

The sharpshooter



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Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Association

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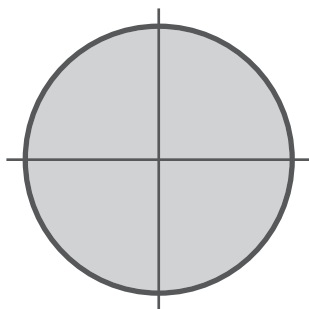
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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A very warm welcome to another edition of our annual *Sharpshooter* journal.

Sad News. We are always very sorry to hear of the passing of Sharpshooters and during the course of this year we have again had to say goodbye to some friends. In October, Professor John Cloudsley-Thompson died. John had served as a courageous tank commander with *4th CLY* in both the European and African theatres. During the latter he developed his interest and passion for desert wildlife about which he ultimately wrote many books and became a leading naturalist.

In late July, James Dunsby, who had originally served with *C (KSY) Sqn Royal Yeomanry*, and then moved on to serve with the regiment's *A Squadron (A (RWY) Sqn)*, sadly died after collapsing during a training assessment exercise for the *SAS* on the Brecon Beacons along with two other others. Our thoughts and prayers are offered to the families and friends of James, John and the other Sharpshooters to whom we have had to say goodbye.

Trust Deed. I am pleased to report that the Trust Deed introduced last year, and the establishment of the Trustees appears to have bedded in well with the development of simple governance procedures allowing quick decisions to be made with regards to making grants and payments, and making other decisions when required. This is in addition to the more formal Trustees' meetings held four times a year.

Worshipful Company of Insurers. The support from the *Worshipful Company of Insurers* continues to grow and we have been recipients of generous donations from the Company for which we are enormously grateful. Peter Crowley, our former Visiting Officer, and whose father, Fred Crowley, was a WW2 Sharpshooter veteran and later one of our Vice-Presidents, and himself a Vice-President, has been a particularly visible and vocal link between us and the *Company* generating considerable support within the *Company* for the *Sharpshooter* affiliation.

Deployed Personnel. The number of deployed personnel from the serving Sharpshooters during the past 12 months has been relatively low. Penny O'Hare and her team of volunteers have been regularly sending out morale / welfare parcels to deployed Sharpshooters and these continue to be much valued by the recipients. A huge thanks to Penny and her team, for all the work that they do in this regard.

Social Media. The website, and our Facebook and Twitter pages are attracting more and more interest and are generating more contact and interaction. If you haven't

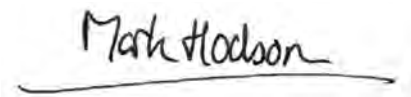
already, then please do take a look at www.sharpshooters.org.uk and follow the links to the Facebook and other pages, and get tweeting or commenting! (Alternatively, let us have your email address and we will email the links to you. Email secretary@sharpshooters.org.uk)

The Association – Moving Forward. As ever, we strive to develop the *Association* and how it supports the Sharpshooter family. Discussions with the serving squadrons about how we can best support them, especially during their transition from the *Territorial Army* to the *Army Reserve* alongside a major recruitment drive to achieve the goals laid out in FR20 (“Reserves in the Future Force 2020”, Govt White Paper, 2013) continue.

The *Association* is constantly seeking donations to support the grants we make to beneficiaries and to be able to provide this fabulous journal every year. These are our main two expenses as the organisation, such as it is, is otherwise very lean and the operating costs are absolutely minimal. If you have enjoyed receiving this year’s journal may I encourage you to make a donation to the Association in order to help us to carry on the good work that we do, maintain the standard and quality of the communications that we all enjoy, and to grow our welfare fund.

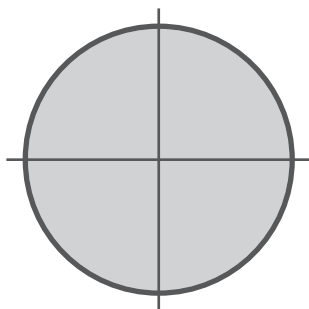
The Museum. As well as asking for donations to support the Association, the Museum Trust is seeking financial support to help pay for our long awaited new museum building in the grounds of Hever Castle. The *Tent in the Park* project, has ambitious fund-raising targets in order to create the high quality environment that our heritage deserves. The Museum Trust team, the custodians of our historical artefacts, have done an absolutely brilliant job at persevering with this project, against numerous obstacles and setbacks, to create a new Museum at Hever Castle. Having received planning permission and approval to create the new museum, the quest for funds has begun in earnest and I ask you **ALL** to join the *Tent In The Park* Friends Scheme plus anything that you can do to assist, either by direct donation, or introducing people or organisations who could also help financially or indeed materially, will be most welcome. Further details are in the enclosed brochure or write to the Hon Secretary enclosing a donation.

Thanks. On behalf of all Sharpshooters let me publicly thank my fellow Trustees and Committee members for the time and passion that they devote to the Sharpshooters and the Association.



Mark Hodson TD
Chairman





HON SECRETARY'S REPORT

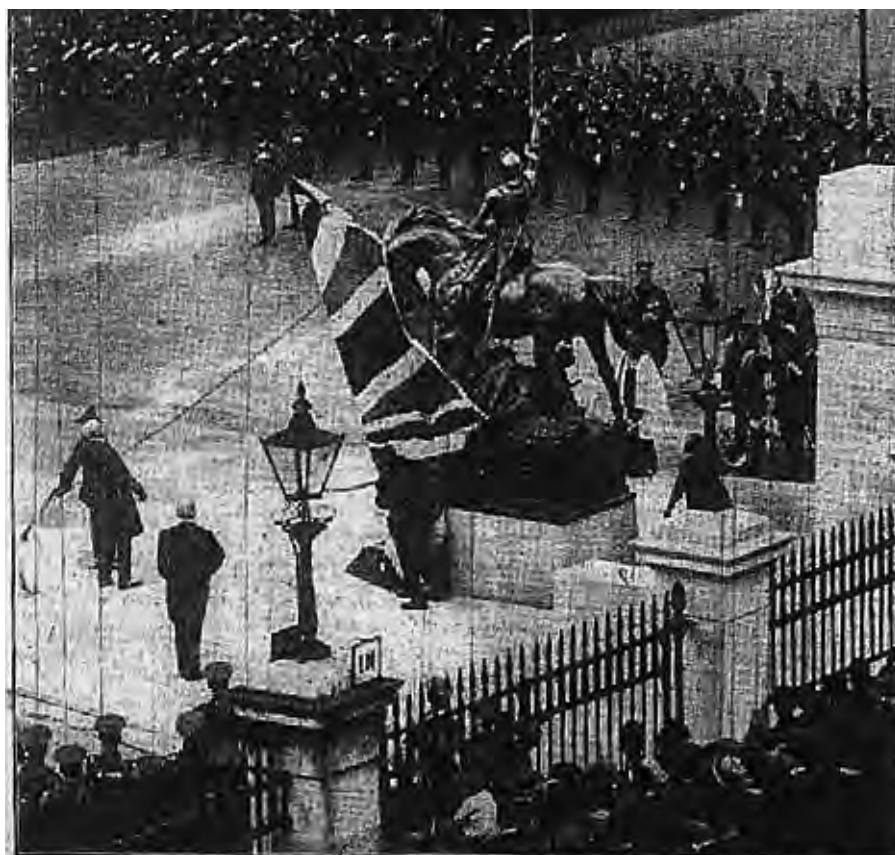
The year 2012/13 has been a challenging year – one tinged with joy at the celebrations of Her Majesty's Coronation Diamond Jubilee and yet sad as more of our dwindling band of World War 2 veterans march off parade to rejoin their comrades in the canteen in the sky. And let us not forget either, more recent members of the *Kent and Sharpshooter* family including Sgt Norman Dives and more recently Corporal James Dunsby from *C (KSY) Sqn* who lost his life undergoing arduous training on the Brecon Beacons. They will all be missed for the variety of character that they brought to our family and I hope that you all take a moment to reflect on their obituaries and to remember them.

The first challenge in 2013 was to get the 2012 Journal out on time and we missed that due to late contributions holding up the checking, proof reading and eventual printing, for which I can only apologise. If there are any missing articles this year it will be because they did not make the required date for contributions, as Simon Malik and I are being ruthless with its application.

In the year there have been the usual events – Cavalry Sunday, The Federation of London OCA Parade, the Lord Mayor's Show, Field of Remembrance at Westminster and, the Bir El Gubi dinner. All of these events have been quite well attended and they are the framework that forms the *Association's* events where we meet to reminisce. To all of you who do support these events I say thank you, and for those of you who do not attend for whatever reason, I say you do not know what and more importantly *who* you are missing!

For 2014 we will be attending the usual events – Cavalry Sunday, which will take place on Sunday 11th May, as well as the Federation of London OCA Parade in early June. In the case of the former this is the 90th Parade since the memorial was dedicated and a short report on that Parade is below:

“The Cavalry memorial in Hyde Park was unveiled on 21st May 1924 by Field Marshal John French, Earl of Ypres in the presence of HRH The Prince of Wales, HRH The Duke of Connaught and two other Field Marshals: The Earl Haig and Sir William Robertson. The memorial itself is the only example, in London, of a statue in complete armour, the main features of which are drawn from the Earl of Warwick, dated 1454. The statue is cast from metal obtained from enemy guns captured by the Cavalry in the Great War and depicts St George, the patron saint of the Cavalry, who, having administered the coup de grace to the dragon with his sword, reins in his charger and raises his sword high in a token of victory.



THE CAVALRY MEMORIAL UNVEILED.—The scene at Stanhope Gate, Hyde Park, yesterday, when Field Marshal Lord Ypres unveiled the Cavalry Memorial. Captain Adrian Jones, who designed the figure of St. George triumphing over the dragon, is standing with Lord Ypres.



THE OLD COMRADES' ASSOCIATION, several thousands strong, marched with Lord Kitchener to lay a wreath as the last of the grateful Cavalry memorial at Stanhope Gate, Hyde Park, yesterday morning. The statue of St. George and the Dragon, executed by Captain Adrian Jones, was unveiled four years ago.

At the unveiling it was noted that there were fully *31 regiments of Regular cavalry* together with gunners from RFA batteries and mechanics from armoured car regiments present, whilst in total nearly *100 regiments* were represented with hardly anyone dressed the same!”

The main effort in terms of trips, is the return to Villers-Bocage on 12th-15th June for the 70th anniversary commemorations – the town are holding a ‘manifestation’ on the 13th and quite what that means no one is really sure! There are hardly any seats left and we hope to have two of our WW2 veterans and their wives with us on the trip.

As you will see in the journal the *Association* continues to provide welfare support to *Sharpshooters* on deployment, and this is much welcomed by those in Afghanistan. The *Association’s* Support 2 Operations team’s work is underpinned by our adopted Livery Company – The Worshipful Company of Insurers and we are really most grateful for their efforts, most especially in the case of James Dunsby’s widow – Bryher. In addition, mention must be made here of the noble efforts of Mike and Jenny Shaw as well, who, together with their congregation are tireless helpers and providers of all manner of things for the goodie boxes.

As you read the Journal you may be surprised by the lack of reading material and this is because the normal contributors have not had as much time to research and write new articles as in previous years’ editions. Serials such as David Whitehouse’s fascinating series on the LRDG have come to a natural end. However this should be the call to you, the reader, to come up with stories and articles for the 2014 edition and you are positively encouraged to write any reminiscences of the Cold War warriors such as myself. These are just as valid as those of our World War and Afghan/Iraq veterans *so the call is to put finger to keyboard and write something.*

This lack of articles does however leave space to talk about the new museum – the *Tent in The Park* – at Hever Castle, which received planning permission in the summer of 2013. The Museum Trust have also received a catalyst grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund which is designed to help the Trust expand it’s capabilities and knowledge of how to fund raise. This will become their Main Effort in 2014 with a museum opening target date of the summer of 2015. That year has a certain resonance with both the *Kent Yeomanry* and *Sharpshooters* as it will be the 70th Anniversary of the end of World War 2 and the 100th Anniversary of when all three of our antecedent regiments served in Gallipoli in 1915. For my sins I have volunteered to be the Project Manager responsible for the delivery of the new Museum, which is a vital task. All our donors, whether from Corporate organisations, Heritage Lottery Fund or indeed the *Kent & Sharpshooters* family will expect the Museum to show value for money and to be delivered on time and on budget. To date we have been focussed on getting the team set up which will at present consist of myself, Dave Whitehouse looking after security issues and Dan Taylor who will be looking at interior design etc along with Boris Mollo. There will be a major meeting at the end of January, which will be a project kick off meeting at Hever Castle. Needless to say this Project is going to grow and my time is not infinite so I’m delighted to be able to welcome Steve Shelley – ex SSM at Bexleyheath – as Assistant Secretary of the *Association*.

May I draw everyone’s attention to Chris Sutton’s piece in here about fund raising and the considerable target that we have to achieve. As he says we are hopeful that

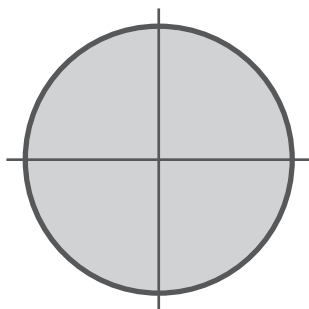
corporate and other organisations will produce a good-sized proportion of what is required and we hope to convince the Heritage Lottery Fund to produce a good-sized piece as well. However both the Heritage Lottery Fund and Corporate donors will be looking to us as an *Association* to demonstrate that the *Kent and Sharpshooters* family is taking an upfront and active stake in all this as well. If we do not do so then they are unlikely to want to invest in us. The best and most affordable way to achieve this is for every person who receives this journal to sign up to become a Friend of the Museum with either a one off payment or – if you can afford it – multiple years’ payments. It is not just about building and opening a new museum but **sustaining** it beyond that. And I would also ask you to get your friends and their families to sign up as well. If you wish to make a larger donation as a family or group – perhaps in memory of a *Sharpshooter* or *Kent Yeoman* who has passed on – then that would be wonderful.

I know that every year, for the last three years the question of subscriptions and the costs of producing this Journal have come up and each year we just scrape by with donations from a number of you – and these are very much appreciated. But it remains a fact that interest rates are low and we are not allowed to adopt a more adventurous investment policy with the capital that we have. I have listed separately those who have very kindly donated sums this year and we are very grateful for them – but the *Association* really does need each and every recipient of this journal to contribute something towards the cost of producing it – especially if you want it to continue into the future. When the *3rd/4th CLY Association* was established in 1948 the ‘entrance fee’ (joining subscription) was 10 shillings, which today equates to £16 approximately. For whatever reason, that has fallen by the wayside and we no longer require that. A £10 donation per member, per year, made as a Standing Order will with Gift Aid contribution guarantee the continuation of this Journal well into the future – and save the Hon Secretary a whole pile of stress worrying about whether we can afford to continue it or not!!

The next two years will be momentous not only for the commemorations that will take place surrounding both of the World Wars but also the opening of our new museum at Hever. I very much hope to see everyone contributing in whatever way you can to make it a success and also help support the *Association* and the continuance of this Journal.

Ask not what the Association can do for you but what you can do to help it.





THE TENT IN THE PARK

by Chris Sutton

Head of Fundraising,
Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Museum Trust

I think most readers of this article are well aware that we are relocating our museum, currently in the gatehouse of Hever Castle, to a new purpose-built building in the castle grounds.

Accompanying this newsletter is a brochure which sets out our vision, and I am delighted to say that we have now got planning permission and a catalyst grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

What's a catalyst grant? Well, there is a story here. When we first invited the Heritage Lottery Fund to come and see us at Hever, they asked us how much we need to fit out the new museum, and we said £250,000. They politely gave us four messages

- You need to create a museum which will truly engage people and the community.
- You must set up an active Friends scheme.
- You should consider asking us for £100,000 and look to raise the balance from private sources.
- When you do come to make an application, bear in mind that it is a competitive process.

As *Sharpshooters*, we are always quick thinking and ready for a challenge. We soon spotted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has another type of grant, the catalyst, for a maximum of £10,000, which is designed to help charities to develop their capability in private fund raising. I am pleased to say we have been awarded the full £10k, and have a detailed plan on how to spend it. I have to keep reminding my fellow trustees that this grant cannot be spent on bricks, mortar or medals, it must go on fund raising consultancy, starting up a Friends scheme, and fund raising materials – such as the brochure which I hope you will read as soon as you have finished reading this sentence!

On the theme of a museum which will engage people and the community, I am 100% up for that. We are working with local schools to help with the museum design, and John Cloudsley-Thompson's desert fox "Noball" is an ideal cartoon character who will guide kids through our display boards!

I am delighted that through the recommendation of Brigadier Ian Townsend, former Director General of The *Royal British Legion*, we have secured the services of Carole Wanless as our fund raising consultant. Carole helped the *RBL* to raise many millions for the *National Memorial Arboretum*. We have also raised an Appeal Committee, under the chairmanship of our Honorary Colonel the Rt Hon Nicholas Soames MP, and



including Lord Astor of Hever DL, Mrs John Cleeve MBE, Nigel Farage MEP, Julian Radcliffe OBE, Brigadier Ian Townsend CBE, David Turner QC, and Lt General Sir Barney White-Spunner KCB CBE.

Let's be honest, most of the big donations that we need to reach our target will come from corporates and trusts, not the regimental family. Carole, the Appeal Committee and I will be focused on securing those large donations.

But it is **VITALLY IMPORTANT** that we demonstrate to the Heritage Lottery Fund, when they audit the benefits we have achieved from the catalyst grant and when they review the big £100k application that I hope to submit in April 2014, that we have demonstrated that we have built support and a sustainable stream of regular donations from YOU, dear reader, as a member of the most important community that we seek to serve, namely our regimental family.

If we get – as I fully intend to do – lots of corporate and trust donations, but do not have at least 100 members of the regimental family as Friends of the museum, alas we will have failed.

I don't believe that failure is in our vocabulary. The Virgin Money Giving website is all set up, or you can use the form on the back of the brochure. Please make the minimum gift of £30 (plus gift aid where relevant) for one year's membership of our new friends scheme. If you can, please make a multi-year commitment. And if you can afford a large donation, we will of course be thrilled to receive that too.



Based on feedback from the Association, we have set the following tiers of recognition for donations

Friends membership	£30 per annum
Yeomen	£500-£1000
Patrons	£1000 - £10000
Founders	£10000+

The Yeoman donation of £500 (or above) will also entitle you to lifetime membership of the Friends scheme, and your name will be recorded on a board in the museum.

The Friends scheme gives you greatly discounted access to Hever Castle, discounts at their shops and the adjacent golf club, a wealth of information about what's going on, and access to special events at the museum.

But it's not just a Friends scheme; it's a Friends and Volunteers scheme. As *Sharpshooters*, we know all about the spirit of volunteering, and "multi-tasking" in our busy lives.

What sort of volunteering? I don't think you need me to inspire you. Those talents, that enabled untrained civilians to become "the finest armoured regiment in North Africa", with similar accolades across all our constituent squadrons in different theatres of war, are the talents that we, as their successors carry forward to this day. It's in our DNA. Join up to the Friends scheme, offer your skills, and whether its hosting children on museum visits or in local classrooms, conserving old uniforms, or helping us do the research to bring the stories of our soldiers to life, whatever your skills – sign up!

And, really importantly, if you can't offer time to volunteer, please still sign up to the Friends scheme. Nobody wants to be Trooper or Lieutenant 100, the chap who forgot to turn up and let the other 99 down.

I also have some confessions to make. I enjoy a successful City of London career. My father served in a yeomanry regiment, the *QOLY*, which – as far as I know – has few people celebrating its achievements today. I remember watching him on parade at the Retiring of the Guidon parade at Edinburgh Castle in the '70s, and it seemed like the total closure of a chapter of history. I have lived for the last 20 years near Paddock Wood, on the border of east and west Kent. My wife was born in the Woolwich Free Hospital. My children have been educated locally, and we are frequent visitors to Hever. I served as a troop leader in *C Squadron* in Croydon in the late 1980s. Despite all of this, until recently, I have had almost zero appreciation of *Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry History*. Bir El Gubi – isn't that the dining club in London? Alam al Halfa – that was a parade I once did on a sunny Sunday morning at Hever. Primasole? Er ... pass. Villers-Bocage ... that was the complicated one, for some reason *The Association* goes there, never quite understood why...

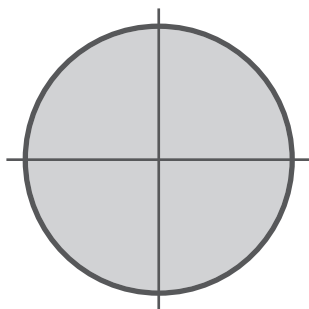
And with that pathetically small knowledge, I would score higher on a *KSY* history competition than my son, who (unlike me) was born and went to school in Kent.

I have started reading some books. I am inspired and humbled and just, well, gob-smacked by the living history of our regiment, our soldiers from all walks of life, in Kent, London, South Africa, Gallipoli, Palestine, France, Iceland, the Desert, Sicily, Italy, Normandy, Germany, Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan and many other places. Gentlemen of the Jury, I simply had no idea! I am inspired by the *Sharpshooter* dash and sense of togetherness, and what a Yeoman will do to serve his colleagues, his country, his community and his family. And, ladies, for "his" we can just as proudly say "her".

We are a living regiment, and we need that spirit today, to reach the eminently achievable target of funding and opening our new museum. I look forward to your donations, your signing up to the Friends scheme, your volunteering, and to seeing you at the museum opening ceremony in 2015.

Many absent friends will be watching, and cheering us on from above.





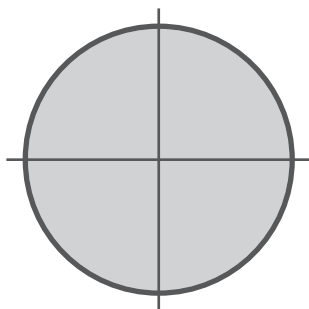
HON TREASURER'S REPORT

An extract of the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2013 and a comparison to the previous year is shown below and the full accounts are available on the KSYA web site.

		2013	2012
Income			
	Subscriptions	2,152	3,646
	Investments	1,871	1,687
		4,022	5,333
Expenditure			
	Magazine	4,022	3,345
	Other	1,733	1,395
Surplus / (deficit)		(1,733)	592
Assets			
	Investments	37,229	32,383
	Cash	9,221	7,453

The KSYA generates investment income that can trace its roots back to 1943 when soldiers returning from battle raised funds to help Sharpshooters less fortunate than themselves. There are some donations still made on a regular basis and also profits from merchandise that Tim Rayson manages; please consider buying Sharpshooter wine so that you are prepared for your Mess or home parties and functions!

The main expense continues to be the magazine and the Trustees have given much thought to this item. It will continue for at least another year but our main effort must always be welfare: please give what you can and let us continue something that was started by our veterans of Bir El Gubi, Benghazi and many more battles in the Western Desert.



WELFARE REPORT

by Penny O'Hare

It has been a happy and sad year but quiet.

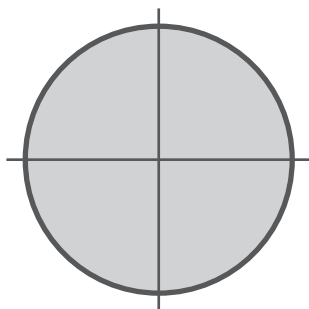
We have had three soldiers deployed out to Afghanistan. They went out in April/May – L/Cpl Jason Grais from 'C' Squadron and WO2 Ade Keeble and Sgt Nick Castro from Bexleyheath. Parcels went out to them as usual but the first boxes must have made their day as I got my class of autistic children to decorate them. There were stickers, pictures and whatever else they could stick on the boxes. The boys have received at least four boxes a month. I would like to thank *The Worshipful Company of Insurers* who donated £500 towards the boxes and also to Mike and Jenny Shaw who again put a box at the back of their church, one box ended up into at least five big boxes of fantastic donations.

I was getting updates from Ade Keeble with a 'Camp Bastion' Newsletter at least every month. All our deployed soldiers returned home safely in October/November.

In July/August we got the sad news that Cpl James (Mick Dundee) Dunsby had died on SAS training in the Brecon Beacons. He had a very good send off in August. The weather was not brilliant but I think it was him having the last laugh on us, or should I say the coffin bearers and the guard of honour. It had been lightly raining all morning but just as they turned up at the church and getting themselves organised to carry the coffin into the church the heavens opened and rained really heavily. It calmed down while we were in the church but as we came out it started all over again. As I say I think Mick was having a good laugh at all of us.

As I say, it has been a quiet year. All I can say is thank you for all the support everyone gives me and the serving squadrons over the year. I could not do as much without you.

Please remember that we are here for all our serving and ex-soldiers' and their families if in need of help. You can contact me on pennyohare@hotmail.com or 07703 254009.



KSYA MEMBERSHIP

We are bringing some clarity to categories of membership of the *Association*. This is important as the *Association* matures and we now have sons and daughters, even grandsons and granddaughters of Sharpshooters taking an active interest in the *Association* as well as an increasing number of long-term friends of the *Association*.

At the moment, these definitions are an aid to building and defining our membership base. Longer term this may generate other distinctions (different ties perhaps? other merchandise opportunities?) More on all of this and developing the membership in due course.

Full Member

For those who are serving in the *Sharpshooters* or who have served in the *Sharpshooters* or one of the forebear Units / sub-Units previously.

Also applies to those who were attached for any period of minimum three months.

Family Member

Anyone who is closely related to a Full Member Sharpshooter (ie who qualifies as a Sharpshooter) whether alive or deceased. Applies for up to two generations from the membership of the Full Member. By exception (subject to Trustee approval) for relations that may need consideration as to “close relation” and/or the two generation rule.

Friend of the KSYA

For those who wish to be involved with the Sharpshooters (through friends, family not covered above, historical interest etc) and who do not qualify for “Full” or “Family” membership.

Subject to sponsorship by a Full member and approval by the Membership sub-committee.

Friends will be encouraged to make an annual donation by their sponsors – and which is mandatory to receive a copy of the Journal.

Honorary Member

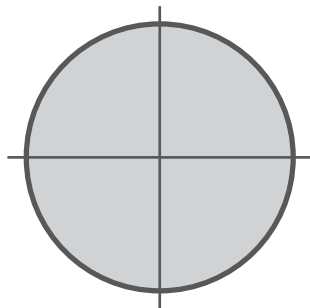
Where, in the opinion of Members or Trustees, and subject to Trustees approval, an individual (or group of individuals) has supported the *Sharpshooters* and/or KSYA in such a way that they should become Honorary Members of the Association.

Vice-President

This is awarded to Full Members (and exceptionally to other categories of Member) in recognition of service to the *Sharpshooters* and / or to the *Association*. May also be given to notable members (such as Honorary Colonels). VP appointments will be approved by the Trustees.

VPs are expected to support the serving *Sharpshooters* and *Association* in an Ambassadorial type role and also to act as counsel, when needed, to Trustees and Committee members.

Chairman



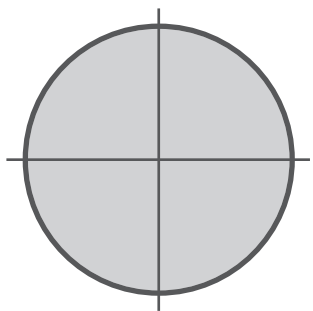
KSYA LIST OF DONATIONS RECEIVED IN 2012/13

In 2012/13 the following very generously donated towards the *Association* funds, thereby enabling us to continue supporting Sharpshooters from either Bexleyheath or Croydon whilst they have been deployed on operations:

The Worshipful Company of Insurers, Hilary Wilson, Robin Bryder, Cate Hawkins, David Sinker, Chris Rae, Clifford Pace (In Memoriam), G Campbell, (In Memoriam), M Tomlin, Mrs Spain, David and Marian Hannam.

The *Association* with more generous support from The Worshipful Company of Insurers have also supported the *RY Regimental Association* in providing support to Mrs Bryher Dunsby following the death of her husband on training.

If you want to get your name here on this page send in a donation – of £10 payable to KSYA – to the Hon Secretary. As a well-known TV advert says ‘every little helps’! You can also donate on line as well at Virgin ‘Just Giving’ where all donations automatically have the Gift Aid contribution added, thus saving the Hon Treasurer the task of doing it.



“THE FUTURE – AS MIGHT BE VIEWED FROM THE PAST”

by TIMBER

For those of you familiar with the original TIMBER, you will know that he was a man of words and a man with clear views, opinion and vision. A man who believed in the ethos and spirit that has been passed on by generations of *Kent and Sharpshooter* veterans to their successors.

As we move into the full on fund raising phase for *The Tent In The Park* at Hever Castle, I asked TIMBER to provide us, the current generation, with a perspective on the future importance of this project from the past. Here is what he might have said.

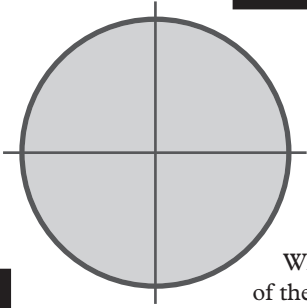
“With the final victory in Europe, it will be with pride and some grief that *Sharpshooters* will reflect on the years of strife and struggle which now lie in the past. Memories of happy times in many parts of the world and of grim battles and dark days, now long forgotten by many, will crowd the recollection.

A soldier, it is said, lives in the past and dwells on the glories of battles long since won or lost, but now for many will come the parting of the ways. No longer soldiers, their thoughts and energies will be turned to the future and more peaceful occupations.

At this there will be no regrets, but in our joy do not let us discount the lessons of our experiences, but rather let us salve what good we can from the evil which has been thrust upon us that our lives may be enriched and all around us may benefit from the knowledge of our travels.

With the parting of the ways many bonds of friendship will be broken, and only the parting will reveal their true strength. Some happiness will be derived from the knowledge that there will be many opportunities for reunion to recapture in peace the comradeship we have known in arms.

We have continued through the years to tell our stories and record the history that is our proud heritage. Now there is a new venture a new mission – Your Museum aim to CONNECT with people young and old, near and far; to allow them to EXPLORE the rich and powerful stories and treasures that we all bring to this place, will surely INSPIRE our joint future. Get involved today – Join the Friends and volunteer to do your bit; for we have now departed and to you from failing hands we throw the torch; be yours to hold it high.”



EMPTY SADDLES 2011/12

Where possible and if requested by the family, members of the Association try to attend funerals with the banner if appropriate.

John Leonard Cloudsley-Thompson

Lt Colonel Ian Mackrill

John 'Paddy' O'Neill

Roy Cawston

Walter Allen

Clifford Pace

Norman Dives

Robin Leigh-Pemberton

OBITUARY



JOHN LEONARD CLOUDSLEY-THOMPSON

23rd May 1921 – 4th October 2013

John Leonard Cloudsley was born in May 1921 in India, though his family soon moved back to the UK. He was educated at Marlborough College, which he left at the end of the summer term 1939, and went up to Cambridge at the beginning of the Lent term 1940. So he was in London during the first few frenetic weeks of the Second World War. His father was Medical Officer of Health in Lambeth, so John helped out at the town hall, recruiting stretcher bearers and first aiders – ready for the anticipated blitz. But things calmed down, so John went up to Cambridge as planned. However, after Dunkirk in June '41, he decided not to return but to find some way of helping in the war effort. Officer Cadet training at school stood him in good stead to join the army – but he was too young! He was too young as well for ARP warden duties – the age for that was 30! So he volunteered for farm work – he was old enough for that!

Ultimately, later that year, and still only 19, he was called up and went first to Tidworth with the 53rd RAC Training Regiment, and then to Sandhurst for four months. He joined the armoured corps as 'he would rather drive than march with the Infantry and would also like to see what I'm shooting at rather than RA'. Whilst there he had thought of joining the RTR because he thought that he did not have the private income thought necessary for the cavalry) but strangely he ended up joining the 4th Queens Own Hussars! However he did not enjoy his sojourn there and transferred to the 4th CLY just before they deployed to Egypt in the summer of 1941. John's book about his life in 4th CLY – appropriately entitled *Sharpshooter – memories of armoured warfare* – is full of delightful and interesting snippets of life in the desert. His early career was with the echelon and he was determined to use the Bren gun to engage strafing enemy aircraft – with little effect but he kept at it!

It was during the Knightsbridge battles in 1942 that John had the first of two narrow escapes when his tank was knocked out from over a mile away – by an 88mm gun.



B Sqdn 4th CLY, Crusader crew, Beni Yusef, March 1942. L to R: Tpr Taylor (KIA), Tpr Webb (later POW), 2/Lt J Thompson (Later severely wounded), Tpr Sagar (KIA), Tpr Baldwin (KIA).

Although he bailed out successfully he was badly wounded and most of his crew killed. As he recalled during his interview with me 'the squadron charged forward to close the range so that they could engage with their 2 pounder guns. I looked behind and found that I was the only one still advancing so I halted and engaged six Mk 3 tanks. I was given the order to withdraw when there was a very large bang – we had been hit.'

He was seriously injured in his lower leg, and was hospitalised first in Egypt, then in South Africa before returning home. He arrived in Liverpool in December '42. After recuperating, he went back to Sandhurst to train young soldiers. He also married at this time, Anne, who was his companion and friend, and mother to their three sons, until she died in 2012.

In early 1944 John had wangled a return to 4th CLY, relinquishing his Captaincy, to serve as a spare subaltern. He took part in the D-Day landings and ended up commanding RHQ troop. It was here that he had his second narrow escape when his Cromwell tank was engaged by a Tiger commanded by Michael Wittman at point blank range of 35 yards! John attempted to fire first but the main armament had been left by the gunner locked in the travelling position so he could not. Undeterred he fired the smoke mortar which sailed over the top of the Tiger – which then fired its main armament. The 88mm round went straight through the hull and lodged in the engine. Fortunately no one was killed. John and crew baled out and miraculously, John led them through enemy lines and back to 4th CLY. After Villers Bocage, John became troop leader of 3rd Troop of B Sqn taking part in the breakout battles in Caen where he – with the late Walter Allen's 1st Troop – almost made it to Borguebus Ridge before being withdrawn to Carpiquet and amalgamation with the 3rd CLY. John returned to the UK after the amalgamation and after a short posting to various OCTU's resigned his commission being granted the rank of Honorary Captain.

After the war John became a very well known and respected Professor of Zoology writing many books and papers about scorpions among other small desert creatures. I am sure that he would have been delighted to know that Noball – the desert fox that he and his crew adopted in the desert in 1942 – has been adopted in a much newer guise as the mascot for the new museum at Hever.

John was an immensely erudite and scholarly man whose knowledge of the desert and Normandy campaigns was phenomenal in its depth and detail. He will be sorely missed.

OBITUARY

Lt Colonel Ian Mackrill

Lt Colonel Ian Mackrill served with the *Green Howards* during the Second World War, after which he qualified as a Barrister.

Ian joined the *3/4 CLY (Sharpshooters)* in the early 1950s and subsequently commanded the *Regiment* from 1960-1962 when he handed over to Lt. Colonel Ben Tottenham.

During Ian's two years in command he was presented with many problems. He had to manage the unwanted amalgamation of the *Kent Yeomanry (Royal Artillery)* with the *3/4 County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters) RAC*. Sadly for the *Kent Yeomanry* they had to give up their long and distinguished role as Gunners, of which they were immensely proud, and convert to *Royal Armoured Corps* with armoured cars. This in itself produced many training difficulties. He also had to preside over several committees dealing with the selection of new uniforms and badges, new regimental colours and flag, mess procedures and etiquette, the property and silver of two Regiments, to mention a few.

Ian also had to deal with two Old Comrade Associations, whose upset members had served before and during the War; some senior members were very vociferous. Many arguments followed but Ian persevered and, much to his credit, all were finally resolved. By the time he handed over the *Regiment* the amalgamation was well underway.



OBITUARY

John ‘Paddy’ O’Neill

4CLY (Sharpshooters)



Paddy O’Neill and in the background Walter Allen.

A eulogy delivered by Tim Rayson at Paddy’s funeral, which was well attended by the *Royal British Legion* amongst other organisations. The stories are very much in Paddy’s own words and style shared with The Association in his video interview for The *AGIUS Sound and Vision Collection*.

In his own words Paddy came from a humble background and in his teens carried out a variety of odd jobs such as working in barns, digging in a quarry, chopping wood, baby sitting and also the dole. In 1940 at the Easter Bank Holiday he had just given his Mum a few shillings and father wanted him to go and buy him some fags. Paddy saw this as the final straw as he was supporting the family so he went out to join up aged 19 years old. However he was rejected because the enlistment age was 20. This did not deter Paddy and he returned the following day saying he was 20 and joined the *Inniskilling Fusiliers* based in Omagh, Northern Ireland. Paddy had a colourful time as a recruit including sorting out his first Drill Sgt who was bullying the troops and swearing too much. As a result he became the Drill Sgt’s pal.

The *Fusiliers* went off to India, but Paddy was held back as they had found out his real age and so he spent the next few months learning how to be a Signaller; he also supervised the digging up and creating of gardens in the new barracks as he knew about digging. He was then sent to *3rd Bn Inniskilling Fusiliers* in Belfast and was the new boy, so spent a lot of time on fatigues. After injuring his finger he got blood poisoning and went back to Omagh where he was put back on supervising the creating of the gardens.

Paddy by this time was fed up and when they asked for volunteers for the *Royal Armoured Corps* (he thought it was the Royal Army Medical Corps) he was posted to Tidworth. Paddy was selected for training as gunner because, as he put it, they never asked what he had done before and when he undertook the basic signalling course he proved to be brilliant at Morse (30 words per minute). As Paddy recalled the Trainer was cross with him for talking in class and had sent out a message at 30 wpm saying “*That so and so O’Neill is talking in class*” and Paddy wrote it down and gave it to him thus proving that he was a trained Signaller.

Paddy deployed with *4th CLY* at 24hrs notice, as part of a batch of 30 new replacements and once at sea they got all the fatigues on board which Paddy complained about after he was put on six charges. Ronnie Aird a pre-war *Sharpshooter* took him to one side and asked what was wrong. Paddy in his own words said *'we joined you 24 hours before we sailed and we are always on fatigues and we are always being sworn at'*. Ronnie Aird had all charges dropped and Paddy was off fatigues – it also turned out Paddy was the only Irishman in the Regiment.

After the long trip around Africa *4th CLY* arrived in the desert and prepared their tanks for desert warfare. At this time Paddy was spare crew and second driver on a Lorry with AC 'Bill' Garner. They were working for Captain Dickie Sutton who had fought in the Spanish Civil War and was known as the 'Admiral' following an incident in Training where Dickie gave his Location as a Grid Reference as being somewhere in the Channel. Paddy remembered that everyone suffered with desert sores so they could not shave and had to cover their faces with a purple liquid; but another officer from outside the *Regt* took them on a task to do some digging in of tanks and charged Paddy with not shaving. Fined three days pay by Royal Warrant.

As part of the echelon, Paddy was involved in running re-supply to *C Squadron* in the desert with water, ammo and fuel as they had been fought to a standstill. He recalled finding an exhausted Lord Cranley – the *Squadron Leader* – lying under the water bowser letting the last drips from the bowser fall on his face.

Paddy eventually ended up as a gunner in a Grant tank as an emergency replacement when they were surrounded by the enemy. He fired a few times but kept missing and did not really understand all the words of command so when the Commander said "Gunner, Gun Control" he turned to the wireless operator and said *"what the bleep bleep does that mean?"* He fired a few more rounds before the action finished and was told later... *"well done Paddy you did not hit what you were aiming at but you did hit some other enemy tanks!"*

Paddy stayed with *4th CLY* for the whole African campaign and then went on to Italy. He came home with the *Regiment* and went to Normandy as a tank driver in a brand new Cromwell with *A Sqn*. His tank was fired on by the *11th Hussars* who knocked out their radiator. Paddy was at Villers-Bocage and recalled the action as follows: *"At 9am 13th June 1944 I was in Villers-Bocage in a Cromwell and supervising making a brew near Point 213 when suddenly a shell landed next to me. The Tank Commander said 'what was that... a sniper?' and I said 'no – It was a bleep bleep 88'".* Paddy reversed up the road to a hedge and tried to get away. Information came in as to who was lost and I then got out of the tank. I could see other tanks burning and I could see another German tank hiding. I was with six tanks but never fired a shot. I could see the houses burning in town and I could see the Fire Brigade. We were sitting around for what seemed like ages and then we were ordered out of the tanks and into a ditch. We planned to burn the tanks and then walk out of the area. We walked via the wide hedges into a field and then along a drainage ditch so we were hidden from the German Infantry. We saw some German tanks and went up another ditch where we were captured. All I had was a tin of sweets from the American rations that they were issued with and which they took from me.

Paddy and the survivors from *A Sqn* were guarded by SS troops for the first night and during that time an SS corporal came to see him – educated at Cambridge – and

asked why an Irishman was fighting for the Brits and invited him to come and fight for the Germans. The reply was pretty short and pithy! The survivors then travelled in captured British lorries to the rear area where they entrained for Germany. This trip lasted several weeks in cattle trucks that they were not allowed out of and had to use buckets for toilets. The first camp he went to was *Stalag VIII* and it was there shortly after arrival that he suffered from a severe infection in his cheek that was lanced by the camp doctor without an anaesthetic. In February 1945 as the Russians drew ever nearer the camp was evacuated and he took part in the long march as ‘forager-in-chief’ for his party. Some barns had lots of straw to enable the troops to keep warm in the bitter weather and eventually they met up with the Americans in March 1945.

Paddy was a modest and unassuming man with a generous spirit for helping those who were less fortunate than himself. He attended the Villers-Bocage 2004 reunion and also came to the dinner at the *House of Lords* where he spent a long time talking to the late Earl of Onslow about his father whom he had served with. He will be sadly missed.



OBITUARY

Roy Cawston

– a Sharpshooter's Story

(Eulogy delivered by Roy's daughter Hilary at his Funeral)



Roy Cawston – Al Amarya 1941

Roy Cawston was just nineteen when he joined the *T4*. When the *Territorials* were mobilised in September 1939 Roy joined *C Squadron* of the *4th County of London Yeomanry Regiment (Sharpshooters)*, to train as tank crew. He was the radio operator and loader in the crew of 2 *Troop* Leader, Count John de Bendor. Leslie Ephgrave was the driver and Bill Cooper, the gunner. Leslie wrote later: *'We saw more of one another in that time than the average married couple see in a lifetime. That we never fell out was quite remarkable and due, in no small measure, to Roy's cheerfulness and patience. Fate chucked us together in the same tank. I couldn't have wished for a better deal.'*

When the regiment became part of the Desert Rats, *Operation Crusader* took them into Libya towards the relief of Tobruk. On 18 November 1941, they experienced their first tank engagement at the *Battle of Bir el-Gubi*. Their progress was stopped when their tank's tracks were shot away and unfortunately, the first people to arrive on the scene were Italians. Cawston and Ephgrave were transferred to a POW camp at Chiavari in northern Italy. From the moment of capture, Roy and Leslie stuck together, their friendship enabling them to survive the years of captivity. They kept up each other's spirits sharing stories of holidays in the

West Country, and planned to visit Devon together at the first possible opportunity. A knife made from a piece of hoop iron and a length of wire was used for many tasks, from cutting bread to the carving of a chess set and was their most valuable possession. They shared everything including the all too infrequent but life-saving Red Cross parcels. They developed tin-can technology, known as tin-bashing, to make 'the Blower', a means of boiling water and heating food with minimal fuel.

Italy's capitulation in September 1943 brought them under German authority and led to their evacuation from Chiavari at one hour's notice. Herded onto railway cattle trucks they were transferred to *Stalag VIII B* at Lamsdorf, close to the Polish border. To combat the bitter Silesian winter they taught themselves to crochet. Using the unravelled

wool from knitted garments, begged, borrowed or stolen, and hooks carved from toothbrushes they made blankets and hats. Roy claimed that the friendship of Leslie and other *Sharpshooter* comrades, especially Arthur 'Dixie' Dix and Les 'Dave' Davies, pulled him through some miserable times but I suspect it was very much a matter of mutual support and that he gave as much as he received.

On 22 January 1945 the camp was again given one hour's warning to move out. With typical understatement Roy wrote: '*Such an order would present no problem to active troops, but not so for POWs at a moment's notice and in the depth of winter. Common sense dictated that priority should be given to blankets and clothing and whatever portable food we had. The chief problem was our below-par physical condition.*' This time they walked. On barely enough food to keep a mouse alive, 1000 desperately weak POWs were marched westwards, ill-equipped, ill-fed and just plain ill. By day they walked for up to twelve hours through the frost-hardened snow. By night they huddled together for warmth in whatever meagre shelter they could find. One night Roy slept on an upright piano in a church hall. On another occasion he and Leslie slept just a few rungs apart on a hayloft ladder, each supported on the shoulders of the person below. All the marchers had cold-damaged feet, Roy suffered frost-bitten fingers and Leslie began to cough. On 3 February they arrived at *Stalag VIIIA* Görlitz where they found Bill Cooper, their tank crew gunner. But a week later they were moved on as the Germans fled before the Russian advance. Within days they were reduced to eating cow cake and pig swill. Having walked at least 500 miles they arrived at *Stalag IXC*, Mülhausen, where both Leslie and Roy went down with beri-beri, and Leslie's cough developed into severe bronchitis. All too soon the camp was 'raused' in the early hours of 2 April, and told to be ready to march out by 6 a.m. but Leslie was too ill to be moved. For the first time since el-Gubi the friends were separated. Roy's diary entry reads: NOT GOOD.

Over the next two weeks *Sharpshooter* comrades helped each other along until, having now walked 600 miles from Lamsdorf, they decided that enough was enough. At one overnight stop, they hid in a pile of hay bales and evaded the searches the next morning. Should anyone ask, the German guards had left them to be picked up by the next party to come along, whoever that might be. In the event it was the Americans.

On repatriation, one of the first things Roy did was to find out what had happened to Leslie who was still at Mülhausen when the camp was liberated. They did get to take that Devon holiday and Roy was best man at Leslie's wedding to Eleanor in 1946. 'Dixie' Dix was best man when Roy married Pat in 1947 and became godfather to Tim in 1954.

In retirement Roy re-forged his connection with the *Regiment*, having been spurred into writing his memoirs by the chance remark, 'I hear you've been fighting in the desert, Grandad', from six-year-old grandson Tom. Roy's mastering of computer technology, with the patient assistance of son-in-law Philip, (for whom the name Denholm Elliot still causes nightmares), and much proof-reading by other members of the family, resulted in the book, *'Before I Forget'*, a unique insight into Roy's personality and a touching legacy for his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

This was the start of another phase in Roy and Pat's lives as he became more and more involved in the *Sharpshooters Yeomanry Association*, through which he was able to trace and reconnect with many old friends. Amazingly, despite being split up after el-

Gubi, the whole of Roy's tank crew had survived. Fifty years later they were reunited. When taking the photo of the golden oldies Pat remarked, 'There's a full tank of unleaded.' She and Roy experienced many *Sharpshooter* events at places like Badminton House and Hever Castle, and commemorative trips such as that to Villers-Bocage in 1994. In 2000 Roy returned to Libya to visit the graves of friends who died at el-Gubi. Pat and Roy enjoyed many pleasant visits with new-found *Sharpshooter* friends, several of whom joined them to celebrate their Diamond Wedding anniversary in 2007.

Roy took on the editorship of the *Sharpshooters'* newsletter and, with the generous sponsorship of John de Bondern he helped to put together a pictorial history of the Regiment under the title '*Carpique Bound*'. Roy represented the *Sharpshooters* on several occasions by taking a place on a tank transporter in the Lord Mayor's Show. November was always a special month for Roy with the anniversary of el-Gubi when the *Regimental Association* laid wreaths at the London Regiments' war memorial. In 2010 Roy celebrated his 90th birthday. He was by then the last surviving member of the tank crew. In November that year, despite being very ill in hospital, he fretted about missing the Remembrance service and not being able to lay his own personal tribute. To ease his mind, his grand-daughter Jenny, who worked in London, offered to lay the wreath for him. Jenny has laid his tribute there each November since then, once even gaining access to the fenced-off memorial aided and abetted by a couple of serving soldiers and a mounted policeman.

I'm pretty sure that the patience, tolerance and single-minded determination which saw him through his POW years helped him pull through his later illnesses and, in 2011 the death of Pat, his wife of nearly 64 years. He continued to correspond with his *Sharpshooter* pals and he visited the junior department of the Leicester Grammar School to talk about his POW experiences. He also did a stint selling poppies for the British Legion in Blaby. Twenty years ago Leslie Ephgrave wrote: '*We learned a bit about patience and quite a lot about ourselves. No heroes these, just ordinary blokes who had several adventures along the way and made some very good friends.*' The enduring nature of that friendship, forged in common adversity and carried on through his *CLY* connections, was demonstrated when several *Sharpshooters* attended Pat's funeral. They considered Pat as much a part of the *Sharpshooter* family as Roy himself and although their numbers are now sorely depleted eight members of the Association have joined us today. I know they all share our loss.

Roy Cawston – A Chairman's Dream

By TIMBER

When Bob Moore reminded me for the umpteenth time (very politely) that he wanted to hand over the Editorship of this Journal, it was with great relief to this Association Chairman that Roy (author and publisher) agreed to take on the task. His wealth of experience and his contacts meant that the high standards were maintained and we started to extend into new areas.

The first of those was video interviewing and then using the video to pass on the stories of the *Sharpshooters* to the next generation. Roy was the first 'victim' of the *AGIUS Sound and Vision Collection* and the video was used to illustrate a talk to the

Bexleyheath *Sharpshooters* called “*The Road to Bir-El-Gubi*” comparing *then and now*, the life of a new recruit in exceptional circumstances.

The talk was well received and a suggestion was made that at the next *Squadron* open day, we invite Roy to actually appear live instead of on video. All was arranged and Roy and I carefully walked through the script for a ‘Parkinson-style’ interview in front of the Mayor, guests, family and friends.

Roy was a consummate raconteur (we have over eight hours of him on film) with an amazing memory and a fund of stories, but keeping to a time schedule was not a strong suit. My job was simple – keep him on script and we would be fine. Those of you who were there (and we did film it) will recognise the look of panic and fear on my face as I asked Roy the opening question and he immediately put the script down on the stool next to him and started... it was a fabulous session but over ran by an hour or more.

Roy did more than most to ensure that the legacy for future generations of *Sharpshooters* was laid down on paper, in photographs and on film. We have much to thank him for. We miss you old friend.



OBITUARY

Walter Allen

(Eulogy delivered by Tim Rayson at Walter's Funeral)



I'm very honoured and proud to stand here and share a few vignettes about Walter's time with the *4th County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters)* during the Second World War.

As we have already heard Walter joined the *4th CLY* in 1938 as an 18 year old office clerk because he, like so many of his generation, could see that war with Germany was inevitable. However as he recalls in his book 'he hated the prospect of becoming a 'foot-slogger' with bayonet fighting and drilling, so when an advert appeared in the *Evening Standard* for young men with driving licences to join a mechanised unit he became more than interested.

A visit to the drill hall in St John's Wood saw Walter enlisted in one go and training started. Walter recalls in his memoir that the *Regiment* was equipped with elderly armoured cars with no guns so that as a gunner he had to simulate the sounds of battle by banging the turret with a large hammer. There were lighter moments, as he recalled, that training nights invariably required drinking copious quantities of ale afterwards. After annual camp in August 1939 he was ordered to join the key party and his immediate task was to write out the mobilisation papers for everyone.

With the declaration of war the regiment remained in London for a week living very well with fine food at *Lord's* cricket ground and comfortable private houses to live in before starting a peripatetic tour of England starting in Bushey and ending in Worksop in January 1940 via Minehead and Woolacombe. It was in Woolacombe that members of *2 Troop* decided that they would in future hold a reunion on the anniversary of their formation. The first reunion took place in 1949 and the last one in 2006 – Walter was I believe the last surviving member of that gallant band. Walter completed a course in Field Hygiene in that time and became known as the 'sanitary wallah' although there was another ruder name he was known by. After much training and it seems beer drinking the *4th CLY* set sail for the desert in July 1941 arriving safely via Cape Town and by early November they were deployed in the desert.

In the desert Walter – as did everyone else – learned quickly how to adapt and survive on four pints of water per day for washing, drinking and cooking and an unending diet of biscuits and bully beef stew. Walter's health was not that good and he had to report sick with three boils in his right arm which meant he could not fight in his tank. Instead he became a spare crewman on a truck to be used as battle casualty replacement. In a way this was a blessing in disguise because Walter's tank was knocked out on the 18th November at Bir El Gubi in the regiment's first action. Two of the crew killed and two wounded.

Walter was called forward and put in a new troop – *4th* – and off they went into battle on the 20th November at Sidi Rezegh where they were knocked out. By the end of

November the regiment had been reconstituted after being reduced to less than five tanks, and they pursued Rommel across the desert – an event that was to become a regular feature over the next 18 months. In fact he was to have a further three tanks shot out from underneath him in the desert and fortunately survived them all unscathed.

The *Regiment* fought throughout 1942 in the desert and in all the major battles including Knightsbridge, Gazala, Alam Halfa and El Alamein. It was during the pursuit of the enemy after El Alamein that Walter contracted jaundice over Christmas 1942 and was evacuated to Port Said to recover. However whilst he was there he contracted diphtheria and was quarantined for the next ten weeks or so whilst he recovered. Walter was very determined to get away from the rear echelon in Cairo, so he got a lift to Alexandria and then hitch hiked to Tripoli, a distance of over 1000 miles. He got there and rejoined his squadron just after the campaign finished but there was much to do in preparation for landing in Italy.

The *Regiment* landed at Salerno and worked its way around Naples and crossed the River Volturno under fire. The main challenge for the regiment in Italy was getting used to the close country, which was completely different from the open spaces of the desert, and they lost quite a few people to snipers and mines. In November the regiment was withdrawn and in December set sail for the UK where they arrived on 3rd January in Glasgow. From Glasgow they moved south to Norfolk where they were to remain, training for D-Day.

After water proofing their tanks, the regiment embarked on 3rd June and sailed on the 5th for Normandy. They landed on D + 1 and soon after moved inland. After advancing into the Bocage country the regiment was tasked to exploit an opening in the German lines at Villers-Bocage. At 0400hrs on the 13th June they advanced and by about 0830hrs they had arrived there and seized the high ground. However the Germans were also there and attacked. After a day of fighting, the regiment had lost a whole squadron and its command element. Walter's squadron stood firm in the town and stopped the German counter attack. With all the losses involved the regiment had to reorganise itself and following more operations that were costly in both men and material it was decided to amalgamate the 3rd and 4th CLY.

There was not room for everyone in the new regiment and those who wanted to be rested were asked to indicate this. Walter very bravely records that *"I thought that this was a chance to step down – I was feeling pretty shaken by this time. Certain NCO friends also needed a change so we quietly went off to Brigade for further orders. A wrench after four years with 4th CLY."*

Walter's war did not finish there and he continued to serve in a Training Group, training new crews before they were sent forward and he was finally demobbed in January 1946 being issued with two shirts, two underpants, one tie and a badly fitting blue suit, with a thick overcoat and trilby hat.

Walter was a brave man who served for four years on continuous operations in an environment where tank crews did not have a great life expectancy because they were so comprehensively outgunned by the enemy, whose tanks were also better protected. As a leader and tank commander he had to get into his tank with his crew and often take turns to be the lead tank and therefore be the first tank to be shot at. That takes a

great deal of courage and self discipline and Walter, despite his quiet and unassuming ways, had that steel.

Walter had many memories of the desert and I'd like to share a few of the more eclectic ones from his published memoir *Undergunned with The Sharpshooters*:

- Operating in temperatures of 100F by day and freezing by night
- The appearance of 'Meat and Veg' stew in the rations as well as soya link sausages and tins of pilchards
- Swapping hand grenades for tins of butter and jam from the New Zealand infantry
- Receiving packets of cigarettes and cigars from South Africa on a regular basis – a great morale booster. However a consignment of bible extracts was not so popular!
- Lizard racing in grooves cut out of the beach.

I interviewed Walter some years ago and I thought then he was a remarkable and unassuming man and I shall treasure the times that I spent with him.



OBITUARY



Sidi Rezegh 1941

Clifford Pace

A short record of his service with the Sharpshooters in WW2

Clifford joined the 4th CLY, end of 38 or early 39, around New Year and it was surprisingly not his first choice because he actually wanted to be in RNR – but there was a very long waiting list and Clifford, not wanting to hang around and wait, ended up being recruited by someone in his office – Captain John Vaughan to join the 4th CLY.

Recruiting in those days was quite simple and as he recalled in an interview “John Vaughan gave me a note for Adjutant and I went along for a chat and was asked the usual questions – did I play Rugby, what school and then joined up.” This was similar to Bob Moore MM who went through the same friendly laid back approach at the same time.

4th CLY was mobilised a week after they came back from Camp in August 1939 and Clifford, being an eager chap turned up straight away at St Johns Wood where he was told he could have stayed home for a couple of extra days. There then followed the ‘Phoney War’ with 4th CLY being billeted around the country before Dunkirk. At this point they were formed into Vickers Gun Teams of four in Civilian Motor Coaches and put on the fens to fight off parachutists which was, on reflection, very Dad’s Army especially as the 1914 guns were so worn there was no chance of shooting accurately. This was followed by more training and eventually in the summer 4th CLY – now part of 22nd Armoured Brigade embarked for the Middle East. Clifford, following a bit of a drunken night out with his troop, broke his wrist when his bunk turned over and broke, but this meant he travelled in style on A deck of the transport ship and not G with everyone else.

In common with everyone else in the Brigade, Clifford’s first time into action was at El Gubi and Sidi Rezegh where in the latter action his tank was knocked out within

20mins of going into action. Clifford escaped on foot and under fire joining the South African infantry for 48hrs before he got back to the rear area. Christmas, he recalled was bad ‘two tins of bully beef and salty water.’

Clifford served through the whole of the desert campaign and two of the battles he was involved in, he captured in paintings¹ – Gazala, where his tank was knocked out and El Alamein where again his tank was knocked out and he escaped on foot crawling half a mile back through the minefields that he had just crossed. After Alamein Clifford contracted hepatitis that he eventually got over and rejoined the regiment who were by now in Tunisia.

Clifford’s next adventures were in Italy when 4th CLY landed at Salerno and took part in the breakout towards Naples and the River Volturno. At this point 4th CLY were sent home to train for D Day but they had to march 10 miles to the docks that ‘creased everyone because no one had done any marching in full kit for ages’. He also noted that the climb up the gangway to board the SS Cameronian ‘was steep – very steep’.

Clifford landed in Normandy separately from the main body of 4th CLY because he was by now a driver of an Anti Aircraft tank and so he fortuitously missed the action at Villers-Bocage where 4th CLY suffered significant losses which led to the amalgamation with the 3rd CLY. Clifford was then recruited into the tank commanded by Jimmy Sale as his operator and off he went into the Goodwood battle where his tank was knocked out.

The allies broke out of the bridgehead eventually and there was then a race to the German border via Belgium and Holland. Along the way the 3rd/4th CLY suffered some casualties and Clifford found time in December to take part in a Christmas tea party for the kids of Asten in Holland. The Sqn commander – Ollie Woods – was St Nick and mounted on a horse that Clifford led as Black Peter in a medieval robe. The local Pastor according to Clifford took a dim view as they were not Catholic and he thought they were trying to seduce the congregation away from the faith!



Clifford Pace (right) pictured with Hugh Stanton at S'Ertogen Bosch, Holland in September 1944.

Although the end of the war was near there was still plenty of fighting and the Regiment was involved in all of it. Clifford recalled that the fighting in the Reichswald was particularly nasty and that they were soon on notice for Rhine Crossing. This happened on 25 March and he was on the first pontoon bridge ‘It was hair raising, water racing past and the road way dipped as the tanks went across with water almost up to the gunnels’. It was just after this that Clifford had a really close shave where they went down to a village as leading tank. There was a flimsy barricade in the street and a gun fired at

us. It hit us just above my head sticking out of the tank – a 30mm calibre shell stuck in the armour above me. It missed me by an inch.

The regiment was under great pressure to continue to advance all the time and as there was no alcohol around Clifford was smoking 50 cigarettes per day. The regiment’s

¹ Two of Clifford’s painting can be seen in colour on the back cover of this journal.

final action was on 1 May at Geddingham and they then raced onto the Elbe, which they crossed on 3 May after waiting 24 hours for a pontoon. They then moved to Hamburg and heard on radio that the Germans had asked for a cease fire. On arrival German Police met them and Clifford ended up in a dentists house on a lake where he found some model soldiers and models of Hitler, which he kept.

After the War Clifford went home on leave, got married, came back after a week. Someone told the CO that he sailed boats and he was then tasked to set up and run a Brigade Sailing Club, which he did most successfully - with six Kriegsmarine sailors – he was demobbed in March 1946.

Clifford was in many respects a typical Sharpshooter – modest, even reticent about what happened during the war but once he got going it was difficult to get a word in at all. The interview that he did with the Australian film company was typical of him and delivered with characteristic modesty and candour. That interview, and the one that I was fortunate enough to be able to record, are fitting memorials to him.

Two of Clifford's painting can be seen on the back cover of this journal.

Top: "4th CLY at El Alamein" by the late Clifford Pace depicting the destruction of 14 tanks of B Sqn 4th CLY in the German minefields.

Bottom: "Escape over the Escarpment" by the late Clifford Pace depicting the evacuation of the Knightsbridge box in 1942.

Full details of both events are in the Regimental history – *Sharpshooters at War*.



OBITUARY

Norman Dives

(1934-2013)

We regret to announce the death of Sgt Norman Dives, aged 79, on 1st August 2013.

Norman joined the Croydon Squadron (then B Sqn 3/4CLY) shortly after it moved to Croydon in the 1950s. The Squadron was conveniently placed for him as he worked in the gasworks around the back of the TA Centre.

He was quite a character, enthusiastic, reliable and with a great sense of humour. He was always smartly dressed and, as the accompanying photograph shows, was one of the few people who could make even battledress look smart.

He continued his service into the 1961 amalgamation with the Kent Yeomanry and into the formation of the Royal Yeomanry in 1967. He became somewhat stuck as a full corporal/car commander for many years, but eventually earned promotion to Sergeant.

His funeral was attended by Betty Frost, John and Hazel Annett, Derek Fransham and Boris Mollo. It was a very well attended event, standing room only; Apparently Norman had made a name for himself as an active member of his community, particularly for his care of their local park and in ensuring that its wildlife never went hungry.



Norman Dives Obituary

Norman died 1st August 2013 of lung cancer.

Norman joined B Sq County of London Yeomanry in 1958, this was in Tavistock Road, Croydon. He had been in the Army Catering Corps for his National Service and spent it in North Africa.

I first got to know Norman at my first camp in 1960. I only did one week at Castlemartin in tents. I travelled up in my battle dress uniform with my kit bag. I was put into a troop and, was given to Norman, as his driver.

“Can you drive?” Norman asked, “Yes” I said. It was only my second time I had driven a Dingo Armoured car!

Every time I did anything wrong I got hit over the head with his beret, I soon got it right and by the end of camp I passed my driving test. The squadron moved to Mitcham Road at the time we amalgamated with the Kent Yeomanry.

We moved through the ranks together until 1970, when he started night school and had little time for the TA.

He was working at the local Power Station as a rigger but was soon promoted and began working in the office. He later moved to a London power Station and worked there until he retired.

Derek Fransham

OBITUARY



Robin Leigh-Pemberton

Robert “Robin” Leigh-Pemberton, Baron Kingsdown, KG PC (5 January 1927 – 24 November 2013) was a British Peer and banker, who served as Honorary Colonel of The *Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry* from 1979-1992.

His father, RD Leigh-Pemberton, MC, farmed Torry Hill, a 2,500-acre estate near Sittingbourne in Kent. The family had been landowners in the area since the 19th century.

Colonel Robin and his lovely wife Rosemary, welcomed our Squadrons and The Association to visit Torry Hill for a family day and cricket match on his private cricket ground. Whilst the visit did not make the local press on that occasion, our predecessors visit did as illustrated by one report in a local newspaper of the time:

“*Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles* – last Saturday the C troop of the regiment met at Torry Hill where they were entertained at luncheon by their captain, Lofus Leigh Pemberton Esq. A booth was erected in the park for that purpose and the benches were supplied by Mr Sage of the Chequers Inn, Doddington. The real purpose of the meet was for the members of the troop to compete in sword exercises for prizes... The prize cup was filled and drank out of to the health of the Queen by the competitors and company. A scratch match of cricket was afterwards played.” (*East Kent Gazette*, 4 September 1869)

Colonel Robin was educated at Eton, where he showed promise in mathematics and classics and won a scholarship to read Greats at Trinity College, Oxford.

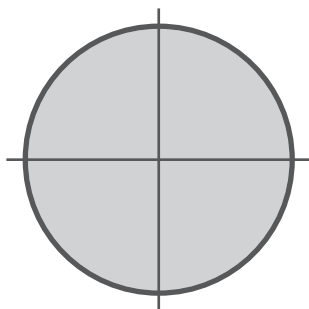
After service with the *Grenadier Guards* from 1945 to 1948, he embarked on legal studies. He was called to the Bar of the Inner Temple in 1954 and practised in London and on the South-eastern circuit until 1960, when he took over the management of the family estate. He became a magistrate and a Kent county councillor in 1961 and was Conservative chairman of the council from 1972 to 1975. A talented cricketer, he was

a committee member of Kent CCC. He was pro-chancellor of the University of Kent, Seneschal of Canterbury Cathedral and, from 1982 to 2002, Lord Lieutenant of the county.

During his time as Governor of The Bank of England, Colonel Robin invited the *KSY* Officers for lunch in Threadneedle Street and welcomed visits from Squadron Leaders and The *Association* Chairman to keep him updated on matters *KSY*. He visited Squadrons and Drill Halls when he could. He nearly ended up commanding the Bexleyheath and Brighton *Sharpshooters* on Sunday Church Parade, when his visit to Regimental Camp in Cornwall co-incided with the *KSY* Officers being late back from a trip to the Scilly Isles. Colonel Robin and Rosemary also took time to attend the final of the London District TA football cup at Chelsea to see the *Sharpshooters* beat a rather rough bunch of Marines, who at one point mooned the spectators. At a 71st (*Yeomanry*) *Signal Regiment* Officers dinner at Lincolns Inn, one subaltern who was struggling to raise a mortgage (Richard Allen), asked the Governor if the Bank could lend him some money. "Of course, old boy" replied Colonel Robin. "Minimum 400 million repayable by lunch time tomorrow"!!!

Firm-jawed and strongly built, Leigh-Pemberton bore a striking resemblance to the actor Kenneth More. He embodied similar qualities of understated Englishness. Colonel Robin was a cheerful, approachable and well-liked figure. He invited Bank staff down to the family estate of Torry Hill, which in addition to the cricket field also has a narrow gauge steam railway, complete with viaduct and tunnel, on which Colonel Robin, wearing an engine driver's cap, would take his visitors for rides.





REVIEW OF C (KSY) SQUADRON, ROYAL YEOMANRY IN 2012/13

As always for *C (KSY) Squadron, Royal Yeomanry*; 2013 promised to be a busy year. However, this year has been particularly taxing: change has been the watchword of the last twelve months and with the radical reform of the *Territorial Army* into a force that is better resourced, more fit-for-purpose and renamed the *Army Reserve*; the *Regiment* and *Squadron* has been impacted significantly with a noticeably increased training burden.

As with the rest of the *Regiment*, we have been re-rolled to Light Cavalry, a new doctrinal concept of employment of which the final details are still being thrashed out, but that in short consists of vehicle-assisted reconnaissance, within enemy territory. As such, the squadron has received a compliment of RWMIK ‘supped-up’, up-armoured and up-armed (armed with .50 Cal HMG and a GMPG) Landrovers and a new arduous training programme to go with it.

All in the *Squadron* have therefore felt a higher demand on our time as we make this transition, but in true *Sharpshooter* fashion this challenge has been embraced with fervour and we are leading the *Regiment* in becoming fully qualified to operate proficiently in our new role.

Taking training back to basics, the squadron spent the first six months of the year re-establishing dismounted soldiering skills. We deployed with *HQ (WD) Sqn* and *A (RWY) Sqn* in January, April and July for three Field Training Exercises (FTXs) on Salisbury Plain training area, where *Sharpshooters* were taken out of their comfort zone of being reliant on vehicles for travel and living, back to good-old-fashioned yomping and muddy, physically demanding-yet-exhilarating infanteering.

This was all clearly too much for Maj Toby Howell whom, in March, after an illustrious and successful two years as Officer Commanding, handed over command of the *Squadron* to Maj Charlie Field, who returned to the Squadron from his interim position as *OC HQ (WD) Sqn*.

Training has continued under Maj Field’s command at the same frenetic pace as previously, as the infantry-based FTXs moved from taking place during shiveringly-cold weekends to the final culmination of the training focus taking place on a swelteringly-hot July weekend. Intertwined with all this, the squadron ran two successful range packages at Hythe Ranges for the rest of the Regiment, under Capt Sean McMullen’s (our new ex-RHG/D Training Captain) expert guidance; deployed for a regimental Command Post Exercise (CPX) in Leicester; whilst all the time completing

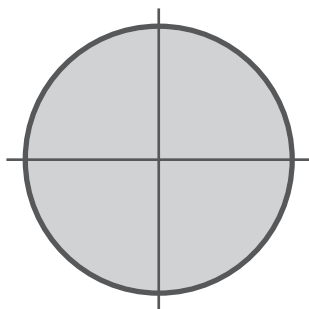
the usual mandatory training, making up the bulk of the Regimental Shooting Team, deploying soldiers to Kenya to work alongside regulars from the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment and of course LCpl Grais representing the *Squadron* on a very successful tour in Afghanistan.

The successes of the first part of the year, unfortunately, were marred by the extremely sad and hard-hitting news of the death of Cpl James Dunsby, at the end of July. James was a Sharpshooter who was a great colleague and good friend of many in the squadron. It was very fitting, then, that his Sharpshooter colleagues should form the bearer party at James' funeral and James would have been proud of how the *Squadron* galvanised during this solemn time. James' dear friend and comrade, Cpl Adam Honeysett, spoke movingly at the funeral reminding us all of James' unique charm, style and humour. Plans are in place to add a memorial to James on the *Squadron* memorial inside Sharpshooter House during 2014.

At the end of the summer the *Squadron* deployed with the regiment complete to Bovington and Lulworth for two weeks of the Annual Training Period (the rebranded version of Camp), which provided a good opportunity for Sharpshooters to tick off a diverse range of courses required of them as part of re-rolling; perhaps unfortunately to the detriment of the usual more fun elements of ATP. Post-ATP saw a more ceremonial and social flavour to the squadrons events calendar, with Lord Mayor's Show, Remembrance Sunday and the squadron Ladies Night Ball, punctuated with yet more training courses and an increased and so far successful impetus on recruiting; a crucial tenant of reforming the *Army Reserves*. In October, the SSM led a contingent of Sharpshooters to form a very smartly turned-out honour guard, representing the *Squadron* at the marriage of Capt Alex Critien and his lovely wife Frida: very many congratulations indeed.

As the year comes to a close, on reflection, it all seems a bit of a blur. However, when comparing the position of the *Squadron* in January, where we were faced with what seemed like a never-ending mountain of training, to where we are now; it is clear that all the hard work and extra time Sharpshooters have invested, has paid off. Whilst we still have a little way to go, our goal of being proficient in our new role is moving ever faster and ever closer into the arcs of our killing area!





265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY) (SHARPSHOOTERS) SUPPORT SQUADRON

71ST (CITY OF LONDON) YEOMANRY SIGNAL REGIMENT

TA Centre, Watling Street, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7QQ

Training night: Tuesday 8pm – 10pm

OC: Maj Keith Wrate; 2IC: Capt Kerry Corrigan; Ops Offr: Capt Kush Cooper; PSAO: Capt Steve Slaney
A/SSM: SSgt Griffiths; SPSP: SSgt Carl Shackleton; PSI (T): Sgt Mick Grounds; SQMS: SSgt Paul Thwaite

We ended last year reflecting on a very successful Olympics and a look forward to the announcement of the results of FR20 consultation. Changes in key personnel and a focus on more military training started the year with a bang. But first of all, some congratulations to recipients of the annual Squadron Trophies: Bracho–Cooke Shield and Lucy Trophy for best male soldier to LCpl Crane; Moore Trophy for best female soldier to Pte Hirst; Appleby Cup for best trade result to Sig Simpson; Lushington Cup for best recruit to Cfn Auguste-Ryan and finally the all important SSM Shield to Cpl Porter.

We are pleased to welcome our new Commanding Officer, Lt Col Julian Picton, back to the Regiment. Col Julian is no stranger having previously served in 68 (ICCEY) Sqn before becoming Regimental 2IC. With him came a re-focus on some key values – soldiering and communications, which, after the hard work of Op OLYMPIC, were a welcome if not all too easy change in the initial months. It was also time to look hard at the troops' career paths and ensure we focussed on promotional (CLM) and Trade qualification courses.

January was busy, as usual. Signallers Harrild, Roberts, Sutton and Pts Hirst and Markham passed their PJNCO Cadre in Catterick. We were visited by one of our Ex Sqn Commanders, Maj David Hewer OBE DL in his official capacity as Deputy Lieutenant of Bexley to present QDJ and VRSM medals to the Sqn. We were also able to officially recognise the promotions of Sgt Castro and Capt Cooper, both of whom had received the good news just before the Christmas break. The month also marked the beginning of saying farewell to WO2 (SSM) Ade Keeble and Sgt Nick Castro as they began mobilisation at Chilwell in preparation for deployment to Camp Bastion on Op HERRICK.



Lt Col Julian Picton CO 71 visits Sqn and speaks to Sig Harrild and Cpl Sutton.

February saw some official recognition for the part the Squadron had played in Op OLYMPIC with our PSAO, Capt Steve Slaney, Cpl Broadbent and Pte Markham invited to a reception at City Hall to mark the outstanding contribution they had made.

March and April were particularly busy with our military skills being tested in the Regimental Military Skills competition, Ex Phoenix Challenge at Thetford over 15-17th March. A number of stands faced our team; communications, observation, CBRN and other challenging Command Tasks. It was cold, raining and blew a gale – perfect training weather! How did we do? Well, for a scratch team, under-strength, thrown together at the last minute, and subsequently reduced by injury, not too badly finishing third overall on Day One and fourth overall by the end of Day Two. Roll on next year's Challenge!

Our Sqn MTSNCO SSgt Daz Lane also provided much needed assistance to the Brigade Driver Training Camp, with Major Keith Wrate volunteering himself to spend two weeks in sub zero temperatures and snow as the course OC.

Our new PSI (T) Sgt Grounds arrived and, on 9th April we received our first official visit from the new CO and took the opportunity to dazzle him with a display of our Communications Capability – REEBOK, CST and BOWMAN with their respective Detachment Commanders, followed by the traditional curry supper provided by newly qualified Class 2 chef Pte Hirst. That evening also saw the last evening at the Sqn for WO2 Keeble and Sgt Castro before deployment.

The Mayor of Bexley decided to have a local uniform awareness day in the High Street in Bexleyheath in March. All reserves forces units in the borough were invited, including the fire brigade, police and ambulance services. The plan was to raise more



Sig Prior and LCpl Crane doing some public engagement.



Upper picture Sig Prior, Sig Roberts, Capt Wardle(RNO), SSgt Lane, Maj Wrate, Sgt Castro, SSgt Shackleton, Cpl Broadbent, Capt Slaney and SSgt (SQMS) Thwaite take part in cycle ride to Eastbourne TAC to deliver 2 Sig Brigade pennant.



Our contribution to the cenotaph parade.

money for “Help for Heroes” which is the Mayors chosen charity for the year. A team of enthusiastic “tattooists” pulled a MAN SVR weighing 35 tonne over four miles from Welling to Bexleyheath, whilst LCpl Crane and Sig Prior manned the BOWMAN vehicle providing communications for the day.

The summer saw the usual build up to Annual Camp. Exercises Phoenix Trot and Phoenix Prep, where all three of the squadron communications assets were set up fully both in urban and rural environments. The operators were pushed to their limits and produced some first rate communications. The ED’s also provided a variety of power for all scenarios and utilised the new lighting and power system the regiment had procured. The main aim for the Squadron was to establish, maintain and operate from an echelon base on Salisbury Plain and provide support for the remaining communications assets transiting though the location. Once 47 and 68 Sqns had deployed it was all business as usual, putting ourselves into daily routine – something we had not done for some while whilst the radio detachment was manned by Cpl Broadbent, and Sigs Harrild, Jackson, Roberts and Wilsher. To add to the excitement the Bde Cmdr visited the Regiment in the field and met members of the squadron at Ech.

Annual Camp itself was carried out jointly with 39 Sig Regt and based this year in the SW seeing us travel from Salisbury Plain to Exmoor and back – a few times! Ranges and Adventure Training in the first week with a testing communications exercise in the second. The Squadron bade a sad farewell to a newly promoted Major Paul Ukpai on

his move to 11 Signal Brigade, 2 Signal Group, whilst Captain Steve Slaney and SSgt Rob Marshall were presented their Volunteer Reserve Service Medal (VRSM) by Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, Princess Anne during her visit. This was a testing two weeks. The range package – described as ‘awesome’ by most of the soldiers included both GPMG and grenade ranges, a very welcome addition giving a really broad experience. Adventure Training saw us based at Newquay, trying to master the arts of surf and body boarding. The Communications Phase was short, focussed and tough on the participants. No real let up and very little sleep. Whilst lasting only 72 hours it tested our ability to set up and communicate in field conditions (rain again), drive long distances and generally keep ourselves in one piece throughout. A particularly good experience for new members, many of whom had not been on an exercise before.

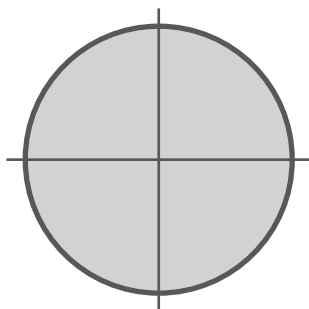
The Remembrance Parade at Bexleyheath this year was lead by only a small contingent of Squadron personnel, the remainder being on duty at the Cenotaph in London. Large assemblies of ACF, ATC, Sea Cadets, ATC band, Veterans and ex squadron members totalling over 100 personnel marched out of the ARC to the Bexleyheath memorial led by OC, Maj Keith Wrate and SSM, SSgt “Leigh” Griffiths to the glorious drum beat and music of the local ATC band. Over 200 local civilians were there to greet the marching contingent.

Others from the Squadron, led by SSgt Colin Jones , formed up as number 12 section on behalf of all Reserve Forces at the Cenotaph. This was the first time the Squadron has had this honour. The section was situated right next to the Cenotaph in full view of the Royal Family, including Her Majesty the Queen and dignitaries from all over the globe.

Noticeably absent from the parade were two Squadron members who had taken the opportunity to participate in Ex LION STAR in Cyprus with 32 Sig Regt. Sig Paul Harrild and Pte Sylvia Hirst ‘enjoyed’ two weeks of arduous training in the sun flying out on an Airbus A330 Voyager courtesy of the RAF.

The end of the year now sees us cleaning, checking and counting all of the kit in preparation for the winter training package of military skills and Comms exercises. We escaped the first wave of rationalisation and cuts in FR20, but a number of our colleagues in the Royal Signals were not so lucky and our thoughts are with them. 884 Signal Troop, the senior Reserve Unit based in Brighton, once a key part of this Squadron’s deployable strength and now part of 56 Signal Squadron is to go. We are under no illusion as to the challenges the future will bring and will continue to keep this Squadron’s capability and readiness at the highest possible level. Whilst history and traditions are important, it is the most able and best placed that will survive.





Orbat – November 2013

265 (Kent & County of London Yeomanry Sharpshooters) Support Squadron

71st (City of London) Yeomanry Signal Regiment (Volunteers)

Squadron Headquarters

Major Keith Wrate - OC
Capt Kerry Corrigan Sqn - 2 IC
SSgt Leigh Griffiths SSM - SSM

Logistic Troop

Capt K Cooper
SSgt Haskell
SSgt Lane
Sgt Bontoft
Sgt Castro
Sgt Woo
Sgt Wise
Cpl Harries
Cpl Sutton
Cpl Butler
Cpl Porter
Cpl Broadbent
LCpl Crane
LCpl Liscoe
Sig Brasier
Sig Roberts
Sig Prior
Sig Simpson
Sig Harrild
Sig Jones
Sig Jackson
Sig O - Boateng
Sig Prior

Sig Sutton
Sig Wilsher

Medic Sect

Capt Wardle
SSgt Eastley
Cpl Myers
LCpl Turner
LCpl Markham

Chefs

Pte Hirst
Pte Evans

LAD

OC - Gapped
Sgt Carpenter
Sgt Hursey
Sgt Pearce
Cpl Brand
Cpl Green
Cpl Larney
LCpl Burgess
LCpl Handley
LCpl Horan
LCpl McRoberts
LCpl Ness
Cfn Auguste-Ryan
Cfn Caiels

Cfn Golding

Permanent Staff

Capt S Slaney PSAO
SSgt P Thwaite SQMS
SSgt C Shackleton SPSI
Sgt M Grounds PSI (T)
Sgt J Morse (Stores LAD)
Miss B Simmons (AO)

RHQ Troop

Lt Col J Picton QC (CO) (R)
Maj Rowson (2IC) (V)
Maj Brown (Ops Maj) (R)
Capt Ward (TOT) (V)
Capt Macaulay (Adj) (R)
Capt Pryke (Regt Ops Sp Off) (NRPS)
WO1 Whitfield MBE (RSM)
WO1 Healey (SVWO) (V)
WO1 Lewis (FoS) (V)
WO1 Gittins (YofS) (V)
WO2 Keeble

WO2 Ohanlon (YofS) (R)
WO2 Fergusson (Ops WO)
WO2 Ford (Regt Admin WO) (NRPS)
WO2 Shuttleworth (RQMS) (NRPS)
WO2 Escritt (MTWO) (NRPS)
WO2 Springer (Ops WO) (V)
SSgt Lapidge (RQMS) (V)
SSgt Marshall (MTWO) (V)
SSgt Savarese (Chief Clerk) (V)
SSgt Jackson (FofS) (R)
Sgt Davenport (Clerk) (V)
Sgt Lonergan (AGC) (V)
Cpl Way (AGC) (V)
LCpl Corke (CO Dvr) (R)

(V) Volunteer
(R) Regular

C (Kent & Sharpshooters Yeomanry) Squadron The Royal Yeomanry

Squadron Headquarters

Maj Field
Capt Sparrow
Capt Ruck-Keene
Capt McMullen
WO2 (SSM) Tomlin
WO2 Furniger
Sgt Bristow
Cpl Ennis
LCpl Francis
LCpl Dunning
Tpr Garner
Tpr Gurung
Tpr Mill
Tpr Pollock

1st Troop

Lt Wakil
Sgt Faytaren
Cpl O'Hare

Cpl Thomson
LCpl Grais
LCpl Brady
Tpr Denton
Tpr Marsh
Tpr Ullah
Tpr Windless
Tpr Wright

2nd Troop

2Lt Moore
Cpl Moden
Cpl Smith
LCpl Banwat
LCpl Brewer
Tpr Hall

3rd Troop

S/Sgt Barnard
Cpl Stallard

Cpl Honeysett
Tpr Eley
Tpr Knight
Tpr Kelsall
Tpr Paine
Tpr Salazar

Regimental Recruit Training Troop

Lt Critien
Sgt Meadows
Cpl Paine, R.

Admin Troop

Sgt Mason
Cpl Paine, D.
Cpl McNeill
Tpr Duncombe

RHQ The Royal Yeomanry

Maj McNemeny 2ic
Capt Webb, MTO
WO2 Chadwick
WO2 Shardlow

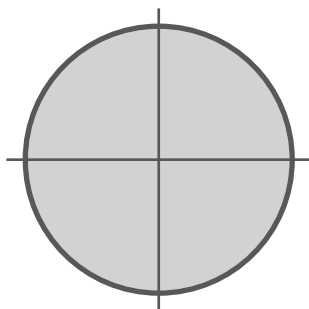
ERE

Cfn Menys

Permanent Staff

Capt Harris PSAO
CoH Goodwin HCR Sigs PSI
SSgt Skidmore QPSI Gun PSI
SCpl Bonham QPSI
Mrs Skidmore AO Clerk
Miss Skidmore AO STMN





ROYAL RUSSELL SCHOOL CCF – ANNUAL REPORT

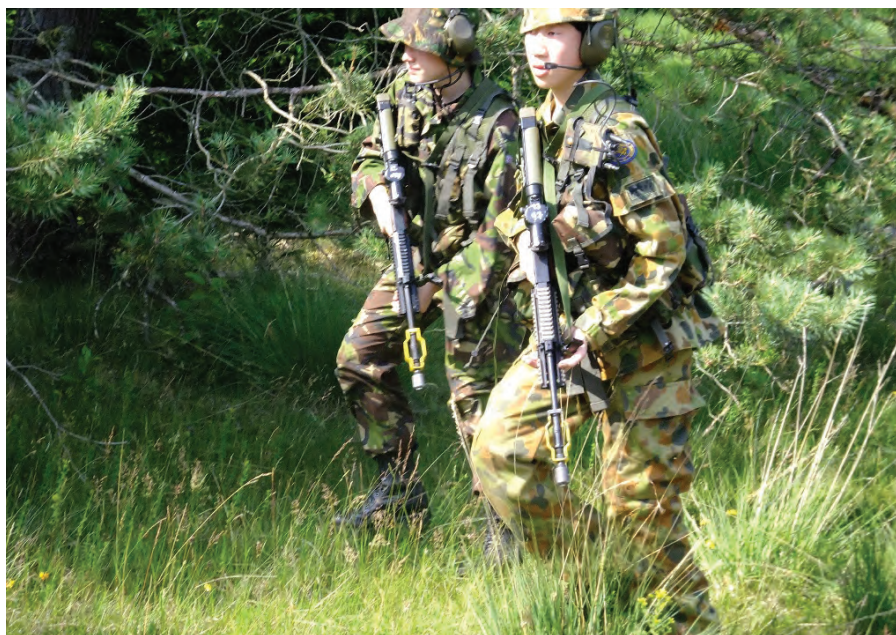
The academic year 2012/13 was not quite business as usual for the CCF and it was peppered with a rich variety of activities that really reflected the capabilities of the cadets – and adults – to take part in a wide spectrum ranging from ceremonial to tactical in the field. It also saw the first stage of a two year exercise with the Australian Army cadets from The Scotch College in Melbourne – known as YARRA YOMP 13.

The year 2012 saw the celebrations of HM The Queen's Coronation Diamond Jubilee and it was also our biennial inspection year and this time it was the RAF's turn to provide the Inspecting Officer. We were fortunate to have the Commandant General of the RAF Regiment to undertake the Inspection and we were really lucky that we were able to have the Band of the Royal Yeomanry to play for both the inspection and indeed for the rest of the school throughout the day transferring their musical knowledge to a variety of pupils. The whole thing went off like clockwork thanks to the planning undertaken by our LO and him taking charge of the Parade.

The biennial was closely followed by Remembrance Sunday and so the Guard were by then well practised in drill! We were extremely fortunate to have an officer from The Royal Yeomanry who spoke during the service about what it was like to be on operations – he had just returned from a tour in Afghanistan. His speech was a powerful reminder that whilst we remember those that died in the two world wars we should not forget those that have died on operations since then.

With Christmas came the usual festivities and the CCF table at the Staff dinner was unusually active – and accurate – with the delivery of a variety of small projectiles mainly aimed at the Head's table. The New Year arrived and with it the challenge of delivering a programme for the Australian cadets in June/July. In early March we also ran a very successful Signals weekend that resulted in all those taking part passing their Cadet Radio User course. This course was run by our affiliated unit in Croydon and it is a testament to his skill and the learning capability of the cadets that they all passed – and to a high standard as well. There was some follow up training as well – even in the snow – at RRS which demonstrated the cadets commitment to learning and maintaining their new found skills.

We also ran another 'famous' – or perhaps 'infamous' WILD BUSH exercise that tests all of the NCO's in a very tough 48hr exercise in the field. There were some very tired cadets at the end of it – not to mention the adults but the cadets practised their skills in demanding time conditions although some found model making using whatever bits of wood and sand were around a challenge!



In action together.



The final attack.



RY Cadets on CR2.



The shape of things to come - Cpl Watkins as a CR2 Cdr!



JICCF on Leo 2.

In March we were also fortunate to again be invited to support Her Majesty's Body Guard of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms at Windsor Castle. The two cadets who took part acquitted themselves well and had a thoroughly enjoyable day out.

This year's Annual Camp was completely different – and split between two locations. As mentioned earlier we, together with Middlesex and NW London ACF, jointly hosted three Officers and twenty cadets from the Scotch College in Melbourne on Exercise YARRAYOMP 13. This was a two week camp featuring one week based in the UK and one week in Germany visiting the British Army as well as the German Army. The cadets from all three organisations were broken down and split into five mixed teams at RRS on a Sunday which saw glorious weather – and the London Regional Cadet First Aid competition running as well.

As Week One was in term time most RRS cadets could only attend some of the activities but those that did had a really good time in a wide ranging programme that covered everything from Army ceremonial to visiting the Royal Armoured Corps at Bovington. The cadets met our Honorary Colonel The Rt Hon Nicholas Soames MP as well as the Baroness Anelay of St Johns who is the Government Chief Whip in the House of Lords and Captain of the Gentlemen at Arms. They also went white water rafting on the Olympic course and had a private tour of the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

Week Two was held in Germany and featured some new visits due to the operational commitments of some units. The undoubted highlight was a very realistic FOB based exercise run by the Queens Royal Hussars for 24 hrs which pushed everyone – adults and cadets – to the limits. This was followed by a visit to the German Army and a sobering afternoon at Bergen Belsen concentration camp where the cadets got a guided tour of the site. By now the cadets from both countries were very tired so sleeping on the coach had become second nature to them which was fortunate. An endex dinner was held in a friendly German gasthaus on the Friday and, on Saturday afternoon the

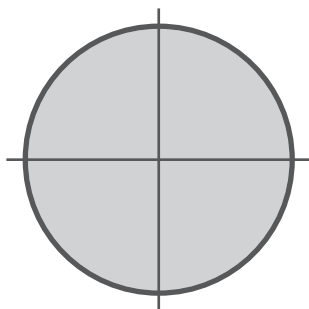
Australians left for Frankfurt airport and the long flight home – two days! The UK cadets returned on the Sunday – tired but having made a large number of new friends not only in the ACF but importantly with the Australians.

Whilst all this was going on the unit also took part in a centrally run CCF camp in north Yorkshire at Catterick where those that attended learnt – or re-learnt skills that they had forgotten. It was, though, a good camp and those that went thoroughly enjoyed it.

Looking forward to this coming academic year an exciting and challenging programme has been put together for the benefit of the cadets. For ten cadets there will be an Exercise YARRA YOMP 14 and that will take place in Australia from the end of June to mid-July and is hopefully a precursor to a more permanent relationship between the two schools that will not be confined to CCF activities. The cadets took part in the Hever Castle Triathlon at the end of September supporting the Museum Trust and raised over £120 in contributions from the crowds that were there. They have also taken part in what has to have been one of the wettest and coldest Lord Mayors show in November. The Combined Cavalry parade in May (it is the 90th Anniversary of the unveiling of the memorial) beckons and, there will doubtless be at least one opportunity to support HM Body Guard at Windsor Castle. There will also be field training opportunities with C Sqn and of course 2014 sees the 100th Anniversary of the war to end all wars which will doubtless generate more opportunities including a biennial inspection in October/November.

In summary the next twelve months holds much promise with many opportunities for the cadets to undertake different and challenging activities which we hope they will volunteer to take part in.





KENT AND SHARPSHOOTERS YEOMANRY MUSEUM TRUST REPORT 2012-2013

Trustees: Guy Farage (Chairman), Anthony Jewell, Huw Jones, Chris Sutton, Dan Taylor, Boris Mollo. The Honorary Colonel, serving Squadron Leaders and Chairman of the Association are invited to Trust Meetings but do not vote.

Curator: Boris Mollo

Deputy Curator and Project Manager: Tim Rayson

Curator (Hever) and Trust Secretary: Huw Jones

Curator (Croydon): Andy O'Hare

Curator (Bexleyheath): David Whitehouse

Treasurer: John Gunn



The Tent in the Park. We are happy to report progress with regard to the future of the Regimental Museum at Hever Castle. The Directors of Hever Castle have now agreed to the plan, described in last year's newsletter, to construct in the grounds two associated buildings, one for the Regimental museum, the other for an education centre. The site chosen is in a clearing in the wooded area near to the main entrance and the plan

is for the museum to look like a tactical military headquarters with camouflage nets, a Saladin armoured car, 25 Pdr gun and appropriate military signs.

The new buildings have now received planning permission from the local authority. Hever Castle will cover the cost of the buildings but the museum will be responsible for the display which is estimated to cost over £200,000. Discussions have been held with the National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF) and a preliminary grant of £10,000 has been received from them.

One condition that the Directors of Hever Castle have proposed is that the museum display should include a new section on the military connections of the owners of Hever Castle. Some changes in plans for the new display will therefore need to be made by our designer, Garry Hall of H&H Design.

Interactive Displays. There have been changes to our plans since the last report. There was no suitable site available on the ground floor at Hever Castle so we have reverted to planning to install an interactive display in the museum room itself. The cost of the hardware and display panels has been covered by grants from the Army Museums Ogilby Trust. The immediate object will be to inform the visiting public about the regiment, its history and its current status and the plans for the future of the museum. It will also be able to record feedback from visitors on our future plans.

Association/Museum Website. Considerable progress has been made in the last 12 months. The museum data base is now up and running including a search facility and, in most cases, illustrations of objects. We have also introduced a *70 Years On* feature recording activities of our parent regiments during World War II, at the moment mainly concerned with 3CLY and 4CLY in Italy in the autumn of 1943.

Recent Acquisitions 2012-2013

Kent Yeomanry

Cavalry carbine by Henry Nock of London

Used by the Cobham Yeomanry Cavalry, c1800. Marked C.Y.C. on the underside of the trigger guard. Cobham, a village just west of Rochester formed one of the original troops of the West Kent Yeomanry in 1794.

Loan: Guildhall Museum, Rochester

2013-5



100818*



100822*

China pot with crest of the Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles

Inscribed 'South Africa 1900-1901', base marked 'Arcadian China Stoke on Trent'

Purchase: ebay

2013-2



100495



100485

Photographs and documents relating to SSM Marsh Seath, REKMR, 1896-1908

Gift: Audrey Goodworth (granddaughter)

2012-20,21

Postcard photograph, band group

In full dress with pillbox caps, West Kent Imperial Yeomanry, Langton Green, Ashdown Forest, 1906

Purchase: ebay

2012-19



100816



100496

Pair of shoulder titles I/Y/ROYAL EAST KENT, c1914

From the formation of the Territorial Army in 1908, the usual design for these shoulder titles was T (Territorial) / Y (Yeomanry) / county name. This pair must date from 1914 when second and third line Regiments were raised and the original regiment became 1/Royal East Kent. It is not certain whether this was an official change or whether the arms had been cut off the 'T' to make sure everyone knew that they were 1st Line.

Purchase: ebay

2013-3

Yeomanry and Mounted Rifle Training 1912,

Manual published by the War Office with pencil entry on title page 'Sgt. Hardman 1/1 REKMR'

Purchase: ebay

2013-14

File of documents relating to the uniform of the Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles



100831



100832

Compiled by R.J. (Bob) Smith wrote extensively on Yeomanry uniforms including the Army Museums Ogilby Trust series. During his lifetime he provided the KSY Museum with much material and information. Sadly after his death in 2012, his library was dispersed but we were able to purchase on ebay his document files for our three predecessor regiments

Purchase: ebay

2013-6

File of documents relating to the uniform of the West Kent Yeomanry

Compiled by R.J.Smith

Purchase: ebay

2013-7

Enamelled sweetheart badge, Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles, c1914-18

A decorative version of the normal regimental cap badge in bronze

Purchase: ebay

2013-4



100497



100494*

Christmas card, West Kent Yeomanry (Q.O.), Egypt, 1916

The cover signed 'Walter'. The Regiment had returned from Gallipoli a year earlier but, despite promises to the contrary, had never recovered their horses. A couple of months later the East and West Kent Yeomanries were amalgamated to form an infantry battalion of the Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment)

The rhyme reads

‘A Christmas Wish:

When Christmas came in England's pre-war days
with chills and doctor's bills on every hand
We often wished that we could live and laze
in some much warmer land
But now we live neath Egypt's scorching sun
and through a haze of flies eat Christmas duff
We daily pray to have that wish undone
BLIGHTY is good enough!

Purchase: ebay

2013-1

Militaria

French Magazine, with article pp7 dealing with KY 1939-45, with photographs taken from KSY Museum collection together with images of uniforms and insignia. A detailed and well illustrated article produced for the French market

Gift: Mike Jackson

2013-12



100812



102123

Sgt Len Wood 1953-67

Photographs, documents, web equipment and ephemera relating to Sgt Len Wood, 297 (Kent Yeomanry) LAA Regt RA 1953-60 and KCLY 1961-67

Gift: Martin Carter (nephew)

2012-16,17, 21, 22

Sharpshooters

File of documents relating to the uniform of the 3rd CLY (Sharpshooters)

Compiled by R.J.Smith

Purchase: S. Lloyd-Edwards

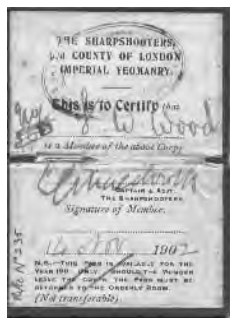
2013-8

Membership card of 'THE SHARPSHOOTERS'

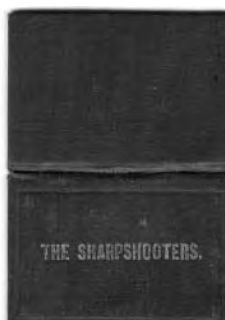
Made out to F.W.Wood and signed by Major C.C.Macdonnell, 14 Nov 1902

Gift: Tim Rayson

2013-13



100849



100850

Items relating to Tpr R.F.H.(Roy) Cawston 4CLY 1942-45

Including his diary as a prisoner of war in Italy 1942-43, his diary as a PoW in Germany 1943-45 and his knife, illicitly made when first imprisoned in Italy in 1942 and carried throughout the remainder of the war. Roy was captured during 4CLY's first action at El Gubi in Nov 1941 and was liberated in 1945 after a 500 mile march in mid-winter from Poland to West Germany.

Loan: Mrs Hilary Wilson (daughter)

2013-15



100855*

Sharpshooters Medals at Bosleys of Marlow

Over the past two years, several medal groups awarded to Sharpshooters have appeared for sale at Bosleys of Marlow, a specialised auction house for medals and military antiques. The medals would appear to have belonged to a collector specialising in our Regiment and are being sold in batches. The first batch, including the DCM to Sgt (later Capt) R.C.B.Bryant, appeared in Nov 2012 and was only brought to our attention at short notice. Tim Rayson undertook to raise funds to bid for some of the more important groups and within 24 hours succeeded in obtaining pledges for over £7500. This has enabled us to place several successful bids as listed below. We also thank Richard Black of the London Medal Company for bidding on our behalf, free of any commission

The following medal groups have so far been bought

Sgt (Later Capt) R C B Bryant DCM 3CLY 1939-45



100826*



100827 Bryant*

Medals of Capt Raymond Chevalier Bisson Bryant DCM, 3CLY 1939-45.

Awarded as a Sergeant Tank Commander for action at Rocca Giovanni, Italy, November 1943. His initial recommendation for the Military Medal was upgraded to the Distinguished Conduct Medal

2012-23

His citation reads as follows

On 30 Nov 1943, Sgt Bryant was commanding a tank in the ROCCA GIOVANNI where the Squadron was heavily engaged in fighting infantry supported by S.P. guns. Owing to the nature of the ground, two tanks of his troop were stuck in the mud and were being attacked by snipers and rifle grenades. Sgt Bryant, realising the urgency of getting these tanks mobile, under heavy fire he dismounted from his tank and attached a tow rope, thereby freeing one tank which was ordered away.

The country was very close and by this time the Troop Leader's tank was surrounded by enemy, this tank had both its guns out of action, Sgt Bryant beat off four attempts to destroy this tank with his tommy gun and hand grenades. Eventually the enemy withdrew leaving twelve dead, eight prisoners and much equipment including tank destroying bombs, twenty pack horses, four L.M.G.s, one mortar and one valuable range finder.

There is no doubt that Sgt Bryant saved two tanks from destruction and through initiative and bravery captured much valuable equipment.

The DCM (Distinguished Conduct Medal) is second only to the Victoria Cross as an award for gallantry in the face of the enemy. In World War II, only seven DCMs were awarded to the 3rd, 4th and 3rd/4th CLY, of which this is one of only two awarded to 3C. Its rarity is indicated by the fact that, of the money raised, nearly £5,500 was required for this group alone.

LCpl A M Doughty 3CLY, 1909

Territorial Efficiency Medal awarded to LCpl A.M.Doughty 3CLY, 1909. This long service medal was introduced on the formation of the Territorial Army in 1908. King Edward VII died in 1910 with the result that medals of his reign are rare. This is the first EviiR example to a Sharpshooter that we have in the collection 2013-9

Sgt G D Margetts 2/3CLY 1914-18

Medals of Sgt G.D. Margetts 2/3CLY 1914-18 including the Meritorious Service Medal. The MSM was normally awarded as a long service medal for regular NCOs. In 1916 the terms were extended to include NCOs offering special services during wartime although only seven were ever awarded in this capacity making it a very rare item. Sergeant George D Margetts landed in France on the 23 Dec 1914. At the time of the award of the MSM he was serving with the 2/3rd CLY but was attached to a RAMC unit.



100857*



2013-18

100828*

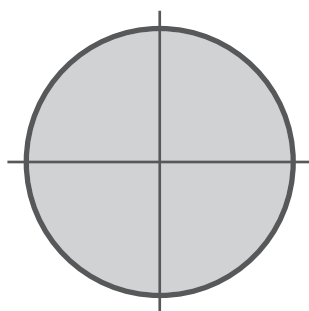
Pte B Emery 3CLY 1915-17

WWI service medals and Memorial Plaque of Pte Bertie Emery 3CLY, 1915-17. He joined 3CLY in Egypt Nov 1915 and was killed in Macedonia 12 March 1917. The bronze memorial plaques were presented to bereaved families at the end of the war. This is the first example we have of one commemorating a Sharpshooter 2012-25

Lieut. S G Hibbert, 3CLY, 1917-18

WWI service medals Lieut. S.G. Hibbert, 3CLY, 1917-18. Commissioned into the Sharpshooters he was posted to France and served in the Machine Gun Corps.

2012-24



KSYA ANNUAL MEMBERS' DINNER THE EL GUBI DINNER

This year's annual function, the 66th such event was held in the Officers' Mess, Regent's Park Barracks on Friday 26th November.

Whether to hold a dinner or a luncheon is a tricky decision for an Association such as ours – whichever route we pursue we inevitably deny some members the chance to attend due to work or accessibility. After many years of very successful dinners, for the last two years we have held fabulous lunches instead, and this year it was decided to revert to a dinner format again and perhaps switch to lunches again at a future date.

As always, the El Gubi event was a great success. There is an important historic link to Regent's Park Barracks as the *Sharpshooters* (then part of the Imperial Yeomanry) were stationed there before deploying for the Boer War in 1900.

Marking the 70th anniversary of the Italian and Sicilian campaigns in which both the *3rd CLY* and *4th CLY* fought, the names of the dishes took us back to the locations of those campaigns and battles (see below)!

Special guests included the Head of Reserve Forces and Cadets from the MOD, Brigadier Mark van der Lande OBE, who is the man responsible for delivering FR20 i.e. the new Reserve, and it was heartening to hear from a man sympathetic to the needs of the Reservist who is responsible for the future of our Reserves.

In addition:

Lt Col Kingsley Donaldson, Commanding Officer *Royal Yeomanry*;

Maj Charlie Field, Officer Commanding *C (KSY) Sqn RY*;

Maj Keith Wrate, Officer Commanding *265 (KCLY(Sharpshooters))
Support Sqn R SIGS*;

WO1 (RCM) Michael Flynn CGC MC, RCM *RY*

Lt Col Wolfgang Mann, Chief C-IED Instructor German Army;

WO1 Ralph Ortman, C-IED Instructor German Army;

Peter Crowley, *Worshipful Company of Insurers*;

Col Andy Hodson and Gordon Jones, leading a large party from our friends in the *Royal Gloucestershire Hussars*;

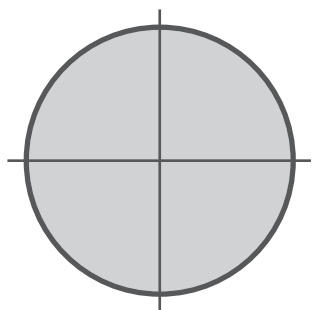
The Gillman family, maintaining the link with our late President.

Around the room, there was a great spread of ages and experience and it was humbling to realise the vast amount of active service experience including the Balkans, the Gulf Wars and Afghanistan, to name but a few.

The *Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry* guidon was on display along with a selection of our silver, for which I thank Maj Charlie Field and WO2 (SSM) Dave Tomlin. The lance guard was provided by LCpl Banwat and Tpr Salazar, who also receive our thanks.

Finally, an evening such as this does not happen without a lot of hard work and preparation for which I thank our Vice-Chairman, Col Paul Acda, and our Honorary Secretary, Tim Rayson.





“WENT THE DAY WELL” THE LORD MAYOR’S SHOW 2013

by Terry Bodman

With one eye on the weather we arrive at London Wall in the dry to find the Low-Loader with the M10 Achilles Tank Destroyer, in lieu of the Sherman Firefly, which is still being rebuilt, but hopefully back on parade for 2015.

Also there was our provider and supporter of the Low-Loader & Tank Rex Cadman along with Georgina his Marketing and PR Manager for the *War and Peace Revival* and Brenda from across the Pond (USA) who stayed with us for the rest of the day. Our Secretary Tim has, or is, arranging with Rex Cadman for a party of Cadets from the Royal Russell School to have a day or two helping in the restoration of the Sherman.

Then the rain started just before the start of the Parade. A couple of late arrivals just made it in time, due to train problems, (maintenance work, car stuck on level crossing etc.) on the journey up to London.





All aboard, we move off with a full complement with umbrellas up and flasks to the fore, the crowds were a bit thinner lining the route this year but still with all the enthusiasm of past years. At Mansion House we salute the new Lord Mayor, a lady this year, Fiona Woolf – only the second Lady to hold the post in 800 years!

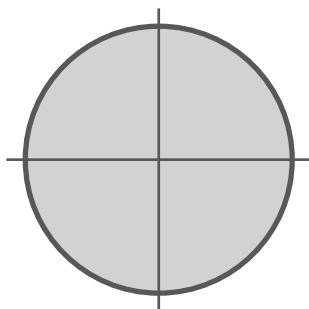
At the lunch stop down near the Embankment, we collected our rations as the rain began to ease off and out came the sun, which gave us a dry run back past the cheering crowds to London Wall. Not much coverage of us on TV, we could just be seen in the distance between the Lord Mayor and Chris Hollings (BBC) while interviewing her from the Mansion House, and with the *Royal Yeomanry* in front of us.

Our thanks to the *Royal Yeomanry* for allowing us once again to join with their contingent for the parade; to Helen at the Pageant Masters Office for all her help and assistance/information for the Show; and a huge thank you to Rex Cadman and his War & Peace team for their continuing support each year for our Association. The web site and the Show itself are well worth a visit.

<http://www.thewarandpeacerevival.co.uk>

The 2013 KSY Association LMS Mounted Crew:

Guy Farage, Boris Mollo, Tim Rayson, Mike Swan, Tony Card, Mick Hall, Alan Davey, Kevin Wright, Cadets, Will Surridge, SSgt Brockman, Cpl Farrington, Cpl Watkins, Cpl Rooke, LCpl Bezan.



FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE

2013

The 2013 Field of Remembrance Service was held at Westminster Abbey on Thursday 7th November.

Started in 1928 by Major George Howson, MC, the founder of the Royal British Legion Poppy Factory, disabled ex-Servicemen from the factory gathered round a battlefield cross and invited passers-by to plant a poppy near the cross. Since that time the Field has developed to include a wide range of military interests; this year the Abbey grounds were laid out with three hundred and ninety plots planted with remembrance crosses in the names of military organisations and associations. The Field remains open for eleven days until the Sunday following Remembrance Sunday.

Every year The *Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry* is represented at the event. The *KSY* plot comprises large crosses representing fifty members of the *Sharpshooters* or *Kent Yeomanry* and named individual crosses in memory of those who have passed away during the year.

At 10.50 am HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and HRH Prince Henry of Wales arrived at the Field where they were met by The Very Reverend John Hall, Dean of Westminster Abbey and The Reverend Canon Andrew Tremlett, Canon of Westminster and Rector of St Margaret's Church. Following prayers their Royal Highnesses laid personal Crosses of Remembrance.

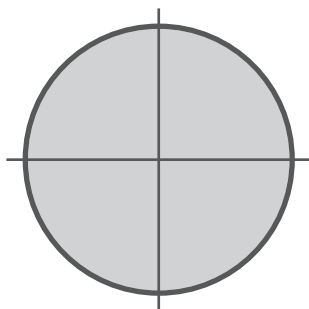
Trumpeters of The *Household Cavalry* sounded the 'Last Post', and Mrs. Sara Jones, the President of the Royal British Legion Poppy Factory, gave the Exhortation to Remembrance. The two-minute silence was then observed, followed by 'Reveille'.

Their Royal Highnesses then began a review of the plots and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh was introduced at the *KSY* plot to our Representative, Guy Farage, President of the *Association*.

The following members of the *Association* and families of our World War II veterans also attended: Dave Barlow and Mrs Barlow, Terry and Pam Bodman, Tim Cawston, Barrie and Carol Corfield, Guy Farage, Marian Hannam, Nick Illingworth, Tony James, Tony Jewell, Jacqueline Matthews, Dave Meader, Boris Mollo, Jonathan Pace and Mrs Pace, Tim Rayson, Steve Shelley, Mike Swan, Malcolm Tanner, Hilary and Philip Wilson, Kevin Wright.

Luncheon, following the Service, was held at *The Old Star* public house where the company was joined by Phil and Patricia Moore.

"WE WILL REMEMBER THEM"



SURREY ARMY CADET FORCE THE MAYDWELL CADET AND BEST STUDENT ON THE THREE STAR CADRE CORPORAL ANDREW MAY

Major RW Maydwell 1919 to 1993

Dickie, as he was known within the Army Cadet Force or 'The Major', as he was known in Slinfold, West Sussex where he lived, was an eccentric and extrovert individual held in high regard in both his business and personal lives by all those who knew him.

Immediately on the outbreak of war in 1939 he joined the Royal Signals and spent most of his war service in the North African desert serving under great leaders such as Montgomery.

At the end of the war in 1945 he returned to his studies to qualify as a Chartered Surveyor joining the firm of Folkard and Hayward and later becoming one of the senior partners.

In the early 1950s he brought two abandoned 15th century cottages and 100 acres of scrubland in Slinfold. He restored the cottages with great care and cleared the land with the help of a number of cadets from Surrey and Sussex before raising successfully pigs, sheep and finally beef cattle. During this time Dickie was commissioned into Surrey Army Cadet Force and served with the Mitcham Road Detachment in Croydon.

At that time the cadet units wore the cap badge of their sponsor units and Dickie was delighted to adopt the uniform of the Kent and County of London Yeomanry (The Sharpshooters). He quickly became integrated with the Croydon based squadron even assisting in the design of the new officer mess kit. Several years later he convinced the Commandant of the need for a TA/ACF Liaison Officer, a role which he fulfilled with relish and he continued to wear the cap badge and embellishments of the Sharpshooters for the remainder of his time in the ACF.

In 1970 huge cuts in the Defence budget were being proposed and recognising that the funding of the Army Cadet Force was severely at risk Dickie got together with Major (later Lieutenant Colonel) Chris Rowlands the County Medical Officer and Sir William Mullens the Vice Lord Lieutenant of Surrey to form a charitable fund now known as the Army Cadet Force Association.

In 1972 an appeal was launched and raised £23,000 – a considerable sum of money at the time. The objects of the Association were to help educate young people through their leisure time activities, so as to develop their physical, mental and spiritual capacities so that they might grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society and that their conditions of life may be improved.

Dickie lived to see the Association grow in strength and as a consequence of his very generous bequest under the terms of his will in 1993; a near seven figure sum was left to the Association. This has gone to provide funds to support many of the activities that the cadets of Surrey Army Cadet Force enjoy today. Hundreds of young people have derived great benefit from Dickie's generosity

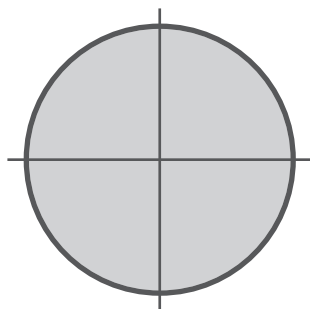
Commandant
Surrey ACF

Note by the Hon Secretary.

This article came to the Association via Tony Jewell and is an important record of one of the Sharpshooter's most generous – in terms of time and money – officers and an outstanding example of philanthropy via a will. I remember Dickie very well and there are certain nuances to the story behind this Surrey ACF Annual award that are not immediately evident and which need to be mentioned.

The village of Slinfold was known to both Sharpshooter regiments when they were stationed in Dorking prior to deployment to North Africa.

Sir William Mullens who helped establish the Army Cadet Force Association was the Honorary Colonel of the Sharpshooters at that time and former CO of the Kent Yeomanry. Whilst serving with the latter he was awarded the DSO for the action at St Valery in 1940 and subsequently a bar in 1944 during the Italian campaign. As Honorary Colonel he was a most generous host at the annual squadron 'smoker' which he hosted at his house just outside Guildford – even if the squadron did demolish the greenhouses one year when a go-kart driven by High Waller went out of control.



FAREWELL TO THE SEASIDE TROOP

One of the casualties of the Force review has been *884 Signal Troop*, which for many years was part of *71 (Yeomanry) Signal Regiment*, serving variously with *94 (Berks Yeo)* and *68 (IC&CY) Squadrons* before settling with *265 (KCLY) Signal Squadron (Sharpshooters)*. This is a partisan – and probably incomplete – review of the troop and its history.

First the history. The story began in the late 1850s when fears of a French invasion rose because of concerns about the strength of the French Navy, reports of the “Orsini Plot” to avenge Waterloo and the policies of Emperor Napoleon III. The rings of forts, often referred to as “Palmerston’s Follies”, that still stand guard around Britain’s major naval bases were the principle results of the resulting 1859 Royal Commission on the Defence of the United Kingdom, while the Royal Navy’s answer began with the armoured frigate *HMS Warrior*, which is on display at Portsmouth.

The scare also led to a revival of the volunteer movement which had been in the doldrums since Waterloo. Unlike the existing yeomanries the new volunteer units tended to be more urban and their members more diverse – not least because the bulk were infantry and thus members did not need to provide their own horses or elaborate uniforms. In coastal areas many of the new units were raised as artillery to man coastal defences. The *Sussex Artillery Volunteers (SAV)* was formed at Brighton in November 1859, becoming an Administrative Brigade in June 1860 with other units at Fairlight, Hailsham and Shoreham, eventually reaching a total of 12 batteries.

Number 6 Battery, one of those in Brighton, was manned entirely from railway workers. It was this battery, which in 1894 received an armoured train built for it by the *London, Brighton and South Coast Railway Company*, reflecting the influence of the Honorary Colonel, Sir Julian Goldschmidt, who was also one of the company directors. Nicknamed “the flying Martello” in memory of the towers built to protect the South Coast against Napoleon, the train was intended to provide mobile defence along the coastal line between Newhaven and Seaford. It was armed with a 40 pounder breech loading Armstrong gun “borrowed” from Shoreham Fort and fitted to a turntable on a truck. This could be dismounted if need be, while stability during firing from the truck was provided by screw downs that wedged onto the rails and stabilisers that drew out from underneath and had adjustable feet. Two third-class carriages carried the gunners and their ammunition, the whole being protected against small arms fire by ½ inch steel plates.

The train, while innovative, was not an unalloyed success as its mobility was offset by problems with stability, especially when firing such a heavy weapon crosswise to the track, despite attempts to damp the recoil and the stabilisers mentioned above, which damaged the track. Observers from the Admiralty at trials also questioned the vulnerability of such a large target to naval gunfire. The *War Office*, however, differed and offered to maintain it for five years. The train was used a couple of times in invasion scares in the 1890s and attended a couple of the Volunteer annual camps. The last report of it was about 1904.

The *SAV's* original uniform was of mixed grey Oxford cloth. The tunic had black braiding on the cuffs and collar, with a black stripe down the trousers. The peaked forage cap was worn with a white metal grenade and other ranks wore a brown leather waist belt, pouch belt and pouch. In *Number 6 (Railwayman's) Garrison Company* two members wore arm badges of silver ovals bearing the device of a locomotive and the word "DRIVER" or "FIREMAN" to denote their role. The *Troop's* fine collection of silver, including several impressive cups and rose bowls, dates from this era, reflecting the status and wealth of the volunteers and their patrons.

In 1880 the *Brigade* was consolidated as *1st Sussex Corps* with its HQ at Brighton with 12 batteries: *Nos 1-8* at Brighton; *No 9* at Fairlight; *Nos 10 and 11* at Eastbourne and *No 12* at Shoreham. This divided in 1886 with the *2nd Sussex Corps* based in Eastbourne. Several members of the *1st Corps* served in the *City Imperial Volunteers (CIV)* during the Boer War of 1899-1902, while twenty years earlier the then Commanding Officer, Colonel Weatherley, had been killed in action with his 15 year old son (a second lieutenant) leading "*Weatherly's Horse*" during the Zulu War.

When the *Territorial Force (TF)* was created in 1908 the *1st Corps (Brighton)* became the *1st Sussex Royal Garrison Artillery* (for defended forts), with the *2nd Corps* based at Eastbourne joining the *Royal Field Artillery* (for supporting the field army). *1st Sussex RGA* had two companies at Brighton with a third at Lewes. Its war role was to garrison the fort at Newhaven, an important post as this is the only deep water port between Portsmouth and Dover, and thus an important target for any would-be invader. This duty was shared with the *Sussex (Fortress) companies Royal Engineers* at Newhaven and Seaford, whose principle job was to man the searchlights. In war, a battalion of the *Royal Sussex Regiment* was billeted nearby for local defence.

Newhaven Fort was one of those recommended by the 1859 Royal Commission and replaced a battery overlooking the port which originated in the 16th century. Rather than levelling the site the designer, Lieutenant (later Major General Sir) John Ardagh RE took the novel approach of building the fort to conform to the existing contours rather than levelling the site first. Newhaven was also the first British fortification to make extensive use of concrete, with shingle taken from the beach and clay for the six million bricks required also found nearby. From about 1906 the armament consisted of two modern 6-inch Mark VII breech loading naval guns (seen as sufficient to fight off an attack from an enemy cruiser) and two modern light quick firing (QF) 12 pounders for defence against torpedo boats. In 1907, a newly built battery observation post was fitted with the modern telephone and this had a rangefinder from which information could be transmitted directly to the guns.

A test mobilisation was called in May 1909. Surprise orders were sent to members by last post on Friday evening with orders to parade at Newhaven Fort at 14:30 the

following afternoon. The railway, so far as the *Brighton companies* were concerned, was supposed to be non-existent. Of strength of 212, 166 responded promptly, the *Brighton companies* parading at their HQ. Forty minutes later advance parties were at the fort and, a few minutes later, were ready to open fire. Readers may wish to speculate whether the Royal Mail and the A259 would deliver as good a result 100 years later, but the experiment gave an early object lesson of the value of motor vehicles in actual service. During annual training in 1910 *No1 Company* beat the record of all other regular and *TF* units in the South Eastern Coast Defences for speed and accuracy, while *No2 Company* was even faster, but less accurate.

The *1st Sussex RGA* mobilised in 1914 and Newhaven was designated as the principal port for the movement of men and material to the European continent during World War I. Its facilities were taken over by the military authorities and the ferries requisitioned for the duration of the war. It was also a base for naval vessels on escort and other duties in the English Channel. However, although the German Navy shelled Scarborough, Whitby and Hartlepool in December 1914 – demonstrating the need for coastal defences – life for the Newhaven garrison was uneventful. Heavy casualties on the Western Front meant fit men were posted to more active service, with batteries going to France and Mesopotamia. By 1918 the garrison consisted largely of troops in low medical grades.

Like all other *TF* units the *1st Sussex RGA* was placed in suspended animation at the end of the Great War, being reconstituted in 1920 prior to reorganisation as the *Territorial Army* in 1921, with *Brigade HQ* moving to Lewes. In 1924 the separate branches of the *Royal Field* and *Royal Garrison Artillery* were merged and all units redesignated as Brigades¹ of the *Royal Artillery*, with coastal units described as *Heavy Brigades*. In 1926 the entirety of the UK's coastal defences was passed to these *Territorial Brigades*. In 1932 the *Sussex RGA* merged with the *Kent Heavy Brigade* – repeating a union tried briefly in 1908 – to produce a unit covering most of the South Coast. In 1938 the term “Brigade” was abolished and replaced by the term “Regiment”, resulting in the *Kent & Sussex Coast Regiment RA (TA)*, with the Sussex gunners forming *159 Battery*. In 1940 the onset of war led to the Regiment's division into three; *519* and *520 Coast Regiments* at Dover and *521 Regiment* was formed at Newhaven from the old *159 Battery*.

The South Coast's defences came to sudden prominence after the debacle of the *BEF* and the withdrawal from France. An invasion of the UK looked highly likely with the German *9th Army* earmarked to embark its divisions at Le Havre and land them in the vicinity of Brighton. As the only deep water port in area Newhaven's capture would have been critical to the invaders who would otherwise have depended on open beaches to receive several thousand tons of combat supplies a day. The port also possessed the only coastal artillery between Portsmouth and Dover so local defences and emergency batteries – usually using six naval guns from cruisers scrapped after the 1914-18 war – sprang up around the port and along the coast. The fort's location gave it a ringside seat during the air battles over the coast and *521's* war diary is dominated by reports of air raids. The fort's main 6-inch Mark VII guns were replaced in 1941 by a battery of 6-inch Mark 24 guns. These were a modern coast-defence version of the Mark VII built during World War II and were located west of the fort, reflecting the increasing

¹ Here denoting a lieutenant colonel's command of a group of batteries.

difficulties with emplacing modern artillery in a Victorian facility. In 1942 the Canadian troops taking part in the Dieppe raid left from Newhaven and in 1944 it was an important embarkation port for the D-Day landings.

In 1945 the *TA* was placed in suspended animation, with *521 Regiment* being reconstituted in 1947 as *411th Coast Regiment (Sussex) (TA)* at Brighton, with additional *TA* Centres in Lewes and Newhaven. The 1956 Defence Review saw major changes to Britain's forces, among them the decision that changes including longer range of modern ordnance and the invention of nuclear weapons rendered coastal artillery obsolete. The 18 coast regiments stood down on 31 December 1956. The territorials at Newhaven saw a brief renaissance as part of the Port & Travel Control Group, later *6th (Sussex Coast Artillery) Unit Travel Control Security (Army)* of the *Intelligence Corps*. A further reorganisation of the *Territorial Army* took place in 1960-61. This included the creation of 3 (*Sussex Coast Artillery*) *Squadron* within the existing *44 (Home Counties) Signal Regiment (Cinque Ports) TA*. *44 Regiment* was based in Gloucester Road, Brighton and 2 *Squadron* trained at the old Preston Barracks. The new *44 Regiment* also absorbed 62 (*Mixed*) *Signal Regiment*, marking the attachment of *Women's Royal Army Corps* personnel to a regiment that had independent signal squadrons serving "teeth" arm brigades.

44 Regiment was equipped with W.S III, later replaced with the S.R C11 as the Larkspur range of radios was issued to the *TA*. 1967 saw further reductions and *44 Regiment* was reduced to a squadron at Gillingham, with other elements forming a squadron for *39 Signal Regiment* at Tunbridge Wells. In 1969 the restoration of much of the *TA* included the creation of *71 Signal Regiment*, with the Brighton signallers roled as a regional signal troop in the new Home Defence communications organisation. The C11s remained for some time and were joined by the higher powered D11/R234 HF stations which were to provide the backbone of Home Defence communications until the late 1980s.



Members of 884 troop at Hever castle – 1996.

By the time I joined *884 Signal Troop* in mid 1985 it had established itself as a key component of *265 (KCLY) Squadron (Sharpshooters)*, which had recently become one of four tape relay centres “Gateways” for the UK’s military home defence communications system. The squadron main site was huge with nearly 200 soldiers and dozens of vehicles, requiring nearly a day to set up. *884 Troop* was well-recruited with up to 65 soldier on the books and 55 parading on most nights; I still remember a gentile “ticking off” at one Sussex reserve forces’ recruiting meeting for this as our establishment was only 2+28. The troop’s high numbers and level of technical competence was down to a succession of troop commanders who were professional electronics engineers, supported by a substantial cadre of extremely experienced NCOs. If there were ever strained relations with SHQ it was down to a mix of distance to Bexleyheath and maybe a longstanding affection for the *Royal Signals* in 884 with Corps scarlet evident at troop dinners and Corps blue-blue-green stable belts appearing whenever the SSM was not to hand. The troop’s retention rate, size and isolation paid dividends in the social sphere with several married couples serving together and there was an excellent bar, built in an unused classroom by a troop member who was also a cabinet maker. The *Troop* was also famed for holding two or three black tie/mess kit dinners a year – each sitting over 100 and, on one occasion, over 200 diners from 884 and the substantial local branch of the *Royal Signals Association* as well as family members.

The *Troop* remained with *265 (KCLY) Signal Squadron (Sharpshooters)* until the reduction of the *TA* and merger of *HQ* and *265 Squadrons* in 2006 when it moved to form part of *56 Signal Squadron* based at Eastbourne. Like the many other troop officers who moved to Bexleyheath – and in some cases further – I always sought an opportunity to go “home” to 884 when duties permitted and, like many others, mourned its departure from 265 and now, its disbandment.

“ZAL”

Huw Jones, one time “*2iC Seaside*”

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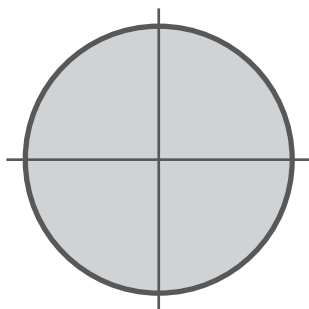
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The Kent and Sussex History Forum website



Op HERRICK 18

A SOLDIER'S STORY

by WO2 Adrian Keeble

It was a very cold morning on the 11th February 2013, the day I was due to mobilise for Op HERRICK 18. I set off early at 0500hrs. I had to be at Chilwell in Nottingham by 1000hrs, a drive of about three hours for me. That should be plenty of time then. Thirty minutes up the road and it began snowing. Suddenly the two hours I had allowed for delays was not looking anywhere near enough. Luckily the snow, while consistent, was very light. I reached Chilwell by 0900hrs, having abandoned my scheduled stop on the M1. OK, an ominous start but at least I was now here and at least I knew I wasn't going to get any colder, except maybe for the ranges scheduled for next week.

The mobilisation training at Chilwell was a well-run, organised and professional operation. I had been here in 2001 when deploying on Op PALATINE and I have to say the place hadn't changed at all. Come to think of it neither had some of the instructors. The training was delivered in a relaxed and informative manner. Having progressed through a thorough medical (I don't recall a rubber glove being used last time) and a rather challenging tabbed march, mobilisation was duly completed and I was ready for the next phase: OPTAG. I booked myself a hotel room in Nottingham



for a couple days between leaving Chilwell and catching the coach for OPTAG at Lydd. This was probably my last taste of luxury for a while so I was going to enjoy it.

OPTAG (Operational Training and Advisory Group) training was conducted at Lydd in Kent, a five hour coach drive from Chilwell. It was to last four days for most of us. I had previously stated that the drive to Chilwell was the coldest I would be during this deployment. I had forgotten about Lydd. To be cold would have been a luxury. Most of the training was conducted outside in wintery conditions. Even with every layer of clothing I could find I was never going to get warm. Battlefield first aid, lessons in Pashtun, the Afghan culture, IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) and the law of armed conflict all swept over me as I tried hard to concentrate and remain warm at the same time. Even the Norwegian containers of coffee left around the training area soon chilled.

Anyway, Thursday lunchtime arrived, OPTAG was completed and we had another five hour coach drive back to Chilwell. It was now Friday 1st March and we collected our weapons in the morning and made our way to Bulford in Wiltshire to join up with the unit I was to be attached to for the duration of the deployment, *3 (UK) Divisional Signal Regiment*. Arriving at Bulford on the Friday afternoon, once my weapon was safely stashed in the armoury it meant I could get home until Monday morning when the pre-deployment training could start properly. Initially the training was a little slow. It wasn't until Wednesday 6th March that any proper training started.

It was a short drive to Warminster to conduct some pistol training on the ranges. I had a few problems and didn't manage to pass the pistol APWT. Which was hardly surprising considering the last time I had fired one was on my previous deployment in 2001. Oh well, I had my faithful SA80 (Mark 2) and I would much prefer taking the Taliban on with that than a pistol. If I was in a close quarter battle with a pistol then the Taliban have got too close for my liking and there was probably very little I could do about it at that stage.

Following the pistol training, we deployed to West Down Camp on Salisbury Plain where Ex ROMAN PASHTUN would be conducted for the next ten days. This was the first chance I had to get an insight into my role in Afghanistan and to meet up with the rest of JFCIS (Joint Force Communication Information Systems) HQ. It was here that I first realised I may not be getting all the pre-deployment training I needed. Most of 3 (UK) DSR would have completed their pre-deployment by the end of Ex ROMAN PASHTUN and disappearing on pre-deployment leave. This would leave me in a bit of a hole for a few weeks. Ex ROMAN PASHTUN came and went. It seemed a bit like a *71 Signal Regiment* reunion as I kept bumping into familiar faces from the past; most notably former *71 SRYeomen*. It was good to catch up.

So back to Bulford and there was still six weeks to fill before I actually deployed to Afghanistan. In the meantime I had managed to arrange some training down at Blandford for myself. There had been no specific training for me organised when I had arrived which left me feeling a little vulnerable. My role in Afghanistan was that of Application Specialist Warrant Officer (App Spec WO). An application is basically the software that runs on computers (and pardon me for teaching you to suck eggs) such as Microsoft Office or Adobe Reader and more importantly the applications that are tailored to military operations; you may have heard of some such as SharePoint. During



Ex ROMAN PASHTUN I had discovered there were over 130 applications in use in Theatre. With my team of Application Specialists I was responsible for them. A daunting prospect and I was seriously beginning to doubt the word “Specialist” in the job title. “Beginner” would have been more appropriate. It was time to dig deep and I have a lot of IT skills and knowledge, a grasp of reality, a cool head and good organisational skills so I should be able to have a decent stab at it.

In the next six weeks I quickly learnt what I could, attended a few training courses and packed my lucky rabbit’s foot for good measure. May 3rd arrived and it was time to deploy on Op HERRICK 18, almost three months after mobilising. My first thought was that I felt the time in pre-deployment could have been used a little better. The flight to Afghanistan is a staged process and takes a good 24 hours even allowing for the time difference of 3½ hours (forward). We eventually arrived in Camp Bastion at midnight on the Saturday 4th May. You are supposed to receive a Day Zero on arrival. A day for you to acclimatise to the heat and do nothing more than recover from a long flight. As I discovered Day Zero rarely exists and it was straight into two days RSOI training (Reception, Staging and Onward Integration). This involves a day

of PowerPoint presentations, which is followed by a day on the ranges to zero weapons and receive more briefs and situation updates.

Finally, I was now ready to meet my team and conduct a handover/takeover from my predecessor; SSgt Lee Rotherforth. Lee was great and gave me all the help he could in the time we had, which was just over a week. From 8th May I was really in the driving seat and ready to take on whatever landed on my desk. I may not succeed but I’ll take it on anyway.

The next few weeks were quite fraught as I settled into the role. This also involved an unscheduled accommodation move as Warrant Officers were moved into their own separate tent having previously been scattered all over the place. The guys I was sharing

a tent with were all very nice and we got on really well; banter was thick and fast in arriving. There were no Regular Army/TA (Army Reserve) prejudices to speak of.

Over the next couple of months I set about trying to learn as much as I could, to give the best service to the other users. The word “customer” was used quite a lot but it’s hardly fitting in a military environment. It made me sound like I was working for Sainsbury’s Head Office, and there is nothing wrong with that, but this was an operational environment not your local high street and we were all deployed as part of the United Nations’ resolution to the troubles in the area.

Camp Bastion is a large purpose-built complex in the middle of the desert. It houses mainly British soldiers but there are a lot of other nations dotted around too; Estonians and Danish mainly. Camp Leatherneck is right next door to Camp Bastion and this is the US base. Again with other nations dotted around including British. There are not too many things to do on Bastion other than go to work, eat, go to the gym and sleep. Your tour can really just end up concentrated to a one mile square block but life is made as comfortable as possible. It is certainly a lot less hostile than being out in the Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) or stuck out on the Sangars for four days at a time as the RAF Regiment experience for the length of their tour. Most of the offices and accommodation areas are air-conditioned, so even when the temperature outside was approaching 50 degrees, inside became a little more bearable. The food was very nice too. You could quite easily gain a lot of weight during the tour if you succumbed to the temptations of the cream cakes available during the evening meal. Thankfully, I had more will power than I realised and my waistline was grateful for that too.

Camp Bastion is supposedly the size of Reading. Not having walked round Reading, I cannot verify that fact but it certainly is big. There are a number of buses that can ferry you around the Camp. Unfortunately they are not too reliable and you are much better off getting your own vehicle. Speed limits on Bastion are mostly 15 mph with some roads allowing more than this, in some cases up to 25 mph but these are few and far in between. You certainly don’t want to be caught breaking these speed limits in Camp Leatherneck. Your vehicle is impounded on the spot and it’s a long walk back to Bastion... and that is only just the beginning of your troubles. As I found out, not a lot of individuals were qualified to drive in Theatre. For some reason they either hadn’t brought their FMT600s (military driving licence) with them or they had been taken off them back at Bulford. I had kept hold of mine, brought it with me and had visited the Theatre Military Transport (MT) Dept. and got myself current and familiarised. As a qualified driver it meant I was a valuable asset to the unit and also meant that I could get myself a vehicle and go visiting places whenever I felt the need as well as run errands for others.

Walking around Camp Bastion you get the impression you are fairly safe. There is always the InsiderThreat to consider but we are well equipped to deal with such issues. You take your body armour (Osprey) and rifle everywhere. While you can leave your body armour at your place of work, your rifle never leaves your side... ever. Eating, sleeping and working it becomes your closest buddy and the one that is most likely to save your life should the need arise. It can also be the one thing that costs you your operational tour bonus. As the many posters around Bastion reminded us “Lose your weapon... lose your Op tour bonus”. For most of us that is about £6,000. The harsh

reminder works well though and I don't know of anyone who has yet ended up going home short of £6,000. The CBRN threat is low. I deployed with my respirator as required but it remained locked in my Gorilla box throughout the tour. I was quite grateful that I didn't have to lug it around with me and it was even unthinkable to imagine having to wear it in that heat.

My two week Rest and Recuperation period in July came and went. I was soon back in Bastion and still had over half of the tour to do. I was slowly learning my job and avoiding some of the pitfalls that had tripped me up at the start of the tour. I was enjoying my physical training. I would get to the gym most days. On some days I would go early in the morning and in the afternoon. On the odd occasion I also went in the evening too. My fitness was improving all the time. I was no longer wondering whether I could still manage to run a mile and a half in 12 minutes and was now aiming for 10 minutes 30 second. The standard required by a soldier 14 years younger than me.

There were quite a lot of organised running events that took place. Every month there is a full moon 5km run known as the Pedro Run. It takes place at midnight on the middle night of the full moon. About 600 people show up to take part from all over the camp. I also took part in a half-marathon at the beginning of July and a few days before that I ran the Independence Day 10km race up on Camp Leatherneck. No prizes for guessing which day that was held on. I was also part of a team taking part in a marathon relay. You have six members each running a mile until as a team you have completed the marathon distance of 26.2 miles. We completed the course in 2 hours 52 minutes.



In August the move of Task Force Helmand (TFH) took place. They moved from Lashkar Gah to Camp Bastion and an awful lot of work went into it. The Commander of TFH said it was the biggest move of a Command Force that had ever been undertaken in an operational environment. It all seemed to go rather smoothly too, JFCIS had a major part to play in it and that meant I did too. My main task was to ensure the applications that were running in Lashkar Gah were still able to run when TFH moved to Bastion and with the minimum of disruption and without any loss of data for the users. In simple terms it meant the working conditions from Lashkar Gah had to exist in Camp Bastion. No mean feat and my team did a great job in ensuring this happened.

As September arrived, you couldn't help but look towards the end of the tour. It was still two months away but with the move of TFH out of the way you couldn't help but try and get one foot on the next flight leaving Camp Bastion. Plans were being put in place to hand over to *21 Signal Regiment*. There was still plenty of work to do though. The next big project on the horizon was the draw down of bases pending the withdrawal of British Forces from Afghanistan completely. It is paramount that all the operational staff work created in these operations is captured in order to further develop training and highlight good and bad points of the current conflict; as well as informing any legal cases that may arise as a result of our involvement in the campaign. All this data needs to be captured and sent back to the UK for processing. I formed part of the team that was responsible for identifying the data and arranging for it to be sent back to the UK. It was a long task and I was only just the tip of the iceberg. *21 Signal Regiment* would have the job of moving this project along and I didn't envy them one bit. But it was nice to be involved from the start. This task also meant I was finally able to get out and see some of Afghanistan other than Camp Bastion. I had a trip to Lashkar Gah, one to Kabul and two to Kandahar. Each place was uniquely different and it was clear to see why anyone who is posted to Afghanistan wanted to try and get to Kandahar. I wouldn't say you could have a holiday camp in the middle of a war zone but Kandahar certainly seemed to get as close to it as you could.

I deployed out with two colleagues also working on the same project; Dougie (a Foreman) and Louise (an RAF officer). Both of whom were lovely people. We arrived in KAIA (Kabul International Airport) on Monday evening 14th October. KAIA just happens to resemble "United Nations Central" with so many different nations in residence. The place has a very different feel to that of Camp Bastion, a very European feel about it. It literally is a military base built around an international airport. It's also a lot higher in terms of altitude, so we did start to feel the cold. When we arrived we couldn't get into our accommodation so some very nice American policemen showed us round and lent us a padlock to safe-guard our equipment while we went for our evening meal. We then found a coffee shop and had a brew before being able to book into our rooms for the night. We had a couple of days in Kabul to carry out a number of visits and meetings. We made sure we had time for a bit of shopping, a few tourist photos and the odd cup of coffee before flying down to Kandahar. We arrived in the early hours of Thursday morning and were taken to our accommodation. No wandering around like lost tourists this time. Again, we had a couple of days here of meetings and visits. Kandahar is also built around an airfield with, again, a lot of nations in residence. The Americans seem to take the lead on providing welfare facilities here. They have fantastic



cookhouses and a shopping/sporting gathering place with a variety of cafes and shops surrounding a football pitch, volleyball court and hockey pitch... with a running track on the outside. Very bizarre. We spent quite a bit of time there. I managed to get a few more photos and souvenirs... much to the amusement of my colleagues. Because of this, Kandahar has a very American atmosphere to it. Maybe that of a small town in Middle America.

Dougie and I also managed to muscle our way into a game of football with one of the units we visited. We formed a devastating partnership down the left-hand side with Dougie feeding me the ball for me to whack past the goal-keeper. A nice meal of steamed fish and chips followed and a cappuccino rounded off a very pleasant evening. The next day was spent with no meetings or visits so it meant we were free to visit more souvenir shops, the American PX (Postal Exchange) shop and of course the customary mid-afternoon cappuccino. We were quite disappointed when we were told that we had been booked on a flight leaving for Camp Bastion later that evening.

At the end of October the Godfather of Pop, Gary Barlow OBE, paid a visit to the troops in Camp Bastion. This was all filmed for TV which is due to be aired on ITV on 23rd/24th December. He was in Bastion for a couple of days and I saw him a couple of times in the cookhouse but not to speak to unfortunately. He looks a lot bigger on TV, he is quite short. Very nice chap though and he came across very well during the show. He was always happy to stop for photos and autographs. My colleague, Louise, managed to get his autograph as she was on duty at the cookhouse when he came out. Unfortunately, the photo she took of him with her didn't come out, I'd lent her my camera for the photo opportunity too. Gary was supposed to perform two shows; one

on Tuesday evening and one on Wednesday evening. Unfortunately a couple of songs into Tuesday's show we all had to report back to our place of work. No reason was given and in the end it turned out to be a false alarm but it was too late to continue with the show. I'm sure Gary must have been wondering what he had let himself in for.

November approached and there was just a few days left to push. Our replacements were in town and getting ready to take over. The departing unit were moving out of their accomodation and into temporary accommodation prior to moving out of Theatre altogether. The sense of anticipation was growing. Saturday 9th November arrived and the day was spent handing rifles into the armoury, packing the last bits of kit, saying your goodbyes to those still staying and praying that the flight out of Thetare was on time. Luckily for me everything went smoothly. A brief stop in Cyprus for a compulsory period of decompression and we finally landed in the UK on Monday 11th November. There were a few briefs to take in, a final fitness test and it was off to Chilwell for the demobilisation. One very relieved soldier arrived back home on the evening of Thursday 14th November only to find his wife wasn't home from work and he couldn't get into his house. It was lucky the neighbours were in though so I wasn't totally stranded.

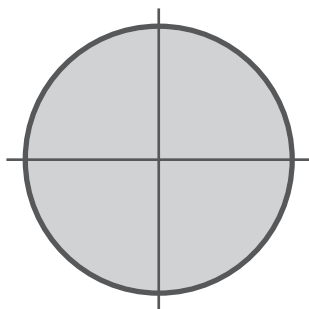
Overall though it was a great adventure. I wouldn't have traded it for anything. It was one of the most stressful and demanding things I have done but it was well worth the effort. I didn't think I had the ability to deploy on operations again and wondered how I would be accepted by my regular counterparts. In the end, it was fine. We had some great laughs between us and I made some great friendships, some of which I hope will last a long time. It will be a great shame if I never see some of them again. They were really nice people. The nine months really seems to have flown by.

So back home to face civilian life once again and it was a case of going one desert to another as ten days later it was off to Las Vegas with my lovely wife, Ali, for a well deserved holiday... for both of us. If you want to know what that was like you'll have to "Friend" me on Facebook and browse the photos. Enjoy!

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to Penny O'Hare for the wonderful welfare boxes she sent me on behalf of the Sharpshooters Association. They really were a great morale boost and the time and effort that went into the work was absolutely fantastic. Thanks, Penny.

WO2 Adrian Keeble

P.S. I suppose you are wondering what time I did my final fitness run in. 10 minutes and 1 second. I'm just annoyed that I didn't kick harder on the final bend to get under 10 minutes.



RGH REFLECTIONS

by Colonel Andy Hodson TD DL

Attending an enjoyable dinner recently at Regent's Park Barracks in the company of the *Kent & Sharpshooters Yeomanry Association*, as the youngest representative present of the *Royal Gloucestershire Hussars*, I reflected that I might have more than one reason to be grateful to the *Sharpshooters*. Indeed, it may well be that indirectly I owe my very existence to one of their forebears in the *County of London Yeomanry*, (*Sharpshooters*) but not for the reason that may immediately spring to mind.

My father David, who died last year aged 92, served as a 'hostilities only' platoon commander in *1/7 Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment*, in the lorried infantry brigade alongside *22 Armoured Brigade* in *7 Armoured Division* from Alamein westwards. He was wounded on a night patrol just after the battle of Medenine, taking a mine splinter in the chest when helping to carry one of his men out of a minefield in which he had stepped on a mine. Under fire, his lungs filled with blood, he was reduced to crawling and in the dark was only found by chance by one of our stretcher parties – just in time to be able to call off the artillery 'stonk' imminently due to be landed on the minefield.

His battalion was later attached to General Mark Clark's *US Fifth Army* on its way up Italy and once my father was fit again he rejoined it in time to take part in the Salerno landing.

I was touched to note that the main course at the excellent dinner was named in memory of the River Volturno, as my father was the first officer to get across that river and survive. One of the most frightening things he had had to do in his two years of front line infantry service, he said, was to cross that river at night in a small boat, as point platoon commander for the entire brigade, together with a few men in order to find out whether the Germans were still there on the other side. A fellow officer had done exactly the same the night before; machine gunfire had been heard and none of his reconnaissance patrol had returned.

Attached to my father's boat was a long line held by the company 2i/c (who eventually became his brother-in-law – but that is another story). The idea was that if things got tricky the boat could be briskly hauled back. Unfortunately, the river was flowing faster than anticipated and the line wasn't long enough; as the boat was swept downstream my future uncle had to make the difficult decision to let go of the line to enable my father to carry out the mission.

On the way across one of the men started to panic and remove all his equipment and had to be sat on. With mixed feelings and his patrol unscathed my father reached the

other side to find the Germans had gone, leaving behind the dead bodies of all the previous night's patrol including that of his fellow officer. My father had them all buried and would later write a poem about the experience which was published in the *Spectator* (which we still have somewhere).

Overall he actually enjoyed his Italian campaign and told me he had never been as fit before or since. The only time he ever wore his tin helmet (which he found reduced his ability to think clearly) was when he was part of the liberation of an Italian town. The townsfolk were so delighted to be free of the Germans that they wished to pour tokens of their gratitude on to their liberators. There was a shortage of flowers in the town but it did have a marmalade factory, and *faut de mieux* the grateful citizens showered their liberators with tins of the stuff, and the only way the appreciative liberators could avoid injury was to don their tin hats!

7 Armoured Division was later brought back as 'battle hardened troops' to help spearhead the D-Day landings, and my father was on the first proper landing ship to arrive on D+2, everyone who had arrived beforehand having done so by landing craft.

He was ferried ashore in a small boat and jumped out into crutch-deep water, whereupon he froze for a moment. Thinking that my father had been immobilised by terror – there were still shells landing on the beach – the beach master called out to him saying "Come on, son, you'll be all right," but it was not that at all: my battle hardened father had simply remembered too late that he had left his precious pipe tobacco in the thigh pocket of his battledress trousers and realised it would now be completely soaked!

Four or five days later found him in close country just south of Bayeux, where he had managed to get in a brief visit to the *Lion d'Or*. He enjoyed the symmetry of the fact that the last pub he had been in before that (in Norfolk, where his platoon had been demonstrating battle drills to our US allies) had been called the Golden Lion.

His lorry-borne platoon was motoring up in close country towards the forward edge of the battle area when it came under machine-gun fire and he was again wounded, luckily this time only through the forearm. On dismounting he was approached by the ashen faced commander of one of our own tanks who had realised too late that he had been the instigator of a 'blue on blue', and I have reason to believe that this gentleman may well have been a member of the *CLY (Sharpshooters)*. His apologies were most gracious and profuse and he was somewhat surprised when my father shook him warmly by the hand and reassured him that he bore no grudge at all.

By this stage of the war, many in *7 Armoured Division* were frankly battle weary and this was compounded by the contrast in battle conditions in the *bocage*, compared with those of the Western Desert. My uncle had been evacuated with battle shock only days before, after an enemy mortar bomb had landed at his feet without exploding, and one of my father's best corporals had shown he was at the end of his tether by throwing a pair of binoculars at an officer's head. There was a general feeling that it should now be the turn of the fresh troops, who had been training in England while *7 Armoured Division* had been fighting for years, to take the brunt of the battle.

Against this background, and perhaps also with the feeling that maybe his own luck was going to run out before too much longer, my father allowed himself to be fed once again back into the casualty clearing system and in due course finished his war serving

as an instructor in the *Artists Rifles OCTU*, (poignantly for me as some 30 years later I was myself to join the *Artists* in its new incarnation). I suspect my father may have suffered from 'survivor's guilt' at having allowed himself to be parted from his men in this way, but, in the light of what he had already done and of the life expectancy of an infantry subaltern in Normandy in 1944, my own respect for him is undiminished.

If that tank commander was indeed from the *CLY (Sharpshooters)*, may I repeat to his successors my father's appreciation of his hand in the matter? That gentleman may well have been part of the machinations of fate which ensured my father's surviving the war and thus led in due course to my own appearance.





SHARPSHOOTERS YEOMANRY ASSOCIATION FORECAST OF EVENTS

2014

100th Anniversary of the start of World War 1 and the 70th Anniversary of the Normandy and North West Europe Campaigns

May

11th Combined Cavalry Old Comrades Association Parade and Service Hyde Park. This will be the 90th Anniversary since the unveiling and therefore will be rather special. Please contact the Hon Secretary in April for further details.

June

8th (TBC) Federation of London OCA Parade and Service Please contact the Hon Secretary in April for further details.

12th-15th KSYA trip to Villers-Bocage

13th 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Villers Bocage

July

23rd ***Founders Day. 113th Anniversary of the 3rd CLY being gazetted in 1901.***

31st The 70th Anniversary of the amalgamation of the 3rd and 4th CLY at Carpiquet Airfield in Normandy in 1944 to become the 3rd/4th CLY.

October

20th Combined Cavalry Church Service and lunch RH Chelsea.
Please contact the Hon Secretary in April for further details.

November

6th Opening of the RBL Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey and lunch. Please apply to the Hon Secretary for tickets in September.

8th Lord Mayor's Show. KSYA and cadets man the KSYA float.

9th Remembrance Sunday. All are welcome at the TAC in Croydon.

21st All Ranks Bir El Gubi dinner. Please contact the Hon Secretary for further details in April.

December

1st Inputs for the 2014 Journal are required by this date.

12th (TBC) RY Carol Concert. Further details to be published.

31st ***115th Anniversary of the Founding of the Sharpshooters in 1899.***

2015

100th Anniversary of the Gallipoli campaign, 70th Anniversary of the end of World War 2, and the Opening of the new Museum at Haver

“Ask not what the Association can do for you but rather what you can do for it!”

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<i>Carpiquet Bound</i> by Walter Allen and Roy Cawston		PDF	£10
<i>Memory Diary</i> by Harry Ramsbottom		PDF	£10
<i>Undergunned with the Sharpshooters</i> by Walter Allen		PDF	£10
<i>The Sharpshooter Chronicles</i> by David Hannam		PDF	£10

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Field of Remembrance 2013



