



The Waggoner

The newsletter of the RASC & RCT



Issue 22 - September 2022



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

21 April 1926 – 8 September 2022

Secretary: Lt Col RW Moore | RHQ The RLC, Building 204, Worthy Down Camp, Winchester, Hants, SO21 2RG

Email: rascrtsec@rhqtherlc.org.uk

President of the RASC & RCT Council

“I am confident that all our members would support such an approach which has the clear objective of ensuring that members continue to receive the support they need and for as long as they need it.

As this issue of the Waggoner goes to print, we have learned of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. I know that all members of the Association and Officers' Club will be deeply saddened by this news. We pay tribute to her Majesty and as she would have wished, we should join in saying “God save the King”.

This edition follows a very enjoyable Corps Weekend and my sincere thanks goes to all who were able to attend the various functions all of which were considered to be very successful. More importantly, the functions provided members and families with a wonderful opportunity to renew friendships and remember time spent together during numerous postings and operational tours. The bond that exists between us remains as strong as ever, providing us all with the motivation to continue to plan events and reach out to those who need support, particularly during this very difficult period. I am sure you will join me in thanking all those who organised our events and those who willingly volunteer their time to

support members at regional and branch level.

Recognising that our membership will remain active and viable for many years to come, we are working with the RLC Association and the other Forming Corps to agree common processes and procedures for the management of data and the support of events. We will also look carefully at the resources necessary to support members both now and into the future. This will require a full understanding of our financial needs, the support provided by our hardworking secretaries and the clerical resources necessary to ensure that any new processes and procedures are administered efficiently and effectively.

We appreciate that the RLC Association will require our help, advice and encouragement as they strive to increase their engagement with RLC ex-Service personnel and, at the same time, develop and demonstrate their capacity to absorb the future fraternal support of RASC & RCT members and the members of the other Forming Corps well in advance of when that support may be required. I would stress that we are definitely not seeking

to accelerate the process of further convergence. That said, your Council believes that it would be prudent to have agreed arrangements in place well in advance of when they may be required. I am confident that all our members would support such an approach which has the clear objective of ensuring that members continue to receive the support they need and for as long as they need it. We will of course keep you informed of development in future additions of the Waggoner.



Corps Sunday Act of Remembrance

Brigadier Paul Evans OBE DL

Chairman RASC & RCT Association

Looking back to my report in the previous edition of the Waggoner, I wrote that 'the majority of us were glad to say farewell to 2021 with all the difficulties that Covid brought and hoped that 2022 would bring stability to our lives'. Sadly, 2022 is proving to be yet another year of worry for us all, particularly with the current cost of living crisis which will be affecting so many veterans and their families.

With this at the forefront of concern for us all, the MGL and The RLC Trustees have put in place a Discretionary Payment Scheme both for serving soldiers who are members of the RLC Day's Pay Scheme and for veterans of the Forming Corps, the latter in conjunction with The Veterans' Charity. Further details are outlined elsewhere in this edition of the Waggoner. It is at times like this that we all do what we can to help those in difficulty and it is important to consult the SSAFA and the RBL when necessary.

The early part of the year saw the majority of the Regions hold their Annual General Meetings, and both myself and our Secretary attended four. South West Region in Taunton on 12 March 2022; South East and London Region at Worthy Down on 30 March 2022; Eastern Region in Chelmsford on 30 April 2022 and Wales and Western Region in Shrewsbury on 21 May 2022. It gave both of us the opportunity to update attendees on current association matters and to hear at first hand concerns of members from branch representatives. Importantly we all had an opportunity to see each other after the Covid restrictions imposed during the previous two years.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations dominated early June and Maureen and I were delighted to attend the South West Region Jubilee Dinner at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Plymouth. The previous day, I ventured to London leaving home at 6am to stand on the Mall

to view the procession to and from The Trooping of the Colour. An experience never to be forgotten, in particular standing in one spot for five hours amongst the thousands present.

Corps Weekend was held 9-10 July and commenced with a concert by the RASC and RCT Band Branch in the Princes Gardens Aldershot, followed by a Drumhead Service at which 10 of our Standards were present. A great deal of hard work went into the preparations for the event and I would particularly like to thank Jennifer Martin, Honorary Chaplain to the Aldershot Branch, for conducting the Service, the Standard Bearers, and in particular Adrian Benge, Chairman of the Band Branch and Roger Balls who conducted the Band. Roger has now formally retired and I trust we will continue to see him at Corps events in the years ahead.

In the evening, the Association held its Annual Dinner and Dance at the Lakeside Hotel, Frimley Green. Over 140 attended what was a most enjoyable evening and my thanks go to our secretary for all the hard work and effort in ensuring its success. As is customary, on Corps Sunday, the Service of Thanksgiving and Rededication was held in our Corps Church, St Michael and St George. It was a particular pleasure to welcome back The Reverend Don Irvine and his wife. Don is well known to many of us having served a full career in the Corps and retired in the rank of Colonel. The Service was led by the Dean of the Cathedral, the Very Reverend Nick Gosnell, who in his usual humorous way warmly welcomed us back to our Corps Church. During the service, we dedicated two new Branch Standards, The Riders Branch and the Ayrshire Branch. We also took the opportunity to lay up two Branch Standards, Bath and Worthing, both of which have sadly had to close due to lack of



Colonel Nigel Gilbert reading the lesson on Corps Sunday

numbers. Following the Service, wreaths were laid at the Corps Memorial by Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Knowles on behalf of the President of the Corps Council, Brigadier Paul Evans who was indisposed with Covid, and by myself.

Lunch followed back at a larger venue at the Lakeside, catering for both the Officers' Club and Association members. This was the first time that we held a joint lunch and there were 180 attendees. It was evident that the hotel were struggling with a shortage of staff, providing a poor service. The future of Lakeside is questionable, and the Council have agreed that we will move next year's functions to the Village Hotel in Farnborough which can better cater for our numbers.

No doubt by the time this Waggoner is published, we will have a newly elected Leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister. Let us hope that the remaining months of 2022 bring sanity and stability to our lives!

In conclusion, my thanks as always to all who play their part in ensuring our Corps Association remains a focus for so many of our veterans, and in particular to our Secretary, Lieutenant Colonel Robin Moore who works tirelessly on our behalf.

Colonel Nigel Gilbert

Secretary RASC & RCT Officers' Club

“Let me remind you that the Officers' Club has many dedicated people who run the RASC and RCT Associated Organisations.

In the March edition of the Waggoner this year, I noted how resilient the Officers' Club had proved to be post-COVID and how our members had an appetite to get out once more to renew the fellowship we hold so dear and to meet old friends once again. As a further example, when your RHQ moved from Deepcut in January 2020, only the simple foundations of the new Officers' Mess in Worthy Down had been laid in the ground in the new build of the Camp. So, after the lull caused by the pandemic, it was especially pleasing that the first ever curry lunch to take place there in March this year attracted a wonderful turnout. We took the opportunity to say thank you to Colonel Colin Constable, our outgoing Chairman, by presenting him with a silver photo frame. The floral decorations were dazzling; notably in RASC and RCT



colours, and the tables looked splendid. The Mess staff were attentive and looked after us extremely well, while the curry was delicious and 'old school,' with a myriad of accompanying side dishes. The chef even had the inspiration to whip up a last-minute birthday surprise!

We are indeed lucky that we have so many opportunities to meet throughout the year. Let me remind you that the Officers' Club has many dedicated people who run the RASC and RCT Associated Organisations. The RASC & RCT Luncheon Club is a

well-attended

opportunity to meet your peers

in the Army & Navy Club (RAG) in London and their events take place three times in the year. The Waggon Club recently had a function visiting a vineyard that was a 'roaring' success; they run four functions a year. The Airborne Officers' Club will carry on meeting once a year, as will the Maritime Officers' Reunion, the Air Despatch and the Movement Controllers' Associations, while the Cyprus Waggoners will continue holding a number of functions each year. For more information on any of these events, contact me at: rascrctcouncilsec@gmail.com

As recently announced, this year's RASC & RCT Officers' Club Black Tie Dinner on Friday 28 October has moved location to The Village Hotel, Farnborough, GU14 7BF. I am pleased to report that this new location is more modern, spacious and with many more up to date facilities to enjoy. It is also easier to get to because it is closer to the main road and rail networks. Costs are the same and if you have already submitted your return, you do not need to submit another.



Colonel Colin Constable and Brigadier Paul Evans

Lieutenant Colonel Paul Duncan

Secretary RASC & RCT Association

It has been a busy year and since the last issue of the *Waggoner* was published. I have had the privilege of attending many functions including the Annual Dinners of the Scottish Region in Perth, The WO's and SNCOs' Club in Royal Wootton Bassett, and the Norton Manor Group and 26 Regiment in Nottingham. Sadly, due to a bout of Covid, I was unable to attend the dinners held by Tamworth and Sefton Branches. In July we held our first full Corps Weekend celebrations since 2019 and, as has already been reported by Brigadier Paul and Colonel Nigel, all the events were very well supported and enjoyable.

Corps Weekend now seems a distant memory. However, I do have one reminder of the weekend, because as I am writing this there is a jagged lump of rubble sitting on my desk! This is actually only a very small piece of Buller Barracks but it reminds me of what big characters we have in the Association and the enormous contribution they make. At the Association Dinner on 9 July, John Mosinski held an impromptu auction of "Bits of Buller" for the Trust Fund. He stood proud with a bag of rock and all the front of a seasoned market stall trader; the

highest price paid was £20.00! A similar entrepreneurial spirit was shown by Eunice Byrne and Julie Lloyd on raffle sales - woe betide any members with deep pockets and short arms. It is the efforts and resilience of members such as these that have allowed us to get going again after all the recent trials and tribulations.

We have already started planning for the Corps Weekend 2023. This will be held on Saturday 15 - Sunday 16 July 2023 and will include all the traditional events: Band Concert, Association Dinner Dance, Church Service and Sunday Lunch. The Association Dinner Dance and the Sunday Lunch will be held in a new venue - The Village Hotel Farnborough, GU14 7BF. The Inspiration Suite at the Village Hotel will give us increased capacity for the Association's Dinner Dance and a more suitable venue for Sunday Lunch. This hotel is also most conveniently located for the Corps Sunday Church Service at St Michael and St George and for the Band Concert. A concessionary room rate of £75 per night for a twin/double room including breakfast is available for members who wish to stay at the hotel on the nights of Friday 14 and Saturday 15 July 2023. A full instruction will be issued to

branches by the end of September which will include details of how to access the concessionary room rate. If you wish to attend and you are not in contact with your branch or no longer have a branch, email or write to me at the address on the front

cover and I will send you details - please mark your correspondence with "RASC & RCT Corps Weekend 2023".

The rest of 2022 looks set to be successful. At the beginning of October, the RCT Riders' Branch will make a very large contribution to the annual Ride to the Wall (RTTW) motorcyclists' pilgrimage to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas. With 85 motorcycles/trikes, 26 which are carrying pillions and some additional "foot soldiers" taking part, this is the largest attendance yet achieved by the Branch and it should also make the Branch the biggest single contingent. Later this year, for the Cenotaph Parade we have 75 signed up to march with us, which is the largest contingent we have ever fielded; our numbers were capped by the allocation allowed by the Royal British Legion. We also have a reserve list who would like to join us, of which many stepped aside for others who may not have had the opportunity to march in the event. I am hoping to secure some additional places in September.

On a more serious note, some Association members may be struggling with the increased cost of living, so I am pleased to report that the RLC Association has formed a new partnership with the Veterans' Charity to provide immediate needs support to RLC and Forming Corps veterans who are in need. **Details are on page 22.**

Members' Data - many members have already returned a "Member's Personal Data and Consent Form" which was enclosed in Issues 20 and 21 of the *Waggoner* and I am most grateful for these. However, there is still a significant number we have not heard from, so another form is enclosed in this issue - if you have not already done so, I would be most grateful if you could fill this in and return it.

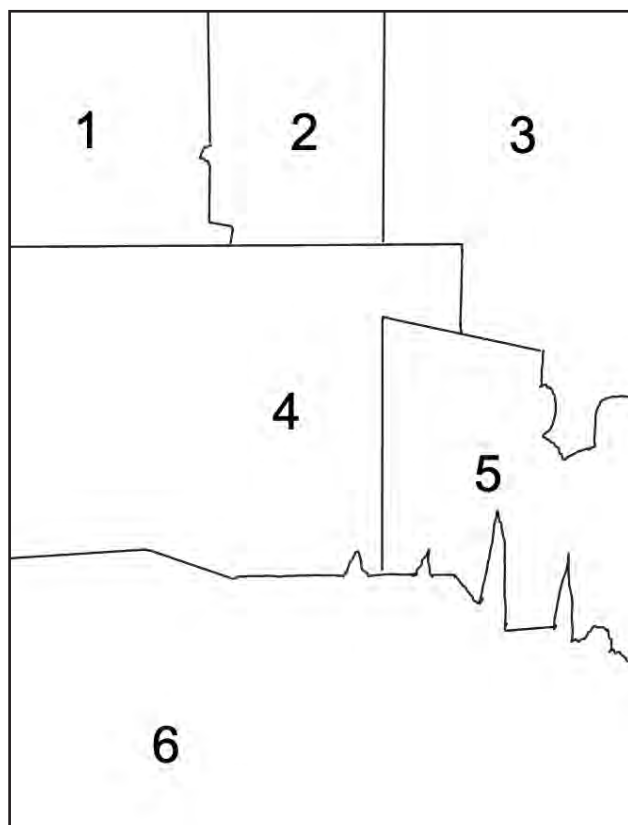
Lieutenant Colonel Robin Moore



A very small piece of Buller Barracks



Corps Weekend 2022



Photographs

Above: On parade outside St Michael and St George

1. David Byrne and Bernie Wilkins with newly blessed RCT Riders' Branch Standard
2. The Rev Don Irvine reading the Lesson
3. Dave Whiting parades the Aldershot Branch Standard
4. Standards parade from Church Lt Col Terry Byrne MBE and Mr Steve Hutchinson Leading
5. Colin Gould, David Byrne and Nik Carter "first to the bar"
6. The Standard Bearers Form up in front of the Princes Hall, Aldershot



53 Port and Maritime Support Squadron RCT (Rubber Wheelies) Reunion

53 Squadron now hold annual reunions. The next one will take place on Saturday 8 October 2022 at the Bell in Banbury. Any old "Rubber Wheelies" who are interested in attending should contact Paula Reid through the Squadron's Facebook page or by email at: preid@gmail.com by 30 September.

The last reunion was held on the Saturday 9 October 2021 in York, the 2020 event having been postponed and then cancelled due to Covid. On Friday 8 October, the troops began to gather at the Windmill pub on Blossom Street, York. It was a very busy York Race Day, so having staked claim to some tables it was 'stay put' for a good evening of banter,

booze and pub grub.

On Saturday 9 October 2021, 'Reunion-day', most of our members enjoyed a relaxing day sightseeing and visiting some of the delights that York has to offer, and undoubtedly some of the pubs as well. At 1930hrs, the function room of the Holgate Club/Pub began to fill with familiar faces from Marchwood Military Port and partners friends and family, including many that didn't make it on the Friday. The formalities were attended to and port glasses were raised to Her Majesty the Queen, the Corps, 53 Squadron, and of course to absent friends. We enjoyed a lovely hot and cold buffet, a disco and karaoke and drank, sang and danced our way into the night. As the evening progressed, we invited the locals up from the bar downstairs, which added to party atmosphere. This long-awaited reunion was well attended and enjoyed by all.

Mike Standlick



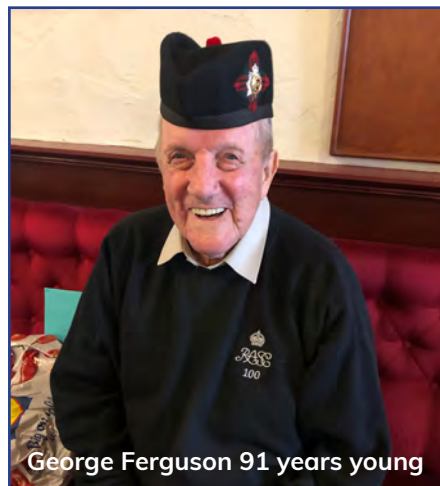
Scottish Region

On Saturday 28 May 2022, the Scottish Region was able to return to the Salutation Hotel in Perth for its first Annual Dinner Dance since 2019. It was a great pleasure to meet up after such a long time and to finally be able to host our guests Lt Col Robin Moore and his wife Jenny - after having to cancel the dinner in 2020 and 2021 it really was third time lucky. A great night was had by all and all of Region's Branches were represented.

All our branches have been active through the spring and summer. None more so than Edinburgh Branch which held a lunch at the British Legion Club Dalkeith to celebrate the 91st birthday of branch member George Ferguson in April. The Branch also had a very successful Annual Reunion "Warrior 22" in the same venue on 18 July and more recently conducted a visit to the Linburn Military Show.



Alan and Amanda McNamara, John Todd and Paul Clark at the Annual Dinner Dance



George Ferguson 91 years young

A Troop 562 Para Sqn RCT (V) Reunion



Following the success of their first reunion in 2018, the A Troopers had to wait until 23 July 2022 before the next event could be held. In 2018, Albie Clapson worked hard to track down as many A Troopers as he could from those 1966 to 1978 days for the first successful reunion. He also put his heart into organising the second reunion as soon as it was possible to do so.

Travelling from Cambridgeshire, Essex, Kent, London, Middlesex, Suffolk, Surrey and beyond, the A Troopers and those from C Troop who had been made honorary members, having found out about the event on Facebook, dropped in on the RAFA Club in Romford.

There was a heartfelt Airborne welcome for everyone but the disappointing news was that Albie Clapson was unable to attend due to Covid. Our thanks go to Pete Brennan for making the event so successful and to Dave Howard for sending photos to Albie throughout the reunion with our best wishes for his speedy recovery.

With so many life-long friends meeting up again, and some who had not seen each other for almost 50

years, there was plenty to reminisce and talk about. As Bernie Mays said, "You hear one story told, someone else gives another different story and someone else another but as they go through the years you can gradually link all the stories together and get a fuller picture."

Everyone was delighted to welcome Jimmy Conway of C Troop. As an accomplished boxer, he trained the Squadron Boxing Team, helped by Greg Haywood. It speaks volumes about our Corps Airborne family that from when Jim almost lost his life working as a runway vehicle operator at Heathrow, Greg has helped care for him ever since.

In addition to the above, it was great to see Chris Arnold (Shovel), Mick Connell, Mick Davie, Jeff Drew, John Fry, Eddie Gillingham, Tony Hales (the Duke), Alan Jenkinson (Jay), John Mason, John Mays, Chris Preston, Tony Ritchie, Arthur Rogers, Phil Ridge (Ripper), Eddie Rolling, Jeff Suckling, Pete West (Spider), Lester West and Dennis Woods.

Tony Hales

Aldershot Branch Summer Outing

In August, the Aldershot Branch organised a summer outing taking a midweek cream tea cruise from Caversham Pier to Pangbourne Bridge on the River Thames, a 3-hour excursion. The Branch booked the whole boat, the "Caversham Lady", with 32 members on board who all enjoyed a first-class steward service and cream teas. The Caversham Lady navigated one lock and all present had a wonderful afternoon out on the tranquil Thames looking over some glorious bankside views.



British Army Veterans in Duisburg

It may interest readers to know that there are many British veterans who stayed on in the Duisburg area including ex-RCT/RLC Servicemen, with a few RAOC Royal Hampshire Regt and 1x Royal Navy as well. Most of our veterans served in 3ADTR, 4 ADTR and 38 Sqn RCT.

In 2016, I was talking to an old Army mate from 3 ADTR and he asked me if I was interested in organising a reunion in Duisburg in 2017, which for me was an interesting task to do. With the support of my dear wife and ex-RCT members who I didn't know before, we organised an event using the 3 ADTR Facebook page. This was a big success, with approximately 90 old Duisburg warriors turning up, including some retired senior officers.

The Reunion made us realise that a large community of ex-RCT Servicemen were still living in the Duisburg area and British Army Veterans Duisburg was formed! To me it was clear that we need to keep this community together, with the aim to support each other when needed, to organise events like bowling evenings, New Year's Eve Parties, wakes for ex-RCT members who have passed on and of course conduct "ceremonial duties".

In September 17, the Cultural Office in Duisburg asked us if we would lay a Wreath at the German Remembrance Day (Volkstrauertag), which we successfully organised, drawing the attention of many local civilians. Our next steps were to enquire about German Reserves in the area and after some perseverance we finally made contact to Reservistenkameradschaft Duisburg. They were surprised that British Army veterans still lived in this

area. A friendship was quickly established when we realised our aims were the same.

We support each other at events, not only here in Duisburg, but also with our Dutch Comrades from Brunssum, NL. "Ceremonial Duties" are a big part of our community's activities, these have included: supporting a RE Battlefield Tour in Brunssum, the 75th Anniversary of Liberation Day in Brunssum, the German Remembrance Day (Volkstrauertag) in Rheinberg and wreath laying in JHQ Rheindahlen, Kiel (Schleswig-Holstein), Niederweert, Brunssum and Meldorf (Schleswig-Holstein).

Robert John Everett



Liverpool Sefton Branch

Saturday 23 April 2022 saw the Branch celebrate the refurbishment of its memorial garden. The cost of the works was covered by 238 Sqn RLC. The garden looks as good as the day it was built. All plaques on benches were supplied and engraved by JLR. who were represented at the Ceremony. 12 members of the Branch, with some wives of our fallen comrades, attended – we were limited to a maximum of 20. A lovely buffet, a moving service and some free drinks were laid on all thanks to PSAO 238 Sqn RLC and Sefton Branch.

On Sunday 3 July, the Branch held its Annual Church in St Phillips Church, Litherland.

Robert Carter



RASC & RCT Airborne Officers' Association Lunch

On 6 May 2022, 22 members of the RASC & RCT Airborne Officers' Association held their first lunch for three years. Travelling from as far afield as Scotland, Northumberland, Cornwall and Spain, these 'Winged Waggoners' (parachutists and pilots), who are all in their seventies and eighties, were delighted to join Major-General John D MacDonald, the last Director General of the Royal Corps of Transport (1991-1993) and former Scottish Rugby International player (1966-67) at Regent's Park Barracks in London.

Due to an equipment failure in the Officers' Mess, the lunch was held in the WO & Sgts' Mess by kind permission of the PMC, Sergeant Major Gavin Keen, who had previously served with 13 Air Assault Regiment RLC based in Colchester, part of 16 Air Assault Brigade Combat Team. In one of the few remaining Victorian cavalry barracks, the Chef and Mess staff helped make the occasion memorable for everyone attending, in true military style, with a superb meal and fine wines.

Over lunch, as the 'Winged Waggoners' discussed their future, including options to join with other non-airborne RASC & RCT Association events, the true value and uniqueness of the airborne kinship of the parachutists and pilots within the Corps, lasting in many cases over half a century, came to the fore and it was agreed that with the grateful support of OC 20 Sqn RLC, they will continue to dine until 'the last man is standing'.

These are veterans who know the special airborne spirit which existed in the RASC & RCT is irreplaceable and cannot be found anywhere else. They have led

by example and continue to do so. OC 20 Sqn RLC, Major Mark Pasalk said: "I am delighted that after the last couple of years they were finally able to come together and equally pleased they all had a most enjoyable time".

A living legend, Jack Matthews (ex 63 Para Sqn and QM GTR in Hong Kong 1981-83), gave three votes of thanks in his capacity as Mr Vice:

- Firstly, to John Hope for his many years as Secretary and his commendable attempts to ensure this year's event took place despite several setbacks due to the pandemic and service exigencies.

- Next to Colin Hird on becoming the new Secretary. Colin was the last subaltern of 63 Para Sqn RCT before 16 Parachute Brigade was disbanded in 1977.
- Finally, to Major-General John MacDonald and all present who had travelled so far, to the Mess staff for looking after everyone so well, and to absent friends.

Col Dick Wilkinson TD said:

"There could be some ex-RCT airborne aged between 50 and 70. If so, do contact the new Secretary, Colin Hird, for more details." Having enjoyed a splendid occasion, the parachutists and pilots, in true RASC & RCT airborne spirit, wished each other 'happy landings' and, on this occasion, departed without any competition to be the last man standing.

Tony Hales



Col Max Maxwell, Maj Gen John MacDonald and Lt Col Alistair Adams

RCT Riders' Branch

Memorial Ride Lincolnshire



Dave Stubbs, Alan Hay and Phil Baker lay a wreath at the Spire

On 13 May 2022, 15 members of RCT Riders' Branch, with a contingent of RTTW riders, descended on Lincoln for a weekend to pay respects to the Airmen and women of RAF Bomber Command that paid the ultimate sacrifice during and after WWII.

On Friday, we all converged on the Woodcock's Hotel in Lincoln which was our base for the weekend. A great meal followed by a few drinks was enjoyed by all. On Saturday morning, half of the riders went to visit the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight at RAF Coningsby, while the other half visited the Lincoln Aviation Heritage Centre. Both very interesting and recommended.

On Saturday afternoon, the real reason for our pilgrimage took place - our ride to The International Bomber Command Centre (IBCC). We were ably assisted with our ride through the City Centre of Lincoln by the local Harley Owners Group (HOG) Chapter. Lincoln's Saturday shoppers didn't know what hit them, 60-ish bikes, some with ear-splittingly loud exhausts, riding en masse through the enclosed shopping streets of this lovely city. We arrived at the IBCC to be met by our tour guides who gave us some interesting insights to the activities of Bomber Command and many very moving tales of individual aircrew. This is another highly recommended visit.

Then onto the RCT Riders' moment of respect and remembrance. Phil Baker, Alan Hay and Dave Stubbs laid a wreath on behalf of all members of the RCT Riders Branch to honour the fallen of RAF Bomber command at the Spire Monument. The tables surrounding the Spire Monument record the names of the 57,861 men and women who gave their lives supporting bomber command. To put the level of this sacrifice into perspective, members of the Branch and Association visiting National Memorial Arboretum at Alreways always find the Armed Forces Memorial, "the wall", with its record of our many fallen comrades a most moving and humbling experience. The tablets at the Spire record the loss of more than three and half times this number.

On Saturday evening, we held a formal dinner culminating of course with a toast to Her Majesty The Queen.

Sunday morning, we rode a short distance to RAF Ingham, to the very new memorial to the four Polish Bomber Squadrons that served here. This is a project constructed and run by a small band of very dedicated volunteers - if you are ever in the area, please visit this wonderful place. After our visit to Ingham some peeled off home, and the rest stayed for another night, full of fun and frolics.

Phil Baker

Celebration of Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Many of us celebrated Her Majesty's Jubilee in June, but few in such style as Salisbury Plain Branch and South West Region. Colonel Kelvin Tutt reports:

"On Wednesday 1 June 2022, members of the Salisbury Plain Branch and their ladies gathered for a traditional English Luncheon to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee. We enjoyed the exceptional hospitality of the Army Air Corps Officers' Mess at Middle Wallop, which has always provided a warm welcome.

Our hard-working secretary, John Phillips BEM, delighted in dressing the tables with a beautifully printed menu card for each guest, elegant place cards and the appropriate flags to mark this special occasion. His menu cards always include not only the food and wines to be set before us, but also a fascinating history lesson. This time it included photographs of Her Majesty in uniform during WWII and a copy of her War Department Driving Permit, issued to Elizabeth on April 16 1945. The back cover gave the history of our National Anthem and a copy

of The Queen's first official photographs which were used to create her image on new coins, banknotes and stamps. These menu cards are rapidly becoming collectors' items.

The Grace before luncheon, as shown below, captured what we believe her Majesty has been for us:

Prayer for The Queen

We gather together today to break bread, giving thanks as we mark the Platinum Jubilee of The Queen's Reign. We celebrate seventy years of Her Sovereignty, and offer our Queen, Elizabeth, our respect and gratitude for Her life of long and faithful service. Amen."

In Plymouth, South West Region gathered at the at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Plymouth, where they hosted Colonel Nigel and Maureen to dinner and local guests to a Jubilee Dinner. Guests and members were entertained by a military bugler and drummers and by Sandy Sparkle, a well renowned tribute artist.



SPB Jubilee Lunch - Lt Col Peter Morling OBE, Mrs Caroline Weatherly, Lt Col Roger Vaughan-Stanley, Col Mark Weatherly, Mrs Sheila Morling, Maj Chris Upchurch, Lt Col Paul Fraser OBE and Col George Vaughan



Mr D Thorning, Mr J Hambley and Mr S Morgan at the Crowne Plaza Plymouth

Tank Transporter Branch



The Tank Transporter Branch had a very active spring and summer. Highlights included the Retford Reunion, the Summer Gathering in Preston and the Historic Vehicle Collection being displayed at several shows.

Retford Reunion 2022. Retford is the old stumping ground of 19 Tank Transporter Company RASC. This year, the Reunion took place on Thursday and Friday 21 and 22 April, to take advantage of the slightly cheaper weekday rates at the Best Western Hotel in Retford. It also gave access to the main function room for the dinner night, this is not normally available due to weddings or other weekend functions.

Numbers were down slightly on previous gatherings, still quite a few who don't want to risk being in large crowds, and others who could not attend due to health issues.

Thursday evening was spent catching up with old friends at the Railway Club, with transport provided to and from the venue. A raffle was held with the star prize being a handmade model of a Classic HGV made by Fred Bastow. Unfortunately, due to health issues Fred is now living in 'The Brierley Court Care Home', Lowmoor, Bradford. The raffle raised £306 and will be split between the care home and Fred's kitty to buy items for personal needs.



Friday evening was our dinner night, again a slightly different format with speeches and toasts taking place before the meal was served, which allowed everyone to relax and be free to enjoy the food and conversation throughout the evening. The food was as always of a very high standard and served quickly and efficiently by the hotel staff. Particular thanks must go to Kenny Mintram for organising the event, the effort and attention to detail was very much appreciated by all who attended.

Tank Transporters Summer Gathering 2022.

The now very popular summer gathering took place on the weekend 4/5 June. This event dates back to December 2016 when I walked into a Preston Gin bar not knowing it was being run by our own 3 Sqn veteran Lee Flannery. A few gins later and an idea was formulated - Why not have a summer reunion here?

A few phone calls were made canvassing interest then invites were sent out via Facebook to former squadron members. With it being a central UK location, interest soon developed with the first event taking place in June 2017, consisting of two very informal days in a pub catching up with old mates that we haven't seen in years.

Due to its popularity and some great feedback, the 2018 event was opened up to the entire Tank Transporting family, even 'Tanky Allen' has made appearances. For the next and subsequent events, we moved the gathering to the much larger pub next door called the Bull & Royal which is a popular bar in the city centre that was one of the few venues that was big enough to host the ever-increasing numbers.

The gatherings are very informal and relaxed taking place over a two-day period, this gives people options, albeit the majority do attend on both days. The pub boasts some great facilities inside and out, we were entertained on the Friday with a popular karaoke and on the Saturday afternoon we were entertained by a cracking group called "Prime Mover Showband".

The entertainment itself was laid on by the landlord free of charge, and in addition he gave our group locals' prices at the bar. The buffets were well received on each day, the funding of which was offset from our own branch funds. The Summer



Is the Bull & Royal big enough?

Gathering is a free event, however this year we did rattle the tin in aid of "Forces Manor" which is headed up by one of our own, Tony Brown, in Kinraig. In addition to the collection, we held two snap auctions for memorabilia donated by Lou Swaine and Andy Jeffery; in total we made £708 which was gratefully received by Tony Brown.

The gatherings have grown in numbers year on year and are just getting better and better. I'd like to thank each and every one of our Tank Transporter family that have made the trip to Preston over the last six years, long may this tradition

continue - 'Na Zdrowie'.

Historic Vehicle Collection. The Historic Vehicle Crew have had another very active show season, culminating with the Newbury Retro festival in August. The Tank Transporter on display included the last five remaining commanders in the UK, these deployed to the show carrying a selection of loads, including Antars! All credit goes to all the Historical Vehicle Crew who meet regularly to help Wayne Meadows in the mammoth task of maintaining and preparing the collection for the growing number of summer shows.



The Historic Vehicle Crew at Newbury Retro Festival

Norton Manor Group (Junior Leaders Battalion RASC 1961-65) Annual Reunion 2022

Once again it was a great pleasure to hold our annual reunion in its usual mid-June time slot, free from the restrictions of COVID-19. It was also a great pleasure to welcome and incorporate the reunion of members of 26 Transport Regiment RCT (Bridging) (formerly 26 Transport Column RASC (Bridging)). In its past, the Bridging Regiment employed many former RASC Junior Leaders (informally known as the RASCALS) who are also members of the Norton Manor Group and it therefore made practical sense to combine our two events on this occasion. One such former boy soldier and now Lt Col (Retd), David Owen MBE, presented several "memory boards" documenting the history, and sometimes colourful past, of 26 Regiment. A thoroughly good time was had by all who attended.

It was a privilege to have as our guests of honour, the Secretary of the RASC/RCT Association, Lt Col (Retd) Robin Moore and his wife Jenny. We all very much enjoyed their company and the entertaining pre-dinner talk given by Robin after which Robin was presented with our group mug (I'm proud to be an old RASCAL) by former Junior Leader, Lt Col (Retd) Terry Byrne MBE, our Master of Ceremonies for the evening.

As a group, we are so very grateful to The Association for their encouragement and support as well as a generous grant of funds to help towards members' costs attending the reunion. This year, the event was held at the Novotel Nottingham and comprised of a casual get-together of our members and ladies over a buffet dinner and sharing their memories of over 60 years ago. There followed on the Saturday evening a gala dinner and vocalist entertainment rounding off a very memorable and

enjoyable weekend event. Farewells on Sunday morning after breakfast were made in the certain knowledge, the good Lord and our health willing, we will get to do it all over again next year. Anyone reading this report on our reunion event who previously served as a junior soldier, or as a member of Permanent Staff at Norton Manor Camp, Taunton during the RASC period 1961 to 1965 and who would like to join the Norton Manor Group, please contact the secretary at:

mikemason47.mm@gmail.com If you served at Bordon in Hants before the move to Taunton, we would also like to hear from you.

Mike Mason



Former members of 26 Regt and their ladies:
Billy Guiller, Barry Greenwood, David Fendick, David Owen, Dick Adams, Harry Worthington, Helen Guiller, Michelle Suddaby, Cath Suddaby, Margaret Owen, Jeanette Adams, Millie Worthington



Norton Manor Group - Reunion - Novotel Hotel, Nottingham - 18 June 2022



Rear Row L:R: Ken Donnelly, Richard Snell, John Regan, Bruce Baker, Graham Du Pratt, Colin Cox, Tony Ash, Mervyn Dare, Rod Bush, Andrew Hill, Alan Machin, Pat Forbes-Ritte, Richard Dimmock,

Rear Row continued: Paul Eames, David Owen, Martin Humphrey, Derek French, Chris Forbes-Ritte, Phil Peat, Bob Toland, Harry Worthington, Dale Miller, Bill King, Clive Oldfield, Russell Pike

Front Row L:R: Sid Nobel, Ian Lennox, Colin Westcott, Alex McCrea, Mike Mason, Wal Stopper, Lt Col (Retd) Robin Moore, Terry Byrne, Peter Snow, Phil Clayton, Cliff Harris, Ron Young

Amended 23 June 2022 11

Poppyscotland Centenary Awards - Poppy Hero

Earlier this year, Amanda McNamara was nominated for the Poppyscotland centenary awards by her friends Thomas Clark, Dennis Beck, Stewart Brown and Iain Dargie. They felt that her dedication and hard work in the support of the Armed Forces Community in Scotland deserved recognition.

Every year Amanda works tirelessly raising money for the Scottish Poppy Appeal in Cardonald. Generating significant additional income to the campaign through poppy pledges, she has personally raised many thousands of pounds. A great advocate of the Armed Forces Community, she takes every opportunity to promote not just Poppyscotland but to inspire, support and educate those around her.

Amanda is also a leading light in the Association, as secretary of our Glasgow Branch she has organised day trips, coffee mornings, breakfast clubs, museum visits, regular meetings and special events. Sadly, she has also been called on to arrange the paying of respects to our fallen. Throughout the Covid lockdowns, she kept in contact with the

Branch's members checking on their welfare.

Amanda is also an active member of the RCT Rider's Branch. Amanda was selected as the winner of the Poppy Hero award by a senior panel which included the President of Poppyscotland, Chief Executive of Poppyscotland and CEO Royal British Legion Scotland among others. During deliberations for this award, Gordon Michie, Head of Fundraising and Learning Poppyscotland said: "Amanda McNamara volunteering in the Lady Haig Poppy factory and her support to the veterans there combined with the staggering range of her volunteering means she is a worthy recipient of the Centenary Poppy Hero Award."

On Friday 22 April 2022, Amanda was presented with the Poppy Hero Award in front of staff and pupils of the Whitecrook and ELCC Cunard Primary School where she teaches. This surprise ceremony also included Poppyscotland staff and her family. Her very proud father Alan reports: "Amanda's face when we walked into the assembly was priceless."



Retired WO & SNCO Club RASC/RCT

AGM, Golf and Annual Dinner weekend 9/10 April 2022

After two years of cancellations, the Club finally got together for its annual weekend at The Wiltshire Golf and Leisure Hotel at Royal Wootton Bassett. Our Patron, Maj General Sir Martin White, and the Association's Secretary, Lt Col Robin Moore, accompanied us. It was a fantastic weekend of stories, comradeship and laughter which never seemed to stop. The weekend was extremely well attended with 105 seated at the main three course formal dinner. The food served was excellent.

On Friday evening, the Club held the AGM and then went to enjoy a curry buffet. A raffle was held with two members winning the two £100 prizes in the draw.

On the Saturday morning after a hearty breakfast, the golfers gathered at the first tee had a tot of port to toast Dave O'Bee, our club founder. Our Golf Member Graham Card organised the golfers who took part in the Dave O'Bee memorial trophy match on the nine-hole course. In third place was Denis West and in second place Phil Stothart who missed out by three points to the brand-new club Golf Champion Bob Lawrence whose name will be added to the trophy. The nearest the Pin was won by Denis West. The nearest in two shots was taken by Mick Nichol. The most golf played was won by Mick Churn. A fantastic set of prizes and winners.

On Saturday evening, we met for our formal dinner where the ladies were presented with a rose buttonhole. We sat for a three-course dinner, after which there were the three traditional toasts to the Queen, our ladies and our fallen comrades. Speeches were given by Terry Byrne and the General followed

by the excellent entertainment provided by Mr Steve Whale. More entertainment was provided by many of the club members who actually believe they are the reincarnation of Fred Astaire on the dance floor and graced with the voice of Pavarotti!

Bob Wade



Back row: Windy Gale, Phil Stothart, Denis West, John Berry, Mick Nichol, Terry Pinner
Front Row: Bob Lawrence, Graham Card, Mick Churn

Band Branch



There was real cause for celebration when members of our Association Band were once again able to gather on Corps Weekend to celebrate for the first time in several years.

Our reunion started rather sadly when several Band members attended the funeral service of Len 'Lennie' McCrae at Finchampstead Crematorium. Whilst not a Band member as such, Len had formed a very strong relationship with the Band during his time at Buller Barracks with the School of Transportation which continued after his demobilisation. He never failed to attend any Band event and will be sadly missed. The Band were represented by standard bearer Adrian Bengé and the last post was delivered faultlessly by Steve Carrigan. Very close friend Dave Marshall also attended as did Branch Secretary, Roger Burke.

For many Band members our weekend started on 8 July when we were privileged to play for a social event in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen within Windsor Castle. Thanks must go to Band Chair Adrian for organising the event through the close work that he carries out with the equestrian staff at the Royal Household.

Corps Saturday started with a concert at the Princes Gardens which provided many RASC/RCT Association members the first opportunity to meet again after several years. The attendance by Band members was the strongest for many years with past members travelling from as far afield as Dartmouth and Stilton in Lincolnshire. A varied program of entertaining music was directed by Roger Balls.

The theme chosen for the concert was the

RASC/RCT Band. Jennifer Martin who presided over the formal Act of Remembrance researched the Band's history and recalled many events that the members sat on the bandstand remembered with great fondness and a great sense of pride. Many thanks to Jennifer for all her hard work and for such a lovely service.

Corps Standards were strongly represented which further enhanced the parade element. A drum stack for the Remembrance Service was again provided by the Old Basing Corps of Drums under the leadership of past RCT Drum Major Bill Prendergast. Wait for the Wagon provided a fitting finale to a very successful concert carried out without rehearsal and executed by the professionalism and expertise of the Association Band Branch.

There was barely time to draw breath before it was time to set up for some pre-show music for the evening dinner and dance. Many who were not able to attend during the day were able to re-kindle past relationships. More musical support featured at the church service where we were able to pay respects to our members past and present.

A provisional booking has been made at the Princes Hall in Aldershot and it is hoped that a full indoor concert can be held in there for 2023.

Many thanks to Brain Quist of the Aldershot Branch for organising the Thames River Trip, what a lovely way to spend an afternoon where the Band Branch were very well represented and able to reflect on a Corps Weekend that we hope brought much pleasure and enjoyment to everyone who attended.

Roger Burke

Laying up Standards

It is a sad reality that with the passage of time some of the Association's branches will become unsustainable. This is not a new situation, as illustrated by the extract from an article published in the Waggoner in 1980, reproduced below. In this our then President, Major General Carpenter, explained the challenges faced and these remain as true today as when he wrote the article. It is worthy of note that in 1980 the Association had 78 active branches, we have now dwindled to only 46 branches.

A Message from the President Maj-Gen V H J Carpenter CB MBE

I COMMEND this supplement to all members of the Corps whether serving or ex-serving. The Association, which also provides the administration for the work of the Benevolent Fund under the chairmanship of Maj Gen W Bate, CB, OBE, DL, is the means by which we implement our theme of service through comradeship.

It is vital that as the veterans of the World Wars grow older that the post-war serviceman joins the Association which includes not only the ex-serviceman but those currently serving. To all who have worn or are wearing our cap badge or that of our predecessors I would say, support your Association and become an active member of your local branch where appropriate. The Association calls for your support, you may need its support.



On Corps Sunday this year the Standards of two of our long-standing branches, Worthing and Bath, were laid up in The Cathedral Church of the Bishop of the Forces, St Michael and St George in Aldershot. Arrangements are also in hand as I write to lay up the Standards of East Kilbride and Oxford Branches. Each Branch closure comes after much soul searching and is a very sad moment for the Branch's members. The laying up of a Standard represents the last chapter in a long history and is a deeply important act since these Standards mean so much to the branch members. The momentous significance that

Branch Standards hold for members is demonstrated from a small extract taken from a letter from the diligently kept records of Worthing Branch, which were very generously handed over to me by the last Branch Secretary, Mr Michael Coomber earlier this year.

"In 1949, the Late Captain Cecile Payne Honourable Secretary of the Association's Bournemouth Branch was transferred to Worthing by his employer – the Midland Bank. On 10 August 1949, he called a meeting at his house in First Avenue, Worthing and nine RASC veterans attended. At this meeting it was decided that a Worthing Branch should be formed. On 29 October 1949, the inaugural meeting of the Branch took place at the Ivy Arch Territorial Drill Hall under the chairmanship of Brigadier P Eassie from the Association's South East Region". At this meeting, Captain Payne was elected at the Branch's first Honourable Chairman and the other Branch Officers were also elected. It was also agreed that a banner fund should be started and at subsequent meetings a Banner Box would be passed round."

On 2 June 1950, Worthing Branch's own Standard was dedicated at Heene Church by their Padre - The Canon Wilkinson. 500 hundred ex-Servicemen took part in the parade with representatives from all the local ex-Services organisations as well as the Association's Branches from as far as Portsmouth and London. "This Standard cost the Branch twelve pounds of our very own pennies (this is equivalent to £457 today), but to the Branch it must be priceless ... not in money, but what it stands for."

The eternal safe keeping and display of our laid up Standards is a great comfort to our members. In recent years it has not always been easy to find a suitable church or cathedral to house these. I am indebted to The Revd Fr Nicholas Gosnell VG, the Dean at St Michael and St George for allowing us to lay up Worthing and Bath Branches' Standards in the RASC & RCT Chapel in his Cathedral Church.

Robin Moore



Mr Kevin Terry and Mr Keith Terry Laying up Bath and Worthing Branches Standards

17 Sqn RCT 'Old Pals' Branch – Annual Reunion & AGM

Like many branches, this year was the first since 2019 that we have been able to hold our reunion in our traditional format. We returned to our usual weekend in July, and what weather we had - it was the start of a heatwave and allowed shirts off and cold beers in hand. The lads also joined in!

As for the previous three meetings, we gathered at Ashdown WWII Army Camp, Evesham, where we are made to feel very welcome by Emma. We had exclusive use of the facility for the weekend. It is an original camp of Nissen and wooden huts that was relocated to this site and is a museum to the second world war. If you have an interest in this era, it is well worth a visit and often hosts groups of visitors. In June they hold a weekend called 'War in The Vale' and some of our members who have been said it is a very good weekend.

Our group was treated to a guided tour by Paul, one of the caretakers, and all agreed it was a fascinating exhibition. As well as a camping site, one of the huts is a barrack room complete with good old Army bunk beds but with modern mattresses, not the lumpy horsehair thing I was issued! All the lads staying in this hut needed was a sleeping bag.

The big surprise this year was a Saracen parked up waiting to greet people, but it was not just a static display, so people were treated to a ride around the large display field. the boys reminisced and the ladies found out what we love about them! The owner is understandably apprehensive about letting people charge about in case they wreck it, 'TROGS' have a reputation even in the civilian world! But I was lucky and privileged to be allowed a cabby and I think some of the lads went as green as the uniforms we used to wear. What surprises await the Old Pals next year?

On Friday evening fish and chip suppers were sent for and this time Taff Thomas got his pie! On Saturday morning we held our AGM. It was started by all standing while the Kohima epitaph was said, and a minute's silence observed for our lost Old Pals. A new chairman Martin (Louge) Lowrey and



The Old Pals with the Saracen

Vice Chair Neil (Nelly) Friel were voted in, and a vote of thanks was given to the outgoing chair Selkirk (Woody) Wood and vice chair Steve (Chalky) White. While the AGM was taking place, the ladies enjoyed coffee and cakes and no doubt chatted about things that ladies do.

After the AGM, due to the intense heat it was decided to delay the German-style BBQ until the evening, so some found the local pub while others cracked the first beers of the day. In the evening, Georgie Perna once again did us proud by assassinating the bratys and Frikadelles, accompanied by Kartoffle salad. Gazebos had been set up, so instead of sweltering in a Nissen hut, we all enjoyed Larry's background music while counting how many raffle-prizes Martin won this year - the man has a Midas touch when it comes to tickets! The raffle raised £188 which was donated to 'Cancer Research UK'.

On Sunday, the majority headed home, but some made a full weekend of it and continued to bask in the sun. Once again the BBQ was fired up on Sunday evening, we had no music but lots of beer and banter!

As a reminder, it was agreed last year to change the criteria for membership to the Branch, so any person of the RCT who served or was attached to 17 Squadron RCT while it was stationed in Bielefeld, up until the dissolution of the RCT in 1993, can join. They will also need to be nominated by a serving member of the Branch. For further information, please

contact the Branch Secretary Richard (Titch) Fry on: oldpals17sqn@outlook.com, or call him on: 07899 668433.

Dates for your 2023 diary: 6-10 July 2023, Ashdown WW2 camp, Evesham.

Richard (Titch) Fry



Support to Veterans

Experiencing Hardship



The Royal Logistic Corps



and The Veterans Charity New Partnership

The rise in the cost of living is affecting millions of people including serving personnel and veterans. To help ensure that these difficulties are met with a swift and effective response, The Royal Logistic Corps (RLC) Benevolence Committee on behalf of The RLC Association Trust has formed a new partnership with The Veterans Charity.

The partnership means that the charity will be able to assess and deliver immediate needs support to Veterans from The RLC and its Forming Corps including the RASC & RCT. This support is provided on behalf of The RLC Association Trust, with the Trust covering the costs of the support.

If you find yourself in hardship, contact the Veterans Charity online at **www.veteranscharity.org.uk** and follow the link to The RLC partnership page where you can submit a “Support Request Form”. If you have no access to the internet you can contact the charity by telephone on: **01271 371001**.

Please note that whilst each case will be dealt with on its own merits, any support is given on a “one-off” basis and will not exceed £200 in value. If your need is greater, then this falls outside what this initiative has been set-up to achieve; if this is the case you will be encouraged by The Veterans Charity to switch to seek assistance through SSAFA or the RBL.

If you require any additional information relating to this Scheme please contact The RLC’s Benevolence Office at:
benevolence@rhqtherlc.org.uk

Remembering our Fallen

On 20 June each year, a group of our veterans from 60 Squadron accompany Colonel Nick Beard on a visit the National Memorial Arboretum to lay a wreath in the memory of their 8 comrades who fell in Aden on this day in 1967. They join a party of veterans from the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers who remember the Northumberland Fusiliers and Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders who also fell this day. A total of 23 British soldiers were killed during the "Aden Mutiny" on 19 and 20 June 1967.



Above: Frank Jacobs with the tribute he made for his fallen comrades which was placed on the Memorial in the Logistic Grove

Right: Colonel Nick Beard MBE laying the Wreath



Obituary

Lieutenant Colonel Graham William Parker, OBE
1932-2022



Graham was born in Stafford into a family of engineers, mechanics and drivers. Discharged early from National Service in the Royal Engineers, he was commissioned 2Lt RASC at Mons OCTU in July 1952. Postings to 2 Main Supply Depot BAOR (Advanced Base Belgium) and 36 Coy RASC MT BAOR (GHQ Staff Car Unit) were followed by a posting in 1955 to MELF 'Force O' at Aqaba, Jordan. He supported the 10th Royal Hussars as Platoon Commander of 'Y' Independent and 16 Coy Tk Tprr PI RASC. Rona joined him in Aqaba. Following the Suez Crisis and withdrawal of 'Force O' from Jordan, Graham spent two years at MELF Tripoli, Libya with 1 Coy and 38 Coy RASC MT. Tripoli was the location for the film *Ice Cold in Alex* with RASC soldiers as extras. The stars Sylvia Syms, John Mills, Anthony Quayle and Harry Andrews often visited the Officers' Mess.

Graham returned to BAOR from 1959 to 1964

with postings to 108 Coy RASC, JHQ and Bünde as Adjutant of 2 Div Colm RASC. Joanna and Julian were born at BMH Rinteln. During a tour in London as instructor/lecturer at the Army School of Recruiting, Woolwich, Graham completed an extra-mural course in Transport Studies at the LSE. He attended No. 2 Advanced Transport Course at Longmoor and returned to Germany as OC 5 Squadron in 8 Regiment RCT, Münster. To commemorate the Squadron's Centenary, Graham arranged a parade of 50 vehicles with soldiers in period uniform.

Following Course No. 28 at the British Transport Staff College, Woking, Graham led a joint military Staff team on CICC (West), HQ Army Strategic Command. CO of 152 (Ulster) Regiment RCT (V) was followed by CO of the Recruit Selection Centre in Sutton Coldfield. During the firemen's strike in 1977, Graham co-ordinated emergency military cover as Garrison Commander in West Midland District. In 1978 he was posted as Chief of Procurement, LANDA Division at SHAPE. He was awarded the OBE in 1979. In 1982 he returned to JHQ as a Staff Officer, retired in November 1983 and worked as an RO at LAMS Antwerp for 11 years, after which he and Rona retired to Wilton, Wiltshire.

Whilst at SHAPE and living near the 1914-18 battlefields, Graham's 40-year passion to research and remember the WWI generation began when he guided a tour to the Somme for the SHAPE Military History Group. Graham's natural gift as a guide led to requests for tours from RMAS, the Royal College of Defence Studies, TA Units and the Junior Leaders. The breadth of his knowledge grew as he studied the Western Front from the Belgian coast to the Vosges. He was an Honorary Vice-President of the Western Front Association and an honorary member of the International Guild of Battlefield Guides. In 1990, Graham instigated the annual Poppy Parade and dropping of poppy petals at the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing during the 11 November ceremony in Ypres.

In retirement, Graham joined Salisbury Rotary Club. He was involved with fundraising for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, remembering his friend 2Lt David Deakin RASC, who died in 1957 from poliomyelitis at BMH Tripoli.

Graham loved sport, especially hockey, and was a talented artist and musician. He enjoyed carpentry, making many treasured wooden toys including a large rocking horse and building a Mirror sailing dinghy from a kit.

Graham was a member of the Salisbury Plain Branch RASC/RCT Association. He passed peacefully at home in March 2022 aged 89. Rona, Joanna and Julian thank the Association and Graham's former colleagues for all their support.

Joanna Legg

Obituary

Les Wales

22 May 1923 – 4 May 2022



Les Wales in North Africa

Les Wales grew up in Balby in Doncaster and attended Oswin Avenue school, leaving at 14 years old in 1937. He initially got a job as an errand boy at Stotts Garage next to the Racecourse. At the outbreak of war, petrol ration commenced and work at the garage dropped off so Les moved to British Ropes on Carr Hill. Before he was 18, Les applied to join the RAF with the objective of becoming an air gunner on Lancaster Bombers. Fortunately, he was turned down because of arthritis in his left foot which the doctor's thought may cause him problems at high altitude - bomber air crews had some of the most horrific casualty rates of the war. Three weeks after he was rejected by the RAF, Les received his call up papers from the Army and joined the RASC.

Already qualified as a driver, Les was initially posted to train as a Bedford 3 Ton Truck driver in Sheffield. In early 1943 he was posted overseas sailing from Glasgow to Algiers. He then served in the North Africa Campaign as part of a supply column supporting the Royal Artillery. At the culmination of the Campaign, he drove right across Libya as the 8th Army pushed the Axis forces back to Tunis. From there he was sent to Sicily as the Allies started to invade Italy.

Les clearly remembered the journey across the Mediterranean during which he was lucky to escape one incident with his life. In August 1943 he was in a Landing Craft Tank (LCT) coming into the port of Syracuse when it was attacked by German bombers, one bomb fell so close to the stern of the LCT that it damaged the water pipes on the vessel, fortunately the most serious result was no water for tea at breakfast the next day, it was a lucky escape! In September 1943, he moved from Sicily into Italy

and spent Christmas in the mountains in a small tent as deep snow fell all around, nearby an artillery gunner froze to death. Les had another escape when his unit crossed the Sangro River. Whilst advancing north at night, his truck broke a fan belt and by the time this was repaired his convoy had moved on and left him. Travelling up to re-join the convoy he was crossing a bailey bridge which was in poor repair with loose planks rattling as his truck crossed. He had only travelled a further 25 yards when a shell landed nearby which left a crater with smoke billowing out.

Les remained in Italy until the end of the war. In 1945 he was able to return on leave to England flying back home in a Lancaster Bomber. He recollected that the guns had been removed from the bomber and despite the crew doing their best to cover the gun slits, wind howled in and it was freezing cold. In 1946, shortly after returning to Italy, Les met his future wife Anna at a dance in Rome. Les and Anna enjoyed 57 years of happy marriage.

After leaving the Army, Les returned to work at British Ropes, later moving to Brodsworth Colliery as a diesel locomotive fitter working underground. He was made redundant in the early 1980s before the miners' strike.



Les Wales with Actress Annette Bening

In 2018, aged 95, Les took part in the film Hope Gap which starred Bill Nighy and Annette Bening. The film was shot in Doncaster and the Director wanted a WWII veteran to read the Exhortation at a war remembrance scene. As a leading member of the Doncaster Branch, Les gave the Exhortation every year at our annual band concert, so he was the ideal candidate. Hope Gap hit the Cinema in September 2020 and was due to be shown in Sheffield. The local RBL Branch had planned to go there with Les but sadly due to Covid restrictions this did not happen. Les' son Frank arranged to show it to him, and he was thrilled at his performance. His grandson, Thomas went to the premiere in London and was

Obituary

very proud of his Grandad. Hope Gap was not the first time Les had been in the movies. He appeared in the 1959 Italian movie *Hercules Unchained*. Whilst visiting his Italian wife's relatives, his nephew, who was involved in the movie, got Les a part as an extra. He recalled having to charge a Roman Wall waving a paper-mache sword. It was a very busy and very hot day he recalled.

Les was a very active member of the RASC & RCT Association and Royal British Legion Doncaster Central Branch. What not many people know is that in 2000 he was also Chair of the Fellowship of the Services (Mess 51) when he was awarded "The Warrant". Les leaves behind his only child Dr Frank Wales and two grandchildren.

Mick Gill

Bryan Wilkinson BEM



Many may remember Sgt Bryan Wilkinson (Wilkie) as he served in the Corps from the late 1940s until the late 1980s. Born in a Yorkshire mining village on 6 August 1931, he followed some of his family into the coal pits at an early age. However, he spent less than a year in the mines before running away from home to join the Army. He initially joined the Duke of Wellington's Regiment, having altered his birth certificate, although he eventually joined the RASC as a driver at Buller Barracks, Aldershot. His parents had no idea where he was until the War Office notified them that he was en-route to the Korean War in 1950. They were shocked but delighted to have confirmation he was still alive.

During the famous Battle of Imjin River in April 1951 involving the 1st Battalion Gloucester Regiment, Bryan was an ambulance driver serving with 78 Company and was captured while recovering casualties from the battlefield at Imjin. The

Company had re-formed in Aldershot in 1950 as a Motor Ambulance Company although expanded in Korea to include General Transport Platoons from Canada and New Zealand. It initially supported 27 Brigade until they were replaced by 29 Brigade. The other RASC Company in Korea was 57 Company which was the Brigade Group Transport Company in support of 29 Brigade and the Commonwealth Brigade. He remained a Prisoner of War for eighteen months during which he suffered appalling conditions and treatment and lost seven stone in weight. After release, he left the Army before re-joining the RASC as he could not settle in his home village. He then deployed to Malaya where he met and married his first wife and he and his family lived in Singapore.

Bryan also served in South Arabia before joining the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR) at Liebenau. Wishing to continue beyond his normal 22-year service, he agreed to continue on extended service although he had to reduce in rank from SSgt to Cpl. He was promoted to local Sgt in the early 1970s when he joined 8 Regiment (Advance Weapon Support) at Münster. He was initially a SQMS before becoming administrative NCO to the Americans at the Münster Nord ammunition site and their headquarters at Handoff. He was awarded the BEM in January 1981 and the following extract from the citation sums him up beautifully: 'He has acted as plumber, glazier and carpenter to resolve problems quickly, repaired American vehicles and even used his own commercial van to provide our allies with an ideal service which the normal system would not allow. He is held in extremely high esteem by the Americans for his talent, energy and unfailing humour'.

Having remarried, he retired with his second wife, Beryl, to their bungalow in Gainsborough where he continued his wedding car and removal van business which he had begun in Germany. He was an active member of the UK Korean War Veterans Association and was the only British uniformed veteran to attend the 30th Anniversary held in South Korea in 1983. He died peacefully at Lincoln Hospital on 19 July 2022 and his funeral service, attended by members of the Corps and the British Legion, who provided standard bearers and a bugler, was held at Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. We are unlikely ever again see the likes of Bryan Wilkinson in the British Army – Wilkie was unique. RIP.

David J Owen

Last Post

Aitken - On 26 July 2022, Mr GWS Aitken BEM RASC/RCT

Andrews - On 7 June 2022, Mr P Andrews RCT

Bannerman - In September 2021, Mr W Bannerman RASC/RCT

Bedford - On 18 February 2022, Mr JMR Bedford RCT

Biggin - On 26 February 2022, Mr BA Biggin RASC

Bradley - On 10 March 2022, Mr AH Bradley RASC

Bullock - On 1 June 2022, Brig RM Bullock CBE DL RASC/RCT

Cameron - On 2 August 2022, Mr S Cameron RCT

Cassie - On 11 August 2022, Mr E Cassie RCT

Clayton - On 3 March 2022, Maj P Clayton TD RASC/RCT

Coleman - On 26 June 2022, Mr C Coleman RASC

Collar - On 3 August 2022, Maj JA Collar RASC/RCT

Crenan - On 31 March 2022, Mrs B Crenan

Cunningham - On 10 July 2022, Mr JTW Cunningham RCT

Davies - On 4 April 2022, Mrs W Davies

Daw - On 4 December 2020, Mr JB Daw RASC/RCT

Dunlop - On 4 April 2022, Mr V Dunlop RCT

Fascione - On 10 June 2020, Mr M Fascione RASC

Geary - On 15 April 2022, IP MD Geary RASC/RCT

Griffin - On 13 April 2022, Lt Col DA Griffin RASC/RCT

Grundy - On 31 October 2021, Mrs A Grundy

Harvey - On 23 June 2022, Mrs J Harvey

Haydon - On 2 March 2022, Mr IG Haydon RLC

Hibbs - On 18 August 2022, Mr D Hibbs RASC/RCT

Hill - On 19th July 2022, Mr CM Hill RASC/RCT

Hudson - On 11 June 2022, Maj MR Hudson RCT

Iverson - On 12 August 2022, Lt Col DM Iverson RASC/RCT

James - In April 2022, Mr CW James RASC/REME

Jeremy - On 4 August 2022, Maj DI Jeremy RASC/RCT

Jones - In October 2020, Mr J Jones RASC/RCT

Jude - On 9 June 2022, Mr R Jude RCT

Key - On 4 August 2022, Maj GJF Key RCT/AAC

Leeson - On 12 July 2022, Maj AH Leeson MBE RASC/RCT

Lilley - In July 2022, Maj J Lilley TD RASC/RCT

Luckraft - On 26 July 2022, Mr AW Luckraft RASC

Maidment - On 9 June 2022, Maj (QM) D C Maidment RASC/RCT

Martin - On 17 March 2022, Mr G Martin RCT

Marzetti - On 29 July 2022, Mrs P Marzetti

McKinlay - On 5 September 2022, Mr H McKinlay RASC/RCT

McRea - On 18 May 2022, Mr LV McRea RCT

Mitchell - On 29 May 2022, Mr GHJ Mitchell RASC/RCT

Palmer - On 12 March 2022, Maj P Palmer RCT/RLC

Parker - On 8 March 2022, Col GW Parker OBE RE/RASC/RCT

Pashby - On 5 September 2022, Mr AJ Pashby RCT

Pearson - On 29 May 2022, Mr J Pearson RCT

Pow - On 5 August 2022, Lt Col RA Pow TD RASC/RCT

Robb - On 7 April 2022, Mr I Robb RASC/RCT

Robinson - On 13 April 2022, Maj JC Robinson RASC/RCT

Rogvie - On 22 November 2021, Mr R Rogvie RASC/RCT

Senior - On 18 May 2022, Mr JA Senior RASC/RCT

Sivell - On 3 August 2022, Mr TJ Sivell RASC/RCT

Skelton - On 17 July 2022, Maj A Skelton RASC/RCT

Smith - On 25 February 2022, Mr P Smith RASC/RCT

Spinder - On 11 August 2022, Maj HM Spinder TD RCT

Stonehouse - On 12 April 2022, Mr S Stonehouse RE/RCT

Vernon - On 13 May 2022, Lt Col PHV Vernon RASC/RCT

Wales - On 4 May 2022, Mr L Wales RASC

Wilkinson - On 19 July 2022, Mr B Wilkinson BEM RASC/RCT

Wilson - On 25 August 2022, Maj (Hon Col) CF Wilson RCT

Woolmer - In June 2022, Mr A Woolmer RCT

Woosman - On 11 January 2022, Mr CJ Woosman RCT

Wragg - On 21 July 2022, Mr GH Wragg RCT

