

NOVEMBER 2003



# THE QUEEN'S ROYAL SURREY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

President  
Brigadier R. W. Acworth CBE

Chairman  
Lieutenant Colonel F. B. Herd TD JP DL

Association Secretary and Editor  
Major A. W. Russell MBE

Benevolence Secretary  
Major J. C. Rogerson

Association correspondence to:  
42 Lincoln Drive  
Pyrford  
Woking  
Surrey GU22 8RR

Telephone/Fax: 01932 344150

NUMBER 74

# NEWSLETTER

## The Salerno Landings 9th September 1943





## Forecast of Events



### 2003

20th December BRITISH BATTALION DAY (1941).

### 2004

10th February SOBRAON DAY (1846).  
 6th March The Queen's (Southwark) Regimental Association Annual Lunch - Union Jack Club.  
 6th March The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association Territorial Trustees Meeting - Clandon.  
 11th March The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum Trustees Meeting - Clandon.  
 20th March The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association, Charity Trustees and Officers' Club Meetings - Clandon.  
 22nd April The East Surrey Regiment Officers' Club Lunch.  
 23rd April YPRES DAY (1915).  
 6th May Golf Society Spring Meeting - Sudbrook Park.  
 12th May Golf v Royal Marines - Fleet.  
 16th May ALBUHERA DAY (1811).  
 May (date tbc) 5 Queen's OMA Annual Dinner - Farnham. Details from: I Chatfield, 13 Wood Road, Farncombe, Surrey GU7 3NN.  
 1st June THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE (1794).  
 11th June President's Reception for the Mayors of Surrey - Clandon.  
 13th June The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association Annual Church Service - Guildford Cathedral.  
 1st August MINDEN DAY (1759).  
 9th September SALERNO DAY (1943).  
 11th September 2/6th and 2/7th Bns the Queen's Royal Regiment OCAs Combined Annual Reunion: details from Maj M R Nason TD, 64 Westfield Road, Barnehurst, Kent DA7 6LR.  
 4th October The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Officers' Club Ladies' Luncheon - Clandon.  
 6th October Golf Society Autumn Meeting - Woking Golf Club.  
 October (date tbc) The East Surrey OCA Reunion.  
 5th November Annual Reunion - Union Jack Club.  
 20th December BRITISH BATTALION DAY (1941).

#### Covers:

**Salerno:** Following the July 1943 invasion of Sicily, the main invasion of Italy took place at Salerno on 9th September 1943. Three Battalions of the Queen's (2/5th, 2/6th and 2/7th) forming 169 Infantry Brigade of 56 (London) Division landed on the first day. They were joined six days later and then relieved by a further three Battalions (1/5th, 1/6th and 1/7th) who formed 131 Infantry Brigade of 7th Armoured Division. After heavy fighting against intense German counter-attacks, a breakout from the initial landing area was made.

#### Frontispiece:

*Plan for the Salerno Landings, 9th September 1943, courtesy of Defence Geographic Centre.  
 Inset: 2/6th Queen's being briefed by CO Lt Col J B H Kealy at sea, and  
 In action soon after landing on 9th September 1943.*

#### Editorial

I regret that I must start with the very sad news that our Museum at Clandon suffered a serious burglary in the early morning of Saturday 25th October. The crime was evidently targeted to steal medals. Over 1,000 were taken and the thieves appeared to have no interest in other items within the Museum. The investigation is in the hands of the police.

The physical damage to cabinets can soon be repaired. The medals, however, were an irreplaceable part of our Regimental heritage, although we are confident that a good medal display can be re-established. Further details about this tragic loss, which occurred after the completion of this edition's Museum notes, and of progress with the investigation and with the new display will appear in the next Newsletter. The Museum will, in due course, contact the living representatives of the recipients of the stolen medals in as many cases as possible.

Turning to other matters, on a personal note it saddens me that my sincere apologies are due to the family and many friends of the late Jennifer Davidson for the editorial mistake in the last Newsletter and for the distress caused.

In a happier vein, I am grateful to all those who provided information, articles and photographs for this edition and hope that readers will find that your Newsletter continues to be both interesting and informative.

With best wishes for a merry Christmas and for a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Tony Russell

#### President's Notes

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the landing at Salerno in which two Queen's Brigades, 131 and 169 took part. The Regiment was represented by Brigadier Geoffrey Curtis at the celebrations to mark the anniversary on 9th September.

I have to report that sadly General Tony White, the last commanding officer of the East Surrey Regiment and the first of the amalgamated regiment, died recently and to Joy his wife and his two daughters we extend our sympathy

In previous newsletters I have explained the reasons for deciding to set a date for winding up the Association's assets as there will come a time when we will no longer be in a position to manage these ourselves. Not to plan to handover our assets in an orderly way would be irresponsible. Brigadier Mike Doyle in his review of the Association's activities recommended 2010 as a planning date. This has now been extended to 2011 to coincide

with the termination of the current Museum lease at Clandon and it also happens to be the 350th anniversary of the Queen's Royal Regiment. The planning date is reviewed annually and so could change.

When we wind up and handover our assets to new management I expect the annual reunion at the Union Jack Club to continue although this will be organised by the PWRR and not ourselves. I also expect the Branches to continue until they decide individually that the time has come to wind up. So the Association of people will continue, as always foreseen, for as long as possible.

On the planned wind up date in 2011 we estimate that we will have, on current stock market performance, around £1m for disposal. The Trustees will use this money to provide an endowment to meet the continuing needs of benevolence which will be administered by RHQ PWRR. They also plan to set aside money to endow the Museum, our regimental chapels and other memorials which perpetuate the name of the Regiment including the memorial on Putney Heath.

With my best wishes

Bob Acworth

#### Association Finances (by Col A C Ward, Finance Sub-Committee Chairman)

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity's finances are controlled by the Charity's Trustees who approve the annual budget and grants. More detailed oversight on their behalf is exercised by the Finance Sub-Committee which reports formally to the Trustees twice a year. The accounts are audited and a formal return submitted to the Charity Commissioners each year. The Museum is a separate Charity with its own Trustees; it has its own funds but has received financial support from the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity.

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity's income is primarily provided by returns generated by its substantial investment portfolio. This portfolio is based upon charitable funds which were built up by the Regiment and its forebears. Professional advisers assist the Finance Sub-Committee and Trustees in managing the portfolio.

Like many other charities, the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity was affected by the decline in the stock market during the last 3 years. Unfortunately this happened to coincide with a period of heavy capital expenditure on the refurbishment of the Regimental Museum and on costs associated with the renewal of the lease which together total over £375,000. Overall the Charity's investment portfolio, which had been worth about £2,790,000 at its peak, was valued at £2,114,612 at the beginning of 2002, £1,812,600 at the beginning of 2003 and stood at £1,866,747 at 31st August 2003.



Recent years have also seen a decline in the returns from investments which has contributed to the reduction in the Charity's annual income.

The 2002 audited accounts show an income of £108,815 of which just over £78,000 was interest on investments and cash deposits. Audited expenditure was just under £259,000. Major items within this included: over £120,000 connected with the museum; £36,435 on individual benevolence cases; £16,848 disbursed on behalf of the Army Benevolent Fund; £16,296 connected to the Newsletter; £3,325 for wreaths and funeral representation; and £6,939 for the marquee reception after the Annual Church Service. £35,840 was spent on the management and administration of the Association: this expenditure included salary and pension contributions, auditors and accountancy fees, office costs such as those for stationery and postage and the telephone, travel expenses, and all the work involved in running the Association and arranging its events during the year.

In managing the investment portfolio and controlling expenditure over the coming years, the Charity's Trustees will continue to look to the future so that, as outlined by the President, when the Association ceases to exist in its current form endowments can be provided for continued benevolence and for the museum, the regimental chapels and other memorials. We would hope for, but are not assuming, a recovery in investment values over coming years.

o o o

### The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (by Maj A J Martin)



The past year has proved how we as a Regiment are now a cohesive, tight, professional group that takes anything that is thrown at it. The combination of the Iraq war and the firemen's strike put great strain on planning at all levels and all departments. I don't think the modern civilian of today, who only has to worry about debt and what terrible TV programmes to watch next, has any idea of the somersaults that the battalions had to perform to fit in with the fluid political decisions. It was all achieved with true professionalism and humour and great flexibility - but some times short-term gains hold problems for the future.

The 1st Battalion returned from Kosovo and leapt straight into the firemen's strike (Op Fresco). It was a frustrating time as the Battalion was desperate to get on with training. As the CO put it "we played our part, we enjoyed those elements that were different experiences and we saved South London and Northern Ireland from

the holocaust that would have occurred had we not been there to prevent it with our state of the art equipment (i.e. The Green Goddess)!"

The Battalion went to BATUS (Canada) in August and returns in November. They have had to attack, defend, delay, advance, and cross obstacles by day and night. They have been gassed, mined, shelled, kept without sleep and irritated by sanctimonious directing staff who display mystical powers of hindsight. The Battalion is in good form and now ready to deploy to any war that may require armoured infantry. They continue to be based in Tidworth.

The 2nd Battalion exists for only one reason, to conduct operations and they have been continually involved since the last edition. They are at present on a 6-month tour in Northern Ireland. The Op Fresco fire fighting commitment lasted for over eight months and immediately afterwards the Battalion was into Northern Ireland training ready for deployment in June 2003. The Battalion was unique when soldiers were deservedly rewarded for bravery during the firemen's strike. Four OR's were awarded the Queen's Commendation for Bravery and two CinC's commendations.

In May the Battalion received a visit by the Colonel in Chief. This visit took place on Albuhera Day (May 16) at Lydd during the Battalion's NI training. It was an excellent visit and enjoyed by everyone. Northern Ireland is a strange mixture of the familiar and unfamiliar. The possibility of elections and the restoration of the power-sharing executive occupy the local political agenda. Economic investment and confidence is much in evidence. Whilst the public expect a diminishing military profile, dissident republican and loyalist para-militaries have continued to pose a threat to stability, life and property. The Battalion returns in December 2003 and is based in Ternhill,



*The Colonel-in-Chief visited the 2nd Battalion on May 16th at Hythe during their Northern Ireland training. The picture shows Her Majesty with Lt Col Julian Clover the Commanding Officer.*

The 3rd Battalion has had a busy period. They have been involved in both the major operations in Afghanistan (Op

Fingal) and Iraq (Op Telic), not as a battalion group but in formed groups of section or platoon level. Soldiers are still preparing for mobilisation as the Op Telic requirement continues to grow.

In addition they have been preparing their response to a civil disaster. In the event of a problem Battalion HQ plus staff revert to HQ Civil Contingency Reaction Force in support of the emergency services. This is a very real role for the TA and has brought a new array of skills to be learnt. In between all the activities Battalion life continues with Annual Camp (Sennybridge) and Cambrian Patrol Competition to name a few. With all these real life commitments the Battalion has a professional 'buzz' about it and is in fine form.

The two independent companies of B Company of The London Regiment and C Company of The Royal Rifle Volunteers are also deeply involved with providing men for Afghanistan and Iraq. Gone are the days of a pint at drill night. There is now a commitment and obligation to follow the 'brown envelope' that signals compulsory call-up.

In summary the Regiment is in excellent form and meeting the daily challenges thrown to it.

o o o

### Museum Notes - October, 2003.

Writing these notes early in October in an attempt to meet the Editor's deadline, I can report that your Museum has had a successful 2003 season to date. Once again, though, the bigger news items are about people.

The Ministry of Defence recruitment process for our new 'Museum Attendant' to succeed Penny James followed a very slow course, but we were delighted that Samantha Higgs, who had been working part-time at the Museum on secondment from the National Trust, applied for the post and was appointed in June after competitive interview. Known to us all as Sam (and with our job title of 'Curatorial Assistant'), she is now well settled in and the Museum again has a full and effective team with Roy Harding and our band of trusty Volunteers.

One thing that has not happened, though, is for a volunteer to come forward to help get a 'Friends' group off the ground. This is important for the future of the Museum; I am sure the ideal person (or persons) is out there somewhere, so please do make contact!

The other major change has been the retirement of David Brock-Doyle from his post of Property Manager for the National Trust at Clandon Park and Hatchlands and, therefore, as a Trustee of the Museum. The Museum owes David a considerable debt in both those roles, between which he trod successfully a careful line. His wise advice and assistance will be long remembered, and we said an affectionate farewell to him at a small lunch party in July, hosted by Brigadier Bob Acworth. On the same occasion, we were delighted to meet David's

successor as Property Manager, Julie Lawlor, and are looking forward to working with her in the years ahead.

The presentation of Lt. Col. Bushell's medals at a happy gathering of all his present-day family made it to the picture pages and editorial of the last Newsletter, but was too late for the Museum Notes, so it should be recorded that the Museum was very grateful to the family for their generous and important gift, and that the medals are now on display near the VC exhibition at the Museum. Later, in September, at another family occasion, we were fortunate to be presented by his sons with the medals of Captain Maurice Strode DSO, another of the Regiment's Great War heroes; these medals are now on display in the main medal case.



*The Museum Chairman accepts the medals of Capt M Strode DSO*

This Autumn Sam Higgs has mounted a small special display to mark the 60th anniversary of the Salerno landings, in which the Regiment played such a large part. This will run to the end of this season, but Sam and Roy are putting together plans for more special exhibits and events at the Museum for the next year or two, some quite low-key but some more ambitious; watch this space for details, and please support these when they come.

The Web Site is now well-established under Lt. Col. Les Wilson's guidance, but work is going on and Les would welcome ideas and comments.

Planning for the longer term is proceeding slowly, as is appropriate, but discussions are well in hand with the Surrey History Centre at Woking (alias the Surrey County Records Office) for the transfer of our archives to their state-of-the art facility in Goldsworth Road. This would assure their expert conservation in ideal storage conditions, and availability for public reference for the foreseeable future. More on this next time.

Finally, congratulations to Derrick Whiting who has won one of the Royal & SunAlliance Community Project Awards 2003 in recognition of outstanding work undertaken on behalf of the Museum.

Adrian Birtles

## Benevolence

During the period to 31st August a total of 98 cases were investigated and 58 individual grants-in-aid were approved. In the majority of cases the grants were for household expenses, debts and rent arrears. The Association helped to provide 14 further electrically powered vehicles and contributed to 2 convalescent holidays. During the year we have also assisted members who are cared for by the Ex Services Mental Welfare Society, War Pensions Agency, Combat Stress and the Ex Services Fellowship Centres.

The Regimental Charity paid out £20,874 as individual grants-in-aid during the first eight months of 2003. Of the 40 cases not receiving a grant, local Councils/Charities or other Regimental Charities assisted 22 after we had contacted them. Eight cases were not receiving such allowances as attendance, mobility or rent rebate. Twenty one Army Benevolent Fund (ABF) Annuities were administered and the ABF generously contributed £50 per month per case. During this period we have renewed or arranged for 3 Nursing Home Fees grants, each of £624 from the ABF and £154 from the Association per year, to be paid for our old soldiers or their widows to be looked after. We have one resident in Gifford House. The ABF total grants in support, which are in addition to the monies paid by the Regimental Charity, were £14,472 (including 3 sets of nursing home fees).

We are extremely grateful to Major John Rogerson at RHQ PWRR for his continued benevolence work on behalf of the Association. Thanks are also due to the ABF which is always helpful with prompt action and advice. SSAFA, Forces Help Society and The Royal British Legion investigate the majority of our cases and we are particularly grateful to their caseworkers for all their assistance.

Appended below are extracts from a selection of letters of appreciation received since the last Newsletter.

**A SSAFA Forces Help officer writes:** I have just received your cheque for £500 towards Mrs A's household expenses. She has asked me to tell you how grateful she is for the help of the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity; she will be writing in person soon. In the interim, perhaps you would pass on her thanks to the members of your Benevolence Committee?

I continue to be grateful for the care and support you give to your ex-soldiers; they would be in dire straits without you. I will, with much pleasure, keep you in touch with Private A's widow for as long as you wish.

I would like to thank you most sincerely for the grant of £500 for the shower. It will be a godsend for me and my

wife as we could not get in or out of the bath. I was very interested to read the Newsletter. Thank you all and God bless you.

**A SSAFA Forces Help officer writes:** I am sorry to be so late in responding to your most generous donation of £500, but it is only recently that it all came together and the sum of £4,087 was collected.

Mrs B is now in possession of a four wheel Rally EPV scooter; she has been taught to drive and manoeuvre it. This has brought her into contact with more people; in fact one lady calls on pension day and walks along side her to the Post Office. The bay windows are due to be installed in the second week of August. Welfare Rights were asked to call on Mrs B, and as a result she is now on the high rate of Attendance Allowance, and welfare is now checking on further allowances for her. Perennial, the Gardeners Royal Benevolent Fund, have also given Mrs B an annuity of £780 per annum paid quarterly.

I have told Mrs B that the grant was made by the Queen's Royal Surreys Regimental Charity. Once again I thank you and your President and all your Trustees on behalf of myself and Mrs B, and may I say it is wonderful when all different bodies get together, and as a result in this case Mrs B has freedom to get about again.

Thank you very much for the cheque for Mr C from the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity. I know he will appreciate it. I have informed him and sent him the Newsletter.

I have heard from the SSAFA officer telling me that he has heard from the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment who have granted me £400 towards household expenses (I had applied for a pension through the Veterans Agency). I have recently had to meet large bills to rebuild a dividing wall between properties and also to crown trees.

As SSAFA's news was 'out of the blue' I cannot thank the Regiment enough - or rather the Association - but do so most sincerely for their generosity.

May I take this opportune moment to thank you for the most generous donation for my motorised wheelchair. Being unable to leave my premises for several months owing to the loss of my left leg, you will no doubt appreciate what a godsend the chair has been to enable me to get out and about again. Thanking you once again.

Please accept my grateful thanks to your Benevolence Committee and the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity and those concerned in getting me the grant of £500 towards repairs to my mobile home. Thank you also for the copy of the Association Newsletter which I have enjoyed looking at and reading with both its historical and recent information. I would indeed like to keep in touch.

May I express my thanks for the cheque you sent via the local SSAFA to enable me to buy a pair of leg splints to keep me walking. I would not be able to carry on a normal life without them and would be armchair bound. The cheque went off to the suppliers today and will enable me to keep going. Once again thank you very much.

Thank you for your contribution towards a stair lift for my wife. She is on oxygen and without it had great difficulty getting upstairs. We are both OAPs now and did not have the financial resources to buy one.

**A SSAFA Forces Help officer writes:** I would like to thank you and the committee very much for the cheque for £500 towards house maintenance for Mrs D. She was 'over the moon' when I telephoned her to give her the news!

### The Army Benevolent Fund (Surrey Committee)

The Surrey Committee of the Army Benevolent Fund (ABF) are urgently seeking new members to join the Committee. Members do not have to have been officers (a common misconception) and NCOs and women members would be especially welcome. Indeed it is not even a requirement of membership to have served in the Services at all.

The Committee meets about four times a year for the purpose of planning fund raising events in the County. These events vary from, for instance, Band Concerts and Historical talks to a Team Challenge Competition for business and commercial firms and, next year, a Sponsored Triathlon.

The ABF is the Army's National Charity, committed to the support and welfare of Soldiers and ex-Soldiers, and their families, in need. The ABF works in conjunction with Regimental and Corps Benevolent Funds and other Service charities in identifying, investigating and giving financial support to those in real need. The Fund pays out about £300,000 a year in Surrey alone and some £4.5 million nationally.

For further information about joining the Committee please contact one of the following present Committee members: Keith O'Callaghan (01483-487289), Nick

Prideaux (01252-340421), David Robinson (01483-773425), David Swinburn (Chairman) (01483-421436) or Paul Thomas (Secretary) (01276-412990)

### Warrant Officers and Sergeants Association (by John Izant, Chairman)

This half-yearly report is quite bright considering the trials and tribulations of the years for many of our members. Obviously time does take its toll. Cliff Martin, a committee member for 26 years, is no longer able to drive due to failing eyesight and his wife has been in poor health recently. Frank Peters has had to go into a home after many months of poor health. It is good to report, though, that his affairs have been taken care of by Mick Etherington. Mick is in the process of assuming the welfare duties of Tony Ramsey MM because Tony is not as mobile as he used to be. Sadly we must report the loss of Paddy Coughlan who was always a smiling face at Annual Reunions and, until recent years, at our Association AGMs.

In June we were represented at one of the Southern Counties largest parades at Weymouth, Dorset, in the form of several all ranks led by the Standard Bearer, Mick Etherington, who also attended several other parades.

In August the committee decided that we should have a repeat performance of our last, very successful, Dinner Evening. This event took place on 20th September with 30 members and wives attending. Although slightly less formal, we did have the traditional Loyal Toast and Toast to the Regiment proposed by the Chairman John Izant, and the Vice-Chairman Tony Ramsey proposed the toast to "Absent Friends and Past members". Having enjoyed a cracking meal we then set about depleting the Conservative Club's bar stocks. Jokes and anecdotes were in full flow until about 2200 hours, when the party started to break up - not through inebriation, I hasten to add.

While our monthly social meetings continue to flourish, we still look forward to increasing our ranks. So if anyone knows of an ex-Surrey/Queen's Surreys man, particularly in the area of Kingston and Surbiton, please put them in touch with either our Secretary Peter Henman, or with our Chairman John Izant ( Tel: 01252 378707).

For the remainder of 2003, we are looking towards Remembrance Sunday, our prestigious annual event The WOs' and Sgts' Christmas Draw (November 29th), and British Battalion Night (December 20th). On behalf of the Committee and members of our organisation, may you all enjoy a healthy, peaceful and happy Christmas and New Year.

**[Page missing]**

**[Page missing]**



and one of the Afghan children's favourite pastimes is back - gaily coloured kites fly everywhere.

However, there are undercurrents. The Pashtun tribe [known to the officers and men of the 31st and generations of British soldiers as Paythans] are the largest tribe in Afghanistan and traditionally have held sway in the capital. However when the Coalition forces, American and largely Tadjic tribesmen from the Panjshir, moved from the north and drove the Taliban from Kabul many Tadjics stayed - expecting and obtaining influential jobs in the new administration - reward for helping defeat the Taliban. This causes unrest amongst the Pashtun and there are many mutterings. Although the President, Hamid Kharzai, is a Pashtun he is considered by many of that tribe to be an American 'implant'. Further one of the most influential figures in his cabinet is Mohammad Fahim, a Tadjic and ex Panjshiri warlord. He is unpopular, to say the least, with the Pashtuns.

Outside Kabul there are major security problems. Whilst we were there we heard of two incidents outside Kandahar where Indian aid workers had been shot. In the north too, near Mazar-I-Sharif, The Save the Children Fund told me about two incidents in which their aid workers had been fired upon. It appears that the warlords are re- asserting themselves in their tribal areas. Dhostum in Mazar, Hazarat Ali in Jelalabad, Ismael Khan in Herat and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar on the Pakistan border to name but a few.



*The outskirts of Kabul reflects the ravages of war*

ISAF are largely involved in security in the Capital but outside it is cowboy country. In the mountains on the Pakistan border Special Forces and Afghan tribal warriors still hunt the Taliban. The final chapters on conflict in this war weary country have yet to be written.

We discovered that buildings were not the only things blown up in Kabul. So were the prices - inflated beyond recognition. Carpets and items of interest for sale in Chicken Street - the hub of the Grand Bazaar - had increased ten fold. This is due to the huge influx of comparatively well paid UN and Aid workers and ISAF soldiers. In seeking souvenirs many thought they had obtained a bargain by paying half the initial price asked. One quarter would probably have been too much! In the

guest houses too prices have blossomed. We paid sixty dollars US a night for a very modest room indeed; it would have been about ten dollars a very short time ago.

So there are two levels of wealth in Kabul. On the one hand are the UN, ISAF and foreign workers plus those Afghans in positions of authority and those in business or trade; on the other hand are the majority who have little or no money and some are on the brink of starvation.

There is one picture that we will not forget. At the end of our visit and on the way to the airport we saw a woman lying in the street, a burka covering her frail body. She was beating her head and hands in the dust in utter desolation and despair. Behind the battered facades of bombed buildings there is still too much poverty and despair in Kabul.

We had a dreadful journey back by Ariana Air. The aircraft was six hours late in taking off and we arrived in the UAE late at night. However we were lucky. The flight out the day before had been aborted after the undercarriage failed to retract properly and the aircraft returned to Kabul and a belly landing.

But to get our difficulties into perspective a glance at the history of the Thirty First of Foot reveals that on the month long return march from Kabul to Ferozepore in India in 1842:

"... dysentery raged among the troops and many men died during the march. The hostile tribes, moreover, constantly attacked stragglers, detached bodies, and rear guards, and numerous casualties occurred. The Thirty-First were so unlucky as to lose three officers during this march..."

Maybe our journey wasn't so bad after all.

**Congratulations  
and  
Best Wishes**



**Congratulations to:-**

Bill and Bunty Spickett who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on 17th July 2003

Tony and Elsie Ramsey who celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary on 11th August 2003. Birthday congratulations are also due to Tony who celebrated his 80th birthday on 19th September 2003.

## Salerno Revisited (by Brig Geoffrey Curtis)

On 9th September I attended a Reception at Montecorvino Airfield to commemorate the Salerno Landings. It was 60 years to the hour since I occupied the airfield buildings with my platoon. The Airfield was the D-Day objective of 2/6th Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment.

I was invited by Dr Angelo Pesce to be Guest of Honour at celebrations arranged by the Italian authorities to mark the 60th Anniversary of the Allied Landings in the Gulf of Salerno. Angelo was a schoolboy at Scafati when the town was captured by 1/6th Queen's during the advance to Naples, and has been a good friend of our Regiment for many years. The Campania Region, the Province of Salerno and the Commune of Salerno had worked together to arrange a splendid programme of events, which was in marked contrast to our own lack of interest in this historic occasion when the Allies undertook their first assault landings on the mainland of Europe.

I flew out to Italy on Sunday 7th September after attending a very successful special Reunion of 2/6th and 2/7th Queen's the day before at The Union Jack Club. After a most warm welcome from Angelo at my Salerno hotel on Monday morning we first went to the brilliant Exhibition arranged by Angelo at the Campania Regional HQ. It was mainly a collection of wartime photographs which, using computer technology, had been "blown up" to around 3ft square. Here we were joined by an Italian National Television crew who walked me around the exhibition talking about the pictures and relics, and asking about my memories and impressions. Not being used to this kind of thing, it was quite a taxing experience especially as everything had to be interpreted, their English being no better than my Italian. However, they were eager for more and asked Angelo if we could meet on the beach after lunch.

Not a lot has changed down on 56 Division's landing area except that there is now a road running right along the shore instead of the tracks we remember. The sea was rough too, with a strong wind and storm clouds over the hills north of Salerno, which could have caused havoc 60 years ago. But as we stood on the beach looking inland across the hinterland to that formidable ring of mountains enclosing the bridgehead area it all seemed unbelievably familiar. We stayed for some time with the TV crew absorbing my memories and rambling reminiscences.

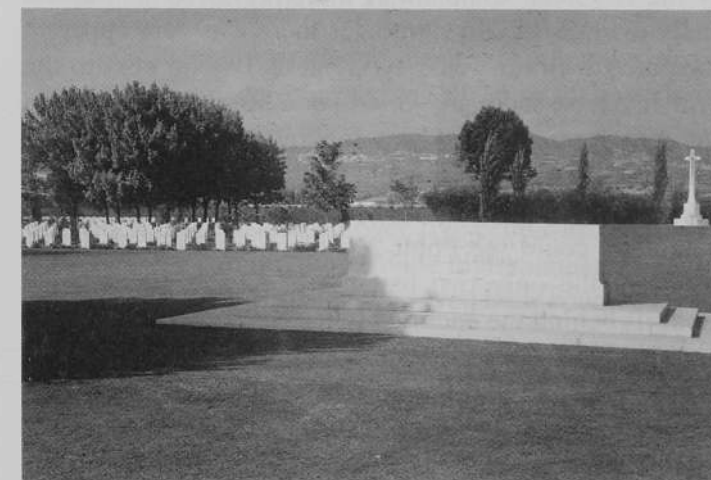
As on the day we were too far to the right near the mouth of the Tusciano, but I was pleased to find my way across to the 2/6th Queen's axis leading up to the Montecorvino Airfield. The vines, tobacco plants and tomatoes growing up their wires have now been replaced by an expanse of greenhouses growing strawberries, otherwise it all seemed much the same. The Airfield just to the right of the road was captured by 2/6th with sterling support from the first troop of the Scots Greys to land in the bridgehead.

Then on up to the level crossing and Route 18. But by then the Germans had begun to react and fiercely contested our advance to cut the main road. At about the same time 2/5th Queen's on the south side of the Airfield was strongly counter-attacked by tanks and Panzer Grenadiers, the forward platoons were overrun and by dusk, after suffering nearly 200 casualties, the Battalion had been forced back to within a mile of the beach.



*From 2/6th Queen's axis road looking North towards Faiano, September 1993*

With these sombre memories it was perhaps appropriate that we should move on to the British Military Cemetery beside Route 18 at Bellizzi. Like all our military cemeteries across the world it is immaculate and has an air of tranquillity. By now the TV crew had become like old chums and had quickly appreciated that the graves marked with the Paschal Lamb were special. So each time we came to a Queen's grave they would stop, and if it was someone I had known, it was good to be able to share my thoughts about him and perhaps help them to build up a picture of those days in the bridgehead where six battalions of our Regiment had fought ... and so many were still there.



*The British Military Cemetery Salerno, September 1993*

The time had come to move on. "I will pick you up at the hotel at 6.15" said Angelo. "We've arranged a press conference for local TV, radio and newspaper correspondents to meet you." This was held at the smart

Salerno Naval League club-house from which ships of the visiting NATO Naval Force could be seen anchored in the bay. The meeting was hosted jointly by the Prefect of the Campania Region and the chairman of Salerno Municipality, and attended by around fifty representatives of the media. "Thinking on your feet" is always exhilarating, but having every question and answer interpreted by someone whispering in your ear certainly spices up the occasion. The depth and variety of the questioning was fascinating and at times somewhat daunting, and I was enormously impressed by the knowledge and interest shown by representatives in the Salerno operation. That evening it became clear to me how important that historic event is to the Italian people when I was thanked as the senior representative of the British invasion forces for giving them their "Freedom and Democracy".

Indeed the following day this theme, this sense of purpose behind their many celebrations, ran through the official receptions. We went first to the Town Hall of Bellizzi in the heart of the 56 Division Bridgehead. Here the top brass of Campania Region and the Province of Salerno were joined by eight mayors each attended by their own Standard Bearer. The guests included the British Ambassador with his Military Attaché, the US Consul General, and representatives of the Royal British Legion and the Italy Star Association. Each speaker -- and there were several of them! -- referred to 9th September 1943 as the turning point in the history of their country, and to the importance of continuing to teach the children in their schools how the landings of the Allied Forces on that day led to the liberation of their country and the dawn of democracy.

It had become quite a motorcade that moved on from there with police escort to the British Military Cemetery for the Service of Remembrance, which was conducted by the Anglican Chaplain at the NATO HQ in Naples. Sadly the lack of Old Comrades there was very apparent compared with ten years ago. But as I stood next to the British Ambassador my mind soon strayed not just ten but sixty years back. I was looking straight at the hill villages of Faiano, San Tecla and Pugliano which 2/7th Queen's had captured on D+1/D+2, and over my right shoulder I could see Point 210 taken by 2/6th Queen's. We were the only two battalions to have got into the foothills behind the enemy, giving vital observation right across the 56 Division sector. Further in the distance I could see Monte Stella, where the whole of 169 Queen's Brigade was needed to clear this 3,000ft peak in the break-out battle before we could join our sister battalions of 131 Queen's Brigade in 7th Armoured Division to lead the advance to Naples.

"Our Father who art in Heaven," brought me back to the moment at hand. After the Ambassador, I placed my wreath with its Paschal Lamb centre-piece bearing the inscription

On the 60th Anniversary of the Salerno Landings  
Remembering All Those of The Queen's Royal Regiment  
who gave their lives in the Italian Campaign

9th September 2003

The exhortation was said by the representative of The Royal British Legion, the Standard was dipped, Last Post and Reveille were sounded, and the Italian Star representative gave the Association Exhortation.

The final official event of this great day of celebration and commemoration was a reception and buffet lunch at "our airfield", now unrecognisable as it is being redeveloped as a regional civilian airport. There can be no doubt that the 9th September is a day of real significance to the Italian people. Speaker after speaker reiterated similar themes... "There is no future without history".... "We owe our future in this country to the young men of Great Britain and the United States who fought and died here sixty years ago"..... "9th September 1943 was the beginning of Freedom and Democracy in Italy."

I felt immensely privileged to have shared the occasion with them, and to have represented the British Liberation Forces and in particular the six TA Battalions of our Regiment which contributed so significantly to this spectacular endeavour. I am only sorry that many more of those who took part could not also have been there with me. I am enormously grateful for the hospitality and friendship of the many Italians I met, especially to Angelo who made it all possible.

o o o

#### The Royal Hospital Chelsea - Into its Fifth Century

Few of those who watch the Royal British Legion's Festival of Remembrance each November can fail to be touched by the entry of the Chelsea Pensioners. The measured tones of 'The Boy of the Old Brigade' start as a contingent of scarlet clad old men slowly marches into the arena. These men are a national symbol that has come to represent tradition and service to the Crown.

The Royal Hospital (meaning refuge or shelter) was founded in 1682 by Charles II for "the relief of veterans broken by age and war". Still located in the original buildings designed by Sir Christopher Wren it is the home to about 350 former soldiers, who served in the Second World War and now more recent campaigns.

Admission as a Chelsea pensioner has always been highly prized. In the 18th Century anyone impersonating a Chelsea Pensioner could be sentenced to death or sent to the Colonies.

Today, to be eligible for admission as an In-Pensioner a candidate must be male and:

In receipt of a Service or Disability Pension awarded for Army Service,

Normally at least 65 years of age, and Free from the obligation to support a wife or children.

Applications are welcome at any time from any former soldier who is qualified. Currently, because of the accommodation available, it is not possible to admit women.

The Royal Hospital has always been organised on semi-military lines. Today the Governor is supported by the Lieutenant-Governor, the Secretary and nine heads of departments. Senior staff are mainly former regular Army officers or civil servants.

Currently the In-Pensioners are organised into six companies under the care of a Captain of Invalids. Each Company has a Company Sergeant-Major and NCOs drawn from the In-Pensioners to assist in its running.

Around 90 of the In-Pensioners work voluntarily as guides, chapel attendants, clerical, shop staff and museum attendants and in many other ways. They make a considerable contribution to the running of the Royal Hospital.

On arrival each new In-Pensioner is given a Berth in one of the 18 Long Wards (which remain essentially as they were designed by Sir Christopher Wren) and is allocated to a Company. The In-Pensioner surrenders his Army pension(s) and in return receives board, lodging, clothing and full medical care. Depending on individual need support for each In-Pensioner ranges from sheltered housing, through all levels of nursing care to providing a hospice.

In-Pensioners are encouraged to pursue a full and active life within the Royal Hospital. In addition to undertaking voluntary jobs In-Pensioners can enjoy many recreational pursuits including the use of a Club, amenity centre, television and snooker rooms, a library, an arts and craft centre, bowling and putting greens, and allotment gardens.

Trips are arranged regularly both within the United Kingdom and overseas, including Battlefield tours, to sporting events and visits to military establishments. In 2002 a party went to the White House in Washington and met the President.

Parades are now mainly limited to Annual Founder's Day, and the Governor's Parade which takes place on Sunday morning before Chapel. The salute is taken by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary or Adjutant with In-Pensioners from each Company on parade.

Holidays and leave of absence is freely granted for up to six weeks at a time, although an In-Pensioner must be in residence to Founder's Day for rehearsals, which take place in early June.

Within the confines of the Royal Hospital all In-Pensioners are encouraged to wear the Royal Hospital's informal uniform. On all official occasions they wear the famous scarlet coats, completed at ceremonial events by tricorne hats. This dress is a modernised version of the uniform worn at the beginning of the 18th Century.

The Royal Hospital's Founder's Day is held on a day close to May 29th which is the birthday of King Charles II as well as the date of his restoration as King in May 1660. The Parade is normally reviewed by a member of the Royal Family. During the course of this celebratory day the statue of Charles II in Figure Court is shrouded in oak leaves, and all participants in the Parade and spectators wear sprigs of oak leaves. This commemorates the King's escape from the Parliamentary forces after the Battle of Worcester in 1651. The statue was re-gilded in 2002 to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

The Royal Hospital has always been proud to have close links with the Sovereign. This continues strongly into the 21st Century. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has reviewed the In-Pensioners on Founder's Day on four occasions. The most significant Royal event in recent years occurred on 5th July 2002 when Her Majesty reviewed the Pensioners at Buckingham Palace and presented The Royal Hospital with its first 'colours', The Sovereign's Mace.

The Royal Hospital is now taking steps to ensure that it can continue to provide the most modern residential accommodation and care, yet maintain the fabric of the buildings and tradition of the past. This will require:

- A new Infirmary building,
- Improved accommodation in the Long Wards and better facilities for the In-Pensioners, also to allow women to be admitted, and
- Improvements to the grounds to maintain the quality of life and make it a pleasant place to live, work and visit.

Chelsea Pensioners are proud to continue a way of life and traditions established over five centuries. The Royal Hospital is committed to provide high quality residential care for old soldiers that have served their country loyally in both war and peace.

The Royal Hospital Chelsea is open to the public nearly every day of the year. Full details are published on the Royal Hospital website

- [www.chelsea-pensioners.org.uk](http://www.chelsea-pensioners.org.uk)

or ring 020 7881 5204.

o o o



Rex Williams writes from Canada:-

The May 2003 issue of the Newsletter arrived recently and the photograph of the WOs and Sgts Mess in India in 1946 on page 21 naturally caught my eye since I appear at the upper right of the picture! It reminded me that I have two other photographs of that period (1946-47), and since there may not be copies in your possession I had them copied and enclose the copies.

The first is also from India. The people in it are all in Battalion HQ, plus our 'char-wallah'. The other was taken in Dortmund in the autumn of 1947 and is from the visit of our Colonel, General Sir George Giffard, with the WOs and Sgts Mess. I have a fairly reliable list of the people in the second picture.

For the other, I have to rely on memory, and the ranks were often lower than those reached later. I hope they will be of interest. I visit England fairly regularly, usually in April to coincide with a conference held in Oxford, and I have been able to get to the Regimental Museum a few times.



India 1946

*Lt Petty, Sgt Cliff Beer, D Davies, "Kisham", S Fishman, D Greene, R Batts, Lt Champton-Jones.*

*J Titchell, A J O'Sullivan, M Bernstein, R Williams, P Coole, D Singleton.*

*Capt Maddams, Collins (?), D Langford, 2/Lt J Ramsden, S Brown, Bakewell (?), P Dudley, D Reeves.*

*(The anomaly was Stuart Brown (in the front row) who was an American who somehow had been diverted to the British Army. I think his family had been caught in England by the war, and he found himself called up. He was an excellent clerk!).*



2nd Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment, Dortmund 1947

*C/Sgt Cersell, Sgt R Williams, Sgt Alderman, Sgt Paston (?), C/Sgt Biles, C/Sgt Gill*

*Sgt Monk, Sgt Deacon, Sgt Jenner, Sgt Singleton, Sgt Drury, Sgt Philpot, Sgt Moore (ACC), Sgt Schofield, Sgt Borman, SSI Cosky (APTC).*

*Sgt Bernstein, Sgt ?, Sgt Cooley (ACC), Sgt Goodchild, Sgt Pfister (?), Sgt Duffey (Drum Major), Sgt Neeley, C/Sgt Elkins, Sgt Muskett, Sgt Lesser, Sgt Yardley.*

*CSM Baker, CSM Burn (?), RQMS Spence, Capt J F Hancocks, Lt Col L C East, General Sir George Giffard, Major Watson, RSM Noakes, CSM Cashford, CSM Herbert (?), CSM Cheeseman.*

*Absent: CSM Waldron, C/Sgt Fell, C/Sgt Andrews, S/I Salmon (RASC), S/I Mosely (RAOC), Sgt Bird, Sgt Rawlinson, Sgt Titchell, Sgt Adkins, Sgt Mitchell, Sgt Wall, Sgt Gibson (REME).*

*Editors's note:*  
The Museum photographic archive contains the India picture with a personality list which differs in some respects. The Dortmund picture is not in the archives. Any corrections or clarifications as to identities would be welcomed.

□ □ □

Service in the Canal Zone 1951-1954

The award of the General Service Medal (Army & RAF) 1918-62 and the Naval General Service Medal 1914-62 with the clasp "Canal Zone" has been approved. The qualifying service is 30 consecutive days in theatre from 16th October 1951 to 19th October 1954.

Where an individual has not otherwise qualified for the GSM the medal with clasp will be issued. Where an individual already has the GSM only the new clasp will be issued. However, should that medal have been awarded for service in a rank higher than that held in the canal zone, the GSM will need to be returned so that an appropriately engraved medal can be issued.

Medals/clasps may be claimed by the individual concerned, or if deceased by the immediate next-of-kin. Applications in respect of Army personnel should be made to the address below and include number, rank, full names, date of birth and Regiment or Corps. Details of service need not be included since the authorities will examine the individual's record, however full own address for return correspondence must be included. Applicants applying on behalf of those who have died will be asked for some proof of relationship in due course, however in such cases instructions from the medal office should be awaited and certificates etc should not be sent until requested.

Army Medal Office, Government Buildings, Worcester Road, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire, WR9 8AU

The words "Canal Zone" should be written on the bottom left corner of the envelope. In every case records will have to be checked to verify the claim and, if substantiated, prepare and issue the medal/clasp. Inevitably this will take time.



**A Visit to Ypres - Some Impressions**  
(by Maj R T W Mellotte)

Anyone who has ever 'done' the Ypres (or, indeed, the Somme) battlefields will have experienced the extraordinarily powerful emotions that wash over one trying to grasp the scale of the whole thing, particularly in regard to the death and destruction, the horrific conditions, and the raw bravery and heroism of those involved.

For a returner like me, the impact is only lessened slightly for one learns and sees new things on each visit. Escorting new visitors, as I was, is to be able to witness their incredulous reaction to it all. It was because I more-or-less knew my way around Ypres and to fulfil a promise that I found myself arriving back in that now immortal town with two friends, both of whose fathers had fought in the Great War. Turning into the beautiful Grote Markt on a stunning Spring day after driving through the flat, featureless plain that is Flanders and the drab outskirts is the initial surprise. Its exact reconstruction is an amazing feat in its own right and prompts consideration of the massive task of clearing up and rebuilding after the war, not to mention the finding and removal of the vast amount of unexploded and dangerous ordnance, bits of which still regularly emerge even today.

There is a great deal to see and a large amount of battlefield tourist material available with recommendations of what to include, but the 'then and now' photographs are especially interesting and evocative. Suffice it to say that we toured the main sites, and some others too, over two days. As always, the Menin Gate and its Last Post Ceremony is one of the most poignant and memorable experiences from just about every perspective - the solemnity, the silence, the large crowds of all ages, the reverence and, most especially, the seemingly endless tablets containing 54,896 names of those who have no known graves - and there are 34,888 more at Tyn Cot. It is very moving.

Hill 60 is obviously a 'must' for anyone with an East Surrey heritage or connection. Its untouched state and bunkers allow the ghosts of what it has witnessed to linger on and it demonstrates the small heights that the armies of both sides found to be vital ground and apparently worth the sacrifice of so many lives.

It was in relation to this part of our visit that I had the honour of laying a regimental wreath on the grave of Lt Col W H Paterson, CO 1 East Surreys at Hill 60. An account of his and his battalion's heroic exploits was given in the last edition of this newsletter (May 03) by Paul Chapman. All the Commonwealth cemeteries are immensely impressive and Colonel Paterson's last resting place, Bedford House, is no exception. Like all the others in the Salient and elsewhere, it is beautiful, peaceful and pristinely maintained.



*The grave of Lt Col W H Paterson*

To visit Tyn Cot, the largest Commonwealth war cemetery in the world with its 11,871 graves, is to launch into an absorbing sea of headstones. So named after Geordie soldiers' nickname for the area because of its similarity to their beloved Tyneside cottages, the site was the scene of ferocious fighting and also contains large bunkers that had to be neutralised during the battles for nearby Passchendaele, perhaps the most evocative name of the whole war. Most cemeteries are located at the sites of battles although some, such as Bedford House, mark the locations of field hospitals or dressing stations.

Each visitor will take away his or her own particular memories. One of mine is the occasion when a distant hillside field that had appeared to be covered in white plastic, as many sometimes are, gradually changed into a field of white headstones. In the battle areas, the cemeteries are as numerous as villages and are so much part of the landscape now.

On the way home, we visited Poperinge and Talbot House where so many soldiers of all ranks sought a few hours solace and R&R. We will remember them all.

**Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Golf Society**

Once again the weather was kind to us for our Spring Meeting held at Sudbrook Park Richmond on Thursday 8 May. We were pleased to be able to welcome Col John Holland, Maj Vic Ebbens and Eric Paton for their first Society Meeting and R Bowley for lunch.

27 members entered the various competitions and the ideal conditions resulted in some very good scores, notably Vic Ebbens 62, John Davidson 64 and Ron Green 65. The Harry Adcock Putting Trophy was keenly contested with Eric Paton, Tim Ross, Christopher Surtees and David Dickins forced into a sudden death play off after lunch, Christopher Surtees, with his long handled putter, prevailing at the 5th extra hole.



*Foster Herd checks the cards at Richmond*

After an excellent lunch the AGM of the Society was held with the Captain of the Society, CC Surtees, in the Chair and 25 members present. The prizes, as follows, were presented by the Captain:

**Senior Division Challenge Cup**

Winner Col John Davidson	73 gross
Runner Up Mike Power	75 gross

**Senior Division Medal**

Capt Brian Scripps	69 net
--------------------	--------

**Junior Division Dodgson Cup**

Winner Maj Vic Ebbens	62 net
Runner Up Maj Ron Green	65 net

**Junior Division Medal**

David Ford	69 net
------------	--------

**Heale's Memorial Stableford**

Eric Paton	35 pts
------------	--------

**Harry Adcock Putting Trophy**

Christopher Surtees	
---------------------	--

**Veteran's Halo**

Col Toby Sewell	49pts
-----------------	-------

**The Society Sweep Winners:**

1st Eric Paton, 2nd Richard Bing, 3rd Brig Bob Acworth.

The Autumn Meeting of the Society was held at Woking Golf Club on Wednesday 8 October 2003. We were joined for lunch by Richard Wells and Mrs Elizabeth Greatwood.

The course was in superb condition and the warm autumn day all contributed to an excellent day's golf, followed by the usual delicious lunch. The Society was pleased to welcome Maj Joe O'Gorman to his first meeting. 22 playing members was the best attendance for some years and we had some very good scores, with Col John Davidson and Maj Vic Ebbens again leading the field.



*Liquid refreshment at Woking Golf Club*



*The end of an enjoyable Autumn meeting*

In the absence of the Captain, the President of the Society, Mike Power presented the following prizes after the day's play:

**Senior Division Autumn Bowl**

Winner Col John Davidson	71 net
Runner Up Capt Peter Dorey	73 net

Junior Division Glasgow Grey's			
Winner Maj Vic Ebbens	71	net	
Runner Up Christopher Allanson	72	net	
Petri Plate Aggregate of Spring and Autumn Meetings			
Winner Maj Vic Ebbens	62+ 71 =	133	net
Runner Up Col John Davidson	64+71 =	135	net
Heale's Memorial Trophy Stableford			
Winner Maj Joe O'Gorman	35	pts	
Runner Up Senior Eric Paton	33	pts	
Runner Up Junior Barry Hoffman	32	pts	
Veteran's Halo			
Col John Davidson	36	pts	

The Society Sweep Winners

1st Col John Holland, 2nd Christopher Allanson, 3rd Mike Power.

2004 Society Meetings will be:

Spring Meeting- Thurs 6 May Richmond Golf Club

Autumn Meeting- Wed 6 October Woking Golf Club

**Q.R.S.R.G.S. v R.M.G.S. - North Hants Golf Club - 13 May 2003**

This year the Royal Marines fielded a much stronger side than in recent years. In fact their combined handicaps were 29 strokes lower than ours, with the outcome a victory to the Royal Marines by 7 games to 3, although many games went to the last hole.

Our star player, Mike Power, was undefeated, with Richard Wells halving in the morning, and with Vic Ebbens winning in the afternoon. Our other winners were Brian Scripps and Ron Green, and John Davidson and Tim Ross halving their morning game. The rest of the teams did not manage to score.

**AM**

Mike Power	7	½	Malcolm Hunt	14	½
Richard Wells	21		Sean Kean	9	
John Davidson	10	½	Max McCartney	8	½
Tim Ross	15		Bob Brown	13	
Brian Scripps	12	0	John Whelton	11	1
Vic Ebbens	22		Mark Thompson	19	
Foster Herd	20	0	David Hunt	19	1
Ron Green	24		John Francis	11	
Peter Dorey	18	0	Ian Hurdle	18	1
Christopher Surtees	14		Alan Gordon	16	
----	1		----	4	

PM Greensomes					
Mike Power	7	1	Max McCartney	8	0
Vic Ebbens	22		John Whelton	11	
John Davidson	10	0	Sean Keen	9	1
Richard Wells	21		Bob Brown	13	
Brian Scripps	12	1	Malcolm Hunt	14	0
Ron Green	24		John Francis	11	
Tim Ross	15	0	Pat Kay	26	1
Peter Dorey	18		Ian Hurdle	16	
Foster Herd	20	0	Alan Gordon	16	1
Christopher Surtees	14		Mark Thompson	19	
----	3		----	7	



**Douglas Bilbey writes from Canada:**

Does anyone else remember the air raids that were aimed at such historic towns as Canterbury in early 1942?

It was the Spring of that year that I was a teenage recruit under training at Howe Barracks, Canterbury. As East Surreys we were the guests of the Buffs, the Royal West Kents, and were at company strength billeted at the lower Barracks.

WW II was at a precarious stage. Dunkirk evacuation had just occurred and there were set-backs in North Africa with even worse news from the Far East. The USA had not entered the conflict and on the Home Front the main thought was “when and where would the invasion of our shores take place?”.

One night without warning the Luftwaffe struck. I remember a normal days drill and instruction, lights out at 10 p.m. and going off to sleep. All of a sudden all hell broke loose. There were explosions, flashes, smoke and shattering of glass over-shadowed by the scream of more

bombs being dropped and the dull continuous throb of the overhead bombers. Amazingly looking back there was no panic. Every man calmly put on his clothes and, as ordered by the platoon sergeant, filed out into the nearby trench.

I was a temporary, unpaid acting lance-corporal and as such ensured that my section was present and in the trench. As I myself raced to go into the trench I was forcibly thrown to the ground and lay beside a mound of earth some 6 feet away. All of a sudden there were shouts coming from the centre of the trench. It appeared that a number of men, or rather boys, were buried in the earth.

The raid on our area stopped as suddenly as it had begun and the attacking planes switched their bombing to downtown and the west of Canterbury. Having extricated unharmed some of our comrades, we were to discover that beneath them were the bodies of others. About five were dead and after digging out their bodies we had a roll-call. All but one recruit was accounted for. This young soldier lived nearby and it was assumed that he had gone to his home.

The night drew rapidly to a close. With all the excitement no-one had a wish to sleep. The following morning saw us clearing up the mess while some of the men were repairing the trench. The bodies had been taken to the make-shift morgue and it was my duty to identify them. It was the very first time that I had seen a dead person let alone ones so mutilated and disfigured. Numb and rather shell-shocked I returned to the Nissan hut to find the men, who had repaired the trench, sunning themselves on the sandy parapet. I ordered them to go inside the hut and to bed-down as it was likely that we would experience another bombardment that night. They all went into the hut followed by me. We had entered the hut when, without warning, there was a terrific explosion. I was thrown under a bed, catching my little finger on the sharp edge of a metal spring, the scar from which I have to this day.

It so happened that we had initially been struck by a time-bomb which had dragged our comrades into the ground in the middle of the trench, and it had now exploded some 12 hours later, leaving a huge crater and throwing the headless body of the missing man up onto the Nissan hut roof.

There was a post-script to the story. Some four years later my father was a Control Commission officer in Northern Italy. He went one evening to a particularly beautiful outdoor café and while dining became aware of a man at the next table who appeared to want to make conversation. My father asked him over for a liqueur and found out that he was a deserter at the battle of Anzio and was trying to make his way back to England. The man said he was an East Surrey, and when my father asked him whether he knew a ‘Captain Bilbey’, he replied that he knew a lance-corporal Bilbey who had been his

section leader as a recruit at Howe Barracks and who had ordered him away from the trench before the bomb exploded.

*(Any survivors of the Howe Barracks bombing can contact Douglas Bilbey via the Editor)*

**Gerry Patmore writes:**

First I would like to say how much I appreciated being allowed to carry the Queen’s Surreys Standard at the Regimental Church Service on the June at Guildford Cathedral. I am the Standard Bearer for the Enfield Branch of the Middlesex Regimental Association but have always wanted to ‘get my hands on’ the Standard of the Queen’s Surreys as I served most of my time with them.

I was a little disappointed by the lack of support from the junior ranks: after all it is our only Regimental Parade of the year, the others being ‘booze ups’. Good job we still have senior officers that care.

While I am ‘sabre rattling’ - although it is good to see so many from the Queen’s Royals and East Surreys, where are all of the Queen’s Royal Surreys? We ran from 1959 to 1966 and can only muster a hand-full of people. Most haven’t reached retirement age yet, but the mortgages must be paid-up by now, so there is no excuse. Get your sons to drive you to our functions, and then you can tell me how young I still look!!!

**Major H M Hare writes:**

You, and Les Wilson before you, produce an excellent publication whose periodical arrival we all eagerly await.

I enclose two photographs from my old albums which might stir some memories of the 1954 to 1957 Malayan period amongst your readers of that vintage, which you might like to publish when you have a space. They are both of 8 Platoon, C Company, 1 Queen’s, when I was the Platoon Commander - how young we all looked!



The one in swimming attire was taken at Pengerang in south east Johore in 1955, when we were on detachment there; standing, from left to right, are Messrs Cutmore, Jones, Butt, Clark, Martin, Hare [me], Simmonds and



Harding [now of the Regimental Museum at Clandon], and, in the front row are Messrs Morgan, Simmons, Durbridge, Olson, Morey, Potter, Tubb and Binfield.



The more military looking one was taken in 1956, in southern Johore, but I only have a few of the names. The majority of the groups were National Servicemen and they were all an excellent team.

#### A E Bartlett writes from West Sussex:

With reference to our telephone conversation of this morning, for which I thank you again for your patience and help, I now write to give details that I recall, hoping that, with the aid of your Association's Newsletter, someone may have news of my old comrade "Ted Fulker".

For reasons that I can't possibly explain here, I am aware that I have left it rather a long time to attempt this search, but I would be grateful for any help that your members can give me. I was serving with the 1st Battalion East Surreys in 1950, at Barnard Castle, as Corporal Bert Bartlett, B Coy, when I was posted as one of a draft of 96 to 1 Middlesex in Korea. When the draft assembled at Shorncliffe Barracks I first met Cpl Ted Fulker, whom I believe had been posted from the East Surrey Corps of Drums & Fife.

Subsequent to our service with 1 Middlesex in Korea, we were then attached to 1st Kings Shropshire Light Infantry, when they relieved the Middlesex on 13/5/51. I took a Section in D Coy, and Ted was given the duties of Post Cpl, handling the mail for the Battalion, duties that Ted carried out very well.

Ted Fulker was a married man with a family of no less than three children I'm sure, and by 1952 he had several years service to his credit in the Army. We returned home on the Empire Fowey about September or October 1952. I reported back to Mill Hill Depot of the Middlesex for the last few months of my Regular Service. I have no recollection of where Ted went after his leave. I have always assumed it was to Kingston on Thames, Depot of the Surreys.

I owe Ted Fulker, for the service of preventing an error being made, of me being reported Killed in Action in

September 1951, when a Pte Bartlett was brought into B Echelon with a Cpl's jacket draped over the body. Finally I hope these details may provoke some spark of memory in someone, if only to think, so that's what became of that so & so!

Please find the enclosed cheque as payment for the issue of the Newsletter you mentioned, and thank you again.

(Any information via Editor please).

#### Frank Turrell writes from Western Australia:

Some time back I did write that I had hoped for a chance to visit the war cemetery in Taiping, Perak. I have been able to do so and I enclose photos which are part of a group I took when there. My wife and I travelled by car from Pemang, having visited there via K L on a return trip from home.



We found the cemetery very well looked after, indeed one could say with loving care. It is a very pleasant run down by car, with plenty of older villages etc. I have also sent the museum some more of these as there may be living relatives who might be pleased to see them. Many of my own regiment (2nd Battalion The East Surrey Regiment) fell in that area. Some, indeed, close to me as we had trained together in Kingston as recruits in 1937, lived together, played together and fought together ..... so many memories.

Perhaps it may be possible to print one in the next newsletter? Then again, perhaps this late in time it may be 'old hat'.

#### Ron Harper writes:

I am enclosing photographs taken at a party at which I and Alan (Curly) Bennett celebrated the 49th anniversary on 19th August of our friendship which started the day we joined The Queen's Royal Regiment at Stoughton

Barracks. At the party we were joined by Mike McDonald (ex-7 Platoon C Company) and Albert Roskilly (ex-9 Platoon signaller), and by respective wives. The celebration took place on the patio of Alan's villa in Spain and a good day was had by all. Alan is recovering from a stroke suffered last February; I am sure his many friends will be happy to see him looking so well. We drank a toast to absent friends and send greetings to those still in touch through the Association.



L to R: Mike McDonald, Albert Roskilly, Ron Harper, Alan Bennett

**PAY ATTENTION  
CAN  
YOU  
HELP?**



Douglas Bilbey wonders whether anyone can remember the names of the sisters who were interpreters when he was serving with the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment in Greece late in WW II. Their father was a professor at the university in Thessalonika.

He also wonders if anyone can recall the name of the female officer who represented the Red Cross in Macedonia.

Mrs Daphne Hill, who is compiling a reference guide to the memorial plaques in the Regimental Chapel at Kingston, seeks a picture of Major George Spencer who was commissioned into 1/6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment in 1940. A group photo in which he appears

would be of assistance. Major Spencer was in charge of the guard of honour when General Alexander brought the King to visit the Division, however the Imperial War photographs are mainly of the 1/4th Hampshires since the King bestowed the Victoria Cross on one of their members.

#### Alex Wilson writes:

I am writing an account of the involvement of the 2nd Battalion the East Surrey Regiment in Malaya and Singapore 1941-1942 as I had two Great Uncles who both served in the Battalion during this difficult time. I have read a number of copies of your Regimental Association Newsletter and I would be grateful if you could publish my request to your members for any information regarding the Battalion, their time as POWs and in particular my two Uncles:

Sergeant Harry Frank Wilson 2027958 Orderly Room Clerk who died as a POW on 5th November 1943 and is buried at Kanchanaburi Cemetery and his younger brother Private Ronald Derek Wilson 2027921 who I believe survived the war.

Any assistance you or the Association can provide will be greatly appreciated. I can be contacted at the address, telephone number or email below.

(161 Skipper Way, Lee-on-Solent, Hants PO13 8HS

Tel: 02392 553249 email: alexwilsonptid@lineone.net)

Thanks are due to Major J L A Fowler TD for again generously providing the paper for the Newsletter.

#### Annual Church Service: Guildford Cathedral



Lt Cols Lowry and Swanson



# Regimental Deaths

*Biswell* - On 10th May 2003 aged 85 years, Corporal George Biswell who joined 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1939, serving until 1946.

*Branson* - On 8th September 2003, Thomas James Branson.

*Clarke* - In May 2003, George Edward Clarke whose service with the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment during WW II included North Africa, Italy, Greece and Austria.

*Collins* - On 7th July 2003 aged 83, Edward Stanley Collins. He enlisted in March 1941 and served with 2/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. Prior to his discharge in November 1946 his service included Iraq and Italy before being taken prisoner of war.

*Coughlan* - On 17th October 2003, "Paddy" Coughlan (see obituaries).

*Crozier* - On 9th September 2003, Peter Crozier. He joined as a boy soldier in 1962. He served with the Drums Platoon of the 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment and then with the 1st Bn The Queen's Regiment, including in Munster, Bahrain and Londonderry.

*Davis* - On 2nd August 2003, John Eastlake Davis. Commissioned as a National Service Officer into The East Surrey Regiment, he served with the 1st Bn in Germany 1956-1957. He subsequently attended Pembroke College, Cambridge and became a solicitor. He was a Partner and Senior Partner before his retirement in October 1994.

*Dunne* - On 22nd October 2003, John David Dunne. He served with the Intelligence Section, 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment during the Malayan emergency 1955-1957. Recently he was Chairman of the Friends of the PWRR and Queen's Museum and was Honorary Researcher.

*Eaves* - On 18th May 2003, Sergeant Robert Gordon (Rocky) Eaves. He enlisted into 2/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in March 1940. His service included Iraq, North Africa, Yugoslavia and Italy prior to his discharge in December 1946.

*Fennell* - On 22nd August 2003, Sergeant John Fennell who enlisted into the 2nd Battalion The East Surrey Regiment in 1942. His service prior to discharge in 1947 included Egypt and Palestine.

*Fraser* - On 14th January 2003, aged 97, in South Africa, William Fraser who served with The Queen's Royal Regiment and the Royal Artillery during WW II.

*Gaffuri* - In February 2003 aged 85 years, Harry Gaffuri who joined 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1939, serving until 1946.

*Heagren* - On 7th October 2003, John Heagren whose service with the 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment 1955-1958 included the Malayan Emergency and the Singapore riots.

*Hill-Smith* - On 3rd October 2003, less than one month after admission to the Royal Star and Garter Home, John Victor Hill-Smith. He enlisted into the 2/6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment in June 1940 and served with the Regiment until December 1943. He subsequently served with the Durham Light Infantry and the Royal Army Service Corps prior to discharge in May 1946 when he had attained the rank of staff-sergeant.

*Houghton* - On 10th May 2003, Stanley Houghton. Having enlisted for Boy Service with the Cheshire Regiment in 1938, he transferred to the Royal Warwickshire Regiment in 1942 and then briefly to the East Surrey Regiment before joining 2/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment with whom he took part in the Salerno Landings. From October 1943 to March 1944 he served with 169 Bde HQ Patrol Company, then returning to 2/6th Queen's with which he served until December 1944. He returned to the Cheshire Regiment and in 1946 transferred to the Middlesex Regiment with which he remained until his discharge in March 1954.

*McCririck* - On 28th July 2003, aged 79 years, Bruce McCririck. Having enlisted into the 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1943 and seen service in Burma and India, he was commissioned into The Queen's Royal Regiment in December 1945 and attached to the Indian Army. Returning to the UK in September 1946, he reverted to The Queen's Royal Regiment until demobilised in September 1947.

*Marshall* - On 17th February 2003, aged 89, Len Marshall who joined the 2nd Battalion The East Surrey Regiment in North Malaya in March 1941 and was subsequently taken prisoner of war by the Japanese. (see tribute poem under obituaries).

*Michell* - On 3rd September 2003, Major Allan Edwyn Dennis Michell. Commissioned into The East Surrey Regiment in 1938, his military service included periods with the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment, with 1/6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment in Italy and with 4th King's African Rifles. He retired from The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment in 1960.

*Miller* - On 18th August 2003 aged 84, William Miller who served with 1/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

*Morton* - On 23rd June 2003, Stanley Morton who served with The East Surrey Regiment.

*Nethercot* - On 4th June 2003, aged 82 years, Francis Richard Nethercot. Having enlisted into 6th (Bermondsey) Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1938 as a territorial, he transferred to 2/6th Bn in 1940. In 1942 he was posted to The Palestine Regiment and in 1945 to the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. He returned to civilian life in 1947 having attained the rank of Staff Sergeant.

*North* - On 14th April 2003, Corporal Alfred Robert North who served with the 1st and 2nd Bns The East Surrey Regiment. He served in Malaya during WW II and was a Japanese prisoner of war.

*Pagani* - On 31st March 2003, R A S Pagani MM who served with the East Surrey Regiment.

*Parrish* - On 14th October 2003, Captain James Parrish who served with the 6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

*Pott* - On 3rd July 2003, Ernest Pott who served with The East Surrey Regiment.

*Reynolds* - In November 2002, Fred Reynolds who served with the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment.

*Ruffles* - In September 2003, Sergeant Danny Ruffles who served with 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

*Saunders* - On 9th October 2003, Eric Saunders who served with 2/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment during WW II.

*Sears* - On 28th March 2003, aged 84 years, John Sears. He enlisted into The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry in 1936. He transferred to The Queen's Royal Regiment after the outbreak of war, remaining with the Regiment for 7 years. His service included the Salerno Landings and the ensuing Italy campaigns until he was captured by the Germans at Savignano. After the war he returned to the grocery trade, becoming Branch manager of the Home and Colonial Store in Maidenhead before emigrating to New Zealand in 1957.

*Sewell* - On 11th May 2003 aged 59, Michael William John "Mick" Sewell whose service with the 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment and then the 1st Bn The Queen's Regiment included Hong Kong, BAOR and Northern Ireland before his discharge in 1970.

*Skilton* - On 27th May 2003, Sergeant Major H G A Skilton (see obituaries)

*Stokes* - On 30th September 2003 aged 86, John Stokes who served from 1939 to 1946 with the 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment and in Burma.

*Voak* - On 20th May 2003, Arthur Norman Voak.

*Webb* - In January 2003, Albert T (Bill) Webb. Enlisting in October 1940, Bill Webb served first with the Suffolk Regiment and then with the Norfolks before being posted to the Royal Tank Regiment in 1942. He joined The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1943 and served with 1/5th Bn during the Normandy invasion and subsequently through France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. He left the Army in 1947 with the rank of Sergeant, but rejoined shortly afterwards to serve with the Royal Army Service Corps. He was discharged in 1963 in the rank of WOII. In 1964 he joined the staff of the House of Commons as a Sergeant at Arms and remained there until 1988.

*Webb* - On 19th October 2003, Gerald Vernon Webb. Having enlisted into the 6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment in 1934, his subsequent service included a period with the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment. He was discharged in 1948 having attained the rank of WOII and served in France, West Africa, India and the UK.

*White* - On 27th August 2003, Major General G A White MBE, late The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment (see obituaries).

*Yeo* - On 10th June 2003, Colour Sergeant Owen Charles Yeo. Having enlisted into the Devonshire Regiment in July 1939, he was posted to the 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment at the end of that year. Prior to discharge in January 1946 he saw service with the BEF including Dunkirk, in North Africa, in Italy including at Salerno, and through France, Belgium and Holland following the D Day landings, and was awarded the Northern Command Commander's Certificate.

# Regimental Families

*Chitty* - On 15th August 2003, Eileen, beloved wife of Roger Chitty who served with 2/7th and 1/5th Bns The Queen's Royal Regiment.

*Frend* - On 28th April 2002, Mary, beloved wife of the Reverend W H C Frend.

*Hurl* - On 9th April 2003, Queenie Hurl whose late husband Leonard Hurl was killed in action on 8th August 1944 while serving with The Queen's Royal Regiment.

*Piggott* - On 20th June 2003 aged 85, Muriel Joan, wife of the late Major-General F J C Piggott.



# Obituaries

## Major-General G A White MBE



Gilbert Anthony White was born on 10th June 1916 at Kingston-on-Thames, the son of a Lloyd's broker who was killed in action in France in 1918. He was educated at Christ's Hospital and joined a firm of Lloyds brokers in the City. He enlisted in the Artists' Rifle, a London Territorial unit, in 1935, however, when the TA was doubled in

strength in the spring of 1939, Tony White was commissioned into the 6th Battalion The East Surrey Regiment. Having been called for full-time service on the outbreak of war, Tony White accompanied the 1/6th Battalion to France to join the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). He was appointed adjutant before the Battle of France in May 1940, a post he held until after evacuation of the BEF through Dunkirk.

He subsequently took part in Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of French North Africa in November 1942, as a staff officer with Headquarters 4th Infantry Division. This formation took part in the breakthrough to Tunis in May 1943 after which Tony White was recalled to England to attend the Staff College, Camberley. After graduation in 1944, he returned to the 4th Division as Brigade Major (Chief of Staff) of the 10th Infantry Brigade, of which the 1/6th Battalion was part, in Italy. The brigade saw a number of actions, including in the Liri Valley, on the shore of Lake Chiuse and in the Arno Valley. Tony White was mentioned in dispatches and subsequently appointed MBE for his service in Italy with 10th Brigade.

Having been sent as an instructor to the wartime Staff College at Haifa towards the end of operations in the Mediterranean theatre, in March 1946 he converted to a regular commission. In April 1946 he went to New York to join the UK delegation to the Military Staff Committee of the United Nations Organisation.

He returned to regimental duty in June 1948 as a company commander with the 1st Battalion The East Surrey Regiment. During this regimental tour he served in Salonika during the Greek civil war and later in the United Kingdom.

He held the appointment of Military Assistant to the Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff from 1952-54. Subsequently, having attended the Joint Services Staff College, he assumed command of the 1st Battalion The East Surrey Regiment in 1958 and went on to be the first

commanding officer of the 1st Battalion The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment following amalgamation in 1959.

Having handed over command in 1960, he served on the personal staff of Earl Mountbatten of Burma (then the Chief of Defence Staff) until 1962 when he assumed command of 56th (London) Brigade of the Territorial Army. He was Brigadier General Staff at HQ British Army of the Rhine from 1966 to 1969. Promoted to Major General in 1969 he was Head of the Joint Services Liaison Organisation in Bonn, retiring from the Army in 1971.

He returned to the City where he established a firm providing personnel consultancy for the Lloyds market, retiring after a decade. He was a member of the Council of Guide Dogs for the Blind 1972-1992 and was chairman of its financial and general services committee. He died on 27th August 2003 aged 87. We offer our sincere condolences to Joy, to whom he had been married since 1939, and their two daughters.

## The Reverend Canon Derek Landreth TD MA

*Colonel W E McConnell writes:*

Former members of 23rd London Regiment (TA) and 4th Battalion The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment (TA) will have been saddened to read the brief Obituary notice appearing in the last edition of the Newsletter.

My first knowledge of Derek was in 1959 when, during the period leading to the formation of 4th Queen's Surreys, I realised that the Padre to our new Battalion was also the new Vicar of Richmond, my home town. Finding I was both a TA colleague and one of his parishioners he jokingly assured me there would be no getting away from him in future! That, like many of his other promises, proved to be true and we remained in close contact until his sudden death in January.

At our first Annual Camp he particularly distinguished himself during an arduous Forced March and Shoot Competition by attaching himself in turn to each of the competing teams. This involved him in covering large parts of the course frequently and at speed, so he quickly got to know and earned the respect of the soldiers. He had learned his soldiering during the war, first as a private soldier in the Royal Corps of Signals and then as a Gunner officer in which capacity he served in the Burma campaign. The manner of his transfer to the Artillery gives a clue to his character. Apparently after weeks of idleness his Signal unit was inspected by the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, who asked Landreth what he had been doing, and was told firmly but politely "Wasting my time sir". When Churchill asked what he would prefer to be doing the reply was "To get on with this war". Very soon afterwards he was sent without any warning, but presumably on Churchill's instructions, to a Gunner OCTU. Posted to India he met and in 1943 married Joan, who was serving as an Army Nursing Sister in Calcutta.

After demobilisation, Derek read History at King's College, Cambridge and Theology at Bishop's College Cheshunt and was ordained Priest at Southwark Cathedral in 1948 where he met and formed a life-long friendship with the late Mervyn Stockwood the brilliant if controversial Bishop of Southwark.

Derek's post-war TA "career" started when as a Curate in South London in the early 1950s he joined the TA as Chaplain to 42nd RTR at St John's Hill, Clapham Junction. The Regiment reverted to an infantry role as 23rd London Regiment in 1956 and in 1959 amalgamated with 6th Battalion The East Surrey Regiment (TA) to become 4th Battalion The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment (TA). The new Battalion was lucky to "inherit" Derek as its Padre, and the very happy and successful amalgamation of the two units owed much to his experience and wisdom. He was a particular asset to successive Commanding Officers and, as an ex-officio member of the Mess Committee, contributed to the success of many Mess functions both during and out of Camp. As stated above, in 1959 Derek became Vicar of Richmond, Surrey. Soon after his induction, becoming aware that land on Richmond Hill formerly owned by the Church and intended for the use or benefit of the poor was about to be sold for redevelopment, he strenuously opposed the scheme in the pulpit and in the local and National Press and then in order to make his point to the Borough Council became a "temporary part-time politician" and won a seat on the Council. His aim was to try to secure the use of the land in question, or some of it, for the homeless or for low cost housing. His involvement in local politics was largely unsuccessful and a considerable disappointment to him, and he did not seek re-election.

In 1968 Derek became a Canon of Southwark and several members and former members of his various Corps and Regiments attended his installation service in the Cathedral. In 1969 the Territorial Army underwent further cut backs, and Derek was promoted to Senior Chaplain to the Forces and posted to one of the TA Field Hospitals in London. His TA service ended in 1975 and he became a Chaplain to HM The Queen in 1980, an appointment he fulfilled with charm, humour and erudition. His clerical appointments after leaving Richmond in 1970 were as Rector of Sanderstead, later Vicar of Icklesham, and Rural Dean of Rye until his retirement in 1988. Retirement gave him the opportunity to exercise his sense of adventure, and interest in world travel. This involved him in numerous long sea journeys, not in comfortable cruise liners but in container ships, oil tankers, and smaller commercial vessels, in several of which he was listed on the ship's manifest as "deckhand" or "steward"! On his 80th birthday he flew in a hot air balloon.

Derek's first wife, Joan, died after a long illness in 1985 and in 1986 he married Isobel. He is survived by her and

the four children of his first marriage, to all of whom we send our deepest sympathy.

## Sergeant Major H G A Skilton

Harry Skilton enlisted in 1934 at the age of 14, as a boy soldier, into the 5th Battalion The East Surrey Regiment (TA), following his father who was a serving RSM in the Surreys. In April 1942, he deployed with the 1st Battalion The East Surrey Regiment from Aldershot to Richmond, Yorkshire, from whence they marched 104 miles to Hoddon Castle, Ecclefechan, in Dumfriesshire, Scotland. While at that training camp he met Jessie Laurie who was later to become his wife.

In October 1942 he embarked with the battalion at Glasgow for an unknown destination - in fact they were to participate in Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa. Harry Skilton served with the battalion in Morocco and Tunisia, including the fierce fighting around Medjez-el-Bab and Tebourba in Tunisia. Having suffered heavy losses, a contingent from the battalion took part in the victory parade in May 1943 in Tunis with Generals Alexander and Eisenhower taking the salute. Shortly afterwards Harry Skilton obtained leave and on 29th June 1943 he married Jessie Laurie in Dumfriesshire. In future years they were to raise three daughters and a son.

Harry Skilton rejoined the Surreys and served throughout the Italian campaign, initially participating in the invasion of Sicily before moving with the battalion to join the operations on mainland Italy. Following the conclusion of the Italian campaign, he went on to see service in Greece, in Palestine and in Cyprus, as well as in Somalia, Tripoli, Tobruk, Germany, Aden and Hong Kong. While based in Aden he trained and coached the Combined Services boxing team which went to Nairobi for a tournament against the Kenyan team which was already famous at international and Olympic levels. Before the end of his army life he was posted for three years to the Outward Bound Training School in North Wales.

On leaving the Army after 31 years of service, he and his wife settled in the county town of Dumfries. Harry Skilton served with distinction as the Burgh Officer for the Dumfries and Galloway Burgh Council for 14 years. He became an active member of the National Mace Bearers Association, took up regular golf, fishing (both sea and freshwater), gardening and viticulture, and avidly followed most sports. Despite a number of ailments, including chronic emphysema and asthma, he continued for 20 years to travel widely with his wife, until four years ago when Jessie fell ill with terminal cancer, an illness through which he nursed her to the end.

Following her sad loss he remained as active and self reliant as possible, still following his exercise routine, gardening and doing all his own domestic chores. Harry Skilton passed away on 27th May 2003 after five days in

hospital. To his surviving family we offer our sincere condolences.

Sergeant Major Dennis “Paddy” Coughlan

Paddy Coughlan was serving with the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment when the film “The Four Feathers” was made and was amongst those who appeared in it. Shortly afterwards he was drafted to join the 2nd Bn which was on its way to Singapore. His service with that battalion included Singapore, Hong Kong, North Malaya and again Singapore before he was taken prisoner of war.

He worked on the Burma railway for 3 years before being embarked with other prisoners on a troop ship to Japan in 1944. While en route to Japan the ship was sunk. He was on the upper deck and was able to get into the sea where he spent several hours. He was then taken on to Japan and was working near Nagasaki when the atom bomb exploded.

After release he returned to UK in 1945. He remained in the Army and his post-war service included periods as an instructor at Howe Barracks, with The Queen’s Own Royal West Kent Regiment in Malaya, as an instructor at Aldershot and as CSM with 23rd London Regiment (TA).

After leaving the Army, Paddy Coughlan worked for the Post Office as a postman and training manager until his retirement at the age of 60. He died on 17th October 2003 aged 87 after a battle with cancer. His wife Flora passed away 12 years ago and he is survived by 2 sons and a daughter to whom we send our sincere condolences.

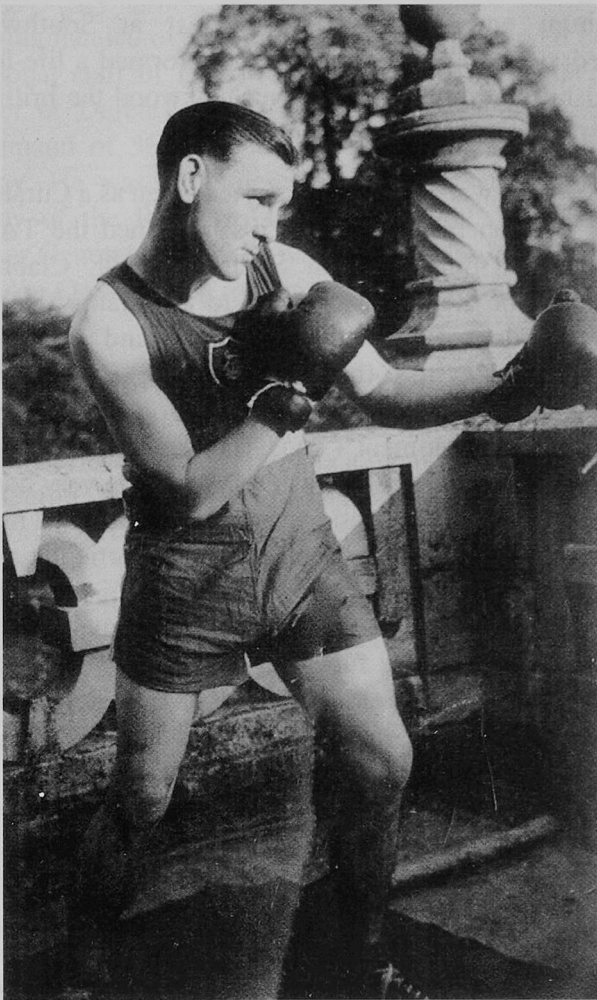
Jack Shuttle wrote the following poem as a tribute to his old friend Len Marshall who passed away in February 2003.

OLD BONES

Returning from the working zones  
I heard him quietly say  
“I’m thirty years old today  
And we’ll never make old bones”.

The year was Nineteen Forty Three,  
Our second in a long captivity.  
It was a hazardous campaign  
Building a railway to Moulmain.

Through virgin jungle and mountain range  
For some two hundred and seventy mile.  
No beds to sleep in, our skin a mange  
Pestered by scabies, bugs and lice most vile.



The late William Miller, battalion boxing team  
Doncaster 1940

In tropical heat, few clothes to wear  
Starvation diet, no medical gear.  
Sickness abounded at an alarming rate  
But all that mattered was the target date.

Cholera, dysentery, malaria, beriberi  
(Which caused a very distended belly)  
Pellagra and jungle ulcers racked our bodies thin  
All for the lack of some vitamin.

Sixty thousand working like slaves  
Completed the Line in just one year.  
Twelve thousand buried in shallow graves  
Never to return to those most dear.

We’ll never make old bones?  
Said long ago in solemn tones.  
For he was wrong, that pal of mine  
Who lived to the age of eighty nine.

The Gallantry Medallists’ League

The Gallantry Medallists’ League is second only to the VC and GC Association, and embraces all holders of second level gallantry awards, both military and civilian, and their families, within the Commonwealth. There is also a class of membership, Friends of the League, open to holders of Level three gallantry awards and their families who wish to assist the League in the furtherance of its aims. Holders of the gallantry awards below qualify for Membership :-

United Kingdom

Level II	Level III
Distinguished Conduct Medal	Distinguished Service Cross & Medal
Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (RN)	Military Cross & Medal
George Medal	Distinguished Flying Cross & Medal
Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (Flying)	Air Force Cross & Medal
Distinguished Service Order (when awarded for Gallantry)	Queens Gallantry Medal
Conspicuous Gallantry Cross	CBE, OBE, MBE & BEM (when awarded for gallantry)

Australia

Star of Gallantry	Medal for Gallantry
Star of Courage	Bravery Medal

Canada

Star of Military Valour	Medal of Military Valour
Star of Courage	Medal of Bravery

New Zealand

Gallantry Star	Gallantry Decoration
Bravery Star	Bravery Decoration

Associate membership is available to families and close relatives of award holders.

The aims of the League are: -

To help those in need.

To create, cherish and maintain the spirit of comradeship between League members of all classes.

To organise social events for League members and provide assistance to those who wish to arrange meetings and reunions.

To organise celebratory Parades and Musters for League members.

To provide through the medium of a Newsletter (published three times each year) information concerning the activities of the League and to provide the means whereby members can maintain contact with friends within the League.

For more details and an application form apply to:

Mr D Harper GM, Hon Secretary

The Gallantry Medallists’ League, 3 Orchard Close, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 2DF

Back cover:

Salerno Battleground: Enemy attempt to split Allied Forces 13th - 14th September 1943, courtesy of Defence Geographic Centre.

Inset: In Convoy to the Italian Mainland, and

The Grave of Corporal W E Dunn, buried in the British Military Cemetery, Salerno.



# Salerno Battleground 13-14th September 1943

