

NOVEMBER 2005

# THE QUEEN'S ROYAL SURREY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION



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NUMBER 78

## NEWSLETTER







## Forecast of Events

2005

20th December BRITISH BATTALION DAY (1941).

2006

10th February SOBRAON DAY (1846).  
 18th March The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association, Charity Trustees and Officers' Club Meetings - Clandon.  
 26th March Regimental Museum Open Day for Association Members - Clandon.  
 30th March The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum Trustees Meeting - Clandon.  
 20th April The East Surrey Regiment Officers' Club Lunch.  
 23rd April YPRES DAY (1915).  
 4th May Golf Society Spring Meeting – Sudbrook Park.  
 16th May ALBUHERA DAY (1811).  
 26th May President's Reception for the Mayors of Surrey – Clandon.  
 (date tbc) 5 Queen's OMA Annual Dinner – Farnham. Details from: 1 Chatfield, 13 Wood Road, Farncombe, Surrey GU7 3NN.  
 1st June THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE (1794).  
 11th June The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association Annual Church Service - Guildford Cathedral 1130 a.m.  
 1st August MINDEN DAY.  
 9th September SALERNO DAY.  
 2nd October The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Officers' Club Ladies' Luncheon - Clandon.  
 4th October Golf Society Autumn Meeting - Woking.  
 October (date tbc) The East Surrey OCA Reunion.  
 3rd November The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association Annual Reunion - Union Jack Club.  
 20th December BRITISH BATTALION DAY (1941).

### Editorial

As forecast in our last Association Newsletter, on The Glorious First of June Brigadier Bob Acworth handed over to Colonel Tony Ward the appointment of President of the Association, and therefore also his Chairmanship of our Regimental Charity Trustees. There was also change at the helm of the Officers' Club when Lieutenant Colonel Bryan Ray, having been the Club Chairman since 1989, handed over to Major Paul Gray after our Annual Ladies' Luncheon on 3rd October. Both Brigadier Bob and Colonel Bryan were presented with tokens of our appreciation at that lunch.

A number of the veterans of our forebear Regiments attended events in London earlier this year when the nation commemorated the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. We were strongly represented at Surrey's county service of thanksgiving to mark the 60th anniversary which was held at Guildford Cathedral in the presence of HRH Princess Alexandra. The cathedral was also the venue for our Association's annual church service when our predecessors' sacrifices were movingly recalled during an excellent sermon. The 60th anniversary has also been commemorated at a number of branch events and our Association will do so again at our Association Reunion at the Union Jack Club in November. For many, of course, the events brought back personal memories of the war years: a number of individuals have been kind enough to offer to share some of theirs and extracts appear in the following pages.

*Covers: The covers are a montage of some of the photographs from the Regimental Archives. Overlaid on the back cover are the Battle Honours awarded to our Regiments in the Second World War.*

*The 4th Battalion The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment (TA) in commemoration of its forebears' service as 42nd Royal Tank Regiment inherited the Honorary Distinction of a badge of The Royal Tank Regiment; this was borne on the Regimental Colour. This badge carried four scrolls; the first bore the dates "1941-45" and the other three the Battle Honours "North West Europe", "North Africa", "Italy".*



### President's Notes

My first notes for this excellent Newsletter will consist of thanking a large number of people on your behalf.

First, I must pay tribute to my predecessor Brigadier Robert Acworth, who has been our President for the last 10 years. Already, after only four months since I took over, I know the task is no sinecure! Brigadier Bob has ensured that the Association is on a very sound footing. We have some excellent reunions, a first class newsletter (thank you Tony Russell), a great museum and we still continue to provide a considerable amount of benevolence to our comrades in need. We can be very proud of our Association, especially when we remember that our Regiment ceased to exist nearly 40 years ago. Thank you Brigadier Bob for all your hard work, commitment and steering the association so well for the last 10 years. Special thanks must also go to Liz for all her support.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Bryan Ray for chairing the Officers' Club for the last 16 years. Thank you for all your hard work. Although he is not retiring (I hope) can I also thank our Chairman Lt Col Foster Herd for organising our golf meetings.

It has given me much pleasure to be present at many of our reunions - 6 Queen's, the East Surrey Reunions, our Cathedral Service and the always over-subscribed Association Annual Reunion at the Union Jack Club. All these gatherings help to bind us together and give an opportunity to maintain our friendships. Many ask me how much longer the Association will go on? The simple answer is as long as there is a reasonable attendance. Already the numbers at some events are starting to drop and at some time after 2011 we will hand our affairs over to RHQ PWRR. This has already been done in the case of The Middlesex Regiment and the Queens Own Buffs are in the process of winding up. So the message is: keep coming to all the gatherings, trace old friends and persuade them to come along.

Our thanks go to Major John Rogerson for administering our benevolence. Last year we paid out almost £53,000 to our comrades. Of this total about £21,000 came from the Army Benevolent Fund, to whom we in turn gave £4,000. If you know any of your former friends or their dependents needing help do tell them to contact RHQ so we can assist. That is what all our money is there for!

I do urge you all to look at our Association's website: [www.queensroyalsurreys.org.uk](http://www.queensroyalsurreys.org.uk); Les Wilson has done a most marvellous job as editor. It recounts our history, our museum and traditions brilliantly. I have not found a better Regimental website. Even if you don't know how to use a computer, get your grandchildren to show it to you. But leave plenty of time, as it is over 800 pages! When you have had a look, consider if you can help Les Wilson by providing other history, photos or even accounts of battles, which could be included.

Sixty years ago at about this time of year, the survivors of the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment would have been returning to UK from the Far East after 3 long years in captivity during which 149 lost their lives. The 2nd Bn The Queen's who served as Chindits remained in the Far East and India until 1947, whilst 1st Bn The Queen's who had seen service on the North West Frontier, Burma and Kohima moved back to UK after a short period in Malaya. 1st East Surreys were early into France, evacuated at Dunkirk, then onto the North African landings, Sicily and Italy.

Our Queen's TA Battalions fought in France, Western Desert, Salerno Landings, Italy with 131 (Queen's) Brigade ending the war in Hamburg before moving to Berlin. 1/6th and 2/6th Surreys deployed to France at the start of the war. 2/6th Battalion was forced to surrender at St Valery, whilst 1/6th went to North Africa in 1943 and then on to Italy.

In all 12 Battalions of our forebear regiments fought in major campaigns in every major theatre apart from Norway. A further 12 battalions were formed as well as the Home Guard. More than 3,500 from our Regiments were killed. Their names are inscribed on the War Memorials of Surrey, South London and elsewhere. They set us examples of courage and endurance, which have continued to inspire our successors to do half as well.

At our annual Cathedral Service on 5th June John Mitchell ended his excellent sermon (printed elsewhere in this newsletter) with the simple but very sincere words: "Thank you". Surrey is very proud of the wartime achievements of its infantry Regiments as is your Association.

With my best wishes,  
 Tony Ward



The new President (left) with Regimental Secretary PWRR and Major Russell



## The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment

(by Major A J Martin)



The Regiment continues to be in fine form and has been supporting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. After the plethora of bravery awards most people military and civilian have now heard of The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. The Regiment has now made its mark! We are not prepared to be complacent and everyone strives to be that little bit better.

The 1st Battalion is now well established in Paderborn in Germany. They are based in Barker Barracks which is an enormous old German Army Barracks. It was the main SS Barracks pre war and is rumoured to have a network of tunnels and vast chambers under the current roads and buildings. The Battalion share it with The Royal Engineers and REME. They are part of 3 Division and 20 Arm'd Bde. They have been on exercise to the Old East Germany to a training area near Berlin. They have also gone as a Battle Group (with Queen's Own Hussars) to exercise in Poland. Lt Col Mat Maer has now departed on promotion, and handed over to Lt Col Roger Thompson (ex RRF). At the end of November 05 the Battalion moves into TELEC training in preparation for their next tour to Iraq in April 2006. This tour is quite soon after their last one but all are looking forward to the challenge. Their tour will be TELEC 8.

An update on Pte Beharry VC. He is still 'Y' listed. This means that due to his injuries he is still medically down graded and is not allowed to serve with the 1st Battalion due to those injuries. He is continuously being treated at Headley Court and we wish him a speedy recovery.

The 2nd Battalion is still commanded by Lt Col Jon Wright. They had a very successful tour in Iraq from Jan to July 05. This was not in the Armoured Warrior role but in soft skin vehicles i.e. Land Rovers, etc. They had a platoon deployed in Baghdad which added that element of alertness as they were serving alongside the US Forces. They had a few wounded or casualties of road accidents who are still under medical care. After well deserved leave they are home preparing for the Arms Plot move from Ternhill to Ballykelly (Northern Ireland) on 12 December 05. They will complete two years there and then (at the moment) are scheduled to go on a two year posting to Cyprus. Whilst in Northern Ireland they will be part of the historic run down of the force levels to what it was pre 1969 - i.e. perhaps three residential Battalions. However we wait and see.

The 3rd Battalion is now commanded by Lt Col Adam Edmunds with Lt Col Tony Guthrie moving on promotion within the Territorial Army (TA) to full Colonel. The TA is once again going through re-organisation. The 3rd Battalion will inherit C Company which is based in Portsmouth and at the moment part of The Royal Rifle Volunteers. This change should be

effective in 2006. The Battalion will also form a fourth Rifle Company in Chatham & Rochester. This is an expansion for the 3rd Battalion. This year they completed a very good Annual Camp at Penally and were visited by their Honorary Colonel, Mr Alan Willett CMG who is the Lord Lieutenant of Kent. Over the period of the past two years 40% of the Battalion has deployed on Operational tours with some soldiers completing two tours. The Battalion has 31 soldiers deployed in Iraq with The Royal Rifle Volunteers and they return on 26 November 05. The TV scenes of the burning Warriors being attacked by mobs also featured members of this platoon.

### B Company and C Company

The two independent companies continue to provide manpower for operational tours.

B Company had a successful Annual Camp on Salisbury Plain and C Company went to Oakehampton. The TA restructuring leaves B Company still as part of the London Regiment and C Company will go to the 3rd Battalion. The Companies close involvement with operational tours and the professionalism required to meet the demands of modern day soldiering demonstrates how good the TA is. The modern trend is more to become reinforcement units as opposed to formed fighting units. This may be the way ahead.

In summary the Regiment's in fine fighting form.

### Museum Notes

These notes are being written at the beginning of October, with less than a month of this year's season to go. To date, it has been a good season for the Museum, with visitor numbers slightly up (which is better than it sounds, since total visitors to Clandon Park House have been slightly down); research enquiries continue at a high rate, but it is notable that ever more of these are being received electronically, with a growing number prompted by the Regimental Web Site. As ever, this has all been made possible by the efforts of the Museum staff, volunteers and helpers.

Perhaps thankfully, this has been a steady season without spectacular happenings, but there has been some good progress; notable here is the programme of "outreach" talks and small exhibitions which Ian Chatfield has organised, taking our Regimental story out to people who otherwise would be unlikely to hear or see it - it is planned to expand on this in the months ahead. Colonel Toby Sewell's talk at the Museum on "The War in Italy" was well-received, and the Open Day for members of the Regiment was better attended (and seemingly enjoyed) than for some years (NB the Open Day in 2006 will be held in the Spring, on Sunday 26th March in response to views expressed). On a more mundane note, but very important to members of staff, the National Trust's lift

has been completed and is in use, avoiding the 95 steps between the Museum and our store rooms.

An important development, which is likely to lead to an expansion of the Museum's activities, has been an offer of space in the new "Woking Galleries", construction of which has just started. Agreement has yet to be formalised, but there is every likelihood that the Museum will have an outpost and displays in Woking Town Centre before the end of 2007. This should fit well with the location of the Regimental archives at the Surrey History Centre, also in Woking. We have been pleased to hear too, that the History Centre is planning a thorough cataloguing of the Regimental archives, which would make them more accessible to would-be users than ever before.

In the immediate future, as well as the annual cleaning and conservation work, the Winter months will see a start on a complete re-assessment of the objects in our collection at Clandon, for the first time since the refurbishment of the Museum; this is a major task, but very important for planning. Another kind of planning to be done during the Winter will be the production of a new Forward Plan for the Museum, setting out our intentions for the next three to five years. Apart from being good for ourselves, an up-to-date Forward Plan is a requirement for a Registered Museum, such as ours. Looking forward to the end of the Winter, the Museum will open again for the 2006 season early in March; members of the Regiment may be assured of a warm welcome at any time the Museum is open - Telephone 01483 223419 if you want to check details.

Adrian Birtles

### Cathedral Annual Church Service

A number of those who heard the address given by Cathedral Reader John D. Mitchell, at The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association Annual Service, Guildford Cathedral, 5th June, 2005 said that it was amongst the best they had ever enjoyed and asked if it could be reprinted in the Newsletter. John Mitchell very kindly agreed and it is reproduced below.

"Words of Jesus from the 24th Chapter of St Matthew's Gospel:

*"Of two men in the fields, one is taken, the other left";*

and a little later on:

*"As for the day and hour, nobody knows it, no one but the Father alone."*

Whatever Jesus meant by these words at the time, those on the field of battle have no difficulty whatsoever identifying with them.

In the Regimental Museum at Clandon House a few days ago I saw the events of war embroidered into Regimental colours in the names of battle after battle. They are depicted in war paintings which capture a frozen moment of attack, or heroism, or terror. They are depicted in photographs and citations, in the recorded exploits of VCs and GCs and other ranks. And more harshly, they were recorded in the film footage showing in the museum of the succession of battles from the Normandy beaches to the fall of Paris. 131 Brigade of Queen's landed onto the beaches on D Day + 2; in succession the 1/5th Queen's fought their way on into Germany, and took part in the victory procession in Berlin in July 1945.

I was impressed by the records of gallantry. I was impressed by the seemingly universal presence of the Queen's and East Surreys. They fought in every theatre of the Second World War except Norway. But I noticed in it all how so much of the most terrible moments has been edited out. The medals gleam; the colours hang in all their splendour; the heroes hold places of honour. But the mud and leeches of Burma have gone; the inky blackness of the jungle has gone; the stretcher parties of Normandy have gone; the cruelty of internment for the East Surrey Regiment in Singapore is recorded, but softened; Changi has gone; the shell-shock has gone; the blood, tears and sweat have been replaced by smart uniforms, glinting steel. Stinking fear has been replaced by pride; squalor replaced by honour. Even in the film footage, more walk on to victory than die in the hedgerow; many stand, few are seen to fall. And we know it was not always so.

But a service like this gives us a moment to look over our shoulder. We, by some miracle, were left; but many were taken. And as Jesus suggested, without any discernible rhyme or reason, and you never knew the day or the hour, or why, or who. The same was true on the home front too; my wife's first home as a child in the East End docks went to the waves of Dorniers and Heinkels; her second home in Norbury went to the VIs; her school at Tennison Avenue went the same way. And I, a child survivor, was to marry a survivor.

It's just that afterwards, as the lists are called, we realise that we have made it - but they haven't. And the human spirit being what it is, we exalt the loss of life into "sacrifice for one's country"; and survival we call "privilege" rather than good luck.

But one element in our survival goes unembroidered - unaffected by spin or rose-tinting, or editing out: and that is our gratitude. The ugly results of war lurk all around us: in children, now themselves old, who never knew fathers, nor a father's role model; whose mothers had to do the work of both parents until, in turn, their day and hour came; in homes for those disabled physically or permanently scarred mentally. Some, in recurring nightmares or periods of deep introspection peer back into moments of hell. We can be nothing else but grateful

that we survived; were spared to celebrate victory; or perhaps to let VE day come quietly with a sense of unreality and the question at the back of our mind, "What Now?"

And just as some were taken and some left in battle; so some were allowed, and some not allowed, to enjoy VE day. Here they danced in the streets of every big city, and the street parties went ahead. But in Burma the 1st Battalion, Queen's Royal Regiment was fighting its way down the Irrawaddy River, to fight its last battle at the end of July 1945, north of Rangoon. The 2nd Battalion after years fighting with the Chindits was also in the Far East, preparing to invade Malaya when VJ day came in August.

After this service, it's lunch. We who survived will meet others who survived. There will be a lot of cheerfulness, good comradeship and laughter. And possibly, talk of others who were taken, rather than left.

Dealing with all these memories and all these ghosts calls for help and support. On my right is your regimental chapel. Today we have spilled out of it into the main body of the cathedral. It is a place of stillness and serenity. Between annual services it is still here for you and your comrades. The Cathedral always extends open invitation for you to come to it on a special mission of your own, or with a couple of friends. To sit; to reflect. To go over things. To remember, to be grateful. From April to October there is a daily Chaplain on duty who may listen and share. Nobody can share entirely what you went through. I dare say you would not want them to. In recognition of what you did go through Guildford Cathedral houses this special area. It is yours – do use it. It may help and heal.

One taken, another left: yes, that is how it goes in war. In wreaths, and two-minute silences and gun salutes we express our gratitude to those who were taken: symbolic gestures, that do their best to render honour. To those who are left, yourselves, we can here, in Guildford's cathedral express Guildford's gratitude. You have since 1661 over the centuries, and particularly in the 20th century, earned the respect not only of this town, but of the whole of Surrey; and beyond Surrey the gratitude and respect of countless towns, villages and communities all over the world through which you marched. On behalf of us all: Thank you."

*The two prayers that follow were written for the occasion, but not used:*

O Lord of the living and the dead, we remember with honour those who were taken - when we were left. We thank you for their passage through our lives; and for their friendship and support as comrades. Forgive us if we failed them, and enable us, for their sake, to enjoy the fruits of their service and sacrifice. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, who in your great goodness has brought us to this day and hour; we give you thanks for comrades and friends, and for the privilege of celebrating this 60th anniversary year. Help us to live each day worthy of the values we defended, so that our service to our fellow men may continue in peace as in war. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



*After the service: (R to L) Col Dickins, High Sheriff of Surrey High Sheriff's wife, President, Col Sewell.*

#### **The Annual Church Service: Guildford Cathedral Sunday 5th June 2005**

(by D J Lubbock)

*Matthew 24:40 'Then shall two be in a field: the one shall be taken and the other left'*

As June 05 was the 50th anniversary of my demob from 1 Queens I thought it might be a good idea to attend the annual service for the first time.

I had enlisted as a National Serviceman at Stoughton Barracks in April 1952 and subsequently signed on for three years as a regular. After basic training most of my intake were posted to the battalion at Iserlohn.

#### **Iserlohn 1952-53**

During the summer of '52 the battalion was involved in some massive Rhine Army scheme's on one of which I was declared dead by an umpire. After sleeping a night somewhere on the bank of the River Rhine, I spent the next 24 hours with a comrade from the Queen's looking for our Regiment. I always wanted to be in the M.T. Section, but the Army in its wisdom made me a company pay clerk, a job which I continued to do until I joined the advance party going to Malaya in November 1953.

#### **Malaya 1953-55**

After training at the Jungle Warfare School at Kota Tingi, we spent a relaxing time in Selerang Barracks, Changi, Singapore, de-greasing rifles and automatic weapons ready for the arrival of the battalion. Once 'A' Company became operational we patrolled the jungle and rubber plantations in platoons and sections, laying ambushes, checking rubber tappers and following up information. Usually we were too late, as the C/T's (communist terrorists) had just gone when we found their camp, their jungle-craft being much better than ours.

#### **The Annual Church Service 2005**

Talking with former CSM Sharpe before the service, who had served with the Queen's in Malaya digging out the Japanese in 1945, made me realise what an easy time we had in the 1950's compared to the experiences of those WW 2 veterans. I felt like a schoolboy talking to a real man.

Mr John Mitchell who gave the excellent address in the Cathedral speaking on the words of Jesus," some taken and some left", reminded me that even in the comparatively easy times of 1953-55 there were some very dark days in the jungle, such as the sad death of a young officer, recorded in the Regimental Chapel as 'killed in action' an event which cast much sadness and heartache over all ranks of 'A' Company.

I am so glad I went to the service as it was a spiritually uplifting experience and, God willing, I hope to be able to go again, not only to give thanks, but also to meet some more of those men, now in their eighties, who in spite of horrendous experiences have survived and are among those who are still left.

#### **"Journey's End" and The Surreys** (by Colonel D Bishop)

Many of us will have seen "Journey's End", the play by R.C. Sherriff set in a British dug out near St Quentin in France in 1918. The play is based on the author's experience of service with the 9th Battalion The East Surrey Regiment. It was first performed in 1928 and has been performed frequently since then in Britain and in many translations abroad. A London production opened at the Duke of York's Theatre in January 2004 and closed one year later to go on tour after a run that attracted the critical acclaim the play has enjoyed throughout its life as a profound examination of the nature of that war and its effect on those caught up in it. At the conclusion of each performance the whole height and breadth of the stage was taken up with the listing in monumental form of the names of the thousands killed serving in three of the East Surrey battalions, including the 9th and, interestingly enough, three battalions of The Queen's Royal Regiment.

The play has now reopened at the New Ambassadors Theatre in London.

There exists a very personal reminder of the connection between R.C. Sherriff and the Surreys. Major John Clark has a copy of "Journey's End" presented to his father, Lt Col C.A. Clark DSO. MC, by Sherriff. In it Sherriff writes an extraordinarily generous and obviously deeply felt tribute to John's father with whom he served in 9 Surreys. He rates him as the finest soldier he ever met, a model of all the military virtues and a man whose influence for the good in very dark times was inestimable.

"Journey's End" is a stark and intensely wrought depiction of the life of British infantry in France in the 1914-18 War and its strong Surrey connection must be a matter of regimental pride. John's copy of the play is a moving tribute to one of the men whose character strongly influenced its creation.

#### **Officers' Club Ladies' Luncheon**



*Geoff Strong appears to doubt that Tony Ward really is the new President!*



*David Dickins and Daphne Hill discuss East Surrey matters*



**Benevolence**

The Charity's individual benevolence work continues to be administered by Major John Rogerson at RHQ PWRR; we are extremely grateful for all his hard work on our behalf. In the eight month period to 31st August 2005 a total of 100 cases were investigated and 58 individual grants-in-aid were approved. The Regimental Charity helped to provide 12 further electrically powered vehicles, 13 orthopaedic chairs/beds and contributed to one convalescent holiday.

Eighteen ABF Annuities were administered and the ABF generously contributed £55 per month per case. During this period the Charity renewed or arranged for four Nursing Home Fees grants, each of £1,040 from the ABF and £300 (average, rising to £350) from the Charity per year, to be paid for old soldiers or their widows to be looked after. We had one resident in Gifford House.

The Charity had paid out £19,135 as individual grants-in-aid, which represented a slight increase over the same period in 2004. Of the 42 cases not receiving a grant, local Councils/Charities or other Regimental Charities assisted 26 after being contacted. Nine cases were not receiving such allowances as attendance, mobility or rent rebate. The ABF total grants in support were £17,969 including four nursing home fees.

During the year we have also assisted members who are cared for by the Ex Services Mental Welfare Society/Combat Stress, the War Pensions Agency, and the Ex Services Fellowship Centres. We are extremely grateful to the ABF which, as always, has been helpful with prompt action and advice, and to SSAFA/ Forces Help Society and The Royal British Legion whose caseworkers have investigated the majority of our cases.

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

I write to thank yourself and members of the Benevolence Committee for the grant towards my wheelchair power pack. The power pack is in use and is much appreciated. I was also very grateful to receive a copy of the Association Newsletter which was very interesting reading.

My wife and I wish to say how much we appreciate the contribution made by the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity towards her riser/recliner chair which will be of great benefit to her health. Many thanks and best wishes.

Many thanks for your grant towards my new scooter. You have made my getting around much easier. Thanks again; keep up the good work.

Your contribution towards my replacement windows and door is very much appreciated and will make such a difference.

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity recently contributed, through the Royal British Legion, to the installation of double glazed windows and doors to my home. My elderly mother, who lives with me, and I are both disabled; we feel the cold much more these days. The installation of the windows has made such a difference that we are still adjusting to it. We have already been able to turn down our central heating. This will have a knock-on effect to our gas bills for the future, so it is certainly a long-term benefit to us.

My late father was always extremely proud of his Regiment. His last wish was that his ashes should be scattered with his comrades in the British Cemetery at Dunkirk. Thanks to the Dunkirk Veterans we were able to comply with his wishes in May 1994.

He would be so pleased to know that the Regiment is still looking after the widows of its former members.

I cannot thank you enough for your most kind contribution. Our best wishes and prayers are with you and all those current members of your present Regiment who are keeping up its fine name.

I am writing on behalf of my father to thank you for the contribution the Regiment made towards the purchase of his special chair. Dad's stroke was a shock to us all, and has restricted his movements greatly, but being able to use his new chair has made a lot of difference. As an ex Queensman myself, I understand the importance of the Regimental family, and it is nice to know that the Regiment was able to help Dad in his time of need. Thank you once again.

Thank you for the donation towards my mobility scooter. It has improved my life considerably as I no longer have to rely quite so much on other people for shopping etc. As the weather improves I am looking forward to travelling further afield. Thank you once again for your kind gesture.

**1/5th Queen's Veterans Final Luncheon**



After many very successful luncheon reunions for members of the original 1/5th Bn The Queen's and their guests it was decided that this year with the 60th anniversary of the ending of World War Two it would be the last. Doug and Margaret Mitchell, who have organised the event at The Refectory Guildford Cathedral with their small team of helpers over the years, once again excelled. A very attractive commemorative menu was produced by Lt Col Les Wilson with the names of all those attending printed on the back and a gift for all the ladies was beautifully wrapped and presented after the meal. In total 32 Queen's Royal Regiment Veterans attended with 21 from the original 1/5th Battalion. The Loyal and Regimental toast was proposed by Lt Col Wilson with wine kindly donated by the widow of one of the old veterans.

**5th Queen's OMA Reunion Dinner 2005**

This year's dinner was held on Saturday 28th May at the Farnham Drill Hall and was attended by 185 old comrades whose service ranged from the North West Frontier, World War Two, Palestine, Malaya and others including some of our younger members who had recently returned from Iraq.



Brigadier Richard Holmes hosted the dinner with the Mayors of Guildford, Waverley and Farnham as guests along with several regimental personalities.



*Les Wilson signs his life away!*

**(East Surreys National Service Officers 50th Anniversary Reunion Lunch**  
(by Anthony Elliot)

The Army & Navy Club ("The Rag") was the venue, on Thursday 8th September 2005, for a reunion of some East Surrey National Service Officers, accompanied by their wives. Many had arrived at the Keep in Kingston-upon-Thames fifty years ago to the day, and all had served with the First Battalion in Brunswick under "Colonel Clive". In all, thirty-two people were present for a memorable Golden Jubilee celebration lunch in the Marlborough Suite. Sadly, some who had originally accepted the invitation when the reunion was first mooted had to drop out – all for very legitimate reasons – and they were missed.



We were delighted to have with us, to help mark the passing of the years, Colonel Geoff Strong and Maureen and Colonel John Francis and Penny, all of whom have been staunch friends over the years. Geoff was at Eaton Hall when many of us passed through, and it was he who had "vetted" us for the Regiment – not least for our sporting prowess! John was the senior subaltern when we arrived in Brunswick.



It was remarked during lunch that such a reunion of so many National Service Officers must be something of a unique occasion. There were no formal speeches, but toasts were drunk to The Queen and The Regiment, in the traditional East Surrey way.

The wives, most of whom already knew each other, were not subjected to too much 2/Lt Blimper and it is worth recording that the bonds forged fifty years ago over blanco, brasso and boot polish, not to mention on the sports field, appeared to be as strong as ever they were.

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## Fallingbostel 1945-2005

(by Noel Matthews)

On the 15th April 1945 with the 8th Hussars leading and 1/5th in support the Division continued its advance towards Hamburg. Daily action and casualties were regularly sustained. On the 5th the carrier platoon, of which I was a member, was attacked suffering 3 casualties including Capt Cole, platoon officer; 50 prisoners were taken.

On 16th April "C" Company, then 2 platoons only, Capt Crook commanding having transferred from "A" Company to take over as the 3 remaining officers had previously become casualties, were in support of the 8th Hussars when they found and liberated Stalag XI B, a camp that held 17,000 prisoners. Various members of the battalion found some of their friends there.

On 16th April this year at Fallingbostel I attended the inaugural Dedication Ceremony of the Memorial Gates made by 2nd R.E.M.E. – these symbolic gates, which are situated on the site of the Stalag guardroom, are dedicated to the memory of the POWs from 13 nations who suffered and died in the camp.

I had been invited by the President of the National Ex-Prisoners Association, Mr Les Allan, who had been a POW at the camp. Eric Reeves was also in the party, taken prisoner near Abbeville with the 2/5th. Flying from Gatwick to Hanover we were then driven by the R.E.M.E. driver to the barracks at Fallingbostel, about a half hour trip, and given quarters in the WOs and Sgts Mess.

The day of the ceremony, 16th April, was a beautiful sunny day and invited guests, VIPs and members of the public, which numbered about 300, were seated facing the memorial. The ceremony was opened with a speech by General Cooper, GOC U.K. Armoured Division; other short speeches followed, The curtains covering the bronze plaques on the wall were uncovered by a British school girl on one side and a German school girl on the other, the inscription on one side being in English, the other in German, commemorating the liberation. Wreaths were laid and a memorial stone, also constructed by the skilled tradesmen of the 2nd Battalion, was dedicated.



After the ceremony VIPs and guests mingled together with German TV crews, press and cameramen asking many questions.

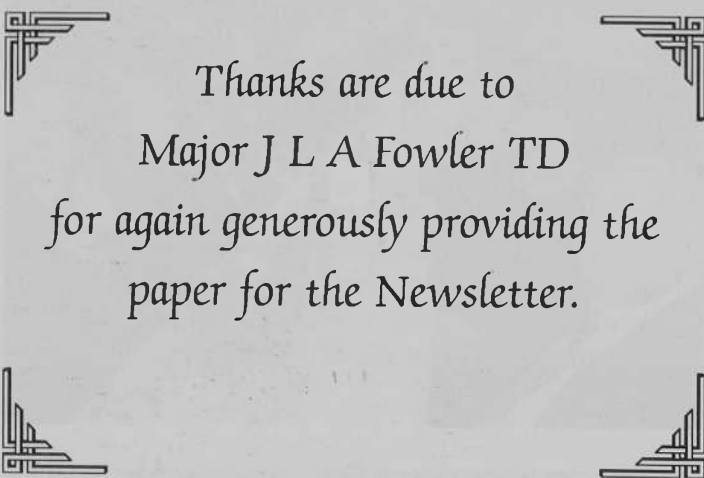
Several POW camps were built in the area, Russian POWs, who were treated as sub-humans by the Germans, had no accommodation at all and 6,000 died in the first year. Italian POWs suffered almost as many deaths. By mid 1944 there were some 96,000 POWs in the camps and sub camps.

The welcome and entertainment by the WOs and Sgts was excellent and resulted in an invitation to visit again next year.

PS.

Returning to England from Dunkirk, due to loss of hearing having been blown up twice at Strazeele, I was sent to a hospital in Nottingham. After treatment I was in the convalescent accommodation in which was a fellow with his leg in plaster. Of an evening he used to go down to the city spinning a good tale as he appeared to be treated to everything – drink, cinema, taxi etc: obviously "officer material" as his "wound" was a broken leg sustained playing football.

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

o o o

## Memories of World War Two

*Reproduced below are extracts from personal recollections of the Second World War which individuals have kindly offered to share. Apologies are offered to those whose contributions have not been included in full or do not appear in this edition of the Newsletter.*

### Burma Memories

By Fred Watson

(The extract below covers the period with the Regiment up to and including Kohima. Fred eventually arrived home, having been discharged, late in the evening of Thursday 23rd March 1946 after 6 years and 1 month in the Army, of which 3 years 1 month were abroad. He had served in three regiments: the 2nd Essex - 20th Royal Fusiliers - 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regt. During all this he met his wife in 1940 and they were married in 1942 at Leominster, Hereford; they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in January 2002.)

I was one of a draft to join the 1st Bn Queen's from 20th Bn Royal Fusiliers from India mid-December 1943. It was a position forward of Admin Box on a small hill in front of Hill 162 (occupied by Japs). Suddenly who was to arrive but the CO Col Duncombe, nickname 'Daddy'. Obviously he gave us a lecture on what he was hoping would happen and the usual 'bull' about the Bn. One amazing remark was 'swearing' if caught was a chargeable offence. We all wondered what Army we had come to. "Damn" and "Blast" were OK.

Shortly after this the Company arrived back from patrol and it was 'B' Company. This was to be my Company and into 12 Platoon. First impressions were what a scruffy lot, dressed in filthy clothes - not shaved - some tin hats - some bush hats. Within 24 hours my impression soon changed. We started digging in after being given our position - everyone, whatever rank. By late afternoon we had a marvellous hot meal - bully stew, rice for sweet and tea. Then jungle 'stand to' at dusk and again at daybreak after a reasonable night under the stars fully dressed.

Things were quiet until we got orders to move forward again, dig in again and no fires. Usual routine; cold bully and biscuits. Boxing Day we had chicken, greens, spuds, xmas pudding, six sweets and a beer. This in front of hill 162 which was hopefully to be our first target. This was the tip of the range of hills; after many attempts it was never taken; bombed, shelled but nothing shifted them.

We had been paid a visit by Japs on Xmas Eve - they shouted a merry xmas to us but fortunately a few grenades sent them back. We had occasional daytime shells but for the next 5 or 6 weeks the days were mostly quiet - fatigues - wood - water - rations. Nights it was patrols or stand to at dusk and this was to be my start of what was a bit of a hair-raising experience. In the

meantime some of our seniors left for England; among them was our CSM. Our Coy Commander was Major Lowry - another gentleman - and 2i/c Capt Taylor (mad as a hatter) a great friend of Capt Grainger 2i/c 'C' Company.

Round about this time we soon found to our disgust that we were surrounded by Japs and had to go on half rations. Having been very well fed, we thought the worst - but no - evacuated villages and their produce helped us out. In fact it was marvellous food. Parachute drops were maintained but it was a bit difficult attempting to collect them as we were continually sniped at.

As our Night Patrols increased so a situation arose between 'B' and 'C' Companies' respective 2i/cs Taylor and Grainger; they decided to have bets (not sure what the stakes were) as to who could kill the most or take prisoners on night patrols. Our Capt Taylor very much favoured our Platoon and it was on one such occasion that I was detailed for this patrol.

The plan was to go out about 9p.m. to a burnt out bren gun carrier which was in a paddy field situated between us and the Japs; we did so, took up all round protection and waited - not for long. I had a Grenade Discharger Cup on my rifle, ammunition and a load of 7 second grenades but no bayonet. The sound of Japs talking was clearly heard. We were silent - the next I knew they were upon us and all hell broke out. Our section commander stood up behind us with his Tommy gun, firing it - the next I knew there was an object almost in front of me and something come down and it was a Jap waving his sword yelling. His sword ended up across my neighbour's back (Pte Tyler); within a second or so he (Tyler) was on my back. Obviously I thought it was a Jap until he said "It's alright - it's only me". I can't tell you how I felt. Anyway our bren gunner was busy during this (Pte Carruthers) but his No 2 had disappeared. However when it had got a bit quieter he came back - but the gunner, thinking it was a Jap, shot at him and wounded him. In fact it was pretty bad - he ended up being sent home. One round went through his upper leg - through his wallet in his back pocket complete with a photo of his wife.

At daybreak what a carnage - bodies and wounded everywhere. Our Jap was dead - yellow and well over 6 foot.

On our return to base we had to pass some Sherman Tank crews who had just joined us. They were informed of our night's work - and after a few days they were 'browned off' and got permission to join us complete with their Browning automatics - they becoming foot soldiers.

I never did know who won the bets - but it was my one and only 'fighting patrol'. We took several prisoners but most were dead. Taylor never stopped talking about it. About this time Col Duncombe disappeared, we didn't know where. A small draft arrived from the Sussex Regt.



We also had a small contingent of Warwickshire Regt with us – they said they had come to experience Jungle Warfare.

So the night patrols continued: my next was a recce patrol – to find out from which direction and if possible by what route the Jap mule columns were getting through to those behind us. We wore jungle boots – no hats. Three of us were to take up positions in bushes in the paddy field area between our Hill and Bn HQ. It was a moonlight night and we found some bushes which we thought were secure, pretty sure the visitors would arrive. Sure enough, along they came, jabbering away, complete with mules. Then suddenly they stopped – right in front of us. We could put our arms out and touch them. Some lit cigarettes – a lot had a pee, but not on us thankfully. It was a hair-raising experience. After about 10 minutes they thankfully went on their way; shortly after that they hit upon Bn HQ and obviously they got no further.

Returning at daybreak we were glad to get back and make our report.

My next patrol was to be another recce patrol; a Jap position had been found and we were to attempt to find, if possible, the strength of the position. Our leader was a hopeless NCO later to be reduced to the ranks. However four of us were with him - rifle, bandoliers, jungle boots, bayonet, no hats. He had a map and compass. Off we went though a bit of jungle to the foot of the Hill – not very high, all very quiet. We got to a yard or two up the Hill and found out what a bloody fool he was:- he asked for a box of matches to look at his map. Anyway we proceeded no further – retraced our steps back to the foot of our Hill Position and reported back to our position at daybreak. The outcome was it was his last as an NCO.

Shortly after all this the famous Battle of the Admin Box took place and thankfully we were not involved. I think some of the Bn was but I am not sure as everything was a bit chaotic. The only good thing was, although we were 'cut off', in all honesty we lived like lords. The Dakotas were wonderful with their drops and fortunately a nearby Burma village was evacuated but it had plenty of vegetables growing. However care was needed for the 'looting parties' as they went out in daylight – and often snipers would be busy. But it was a risk worth taking.

Regarding cooking, we had fires thanks to the Wood Fatigue Parties. Smoke was a problem but we got by. Our menu was tea and biscuits after stand down. Later it was breakfast – porridge, egg and bacon, more tea. Tiffin was usually cold bully, biscuits, lettuce or whatever. Supper, before Stand To, was usually bully stew and more tea. Unfortunately we did have what was a very unpleasant occurrence. We (about three of my platoon) in the late afternoon had gone to the bottom of the Hill to collect our rations and three came down from 13 Platoon. Obviously we had a short conversation and returned with rations to each of our platoons. Apparently

the boys of 13 Pl started a card school just waiting for supper when there was an almighty bang – too close for comfort and amid the screams we feared the worst. Shortly after along came three stretchers from 13 Pl with three bodies, the same three that we had been talking to earlier on collecting rations. Thankfully they were covered up but it was pretty terrible. They also happened to be members of my draft. Later we were to find out the Japs on Hill 162 had an artillery gun mounted on an old railway line and moved it around.

What turned out to be my final experience of the Arakan was strange to say the least. For some reason a party of us had to go back to Admin Box; it was after it was in a reasonable state. It was just a day trip. While we were there, there was an air raid; everything opened up and a Jap plane was shot down. The pilot was a woman. It was the only Jap plane I saw in the Arakan.

Some good news reached us not long after this when we heard the Japs had left 162. We persuaded the powers-that-be that we should find out, so off we went in search – yes, they had gone but what a fortress. I personally couldn't believe it. However it was done it was remarkable. They certainly knew how to build defences. At the same time those that had surrounded us had apparently been driven back. I think it was late March/early April – not sure as to the days – dates were, to say the least, difficult to keep track of. At least we did, subject to the situation being OK, manage to go to an occasional church service (open air at HQ). Very nice.

Anyway, filthy dirty – complete with 'lice' and unshaven – we marched out of the Arakan; to where I have no idea only that it was to an airstrip. Our whole Brigade was flying to be attached to 2nd Div up near Kohima. Apparently they were 'cut off'.

We had a smooth air journey; no complaints. We arrived at the reception camp and were fitted out with new clothing and cleaned up after showers. We stayed for a few days just resting and even had a film show one evening. No parades. No fatigues. But I did see an Indian camp worker kill a snake about 6 feet long.

Our next stop was a truck journey up to the 15 mile stone on the main Kohima Road. It was obviously a reasonable camp, mostly tents, but care had to be taken. Sleep fully clothed and some prowler guards. Then roundabout April 12th things happened. We moved up towards Kohima. In the distance was a hill littered with white objects which we found out was 'Parachute Hill'.

Anyway the Bn was to attempt to take a hill known as 'Jail Hill'. This was to be done with 'C' & 'D' Companies with 'A' & 'B' in reserve at 12 o'clock midday. Stupid we thought; however it turned out catastrophic – dead, wounded, prisoners. I ended up a stretcher bearer. It was absolute carnage. But thankfully somehow we got back ending up somewhere between the 15 mile stone and Kohima.

We were able to sort ourselves out eventually and after a few days in the jungle with little protection orders came through that we were to attempt to take 'Jail Hill' again – but at daybreak. 'A' & 'B' Companies in front 'C' and 'D' in reserve. At 4.45am we were to be at the bottom of the hill. At 4.30am the artillery were going to shell it. This they did – some too close for comfort.

We were issued a bottle of rum – between 2; it worked wonders. On the sound of Major Lowry's whistle we charged up the Hill. Bayonets fixed, full of rum, screaming and yelling. Absolute mayhem – I can't describe it. Everything was going off. Some of us only had 7 second grenades; we were throwing them and Japs were throwing them back. Casualties and dead were everywhere. This went on and eventually we got onto the Hill around midday; at 'stand to' that night there were 28 of us - Company Commander, CSM & one Sgt in that 28. We found dug outs and two of us stood to all night. Not much water to drink, two biscuits and ½ small tin bully that day.

Meanwhile, all this time sniper and small arms fire was going on. The next morning we had our first tea brought up from the bottom of the Hill; what a godsend. It tasted of petrol – but it was lovely. We lived under these conditions for several days. Tanks had arrived and we began feeling more secure.

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#### John Burnand remembers:

In June 1943, aged 18 years, I volunteered for the Army to ensure that I joined my father's regiment The East Surreys in which he had served in World War I. My father did not dissuade me and I promised my mother I would return. I arrived in Italy in mid March 1944 to join the 8th Army's 78 ('Battle Axe') Division and went to the Regiment's forward position at Cassino situated on a narrow ridge called 'Snakeshead' near Point 593 to the rear of the world famous Monastery. In the stony ground only shallow trenches called 'sangars' with loose stone surrounds provided protection but as these were overlooked from enemy positions all movements had to be made during darkness hours.

After a month of cold weather in these stressful conditions, the Battalion was moved to a rest area and following further training we returned for the final battle for Cassino in mid May. It was a memorable moment when we saw the Polish Flag on the walls of the Monastery which had dominated the previous six months of bitter fighting. Following the breakthrough in the Liri Valley we advanced nearly every day for the next month by-passing Rome to Orvieto where along the route Italians welcomed us with wine and flowers. The weather was now warm and thirst and dust were daily problems. New German reinforcements slowed our advance and we suffered significant losses around Lake Trasimeno. I

received a minor head wound and was unable to remain with the Division before it was finally withdrawn for leave after 18 months continuous action which began in North Africa.

I re-joined 'C' company in my regiment in September. The German's final defence was the Gothic Line in the mountains north east of Florence. The weather was now very wet and cold. The attack began on the night of 15th October. Everyone was heavily laden with guns, ammunition, picks and shovels, and hard rations which had to be carried up steep slopes against well defended positions until the objectives were achieved and held. Unfortunately, our own artillery barrage to support this attack (now called friendly fire!) caused many casualties. Both my legs were broken and I was unable to move. Early the next morning the Germans left their position but instead of being taken prisoner I was shot twice, fortunately in the legs, but I laid quite still until they left although the pain was intense.

For the next four days I laid face down in the mud drenched by heavy rain but I did manage to drink a few drops of rainwater to ease my thirst from a nearby puddle which I was able to reach using the cap of my fountain pen. I was found by The Buffs and taken to the First Aid Post. I regained consciousness three days later while being flown south to the Military hospital in Caserta. 'C' Company suffered such heavy losses during this action it was disbanded and the few survivors transferred to the other Companies.

For the next three months attacks from malaria and later tetanus with convulsions for ten days preceded the first amputation. An intensive period of 120 penicillin injections over 15 days certainly saved my life. When I returned to England in February 1945 I was received by the Liverpool General Hospital and weighed little more than six stones. A re-amputation became necessary if I was ever to be able to walk again.

From then on my recovery began. I was transferred to the Limbless Hospital in Roehampton in April. On VE Day almost all the hospital staff went to London on 8th May to celebrate the victory celebrations. Before they left, although none of us were able to move from our beds, we were each given five cubes of tinned pineapple to join in the joy of that day.

On May 7th I am a guest at a party to celebrate the 60th anniversary at the local Civic Society who have organised an evening of memories of those momentous days.

My first limb was fitted in June 1945 and I returned home shortly afterwards. In 1946, three years after joining the Army, I was demobbed and provided with a double breasted grey suit. I was ready to face civilian life and joined I.C.I. Paints Division as a laboratory assistant. Given leave to study at the University of London (London School of Economics) from 1952-1955 I graduated with an honours degree in Economics. In 1982,





The Queen and I bid you a very warm welcome home.

Through all the great trials and sufferings which you have undergone at the hands of the Japanese, you and your comrades have been constantly in our thoughts. We know from the accounts we have already received how heavy those sufferings have been. We know also that these have been endured by you with the highest courage.

We mourn with you the deaths of so many of your gallant comrades.

With all our hearts, we hope that your return from captivity will bring you and your families a full measure of happiness, which you may long enjoy together.

*George R.I.*

September 1945.

## Thank You Messages

This page shows some examples from the Regimental Archives of contemporary thank you messages which were issued to serving personnel during 1945 by the King and by Commanders at various levels.

The letter on the left from Buckingham Palace was for those returning from their years as Japanese prisoners of war.



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PERSONAL MESSAGE  
from  
COMMANDER  
7th ARMoured DIVISION  
to  
EVERY OFFICER AND MAN  
ON DEMOBILISATION

MAIN HEADQUARTERS  
7th ARMoured DIVISION

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS

2 May, 1945

## SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

### Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Forces in the Mediterranean Theatre

After nearly two years of hard and continuous fighting which started in Sicily in the summer of 1943, you stand today as the victors of the Italian Campaign.

You have won a victory which has ended in the complete and utter rout of the German armed forces in the Mediterranean. By clearing Italy of the last Nazi aggressor, you have liberated a country of over 40,000,000 people.

Today the remnants of a once proud Army have laid down their arms to you—close on a million men with all their arms, equipment and impedimenta.

You may well be proud of this great and victorious campaign which will long live in history as one of the greatest and most successful ever waged.

No praise is high enough for you sailors, soldiers, airmen and workers of the United Forces in Italy for your magnificent triumph.

My gratitude to you and my admiration is unbounded and only equalled by the pride which is mine in being your Commander-in-Chief.

*H.R. Alexander*

Field-Marshal,  
Supreme Allied Commander,  
Mediterranean Theatre.



*I feel I cannot let you leave 21 Army Group on your return to civil life without a message of thanks and farewell. Together we have carried through one of the most successful campaigns in history, and it has been our good fortune to be members of this great team. God Bless you and God speed.*

*B. L. Montgomery*

FIELD MARSHAL  
COMMANDER IN CHIEF

BLA 1945

You may well be very proud to have served with the 7th Armoured Division. No Division in the British Empire has contributed more to the downfall of the Axis Powers and to the total defeat of Germany.

The Desert Rats first saw service in the Middle East, when Italy declared war on us in 1940. They fought with great distinction all through the long campaign which culminated in the victory of ALAMEIN. They took a leading part in the pursuit of Rommel's defeated forces, and in the final breakthrough to TUNIS.

The Division was the first British Armoured Division to land in Europe, when it took part in the assault landing at SALERNO. It served through the Italian Campaign till brought back to England early in 1944 to prepare for the great assault on Western Europe.

Once more the Division formed part of an assault Corps and fought hard throughout Normandy and the winter campaign. Finally, the 7th Armoured Division crossed the RHINE and made history by its rapid advance to the ELBE and subsequent occupation of HAMBURG.

This is a grand and glorious record. The credit for it belongs to you, to each individual officer and man.

I think that there are three particular qualities to which we can ascribe our success:

(1) The firm belief which we have held in the ideals for which we have fought. The restoration of

Christian Civilisation to the world; and our trust in God to give us the power to achieve this;

(2) Our fighting spirit and the determination to overcome all difficulties;

(3) Our team spirit and the desire that all we achieve may be for the common end and not for selfish gain.

These three great guiding motives have stood out like shining beacons, not to us alone, but to all men and women of the United Nations.

We have won the war; now for the peace.

Difficult times and hard work for all of us lie ahead if we are to restore the ravages of five-and-a-half years of war. The same sterling qualities which led our country through every peril to final victory will help us again.

I hope that you will carry back to civilian life with you those three fine qualities which have played so predominant a part in the life of this Division. I am sure that if you do we shall win the peace as completely as we have won the war.

Finally, I wish to thank you for all that you have done for the Division, and to wish you happiness and good fortune in the years to come.

*L.O. Dyne*

Major-General,  
Commander  
7th Armoured Division



after three years as Head of Strategic Planning, I retired having been with the Company for 36 years.

I joined BLESMA in 1948 but allowed membership to lapse until I rejoined in 1998. Since then I have benefited greatly from the support of the Regional Welfare officers; firstly Mike Gallagher and now John Francis who has worked closely with the Veterans Agency to alleviate my current mobility problems caused by wear and tear on my spine. In particular, I am most grateful for his initiative for the part funding by BLESMA of a stair lift to get upstairs to my bedroom which I have not slept in for several months.

Looking back over the years, I have no regrets and I kept my promise. It was the right decision. I still have my cap badge, army pay book, identity discs still caked in Italian mud and the memories I have shared with you.

o o o

#### D Lashbrook recalls:

I have only a brief memory of war service with The Queen's Royal Regiment.

I joined the TA in 1939; you had to attend a certain number of drills and 2 weeks camp to receive the £5 bounty. Anyway I never received the £5 as I was called up for active service on 28th August 1939.



We boarded a fleet of London buses at Croydon and travelled through the night to Avonmouth Docks. We slept in railway trucks to start off until our tents arrived some time later. We built gun emplacements for Lewis guns; I do not think they would have been much help in stopping Jerry from bombing. In January 1940 we moved to Plymouth Docks as they expected Jerry to bomb the naval docks. About April we were transferred to the London area after being trained on searchlights. On 2nd August we were transferred from the Queen's to the Royal Artillery.

o o o

#### Roland 'John' Dray writes:

I was not a long time served member of the Queen's, having joined them in mid August '44 having previously served in the 5th Northants in the 78th Division. I was sent from a CRU where I had been sent after treatment for a superficial wound in my left knee. I joined the 2/7th Battalion.

A couple of interesting occasions I remember while with them:-

When we came out of the line from Santarcangelo in October, we went back to Macerata for a rest and so called training (I loved the days in the quarry with the Tommy Gun)

While there we held a horse racing meeting in a local stadium. The Pioneers Platoon made a number of horse cut-outs and attached them to sledge type slides. These were attached to lengths of field telephone cable which was laid out the length of the course and attached to a drum with a handle which when turned drew the 'horse' toward it. Whose idea it was I know not, but it was quite clever and worked a treat.

Each platoon was invited to enter a jockey (he to turn the handle as fast as he could). We were also able to name the 'horse' our man was to run. I cannot remember many of the names that were given to the horses, but a couple that we of A Coy. gave were: 'Bomb Happy by Near One out of Nebelwerfer' and 'Figgy Fig by Quanto Costa out of Signorina'. Goodness knows what the Italians thought hearing the names coming over the Tannoy, there were quite a few of them there.

There were many other fun names all on a printed Race Card; if anyone out there has a copy I would be over the moon to see it.

Some of the flash, affluent NCOs, dressed in civvies got from somewhere or other, set up bookies stands offering odds and fortunately for our company lads, our jockeys did well and we were on the vino that night.

The other memory I have is later up at Faenza, December the 7th to be precise: we crossed the Lamone River in the early morning and began the attack at around 8am. We went through the lads of the 46th Div and began our attack to take Faenza. We were in between the river and a road heading for the town; after a while Jerry got wind of us coming and laid down a bit of stonk and I remember the rattle of his Spandau and bits flying around - he seemed to be objecting to our presence. I thought 'mother tis a bugger here, get me out' and at that moment I saw attached to the foot of a peach tree an S mine and then in a blinding flash the bloody thing exploded; someone had pulled the trip wire.

I had been badly hit in the right ankle. We, the wounded, were carried into a farm very near by and the good old stretcher lads dressed our wounds. When the stonk eased

up we were taken by a two stretcher red cross jeep, back down the road to a church, there to wait while a Bailey was put up to get ambulances across to collect us. That was the end of my soldiering.

I have been back and covered that ground twice, once in the early sixties with my wife. The farmer and his family were still there and made us very welcome; the story appeared in a local newspaper later. The last time I went out there was as recent as 2004. The farm is still there and the son, a little boy in '44, still runs the farm and remembers us being carried in. He took me to the spot where the tree and mine were and into the room I was carried to await evacuation. The church we were in awaiting the bridge to be built is still there but no sign of the Bailey.

So these are my two most outstanding memories of my time with The Queen's Royal Regiment, a great crowd of lads and let us not forget our fellow D Day dodgers that stayed in Italy.

o o o

#### Derek Edwards writes

I was sorry to hear of the passing of Nancy Kealy - I used to know her quite well in the old days, when John was around. Also, of course, Bill Roadnight. When repatriated at the end of the war, we were all amused, I recall, when Bill brought with him, in typical Quarter-Master fashion, a number of articles on which, as we told him, HM Customs would frown; and he got badly caught, much to the amusement of some of us.



Finally, I came across the enclosed official photograph of me, as a young Lt., which my wife, then a WAAF, saw in a magazine at the dentist's and wrote to the War Office for a copy. A few days after that was taken I was wounded, but patched up in hospital in time for the Salerno Landings!

o o o

**Tony Parkes remembers** as one who only just made it and saw the Regiment's transition from war to peace:

*'What did you do in the war Daddy?'*

*I fought & fought but it was no good..... I had to go in the army in the end."*

My father earned his living in Bermondsey and from time to time I helped him. In so doing I became interested in the goings on in the Drill Hall in Jamaica Road and in the men who proudly wore the Pascal Lamb.

At school I was a member of the OTC and obtained Certificate 'A' and thereafter became a member of a Bermondsey Army Cadet unit. On Saturday the 7th of September 1940 I was in Bermondsey and watched the hundreds of Luftwaffe bombers flying up the Thames to bomb the dockland area...which they did.

Time came for me to be called up and I duly attended a recruiting office at East Croydon. The country was getting short of manpower and so men of my age group were to go not to the armed services but to the coal mines. I was to be a Bevin Boy. There must be some way around this. There was. I could sign on for seven and five as a regular soldier. This I did!

In due course I completed basic and corps training at a Young Soldiers' Training Centre at Derby. During this I passed a War Office Selection Board at Catterick and became earmarked for Officer Training. The Queen's had six battalions in Europe and in my mind's eye I saw myself as a member of one of the six.

No so! At Pre-Octu at Sandhurst we were told that a proportion of us would be sent to India's sunny clime to help defeat the Sons of Nippon. I was one of those selected. During my embarkation leave whilst on the top of a tram going down the Walworth Road I heard the drone of an aircraft. I looked around to see that the tram appeared empty. People were trying to hide under the seats. They knew what I didn't; it was a V1 missile which exploded a few minutes after the engine cut out - fortunately not in the Walworth Road on this occasion.

For the journey from Liverpool to Bombay we travelled on the Empire Trooper. Conditions were appalling. The 'Empire' bit indicated that the vessel had been captured from the enemy. They must have been happy to lose it. Our third class train from Bombay to Dehra Dun, although devoid of cushions of any kind, was luxurious by comparison.

At the Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun we were transformed to become Gentlemen Cadets. All our clothing was bespoke for us (even our shoes) and we were provided with the services of a bearer to clean and maintain all this bespoke tailoring. There had to be a snag and there was!



I was asked to indicate which regiment in the Indian Army I would like to serve in. A struggle occurred when I told authority that I wanted British service in The Queen's Royal Regiment and that nothing else would suffice. A number of my chums, in Highland regiments mostly, jumped on the bandwagon and in the end I was commissioned into The Queen's.

Thereafter the route was a slow one involving a short spell at the British Base Reinforcement Camp at Deolali and jungle training at Budni in Bhopal State. Eventually I got to the 1st Battalion east of Pegu on the Sittang Bend. The first officer I met was the QM Bill Willans who kindly exchanged my .38 pistol for a .303 rifle. A day or so later I was out on patrol collecting the first of the leech bite scars on wrists and ankles that I still bear.

I had fought and fought and had got there in the end!

**Harry (Jock) Stewart** writes about his childhood war time memories:

I lived in Paisley near Glasgow during WWII. My father was at the time excused from military duty for health reasons but he did join the A.R.P.

As Paisley is very near to Clydebank and the ship yards, we often had to go to the shelters during air raids, but as we were young and this was an adventure we did not see the danger.

After one particular vicious raid my father, who was a driver delivering Ministry Of Foods bulk items of food - dried egg, margarine, soap flakes etc - to the naval ship yards, submarine bases and also the flying boat base in Dumbarton, took me with him as he often did. I remember seeing the bomb damage in the area, tramcar lines curled up like giant bed springs, smoke still lingering in the air and the terrible smell of burning. I remember a particular throat catching stink which was the smell of horsehair mattresses burning mixed with old wood and a multitude of other items, but of course at the time these were commonplace smells and it is not until you think back that they register as to what it was. Being just under ten years old this war, the air raids, the men and women in uniforms, the military vehicles, and the rationing was a way of life. Part of my school was bombed which brought great pleasure to us kids. As it was the school holidays the school was empty at the time: we played in the ruins all through the holiday period.

My father was involved in some way (he would not talk about it) in the capture or the guarding of Rudolph Hess when he landed near our house. I never saw him myself but he was the focal point of the adult conversation for months. I remember it being spoke of in hushed tones, but I did not have a clue who Hess was.

**Glyn Court recalls two episodes**

*It's Tommy this an' Tommy that, an' chuck 'im out, the brute!*

Fairly early in a broiling day in early April our platoon had occupied a small hill rising from the Burmese plain near Pakokku. It was a steep-sided hill, almost like a volcanic "plug", with a narrow path leading to the top, crowned, as most of these hills are, by the slender spire of a pagoda. We had met no opposition on the way up, but the platoon commander, on looking over the edge, thought he glimpsed some Jap activity in a scrap of jungle down below and sent the platoon sergeant and me, a junior NCO, with my section, down to reconnoitre. The sergeant and I were armed with execrable tommy guns, probably Al Capone rejects, the others, lucky lads, with sound, dependable, through-and-through English Lee Enfield rifles. We came down easily enough and advanced toward the jungle. "I'll go ahead," said the sergeant, "but follow and give me support." We walked on and the sergeant disappeared in the undergrowth, but moments later he dashed out again, shouting, "Get out of it! There's a dozen of 'em there." Out came Japs; we loosed off a volley at them, they replied in kind and then thought better of it and turned back into the jungle. My tommy gun, curse the beast!, then jammed. Stalemate ensued, because all the death-or-glory boys were off duty, and we climbed the hill again to clean our small arms and make a report. When I took my tommy gun to pieces I found that the ring holding the extractor pin had been blown flat. "Never seen anything like that before," said the armourer. At any rate, I gave up the tommy gun without a pang. Whether I then inherited the plumber's nightmare, the Sten gun, I can't remember and would rather forget; but I know that before long I again had that trusted friend the Lee Enfield, and what, other than demob, could a soldier ask more?

*Counting chickens unhatched*

It hadn't been a troublesome day: Japs somewhere near but elusive, and no great problems other than heat (105°), thirst, hunger (half-rations) and sore feet. Toward late afternoon our company came to a village by an abandoned railway embankment somewhere east of Nyaung-u, fairly open and cultivated country with patches of jungle dotted around. We halted a few hundred yards from this village but out of range, and the platoon commander said to me, "Take your section and do a recce." It looked innocent enough, with a farmer working in a field, but one never knew. For most of us, our knowledge of Burmese consisted of "Japan-do shi le la" (Are there any Japs? ), "M'shi bu" (There aren't any) and "Na m'leh bu" (I don't understand). With the first two of these happily exchanged with the farmer we walked on, but cautiously, into the village, and there were met, not by a spatter of rifle fire but by a smiling, English-speaking headman and escorted into his hut to meet his family. Dainty cups of green tea without sugar raised a

wave of horror that could have been felt away back in Battersea, but the innate discipline of The Queen's Royal Regiment, together with my undertone "Drink it, grin, and say Thank you" prevailed, and everyone relaxed. "Have the Japanese been gone long," I asked, "and have they taken all your food?" - because I needed to tell them that we infantrymen hadn't any to give. But the headman smiled and said, "We still have a little," and unexpectedly added, "and we will bring you Burmese food in the morning." Delighted with the whole encounter, we returned to the company and I made my report. A quiet night followed, and just before daybreak we stood to as usual. The sun rose, and as we were about to stand down we looked up along the path to the village and saw a procession of people coming toward us, some holding bowls of steaming rice, others carrying folded palm leaves with spices and chicken in them. "Here it comes, lads," I said, "khana's up." Chops were licked, and saliva was flowing in anticipation, when a bellow worthy of the great bull of Bashan shattered the morning calm: "Take that food to HQ !" End of story. Well, not quite, because many years later we read in the regimental history that "fresh chicken, rice and fruit were borne in by numbers of women and men and placed in front of us, and we ate right royally." Ha! (For "we" read "HQ"). Moral : Don't believe everything you read in print, or even the half of it.

**PAY ATTENTION  
CAN  
YOU  
HELP?**



**Albert Briggs** would like to hear from anyone who remembers or has information about his father Alfred Albert Briggs. His father served in The Queen's Royal Regiment from August 1936 until June 1959. (contact through Editor)

**John Girdler**, who lives in Belfast, has proposed that the move of 2 PWRR to Shackleton Barracks, Ballykelly, Northern Ireland might give the opportunity for a reunion for former members of the PWRR and the forebear regiments and their families now living in Northern

Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. In order to gauge the attendance for the event, to be held in July 2006, those wishing to attend are asked to inform the Editor.

**Mr P Sanders** would like to track down any information about, or people who may remember, his father Albert Edward (Gus) (Cracker) King who enlisted into The East Surrey Regiment in September 1928.

'Gus' was captured at St Valery in June 1940 and was subsequently a POW in Stalag XX1, XXB, and XXA before ending up at Stalag 383 (HOHENFELS) it was at this last camp that he won a boxing shield made out of a red cross box.

*(Editor: he appears in the Regimental Journals in 1934 when he lost in the final as a heavyweight at the Kent Inter services boxing championships when he was a member of the 2nd Battalion The East Surrey Regiment. Anybody with any further information is asked to contact the Editor).*

**Ken Parker** was one of those who formed the first intake at Stoughton Barracks. They were told to be at Guildford railway station by 1600hrs on 17th May 1951. He would like to hear from anyone in that intake and particularly remembers Maurice Micklewhite (possibly now better known as Sir Michael Caine!), Johnny Lee, Frank Lawrence, Ginger Lawson, John Leary, Alf Hawkins, David Denton and David Paine.



*A couple of pictures to help stir the memories of Intake 1.*

*(Contact through Editor)*





## The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Golf Society Spring Meeting 2005

This year heralds the 75th anniversary of our Golf Society and on the 5th May twenty nine players met at Sudbrook Park, Richmond for the Spring meeting to mark the occasion. The weather was kind to us and the course was in a condition too good to excuse poor play.



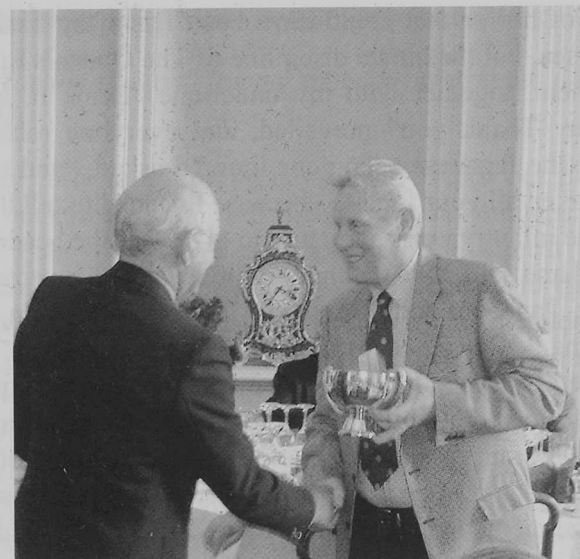
*Putting for glory at Sudbrook*

Five additional members joined the party for an excellent lunch and to enjoy the comradeship of old friends and the sorry tales of the putts that just didn't sink during the morning. The hospitality of the club was as enthusiastic as always and the staff presented a bottle of champagne for the winner of the putting competition, and the luxury of a starter to make sure we all started at the right tee and time.

To commemorate the day, everyone in attendance was presented with a glass memento bearing the regimental badge, a description of the event, the date and the member's name. We have our secretary Foster Herd to thank for his ingenuity and hard work in producing these valued reminders of the day.

The results of the day's play were:

|                             |                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| The Challenge Cup           | - Capt BML Scripps |
| The Veteran's Halo          | - Col JW Sewell    |
| The Dodgson Cup             | - Maj RA Green     |
| The Heale's Memorial Trophy | - WJT Ross Esq     |
| The Harry Adcock Trophy     | - HP Mason Esq     |



*Prize-giving*

After the prize-giving a short AGM was conducted where the finances were approved and appreciation accorded to the Secretary and the Richmond Golf Club for their efforts in making this occasion a memorable one.

Wednesday 11th May brought another 75th celebration but, sadly, it was the last match to be played against the Royal Marines GS at North Hants GC. Both societies have found difficulties, in recent years, in fielding full strength teams therefore it was mutually decided to close this long standing fixture at this celebration. Both sides fielded ten players and Gen Pat Kay managed to produce some familiar faces from past matches to renew old rivalries and make it a memorable event.



*Refreshments at the Royal Marines match*

At lunch Gen Pat gave a potted history of the fixture and Lt Col P Roupell replied on behalf of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment. Play continued in the afternoon, when we went some way to recouping our morning losses, but we eventually lost by 6 games to 4.

Although successfully retaining the cup, the Royal Marines presented it back to us as the originators. Its future use will be discussed at our next meeting.

Major Ron Green (Soc Capt)

## Congratulations and Best Wishes



### Congratulations to:-

**Stan and Florry Blay** on their 60th Wedding Anniversary.

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**Sid Parker**, who served with 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. He was presented with the insignia of Chevalier de La Legion d'Honneur by the French Ambassador in London at a ceremony attended by Sid's wife, son and daughter on 18th June 2005. The award was in recognition of, in Sid's words, his bit part in the D Day operations. Sid was also invited to the Bastille Day reception at the Ambassador's Residence on July 14th 2005.

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**E Hall**, pictured below receiving The Eagle Award for being Civilian Supervisor of the Quarter for the USAF where he is now employed at Lakenheath, Suffolk.



o o o

**Margaret and Doug Mitchell** who were privileged to receive an invitation to attend a reception held at St James's Palace on Friday 8th July 2005, to mark the 60th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War, in the presence of Their Royal Highness The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester.



*Margaret and Doug being presented to the Duchess*

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### Sint Niklaas visit by 1/7th Queen's

In September 1944 the 1/7th Bn Queen's relieved the Belgian City of Sint Niklaas. A friendly link with that City has been maintained ever since. In September 2005 on the annual visit to the City by the Regimental party the following members were presented to HM King Albert, King of the Belgians. Shown right to left: Harry Buckland, Ted Bussey in wheel chair, Joe Rowe MM, Dennis Summers, Major Norman Burrell MBE, to whom the King is speaking and Major John Tamplin MBE. Other than the last named, all were present at the relief of the City in 1944.



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#### Colonel John Davidson writes:

I was most interested to read the article on the 1935 Quetta Earthquake. I was there (aged 2). Indeed it was my earliest memory of life.

My father was an instructor at the Staff College and we lived in a quarter. I can remember being wakened in the early hours to the most frightening noise and panicking because I couldn't escape from the mosquito net tucked into my bed. I can still smell the terrible and distinctive stench — a mixture of putrefying bodies, animal and human, and of the cocktail of liquids (whisky, gin, tomato ketchup, etc.) from all the bottles (no plastic in those days!) that had smashed with the bazaar buildings and which were running down the streets and monsoon drains.

I can also remember having to evacuate our quarter, which did not collapse, and the excitement of having to live in the garden in tents. But strangely, I'm certain we were not evacuated, as is stated in the article. Perhaps the families of Lieutenant Colonels were exempt.

*(Editor: The sources in the Regimental Archives for the article stated that all British families were evacuated. The Regimental History records that "By 12th June all British women and children had been evacuated besides thousands of refugees ....". However, an official Government Report into the tragedy notes "June 9th - Conditions returning to normal. Families of British other ranks evacuated.")*

#### Sam Costa writes;

In 1999 I decided with the help of others to trace as many members as possible of 9 Platoon C Company 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment who were with me in Malaya 1954-57. Up to now we have traced 23 of the platoon and

are still looking for the rest of them. Our best gathering was at the Union Jack Club in 2002 when 12 attended.



Union Jack Club Reunion

We had a 50 year reunion at my house on Saturday 23rd July 2005; 11 members and 10 wives attended and a great time was had.



Unfortunately on the Sunday morning I received the sad news that Terry Jenkins had suddenly died. On Monday 1st August seven of us from various parts of the country travelled to Torquay to pay our respects. Terry joined 9 Platoon in Malaya in 1955 and we soon realised that he had a good singing voice and he entertained us with his singing. He had also boxed for the Battalion. He will be sadly missed. The last time we saw Terry was when 6 members of 9 Platoon marched past the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday 2004.

#### Jim Jeffery writes:

I was saddened but interested to read in the May edition of the Newsletter of the death of Bill Roadnight. Bill came to the 2/5th Battalion as RSM, and was promptly nick-named "Train-driver" or "Engine-driver" by the Battalion wits, this because of Bill's habit of holding his head to one side, - like the driver of the then steam trains, looking out of side of the engine!!

The entry in the Newsletter also mentioned that Bill and Lt Col J.Y. Whitfield were among the first to land at Salerno. Lt Col Whitfield, known by us all as 'J.Y.' was a highly respected and loved C.O., who later went on to command 169 Brigade (2/5th & 2/6th & 2/7th Bns) and ultimately to command 56th London Div - our Div - so we never really lost him.

After he left the Army, 'J.Y.' came home to Chiddingfold in Surrey; he sadly lost his sight, I believe through diabetes. When he died, he was buried in Chiddingfold church-yard, and ex CSM John Dunkley, who lives in Chiddingfold, tends his grave regularly, - though John himself has had his 90th birthday.

The 2/5th Bn was centred in Guildford, - at Sandfield Terrace Drill-Hall, - and most of the Bn were locals. In 1997 one of our OCA members, ex CSM Arthur Steadman, celebrated his 90th birthday, and I arranged to collect him, and ex Sgt Len Gibbs who lived in Guildford, and to pick up John Dunkley and all to have lunch and a long, long chat at Chiddingfold Golf Club. On leaving the golf club, we diverted to the church-yard, and all four of we old 2/5th veterans stood around Col Whitfield's grave and paid homage to a fine soldier, a great leader, and a gentleman of the very first order.

Sadly, Arthur and Len are no longer with us, but John and I still soldier on and intend to be at the Cathedral Service in June.

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## Regimental Deaths

**Bacon** - On 22nd June 2005 aged 91, Ronald Mark (Rasher) Bacon who enlisted into 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in June 1940. His service prior to his discharge in May 1946 included North Africa, Italy and Normandy through to Germany.

**Clarke** - On 6th April 2005, R J (Nobby) Clarke who served with The East Surrey Regiment.

**Cole-Biroth** - On 15th February 2005, aged 90 years, Captain John Peter Hamilton Cole-Biroth. Having joined The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1936, he was wounded at Dunkirk in 1940. He was commissioned into the Regiment in September 1941 and was wounded and taken prisoner on operations in the Western Desert in September 1942. In October 1943 he escaped in Italy but was recaptured in January 1944, being moved to Germany where he was a POW until May 1945. After retraining he served with Movement Control Harwich for 6 months in 1946 before becoming Staff Captain at the Forces Broadcasting Unit, War Office from September 1946 to April 1948. He retired from the Army in September 1948.

**Cooper** - In July 2005, Wally Cooper who served with The East Surrey Regiment and The Queen's Royal Regiment 1943-45.

**Dear** - On 25th July 2005, Captain Colin Paul Dear MC The Queen's Royal Regiment (see obituary).

**Frend** - On 1st August 2005, the Reverend Professor W H C Frend (see obituary).

**Glassco** - On 28th July 2005 aged 85 years, WO II W S Glassco who served with 2/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

**Jenkins** - On 23rd July 2005, Terry Jenkins. He served with The Queen's Royal Regiment from April 1955 until April 1957 and was with 9 Platoon C Company the 1st Bn in Malaya.

**Johnson** - On 11th August 2005, Donald Johnson who served with 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment 1955-1957.

**Johnson** - In July 2005, L T (Les) Johnson who served with 6th (Bermondsey) Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment and 3rd Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment.

**Jones** - Suddenly T D (Terry) Jones who was a national serviceman 1954-56 and served with C Company 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in Malaya.

**Kendall** - Sergeant William A H Kendall who served with The Queen's Royal Regiment 1936-46.

**Lipscombe** - On 10th October 2005, A E Lipscombe who served with the East Surrey Regiment.

**Matthews** - On 16th September 2005, Corporal Jim Matthews (see obituary).

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*McCourt* - On 9th October 2005, CSM Paddy K McCourt, 1/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment, who was badly wounded during the war.

*Mitchell* - On 10th July 2005, H W (Harry) Mitchell. Having enlisted in 1939 he served throughout the war with 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment including in France, Belgium, North Africa, Italy and Holland.

*Mountain* - On 27th July 2005, aged 80 years, Stanley Mountain. He enlisted into the Royal Artillery in December 1942 and was subsequently transferred to 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. He was wounded on operations near Villiers Bocage in June 1944. Having returned to duties in late September 1944, he was badly wounded in action near Veghel, Holland in early October 1944. He was flown back to UK for treatment and subsequently discharged as unfit for further service.

*Moyle* - On 10th April 2005, Richard William Moyle. He enlisted into 5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in July 1937, later transferring to the Royal Corps of Signals.

*Munt* - In February 2005, Roy Munt who served with 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment 1952-54.

*Neale* - On 22nd July 2005 aged 92 years, Major Archibald Graham Neale. He was commissioned into The Queen's Royal Regiment TA in December 1934, serving with 5th Bn until August 1939. He served with 1/5th Bn with the BEF, being wounded in May 1940, and subsequently was with the battalion in UK and the Middle East. He was Mentioned in Despatches in 1943. He was attached to the US Army in 1944, attending the American Staff College and spent 8 months with SHAEF. He retired from the TA in June 1950. He subsequently became Managing Director of Friary Meux, was Master of the Worshipful Company of Brewers in 1967, and was a Freeman of the City of London.

*Oats* - In South Africa in May 2005, Captain G T Oats (see obituary).

*Pullen* - On 29th June 2005, Colonel Derrick Brian Pullen, late The Queen's Royal Regiment. Having been commissioned into the Beds & Herts in October 1940, he served with 6 and 9 Beds & Herts and The Kings African Rifles during World War II. He then served with 5 Glosters 1948-57. He joined 6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1957, going on to command 3rd Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment. He was TA Colonel London District 1968-1972. He was awarded the OBE in 1967.

*Raynsford* - On 29th June 2005, Sergeant Maurice Victor Raynsford who served with The Middlesex Regiment, The East Surrey Regiment, The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment and The Queen's Regiment 1953-1969.

*Rollitt* - On 5th April 2005, Fred Rollitt.

*Rumble* - On 18th July 2005, aged 80 years, Corporal John Charles Rumble. Having enlisted into the Royal Fusiliers in November 1942, he subsequently transferred to the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment and then 2nd Bn The Hampshire Regiment. His service prior to his discharge in November 1947 included Italy and Austria.

*Schnabel* - On 20th June 2005, aged 87, Lieutenant Eric Schnabel. He enlisted into The Royal Artillery in January 1940 and was commissioned in May 1943. He transferred to 2/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in April 1944 and was wounded while on operations near the Gothic Line, Italy in September 1944. He retired from the Army in April 1946. A hockey player for many years, he was Warwickshire County Hockey President 1972-73.

*Smith* - On 24th May 2005, Dave Smith who served throughout WW II with The Queen's Royal Regiment and the North Irish Horse.

*Taylor* - On 13th June 2005 aged 94 years, at the Queen Alexander Hospital Home, Wentworth Taylor who served with The East Surrey Regiment.

*Turner* - On 12th June 2005, RQMS George E Turner who served with 6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment 1928-1946.

*Twidle* - On 20th January 2005, aged 89 years, Captain Harry Walter John Twidle MBE. Having originally joined 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment in 1932, he transferred to the Royal Horse Guards in 1935. In 1943 he was commissioned into The East Surrey Regiment, serving with 2/6th Bn until 1945. In 1951 he was granted a regular commission with 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment. In 1957 he transferred to the RAF with which he served until 1968.

*Twitchin* - On 20th April 2005 Lance Corporal Percival Clifford Twitchin who served with 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment,

*Watson* - On Sunday 14th August 2005, Major Derrick James Watson, The Queen's Royal Regiment. Having enlisted into the Territorial Army in February 1939, he initially served with 11th Royal Fusiliers. He went to Sandhurst in October 1940 and was commissioned into the South Staffords in February 1941. He subsequently joined the 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in Egypt and served with the battalion in North Africa, Italy and NW Europe through to Berlin and thence the Rhineland. He was regazetted to The Queen's Royal Regiment in November 1945. He was Mentioned in Despatches in February 1945, wounded in late March 1945 during a night advance after crossing the Rhine, and awarded the Croix de Guerre in April 1945. He retired from the Army in February 1946.

*Webb* - On 22nd June 2005 aged 88 years, Ronald Arthur Frank Webb.

*White* - On 5th May 2005 aged 91 years, Captain A C L White TD (see obituary).

*Winters* - On 5th June 2005, Private John (Jack) Winters who served with 10th Bn The East Surrey Regiment from 1939-1946.

*Young* - On 5th October 2005, Lewis Young who served with The Queen's Royal Regiment 1941-47.

## Regimental Families

*Burnett* - On 31st August 2005, Elvie Burnett, widow of Keith Burnett who served with The East Surrey Regiment and The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment before transferring to the Intelligence Corps.

*Le Q Clayton* - On 20th June 2005, Judith Mary Le Q Clayton much loved wife of Tony Le Q Clayton TD of 6 Queen's and 3rd Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment, and daughter of Peter Blackstone of 5 Queen's.

## Obituaries

### Captain Colin Paul Dear MC.



Colin Dear was born at Balham, London on 20th October 1922. He was educated at Whitgift School 1933-40 before going on to Monkton Combe School. He attended Sandhurst and was commissioned into The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1942, joining the 2/5th Bn in Iraq. He served with the battalion in the Western Desert, including at Enfidaville, and took part in the Salerno landings.

On the evening of 25th September 1943, Colin Dear was a platoon commander in B Company 2/5th Bn which led the assault on Mount Stella, advancing in an arduous climb of some 3,000 ft behind a creeping barrage. When the other leading platoon came to a halt, he took command and led both platoons towards the crest. They came under intense machinegun fire before closing with the enemy and engaging in hand-to-hand fighting. After capturing the position, Colin Dear reorganised the survivors. Over the next two hours the company commander, Colin Dear and eight men held off two

determined German counter-attacks before reinforcements arrived. Colin Dear was awarded an immediate MC.

In January 1944 he took part in the battle of the Garigliano River crossing. During the crossing the boats were shot up when they came under German fire. They were swept away in the strong current; Colin Dear was wounded in a mortar attack resulting in the amputation of his right foot. He subsequently became an OCTU instructor at Foremarke Hall, Mons Barracks and briefly at Sandhurst. He left the Army in January 1947.

He subsequently qualified as a chartered accountant, working for Unilever for some 30 years before working with the Action Resource Centre charity from 1982-87. Colin Dear, who died on 25th July 2005, married Monica Sheila Dobson in December 1945 at Burton-on-Trent. We extend our sincere condolences on their loss to her and their two sons and a daughter.

### The Rev Professor William Hugh Clifford Frend.

Bill Frend was born in January 1916, the son of a Church of England clergyman. He attended Haileybury before going to Keble College, Oxford in 1934 where he got a first in history and a doctorate which he completed in 1940 having also attended Berlin University in 1938 and the Sorbonne in 1939.

He had, in his own words, "an odd war". Medically boarded as D4 in April 1940, he became a civil servant, first in the War Office and thence to the Cabinet Office where he worked until 1942. He subsequently worked in Intelligence in the Foreign Office 1942-1945. He served in North Africa July 1943 - April 1944. He then served in Italy, including with 5th Army in Rome and Florence and with the US 92nd Division. He ended the war as head of the German Section of Rome Radio. He was upgraded to AI and recommended for commission by the US Forces; although remaining a civilian he received war medals in 1946 on special award.

He wrote in his personal details for the Officers' Club that "the only thing of note I can claim was to persuade the German Embassy in the Vatican to "put themselves at Allied disposal" at the time of the anti-Hitler plot in July 1944". He also discovered conclusive evidence, found in the chimney of the Chief of Police HQ in September 1944, of the redoubt in the southern Alps, with map of the tunnels etc then under construction.

He was commissioned into The Queen's Royal Regiment (TA) in May 1947 serving with the 5th Bn as IO. He was subsequently TA IO with 131 Bde. In 1950 he received the Gold Cross of Merit with Swords from the Polish Government in exile for services in Italy 1944-45. He retired from the TA in October 1967.



He had worked on the Editorial Board on German Foreign Ministry Documents 1947-51 before becoming a research fellow at Nottingham University. He subsequently lectured in Divinity at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge 1954-69 and was a Fellow of Caius 1956-69. In 1969 he moved to Glasgow University where he held a Chair of Ecclesiastical History until his retirement in 1984. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1979 and a Fellow of the British Academy in 1983.

He was ordained in 1983 and was priest in charge of the Barnwell group of parishes from 1984-90. He married Mary Grace Crook in June 1951. She predeceased him in 2002 and he is survived by a son and daughter to whom we send our deepest sympathy

### Corporal Jim Matthews



Cpl Jim Matthews died on 16th September 2005 at the age of 66 after suffering a prolonged illness, which he endured with great courage.

He joined the Regiment in 1959 with the last group of National Servicemen to be called up and after training at the Depot in Canterbury he joined B Company 1 Queen's Surreys, serving with them in Aden and Mukerias.

Jim Matthews was the son of a prominent and popular Trade Union leader of the 1950s and he inherited from his father the compassionate concern for the well-being of those around him, without the aggressive aspects of Unionism. He was very friendly and popular with all ranks and although he was born and brought up in the West Country he had all the characteristics of a true Cockney; with all their repartee, humour and wit and, as a soldier, he was a very good influence in adverse conditions. He was also a keen sportsman and particularly liked his football.

Above all Jim Matthews was an extremely loyal man and showed great loyalty to his Regiment, his Company and to his friends. After leaving the Army he encouraged many members of the Regiment to join the Regimental Association and it was typical of his loyalty to the Regiment and to his friends that, in spite of his chronic ill health, he attended the All Ranks Regimental Reunion at The Union Jack Club in November last year. He was also the driving force behind the three-yearly 'B Company Reunions' and it is thanks to his influence and organization that they have continued over the past 45 years. He will be sadly missed at next year's reunion. The fact that fourteen members of his Company attended his

funeral indicates the high esteem in which he was held. Throughout his long illness he was wonderfully looked after by his wife, Pam, and to her and the family we send our deepest sympathy and condolences.

GM

### Captain G T Oats

George Oats was one of the South African officers of the Union Defence Forces who volunteered to continue the War serving in the British Army. He joined 2/7th Queen's in October 1943 as a Platoon Commander taking part at Monte Camino and the Crossing of the Garigliano. Soon after he was badly wounded on Monte Damiano. He rejoined 2/7th Queen's in September 1944, becoming Signals Officer, which post he filled until the end of the War.

Returning to South Africa he had a very successful career in business but he always kept in touch, coming over to England and attending Reunions on a number of occasions, the last being in 2004 when he was already 90. He was a much liked and admired friend.

JWS

### G W A Swain - National Secretary, Italy Star Association

Graham Swain at the time of his death, which was reported in the last Newsletter, had been National Secretary of the Italy Star Association for some fifteen years. He served in the Signal Platoon of 2/7th Queen's from September 1944 until the Battalion's disbandment in March 1946. He had previously served with 7th Ox and Bucks Light Infantry, also in 56th Division, which he had joined in October 1943. The transfer to 2/7th Queen's came when, during the Gothic Line battles, heavy infantry casualties necessitated the break up of one brigade to reinforce the remaining six Battalions of the Division.

Soon after leaving the Army Graham Swain joined the Police, firstly the Kent County Constabulary, then transferring to Southampton, and finally the Hampshire Constabulary. He had a distinguished career finishing as Detective Superintendent Crime Coordinator for South West Hampshire.

As Secretary of the Italy Star Association his detailed and dedicated work contributed a very great deal to the flourishing of the Association, which at its peak had nearly 3000 members including many from the Commonwealth Divisions and representatives of the 2nd Polish Corps, who served in Italy.

JWS

### Captain A C L White TD



Alan Charles Lincoln White who died on 5th May 2005 aged 91 years joined the TA in 1938 and served almost continuously until 1967.

Not surprisingly he was affectionately known to his comrades of

every rank as 'Chalky' throughout his long and distinguished career.

With war threatening 'Chalky' joined 56 London Divisional Signals in 1938 but soon afterwards transferred to 48th RTR and trained as a tank driver and as a gunner. He became a Troop Sergeant and sailed with the Regiment to Tunisia in Spring 1943 where it took part in a number of actions culminating in the final victory of the Allies in North Africa. In August 1943 'Chalky' was commissioned and joined 1/6th East Surreys soon becoming MTO, an appointment he held throughout the whole of the Italian and Greek campaigns until he was demobilised in November 1946. A competent amateur boxer he also held appointments as Battalion and 10 Brigade Boxing Officer.

When 6th East Surreys was reconstituted in August 1947, 'Chalky' was among the first to rejoin and was again appointed MTO. Always well groomed, and a stickler for

strict compliance with Dress Regulations, he retained a degree of idiosyncrasy in his working dress which throughout his long career consisted of Despatch Riders breeches, pale coloured puttees, BD blouse and highly polished brown boots! Such was his reputation he succeeded in persuading several members of his war-time MT Platoon to rejoin and together they ensured that at least one of the specialist departments of the Battalion was quickly "up and running".

By 1959 'Chalky' had reached "demob" age for the second time so had to leave the Surreys, but secured appointment as TA Adjutant to 167 Field Ambulance RAMC (TA), to the advantage of all concerned. That unit became the victim of further TA cuts and 'Chalky' was "demobbed" for the last time in 1967. However his public spirited attitude was not to be denied and he became a Special Constable for the next ten years. Strictly in the line of constabulary duty and self defence he had cause on one or two occasions to make use of his boxing experience! The same determination to be of service to the community inspired him to work during the 1980s as a hospital driver carrying hospital patients in his car between hospital and home.

Always intensely proud of his Regiment and keen to preserve its high reputation, he (and his wife Peggy whom he married in 1942 and who survives him) spent many hours helping the establishment of the Regimental Museum at Clandon, and in running the Museum Shop.

WEM

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### The Queen's Royal Regiment

"Defence of Escaut", "Villers Bocage", "Mont Pincon", "Lower Maas", "Roer", "North-West Europe, 1940, '44-45", "Syria 1941", "Sidi Barrani", "Tobruk 1941", "Tobruk Sortie", "Deir el Munassib", "El Alamein", "Advance on Tripoli", "Medenine", "Tunis", "North Africa 1940-43", "Salerno", "Monte Stella", "Scafati Bridge", "Volturno Crossing", "Monte Camino", "Garigliano Crossing", "Damiano", "Anzio", "Gothic Line", "Gemmuno Ridge", "Senio Pocket", "Senio Floodbank", "Casa Fabbri Ridge", "Menate", "Filo", "Argenta Gap", Italy 1943-45", "North Arakan", "Kohima", "Yenangyaung 1945", "Sittang 1945", "Chindits 1944", "Burma 1943-45".

### The East Surrey Regiment

"Defence of Escaut", "Dunkirk 1940", "North-West Europe 1940", "Tebourba", "Fort McGregor", "Oued Zarga", "Djebel Ang", "Djebel Djaffa Pass", "Medjez Plain", "Longstop Hill 1943", "Tunis", "Montarnaud", "North Africa 1942-43", "Adrano", "Centuripe", "Sicily 1943", "Trigno", "Sangro", "Cassino", "Capture of Forli", "Argenta Gap", "Italy 1943-45", "Greece 1944-45", "Kampar", "Malaya 1941-42".

