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THE QUEEN'S ROYAL SURREY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER





Forecast of Events

2008



10th February	SOBRAON DAY (1846).
16th March	Regimental Museum re-opens - Clandon.
17th March	The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association, Charity Trustees and Officers' Club Meetings - Clandon.
1st April	Centenary of the raising of the Territorial Army.
5th April	3 PWRR exercise the Freedom of Guildford.
20th April	Regimental Association Members' Open Day, Regimental Museum.
23rd April	YPRES DAY (1915).
24th April	The East Surrey Regiment Officers' Reunion Lunch - The RAF Club.
1st May	Golf Society Spring Meeting - Sudbrook Park.
16th May	ALBUHERA DAY (1811).
19th May	President's Reception for the Mayors of Surrey - Clandon.
(date tbc)	5 Queen's OMA Annual Dinner - Farnham. Details from: I Chatfield, 13 Wood Road, Farncombe, Surrey GU7 3NN.
1st June	THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE (1794).
1st June	The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association Annual Church Service - Guildford Cathedral 1130 a.m.
1st August	MINDEN DAY.
6th September	6th(Bermondsey), 2/6th and 2/7th Queen's Royal Regiment OCAs Combined Reunion lunch - Union Jack Club.
9th September	SALERNO DAY.
6th October	The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Officers' Club Ladies' Luncheon - Clandon.
October (date tbc)	The East Surrey OCA Reunion, Clapham.
7th November	The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association Annual Reunion - Union Jack Club.
20th December	BRITISH BATTALION DAY (1941).

Editorial

I am extremely grateful to all those who provided material for the Newsletter. 2008 will mark the Territorial Army Centenary. I would particularly welcome recollections of life with the TA for inclusion in the next edition. The Centenary will also be recognised in the Regimental display in the recently opened Lightbox in Woking. The current display there primarily relates to the Second World War whilst also giving an introduction to the history of the Regiment. Under the contract which has been signed, the Regiment will have a display, which will be changed annually, for the next 15 years: so why not pay a visit when you are next in the town.

Frontispiece: The two new stained glass windows which have been installed in the Regimental Chapel, Guildford Cathedral.

President's Notes

It was marvellous to see so many at our annual Cathedral Service on 17th June. In the presence of The Lord Lieutenant Mrs Sarah Goad JP, The High Sheriff, Leader of Surrey County Council, Mrs Penelope Keith CBE, senior officials from Surrey Royal British Legion and Falklands veterans the Dean blessed two new stained glass windows and a commemorative plaque in our chapel. Photographs of this moving occasion are found in the centre pages of this Newsletter. As you will see one of the new windows has The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment badge and the other is The Queen's Royal Regiment crest; these join windows of The East Surrey Regiment and of the Home Guard which were already installed. Our thanks are due to Colonel the Reverend Peter Hewlett-Smith OBE who preached such an appropriate sermon. Peter joined the East Surreys as a National serviceman in the same intake as me. Next year's service will be held on 1st June (The Glorious First) - a note for your diaries.

I am sure that you will join me in congratulating Ian Chatfield, our excellent Museum Curator, on all his hard work which has led to our museum being formally "accredited". This is a great achievement; well done. I would also like to thank the museum trustees for all their efforts to try to secure a long term future for our museum. Thanks also to Les Wilson for all the work on our website. It gets better and better. We plan to put on all the Battalion World War 1 war diaries next year.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter you will see a financial report about the Regimental Charity which continues to be healthy. Remember our priority is benevolence. Bill Titchmarsh (who served with The Queen's Royal Regiment) is now an in-pensioner at The Royal Hospital and it was good to see him at our re-union at the Union Jack Club. The Royal Hospital has recently slightly relaxed the entry requirement rules and an outline of these can be found in the Newsletter.

Lastly, I make a plea for you to continue to send to Major Tony Russell articles for this Newsletter. I'm certain that it is due to the articles about 1 Queen's Malayan tour that we now have half a platoon coming to our reunion at the Union Jack Club! Thank you, Tony, for such a good Newsletter and for all your other responsibilities.

Please do continue to maintain contact with all your former friends in the Regiment and the Association. Support your friends if they are in difficulties and also let us know.

Gill and I wish you all a very happy Christmas and 2008.

Tony Ward

Benevolence

During the period 1st January - 7th September 2007, 61 cases were investigated and 41 individual grants-in-aid were approved (of these 11 cases were to former embodied Territorial members). In the majority of cases the grants were for household expenses, debts and rent arrears. The Association helped to provide five further electrically powered vehicles, one orthopaedic chair/bed and contributed to seven "Disabled Adaptions". The Charity paid out £17,726 as individual grants-in-aid through RHQ PWRR. The Army Benevolent Fund (ABF) provided a further £1,900 in General Grants. Of the 20 cases not receiving a grant, local Councils/Charities or other Regimental Associations assisted 11 after RHQ had contacted them. Five cases were not receiving such allowances as Attendance, Mobility, Pensions Credit or Rent Rebate.

Fifteen ABF Annuities were administered; the ABF generously contributed £60 per month per case. During this period we have renewed or arranged for three Nursing Home Fees grants, each of £1,300 from the ABF and £500 from the Regimental Charity per year, to be paid for our old soldiers or their widows to be looked after. The ABF total grants in support, including Nursing Home Fees and annuities, were £9,600.

Due to manning difficulties within RHQ PWRR, for the present Major John Rogerson is continuing to act as Benevolence Secretary on a part-time basis after his official retirement date. 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.

Regimental Charity Finances

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity's finances are controlled by the Charity Trustees who approve the annual budget and grants. More detailed oversight on their behalf is exercised by the Finance Sub-Committee which reports formally to the Trustees twice a year. The Charity's accounts are inspected each year by independent auditors and the Trustees make a formal return to the Charity Commissioners annually; the Trustees' report, which includes a statement of financial activities, can be viewed on the Charity Commission website. The Museum is a separate Charity with its own Trustees; it has its own funds but receives financial support from the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity. There is also a separate Territorial Charity with its own Trustees.

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity's income is primarily from returns generated by its substantial investment portfolio. This portfolio is based upon charitable funds which were built up by the Regiment

and its forebears. Professional advisers assist the Finance Sub-Committee and Trustees in managing the portfolio.

Like many other charities, the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity was affected by the decline in the stock market around the start of this century. This happened to coincide with a period of heavy capital expenditure on the refurbishment of the Regimental Museum and on costs associated with the renewal of the lease. Overall the Charity's investment portfolio, which had been worth about £2,790,000 at its peak, was valued at £2,114,612 at the beginning of 2002 and £1,812,600 at the beginning of 2003.

However, over the last few years the Regimental Charity has benefited from the stock market recovery and at 31st December 2006 the total value of the Regimental Charity's investment portfolio and cash deposits stood at £2,178,934. The 2006 audited accounts show an income of £85,864, of which just over £62,500 was interest on investments and cash deposits. Audited expenditure was £146,750. The overspend was met by selling investments, although this was more than offset by a gain of over £130,000 in the value of investment assets.

In managing the investment portfolio and controlling expenditure over the coming years, the Charity's Trustees will continue to use the end of 2011 as a planning date for the cessation of the Regimental Association and Charity in their present form. This planning date is kept under regular review and does not mean that branch activities need cease then. The Trustees intend to ensure that endowments are provided for continued benevolence for our old soldiers and their dependants, for the Regimental Museum, and for the maintenance of Regimental Chapels and other memorials.

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Eligibility for Entry to The Royal Hospital Chelsea

For many years the Royal Hospital Chelsea has accepted as In-Pensioners only those who have met four conditions: they must have served as a Regular soldier in the British Army; they must have nobody who is dependent on them; they must have a military or war disability pension which they surrender on entry; and they must be over the age of 65. Of these conditions only the first two are legally binding: the other two are at the discretion of the Commissioners of the Royal Hospital, and on occasion they have interpreted them flexibly to allow for special cases.

As a result of cumulative and continuing changes in demography, society and Government policy they have recently taken a fresh look at the conditions of entry to see whether there is a case for making any changes. There are no plans at present to alter the 65 years of age requirement, but it has been decided that The Royal Hospital should in future be prepared to accept those who, while meeting all the other conditions, do not necessarily have a military or war disability pension to

surrender. This change will open up entry to a number of deserving candidates who have, until now, been excluded. This change to conditions does not mean that the Royal Hospital shall be accepting those whose only experience of the military was during National Service, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

There are, however, two other factors which should be taken into account. First, it has always been the policy not to accept as In-Pensioners those who are already too frail to contribute to the life of this unique community. The Chelsea Pensioner, a figure much loved by the British public, is a living memorial to the service given and sacrifice made by successive generations of soldiers, and a symbol of the covenant that must exist between the nation and its Army. As such it is vital that pensioners are able to carry out the many representative functions that keep them - and thus the ideal they represent - in the public eye. They must not become invisible. Once they are admitted the Royal Hospital shall, of course, look after them until they die, providing whatever nursing care is required for however long is necessary. But with few exceptions (there is occasionally a special case) applicants must be sufficiently fit on entry to play an active part in the Hospital community. This constraint is particularly acute just now as the Royal Hospital have recently embarked on a major development programme, one consequence of which is that there is great pressure on beds in the Infirmary.

The second consideration is that The Royal Hospital cannot, for a number of reasons, generally accept people as In-Pensioners totally free of charge. This would be hard to explain to the vast majority who surrender their pensions on arrival; and it would be difficult to justify to the tax-payer, from whom The Royal Hospital continue to get a Grant-in-Aid. For this reason they shall expect any applicant who does not have a pension to surrender to make an alternative financial contribution of at least £100 per week. Precisely how much each individual actually pays will be subject to discussion on application, and will depend in part on his circumstances. Suffice it to say whatever sum is agreed will fall within the bracket paid by the current contingent of In-Pensioners and will thus continue to constitute extremely good value. Moreover, this charge can be paid by the individual in person; by an association or other charity prepared to sponsor him; or by a combination of the two. This will allow the maximum flexibility.

The Royal Hospital Chelsea does not seek to increase substantially the number of In-Pensioners as capacity is limited, but it is hoped this small but positive change to the rules of entry will enable some deserving candidates to go there who might otherwise have been denied. Of one thing they can be certain. Once admitted to The Royal Hospital they will be able to enjoy their later years to the full among their comrades, secure in the knowledge that they will never lack for care, and will live and die with dignity among friends in a caring community.

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A Visit Down Memory Lane

(A Regimental day of recollection in the company of Lt Col (Rtd) Les Wilson MBE and RSM Sid Lea during August 2007: by RSM Tommy Atkins who since died on 19th November 2007)

We firstly went to the Regimental Museum at Clandon; this was because Sid had not been to the Museum for quite some time during which the Museum had undergone a major refurbishment, and Col Les gave him a conducted tour, explaining the exhibits on display. Not surprisingly this took a couple of hours, but I think Sid was pleasantly pleased with what he saw and heard, and no doubt picked up a few memories from the many photos on display. I, of course, was familiar with the museum because of recent visits. A short break and a cup of tea, and off we went to our old site at what was Stoughton Barracks, but is now a civilian housing development.

On arrival we had the customary photos taken just outside 'The Keep', and I couldn't help but reflect it was 70 years ago (April 1937) that I had first walked through those gates to join the Regular Army and enlist in The Queen's Royal Regiment. Though the 'Keep' has kept its outward appearance, it has been converted into flats, all very tastefully done, and I believe rather expensive to buy. The view of the Guard Room on the ground level, and the veranda where many a sentry did his two on and four off just inside the main gate, is hidden from view by hedgerows. As I walked around the 'Keep' I couldn't help but remember the day in 1958 when three soldiers broke out from the guardroom at the rear end of the 'Keep'. They were absent for three days before being apprehended. All their surnames began with a B and thereafter I always referred to them as the three 'Bs'.

Nearly all of the old military buildings have been demolished, and civilian housing has been developed, but I have to say with a considerable amount of forethought on the part of the developers; some of the original military buildings were kept, and tastefully redesigned as civilian accommodation. These buildings included 'The Keep', 'The Officers Mess', 'The Admin building' that incorporated the Quartermaster's Quarters at one end, and at the other end the 'RSM's quarters', and in between the 'Commanding Officer's Office' and the 'Adjutant's office', 'The Orderly Room', 'Ration store' and above them the 'Regimental Secretary's Office' and the 'PRI's Office'. As I stood outside the what was the RSM's quarters having a photo taken, again memory lane appeared and I recalled such names as RSM Osborne back in 1937, a Major Pillieu and a Captain Evans, and of course my very first Platoon Sergeant Jack Dennis ('Mad Jack' as he was known because of his quick temper).

I remember these times quite clearly, because I returned to the Depot on two more occasions during my 23 years service; one was in 1946 when the Depot was re-activated for training National Service men and it was during this period that Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery visited

the Depot and I was introduced to him. The third time I was posted back to the Depot was in 1957 as Regimental Sergeant Major: little did I know it then, but I was to be the last RSM of the Depot at Stoughton Barracks as 'Amalgamation' had reared its ugly head and the Regimental Depot at Stoughton Barracks was to be no more. I had set my sights when first enlisting in 1937 to becoming the RSM, but it was not to be until almost twenty years later that I achieved that ambition.



On parade again

From the Admin Block and its many memories we progressed to Peterborough Block that faced the Parade Ground and the 'The Green'. This building had been of four large type barrack rooms with about 30 beds in each barrack room, and in between accommodation for senior NCOs and also ablutions. To the rear of Peterborough had been a similar building called Tangier Block, but that had been demolished. Peterborough Block has been converted into civilian type flats, all very tastefully done.

During our tour we were able to pick out where places such as the NAAFI, the WOs and Sgts Mess, the MT shed, Hospital and Married Quarters had stood. Roy Harding, ex signal Platoon from Malaya days, joined us at this time and he brought along an album showing the demolition and development of the civilian housing estate as it is now. We were able to pick out places where once stood the WOs and Sgts Mess and the Naafi, and the Parade Ground. The 'Green', adjacent to the parade ground, during my recruit days back in 1937 was as holy as the parade ground; as the Regimental Sergeant Major in 1957 I re-introduced the rule that it was not to be used other than for special Regimental Functions. There is still an area of this green visible and tastefully planted with trees. Finally there is still a small area of the sports field and the area at the bottom where once stood the 'Piggery'; who could forget the 'Piggery'?

Whilst visiting the area in which the Mess had stood, we spoke to a resident of one of the houses, and as we were talking, she mentioned that she had been watching a film the previous evening called 'Carry on Sergeant'. My ears pricked up at this, and when she had finished talking, I asked her if she recalled the scene in the film where a chap was standing on a rostrum announcing the

prize giving: a moments thought and she said "yes", so I was able to tell her the exact words, and that it was I who did that part. She was so excited that she was going to watch it again that night. We of course told her that could add a few thousand £'s to the value of her property. I don't think so though!! However we finished up having a photo taken with her and her two children. (I should have mentioned that the bulk of the film 'Carry on Sergeant' was made at Stoughton Barracks during my time as RSM there in 1957 to 1959).



Recalling a moment of celluloid fame

From there we progressed around to where had stood the old hospital and the married quarters. These had given way to new housing development until we came to the Officers' Mess Building. This building has been retained in outward appearance, but again like the Admin and Peterborough Block has been converted into flats, with the anteroom being a communal sitting room.

The grounds have all been tastefully developed and as time has gone by have matured into a pleasant area.

From the Depot we took a short hop up to the Cathedral to visit the Regimental Chapel. Here we were able to view the latest additions of the Stained Glass Windows on which the Regimental Cap Badges of The Queen's Royal Regiment and The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment are depicted, and an engraved Stone Floor Tablet.

We then retired to the Refectory where we were joined by Colonel Tony Ward President of the Regimental Association of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment, had some refreshments, put the world to rights and dispersed to our homes; Colonel Les to Dover, me to Aldershot, and Sid Lea to the North of the country via the Union Jack Club in Waterloo, London, where no doubt after an exhausting day out he enjoyed a nice cool pint and a nights rest before continuing North to his home the next day.

A big THANK YOU also to Ian Chatfield, Curator of the Regimental Museum, and Roy Harding who both came in on their day off to help look after us.

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"Malayan Mutts"

During 1st Queen's time in Malaya a battalion magazine "Tangerine" was produced. This recorded events, and changes. During its tour the battalion was augmented by a new unit, the Dog Platoon.



The following appeared in Tangerine Volume II June/July 1955

Standing Orders for Dogs Attached to 1 Queen's.

(With apologies to the Police gazette).

1. All dogs engaged on company duties will be known by name according to the station in which they work, e.g. dog, Danger I, Bukit Serampang.
2. You will be responsible to the CO through RAVC and OC Company for the tracking down of any CTs in the area and for the administration and welfare of all stray female and unlicensed dogs in your area.
3. You are responsible for informing your handler of the approach of any unauthorised person and in his absence will take immediate steps to bite the same. You will ensure that you have adequate teeth at all times to effect this.
4. You will be responsible for the discipline of all fleas in your area and will notify RAVC NCO i/c of any transfers that take place. Such transfers will be filed and correctly minuted, with notes of any public reaction.
5. You will attend the monthly meetings of the Female Dogs Association in your area and report to the RAVC NCO i/c of any proposition made and action taken by you.

6. You are responsible for the irrigation of all plants in your company area and will ensure that such action is taken in accordance with Appendix 'A' i.e. the right leg will be lifted 4" from the ground and the eyes will be fixed on a point 10 yds to the front. You will pay particular attention to the regular inspection of such plants and will report any deficiencies.
7. You are entitled to rations and allowances as laid down by Appendix 'B'. Additional unrecorded bones may be granted in special circumstances, but details of such must be recorded under the heading "Record of Unrecorded Bones".
8. All petitions etc will be submitted to the OC through RAVC, CSM and QM company's. Complaints that you are leading a dog's life will not be entertained. You will base your activities on the theory that every dog has its day and you will be rewarded accordingly.
9. You will wear a collar and license tag during working hours. The license tag is to be worn three inches below the right eye. Your bed will be made up by 0630 hrs daily in accordance with standing orders.
10. You are responsible for seeing that anti-cat operations are carried in accordance with Appendix 'C'. Four hours of this will be done at night. You will not mutilate the bodies of your victims and those will not be exhibited outside your company office.
11. You will not expend energy during working hours other than in the proper discharge of your duties.

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The Surreys and the Benedictine Legacy

(by Bryn Evans)

Italy in Winter - February 2006

I walked from Cassino's railway station into its forecourt and the February rain, and began to hail a taxi driver to take me up to the Monte Cassino Monastery. Then two Italian railway police stepped in front of me, and quickly escorted me back to their office. Feeling like a terrorism suspect I had to answer their questions for a bemused 15 minutes, while they checked my passport, and I explained that I was just a tourist.

I am not sure why they found me suspicious, but after alighting from the train I had paused on the platform to photograph a memorial of a 50 year reunion in 1994 of veterans of the 2nd New Zealand Division. The plaque stated, "... in Honour of all Who served at Cassino in

1944." In a near half year campaign to conquer Cassino and its mountain Monastery, many of The East Surrey Regiment also fell by the New Zealanders' side. Maybe there is a suspicious gene inherited by Cassino police officers. For those climactic battles for Cassino were just the most recent of numerous destructions to befall the Monte Cassino Monastery over the last two thousand years.

But what had brought me to Cassino? My late father in law, Harry Skilton, had served with the 1st Battalion East Surrey Regiment through the Second World War's Italian Campaign, and it was to seek some understanding of the forgotten ordeals of the 1st Surreys' part in the four battles for Cassino that decided me to make the journey there in late winter of 2006.

As my plane had lost height to land at Naples airport, I looked down across the bay searching for Salerno, where the Allies had landed 62 years before. The taxi ride to town on narrow, poorly lit and bumpy roads gives an early sign of Naples and Southern Italy's ever present poverty. But it is luxury compared with what Neapolitans suffered in the wake of the Allied invasion and bombing of the city, when half the population fled to live in the fields and resorted to eating weeds for food.

Monte Cassino and St Benedict

So there is clearly good reason for a generational loss of memory of those times. And no-one I questioned in Naples seemed interested in the mountain top monastery of Monte Cassino. Yet it is probably the most important of any monastery in western civilisation. St Benedict established the monastery as the Roman Empire disintegrated, and the Benedictine Order with their scholarship through the Dark Ages provided the lifeline from the knowledge of the ancient Greeks and Romans, a lifeline that made possible the Renaissance.

In 480 AD the man we now know as St Benedict, was born the son of a Roman patrician near Spoleto in Perugia. Later in his childhood he lived with his family in Rome, but disillusioned by the corruption and decadence of the declining Empire, he moved to Subiaco, then later with a few of his supporters south into the Abruzzi Mountains.

Around 529 AD St Benedict founded the Monte Cassino monastery about half-way between Rome and Naples, reputedly taking over a still active Temple of Apollo. Part of "Benedict's Rule" for all monks was the principle of spiritual reading, which took the form of transcribing the great works of Greek and Roman literature. In 577 AD the Monte Cassino Monastery was destroyed by the Lombards. The monks fled to Rome, where their teachings and ideas so impressed the Papal authorities, that in 717 it was rebuilt by Pope Gregory II. But in 883 its second destruction came at the hands of the Saracens.

In the middle of the tenth century its rebuilding began again, only for a third tragedy to strike in 1349 when an

earthquake left only a few walls still standing. Restored again the Monastery was to last until 1944, when during the four drawn out battles for Cassino, Allied bombers pounded it into piles of rubble. In the 3rd and 4th of those battles the 1st and 1/6th Surreys were prominent in the conquest of Cassino, and in the taking of Monte Cassino Monastery, which was the pivotal strongpoint of the Germans' Gustav Line.

But the benefit of hindsight now shows that the Monastery's destruction in 1944 was not quite the tragedy it appeared to be at the time. Some months before the First Battle of Cassino in January 1944, two officers of the Herman Göring Panzer Division, a medical Captain Becker and Lt Col Schlegel, on the orders of General von Senger und Etterlin, had arranged the evacuation of the Monastery library's priceless collection of ancient books, manuscripts and other valuables. General von Senger was commander of the 14th Panzer Corps, an Anglophile, graduate of Oxford University, and lay member of the Benedictine Order. As Allied forces converged on Cassino, General von Senger and those two officers foresaw the greater threat to the treasures of Western faith and philosophy.

Winter of 1943/44 and the Second Battle of Cassino



In the winter of 1943/44 the Allies threw their forces at the Gustav Line, and carried out an amphibious landing at Anzio to its north. Meanwhile the 1st Surreys were part of the 78th "Battleaxe" Division, and deployed with the

8th Army along the upper reaches of the Sangro River east of the Italian Appennines. For four months, and at times in thick snow and ice, they held a ten mile front around the village of Forlì del Sangro. Movement was often only possible using skis, and supplies were portered up the mountains on foot or by mules. They were on the left flank of 8th Army, and maintaining tenuous contact with the right wing of 5th Army, who were struggling to breach the Gustav Line at Cassino.

The Allies main objective had now become Rome, for which the Gustav Line had to be broken. To mass the forces to do that, the major part of 8th Army was to be secretly switched to support 5th Army west of the Appennines. The Second battle of Cassino raged from 15-18 February 1944, but failed to exploit the Allied bombing raid, that had flattened the Monte Cassino Monastery.

And so by 19 February to reinforce the Cassino offensive, the 1st Surreys had made a cross country trek through the mountains in freezing rain, snow and blizzards south west to Capua. For a few days they regrouped in a brief bivouac in two man tents amongst some olive groves. But by 23 February they were into the front line again, on the eastern bank of the Rapido River, opposite the towns of Sant' Angelo and Cassino, held by the Germans across the river.

For a month they held the river frontage, constantly repulsing German raids from the other side, and often crossing the river themselves to undertake night patrols. Beyond was the Surreys' next goal, the now shattered remains of the Monte Cassino Monastery, but still held by the Germans as the lynchpin of their Gustav Line.

By Train to Cassino - February 2006

So there I was in mid-February 2006, same time of the year as the 1st Surreys entry into the Cassino theatre of operations. Still unclear how I would reach the mountain peak of Monte Cassino, I caught the 8.05 am train from Naples Centrale to Cassino. As we pull out of Naples and its suburbs of apartment blocks, Vesuvius is in full view. It is a cold morning with intermittent sun and rain, and cloud covers the volcano's peak.

Gradually Naples' urban sprawl gives way to vegetable fields, vineyards and orchards, showing the first buds of spring beginning to open. But then the hills in East to West rib lines close in, and the cloud and rain increases. At Capua darker clouds hide mountain peaks, and water lies by the track. It is 9.30 when we reach Teano, in the past a refuge for the Benedictine monks from earlier conflicts. After Teano the mountains are higher and steeper, some with peaks protruding through wisps of cloud like the smoke of battle. The train is now crossing deep, wooded ravines.

Through the next stops at Vairano Caianello, Mignano and Monte Lungo, the mountain slopes become sheer, rock faces strewn with boulders. The clouds have become

grey black and hang ominously lower, as if hiding their prey. At Rocca D'Ev I feel a sensation of passing through ranges of hills and mountains that will never end. And then we are there, the train pulling into Cassino station, and I noticed that small memorial to the 2nd New Zealand Division, who sacrificed so many against a counter attack of German Panzers. I found it surprising the local police maybe thought it should all be forgotten.

The Third Battle for Cassino - March 1944

But those times will not be forgotten by those who were there, or by those who will pass on their stories. Leading up to the Third Battle for Cassino 15 - 20 March 1944, the 1st Surreys' rifle companies clung to the rocky slopes on Snakeshead and Phantom Ridges around Monte Cassino, often enduring sub-zero temperatures and the Germans' shelling of any movement. During the day they hung on in sangars, which were little more than scooped out depressions, with surrounds of loose stones and rocks scrubbed together to give a gesture of cover. Only at night could they dare to stand, when the porters and mules brought up supplies, and a hot meal could be cooked.

The 2nd New Zealand and 4th Indian Divisions tried again to take Cassino Town, with the 1st Surreys and 78th Division in support. General Alexander had assembled a multi-national force of his elite troops, and the 78th Battleaxe Division were his mountain warfare specialists. Major Böhmeler of the German 1st Parachute Division in the Cassino Battles, named these three Divisions, "...the finest weapons in the whole of General Alexander's armoury" (M Parker, Monte Cassino). The Allies had raised the stakes.

Despite the Allies' aerial bombing this time completely destroying Cassino Town, German forces held on, and only some positions to the north were consolidated. But the overall build-up was unceasing. The Surreys and the 78th Battleaxe would soon be in the Fourth Battle to help force the breakthrough.

Monte Cassino Monastery - The Ascent in February 2006

My mind came back to the present. My taxi driver, Giacomo, grey and wizened, looked a bit of a risk for driving me to the top of a sheer 1,700 feet high mountain. Looking up at the rocky peak, its slopes bare from the ravages of winter, you cannot see where a road could make a climb that seems nearly vertical.

The morning was still full of incessant rain, overcast with a biting wind. It was a day when the Surreys in 1944 must have cursed as they crouched seeking any slight cover on the bare, rocky mountainsides. It was on just that kind of day, "...when the gales and the black thunderclouds sweep across from the wild hinterland of the Abruzzi, the Abbey of Montecassino hardens into a gaunt symbol of

defiance, a great fortress in the sky." (Majdalaney, "Monte Cassino, Portrait of a Battle").

Turning from Cassino's main street we drove past the ruins of the ancient Roman amphitheatre at the mountain's base. In his few words of English Giacomo assured me he knew every inch of what proved to be five miles of twisting road, climbing through a series of hairpin bends.

We came around the last turn and pulled into an empty car park. As I stepped from the taxi into the driving rain, the cold, thinner air made me gasp, and wish for another layer of clothing. Now I could see why the four drawn out battles for Cassino, with the troops on both sides fighting, living and dying in the open, has been likened to the horrors of the siege of Stalingrad.

Operation Diadem - The Fourth Battle for Cassino: 11 - 18 May 1944

After the Third Battle the 1st Surreys had been allowed some three weeks rest, their first real break since the start of the Italian Campaign, before moving back for the next offensive. On the night of 11 May 1944, code named Operation Diadem and coordinated with a break out from Anzio, the fourth and final battle for Cassino and the Monte Cassino Monastery began.

With the bulk of 8th Army now added to 5th Army, the Allies were planning to not only throw overwhelming force at the mountain bastion, but also break through the Gustav Line through their weight of numbers and materiel. And with those numbers came the inevitable losses of men.

The 1/6th Surreys with 4th Division were amongst the spearhead troops to first cross the Rapido River. "It was a warm-scented night, and very quiet. As the companies moved stealthily down towards the river the nightingales were singing." (DS Daniell, "The History of the East Surrey Regiment, Volume IV".) Then at 10.45 pm the evening silence broke apart, as the massed artillery of 8th Army opened up on the German positions on the far bank. Under cover of the barrage assault companies of 1/6th Surreys dragged their boats to the water's edge. At 11.45 pm the guns ceased and they began their crossing of the Rapido.

But many of the 1/6th Surreys were caught midstream in the glare of a chance flare, and the German mortars chopped them and their boats into a frothing vortex. Once across the river it was desperate close fighting to take the German machine gun pits with grenades and bayonets.

Three days later 1st Surreys crossed the Rapido with 78th Battleaxe Division to exploit the bridgeheads. By the 18 May the 78th had completed their turning advance around Cassino and into the Liri Valley to cut the route to Rome, and link up with the Poles, who had finally driven the Germans out of the ruins of Monte Cassino. The Battleaxe Division, undefeated throughout continuous

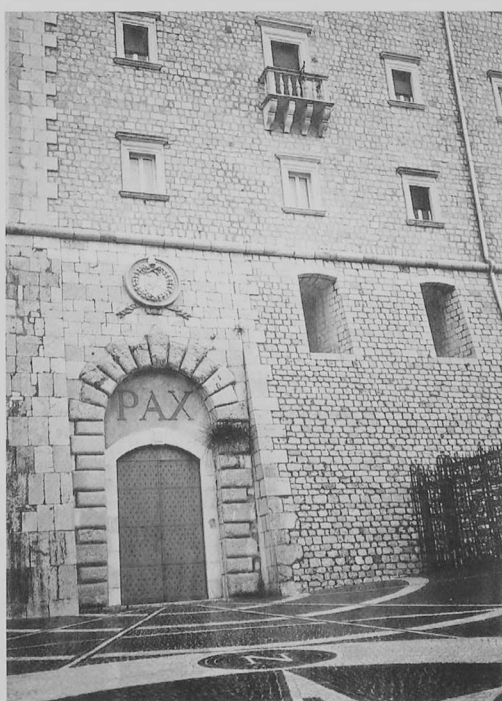
fighting in North Africa, Sicily and Italy, left in their wake approximately 800 enemy killed, wounded or prisoners, forty tanks destroyed, and won their third VC of the war. They had demonstrated again that they "...were perhaps the most sophisticated division in the two armies."(F. Majdalaney, "Monte Cassino, Portrait of a Battle".)

But the Battle took its toll on both sides. The 1/6th Surreys with 4th Division endured fighting so torrid it took them 7 days to advance less than a mile to finally take a position on the Cassino - Rome road. They "...crawled, rolled, slithered and dragged" themselves on their stomachs and elbows, just to stay alive, only daring to stand when in the deepest dug trench. With their numbers dwindling as enemy fire took its toll, Corporal Robinson watched other comrades crack, and wrote to his wife, "...when, when, when is this insanity going to stop?"(Lord Carver, "War in Italy") When it was over, the 1/6th Surreys had lost 40% of their force in casualties.

That was the inevitable price, but with a 3 to 1 superiority the Allies' Operation Diadem was able to smash through the Gustav Line. Cassino and the Monastery were taken, and by late May the Germans were streaming north in retreat.

Inside Monte Cassino Monastery Today

Today those terrible battles contrast with the rebuilt Monastery's tranquility, the beauty of its courtyards, cloisters and enclosed gardens. I walked into the entrance cloister, to find a garden with its own resident white doves, fluttering and cooing around a sculpture of St Benedict, which commemorates his death on this spot in 547 AD. In the second open cloister, named Bramante and reflecting the style of this Renaissance architect, there is another statue of St Benedict, left miraculously intact despite the destruction of everything around it in 1944. Also still standing from the time of St Benedict himself is the original entrance arch and its Roman word of welcome "PAX" (peace).



Looking out through the cloister's arcade I glimpsed through the swirling mist a view of the Liri Valley far below. To the west I could see the Polish war cemetery of more than a thousand graves set into the slopes of Snakeshead Ridge.

Walking around the Monastery today, from the ethereal Paradise Loggia that leads in to the central Benefactor's cloister, to the opulence of Baroque art and decoration in the Basilica Cathedral, and to the mosaic and marble of the underground crypts and chapels, one can only marvel at how it was rebuilt from the rubble of 1944 to such perfection by 1957.

The English Cemetery and the Surreys' Legacy

Having read so much about its destruction, and seen those pictures of its bombed out remains, the Monastery's restoration seems almost unbelievable. There must be something else I thought, as we left on the drive back down to Cassino. So when Giancomo suggested that he drive me to the English Cemetery, I had no hesitation in saying yes.

Just a few minutes from the town we stopped outside the cemetery. The rain continued to beat down as I walked up some steps of the cemetery entrance, and I thought I would look for any graves from Harry's Battalion, 1st Surreys. But as I came into full view of the cemetery, I was not prepared for what I saw.

Just thousands of graves - in excess of 8,000, more than at El Alamein. All were immaculately maintained, and tears welled in my eyes at the thought of the sacrifice they had made. So many graves all appearing the same, it seemed it might take some time to find any from the East Surreys. I took a few steps down a path between the rows nearest to me, and there the very first grave in only the second line was that of a soldier in the East Surrey Regiment, and so was the first grave in the next line too. It was as if Harry's unseen hand had led me here.

The cemetery's graves marked the fallen from across what is now the Commonwealth, as well as the many English county regiments like the East Surreys. Those whose bodies were never found are commemorated by inscriptions on stone monoliths at the cemetery's centre. And overlooking the cemetery like a father figure is Monte Cassino and its monastery, rebuilt perhaps grander than ever.

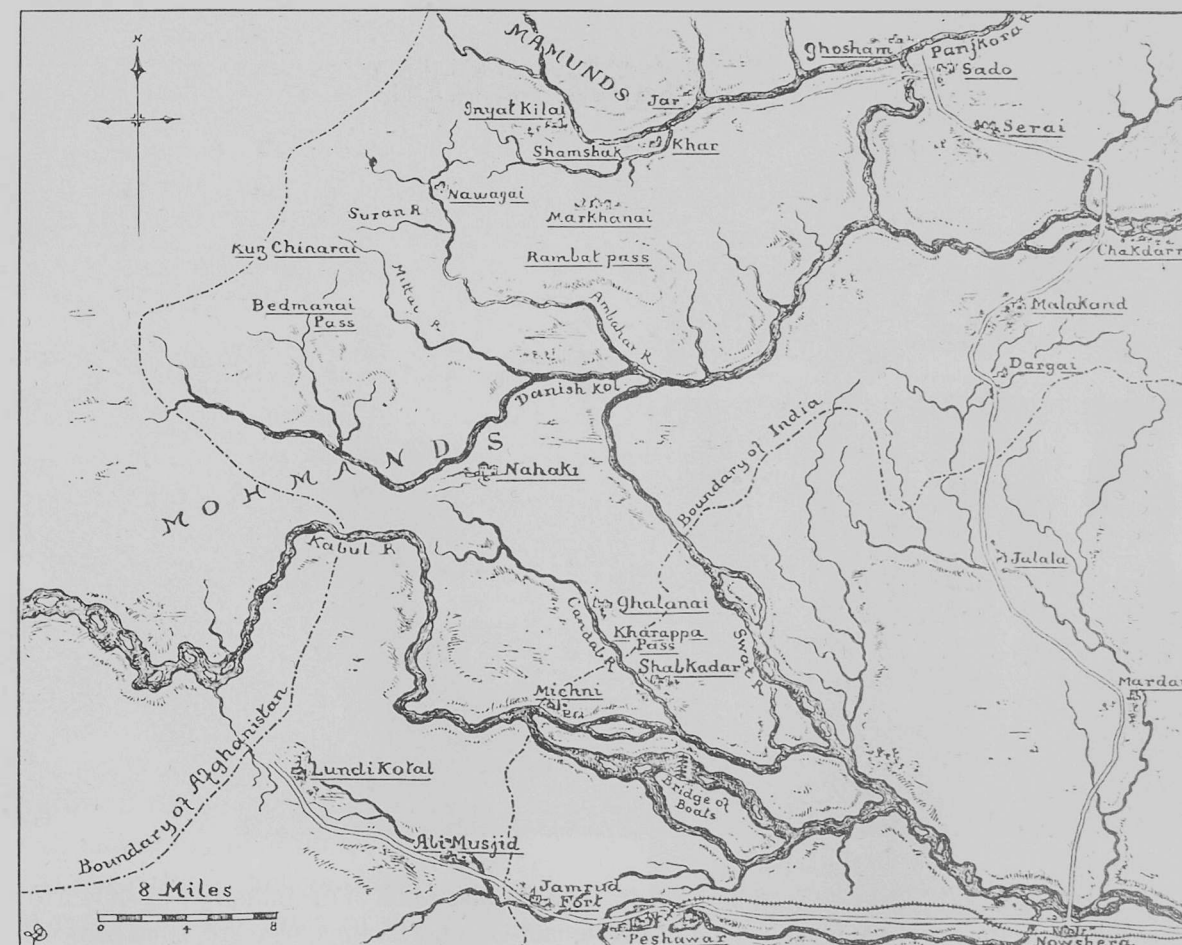
But more important of course than the Monastery's rebuilding, was that those values of the Christian faith, of the Hellenic culture, and those beliefs in individual freedom and in democracy, enshrined in its many books and manuscripts, had been restored by the Allies' victory. The Surreys had fought and died to ensure that legacy would endure.

□ □ □

One Hundred and Ten Years Ago: The Battle of Nawagai - September 1897

After fighting in two wars against Afghans during the 19th century, in 1893 the British had succeeded in imposing the Durand line, dividing Afghanistan and what was then British India. The border, which had deliberately been drawn so as to cut through the Pakhtun tribes, was seen by the British as a permanent settlement; the Afghan side viewed it as a temporary development. The North-West Frontier remained a turbulent, problematic area for the British Government in India. Attacks by Mohmands, who inhabited the country north of Peshwar, in the region in the hot weather of 1897 had brought some 20,000 tribesmen into the field by the beginning of August and led to the formation of the Malakand Field Force which 1st Queen's were to join.

On the 3rd of August the 1st Battalion of the Queen's at Ambala was ordered to move to Jullundur, to relieve the Buffs who were on their way to the Frontier. On the 10th of August, at 11.30am, the Battalion, which had been at Jullundur for five days, was ordered to mobilize; it left the same evening for Rawalpindi. From Rawalpindi the Battalion moved to Nowshera, where it was issued with camels, and then marched through a hot and breathless night to the Malakand Pass.



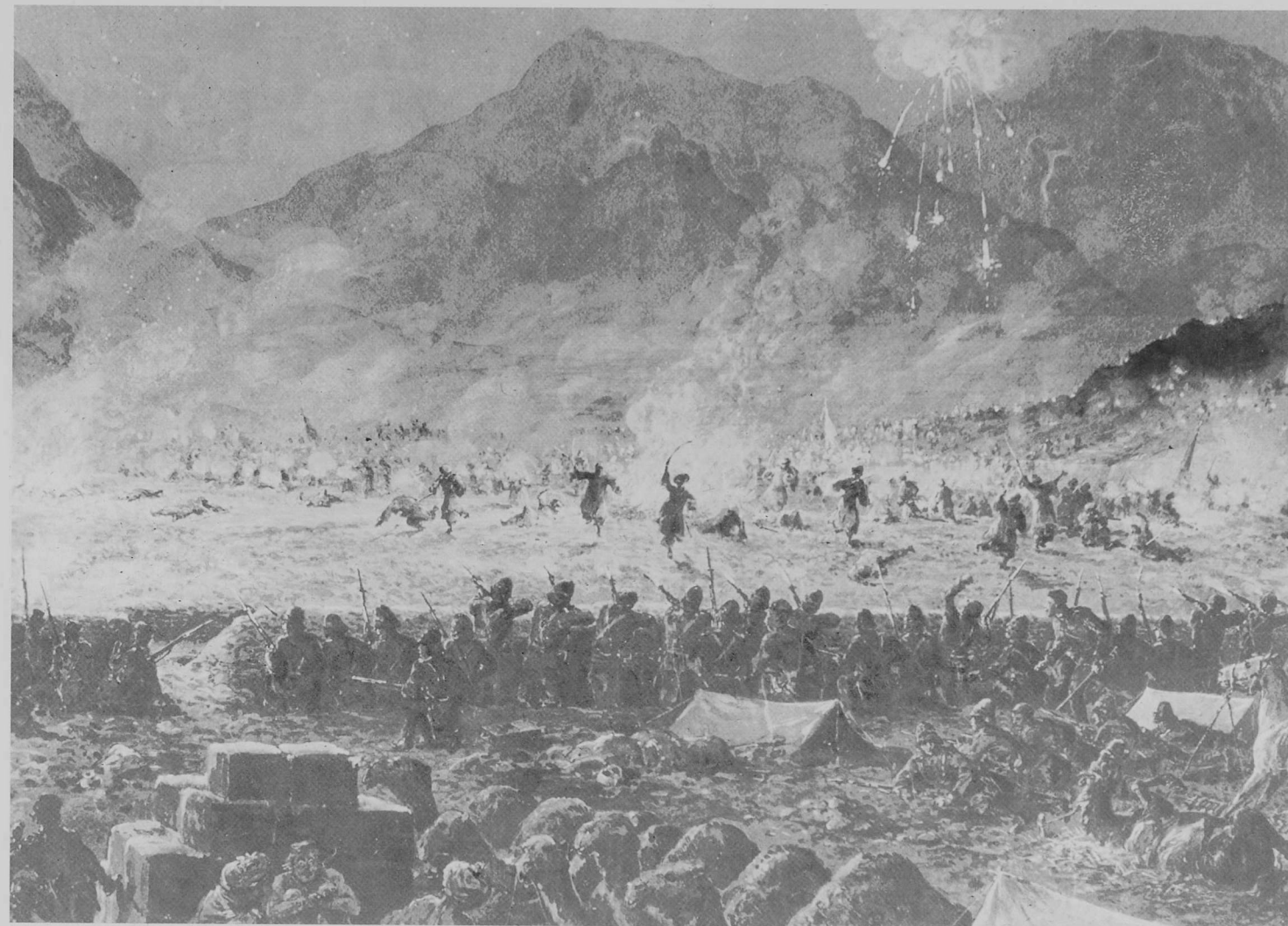
By the 12th of September the Queen's, now part of 3 Brigade, had reached the valley of Nawagai where they built a perimeter camp and prepared to remain in the area for several days. The local Mullahs, who had collected a large force, decided to destroy the Brigade at Nawagai. Several days of sightings and contacts followed. On the 19th a force of 3,000 tribesmen appeared in the valley, out of range of the mountain guns. The Political Officer with the column learned that a determined attack on the camp would be made on the night of the 20th of September.

Precautions were taken: bonfires were stacked at intervals round the perimeter, and pickets were posted along a deep nullah about fifty yards in front of the Queen's side of the camp. At 8.30 on the evening of the 20th the bonfires were lit; at that moment heavy fire was opened by the enemy all round the camp. Minutes later the pickets came running in to report a very large number of swordsmen assembling in the nullah, and almost at once the first enemy attack was launched. Each charge by swordsmen was preceded by heavy musketry fire: on several occasions the whole perimeter was assaulted, but the many really determined efforts were made against the sector held by the Queen's, the only British battalion in the Brigade. The tribesmen, with some justification, assumed that if the British front could be broken the effect on the morale of the rest of the Brigade would be disastrous.

Winston Churchill was in the camp at Nawagai and described the action: "The fire of the British was crushing, their discipline was admirable..... the soldiers, confident in their power, were under perfect control. The guns fired star shell. These great rockets bursting into stars in the air slowly fell to the ground, shedding a pale and ghastly light on the

swarming figures of the tribesmen as they ran swiftly forward..... Then the popping of musketry became one intense roar..... Nothing could live in front of such fire. Valour, ferocity, fanaticism, availed nothing. All were swept away. The whistles sounded, the independent fire stopped with machine-like precision, and the steady section volleys were resumed. This happened not once but a dozen times during the six hours the attack was maintained."

The attacks went on until the moon rose at 2 am. At dawn it was found that all the transport drivers and servants had crowded into a small area immediately behind the Queen's, which they had assumed would be the safest place in the camp.



In his despatch describing the affair Sir Bindon Blood wrote "The fire discipline of the infantry was shown to be excellent, especially that of the 1st Battalion of the Queen's, under Lieutenant-Colonel Collins, who are, in all respects, an example of what an Infantry Battalion should be."

The battle had been but one episode in the very turbulent history of the region. For many of those who fought that night, however, it was far more than that. Perhaps more evocative of their feelings and pride than the accounts by Churchill and the commander is a poem written by Pte W Mixey of The 1st Battalion Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment to commemorate the attack made by the "Mad Mullah and his tribes". (Time - The Balaclava charge)

*On the twentieth of September
I shall ne'er forget that night
The enemy they surrounded us
And thousands were in sight
We could hear Mad Mullah shouting
As the star shells hit the sky
"Lead on my men and take their camp
And none of you shall die"
Rush after rush they made that night
But their efforts were in vain,
Our bullets fell among them*

*You could hear them yell with pain,
But some of our men lost their lives,
And died as Britons die,
Fighting for Queen and country too
In the camp of Nawagai*

*Our chaplain walked amongst us,
And cheered us one and all,
And we thought every moment,
To see the brave man fall,
We could hear the beating
Their bullets fell like rain
They wounded our brave general,
Wodehouse was his name,
The morn came shining o'er the hill
That laid behind our camp,
The enemy they saw it,
And then began to scamp
They would not stand and face us
But with a hue and cry,
They ran away and left us
Victors of Nawagai*

*Sentries were then put on,
The men were told to rest,
For we had fought for six long hours
And been put to the test
But after kneeling down so long
Our limbs began to ache
And wishing for the morning
We all laid there awake,
At last the morning came and then,
We one and all went round,
To see if our dear comrades
Had got through safe and sound
We all talked of the night we'd had
As the vultures flew on high
Waiting for their share of war
That fell on Nawagai*

*Sir Bindon Blood he then sent for
Our colonel and said he
"I am proud to have your Regiment
In this brigade with me
Their well directed volleys
Kept the enemy at bay
And they'll remember that great fight
Until their dying day;"
As years roll on and comrades meet
On dear old England's shore
They talk about that awful night
When the Mullah failed to score
Here's honour to the third brigade
So raise your voices high
The Queen's they fought as Britons can
In the camp of Nawagai*

After the Nawagai battle, when the British Army casualties were in fact very light with one soldier killed and 27 (plus six followers) wounded, the opposition melted away. The advance continued over the Bedmanai Pass and the men of the Queen's, burnt almost black by the sun and extremely fit after six weeks of mountain warfare, marched into Peshawar on the 2nd of October. At Peshawar the Battalion was transferred to the Tirah Field Force and was the only Regiment to fight on both sides of the frontier in this campaign.

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East Surrey Regimental Reunion.

This year's reunion was held at the New Drill Hall, Clapham Junction on 6th October. There were just under 100 attending, with friends who have attended regularly joined by others who were there for the first time.

Col Bishop stood in for the President Col Francis and cut the cake which had been donated by a member. The delicious rich fruit cake was superbly decorated with the East Surrey badge and everybody enjoyed a slice.



The Reunion is helped by donations from the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association and individual members as well as the raffle run at the Reunion.

Mr & Mrs Daniels put on an excellent buffet and bar facilities, and we all enjoyed the afternoon.

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*Our thanks are due again to
Major J L A Fowler TD
for generously supplying the paper
for the Newsletter*

Regimental Association Annual Church Service: Guildford Cathedral 17th June 2007

The President welcomes guests



Dedicating the memorial flagstone



The President invites the Dean to dedicate the new windows and flagstones



Admiring the additions after the service



Dedicating the windows



The President welcomes Association members and guests to lunch in the refectory



Comparing notes with the World War Two re-enactors

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Golf Society
Spring Meeting 2007

The Spring Meeting was held at Sudbrook Park, Richmond on Thursday 3rd May 2007. 26 members attended and had a thoroughly enjoyable day. The course was in excellent condition after the fine and dry, albeit short, burst of summer weather we had in April and early May and the bar and catering came up to scratch as usual. For one of the first ever times Col John Davidson failed to win anything in the competition owing to the unwelcome presence of diesel in his petrol tank, or it could have been the other way round. In any event he compensated for his unexpected absence by winning third prize in the sweep. To make up for John's absence Maj Stephen Petzing came all the way from his home in Canada to win both the Heals Memorial Trophy and 2nd prize in the sweep.

Prizes at the end of the day were presented by the President, Michael Power and the Annual General Meeting was held under the Chairmanship of the Captain, Col David Dickens.



L to R, the Captain Col David Dickens, Maj Stephen Petzing and the President Michael Power.

Prize winners were:

The Challenge Cup		
Michael Power (President)	84	
The Dodgson Cup		
Col Tim Trotman	Net 73	
The Heals Memorial Trophy		
Maj Stephen Petzing	35 Points	
Veterans Halo		
Col Toby Sewell	41 Points	
The Harry Adcock Putting Competition		
Ron Green		

Sweep

- Winner Peter Mason
- 2nd Maj Stephen Petzing
- 3rd Col John Davidson



(above) Brig Bob Acworth and Christopher Allanson, and (below) Jumbo Fuller not winning the putting competition.



At the time of writing the Society's next event will be our first match against the Royal Hampshire Regiment, to be played at Liphook Golf Club on 25th October. The Spring Meeting 2008 will be held at Sudbrook Park on 1st May.

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Road Trip Remembered



Pictured after the Annual Church Service are (L to R) Jock Stewart, Maj Paul Gray and Norman Curtis who were three members of a group which drove back in land rovers from Bahrain to UK in 1968.

Officers' Club Lunch, Clandon Park, 1st October 2007



Brigadier Bob Acworth pleads guilty under close questioning from Mrs Muriel Sewell



Looking forward to lunch

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David Brassett writes from: Apt: 68, Rowena Jackson Retirement Village, 40 O'Byrne Street North, Waikiki, INVERCARGILL 9810, New Zealand.

I was a member of "D" Company, 1st Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment after joining the Regiment on draft from the U.K. in January 1940. I served with "D" Company, both in 17 Platoon and as Company Clerk. A.R.C. (Maggie) Mott was my first Company Commander and then Major G.B. Shaw. I served in Allahabad, Razmak (on two operations against local rebellious tribesmen) Peshawar, and Ambala until we trained for the 7th Indian Division, in the 14th Army. I was finally repatriated in November 1944 and was posted to the holding Battalion at Gravesend.

The only contacts I have had with old comrades were with the late Jack (ACE) Shephard MM and Don Papworth also now deceased. I would be pleased to correspond with any of the old pals of "D" Company if any are interested in swapping old memories.

After I arrived back in the UK I found myself on a variety of postings, including six weeks at John Lewis's Departmental Store where an Exhibition was being held to educate the public about the conditions that the 14th Army was fighting in. Next came an A.R.P. Course where we learnt the rudiments of Civil Defence and another stint at Pinewood Studios where a platoon of Queen's men were used in the production of the film BURMA VICTORY. I remember coming back one night from the usual trip up to London when we were offered a ride by a motorist. He asked if we would mind if he put the radio on as there was to be a special announcement by the then Prime Minister - Clement Attlee. This was to inform the nation that the war with Japan was over. When we got back to the Studios we spread the word and before long, the technicians piled up some old film from the cutting

room and set it alight. You can imagine the reaction - a fire in a film studio complex - Fire engines came from all over the place - we quietly disappeared into the darkness and our billets.

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John Charlwood writes:

It is a small world!

It was very interesting to read about the Queen's in Malaya during the 1950s, in which I was involved. I am glad that 50 years on we are not forgotten.

My wife was at her church group meeting a few days later. The group only consists of about eight members and my wife mentioned that I had just got my veteran's badge. She was then asked where I had served - she told them with the Queen's in Malaya in the '50s. Peter Richmond, a regular member of the group, then said that his second wife of 22 years had been married to Sgt Jones who was killed in Malaya with the Queen's in 1954. My wife was so surprised as she had been reading about it in my Newsletter.

I should report that Eunice, widow of Sgt Jones, died on 21st October 2001 aged 80 after a three year fight against cancer. She is survived by their son Michael who was six when his father was killed, two grandsons and four great grandchildren and by her second husband Peter Richmond. Eunice is interred in Littlehampton Cemetery, West Sussex, and Michael lives in the Guildford area.

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Miss Joan Snaith writes:

I am writing on behalf of my Father Mr Samuel George Snaith to thank you very much for the kind donation the Regiment has made towards the purchase of an electric scooter. As Dad has great difficulty in walking he cannot go out of the house unless myself or other family take him in the car. The scooter will mean he will be able to go out when he wants to and not have to wait for others giving him the independence that he wishes for.



Sam (better known as 'Jock') 3rd from left kneeling would like to hear from anyone who remembers him. (via editor)

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PAY ATTENTION CAN YOU HELP?



Capt J L Netherwood seeks information from anyone who might remember his late grandfather



3776990 Private Harold Leslie Netherwood (known as Les). He was born on 17 June 1915. He transferred from 101 Light Anti Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery on their disbandment in June 1944 and became a private soldier in 2/6 Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment on 11 June 1944. He remained with 2/6 QRR until he was returned/evacuated to England on 01 September 1945 and was then put

onto the Y List on 08 September. He was discharged from the Army on 04 February 1946.

Contact address:

Capt J L Netherwood REME
Equipment Care Inspection Teams
Cophorne Barracks, Cophorne Road
Shrewsbury SY3 8LZ

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Alfred Joseph Rackley, who moved to Canada after the Second World War, would like to hear from anyone who served with him in 2nd Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Contact via Editor

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John West, pictured (over page) after being presented with the Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal on 18th July 2007, would like to hear from anyone who served with him at Tanglin Barracks from February 1962 to August 1963. He particularly remembers Eddie Tackley and Chris Jillings. He has met an old comrade from Queen's Surreys days, Brian Johnson who served on the Regimental Police and

with "B" Company at Mukerias, Aden. Brian has lived in France for 15 years running a successful business with holiday gites. (contact via Editor).



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John Cook seeks information about the war service of his father Cyril "Cookie" Cook, who is pictured in Venice in May 1945 with the Mortar Platoon 2/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. (contact via Editor).



'Cookie' Cook standing middle row, 5th from right

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Bandsman D Caudrey writes:

I would like to hear from any ex-members of the East Surrey and Queen's Regimental Bands. At present I have managed to find 21 ex-band members who served with me during the period 1957-67.



Reunion lunch 12th April 2007

I am now hoping to locate ex-members either side of those dates. Contact address: Heathers, 3 St Sampson Road, Cottessmore Green, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 9RW Tel: 01293 550731

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Exercise DOVER CASTLE 2007

(by Desmond Wilson)

Officers of the 5th Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment (TA) and of the 3rd Battalion The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment (TA) held a reunion dinner on 19th April 2007 for those who served together in the 1950s and 1960s ("whippers in" were David Robinson and Desmond Wilson).

The first parade was at 1230 hrs at the Museum at Dover Castle, where we were met and royally entertained to a superb buffet lunch with wine. The roll call found officers and wives totalling 25 present on parade - and with Major John Rogerson of RHQ as Maître D: this put us all in good spirits to go round the updated, modernised museum.

Following this we were escorted to the labyrinth of underground tunnels, which have been part of our defences against attack since Roman times. These honeycomb the cliffs, and we were amongst the first to visit the recently re-opened military HQ and World War II command centre. From these rooms, deep down, was organised the return of the B.E.F. from France in 1940. In the medical room some actors put on a display of an injured, frightened pilot being attended to by a blonde nurse. This brought our party, some more elderly than others, but not geriatric really, out into the sunshine - but some 200 feet lower than when we had entered. John Rogerson had this all in hand and had a landrover with trailers (called "The Land Train") to return us up to the museum in one lift.

We now departed the Castle and headed for our own hotel (Walleys Court Country House and Spa) where we would dine and stay overnight.

1930 hrs and all on parade again; 27 sat down to dinner with Lieutenant Colonel Foster Herd as President and Captain Adrian Birtles as Mr Vice. Our guests were Major and Mrs John Rogerson who had done so much to make it all a success. We toasted Her Majesty and this was followed by a short address by Foster. Some attendees had travelled from Banbury, from Taunton, from Suffolk, and from the Isle of Wight.

21st April: 0900 hrs breakfast. 1030 hrs depart hotel: PUFO for those not going on to the RAF Museum at Manston. 1200 hrs: those at Manston retire to pre-recced pub where some with white hair were called "Darling"!!

A small refund from the hotel has since been sent to the museum as a token of our gratitude and esteem.

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60 Years Ago: News from 2nd Battalion The East Surrey Regiment 1947

(sent by Ove Juul Nielsen who served with "C" Company)

Station: El Ballah, Suez Canal.

At the end of April the eagerly awaited and often postponed move to Egypt took place. Our sixteen month tour of intensive internal security operations in Palestine ended on a high note when, a few days before our departure, terrorists blew up and set fire to the Haifa oil installations.

Situated about two miles from our camp, the burning oil tanks presented a most awe inspiring spectacle and illuminated very clearly the entire district. The Battalion was turned out to provide a cordon round the Hadar Hacarmal district. In response to an SOS a salvage party, under the command of Lieut TR Bond, was despatched to the scene of the fire. The following letter was later received by the Commanding Officer from the manager of the Shell Company of Palestine, Ltd :-

"Now that the fire is almost on its last legs and the general confusion attendant upon emergency supply arrangements is beginning to straighten itself out, I should like to express my deep appreciation of the very valuable assistance which was rendered to us by Lieut. Bond and his detachment on the morning of 31st March, 1947. The task of moving hot drums of oil products from the vicinity of our threatened service tanks was by no means a pleasant one, but was tackled with a will and efficiency which set a very fine example. Luckily, and almost by a miracle, the service tanks were saved, but had they burst, the drums which your detachment moved would have added greatly to the fire hazard. The presence or absence of these drums in their original position might well have been the deciding factor in the fate of the remainder of the installation.

I should be most grateful if you would convey my appreciation of their efforts to those concerned. Once again, very many thanks."

The Battalion left Haifa by train on the morning of the 27th April. Brigadier FD Rome DSO, commander of the Brigade, came to the station to say "Goodbye and thank you" to the Battalion.

Units of an Airborne Division had to provide adequate protection for the troop train throughout its journey to the Palestine-Egypt frontier. They kept their word. The orange groves on both sides of the railway bristled with Bren guns; at every level crossing posts were established. Armoured cars whipped up and down the road whenever it ran alongside the railway.

On arrival at Fayid in the Suez Canal area, the Battalion took over the role of G.H.Q. Guard Battalion. Duties were very heavy. Some of guards provided were ceremonial;

this was a change from the barbed wire and road block routine to which we were so well accustomed. A daily ceremonial guard-mounting parade, with the Drums playing to their places of duty, was something quite new to most of us.

The amenities at Fayid were very good and were greatly appreciated. The splendid shopping centre, camp cinemas and the comparative civilized existence after the perimeter-bound life we had been accustomed to was indeed pleasant.

After a little over a month at Fayid the Battalion moved to El Ballah, where we are now located. We like it. The amenities are not quite so good as those at Fayid, but we are only a few miles from Ismailia and only an hour's ride from Port Said. The camp is a nicer one than we had at Fayid and the temperature slightly lower.

Our role here is the guarding of the "Polly Camp" and to put in as much field training as possible. The Polly Camp is the camp in which are accommodated the families who were evacuated from Palestine under Operation Polly about six months ago.

The Battalion is now, for the first time since leaving England a year and a half ago, able to do some normal military training. Cadres of every description are going on in every corner of the camp. The whole Battalion has been tested and re-classified under the Star Classification scheme.

On the 12th June the Battalion took part in celebration of the birthday of His Majesty the King. The colours were carried by Lieut RG Page and Lieut GG Gale, escorted by C/Sgt F Hammond, Sgt D Driver and Sgt G Halliday.

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5 Queen's OMA Dinner: Farnham



During the course of an excellent evening George Lefevre managed to capture Les Wilson giving clear instructions to Tony Russell and David Robinson about the standard of behaviour he expected on such occasions.

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President's Reception 21st May 2007

The President's Annual Reception provides an opportunity to introduce the Regiment and its history to many of Surrey's Mayors at the start of their terms in office and to other County dignitaries. The presence of representatives of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment emphasises the connection with today's soldiers. Guests also hear about the Regimental Association and Charity, and about the benevolent work carried out. This year the Association President presented cheques from the Regimental Charity to representatives of the Army Benevolent Fund and Surrey Army Cadet Force.



Colonel Patrick Crowley, a former Commanding Officer of 3 PWRR, with the Mayor of Kingston-upon-Thames



Peter and Maureen Henman with guests



The President presents a cheque to Major Alan Mulder from Surrey Army Cadet Force



Inspecting the Onslow Room



Admiring the medal display

Museum News

(by Ian Chatfield)

We have again had well over 20,000 visitors during the season and our two open days went down very well with a good attendance at both: please make a note that our next Regimental Open Day will be on Sunday April 20th 2008.

The museum has received some very nice donations since the last Newsletter. These include a WW1 medal group belonging to Pte V. Edwards and a WW2 Territorial group of Pte. T. E. Lamport, both from the Queen's. Then just before we closed to the public at the end of the season Mrs Joan Mallett brought in a wonderful ninety year old lady Mrs R. Johnson who donated the medals of her late husband WO2 Sydney Johnson. Sydney had served with the Queen's for over 27 years seeing action in Palestine 1939, North Africa, Ceylon, and Burma (Chindit's); the medal group include the GSM with Bar Palestine, 1939-45 Star, Africa Star, Burma Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 1939-45, Army LS & GC Medal and The Ceylon Armed Forces Inauguration Medal. Mrs Johnson was thrilled to see her late husband's medals on display in the museum.

We have also received from Mr Dan James a complete set of East Surrey Regiment histories plus many other books and journals of enormous interest. Dan has been a great supporter of the Regiment and the museum and we are very pleased to receive this gift.

We at the museum wish all of our supporters and friends a very happy Christmas and successful 2008, and we look forward to seeing you during next year.

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Lost and Found

(by 'Tiger' Tyson)

Late in the year of 1959 I made my way with a large group of others to the barracks in Canterbury. We were one of the last groups of National Servicemen and most of us were older than the general intake being 20 plus as many men had either been finishing an apprenticeship or been in other forms of education. Anyway I was sent to one of the old wooden huts and was allocated my number and told by Cpl Otham that I was now a member of Kohima platoon and I would be under the "fatherly care" of Sgt Bob Riley when he returned from his honeymoon some days later.

Amongst the other recruits I was to meet some people who were to become my friends for the rest of my life but unfortunately there were to be others with whom I would lose touch. Among these was Terry Gale; he had just finished his apprenticeship and was a very clever chap especially with motor bikes and sidecars. He had built himself a racy little sidecar to go with his

Triumph bike and when we went to Bury St Edmunds for the amalgamation parade this was greatly admired by everyone who saw it.

As I was a married national service soldier with two children I had very little money; in fact I was told I was the lowest paid soldier in the battalion. Terry was a very generous fellow and when we got leave at weekends he always volunteered to give me a lift home even though he lived in Surrey and I lived in Sussex. On other occasions he found a farm that paid us half a crown a bag to pick peas and we went picking together.



Terry Gale in centre

When we went to Aden I was with B Company and Terry was with the assault pioneers in HQ Company and we only got together occasionally.

After demob I often tried to make contact with him but with no success.

I now live in Worthing and recently a friend of mine was decorating a flat for a chap who had recently lost his brother and he came to me and asked me was it true that I had served in Aden as he had found an old photograph album that he thought I might be interested in. When he handed it to me I saw that on the front was fixed an old collar dog of the Q.R.S.R. and then before I opened it I asked him if he knew the name of the chap it had belonged to and he said yes it was Terry Gale.

I never did find Terry but he had found me.

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It was all so simple then!

In these days of never ending forms and rule books it may be interesting to reflect upon the following directive which was issued in February 1944.

DIRECTIVE TO SUPREME COMMANDER ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

(Issued 12 February 1944)

1. You are hereby designated as Supreme Allied Commander of the forces placed under your orders for operations for liberation of Europe from Germans. Your

title will be Supreme Commander Allied Expeditionary Force.

2. *Task.*- You will enter the continent of Europe and, in conjunction with the other United Nations, undertake operations aimed at the heart of Germany and the destruction of her armed forces. The date for entering the Continent is the month of May 1944. After adequate channel ports have been secured, exploitation will be directed towards securing an area that will facilitate both ground and air operations against the enemy.

3. Notwithstanding the target date above you will be prepared at any time to take immediate advantage of favorable circumstances, such as withdrawal by the enemy on your front, to effect a re-entry into the Continent with such forces as you have available at the time; a general plan for this operation when approved will be furnished for your assistance.

4. *Command.*- You are responsible to the Combined Chiefs of Staff and will exercise command generally in accordance with the diagram at Appendix. Direct communication with the United States and British Chiefs of Staff is authorized in the interest of facilitating your operations and for arranging necessary logistic support.

5. *Logistics.*-In the United Kingdom the responsibility for logistics organization, concentration, movement, and supply of forces to meet the requirements of your plan will rest with British Service Ministries so far as British Forces are concerned. So far as United States Forces are concerned, this responsibility will rest with the United States War and Navy Departments. You will be responsible for the coordination of logistical arrangements on the Continent. You will also be responsible for coordinating the requirements of British and United States forces under your command.

6. *Coordination of operations of other Forces and Agencies.*-In preparation for your assault on enemy occupied Europe, Sea and Air Forces, agencies of sabotage, subversion, and propaganda, acting under a variety of authorities are now in action. You may recommend any variation in these activities which may seem to you desirable.

7. *Relationship to United Nations Forces in other areas.*- Responsibility will rest with the Combined Chiefs of Staff for supplying information relating to operations of the Forces of the U.S.S.R. for your guidance in timing your operations. It is understood that the Soviet Forces will launch an offensive at about the same time as Overlord with the object of preventing the German forces from transferring from the Eastern to the Western front. The Allied Commander in Chief, Mediterranean Theater, will conduct operations designed to assist your operation, including the launching of an attack against the south of France at about the same time as Overlord. The scope and timing of his operations will be decided by the Combined Chiefs of Staff. You will establish contact with him and

submit to the Combined Chiefs of Staff your views and recommendations regarding operations from the Mediterranean in support of your attack from the United Kingdom. The Combined Chiefs of Staff will place under your command the forces operating in Southern France as soon as you are in a position to assume such command. You will submit timely recommendations compatible with this regard.

8. *Relationship with Allied Governments-the re-establishment of Civil Governments and Liberated Allied Territories and the administration of enemy territories.*- Further instructions will be issued to you on these subjects at a later date.

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THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S ROYAL REGIMENT

The Regiment, for once, has gone through a relatively quiet period. The 1st Battalion has spent the past six months in Germany. They did however send a company to the Falkland Islands for a three month

tour. Whilst there they met up with HMS Southampton our affiliated ship. Back in Germany the battalion has been very active in converting to the new radio (i.e Bowman). The Bowmanisation takes time and soon the full conversion will have been achieved. Deployment is on the cards for 2008. Although this is planned to be Iraq, training is taking place for Afghanistan in mid 2008. This would be a company size group. Adventure training and sport has also taken place. A period for consolidation has so far been achieved.



Visit by Colonel-in-Chief to 2 PWRR in NI Sept 07
with CO - Lt Col Doug Chalmers

The 2nd Battalion saw the transition from "the troubles" to peace in Northern Ireland on 1st August 2007. They are still based in Ballykelly but move to Cyprus in March/April 2008. They have also been Bowmanising and taking advantage of a more structured and calm period by taking part in adventure training and sports. A rifle company deployed to Kosovo for a 6 month tour and return Feb 2008. This has made a

change and will be interesting as the Balkans perhaps move to elections and any resulting violence.

Both Regular Battalions have contributed a lot of manpower over the summer in support of recruiting. This is a constant battle and numbers are improving.

The 3rd Battalion and B Company The London Regiment continue to support the Regular Army. B Company recently had a Platoon in Afghanistan as part of Somme Company. They had a good tour and on return marched through the City of London for a good welcome home parade. The 3rd Battalion completed annual camp in Wales and Devon and have had a fair amount of ceremonial.

The programme for 2008 is filling up but with both Regular Battalions out of the Country it does mean that we have problems, for example, in organising Freedom Marches. The Regiment is in good form.

More Aircrew Remembered

The 'On the Wings of Freedom' association has the objective of erecting a monument, "for those who never made it back to Home Base", on every site where an Allied plane crashed during WW2, in the parish of Echt-Susteren in the Netherlands. The first was unveiled at Lilbosch Abbey on 3rd September 2006.

Sydney Bowbrick (Sergeant, 1/5th Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment, 1939 - 45) was invited by the 'On the Wings of Freedom' association to attend the unveiling, on 19th August 2007, of three more monuments at Echt in the Netherlands, to aircrew for three aircraft. One of these was a Vickers Wellington bomber from Grimsby which crashed the night of 3rd September 1942 near Echt. Colin Bell the current Wing Commander at Grimsby was also present.



Sydney and Margaret after laying the wreath

Sydney and his wife Margaret had been invited a year earlier to the unveiling of the first memorial near Lilbosch Abbey. The recent return visit to that site gave Sydney and Margaret the opportunity to lay a wreath for the 1/5th

Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment. The battalion including Sydney fought intensely in the Echt area, only 3km from the German border.

The parade to the memorial sites included an impressive 50 WW2 military vehicles, mostly American (they left theirs behind!) apart from those of the 'Summer of 1943 England Club'. A WW2 aircraft display, in the vicinity of the spire of the church in Pey, was a reminder that we deliberately destroyed that spire in 1944, since completely restored, because it was being used by a sniper.

Congratulations and Best Wishes



To Noel and Dorothy Matthews who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 18th October 2007.

Birthday congratulations to Lieutenant Colonel E C T Wilson VC who was 95 on 2nd October 2007.

The Rangoon Memorial

The Memorial has been refurbished with the assistance of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.



Regimental Deaths

Ainsworth - On 31st August 2007, Captain JBL Ainsworth. John Ainsworth joined 1/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in the Western Desert in 1943. He subsequently served with the battalion in Italy and in Northern Europe after D-Day. He was severely wounded on operations in Holland. After the war he forged a career in homeopathy, eventually founding his own company and gaining Royal Warrants.

Atkins - On 19th November 2007 aged 89 years, Regimental Sergeant Major Harold "Tommy" Atkins. Tommy Atkins enlisted into The Queen's Royal Regiment in April 1937. He was with the 2nd Battalion 1937-1944, and his wartime service included India, Palestine and the Western Desert, Syria, Ceylon, and Burma where he was part of Wingate's 2nd Chindit expedition. Having served at the Regimental Depot he was subsequently with the 2nd Battalion again, and then the 1st Battalion with which he served in Malaya. He was the last Queen's Royal Regiment Regimental Sergeant Major at the Regimental Depot. (Tribute will appear in the next Newsletter)

Bentley - On 8th September 2007 aged 80 years, Gilbert Alfred Bentley who served with The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Bodfish - On 29th October 2007 aged 90 years, Lance Corporal Stanley Vivian Bodfish. He enlisted into 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment in 1932, serving with the battalion until 1940 when he was transferred to 1/6th Bn with which he served until discharge in 1946. His Second World War service included France (1939-40), North Africa, Italy and Greece.

Bowker - On 5th June 2007, Reginald Patrick Bowker who was a national serviceman with 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment and saw service in Malaya.

Burns - On 30th May 2007, Charles Burns who served with The Queen's Royal Regiment 1937-1947.

Castle - On 13th July 2007, Reverend Vincent Castle who was padre to 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment for part of the Second World War.

Davis - On 15th June 2007, Frederick George Davis. He enlisted into 2nd Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in August 1938. His subsequent service with the 2nd and 1/5th Battalions included Palestine, Western Desert, Syria, Ceylon, India, Burma and Germany. He was discharged from the Army in August 1950.

Day - On 9th May 2007, Ronald W Day who served with the 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment 1944-1945.

Dukes - On 1st October 2007, Stanley Dukes who served with The Queen's Royal Regiment during the Second World War and was taken prisoner of war at Abbeville.

Eales - In June 2007, Colour Sergeant Victor Samuel Leslie Eales. He enlisted into The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1943. His service prior to discharge in 1946 included Egypt and with the code breaking centre at Bletchley.

Franklin - On 2nd September 2007, Kenneth Ronald Douglas Franklin who served with The East Surrey Regiment.

Goddard - On 17th October 2007 aged 66 years, Anthony Noel Goddard. He enlisted into 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment in May 1962. His service prior to his discharge in July 1965 included Hong Kong, South Korea (3 months on Honour Guard), 39 Army Youth Team Guildford, and BAOR.

Lockwood - On 8th October 2007 aged 95 years, Captain Kenneth Lockwood MBE. Kenneth Lockwood was a Territorial Officer commanding a company of 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment when he was taken prisoner of war by the Germans during their advance towards the Channel in May 1940. In September that year, having been recaptured following an escape from Stalag VII C, he was sent to Colditz Castle. There he was appointed canteen officer. After having been captured while attempting to escape via the canteen, he subsequently assisted the escape attempts of fellow prisoners. Following repatriation in 1945 he returned to his civilian job as a London stockbroker. He became honorary secretary of the Colditz Association of former prisoners when it was formed in the 1950s, an appointment he held until the Association was wound up in 2006.

Lott - Aged 91 years, Horace Lott. Having originally served with the Northamptonshire Regiment, after Dunkirk he joined 1/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment with which he served for the remainder of the Second World War.

Lucas - On 21st August 2007, Richard Thomas Lucas.

Piper - On 8th November 2006 WOII L H "Pip" Piper (see obituary).

Polkinhorne - On 3rd September 2007 aged 91 years, Major Graham Polkinhorne who served as an officer with 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment, including in Burma during the operations in Arakan and at Kohima.

Riches - On 5th October 2007 aged 93 years, Captain Reginald Stewart Riches. His Second World War service with 2/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment included Iraq, North Africa and Italy.

Riley - On 13th October 2007 aged 87 years, William Frank Riley who served with 1/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment during the Second World War. His service included North Africa, Italy and Northern Europe, and he

was for a while the driver of the truck which towed the Medenine Gun.

Rolfe - On 3rd August 2007 aged 87 years, Ernest William Rolfe. He enlisted into the RAFVR in August 1940, serving as a night fighter pilot and attaining the rank of Flight Lieutenant before his discharge in June 1946. In 1956 he joined 6th (Bermondsey) Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment (TA), transferring into 3rd Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment and subsequently 6th Bn The Queen's Regiment before his discharge in 1969 in the rank of Sergeant.

Swan - On 8th October 2007, Richard Roland Seymour Swan who was a national service officer, initially with the Royal Sussex Regiment and then with The East Surrey Regiment in BAOR. He subsequently had a career in law and was for a number of years senior partner of Heald Nickinson

Wade - On 7th November 2007 aged 80 years, Lieutenant Colonel Richard Michael Anthony Wade. He was commissioned into The East Surrey Regiment as a Regular Officer in August 1946, initially serving with the 2nd Battalion. During his subsequent service with the Regiment he was adjutant at the Regimental Depot 1949-1951, adjutant of the 6th Battalion 1955-1956 and served with the 1st Battalion in BAOR and the United Kingdom. He transferred to the Royal Army Pay Corps in 1958 and retired from the army in 1972.

Wagstaff - On 13th September 2007 aged 87 years, Major Walton Wynter "Peter" Wagstaff. He enlisted into 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in October 1938. He was taken prisoner of war in France in 1940. He remained in the army following his release and in 1946 transferred to the Royal Scots. His service prior to retiring in from the army in 1974 included Korea 1953-1954.

Warren - On 6th July 2006, Major G A R N Warren whose Second World War service with 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment included Italy and Northern Europe.

Watson - In September 2007, John Stuart Watson. He originally enlisted as a Territorial with the Royal Artillery in April 1939. His service with the Royal Artillery included Iceland and the Western Desert. He transferred to 2/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in July 1944, serving with it in Italy. He was discharged from the Army in June 1946.

Regimental Family

Sanders - In November 2006, Mrs Gwen Sanders widow of Major Alan Greville Sanders DSO.

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Obituary

WOII L H Piper



'Pip' Piper was born on 29th September 1924 at Maidstone, Kent. He was educated at Eastborough School, Maidstone and was also a choir boy at the local St Luke's Church. After leaving school he worked for Tillings and Stevensons who were coach and bus builders. Later, he became an apprentice with Vickers Armstrong. When war came he was in a reserved occupation and he was not conscripted. Having later joined the Army, during his early service he became an Amateur Athletics Association coach. He was a member of the 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment shooting team for many years and served with the battalion in Iserlohn, Malaya, Singapore. After the amalgamation he served with 1st Bn the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment in Aden and Hong Kong. Throughout his service he was a first class instructor on all weapons.

He married Joan on 16th July 1949 and they had three children, ten grandchildren and ten great grandchildren. He retired from the Army in 1969 and became a Yeoman Warder at the Tower of London. During his service as a Yeoman Warder he became Clerk to the Chapel Royal, St Peter ad Vincula.

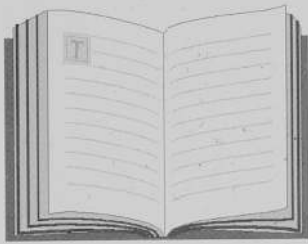
He finally retired in September 1989 and moved to Birchington. Sadly Joan died in 1996. "Pip" continued to be very active until very shortly before his death; for many years he was secretary at Cliftonville Bowls Club. He died on 8th November 2006.

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Inheritance Tax

Veterans, including doctors and nurses, who were wounded or fell ill on active service **may** be exempt from IHT (inheritance tax) if it can be proved after their death that they died as a result, even indirectly, of their injuries. A claim usually hinges on how a claim case is put together so expert advice should be sought early. It is vital to pull together medical evidence and keep records. In many cases involving the World Wars, medical evidence may be lost so veterans should prepare a detailed statement of wounds or diseases; notes must be kept updated. Family doctors should be alerted to the issue and it is vital that the death certificate makes specific reference to war wounds if these are relevant before it is signed. It is impossible to know in advance whether an individual's estate will be exempt from IHT before they die. The tax must be paid first on the estate for the family to get probate. An appeal must then be made to the Ministry of Defence to get IHT refunded if necessary.

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PUBLICATION

The Story of the 57th (East Surrey) Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Artillery (T.A.)

Part One: Conversion and Confrontation, 1938 - 1940



The Regiment originally existed as the 5th Battalion The East Surrey Regiment, an old territorial infantry battalion that recruited in Surrey and South West London. After a brief account of its lineage and a chapter on the inter-war years, the book tells the story of the Regiment following its conversion to the anti-tank role. On the outbreak of war the Regiment embodied at Epsom Racecourse and after training in Somerset crossed the Channel to join the British Expeditionary Force. It then took part in the fighting in Belgium and France before returning home via Dunkirk.

Available from: Ray Goodacre, 7 Eastgate, Banstead, Surrey SM7 1RN

Price £10.00p plus £1.50p post and packing (please make cheques payable to: 57th A/Tk Regt History Project).

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Branch Secretaries

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6th Bn OCA-QRR:	Major M R Nason TD, 64 Westfield Road, Barnehurst, Kent DA7 6LR	Tel: 0132 2527017
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Back Cover: *The Memorial Flagstone in The Regimental Chapel, Guildford Cathedral which was dedicated on Sunday 17th June 2007.*

THE QUEEN'S ROYAL REGIMENT

THE EAST SURREY REGIMENT

THE QUEEN'S ROYAL SURREY REGIMENT

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO DIED IN THE
SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY 1661 - 1966