



Airborne Engineers Association

Registered Charity No. 1009201

Newsletter

JANUARY 1998

PRESIDENT

•

Brigadier G.A. Hewish, MBE

Contents

From the Chair!	4
Committee Members.....	5
News from “The Squadron” & Around the Branches	6
The Squadron	6
Lady Diana - “Princess of Wales”	6
The New “P” Company.....	7
Takes the Challenge!.....	7
Aldershot Branch	10
Birmingham Branch	11
Chatham Branch.....	11
Looking Ahead.....	11
Yorkshire Branch	12
North. West Branch	13
South West Branch	14
Hameln Branch-Germany	14
Historian - Fred Gray.....	15
“Escape”	15
My First Escape	15
Jordanian Commemorative Service Medal.....	19
“John Rock Room” - Recent Additions.....	19
News Items.....	20
Who Are These Men?	20
Lost Colleague	21
How Shxx Happens!	21
Aldershot NAAFI Club.....	22
Lost Touch with Pals?.....	23
Chris Chambers	24
Airborne Forces Weekend	24
Double Hills (Paulton)	24
The AGM Chatham.....	25
The AEA Shop.....	25
St. Lawrence Jewry-Guildhall, London.....	25
Remembrance Day.....	25
Sid Burrell.....	25

Greetings from 'Oz'	25
From the Editor	25
Association Shop	26
Obituaries.....	27
591 (Antrim) Parachute Squadron R.E.....	27
"Jock" Harvey Adam.....	27
Arthur Griffiths.....	28
1st Parachute Squadron R.E.....	28
Mr R Batey	28
Airborne Forces.....	29
Op Corporate Reunion	29

From the Chair!

Dear Members,

On behalf of the members of the AEA I would like to thank Maj. Gen. G.W. Field, OBE CB for the support he has given over the last few years. He has resigned as President of our association, but his support and help has been greatly valued, especially in the knowledge of how busy he is in his present post.

Our new President is Brig. G.A. Hewish, MBE and as we have the establishment for two Vice Presidents, Lt. Col. C.M. Davies was also appointed. As both nominees had been approached before the AGM, I am happy to say that after being nominated and duly voted in, they agreed to take the posts. You will note therefore, that it was not the normal 9 Sqn Sgts Mess type of appointment, where, if you had not attended the meeting you were volunteered for the job!

The 1997 AGM will, I think, be long remembered as one of the most successful we have ever held. The location was perfect, and every one made the effort to make us feel at home. Eric Blenkinsop and the Chatham Branch Sub-Committee worked extremely hard to ensure that everything, from reception at the main gate until we exited on the Sunday, was just right. However, I think the guard at the main gate could have been informed the AEA did not mean Ancient Engineers Association!

On your behalf I have thanked the Chatham Branch, Lt Col Olley and W01 George (CO and RSM respectively) 1RSME for the use of the barracks and the WO's and Sgt's Mess, and Dr John Rhodes the Curator of the Corps Museum. Without all their efforts we would not have had that truly wonderful AGM and Reunion!

Tom Ormiston - Chairman
Airborne Engineers Association

Committee Members

Position	Member	Address	Postcode	Telephone
President	Brig GA Hewish MBE			
Vice President	Ian Wilson			
Vice President	Lt Col CM Davies MBE			
Chairman	Tom Ormiston			
Secretary	Ray Coleman			
Membership	Chris Chambers			
Treasurer	Capt Dick Brown			
Historian	Fred Gray			
Entertainment	Dave Rutter			
Editor	Colin Parker			
1 Sqn	Bob Jones			
2 Sqn	Ollie Atkins			
3 Sqn	Bob Sullivan			
4 Sqn	Eric Richards			
9 Sqn	OC, SSM, Cpl			
131 TA	Bunny Brown			
591 Sqn	Tony Jackson			
147 AB Pk Sqn RE	Major Ian Robbie			
9 Fld Coy (Airborne) RE	Mr TH Carpenter			
Aldershot	Moggy Metcalfe			
Birmingham	George Barrett			
Chatham	Eric Blenkinsop			
Yorkshire	Bill Rudd			
Northwest	Alan Marshall			
South West	Tom Brinkman			
Shop	Jan Chambers			
Hameln – Germany	WO2 Jim Hillman			

News from “The Squadron” & Around the Branches

The Squadron

By S/Sgt Lindsey Horton

Lady Diana - “Princess of Wales”

It was late on the Wednesday night before Diana’s funeral when I received a call for the 2/ic, Capt. Vincent O’Neil. We were instructed to leave in the early hours to go to the Althorp Estate and recce a site for a bridge, to determine if it would take the weight of the hearse carrying the coffin of the Princess. Well that was the story that was given to us.

On our arrival we met the estate manager who then proceeded to take us to the lake, where he informed us that a decision had been made to bury Princess Diana, on an island which stood in the middle of the lake. The question was, could we build a bridge to the island so that the coffin could be carried across. Not a problem was the answer. We then rowed across to the island trailing our tape measure behind us and battling through the undergrowth a measurement was taken. The decision was made to put in an Air Portable Floating Bridge across to the island.

A phone call was then made to the Squadron to get the wheels in motion to obtain twenty-two deck units with ramps, ready to be moved the following morning. Everything came together and the bridge left Aldershot on the Thursday. Destination, a TA Centre in Northampton. On arrival the Squadron members cleaned up and headed to the town for a few quiet beers, prior to moving out at 05.30 am so that we could get the bridge into the estate before the press got wind of what was going on.

Once in location we had to wait until 09.30 am before the build could commence, as that was when the Earl would release the news to the press. The bridge then went in, with the lads in fine form after their night out and it only took about an hour. As the bridge was nearing completion we had a visit from the Earl who said, “It could not have been done without us.” We then returned to Aldershot.

On the Saturday, with a police escort, we headed back to Althorp to strip the bridge out. All in all - a job well done.

The New "P" Company Takes the Challenge! *9 Parachute Squadron*

Last year a number of recommendations were made to change P Coy and the new programme has been running successfully in Catterick since February. This article follows the progress of some recent recruits who found out exactly what it takes to become an Airborne Warrior!

Training by Cpl M. Watson



THE ASSAULT COURSE - "I can Fly Already"

After seven years' service I decided to try something different and made a positive decision to serve in 9 Sqn. There is no pre-Para training by 9 Sqn now, but the gym staff at Gibraltar Barracks has devised special training for those who want to try for P Coy. It is run by qualified PTIs, is designed to prepare blokes physically without injuring them, and it is a good all round PT programme which includes a few trip up to Aldershot to tab around Long Valley - all excellent preparation.

Screening Day by Spr. Noel Hickman

Carried out in Aldershot, this determines who is suitable to go forward to all - arms P Coy in Catterick. The following must be achieved:

- BFT in 9 mins 30 sec
- Wearing denims and trainers
- Trainasium, high shuffle bars
- CFT in 1 hr 50 mins

After being attached to 9 Sqn, spending three months with the lads in Kenya, I had got a taste of what being with the Squadron was all about; I had just had to pass! P Coy staff travelled down from Catterick to screen/test us. We had to do a slightly faster than normal BFT and CFT and prove we had a head for heights - it couldn't be that hard surely? 120 lads from a variety of units attended and no, it wasn't that hard at all although 40 blokes failed, mostly because they were either young lads, straight from training and not fit enough, or were blokes who had psyched themselves out worrying. P Coy here we come.

The Build-up by Spr. Neil Bromley

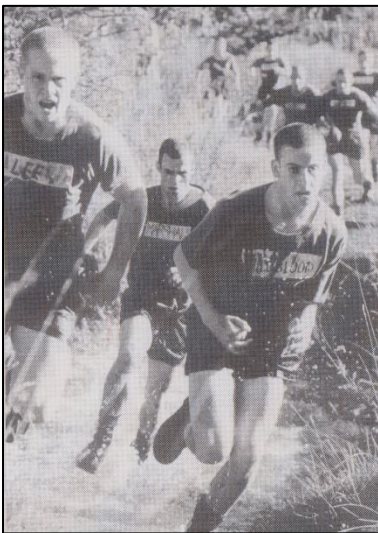
We moved up to Catterick to start the 31/a week build-up phase, which included the inevitable runs, swimming, circuit training and marches ranging from 6 miles to 14 miles. It also included 'rest periods' which concentrated on weapon training, field craft and some history about airborne forces.

During this phase most of us seemed to struggle but managed to hang in there with a lot of encouragement from the P Coy staff. I must admit that I hadn't ever done this much PT in my life before and it made basic training seem easy. Still, I hadn't picked up any major injuries and felt that I was as ready as I could ever be for test week.

Phase 3 - Test Week by Sgt. "Chalky" White

Test week for 'P' Company hasn't changed in years, the staff apparently looking for students to demonstrate fitness, endurance, physical courage and determination. The students do their best in what will probably be the hardest week of their lives! The tests are as follows:

- 10 mile march 1 hr 50 mins
- Milling Points awarded
- Trainasium Pass/Fail
- 18 mile march 4hrs 30 mins
- Assault course 8 mins 30 secs
- 12 mile march 2hrs 35 mins
- Steeplechase 14 mins 30 secs
- 10 km speed march 1 hr 6 mins
- Log race Points awarded
- Stretcher race Points awarded



THE STEEPLECHASE
"How Long have we got!"

During these tests, the "jack wagon" is not an option and we all had to score enough points on each event. I don't know anyone who found it easy, although we older lads seemed to cope better than the lads straight out of training do. At the end, we were awarded a pass or fail, the pass providing a great sense of achievement. It is without a doubt, the hardest thing I have ever done in my life. For anyone out there my advice is; don't think about it - just do it!



THE LOG RACE
"Mind over Matter" - Who coined that phrase?



MILLING

"If you don't hit me, I won't hit you ... Bullsh*@!"

Parachute Training by Spr. Mike Porter

This for most, is the enjoyable phase, four weeks eating "top-notch scoff" courtesy of the RAF. The only downside at Brize is having your own personal war dog barking at night outside the accommodation. Still, sleep was aided by regular trips to the Spotlight Club and nightly bids to become the Corps' drinking champion.

We trained on two parachutes, the old PX4 and the new LLP (low level parachute). Eight descents follow ground training, one using the PX4 from a sky van and the remainder using the LLP from a C130 Hercules with up to 118lbs of equipment attached. All jumps are from 1000ft except the final one, which is from 800ft. After successful completion, it's back to the 'Shot' to register for our Para pay of £110 a month and, more importantly, to start life in the Squadron.

Summary

The new P Coy programme is working! Volunteers from the field army have achieved a 90% pass rate. It is also worth noting that anyone who has passed either Basic SF selection, Op Ajax or The All Arms Commando Course does not have to do the P Coy test and if posted to 9 Sqn, will go straight onto the Basic Parachute Course.

Aldershot Branch

By Fred Gray

Chairman: DEREK TAYLOR
Entertainments: DAVE RUTTER & TONY MANLY
Secretary: FRED GRAY • Tel: [REDACTED]

The last three months have been relatively quiet as far as branch activities have been concerned, with only one organised event during that period. We only have four such activities throughout the year in addition to our Christmas dinner, which this year is being held in the Potters International Hotel, Aldershot. On that night we look forward to seeing the return of Bryan and Betty Andrews after Bryan's very serious illness. He has now escalated to crutches, which gives him greater mobility after his troubles with a walking frame, and will also have the use of a wheel chair. He does like to have a talk with friends, so if you can spare a few minutes - give him a ring on [REDACTED].

Our Sunday meetings continue to be popular, especially as they are usually followed by lunch in a nearby hotel. We had the very great pleasure of having Ron White (1st Para Sqn RE) and Wally Gee (9 Para Sqn), as guests at our September meeting. Ron was over from California for the annual reunion of the 1st Squadron and Wally was on holiday from Australia. Wally took the opportunity of passing on best regards from all AEA members residing in Victoria to everyone in the UK.

In addition to our own activities, September is always a full month as the Double Hills Ceremony takes place in Somerset and 1st Para Squadron have their re-union in Donington. Branch members are normally at both.

Being in Aldershot also gives us the opportunity to attend lectures and presentations put on by FOREM, (Friends of the RE Museum) in the local barracks. On 9 October Captain Robert Burgess MC, formally of the 2nd Parachute Squadron RE, gave a photographic presentation of the activities of his Squadron during its wartime service in Africa, Italy, France and Greece. It turned out to be not only illuminating but a very humorous and interesting evening.

During October the big social event was of course the Association Re-union organised by the Chatham Branch and held in the Brompton Sergeants Mess. For those able to attend it turned out to be a wonderful weekend. The organisation was superb, the meal excellent, and the price was right. It gives 9 Squadron and the Aldershot Branch a big headache for next year, as it is our turn to host the 1998 re-union. It will take a great deal of planning and hard work to come even close to the standard set by Chatham. Congratulations to Chairman Eric Blenkinsop and his superb team of organisers.

Finally, the Aldershot Branch would like to welcome Tom Tuddenham and his family to our branch. Tom served in 9 Squadron 1952-58 and with the Sqn at Suez. He now lives in Cambridgeshire, but drives to Aldershot for our meetings. Another good reason for Sunday lunchtime gathering which allows Tom to travel in daylight. We look forward to his continued membership for many years to come.



(Left to right)
Chris Chambers, Derek Taylor, Wally Gee, Steve Stephenson and
'Met' Metcalfe

Birmingham Branch

No news from the "Brummie" Branch on this occasion, look forward to hearing from you next time!

Chatham Branch

By Eric Blenkinsop

We, in the Chatham Branch, were privileged to be entrusted with organising this function and most privileged again to be allowed the facilities of Brompton Barracks, in which to stage it.

Given the superb accommodation that was made available to us, we felt from day one that if we, in the branch were to put the required effort into both the planning and execution of the weekend programme, there could only be one outcome.

Well, there seems to be no doubt at all that the whole weekend was a resounding success, which speaks volumes for all of those involved, and indeed, everyone that came along. With regards to the execution of the programme, special mention needs to be made of the sub-committee members, the co-opted "Nudgers" (those men with funny armbands) and not least, the mess bar, kitchen and dining room staff, all of whom worked so hard and so efficiently.

A big thank you also goes out, to all of you, who generously donated prizes for the raffle, not least, the Yorkshire Branch. Contrary to popular belief, the ladies at Chatham are not always behind us, for, on occasions like this, they are right up alongside us! Talking of ladies, I am sure that you will agree, the 'Icing on the Cake' this time was Pam Seaman.

Following the weekend we have received a tremendous volume of letters; phone calls of appreciation and we would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your kind thoughts and words.

So, having savoured the moment, we must now move on to the future, but before doing so we would wish to send our kind thoughts and sincere best wishes to all of the members who were unable to attend due to poor health. In particular to those that had planned to join us but had to cancel at the last minute for health reasons or other family reasons.

Looking Ahead

Branch Committee Changes

The responsibility of Branch Secretary has now been passed to Jim Rogers, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] • Tel: [REDACTED].

The Xmas Lunch 1998

Once again Mike Fisher has come up trumps and organised the lunch at the Tudor Rose, Borden, Nr Sittingbourne for Sunday, 14th December 12.30hrs for 13.00hrs.

REA Veterans Weekend - Chatham 1998

This will take place on Friday 11th, Saturday 12th, & Sunday 13th of September.

6th Airborne Division R.E. Dinner

Saturday, 12th September at the Victory Club - A coach will be provided for members as usual, and a separate dinner will be organised for the ladies.

Finally, from all of us at Chatham, we wish all Association members and their families a Joyful and Happy New Year.

Yorkshire Branch

By Bill Rudd

I thought it about time that Chairman Mao attempted to add some spice to the Newsletter for the first time. Charlie, our Secretary is a busy guy, what with his civilian job and attempting to re-educate himself, he doesn't have a lot of spare time on his hands. The latest is Ken Hart, he is also a mature student at "Ripon Big School" (College) and is taking a degree in brain surgery. It must be something to do with the "Airmobile Initiative."

The Branch continues to hold its own in numbers attending. One of our latest recruits is Mat Newell (Leeds). He does not require a sleeping bag after the night's events; as he's always last to leave the bar, not bad for a 78-year-old! I certainly can't keep up with him. We welcome Bob Prosser and Sheila to the Branch. They have just moved up from St Albans to the Skipton area, and I look forward to their continued support.

Many of our members travel great distances for a meeting night, especially "Baz" H, Bill Holmes, Paul Sangwin and the lads from Hull. We certainly don't lack characters with guys like Tom Thornton, John Waite, Sid Davies and many more, keep recruiting Sid! Oh, I nearly forgot, our Master Chef, "Yorkie" Davis and entertainment entrepreneur "Ginge" Goodfellow. I hope I haven't missed anybody. Can I please pass a message through this medium; has anyone seen Burlack, Ruddock or Westbrook?

The Branch has settled down into its cycle of meetings every two months, on Friday nights at Harrogate, with supper provided by ASDA and cooked recently by Myra Barnwell and Margaret Copson in the absence of "Yorkie" D. Barney continues to look after the raffle. All in all a good team and I thank everybody for supporting our Yorkshire Branch, please may it long continue.

Our highlight of the year was our visit to the AGM weekend at Chatham, which proved to be an excellent attendance by Branch Members and their wives. The weekend I thought was a complete success and it brought together the friendship and the airborne spirit, which seems to grow year by year.

A special thank you to all the Chatham Branch Committee who must have worked very hard to produce such a splendid weekend, even I met members who I had not seen in 38 years.

What of the future? We are holding our Christmas Dinner on Saturday, 13th December at Hooton Pagnell, 3 miles South of the M662/A1(M). "Ginge" Goodfellow in tow with "Yorkie" Davis is the driving force. Our Annual Dinner hopefully will be on Friday, 7th February '98 in the WO's/Sgt's Mess, 38 Engr Regt - details to follow.

Finally, on behalf of all Branch Members we congratulate and welcome Garth Hewish as our new President. To All members who live in the catchment area of the Branch and do not attend meetings, we would be delighted to see you. My contact number is [REDACTED] or Charlie Dunk on [REDACTED].

North. West Branch

By Brian Jones

First let me begin by congratulating and thanking the Chatham Branch and Eric for all their hard work to the function such a success! Many thanks also to the RSM for allowing the use of his Mess. I am pleased to say there were six (6) members from the North West in attendance.

The branch continues to grow steadily and we welcome the following new members: Len Jones, Norman Towler and George Mills. There are several new potential members identified and our secretary Alan Marshall is writing to them. Our last meeting was held at the iHungry Horsei pub at Cuddington in Cheshire and we had ten (10) members and four (4) ladies present. I am delighted to say.

Unfortunately, we have had to cancel the weekend in Blackpool, due to a lack of numbers, but thanks for trying Jim.

Our current paid-up strength is nineteen (19), with several sitting it out! We have agreed at our last meeting, should anyone wish to continue in the branch, they could, subject to paying their back subscriptions. Come on lads, strength is always in numbers!

All the best to everyone in the AEA for the festive season and 1998, I will be in Malta for Xmas and the New Year, hopefully getting my knees brown!

South West Branch

Unfortunately, due to the illness of the Chairman, who is in hospital for a heart by-pass operation and the fact that the "chief scribe" is on holiday, we have no news on this occasion. We take this opportunity of wishing Eric a speedy recovery and the branch sends its good wishes to all of their colleagues for the festive season and trust we all have a healthy and prosperous New Year!

Hameln Branch-Germany

No news from this Branch as yet! Look forward to hearing from you.

Historian - Fred Gray

“Escape”

During the Second World War a great many British servicemen attempted to escape and rejoin their own forces. Some succeeded but many failed. Very few escaped twice and only a small number were successful on both occasions.

One who did evade capture on two escape attempts was John Humphreys. The first attempt whilst a prisoner of the Italians, and the second immediately after the battle of Arnhem. Although recommended for the Military Medal for his conduct at the Arnhem Bridge, John was denied the award. Being awarded the OBE later in life in some way offset this disappointment.

My First Escape

By John E. Humphreys

It was a bit chilly at 0600 hrs as I clambered out of the bottom of the slit trench, but I knew that in a short time it would soon be like living inside a furnace as the sun rose over the Libyan Desert. Tobruk was beside the sea but it was still a very hot place in June and unknown to me then, it was going to get a lot hotter. I joined the Field Company in 1940 and for the past two years had been in Africa. It had originally been a TA unit, but by now was composed of TA, Bevan Boys, Regulars and Volunteers as we had lost quite a lot over the past two years and was probably the reason why I was a L/Sgt at the age of twenty.

There were six of us sharing two trenches, dug in on the west side of Tobruk harbour and we had been detached from the Company for some weeks, having been tasked to prepare all the harbour installations for demolition. This comprised of all harbour installations, eight water towers, the water distillery and the Bakery.

The task was almost finished; today would see it completed. Meanwhile we had the usual start to the day. The drill was for one to make tea and the others to get breakfast cooking, which we did over cut down petrol flimsies filled with sand, into which petrol was poured. The fire would last long enough to boil the water and cook the tinned bacon, sausages, etc.

We had just started eating when very intensive shelling started. This was unusual as we had become accustomed to the “Stuka’s” doing their three times a day bombing run, but shelling we had not experienced for some time. The guns went quiet, but then the drone of heavy bombers was heard and we got plastered again, this was followed by the familiar sight of the “Stuka’s” and then the pattern was repeated again and again as the day wore on. It was obvious the “Jerries” were putting in an attack, but there was little we could do except stay in our slits and wonder what was happening farther west.

We found out about 1600 hrs when the noise of tank tracks was heard and through the dust and smoke appeared four tanks with white crosses painted on them, heading straight towards us. As we were armed with rifles and a Tommy Gun, the sensible thing to do was to sit on the bottom of the slit and let them roll over us, which they did. I had seen nothing of my Company Officers all day and being a product of the pre-war Regular Army, was sufficiently brainwashed to follow orders to the letter. My last orders had been to refrain from carrying out any demolition’s, until I was in receipt of an AF4012A signed by an officer. I waited for half an hour then got out of the slit, jumped into the truck that we had and headed for the docks where I thought my OC might be. On the way there I actually drove through the tanks that I had seen previously without them firing a shot at me. Sure enough my OC was at the docks trying to get on one of the LTCs that were attempting to leave.

In my “brainwashed” Regular Army way, I went up to him saluted and asked him to sign my AF4012A. He started jumping up and down and screaming that I should have blown them by now, so I saluted again, turned around and ran back to the truck and drove back to where I had left my section, once more passing through the “Jerry” tanks. They must have thought that I was one of them in a captured vehicle, as again I was not shot at.

It was now dusk with a lot of noise, smoke and dust so we were able to blow up the bakery and distillery without interference and then started on the water towers. By this time it was almost dark and the tracer rounds were

visible, making it easier for me to work my way around to the first tower, fit the initiation charge, light the safety fuse and move on to the next one. All but three had been blown when I realised there was only Sapper Saunders and myself left of the section and by now the machine gun fire was getting intense, as though the enemy realised what was happening. We were now at the last one and quickly fitted the initiation set, lit the fuse and got into a shell hole and lit a Victory V, the cigarettes that we got with the rations. I had smoked mine and the charge had still not gone off, so I got up and walked towards the tower thinking there had been a misfire. I was about thirty feet away when it blew, I can still see the tower cracking across the base then splitting down the middle with the water pouring out and the next thing I knew, Saunders was asking me if I was alright. I no doubt looked a lot worse than I felt, covered in dust, dirt and blood, but fortunately I was only suffering from the blast effects, which was not severe!

Our task completed, the next thing on our minds was how to get out of Tobruk without being taken prisoner. All around we could hear foreign languages, so I decided to "leg it" to the ruins of the bakery where we had left our kit, only to find 20 or 30 others there and two officers from the RASC who were unloading their revolvers and preparing to surrender. Having been in Tobruk almost six months, I knew it well and explained to the officers that if we could get to the south side of the harbour there were a number of folding boats there in a concealed place. We could use them to make our way east along the coast. They agreed and at first light we formed up in three ranks and without weapons, marched in an orderly manner for three hours past columns of POWs being escorted in the opposite direction and nobody took the slightest notice of us. Difficult to believe, but true! We got to the boats, but found there were no oars, so I volunteered to go to the boat store about half a mile away and see if they were there and then my luck ran out. A firefight broke out quite near and the sound of "Jerry" mortars was clearly heard. This was the last thing I heard until I realised that I was lying on my back looking up at a big "Jerry" Feldwebel who said to me "Tommy, for you the war is over." A feeling of complete desolation came over me as I realised that I was going to go "In the bag." They treated me well, gave me a tin of cigarettes (looted from the NAAFI) called up an ambulance and sent me off to the hospital in Derna where I was treated for a head wound and eventually transferred to the POW cage. A couple of weeks later the cage was emptied and all of us marched to a ship, where we were battened down below decks. We were now in the hands of the Italians who seemed to get braver the farther they were from the front line.

The boat docked at Brindisi where we disembarked and were paraded through the town as an example of Italian superiority. This fell rather flat as the local women handed out cigarettes, fruit and water despite opposition from the Carabinieri. From there we went to PG66 which was at Lucca near Pisa, but we didn't get to see the Leaning Tower, nor did we get much else. We were fed once a day, a small piece of bread and some gruel, which was supposed to have rice and vegetables in it, but I could never find any!

This was about the time that I decided that I would have to do something about escaping. Most of my fellow prisoners seemed content to stay in captivity as it got them away from the war, but my Regular Army training was pricking my conscience and my belly; telling me to fill it! This did not appear to be too difficult, as the sentries were a "sloppy" lot and there was only a single fence around the camp with a culvert drain running underneath it beside one of the sentry boxes.

If I could get to the culvert at night without being seen I could escape. It proved to be that easy, but not what I had not bargained for, as once in the country I became very conspicuous in my shorts, shirt, boots and puttees! I was soon back in the camp and not long after; sent to PG70 near Ancona on the north East Coast of Italy.

This was a well-established camp and housed a few thousand divided up into groups of a hundred, each group commanded by a Sgt. The hundred was split into quarters and each man had a number from one to hundred. The number was used to determine whose turn it was to fetch the daily meal from the cookhouse, two men would carry the pot and they would get an extra cup of the soup that day. The numbers were also used to draw lots for the slice of bread and piece of cheese that was issued around 1100 hrs. Cheese we received five days a week the other two was supposed to have meat in the vegetable soup. I was lead to believe that we would get a Red Cross parcel every week, but that was wishful thinking, if we were lucky we might get one every six weeks and it was these that kept most of us alive, even so I was down to seven stones.



(Left to right) L/Sgt. J. Humphrey, Spr. R. Williams and Tpr. B. Duff (RTR)

I got to that camp in October still dressed in KD but soon after was issued with a Greek Army uniform jacket and trousers, which looked very much like that worn by the Italian guards. The daily routine hardly ever changed; up at reveille, wash and shave, get a cup of what they called coffee then roll call, which could take anything up to two hours. Bread and cheese was served at midday with the Klim tin of soup. Not having mess tins, we all used the empty milk tin from the Canadian Red Cross parcels. That was it, until the evening roll call, the afternoons were spent in different ways by different people, some engaged in theatrical productions, some were taking degree courses and others like me were doing their best to keep fit. Very few of the POWs were interested in escaping, quite the reverse, they objected to the upheaval when someone did try.

The winter came and went and in the Spring I became friendly with a few whom thought as I did about getting out. The guards, who must have been tipped off, found the tunnel that we were digging! The plan to escape by spending the night on the roof and slipping out with the wood carrying party came to naught and all I was getting, were a few days in the cooler! It was obvious to me, if an escape were to be successful it would have to be planned in secret with no more than three people involved. One of us would have to be a fluent Italian speaker; so with the aid of a Hugo's Italian grammar book and all the time in the world, assisted by a bored sentry with whom I used to converse when he was on duty, I could speak it well enough to get by.

I had to devise a plan that stood a good chance of succeeding, but which I could plan alone. I started by watching the wicket gate that was used by the sentries entering the compound and which was also used by the food orderlies. I noted that the sentries paid little attention as to who went in and out, as the way only lead to their barracks. But, I thought, supposing I could get through the gate without being challenged and into the Italian "huttet" barracks, then hide under one of the huts until nightfall. The next time that I was food orderly I looked closely at the barrack huts and sure enough they were built on piers above the ground. It was possible to slide underneath and remain hidden. From there it was easy to get over the wall, which was not guarded and "leg it" for the hills.

I asked one of the theatre crowd to make my jacket look like an Italian Sergeant, on the pretext that it was going to be use in a skit. When it was ready I hid it and explained my plan to Dick William's and Bernard Duffy who were also keen to escape. After the evening roll call we waited until the guards had returned to their barracks and I then marched them up to the gate as though I was taking them to the Admin Block. If the sentry stopped me I was going to say they were being taken to the Commandants office for punishment and it was as easy as that. The light by then was going and we slid under one of the huts until dark, then climbed the perimeter wall and "legged it" for the hills.

The first week we kept to the country tracks and only moved at night. At first light we would look for a farmer's field and help ourselves to whatever was edible, usually tomatoes, figs, grapes and occasionally eggs or the luckless chicken, then hole up for the day. After a week we got a bit bolder and started walking by day, with me in front to do the talking if it was necessary. It was about this time that we persuaded a farmer to swap some of his old clothes for the ones that we were wearing and to our surprise he was more than willing. We were now dressed in an assortment of rags, but not as conspicuous as we had been. The days went by without incident, the bridges we avoided and swam the rivers at night and still on the country tracks. I cannot remember how many days passed before we came to the Grand Sasso, a mountainous range that meant we would have to go down through Pescara, unless there was an easy route over it and there was. I asked and was told that a train service ran from a village a few miles away and went from one side of the mountain to the other. Well, we had money. We had bumped into a few deserting Italian soldiers and some officers and had relieved them of their cash knowing that it might be needed and there was nothing that they could do about it without giving themselves

away. Off to the station we went where I bought three newspapers and told the others not to speak but just keep their heads in the paper. I bought the tickets without bother and we got on the train and stayed there until it had got around to the other side. I think that some of the passengers were suspicious, but they didn't say anything.

We were now getting too "cocky" for our own good, moving in daylight and with the money that we had, we were thinking of buying a big meal and so made our way in to Foggia. All went well until we were leaving the town, when a nosy Carabinieri stopped us and started asking questions. Fortunately it was late evening and not too difficult to get rid of him, but it taught us to stay on the tracks. Some days later we were approaching an autostrada in order to cross it and as usual I was well in front of the other two and about to step onto the road when a German Convoy came roaring up from the south.

I stood still hoping to be ignored and scared stiff that I would be recaptured after having come so far. The trucks and half-tracks went past, but behind them were motor cycles with sidecars on which were mounted machine guns. One of these stopped opposite me and I thought "Oh, Hell, this is it and we were out of uniform," but the rider asked in very broken Italian where he could get water. Luckily we had just crossed a river so I was able to tell him and he then took off and so did I.

By now we had found that the local peasantry, the "Contadina," who disliked the Germans and were friendly towards us, so that we could often get fed in the evening at one of the farmhouses. On one occasion we were settled in the farm kitchen and I was talking to the occupants and they seemed to think that I was an Italian deserter and not an Englishman. When I asked them why they said "Voi parla Italiano la lingua Toscana e bocca Romana." That is the equivalent of Oxford English and I could only assume that the friendly sentry to whom I used to speak to was the son of wealthy parents. Continuing to head south we seemed to be in an area where all the villages were built on hilltops and it was a slog up and slide down. Walking into one village on a Sunday evening we watched the young men and women promenading around, eyeing each other up and looking askance at these three scruffy strangers, when I heard above the normal conversation someone excitedly saying that there were English soldiers in the next village. I pushed my way through the crowd and asked him where and he pointed to the next village on yet another hill, so off we went. When we arrived we found the market place full of people looking at four armed jeeps in which were soldiers wearing PPA titles on their battle dress. Well, I thought we have made it and fought my way to the front of the crowd only to be told to "F... O... you scruffy 'Itie' bastard." His eyes popped out when I replied in like vein and in no time we had convinced them that we were "Brit ex POWs." Later that evening they drove us to Bari and that was where I saw the maroon beret for the first time.

They handed us over to the IO of the 1st Para Bde where I underwent an extensive debrief and was then told to find accommodation with the 1st Para Sqn RE who were just up the road. Sometime later we were on our way to Algiers then Glasgow to be given six weeks leave. Whilst on leave I received a letter from RE records, congratulating me on my escape, but pointing out that I would have to revert to my substantive rank of Corporal, as I had not practised my trade for twelve months! I would have to revert to non-tradesman status, so with a few scrawls of the pen my pay was reduced to less than half of what it was! Quite a welcome home, in the infantry they got medals!

Jordanian Commemorative Service Medal

Through the very commendable efforts of Mr George Harris, a Jordanian commemorative medal has been struck. This has the full approval of King Hussein and he took a great deal of interest in its design, production and of those who bought the medal. The King was so impressed with the efforts of Mr Harris that he invited him and his wife to Jordan for a holiday, all expenses paid.

The medal is of a very high quality and comparable to anything produced officially. One side shows the head of King Hussein and the reverse has the words "For Service in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan 1958". Around the edge are the regimental number, name and Squadron/Regiment of the recipient. Cost is £30. To date more than nine hundred soldiers who served in Jordan have bought the medal. For those interested, please contact [REDACTED] - Tel: [REDACTED].

"John Rock Room" - Recent Additions

A painting, measuring 3'6" by 2'6" depicting the second day of the battle at the Arnhem Bridge by the Farnham artist David Shepherd, has been donated by Major Sid Booth, formally OC 9 Sqn during the early seventies. This is a much travelled painting, as it has seen service in four towns in Zaire (Kisanghni, Kalenue, Kabalo, and Kinshasa), three houses in Warsaw and three houses in the USA, after which it returned to the UK in 1970. It will now be placed alongside the second well-known painting by David Shepherd "The Battle at Oesterbeek Crossroads" and hang in the John Rock Room.

An excellent group photograph of the 12 Parachute Squadron RE (1946) has been donated to the Association by Mr Jack Wynne. It has now been framed and as soon as possible and it will also be placed in the John Rock Room. Thanks to both Major Sid Rooth and Jack for their donation.

News Items

PRA Veteran Harry Rubins sent this poem to us. He told us, Jodie Johnson was 11 years old when she wrote it, having witnessed a parade of 700 Normandy Veterans at the Annual Remembrance Service at the Royal Garrison Church, Aldershot in May 1996.

Who Are These Men?

1. Who are these men?
Who march so proud
Who quietly weep
Eyes closed, heads bowed?
These are the men
Who once were boys
Who missed out on youth
And all its joys
2. Who are these men?
With aged faces
Who silently count
The empty spaces?
These are the men
Who gave their all
Who fought for their country
For freedom for all
3. Who are these men?
With sorrowful looks
Who still can remember
The lives that were took
These are the men
Who saw young men die
The price of peace
Is always high
4. These are the men
Who in the midst of pain
Whispered comfort to those
They would not see again
These are the men
Whose hands held tomorrow
Who brought back our future
With blood, tears and sorrow
5. Who are these men?
Who promise to keep
Alive in their hearts
The ones God holds asleep?
These are the men
To whom I promise again
Veterans, my friends,

I WILL REMEMBER THEM!

JODIE JOHNSON - 19.05.96.

Lost Colleague

One of our colleagues is trying to establish the whereabouts of a person he met at the AGM in October. The member he is trying to contact is a Hand Gun, Small Arms and Archery enthusiast. Does anybody know who this is? If you do, please contact Robert (Bob) Codd on [REDACTED]. Bob's address is [REDACTED]. Sounds like they both had a good night, without introducing themselves!

How Shxx Happens!

In the beginning there was a plan
And then came assumptions
And the assumptions were without form.
And the plan was without substance
And darkness was on the face of the Sappers.
And they spoke among themselves, saying
"It's a crock of shxx and it stinks!"

And the Sappers went unto the Corporals and said
"It's a pile of dung and none may abide by the odour thereof"
And the Corporals went unto the Sergeants, saying
"It is a container of excrement and it is very strong, such that none can abide by it."
And the Sergeants went to the Sergeant Major saying
"It is a vessel of fertiliser and none may abide by its strength."
And the Sergeant Major went among the Officers and the Officers spoke among themselves, saying one to another
"It contains that which adds growth and it is very strong."

And the Officers went unto to the OC, saying unto him
"It promotes growth and is very powerful."
And the OC went unto to the Brigadier saying unto him
"This new plan will actively promote the growth and vigour of the Squadron with powerful effects."
And the Brigadier looked upon the Plan and saw it was good, And the Plan became Policy!

This is how Shxx Happens!

An adaptation of a story once told about plans!

Aldershot NAAFI Club

The day arrives when the eagle shxx!
I grab my pay in my "grubby mit."
This week I don't have to sub,
I'm off to the ALDERSHOT NAAFI CLUB.

A hurried shxx, shower & shave,
I'm sure tonight I'll be very brave.
There will be fierce battles never fought,
Tales of mythical heroes as beers are bought.

In tee shirt, jeans & "dessie" boots,
I aim to get pissed as the proverbial newt,
It seems ages since a Guinness I last drank,
"Must have a couple of warmers in the bank."

The lads form a circle the crack is good,
We all complain about Charlie Edward's food!
Dreams of sausages, egg and beans, perhaps a roast?
But all we got was PEAS ON TOAST!

More Guinness drunk, more stories told
Of Aldershot warriors both brave and bold.
Then as the lights begin to swing
All the lads start to sing.
"I'm standing at this NAAFI bar in a most peculiar manner.
Someone spat into my beer, I thought it was a tanner?"
Songs of Sappers down on Laffen's plane.
Songs about jumping out of an aeroplane.

Then Mandora WRAC's all start to shout!
"All 9 Squadron are a dirty lot; they all take it up the crack."
"And we like it" we all shout back!

Now we come to end of tonight's show,
I feel bloody "sozzled" with nowhere to go.
Drunk & starving that's how I feel
As I stagger off for a Chinese Meal.

A taxi back, the end of all the fun,
No "ackers" left I'll have to do a run.
Into the billet now feeling like shxx,
I wearily collapse into my pit!

Saturday morning comes the agonies start.
My headaches, I belch and fart.
"Never Again" I loudly complain,
As I head for the bogs in a mist of pain.
But an hour later after a shxx, shower and shave.
Once more I begin to feel a little brave.
A mug of tea and bacon "sarnie"
I think I'll get a sub from Arnie!

Back in standard dress with a £5.00 sub,
"Fxxx ... it," I'm off for a dinnertime session to ALDERSHOT NAAFI CLUB.

JOHN THOMPSON
Sometime back then!

Lost Touch with Pals?

A free service is offered by Channel IV Teletex No: 676 in placing adverts, to enable tracing of service pals you may have lost touch with over the years! Next time you have a spare minute, tune in and see what you can offer, remember it's FREE!

Chris Chambers

Association Membership Secretary

Since the last Newsletter, a further twenty-seven (27) members have joined, details as follows:

Ian Redwood	9 Para Squadron RE	1986-1987
Malcolm Joinson	11 Independent Field Sqn R.E.	1960-1963
	59 Independent CDO Sqn R.E.	1970-1976
	131 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1979-1981
Malcolm Walker	131 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1963-1970
William Rees	9 Independent Para Squadron R.E.	1950-1954
Alistair Burnett	131 Para Engineer Regt. (TA)	1967-1969
Thomas Turner	131 Para Engineer Regt. (TA)	1964-1969
Jack Saabye	9 Field Coy R.E. (Airborne)	1945
Clifford Allison	301 Para Field Sqn R.E.	1960-1964
George Mills	9 Field Coy R.E. (Airborne)	1944
	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1945-1947
Norman B. Towler	9 Airborne Sqn. R.E.	1944-1946
Jonathan Nichols	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1986-1997
Mark Hindley	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1986-1993
		1995-Current
Marcus Oldroyd	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1994-Current
Andrew Longman	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1990-1997
Chris O'Donovan	9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1969-1974
Henry Hardy	9 Airborne Sqn R.E.	1947-1948
Paul Cooper	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1980-1987
Austin Hussey	22nd SAS Regt.	1964-1973
John Magee	9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1961-1973
	131 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1975-1977
Gary Wilkinson	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1988-1995
Donald Doherty	131 Para Engr. Regt. (TA)	1953-1957
	9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1958-1962
Joseph Waugh	9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1951-1955
John McCairn	9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1957-1967
Andrew Scott	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1990-1997
Gerald Irons	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1984-1990
Leonard Clark	9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1951-1954
David Mayne	9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1956-1958

To all the new members

“Welcome to the Association”

The Membership continues to grow at a steady pace and thanks to the OC, Admin Officer & SSM for encouraging the “lads” to consider joining us, especially before they are posted to other units and/or leave the Army. On a sad note, we have lost some members this year as they have passed onto the final DZ. Our condolences, as always, go out to their families and loved ones!

Airborne Forces Weekend

The weather was kind to us and there was a large turnout of “Sappers” for the parade. Everyone had the usual good time during the afternoon and evening in the “John Rock Room” at Rhine Barracks.

Double Hills (Paulton)

Nearly four hundred (400) people attended the Memorial Service, which was as always a very moving occasion. There were twenty-six (26) standards on parade. Gerry Taggart presented Peter Yeates (Double Hills Committee Chairman) with a new Airborne Flag on behalf of the Association and 9 Para Sqn R.E. If you are not going to Arnhem in 1998, do think about joining us in Paulton for our 20th Anniversary Service.

The AGM Chatham

What more can, or needs to be said about what turned out to be a really great and most enjoyable occasion. The Branch Committee and Members really did us all proud and it is going to be a very hard act to follow.

The AEA Shop

Jan thanks all of you who support the shop; she in turn would like to thank Jean Metcalfe for her assistance at Chatham, which was much appreciated. Please note the new items on the stock list.

St. Lawrence Jewry-Guildhall, London

The 52nd Airborne Forces Memorial Service at the Guildhall in London saw a large turnout, which included many of the Membership. Lt. Gen. Sir Rupert Smith KCB, DSO, OBE, and O.G.M. read the lesson and he is the Colonel Commandant of the Parachute Regiment.

After the service a buffet was provided, courtesy of the Metropolitan Police. Everyone then retired to the bar for a few drinks and I managed to "snare" a new member who is serving in the Met Police. He is now £20.00 poorer for having the misfortune to offer to buy me a pint of Guinness!

Remembrance Day

The Union Flag, tattered and torn, flew on the MOD buildings in London and to add insult to injury it was upside down. The matter complete with profuse apologies was rectified later!

The rain poured down, but it did not dampen the spirits of the thousands of veterans who marched proudly past the Cenotaph and it was nice to see so many of our membership amongst them.

"Moggy" Metcalfe and I were invited to the Royal Green Jackets Club after the parade. This turned out to be a very enjoyable experience and we were made most welcome. The day ended in the early hours of Sunday morning - but that is another story!

Sid Burrell

Sid has now left the Chelsea Hospital and is no longer an "in-pensioner." He is at present on a World Cruise with his bride to be! We extend them both our best wishes for the future!

Greetings from 'Oz'

Airborne Sappers Association, Mal & Joan Scott and Frank & Helen Brady send season good wishes to all AEA members and their families.

Finally, Jan & I would wish you all a very happy and prosperous New Year. See you all in 1998.

CHRIS CHAMBERS
Membership Secretary



"Happy Landings"
Chris

From the Editor

Dear Members,

I would like to take this opportunity of wishing you all a very prosperous and happy New Year. Somebody has to win the Lottery! I look forward to providing you with many stories and news-worthy items in 1998!

Association Shop

Items available & applicable pricing!

Description	Price	Postage & Packing UK
Association Ties (Pegasus Logo)	£12.50	£0.75p
Association Bow Ties (Pegasus Logo)	£7.50	£0.60p
Association Blazer Badges	£12.00	£0.60p
Association Jumpers Maroon with Blue Pegasus Logo & words "Airborne Engineers" (Sizes: 38"-48" to order)	£18.50	£2.60p Recorded Delivery
Association Sweatshirt Maroon with Logo - as Jumpers (Sizes: Med/Large/X-Large to order)	£14.00	£2.60p Recorded Delivery
Association Polo Shirts Fred Perry Style, Maroon with Logo (Sizes: Large/X-Large)	£14.50	£2.50p Recorded Delivery
Association Tee Shirts Maroon only with Logo - as Jumpers (Sizes Large/X-Large)	£ 8.50	£1.00p
Association Shields	£15.50	£2.60p Recorded Delivery
Book: "The 9th" by Tom Purves	£14.00 Membership Price	£3.50p Recorded Delivery
A Memoir of 9 Parachute Squadron RE, in the Falklands Campaign 1982 by Major C.M. Davies, MBE RE	£12.00	£1.00
Stick Pins c/w Parachute Wings	£2.60	£0.60p
Anniversary Ties (Silk) Double Logo - Pegasus & Wings	£15.00	£0.75p
Christmas Cards c/w AEA badge on cover (Packs of six)	£3.25	£0.60p
Association Cuff Links (Per Pair) (As Lapel Badge - Slightly Smaller)	£8.50	£1.50p

Cheques should be made payable to:
Airborne Engineers Association

Recorded Delivery: Would Overseas Members please send cheques in £ Pounds Sterling from your local Bank or International Money Order from your Post Office.

My thanks for all your continued support!

Until next time, I remain - Yours Aye!

Jan

Obituaries

591 (Antrim) Parachute Squadron R.E.

“Jock” Harvey Adam, died on the 10th July 1997 aged 77, having been ill for some time.

In May 1943, Harvey was serving with 591 (then a field company) in 54 Division at Woodbridge in Suffolk, when parachute volunteers were called for to join 6 Airborne Division. Harvey volunteered immediately and on completion of his parachute training at Ringway he was assigned to 1 Troop, commanded by Captain Frank Harbord in the newly formed 591 Parachute Squadron at Bulford.

Harvey served with 591 initially as a Corporal and later as Lance Sergeant throughout the 1944-45 campaign in Northwest Europe, in Normandy, the Ardennes and on the Rhine crossing, where his glider crashed. He was incorrectly posted as “killed in action” and some days later read his obituary in his local paper!

After the war in Europe he was transferred to 3 Airborne Squadron R.E. in 5 Parachute Brigade, which moved to India in July 1945 and then to Singapore. In December 1945 the Brigade were dispatched to Semarang on the North Java coast, where the civil administration had broken down. 3 Squadrons task was to get public services going again. On their departure the “Sappers” were highly commended for their good work. Harvey was a Sergeant Major when he completed his service in 1946.

His Army trade was as a Carpenter & Joiner and after refresher training at a technical college, he put his expertise to good use in his peacetime occupation of funeral director. He built up a flourishing business in the Thetford area and on his retirement, having no son, he was pleased to hand the business over to a local man, rather than a large combine.

He took an active part in local government for many years serving as Parish, District and Suffolk County Councillor. At the time of his death, he was Chairman of Forest Heath District Council.

Harvey regularly took part in the annual pilgrimage to Normandy and he also attended the 6 Airborne Division Reunions in London.

His funeral at St. Peter’s Church - Brandon, was attended by a contingent from the East Anglian Branch of the Parachute Regimental Association.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his widow, Dawn, his married daughter Jane and his three grandchildren. Had Harvey survived his illness, he would have celebrated his Golden Wedding anniversary in November.
591 Parachute Squadron R.E.

Arthur Griffiths, formerly of 2 Troop, died in Germany on Christmas Day 1996, having suffered for many months from Alzheimers and Parkinsons disease.

Arthur, who was an ex-boy soldier, served with 591 throughout the campaign in North West Europe. In the Normandy landing his planeload were dropped astray in the flooded ground and widely scattered. Unable to carry out their assigned task (destruction of the guns in the Merville Battery) the party from 2 Troop, led by Lieutenant (later Captain) Hinshelwood, joined up with 'C' Company of 1 Canadian Parachute Battalion and fought alongside them at Varaville.



In April 1945, 591 Squadron were with leading elements of 6 Airborne Division in the dash for the Baltic. Arthur was among the first Airborne troops to link up with the Russians.

WISMAR, GERMANY - APRIL 1945
"Arthur Griffiths meeting a Russian Tank Commander"

After the war in Europe he joined 3 Airborne Squadron R.E. in 5 Parachute Brigade and served in Singapore, Malaya & Java. After his service in the Far East he joined 6 Airborne Division in Palestine. On his return to England, in common with other "Sappers" who he had been with in Airborne Forces since the

early days, he was transferred to a field unit R.E. in an infantry formation based in Germany.

On completing his service as a Warrant Officer, his first job was with the British Army Kinema Corporation. He then spent many years with the British Forces Broadcasting Network in Germany. He married a German girl and had two sons, one of whom is serving as a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army.

Arthur used to visit Normandy regularly, bringing his caravan from Germany and whenever possible he attended the 6 Airborne Division R.E. reunions in London.

His widow Ilse wrote to Bernard McDonough (also ex-2 Troop) to inform him of Arthur's death. He was buried with military honours in the German village where he lived. We express our sincere condolences to his widow and family.

1st Parachute Squadron R.E.

Mr R Batey

The Yorkshire Branch has been notified of the death of Mr R. Batey. Very little is known of his personal history, other than which unit he served in and that he lived in Gateshead, Tyne & Wear.

If any member can provide other details, an obituary can be prepared for the next Newsletter. Details to the Editor please.

Airborne Forces

Op Corporate Reunion

A reunion is to be organised for the veterans and families of Airborne Forces who took part in the Falkland Islands Campaign in 1982. The reunion will take place in Browning Barracks, Aldershot, on Saturday, 13th June, 1998.

The programme will start at midday with a reception and drinks, which will be followed by a Drum Head Service and then a display by the Red Devils. Beating of the Retreat by the Band of the Parachute Regiment will take place at about 4.00 pm. In the evening, separate entertainment will be laid on for the kids - a disco, while comedian Jim Davidson entertains the adults. Entertainment will continue for the remainder of the evening with music from the Band. Food will be laid on throughout the afternoon in the form of a barbecue. Costs have been kept to a minimum and are £10.00 for adults and £3.50 for children under the age of 12.

This will be an ideal opportunity after 16 years, for both veterans and families to reunite and share many memories. Twenty Falkland Islanders are being flown over and hosted for the weekend and many other key figures, including Lady Thatcher, have been invited. The event is expected to include at least 2,000 people.

Rushmoor Arena will be available for caravans and tents and there will also be limited bed spaces available within Browning Barracks. All details for the reunion, including accommodation, will be sent out with tickets.

For further details, please contact [REDACTED], the SSM of 9 Para Sqn. RE, on [REDACTED], or the event organiser, [REDACTED] on [REDACTED], or just fill out the application form opposite.

Airborne Forces Op Corporate Reunion

APPLICATION FORM

Surname:

Forenames:.....

Title/Rank:

(Families Only) Family of:

Unit served with in 1982:

Please send

..... Adult Tickets @ £10.00 per person

..... Child Tickets @ £3.50 per person

TOTAL £

Please make cheques payable to:

“Airborne Forces Security Fund”

Application forms (including a LARGE stamped addressed envelope) to be returned to:



Details of timings, accommodation available and further information will be sent to yourself along with your tickets (**please ensure you have enclosed a LARGE stamped addressed envelope**).