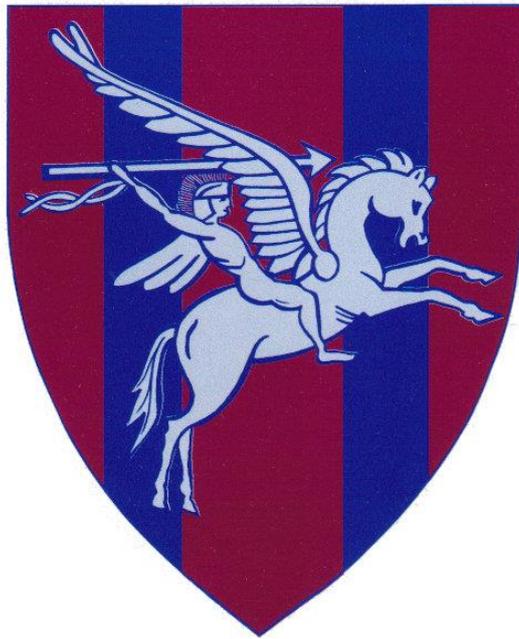




# THE AIRBORNE ENGINEERS JOURNAL



**Airborne Engineers Association  
Registered Charity No 1009201**





# The Airborne Engineer



December 2007 Issue No. 23

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**Publication Deadline - April 2008 Edition**

Members submitting material for publication in the April 2008 edition of the Journal are advised that the closing date will be **Friday 14th March (Branch Secretaries please NOTE!)** Kindly ensure that you forward your articles direct to the editor - address as shown above.

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# President's Message

**Bill Rudd MBE**

A short message to say how delighted and happy I feel, on our Association's continued success over the last 12 months. Firstly, I was disappointed when informed of the demise of our SW Branch. There are always casualties in the name of many Association's across the board in the UK, however, we soldier on in the hope that members residing in the South West will get together and form a new branch. Now there is a challenge! Which I might say is well overdue.

On the same subject our active branches in Yorkshire, Birmingham Aidershot, Chatham and Edinburgh certainly make up for the loss of our branch in the South West, and I thank them all personally for their dedicated involvement in all the Association business over the last 12 month. It goes without saying that the branches will always remain the backbone of any success that we achieve in the coming future. I thank my Chairman most sincerely for his very active support that he has given me. Much has happened in the way of strengthening the Association, we move in a very progressive era and much credit goes to our Chairman for keeping the boat steady and in the right direction.

Most important is the established formation of our 23 Engr Regt (Air Assault) and the invitation in June last year to the Freedom of Woodbridge Weekend. I speak on behalf of all the veterans in extending a sincere vote of thanks for a very most rewarding and enjoyable weekend. Lastly on behalf of all members of the Association we wish them good luck and safe return from their future operational tour in Afghanistan early next year.

The final hurdle is now in sight regarding the finance for the project of our John Rock Bust. Much credit goes to Eric Blenkinsop for all his dedicated work, which he has achieved to date. Well-done Eric.

Our recent implementation of the President's Commendation for member's, who have produced outstanding work on behalf of the Association, this is not before time. There are many waiting in the wings that are ready to be considered for this honour, good luck to all.

A quick mention on our successful A.G.M. weekend held in Harrogate at the beginning of November. Any success on a weekend of this nature is due to the large turnout and the support of members, this ensured the success, and I thank you all for your support.

As previously mentioned, the Branches are the backbone of our success and I ask you all to build on this, with new ideas and vigorous recruiting, in and around your own areas. There is a large number of sapper airborne out there, who just need a little persuasion.

Lastly as always, I would like to thank my able committee under the guidance of my Chairman Mick Humphries for their outstanding work over the last 12 months.

It leaves me now for Dorothy and myself to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Very Prosperous New Year

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# Chairman's Report

**Michael (Mick) Humphries**

Well, what a great weekend the 2007 AGM/Reunion was.

For those of you that didn't attend the reunion in Harrogate, you missed a fine party. A huge vote of thanks is extended to Bill, and the entire Yorkshire branch for organising a great weekend. Nearly 300 people, including 40 serving soldiers from The Regiment, attended the weekend. We were delighted to welcome the new CO 23 Engr Regt (Air Asslt) Lt Col Dave Wilson MBE and wish him a very successful 2 years in command.

At their annual Yorkshire branch dinner, Bill will be handing over a cheque for nearly £600 to our nominated charity for 2007, "Combat Stress".

We have had a good year as an association in 2007. I detailed many events, and affairs of The Association in my Annual report that I presented to members at The AGM.

For those of you that could not attend a copy has been replicated below.

We have had a very good year as well as an active one.

The Branches in Birmingham, Aidershot, Chatham, Edinburgh and Yorkshire continue to flourish; sadly we have seen the demise of the West Country Branch due to falling numbers and the increasing age of the membership. Sadly we have sent several of our members of to the final RV, however it is good to see the membership applications coming in with ages ranging from twenty something's at the other end.

The year has seen the usual round of parties and trips out.

The first big event of the year was the Aidershot branch annual dinner where I was able to witness the handing over of a cheque for £2,000 to BLESMA, which was the raffle proceeds from last years reunion. This year the committee have decided that the charity to benefit will be Combat Stress, the Ex Forces Mental Welfare Society.

Sadly The Aidershot Branch trip to Normandy had to be cancelled due to a lack of support, however I know that a large number of you, including a big contingent from Yorkshire made your way there to see The Association present a bench in memory of all Airborne Sappers who fell during the Normandy campaign. I would like to put on record a big thank you to John Mason, without whom this would not have happened.

I was on Horse Guards in June for the Falklands Commemorations and it was good to see Louis live on the BBC. Many of you will also have seen the British Legion publication commemorating the day, the front cover dominated by airborne sappers. During the year we have laid wreaths from the Association at Normandy, Double Hills, Aidershot and many other venues around UK on Remembrance Day. Many of us attended the excellent Veterans Weekend hosted by the regiment in Woodbridge. This was the first opportunity for us all to visit John Rock Barracks, and how impressed we were by the location. It is good to visit the regiment and good to have them there to support us, as we grow old. I am sure that this weekend will become an annual event. Billy Morris has been recruiting at full speed and has managed to entice a cheque from 53 new members. Many of these new members are trained paratroopers within the Regiment and many are from 51 Parachute Sqn. Since taking over this role: Billy has managed to recruit 103 new members and the total membership now stands at 1,322 Ray Coleman, with the help of Pam, has had another successful year running the shop, and once again has turned in a profit of around £1,000. Dave Rutter continues to do a sterling job as editor of the Journal and has managed, despite provocation from Royal Mail to keep the subscription level, however we will need to increase this now otherwise the journal will not be self supporting. Dave has for many years been responsible for not only producing the Journal but he also collecting subscriptions and selling the advertising space.

Over the year Dick Brown has been continuing to look after the association funds. There has been little change in the association funds this year. We have spent a similar amount of money to the amount we have collected.

Financial out goings this year have been spent updating the Falklands memorial in Aidershot, the bench for Normandy and upgrading the Editors printer. Our liquid funds remain around £15,000.

We have had a good year and I look forward to many happy association events in 2008.

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very happy Xmas and a Prosperous new year.

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## 2 Troop Falklands Reunion

After returning from Op Corporate in 1982, 2 Tp decided to hold a formal Dinner at The Bush Hotel in Farnham. We vowed that we would return 25 years later, and thanks to the hard work of Jock Ferry and Billy Morris we did just that. The weekend was well attended with over 50% of the troop attending including all of the management.

The weekend started with a smoker in Aidershot Garrison Sgts Mess, with much lamp swinging and "Deano" songs.

On the Saturday we sat down to dinner at The Bush Hotel and enjoyed the same Duck L'orange menu we had enjoyed 25 years earlier.



The highlight of the weekend was probably the Sunday morning service at the Falklands plot in the Aidershot Military Cemetery.

Many of us were struggling to hold it in during the reading of names, however John Ferry emerging from the bushes playing a lament on his bagpipes was probably one of the most moving moments many of us had ever experienced.

It was good to meet old friends and toast those absent. It proved to be an excellent weekend, which was much enjoyed by all. We have vowed to do it again in 25 years time!



**2 Troop members gather in the Military Cemetery for a short service of Remembrance**

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## Airborne Engineers Association Sports Club Running Section

**Billy Morris**

**Snowdonia Marathon 27th October** This years race had a change of days, now on the Saturday this was to enable the runners, who travel from all parts of the world, to have a bit of a social on the Saturday night in Llanberis after completing one of the hardest marathons on the world circuit.

I collected Bob Chatterton from his hotel on Saturday morning, as I had travelled up on the Thursday with my family to stay with my father-in-law who lives in Anglesey.

Bob's wife Sandra was to make her way to the finish, which would be around 1400 hrs, after a lazy breakfast in the hotel. We parked up in the Electric Mountain Car Park, and started to get ready. Taff Adams turned up and we had the pre race picture taken. This was the last time we saw Taff, as he is in a different class of runners to Bob and my self, he is a racing snake, and would be finished, and back home by the time we plodded round. It's not the winning it's the taking part, so there were three Airborne Engineers running the 25th Anniversary race.

The race started at Nant Peris at 1030 hrs. 1,203 runners took part this year event, the weather started clear and dry, whilst running up Llanberis Pass to the hotel. The race follows the A498 to Beddgelert and there continues along the A4085 to Waunfawr. From there it is a rapid climb to about 1,200ft at Bwlch y Groes, and then downhill to the finish in Llanberis. The lead runner at this stage went down with hypothermia and had to be recovered off the hill. The race wining time was 2:41:28. Taff Adams time was 3:32:30, mine 3:54:37 and Bob's 4:56.51 .The slowest time to complete 7:46: 21, but he was over 60 years old! This race is a challenge, but worth every mile once you have it in the bag. Roll on next year.

Come on 9 and 51 Para Sqns, lets see some more Airborne runners next year, ask Lcpl Mickey Moony 9 Sqn he did it last year!

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## Joining the Brotherhood

**Spr Sean Hartley**

Ever since I was born soldiers that have worn the maroon beret have surrounded me. My father, step dad, uncles and family friends either have, or still are, serving in the Parachute Regiment or Airborne forces. As it happens my younger brother is a corporal in the local cadet force, and his cap badge is Para Regt too!

Unlike him though, joining the Army was the furthest thing from my mind when I left school, I really did not know what to do with myself, but I certainly was not about to take orders, after all I just had twelve years of that at school.

School just wasn't my thing, unless it was sport or taking part in practical, interesting lessons, if not I wasn't really bothered, and toward the end I often found myself in front of the Head teacher for minor unruly behaviour.

The penny finally dropped as the summer holidays were about to come to an end, and I realised this was it and I either had to go back to college to improve my grades or get a job. Under my own steam I decided to look and see what Army careers had to offer, it didn't seem that bad and I was soon booked into Pirbright to carry out my 2-day assessment. Under my Step dad's training and guidance, I nailed a 09.10 mile and a half, the quickest of 48 attendees, not bad for a spotty 16 year old. As I waited to carry out basic training, my step dad, Sgt Brad Miller was still serving at 9 Para Sqn as the Master Chef, and as the move to the new bar at Buller Bks was in full swing, he organised it with LCpl Martin Jones for me to help with the building of the brick BBQ stand. By now I was beginning to see a lot more of the Sqn, from football cup finals and to visits to Support Troop's hangar. My heart was now set on serving with the Sqn as the attitude and humility of the blokes was infectious and I was completely taken in with all the many pep talks. Though I knew a lot of this was because I was the stepson of a Sqn member, it would be a different prospect on my own when I arrived as a new Sapper, and certainly until I achieved my para wings!

So, just over 2 years later and Phase 1 training at Basingbourne done, combat engineering at RSME complete, and an emotional time at Leconsfield over it was off to Ripon for Pre-Para.

Pre-Para was a culture shock, no matter how much people try and prepare you mentally. I managed to survive the punishing routine and made it on to P Coy, where the pace continued to be relentless, but I just kept on digging out day after day and achieved a good pass.

I had finally arrived at the Sqn as a brand new member of Support Troop. Though the hard work was done I still felt incomplete without my wings, and as anyone starting a new career knows, being the new guy just ain't all that.

With most of the aircraft tied up on Ops and with Sqn and Regt commitments coming thick and fast, it felt as if I was never going to be Airborne, and it felt like the new bloke jobs just kept on coming! My troop Staff Sgt, SSgt Simonds, despite being undermanned, kindly allowed me to take part in the inter Sqn boxing training and final, this coupled with representing the Regimental football team kept my spirits high in the meantime.

At the end of July I finally received joining instructions for my jumps course at Brize Norton, finally I was about to become Airborne! After sampling the delights of Oxford, the Spotlight club and Whitney, and not to mention completing seven parachute descents, I was finally awarded with my British Para Wings.



**Ground Training**



**Emplaned with members of 9 Para Sqn**

With wings, life in the Sqn life has improved no end, but to be totally complete and fully blooded I still had to carry out my first Sqn job. I did not have to wait long as straight after summer leave we had three days of jumping lined up.

After consulting with Sgt Daz Jones, the Sqn Air Adjutant, he agreed that Brad could come and join me on my first Sqn jump. This would be a great day for the both of us, as

I know he is extremely proud of what I have achieved, and in a strange way it was a thank you to him for all the help and support he has given me. It would also be a great chance for him to catch up with some old friends. He

is a WO2 now, and serves at the Defence Food Services School in Aidershot, so it was a lucky coincidence that he was on leave at the time, and he was just about 2 months still in date to parachute.

The day itself was a real good laugh, a great bonding session and proving that the Sqn really is an extended family. In true Airborne style I think Brad had the heaviest container (Bergen) there, yeah whatever! Just like the olden days in the Sqn he tells me. After completing ground training at Wattisham we emplaned for the DZ, Frog Hill on the Stanta training area. It was a perfect day with 5 knots of wind. The flight was short but the pilot did his best to throw it about just before exiting.



**Action Stations**



**Green On – Go..Go..Go**



**Kicking out twists**



**Safely back on mother earth**

I had a perfect landing, which you would expect having just passed but the old fella had a bit of ground rush, a straight back landing on which he spanked his head a bit, poor thing. After what seemed like a 2 mile tab off the DZ, it was on the coach to prepare for more of the same tomorrow.

This is the start of many months' preparations for Ops next year, and I am looking forward to conducting some real-time training in Kenya to further enhance my all-round skills as an Airborne Sapper.

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## In Appreciation

**Yvonne Brinkman**

I would like to thank all the people who sent cards, letters and old photos to Tom while he was ill. Phone calls and cards from Eric and Beccy Blenkinsop, memories of their service together from Ron and Daphne Day, not forgetting the photos from John Elliott. These kind gestures cheered Tom up immensely.

Sadly Tom lost his battle with cancer on 6th September aged 75. He was cremated at Canford Crematorium, Westbury-on-Trym on Friday 14th September. My family and I would like to thank all the people who travelled such a long way to say goodbye to Tom, it was lovely to see all the 'red' berets of his army buddies. Particular thanks are extended to Gerry Hicks who carried the AEA Standard and to the 3 serving soldiers from Rock Barracks who travelled down from Suffolk to pay their last respects to Tom.

Tom served 30 years in the Bristol Fire Service after his period of service in the Royal Engineers; and it was good to see a Fire Appliance and 2 representatives from the Avon Fire Service also in attendance. The service was very moving especially when the bugler played the 'Last Post'.

Using Brig John Hooper's words in a letter to me, "I hope you feel that he is now at peace and enjoying good exits, flights and landings from some celestial aircraft". I can hear his chuckle now. I think John summed it up just right.

We received 60 cards of condolence, which shows that Tom had many good friends.

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## Married to the Mob

**Izzy Leather**

It's the end of 1986 maybe the beginning of 1987 and I'm about to meet the man that will one day become my husband and introduce me to a whole new family!

What am I doing with an ex-Para? My father was in the Merchant Navy, his brothers were in the Royal Navy, except for the one given the choice of prison time or service time - and he became what I now know to be a 'crap hat' - sorry Uncle Cyril!! My only other connection with the services, were my mother's brother who was in the 24th Welsh Borderers and his son who served in the Welsh Guards - more crap hats! However, that last crap hat gives me my strongest connection - Paul was eight weeks out of basic training and like many others on his way to the Falklands on the Sir Galahad.

Anyway, some 10 years later Mick and I become 'an item' and after a short 'tour' of a year in Bosnia, I begin my initiation into the Airborne family - meeting new in-laws is a doddle! Naively I thought being a copper would stand me in good stead for my new 'family'. The same sort of sense of black humour, the camaraderie and of course, enjoying a drink or two! I had so much to learn and soon realised I had to learn quick time.

My first introduction was to Scouse Hogan and his wife, which somewhat allayed my fears of what ex-Para's were like when they got together but needless to say I was conned! Two together within the relative safety of a family home prepares you for nothing. Over the next few years I went on to meet the likes of Paddy Boyce, Sebastian Dangerfield aka Louis Gallagher MBE, Andy 'The Dentist' Syrett, Mick Mathis and many others. We've been to parties, rugby matches, AEA weekends, weddings and all too often funerals. I have persevered with trying to remember what face goes with which name, let alone what rank and then why 2 Troop were with 3 Para and all part of 9 Para that were engineers!

I sit, like most of the other wives, listening to the war stories getting bigger and more elaborate each time they are told and NEVER mention the fact that, no I don't remember

when the guard house was attacked with tins of chicken soup that missed and hit passing cars in Queens Avenue, because I wasn't around then!

As much as I may pull the occasional face or smile sarcastically at the stories, it's fair to say I never really tire of them and can also be heard regaling them on occasion myself. What these stories and the characters that tell them do make me realise, is how much I think I would have enjoyed being a Para wife. Don't get me wrong, I'm under no illusion that sometimes it must have been hard for the wives when the lads were on a tour of duty and away from home and not everything would be great all the time with all the wives and families, but at the end of the day you had one hell of a family unit. That is still evident each time we get together, whether our group be large or small and I have always been made welcome and quickly came to feel like part of that extended family.

I am very proud of Mick and his time in the Para's and God help anyone who has a bad word to say about any of you these days!

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## Parachuting Problems

Brian Stuttard



I found this photo in my 'archives' recently and I thought some of your readers might be interested.

When I was in the squadron in 1959/61 was a keen photographer and often tried to get a few shots during a descent. My technique was to carry the camera inside my smock with strap round my neck. Once the 'chute had opened and all was well, I would pull out the camera, take a few quick shots, put it away again and prepare to land.

On this particular occasion, a training drop from a Beverley with containers at Hankley Common near Aidershot. I took several shots but didn't really see what I had captured.

From the 'photo you can clearly see that the next but one

to exit after me has a blown periphery and is descending much faster than the rest of us. I'm afraid I can't remember who the unfortunate was, or if he landed safely, perhaps someone remembers.

I had a similar problem some months later, landing, uninjured, long before the rest of stick but unaware of the problem until told by those waiting on the ground.

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## Those were the Days

Steve Ainley (Western Australia)

Many, many years ago, I was an Airborne Engineer in the British Army, and obviously I have many memories from this period of my life. One thing that I often think about is the 24 hour ration pack. For those of you who have not experienced the 24 hour ration pack, it was a little box of goodies and not so goodies that you were given if you were working somewhere that had no cooking facilities available. Now I'm sure that nowadays, things have progressed and in today's 24 hour ration pack you probably get things like caviar and salmon and Peking Duck and a white tablecloth and silver cutlery, but in the 70's the pack was quite basic.

Sometimes you would strike lucky and get the pack with the little tin of fruit salad in it, this was always a highlight for me, but two items you were always guaranteed to get were the little packet of hard biscuits and the little tin of processed cheese or "cheese possessed" as it was known. "Cheese Possessed" was like no cheese you have ever tasted, very few soldiers were keen on the hard biscuits and "cheese possessed" and you would find piles of them discarded all over the place, blokes would put them away until they were desperate but that time never seemed to arrive. Still looking back, I do have one fond memory of "cheese possessed".

In the early 70's we were on a tour of Hong Kong, one day about 20 of us sailed over to Lantau Island for a 24 hour exercise. I was recently reading where Lantau Island is becoming a tourist destination with fancy hotels and a Disneyland, but in those days there was not a lot going on, plenty of hills, some old monasteries and lots and lots of mosquitoes. We walked up hill and down dale for about 20 Kms and eventually we arrived at a deserted beach where we were to spend the night before returning to the mainland the next morning. After a clean up in the ocean, everyone opened their 24 hour ration packs and settled down for a quiet night. "Froth Beer" and I decided that it was a little too quiet. A few Kms back up the last hill we had descended, we had noticed a few houses down a little side-track. We went around and collected everyone's discarded packets of biscuits and tins of "cheese possessed" stuck them in a bag and set off in search of beer! By the time we reached our destination it was starting to get dark, we found there were about 20 wooden shacks surrounding what looked like a small duck pond. Men, women and children emerged to warmly greet us, they could not speak a lot of English and our Chinese consisted of "one sweet and sour prawns with fried rice please" and yet somehow they seemed to

know that we would give them this large bag of gourmet delights and in return they would give us beer. Tables and chairs were carried out and soon an endless supply of food and bottles of beer, it's amazing how you can have an entertaining evening with people using sign language, the children kept prodding us with their fingers and muttering away in Chinese, I suppose they were saying "these are very good-looking Englishmen", but more likely they were saying "who are these idiots and why are they drinking all our beer" After an hour or so of eating all manners of foods that I could barely see in the candlelight, I suddenly started to get a bit of a churning sensation in my stomach, which rapidly got worse. I glanced around for a sign saying "Gentleman's Bathroom" but could see nothing, eventually I started to act out the international sign language for "Excuse me but I need to use the facilities and I need to use them quickly before there is a serious accident" They soon caught on and an elderly lady with a lantern beckoned me to follow her, for some reason all the women and children followed behind me, by this time explosions were going off in my bowels, I could barely walk I was clutching my buttocks so tightly. When I glanced behind me all the kids were impersonating my

strange walk, the elderly woman led me across a wooden deck over some water to a structure, which appeared to be the toilet. It was basically a piece of wood with a hole in it, there was a small wooden wall around it but you were pretty much just sitting there in the open air, still this was no time for modesty, There were some sheets of brown paper hanging from a nail which I presumed was toilet paper although in the dark it felt more like sandpaper. All the women and children stood around laughing and applauding me, I kept expecting them to hold up cards giving me marks out of ten.

You have to remember that this was before cable television, so the sight of me straining away was probably the most exciting thing that had happened in many a day.

Anyway, eventually the food and beer ran out, we all said our goodbyes and "Froth" and I staggered off into the darkness. After a couple of minutes I walked into a small wall, fell over the top and fell into what felt like mud, I dragged myself out and we immediately realised that I had actually fallen into the sewage pit, this did not help my bowels at all and it was politely suggested by "Froth" that I follow him about fifty metres downwind.

By the time we made it back to camp I had attracted every mosquito on the island and I spent most of the night sitting in the ocean cleansing myself. Still, it was a good night and a happy memory of "cheese possessed".

So, the moral of the story is, never throw your "cheese possessed" away, it might come in handy. And the other moral is, always carry a torch when you're wandering around in the dark. And the final moral is, if you are going to eat strange foods, in a strange place, given to you by strangers. Always carry a roll of good quality, soft, absorbent toilet paper.

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## Arnhem 2008 Commemoration

### Patrick Pronk (Holland)

As in previous years I attended the Arnhem Commemoration during the Arnhem Weekend.



A few months ago I noticed when I was in Arnhem that some one had stolen the plaque attached to the 'Callaghan' bench seat. Lucky enough John Smith had made two of those plaques so I attached the spare one I had to the bench, this time with heavy glue and screws.

On the Friday evening I went to the 'Berenkuil' near the Bridge for the Silent march. Standing there talking with some friends I came across Dave Grimbley who was standing behind me with other members of the Squadron.

When the service was over all veterans came together at the Town hall for a cup of coffee. There I met Tom Carpenter, Harold Padfield and Tommy Hicks.

On the Saturday there was the annual drop at Ginkel Heath by members of the 4th (Volunteer) Battalion, The Parachute Regiment. Around midday I went to Arnhem to see the new information Centrum about the Battle of Arnhem. They asked me if I could supply them with stories about Airborne Sappers who were at the bridge at the time. Have given them the stories of Tom Carpenter, Peter Stainforth and Arthur Hendy.



In the afternoon I went to the Airborne Museum and came across Alan Brown, curator of the Airborne Forces Museum in Aidershot. He is also a guide at the Leger Battle Field tours. He had a coach with him at Arnhem and on that coach was George Cosadinos, C.Troop 1st Parachute Squadron. During the Battle he ended up at the church in Oosterbeek, had a nice talk with him.

And at the Sunday there was the Service at the Oosterbeek Cemetery, which was impressive as always.

## Old Habits Die Hard

### 'Fenny' Fleck

You know you've been Defence institutionalised (Made military) when...You use target indication to point out hot chicks...

You use the term 'chicks' You insist on dancing like a dick, whilst your civvy mates insist on trying to dance 'properly'.

Your civvy mates don't understand any of the terminology you use such as 'no dramas', 'squared away', 'take a knee', 'have a chat' etc....

You can't help saying "Roger", "Say again" and other snappy bits of VP (voice procedure) You cringe, and mutter under your breath 'haircut', when you see men with long hair.

You refer to personal organisation as "admin" You use patrol hand signals in a nightclub if people can't hear You always use the 24 hour clock....

Nothing soldiers do shocks you any more...

You can't watch war movies without giving a running commentary, and going that's wrong he's got the wrong kit/weapon/badge etc.

Whenever you spell something out you use the phonetic alphabet....

You don't trust your mum/wife/girlfriend/any woman to iron your kit because deep down you think that your ironing is better....

You point using your whole hand in a karate chop motion....

You find that the conversation somehow always comes back round to you, because you're more interesting than most topics of conversation...

You think not shaving is a treat....

You get really irritated when people you don't know call you 'mate'....

Your blood boils when you see civvies wearing DPM especially desert combats when the closest they have been to sand is the beach...

Going out on Thursday "international army night out" wherever it may be, or whichever course one is on, involves forming the ring-of-steel, talking about ourselves and the army and aggressively staring at girls; who if they don't immediately come over are obviously lesbians...

You come out in a cold sweat if you find yourself still working after lunch on a Friday....and Wednesday afternoons and starting early on a Monday is practically impossible.

You have to stop work at 10:00am for NAAFI break or else you might not make it to lunch....

At least half of your DVD collections are war movies.... And

you think that eating every meal for a week with the same spoon that you licked clean and kept in the pocket of the same shirt you've worn all week; is perfectly normal....

All of your food has to be prepared by a chef because you're incapable of cooking anything that can't either be boiled in a bag or eaten cold....

When you are pointing out some natural feature you begin with "Reference bushy topped tree" etc.

When meeting mates in a pub you always turn up 5 minutes early and are secretly angry that nobody else has! Worse still, if it's a venue you haven't been to before, you turn up 15 minutes early to put in a CTR, in order that you are definitely there 5 minutes early, more like 30 minutes early got to recce the beer too.

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# No Neutrals in War

**Ron (Pinky) White - 1st Para Sqn RE**



The morning of Sunday, 17th September 1944 started so peacefully. Thousands attended church; times were serious but people were optimistic that liberation was close, or so they believed. This account involves a civilian tragedy at Van Stirum schools in Arnhem beginning that very morning.

When "A" Troop was ordered to defend the school, we arrived to find a few "B" Troop sappers and the very few survivors from "C" Coy 3rd Battalion.

There were three well-built buildings controlling the access flow on the bridge. The first building was the private residence of Miss Cornelia Van Limburg Stirum. Next was the Red School. The next and largest was the girl's secondary.

These buildings were a philanthropic gift from the Van Stirums, and unfortunately occupied a crucial part of the bridges defence. B Troop and C Coy were in the secondary school, so a troop occupied the Red School.

The Germans were across the street from the Van Stirum House, but to get at us, something had to go. They decided to occupy the residence. Mrs. Van Stirum was in her nineties and bedridden. They told her maid, Miss Boss, and Mr. and Mrs. Jansen, her companions, that they were going to burn the house down and Miss Van Stirum with it.

Miss Stirum did not attend the morning services due to an earlier stroke, but according to her companions, her mind was very clear.

With the coming of the British parachutists, fighting began.

The enemy was as thick as fleas on a dog, so fire fights were raging everywhere. The knowledge that we had landed smack on top of two SS Panzers Divisions made everyone shape up fast.

The next morning it started in earnest and her residence, as were the two schools, a top target. Dust and rubble plus bullets made her bedroom untenable, so her companions

moved her to the corridor. She lay on that stretcher, no doubt paralysed with fear, while we fought to hold the schools. The enemy occupied her house and a row of houses opposite.

On Monday afternoon her male help (Jansen) decided to go for help, so he and his wife passed through the firing (no mean feat). Miss Stirum, her maid, Miss Boss, plus the doctor stayed and in order to protect themselves from falling rubble and debris, they put stew pans on their heads.

It got so dangerous that Miss Boss realised they had to move. With incredible guts, Miss Boss managed to carry and drag Miss Stirum down the stairs to the ground floor.

The Germans then said they were going to fire the house.

Miss Boss pleaded that if that occurred; Miss Stirum would be burnt alive. The soldiers just laughed and told her that the bridges were more important than some old lady. Miss Boss carried the old lady into the garden, and although it took all of her strength, she was able to place the lady by a wall and cover her with blankets. She then placed a stew pan on her head, probably said a prayer, put the dog on a lead and crossed the road through the fighting until she found someone. She found a Mr. De Greef, who fortunately was head of the local A.R.P (Air raid Precautions).

Together with his son and a friend they went to rescue the lady, but the Germans would not give their permission to cross, as the fighting was so severe.

In the meantime, the Germans were trying to eject "A" Troop. Lyn Davies and I were defending the second floor.

Grenades, shots, screams and yells made the place sound like a madhouse.

Eventually the noise abated slightly, but we were concentrating on the Germans outside. We realised that something strange was happening, so we focused on the door, ready for whatever we heard. "Shush" - in through the door was a crawling McGivern, by sign language, we understood that we were to follow. Staying close to the wall, down the stairs, and exiting the school by the side door, we then realized that the noise was made not by "A" Troop or survivors, but instead by incoming Germans.

To enter the big school we had to climb a five-foot wall, and the lady could not have been a few feet away. When in the Girl's School, called "Van Stirum", I was posted to defend and barricade the ground floor with Lt. 'Stiffy' Simpson. We then barricaded

the main door, knocked a hole in the opposite side facing the bridge, bandaged up the wounded and waited. There were no windows in the vestibule but large openings big enough to fire from. As I began peering out of one of the slots, I came nose to nose with three civilians. After the necessary introduction, "Hands up!" and the German equivalent with threatening hand gestures on my part, they smiled and said in faultless English, "We've come to help." We refused and sent them on their way.

Meanwhile, the poor lady was a few feet away (unknown to us) covered in soot and burning debris. It must have been dreadful for her.

Eventually, the school was blown apart, and we had to evacuate in a rush. The dead we had to leave, and I am never positive we extracted all the badly wounded, what with the top floor all collapsing and the walls falling in. All

survivors were captured.

Then Mr. De Greef, the A.R.P Chief, decided to try again to find the lady. The Germans, not believing that anyone could survive in that shambles, let them through.

In Mr. De Greef's own words, "I went into the garden, it was unbearably hot and the house was burnt down, total destruction. When I turned to leave, I heard a weak sound, I found Mrs. Van Stirum under a thick bush near the garden wall. She could only make weak sounds, her eyes and mouth were full of soot and ashes, I wiped her face and went for help." Mr. De Greef came back with a stretcher, his son Karel and three brave women, Riek Vos, Ann Van Wijngaarden, and Ans Meurs. Then they made the long trek to the Diaconnessew Hospital, a task that drained their energy but showed true guts and tenacity.

In the hospital, a Dr. Enovs and his staff did all they could, but there was no hope of recovery. Mrs. Van Limburg Stirum died on Saturday morning, September 23rd 1944.

That same day, she was buried under a large tree in the hospital grounds. She was later reburied in the Moscowa Cemetery near Arnhem.

I have often wondered whether or not I turned the Good Samaritan Mr. De Greef away when only a few feet from her rescue...

*I received this information on Miss Stirum in the year 2000*

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## Thus it was

### **The late "Lucky" Luckhurst 1st Parachute Squadron RE**

It was descending from the sky on a bright Sunday lunchtime.

It was welcoming smiles and warm handshakes from Dutch civilians It was marching down leafy lanes and onto the quiet Sunday afternoon streets.

Suddenly it was machine guns.

It was stretcher-bearers.

It was hand grenades and shouts of "die you bastard".

It was dodging from doorway.

It was leaping from garden to garden.

It was smashing out of windows and the beating out of fires.

It was noise. It was night. It was morning. It was second lift.

It was more men, more strength, more chances of success.

Night followed days and days-followed night.

And it was carrying in of the wounded and carrying out of the dead.

It was frantically waving yellow silk triangles.

It was choking at the sight of much needed supplies drifting out of reach.

It was cursing, it was praying.

It was the screeching of panzers and the whirring of mortar bombs.

It was the mutilated trees and the mutilated men.

It was crapping in the corner of a garage or the corner of a slit trench.

It was the victory "V" sign, stuttered out on a Bren Gun

It was cries of "Whoa Ho Mohammed!" and the groans of the badly wounded men.

It was dirt in the mouth and the ringing in the ears.

It was rain soaked clothing and blood soaked earth.

It was shortage of food, of ammunition, of sleep, of hope.

It was surrender but not defeat.

It was a brave, brave try.

**It was ARNHEM, 1944**

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## Am I the last?

### **Capt Robert (Bob) Burgess MC**



My period of military service was from March 1940 until October 1946 spending most, 1941 'til 1946 with the 2nd Parachute Squadron RE. I just thought I might be the last of the Squadron members, if not I would like to contact any former member still around.

Areas of operation during my service days include North Africa, Italy, Greece and Southern France.

My contact address is as follows: Room 33G, Wingham Court Care Home, Oaken Lane, Claygate Surrey KT 10 ORQ The photo was taken at Wingham Court on 15 June 2007.

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## Northern Ireland Tours

### **Eddie Carnegie (Australia)**

I look on with great amazement of all the activities that are going on, both civil and military of what the squadron are doing. Where are the Ireland episodes recorded or are they not glamorous.

I personally have been involved in a few, one with your good mate Mick Caddick. I recall that the powers that be suggested that we install an O.P. at the top of Egg lane in the Ardoyne during February/March 1973. Of course we came under sustained armalite fire and like true engineers we leapt off our scaffolding without care for the ground below, which I may say, was about 20 feet. As many may recall from that day, 3 Para unleashed a response from Flax Street Mill to quieten the situation. We proceeded to go back that night to the squadron bar at Antrim, no doubt to buy beers for being caught out.

The other a more sinister matter, as a member of the LE.D teams of 3 Troop down at Castle Dillon 74-75 I think. Team members' Phil Poulton, Tom Wagstaff, my self and George Lightowler (who was on leave at the time) so Kevin McGrath commanded us for the day.

The team had to watch the death of a newly appointed A.T.O. officer due to politics.

Do you know what it is like to clear an LED in the middle of a field with no risk to anyone. Only to watch an A.T.O. officer go up and commit suicide in front of us.

Well I will tell you, we all took our packed lunch and hid behind a ditch and when the young family man mentioned he was going to cut a detonating cord, which we thought could have been a coax collapsing circuit. Unfortunately our fears were realised, and on cutting the coax the main charge detonated.

Needless to say we were all put in further risk. Me personally I traced a false firing point, but was caught in a booby trap zone with trip wires. There was no way out and on pulling the booby trap trip wire, well the trap turned out to be about 100 kgms of anfo - not bad from about 7 metres. Anyhow the good story I always tell is it was like the Tom and Gerry movies with the scorched earth.

It gets even better; my controlled explosion (according to CATO) had floored my best mates from the other 3 Troop search team.

We had to recover the deceased (ATO) and place him in a body bag in the back of our Land Rover and take him back to Dungannon.

It gets even sadder, on phoning my wife that night she was distressed because of all the information given about the incident by 9 sqn office personnel to their wives. Pity administration never had the same ethics as the real Sqn Personnel.

The good thing is we are back at the squadron bar, but as you know the search teams did not really drink, as they were on duty every day, and our day used to start about 0400 hrs every morning.

A well that was a long time ago, but I know the real meaning of life.

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## The Falklands Campaign- 25 years on

### John Ferry

Who would have thought that it was 25 years ago since we were sent off on an adventure that would change our lives forever! Back in 1982 we were listening to the news about Argentina invading the Falkland Islands, mainly on the radio, as 24-hour television was still to evolve, and satellite television had not been heard of. I remember chatting with some members of my own unit, 9 Parachute Squadron Royal Engineers in the bar, about the Argentinean scrap men daring to go ashore on South Georgia and raising their National Flag, and then trying to convince some of the lads that the Falkland Islands were not part of Scotland! I distinctly remember 3 PARA (who at that time were based at Warminster and on Spearhead Battalion) being called back from Easter Leave to get ready to deploy. The bulk of 2 PARA had just left for a tour in Belize and they too were called back. Total chaos as usual. 3 Troop, 9 Para Sqn were also on 'Spearhead' to support 3 PARA, but were left confused when 3 PARA set sail without their Sapper support! 9 Sqn's OC Major Chris Davies was trying to find out from the Brigade HQ if we needed to start packing, only to be told "NO" as it would not come to anything, it was the Argentineans just showing off and things would settle down in few weeks.

3 PARA set sail on the Canberra with a Battalion of "Bootnecks" and we were all jealous at the time. They set sail and we started to hear 'rumbles that 2 PARA were getting ready to move too. Therefore the OC made a command decision to get 2 Troop ready to go as well, even though he had no official order! The Troop started to pack all their stores and A41 Larkspur Radios'. I happened to be one of the few trained '30 cal machine gun' operators left in the Sqn, and as we had one on establishment, with plenty of ammo, we packed that as well. That turned out to be a good decision later! Then 2 PARA was ordered to set sail on a North Sea Car Ferry, the Norland along with a re-enforced Troop of Sappers, so the OC pre-empting the mobilisation order paid off.

I can still remember the "whinging" that 3 PARA set sail on a luxury liner and we got a car ferry! It still wasn't clear if the whole Sqn was to be mobilised at this time, as the Government was convinced that it would all calm down soon! '

After the usual military "on the bus, off the bus syndrome", 2 Troop (+) were ordered to report to Portsmouth. The first thing that changed as soon as we got there were the removal of the Larkspur radios as we were to be issued with Clansman belonging to a TA Unit! Eventually we set sail with 2 PARA Group. I remember the wives and children waving us off on the dockside and the Airborne Band playing as if we were going on holiday! Morale was high as we were "not off to war" only going down to show them that it is our Sovereign Territory!

The rest is history as you know, we did invade on the 21 st May 1982 at San Carlos and Port San Carlos, jammed into those "floating skips" that the Marines call landing craft, watching the fire fight going on top of Fanning Head between our Special Forces and the Argentinean OP, and the eventual "long tab" towards Stanley with all that kit. My first task once we had landed on "Green Beach" was to go up on Fanning Head and 'blow up some Argentinian "Wombats" and RADAR equipment left behind after the initial fire fight. As a Para trained soldier, that long "Tab" summed up to me totally "Why P Company selection is absolutely vital", not just for carrying very heavy bergens but also the "test of character" that each individual had to find within themselves! That famous advance to contact with absolutely no cover from view, carrying huge amounts of kit in the bergen reminded this Airborne Soldier why fitness training is vital, in case the unexpected "pops up with no warning".

Mount Longdon has gone down in history as a hard battle and I for one am still proud to say, "I was there". We lost one of our best Cpls on that battle, Scott Wilson, but I know that he too would be saying the same as me, had he lived. He was a pure Soldier, Sapper and very proud Airborne Warrior. I will never forget when the order to "fix bayonets" was given, something that exercising on Salisbury Plain cannot prepare you for.

Eventually the whole of the Sqn was mobilised and had to be re-enforced with a Troop from 20 Fd Sqn RE as the re-enforced 2 Tp had thinned the Unit down a bit! The Sqn had 4 killed in action and a further 5 injured. I was lucky enough to return to the Falklands 11 years ago and get back on Longdon.

There were still items of kit laying around, and I stood on the summit by the Memorial Cross and said a few words in memory of the fallen heroes, Scotty, his brother in law Cpl Ginge McCarthy, Sgt Ian McKay VC, Cpl Scouse McLaughlin and young Ptes Jason Burt, Ian Scrivens and Neil Grose (all three were only 17 years old) to name but a few.

As we as a Country commemorate the Falklands War with various local and national events, I for one can speak for all who fought in that War, despite our losses, the cause was just and the Islanders are free. In fact, as I write this article, 25 years ago today on the 12 June, the battle for Mount Longdon was coming to a close with 23 killed and 50 injured, the heaviest losses on any of the land battles.

On Sunday 10th June 2007 the Aidershot Branch of The Parachute Regimental Association and Garrison Headquarters held a commemorative day to remember the Falklands Conflict of 1982. The event took the form of the following:

- Drumhead Service at the military cemetery.
- March past of veterans.
- Official reception in Princes Hall Aidershot.

Planning started way back in early 2007, with a special committee formed from within the local PRA Branch and Garrison Headquarters. It soon became clear that the best format was to hold a Drumhead Service at the Falklands Plot, within the Military Cemetery, where 18 graves are located and a marble plaque dedicated to members of the Parachute Regiment, Airborne Forces and Attached Personnel who died. During the Drumhead Service the band of the Royal Logistic Corps provided accompanying music and Bugler for the Act of Remembrance.

18 children stood behind each of the headstones, and placed a bouquet of flowers on each grave as the Last Post was being played.

Some of the Widows and Parents of those buried in the Cemetery, including Mrs Freda McKay, mother of Sgt Ian McKay VC and Mrs Sarah Jones, wife of Lt Col H Jones VC attended the service. A lone Piper from the Scots Guards played "The Craggs of Tumbledown Mountain" as a Lament after the traditional bugle 'Last Post', a very sombre and fitting moment.

Following the Service the Veterans assembled in Aidershot at the junction of Hospital Hill/Willems Avenue for a March Past through Town. The parade marched past Princes Hall where the salute was taken by the Commander Aidershot Garrison, Col N B Josling OBE and the Mayor of Rushmoor. The crowds cheered and clapped the Veterans as they passed the saluting dais, a fitting way to say "Thank You" for what was asked of them and all Service Personnel 25 years ago.

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## "Ubique and Utrinque Paratus"

### **131 Para Sqn RE (V) - Grand Reunion**

On 16th June 2007 Headquarters and Support Troop of 131 opened the Kingsbury TA Centre doors to "old and bold" as well as serving members of 131 down the years.

Actual figures are somewhat hazy since there was a lot of coming and going as the evening went on with old friends turning up having heard about the celebrations at the last minute but there were certainly more than 230 souls in attendance, including dignitaries and guests of the Squadron.

The Celebrations began for non-serving members with the gates opening in theory at 1200. In fact the first arrival was before 10 o'clock: the same individual got his money's worth with well in excess of 12 hours' revelry. Not surprisingly he was from North of the Border....

The barbecue lunch was little affected by the weather, which at times seemed pretty determined to put a dampener on proceedings. The current OC, Maj Coles, gave an opening address followed by Capt Wilcock, 21C 299 Parachute Squadron RE (V)

relating the restructuring of the unit and the return of 299 to the Red Beret. Maj Gen Cowtan followed with an uplifting and entertaining speech by, recalling key moments from 131's rich history. People were free thereafter to return to chin wagging with comrades old and new whilst looking at kit and equipment in service today. These displays included several weapons from throughout 131's history, plant and Motor Transport vehicles, the Infantry Assault Bridge, diving equipment, Operation HERRICK (Afghanistan), Arctic training and an extensive photographic display. Unveiled to all on this day was the Historical Display in the Red Dog Bar (All Ranks' Mess), which received much comment and praise.

Naturally, alcohol was in demand throughout the day but at 6 O'clock everyone was shepherded back into the hall for entertainment provided by the comedian, Al Murray, familiar to many as "The Pub Landlord" from stage and television. We're not sure whether or not he was press ganged into this role since his father is one Lt Col Murray, the OC 131 when it was reduced in size from Regiment to Squadron in 1967. It is possible that the habit of giving direct orders has been hard for him to shake off but it was clear to all that Al enjoyed doing his set as much as we enjoyed being audience to it: his 25 minute set grew to twice that to the consternation of his manager. Over £500 was collected for CamKids, Al's charity, which is directly involved with members of the Corps in building schools in Cambodia.

It should also be highlighted that two serving officers of the 131/299 family, Captains Wilcock and McIntyre, are doing laudable charity work in aid of the Teenage Cancer Trust by cycling unsupported from John O'Groats to Land's End.

They started on 25th June and are aiming to complete it in just 7 days and raise £2000 in the process. Those wishing to support this worthy cause can donate at [www.teenagecancertrust.org/sponsor/commandocycle](http://www.teenagecancertrust.org/sponsor/commandocycle) Camp cots and tents were provided to accommodate most attendees although some stalwarts preferred propping the bars up till the wee small hours and a certain amount of crashing out was observed. Several serving and

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ex-members are still outstanding their "gizzits" from the 60th, especially the tankards; when the initial order was placed fewer than 150 had signed up for the weekend. 180 were made but over 230 actually attended! The manufacturer of the tankards and shirts are busy manufacturing more. Please be patient and bear with us, we will get them to you as soon as possible.

Furthermore some people have subsequently found out about the anniversary and would like to purchase gizzits. A limited offer exists to order extra tankards (£11), polo shirts (£13) and booklets (£2), as pictured on page 4.

Please make your requirements known, including shirt size, and an accompanying cheque made payable to 131 Indep Cdo Sqn to: WO2 Dudley, 131 Indep Cdo Sqn RE(V), Honeypot Lane, Kingsbury, London NW9 9QF The Squadron PRI did a roaring trade on the day, items can be viewed on the website and purchased by contacting SSgt Crockett at HQ in Kingsbury.

It is hoped that rumours of a 131 Association substantiate themselves in the next few years so that everyone who has served with 131 in its different guises down the years is made welcome at the next event we hold. Plans are already afoot for get-togethers in 2008, watch this space.

On the following pages are pictures of many - but not all - of the ex-members who attended the weekend.

Apologies to those who didn't get their photograph taken - and apologies for some who did! The group photograph is going to be made available, initially electronically: please contact WO2 Olaf Dudley about this, with a viable e-mail address, at

Finally, two pleas: if you know anyone who has served with 131 and would like to be on the distribution list for the Squadron Newsletter please, please pass them on a copy of this and pass us on their contact details. We are trying to build up as large a mailing and e-mailing list as possible, including some basic details of service. We all know people we wish had been there, please call them up and ask them if they knew about it: let's pull together so that next time we can get more of us together.

The other request is that any 131 memorabilia you may have from any period in its history, especially old photographs, are requested in order that they can be copied and added to the archives. Once again contact WO2 Dudley about this.

Thanks and best wishes of everyone in the 131/299 families go to everyone involved with planning, running and especially attending the weekend. Roll on the 65th!

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# Aldershot Branch Summer BBQ 2007

## Ron Day

This occasion has become the principal event of our year.



Some 58 of us attended, as is now the usual, in Fred and Betty Gray's stunning garden with it's now, expected, smart arrangement of various borrowed gazebos, all mathematically aligned in true "Engineer Style". The garden flowers were truly splendid, complementing the extensive work Fred had accomplished in laying new, smart, patio paving since last year.

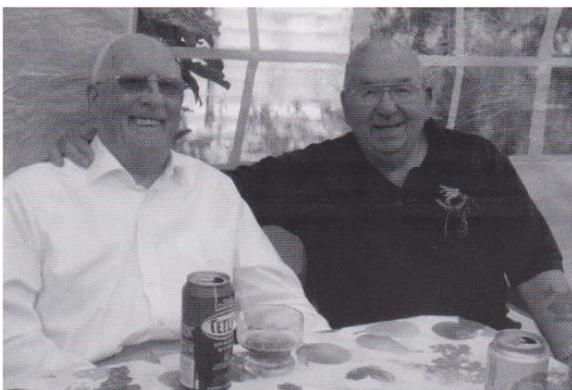
### Joe Stoddart with Col Dennis Eagan

These days, the event has settled into a established routine. The Branch members initially assemble in one of the gazebos for OGM, while Tony Manley prepares the meal. For the current day he had obviously laboured long and hard beforehand preparing some extremely attractive salad dishes, to go with the usual selection of grilled meats. Some obviously delicious sweet desserts followed this. Many congratulations Tony, on what all agreed was a really sumptuous spread. The occasion was blessed with the presence of our Branch President, Colonel Dennis Eagan. Also Major Frazer Ross and family graced the occasion. It is so good to be able to keep in touch with old friends from 9 Squadron at such times. We also had won the lottery on the weather. Truly great.



### Mick Leather with Maj Frazer Ross & daughter

The barbecue was especially welcome because this time it had been voted for as a "freebie". Strangely then, there were some 7 reported late refusals, which initially might have proved a catering problem. However, obviously word had "got around" as they say, and some balancing late additions meant that the numbers attending were almost approaching the planned 60 odd. So thankfully, there was not the amount of waste, which at one stage had been feared. The usual raffle was a huge success. On this occasion some £233 was realised.



### Harold Covington (ex 1st Para Sqn) with Ray Coleman

John Smith and Glenda organised the raffle for which there was a great response in relation to donated gifts.

Jeannette Rutter, John and Glenda sold the tickets at a great rate, as is evidenced by the final sum, announced with huge pleasure by our Chairman Joe Stoddart.

All in all, I suspect this day's event was one of the most successful barbecues that have been held. A truly splendid day weather wise, such excellent food and convivial company; all held in truly great surroundings.

Our grateful thanks to Fred and Betty in hosting this occasion - we must come again.

Footnote Mention again must be made of the great effort and expense Fred has gone to in re-paving his patio for the occasion in early summer. He has co-opted John Smith (in his B2 Bricklayer Mode) to assist in the project. A long retired Clerk of Works (C) (come Building Surveyor) has nought but compliments on the result.

## The Ex 9 Parachutists Wife - 1960 ongoing The Wind Beneath his Wings

What was the attraction of these men and why didn't it strike us as funny They never went to Charm School, were never unemployed but never had any money Can it have been the uniform; the Red Beret had a certain charm. "It makes me bullet proof," he said And you thought "well if he goes where the muck and bullets fly that'll stand him in good stead.

And so they came to see us on a weekend pass travelling by train and bus, and when they finally did propose their mothers with a great sigh of relief passed them on to us.

They took us from our family and friends and a comfortable home, to a grotty Square in Aidershot named after some worthy called Jerome.

They went to some far-flung place for weeks on end leaving us all alone With one letter saying they'd arrived and another when they'd be home.

You quickly realised that this was his life and soon adapted to becoming a Para's wife You made good friends as he had too, as everyone was in the same boat as you.

Life went on at a steady beat until one day he had to leave and join the Aliens in Civvy Street He left the Army with shiny shoes and they also fitted him with a very short fuse This can go off at the slightest thing and you wonder what you've done.

Then you realise he's made the transition from Action Man to a right old pain in the bum.

They go to their Reunions and sometimes you go too, So they can recharge their batteries and greet old friends anew.

These men meet regularly and the beer and talk flow free And you realise what a life they've had and the great camaraderie.

It never leaves them this feeling they have of friends well met and true, They'd have jumped in with both feet for them and you're sure they would for you.

You listen to their tales of battles fought, their narrow escapes and daring-do, but their special brand of humour is always present too.

As the formal dinner is over and Brigadier Garth gets to his feet, You settle down to listen, as you know you're in for a treat.

He doesn't disappoint us and leaves us laughing 'til we're helpless, And Sean who's travelled from far away looks at all the faces there and says, "you can't beat this, it's priceless".

The evenings are long and some are there at the finish, You wonder what they're running on and realise the fuel is Guinness!

You say your farewells and travel the long miles home when the weekend is over and he's had such a good time it takes him three days to recover But for all his faults you love him nonetheless.

Would you ever consider Divorce, No - Murder, Yes!!

"Publish and be damned" they say, and I probably will be if this gets in the Journal!

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## Donation to the Ghurkha Appeal

Tom Hicks 1st Para Sqn RE



I had a caller at my door a few months ago; he was an agent for a charity magazine with the title of "Good Neighbours News " (GNN), which is published monthly and priced at £2.50. The magazine runs a prize draw, competitions and a community award scheme. I wrote an article and was awarded £200 to be donated to a charity of my choice. I decided not to donate the money to one of the big charities and instead chose a small charity unknown to many but one that I considered to well deserved

The brave men represented by this charity are very much admired by all but in my opinion have always had a raw deal, so I nominated The Ghurkha's Welfare Trust. I was asked by their agent to take photographs of a copy of the cheque and some of the "Airbornes" to publish in their magazine when I attended the "Airborne" reunion at Arnhem. So if any one has a photo of this I would be very pleased if you could send me one.

It is 11 years since our veteran's formation was formed at the joint services Parachute Centre at Netheravon. We were trained by Major Bob Card and staff and were named "The Arnhem Veterans Tandem Free Fall Team" with ten static line jumpers. Our DZ (Dropping Zone) was Ginkel Heath on the outskirts of Arnhem. The same heath on which we dropped on September 17th in 1944.

Each year our veteran's team sponsored a different charity, one year our sponsorship was for the McMillan Nurses and two of the nurses jumped with us just to show us how easy it was. Two years ago we were down to ten tandem jumpers, on our last jump we were down to five and were still keen to jump, one of our team Ray Sherrif who was blinded at Arnhem Bridge is still as keen as ever.

It is now to be a happy memory as the powers that be have decided that enough is enough, I am 88 and the rest of the

team are not far behind so in the words of our old song "We ain't gonna jump no more". I think they have made the right decision, so we finish on a high of 13000 feet and not on mother earth as the landings get harder every year.

Finally I must get this one in. I was the only Sapper jumping as Gus Woods had had to retire due to impaired vision, he was 1st Para RE also, so all those years we had two Sappers jumping in our team. "Oh where oh where have the 9th Squadron gone, oh where oh where can they be"?

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## The First Parachute Squadron

Col Chris Davies MBE

In 1940, with its back against the wall after Dunkirk, the Country appealed to spirited young men in its Armed Forces for volunteers for "Service of a Hazardous Nature".

The Commandos were born and from the fittest and most adventurous of these came the first volunteers for parachute operations.

The 1st Air Troop Royal Engineers was one of the first formed units to be designated for parachute training and, later in 1940; this small, determined group of men was expanded into the 1st Parachute Squadron RE. It was not long before elements of the unit were involved in operations and a section of nine men including Captain Dennis Vernon RE parachuted into France near Le Havre in February 1942 with C Company 2 Para (under Major, later Major General John Frost). The aim was to capture vital parts of the German radar site, which had been established at Bruneval, and to bring them back to England for examination. At that stage of the war German radar technology was way ahead of ours and it was vital that our scientists should know just how far the Germans had progressed. By parachuting into France, attacking the radar site and withdrawing over the beaches to waiting landing craft, all within the space of some five hours, this Company group completed the first ever-successful British parachute operation in almost text book fashion. The Parachute Regiment received its first battle honour. The Sappers went straight back to training, camp construction and the thousand other tasks that fell their way - work as normal!

Operations in North Africa, Sicily and Italy followed during the next two years and it was not until early in 1944 that the Squadron, as part of the 6th Airborne Division, returned to England to prepare for the invasion of Europe. The Division's turn to take part in this finally arrived in September of that year when it took part in the airborne assault to capture the bridge (of 'too far' fame) at Arnhem.

Most of the 1st Parachute Squadron made it to the bridge and the survivors were among the last to surrender when larger and better armed, seasoned German troops finally overwhelmed them. Having trained, lived and fought together for over four years it was with great sadness that the Squadron was decimated during this fierce final encounter with the enemy. Those who remained alive were to suffer nine long months of captivity, many working in German coal mines, before they were repatriated soon after the victory in Europe.

For over sixty years, in September every year, the gallant survivors of these challenging times have held a reunion in Donington, Lincolnshire, the town where the 1st Parachute Squadron was billeted before they flew off to Arnhem. Some of the men married local girls and they returned to live in the area after the War's end. The ranks may be thinning, as time takes its toll, but the friendship of the survivors remains undimmed as the years pass by. At every reunion they are joined by their families, the families of some of their comrades killed at Arnhem and younger people like us (OK 'young' is a relative term) who remain in awe of the achievements of the men of the 1st Parachute Squadron. The annual gathering at Donington is a very special, and humbling, occasion for us all. But it is also a joyous weekend, as the accompanying photographs show. Long may it continue.



**Mrs Dorothy Stainforth & Col Chris Keebles DSO (Para Regt) cut the Sqn Reunion cake during Saturday evening dinner night**



**The parade, which included 2 grandchildren from Australia, prepare to march to the Donington Church**

Note: Official records note that the 1st Parachute Squadron was finally disbanded in 1947 when 9 Parachute Squadron became the only Royal Engineer Airborne unit in the Army's order of battle. In fact the majority of men in the re-formed Squadron came from the 1st Parachute Squadron so the "disbandment" was, in fact, more of a mere re-numbering exercise.

The spirit of **THE** Squadron lived on, and lives on to this day, in the young men who now serve in 9 Parachute Squadron.

Men who, in the words of the family motto of the only surviving officer of the original 1st Para Squadron, Peter Stainforth, have never been found wanting.



**Veterans of the 1st Para Sqn RE assembled under the "Arnhem Oak"**

## 1st Parachute Squadron Cake

The first cake made for the 1st airborne sqn Royal Engineers, who were stationed in Donington Lincolnshire before going of to Arnhem, was originally made by Mrs Grimer, who on being invited to a dinner put on by a few of the sqn after the war (details of those men have already been written). Mrs Grimer felt that after the meal there was something more needed so at the next reunion she presented them with a large iced cake to be shared between them. So started a tradition that was to carry on up this day with Mrs Grimer's daughter Lynda Hibbitt now making the cake and her son icing it.

Another tradition was also started when Mrs Cissie Albans who was teenager in the village when the Sqn was there and was then miss Ciss Wyers, had come back to live in Donington from the nearby village of Gosberton Risegate. Even while there Ciss and her husband Percy used to put up some of the lads when they had their reunion, and carried on doing so after they came back. They often put up as many as 8 people in their lovely large house in the village square.

After the Church parade on the Sunday she started to invite everyone back for refreshments of which Percy, daughter Joy and herself would bake cakes and prepare a buffet before hand. So with tea and coffee being continuously available everyone would be fortified for the long journeys that many of them had to make home. She still prepares the food with assistance from a few of the wives of members but it is now laid out in the Church hall owing to the greater number of families of members and the attendance of former members of 9 Para Sqn.

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## Yorkshire Branch Arnhem Pilgrimage

**Bill Rudd**

**Wed/Thurs 19th Sept** After much detailed planning with regards the ferries and accommodation we finally boarded The Pride of Hull heading for Rotterdam. A pleasant journey across the North Sea, which included dinner, cabaret and a few beers with us finally arriving in Rotterdam at 8.00am next morning.

Might I say at this stage that our dear friends in Newcastle loaned us a mini bus for the period at no cost. Our Dutch friends Ed Der Vanderlann and Ton Sonia had arranged our accommodation at a bungalow park within the Dutch National Park about 5 Kms from Arnhem / Oosterbeek, this of course was self catering, DROs and cooks were hard to find until Yorkie Davies volunteered, this gave him an excuse to go to bed early! The infamous Syd Hoyle, who is now resident in Holland, joined us, by coincidence he works in a brewery, no flies on Syd! Weather forecast looked good and our Dutch friends brought along a beer tender, I think we call it a 'carry out' in UK.

**Fri 21st Sept** The day was planned, firstly to visit the Liberation Museum 1944 at Groesbeek, which is 7kms east of Nijmegen. The museum was established to keep alive the memory of Operation "Market Garden", but primarily the museum is intended to be a token of gratitude for all those who gave their lives for freedom. The museum is on the exact spot where the 82nd American Airborne Division landed under command of Gen James Gavin. We were met by the curator who kindly asked us to watch a film and then gave us escorted tour of the very impressive display. This I am convinced is a must to see if you are in the area. Snacks and tea followed before moving onto Nijmegen.



Nijmegen is reputed to be the oldest city in Holland and in terms of beauty and architecture it holds it's own. We then moved to the city centre with one or two pit stops at local cafes, what impressed me was the very large barge traffic, which was constant up and down the Rhine. Our next move was to return to Arnhem to attend the commemoration and the wreath laying at Airborne Monument below the John Frost Bridge.

### **Malcolm Barnwell, Bud (3 Para) & Bill Rudd at the Airborne Monument**

A most moving service was given, fully supported by the many local dignitaries and local town residents, least to say John Parker paraded our AEA standard on this occasion. We were delighted to meet up at this stage with Tom Carpenter and members of the Birmingham Branch; also Mat Newall and his lady friend and Eldred Grocock with is lovely wife Anne. This

called for a beer before departing on our way, still looking for Harold Padfield! We then moved on to the Corn Market to finish off the night before moving back to our five star accommodations.

Incidentally the Corn Market is as famous as West End of London, anyone seen Harold Padfield?



Sat 22nd Sept A hearty breakfast was cooked by Yorkie Davies, which was greatly appreciated by all. Our planned day was firstly to move to Ginkel Heath to watch the 4th Bn Para Regt parachuting through the clouds, which also included members of 23 Engr Regt (Air Assault).

The weather was ideal for parachuting with little wind, the sun shone and the crowds were large including many local residents. The next highlight of the day saw us heading down to Oosterbeek for a late lunch and to meet up with Mat Newall and his lady friend, also Tom Carpenter and his granddaughter.



**Members of 9 Para Sqn**



A pleasant hour soon passed before we moved off to attend a parade at the RE Monument at Driel for 1700 hrs.

This consisted of a wreath laying ceremony with the British Ambassador in attendance; also it was good to see the Troop Commanders Course from Chatham on parade. I am led to believe that this was the largest attendance to date and also included 299 Veterans from Hull along with Tom Carpenter, Kevin Lambeth (Birmingham) and the Canadian Pipe Band. John Parker carried the AEA standard with Kevin carrying the Arnhem Veterans standard.

**Kevin & John parade the "Standards"**

A most moving service of remembrance to the British and Canadian Engineers who saved many lives in moving the remnants of the 1st Airborne Div across Rhine, in retreat. I must mention at this stage my dear friend Eldred Grocock who met us on arrival with a Charlie Edwards all in stew from the rear of his car.

Eldred it was much appreciated by us all, and it saved buying supper that night!



**Pete Stevens, Yorkie Davies, 'Bud' Grocock, Dave Grimbley, a member of the Troop Commanders course, Kevin Lambeth & Billy Gibbons - Bud holding the "all in stew" pot.**

From Driel we preceded to Oosterbeek, following a visit to the Airborne Museum, a few beers and then back to the bungalow park restaurant for supper and then to bed.

Some did stay up late by attending - a party at which many stories were told, no sleep for the occupants of No 10. Lastly, I have to meet Harold Padfield.



**Sun 23rd** Sept Up bright and early to beat the traffic jams into Oosterbeek to attend the official memorial service at the Airborne Cemetery and the placing of flowers on every grave by the local school children, total of graves. This I am sure was the highlight of the whole weekend, a moving and emotional service attended by, I would guess, 7000 vets and local residents. Our British VIP was Sir James Cleminson KBE. CB who incidentally was OC of 5 Platoon 3rd Bn Parachute Regt at the time of the battle.

**Bob Hemrov, Tom Carpenter & Bill Rudd at the Driel Monument**



**Yorkie Davies, Bof Harrap, Dave Grimbley, Barney Barnwell, Billy Gibbon, Syd Hoyle, John McCarthy & Bill Rudd at the Museum**

Once again the AEA standard was on parade. On completion of the service we then made our way into town to the schoorob bar for refreshments. The main high street was just one mass of veterans meeting friends old and new, some they had not seen for forty years! Late afternoon it was time to say farewell to all, especially our Dutch friends and head for the Europort. The Pride of Hull was waiting for us, and after boarding, an excellent meal followed by a cabaret, a small percentage of our party went to bed early. May I please remind members that the 65th Arnhem Anniversary will be in 2009 and we hope to run a coach trip to witness the event. Any member wishing to join us would be more than welcome.

Anybody seen Harold Padfield? Sorry I missed you Harold, it was your turn to buy the beers!

## "Fergie Semple" Golf Tournament Ed:



**Tony Hogan, Mick Leather, Dave Rutter, Geoff Barlow, Billy Morris, Myra Hindley, Tom Dolan, Chris Lunn, John Hughes, Ken Mason & Yorkie Davies**

The Ripon City Golf Club was the venue for the 2007 Fergie Semple Golf Tournament on Friday 2 November.

The event, organised by John Hughes took the format of a Stableford Competition playing off full handicap, though it has to be said that there were the odd jibes of 'bandit' when players declared their playing handicaps! John had negotiated with the Ripon City Club secretary for a greatly reduced 'green fee' and just as importantly had arranged for perfect weather conditions. The draw was made for playing partners and starting times and the match was soon under way. Gasps of awe were in evidence as the first 3-ball teed off. These were quickly followed by calls of "bad luck" as Mick Leather ventured to see if his ball would float in the lake just forward of the first tee.

With none of us having played the course before it soon became apparent that there was a need for more signs around the course as several players teed off in the wrong direction from the 8th tee!

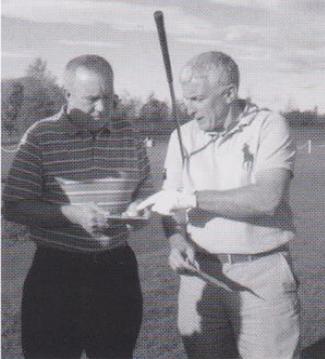
In glorious sunshine we had little time to appreciate the scenery as local club members were taking the game far more seriously than us and probably didn't appreciate the odd delay while we searched for the elusive golf ball.



### **Flat battery - send for the RAC**

While the majority took the exercise in their stride by either carrying their clubs or pulling a trolley, John Hughes and

Yorkie Davies opted for the lazy golfers game and travelled the course using a buggy. That is to say, they travelled most of the course in a buggy until the battery went flat resulting in the buggy having to be pushed along the 17th and 18th fairways.



### **Chris Lunn checks Tony's card**



Back at the 19th hole (Clubhouse), the scores were checked for accuracy and the winner, with a score of 35 points, was Tony Hogan.

This year's competition gathered in a total of 11 players which bettered 2006. All players promised to compete for the trophy next year; so I hope we can

encourage a larger field for 2008. The golf tournament can only get more better each year, so why not join us?

All players extend sincere thanks to John Hughes for organising the event and Mick McGrath for providing the photography support.



**Billy Morris (2006 winner), presents the Fergie Semple trophy to Tony Hogan**

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Harrogate Reunion- 3 November 2007



Putting on the style - serving members of 9 Para Sqd RE  
Great to see so many serving airborne soldiers present!



Harry Mennie & Charles Barker



Phil Poulton, Mick Willis, Robert Qarikau & Dave Jones



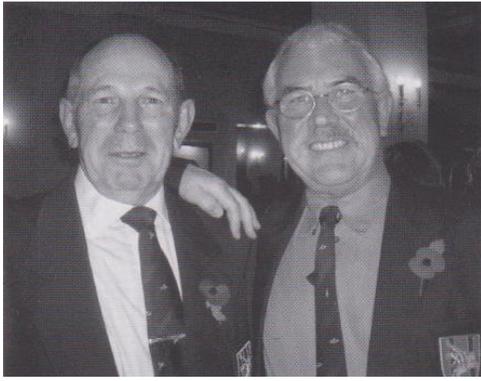
Standard Bearer, John Parker and Piper, Frank Menzie-Hearn  
welcome the guests to the Gala Dinner



Ralph Young, Louise & Christine Young



In Pensioner, Eric Borlace & Don Doherty



**Ken Turk with Syd Hoyle**



**The 9 Sqn lads celebrate with Champagne!**



**Maj Kevin Copsey makes his point quite clear to wife Dawn and to Harold Padfield**



**Billy Morris & Graham Strettle with Colin Walker**



**Lindsey, in the absence of partner Froth Beer, in the company of Froth's best friend, Phil Poulton. Next year Froth, take it easy during the afternoon session!**



**Signing the Guest Book Christine Humphries, Bill Rudd, Mayor (Councillor) Cliff Trotter, Consort Christine Trotter & Chairman Mick Humphries**



**Plying the OC's wife with wine will not increase your chances of further promotion!**



**Taking chivalry to the extreme - watched over by ones' wife and ones' partner!**



**SSM Mick Stewart explains to Louise and Lt Col David Wilson MBE CO 23 Engr Regt (Air Asslt), why Sainsbury are now charging 5p for plastic shopping bags**



**Tom Tuddenham & Nick Kupyn**



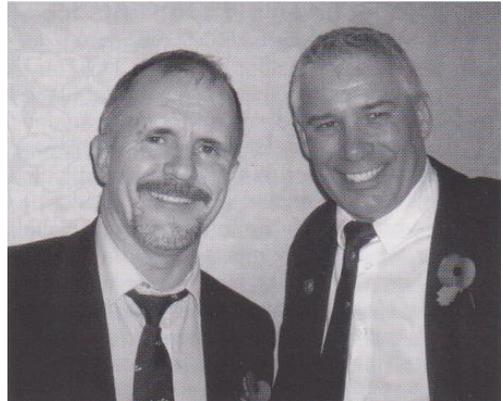
**Colin Birkenshaw with Bert Tate**



**Robin Taylor & John Hughes**



**Jackie Mathis, Roy Gambrill and friend**



**Dave Leibrick with Mike Robertson**



**Brian Care listens to Syd Hoyle explain the benefits of living in Holland**



**John Elliott with unknown friend! John's on the right!**



**George Jones, Curly Chapman, John Waite & John Elliott**



**Mayoress Christine Trotter with Dorothy Rudd**

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## Fred Robson- An Old Acquaintance

### **John (Indiana Geordie) Thompson**

I was talking to one of my divers. A guy called Steve Lee who I had introduced into diving and is now very much a convert. I was saying to him that every shipwreck I researched seemed to lead to another shipwreck, but that they all seemed to be located on remote islands in the Middle East. I couldn't say no to him carrying bottles of booze on our trip as we normally take a few bottles of whisky to use as a form of bribery for our Arab brothers.

However social life as you all know is sadly lacking in the backwoods of Arabia. I said to Steve I would like to find a shipwreck just off the beach of Copa Cabana. No such luck!

Two days later I received a phone call from a lady called Jade Pillar from the Philippines. She told me that her uncle had worked for the Sailing and Fisheries board for some forty years and when he retired he had photo copied all the information in the Area of Davao Bay on shipwrecks that sank during and since the Second World War. He also had all the locations of what we call snaggings! If fishermen constantly snag their lines or nets in a marked area they report it to the authorities on the assumption it could be an unknown shipwreck. I must admit I did get a wee bit excited. Jade told me she had approached a guy called Martin Woodward who is out there on the Discovery Project set up by the Philippine Government to search for Japanese shipwrecks. Martin worked in the North Sea at the same time as me and had suffered a very serious accident. He received a very large amount of money for his injuries but fought back to full health and he now has a diving company on the Isle of Wight and a Maritime Museum on the island. Martin is very high tech and was approached to carry out the Discovery Project out in the Philippines. He told Jade that he was too busy and gave her my name as I have now a lot of expertise in an underwater survey tool called a Proton Magnetometer. I have helped Bob Williams of Aqua Scan to develop the machine in locations and weather that the average intelligent diver would never go.

I was still very dubious as in the salvage world, the Philippines although wonderful people, they tell some amazing stories about shipwrecks. Apparently at the end of World War II, an Armada of Japanese was heading back to Japan pursued by a fleet of American ships. They had raped and pillaged the temples of the Asian countries and were supposedly filled to the gunwales with treasure.

If the truth were known the Japanese currency had collapsed and they actually had to pay their troops in anything they could steal. The Armada reached a place called Paradise Island (Samal) in Davao Bay where they were anchored up. Then the Americans dropped the bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima. The Americans were getting very close, so the Japanese Admiral rather than surrender did a 'Scapa Flow' and sank the fleet with a total of four thousand prisoners. They would normally put the prisoners inside and weld the doors before sinking the ships. At a later date when divers found the shipwrecks of other similar Japanese shipwrecks they thought the doors were sealed to protect the treasure. When some of the doors were finally opened to their horror there were piles of

skeletons. Because the fleet in Davao Bay sank in around 400' of water they could not be reached as in those days technology had not got that far. The Americans recorded them but the records sort of died a death in the archives.

Also in the area off Samal Island, supposedly seven ancient Chinese Junks were shipwrecked in a storm. They were full of very old Chinese porcelain. Further South from Paradise Island is an area full of fisherman's snaggings, which sounded very interesting. After more phone calls and further evidence I decided to go for it. I had to pay my own fare to the Philippines but they were paying

all expenses on arrival. This is a normal arrangement and then if the project were to go ahead and was successful I would then get a percent of the net.

In the days that passed the thought struck me that someone from the Squadron was living in the Philippines.

Then I realised it was Fred Robson of 1 Troop fame. The last time I had seen Fred was at an Airborne Forces weekend over twenty five years ago when I had around 22 guys sleeping at my place, a couple were under the bed too!



We had had an all weekend session as you usually do on Airborne Forces weekend, and at around 4:00 am on the Monday morning, Fred, Neil Westbrook, myself and another whose name escapes me, staggered out of the bar and fell asleep on the edge of the parade ground in Montgomery Barracks. A few hours later I awoke feeling rotten and headed home leaving them still lying there. That was the last time I had seen Fred.

#### **John Thompson with Fred Robson**

My next thought was to check out the Airborne Engineers Membership Directory. There it was his address in Quezon City Manila, Philippines but no telephone or e-mail? By chance I phoned up Dave Rutter who told me that Fred was in contact with him because he had some problem with his credit card. He had ordered new ones but they refused to send them out to him in Manila for security reasons. Fred had asked the credit card providers to send them to Dave, so he could arrange some method to get them to him. I told Dave that in a couple of weeks I was flying out there so I would hand deliver them. Problem solved! By e-mail from Dave I finally contacted Fred and then talked with him on the phone. I had never served with Fred during my nine years with the Squadron but had the pleasure of his company and humour on many occasions in the old Aidershot NAAFI club. Fred was more than pleased when I told him I was flying out to Manila and asked me to visit him. However he did tell me that he had not been too well, suffering from a type of thrombosis to both legs and he found it difficult to walk and was in lots of pain!

When Fred left the military he took over the running of his in-laws hotel in Birmingham. In Fred's own words it was a bit of a disaster! After a few more jobs; Fred decided to move to Australia where he worked on plant for some time.

There is a story that he was grading a very long road in the outback with a caravan towed behind him. He had not seen anyone for weeks. In the distance appeared a cloud of dust, which turned out to be a guy grading the road from the opposite direction. As they came close together they both jumped out and to Fred's surprise it was Cliff Joy ex Shiny Nine and an old Plant Troop member. Fred reckoned that the story was untrue but he had met Cliff on a plant job in Aussie. Personally I prefer that story! Fred then took an offshore job with an American company and amazingly worked his way up to a senior position running an oil rig. This is quite amazing as the Americans are not prone to let anyone but Americans get to that position of authority. After twenty five years working for the same company and being flown all over the world, mainly working in Asia, Fred met a beautiful Philippine lady called Ludina and retired and settled in Quezon City near Manila.

On the 16 July 2007 I took a very long flight via Bahrain, which brought back many memories of building Hamala Camp in the mid sixties, and landed in Manila 23 hours later. A lady called Maria Suba who was my liaison for the few days in Manila before heading to Samal Island, Paradise Island, met me. Maria took me to my hotel and after settling in I asked if I could phone Fred and see what the score was. I was a bit jet lagged but not too bad. Maria said that she had talked to Ludina who said she would meet us in a bar near to my hotel so off we went.

It was two hours before Ludina arrived; by then after a quick lunch and a few beers I was feeling decidedly woozy!

Ludina arrived at the bar smiling and glad to see Maria and me. Soon we were wending our way through the horrific traffic of Manila listening to the bubbly Ludina. It was amazing, with taxis, peddicabs (which are powered by petrol or manpower) and Jeeps. With the American presence after the Second World War the Philippines had used the jeeps left there and made them into these vehicles which are made of burnished aluminium but very artistic in their presentation. Nearly two hours later we turned up at a large house in the Quezon City area of Manila.

Walking into the large yard Fred was sat on what he calls his 'throne' at the door entrance, as he rose to meet me I could see the pain in his face. Soon we were grappling in quite an emotional embrace. Beers were placed before us and in no time the lamp was being swung. Fred has two young sons who are both very lovely children. His youngest Bryan is a budding karaoke star and moves better than Elvis Presley (so we had something in common!) Fred also looks after two or three nieces who come from the provinces where the education is not as good as in Manila. They stay with Fred until they have finished their studies. Actually his house is

mayhem as he has an enormous karaoke machine in his back yard given to him by someone who owed him a couple of thousand dollars. There is a constant flow of people possibly coming to see the new foreigner and to listen to me sing!

I asked Fred who they all were. He replied that he did not know but that he fed all of them. Sitting there in a temperature of 38C as the sun went down brought back many memories of the Squadron days. I lasted until around two o'clock in the morning and by then the beers and jet lag had caught up with me so Maria and I sorrowfully left staggering into a taxi back to Manila.

The following day was a madhouse with organising and getting ready for the following days flight to Davao Bay. To cut a long story short after arriving and assessing the situation, I convinced the dive company that their project would cost an enormous sum of money and they would likely get their fingers burnt. At the time they were not very convinced. The five days spent on Paradise Island was absolutely wonderful and the diving out of this world.

However since I left an American has attempted to do what they were trying to do and failed badly. The company now want me to return on another project in the next weather window, which is April/May 2008.

During my last couple of days in Manila I managed to have another session with Fred, as it was young Bryan's birthday. I also sang karaoke in a Japanese sushi bar.

On my return to the UK I received the good news that Sultan Quaboos has sanctioned my project in the Oman and had set up a fund to assist us. He was appalled at the way we were living on the beach and has supplied my next expedition in November with air conditioned tents, a desalination unit to make fresh water and a portable kitchen with cook. It beats Salisbury plains in winter with a wet blanket and ground sheet!

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## Journal Subscription Increase

Due to the ever increasing postal charges (three in the last 18 months) adding to the additional cost of printing and administration in the production of the Journal, we must adjust the subscription charges accordingly.

It was agreed at the 3 November 2007 AGM to raise the subscription for UK residence from £6 to £8 per annum i.e. 3 issues, and for all overseas subscribers (including European addressees) from £7 to £10 per annum.

The cost of mailing to UK members is currently almost one third of the annual subscription and to those overseas considerably more. The new rates are to be introduced from **1st October 2008**. Reminders to amend Standing Order payments will be contained in the April 2008 issue of our publication.

I would greatly appreciate more members opting to pay by standing order as it saves me a considerable amount of time and effort sending out subscription reminders and banking hundreds of cheques. If you'd like to pay by standing order; simply notify me and I (editor) will forward the necessary documentation.

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## PARASITES

With reference to the comments made by Don Newman about Parasites. In around 1962-63, Wally Linham was a P.S.I, with 300 Para Sqn RE (TA) in Edinburgh and, with time on his hands, compensated by improving his golf. He also found time to design an Airborne Engineers tie, which met with the approval of those to whom it was shown, including the CO of 131 Para Engr Regt at that time, Colonel John Cowtan.

A prototype was sent to Chatham for their comments and approval but the Corps committee rejected the idea out of hand, saying that the Corps had its own distinctive tie and did not see the need for units within the Corps to have their own versions.

After seeking advice from a number of sources, Wally was told that they could not object if the tie was affiliated to a club - so he decided on a play on words PARAS In The Engineers = PARASITE.

The tie which became known as the 9 Sqn tie was originally the Parasite Club tie and was produced in Edinburgh for 131 Para Engr Regt (TA). The CO at that time and other distinguished Airborne Sappers were perfectly happy to be members of the "Parasite Club".

I was very proud to wear the tie as an original member; in fact, I still have the tie that was first made. It's a bit the worse for wear now but I wouldn't part with it.

Perhaps Don was unaware of the reasoning behind the name PARASITE

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## Festive Suggestions- Cocktail Recipes

Abbey Cocktail 14 oz orange juice, 14 oz gin, 2 dashes of orange biters, 1 maraschino cherry for garnish.

Admiral Benbow 14 oz Plymouth gin, 16 oz lime juice, 1 oz dry vermouth, maraschino cherry for garnish.

Aggravation (aka Teachers Pet) 1 oz Scotch, 1 oz coffee liqueur, mild or cream

Angel's Delight 114oz cream, % oz triple sec, %oz gin, 2-3 dashes grenadine.

April Rain 2 oz vodka, 16 oz lime juice, 16 oz vermouth, lime peel for garnish Americano 1 oz Campari, 1 oz sweet vermouth, club soda, lemon twist or orange slice for garnish Liquid Oxygen Blue Curacao pour into % glass of champagne (POUR GENTLY)

Brandy Cocktail

Using cheap brandy, pour tot into glass with a sugar lump.

Top up with Champagne or sparkling wine.

Blows your head off and strips the enamel off your teeth.

It's for people who like a drink that fights back!

**PLEASE, do not attempt to drink these all at once! \* \* \* \* \***

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## Branch News

### Aldershot Branch

#### Mrs Betty Gray

Since August branch activity has been limited to two major events. With the weather so unreliable and wet throughout the summer our annual BBQ was in doubt right up to a few days before it was due to take place. But with the Almighty on our side a window of warm (even hot) weather came to the rescue and we were able to go ahead as planned. With plenty of help from branch members the garden was prepared in two days and Sunday dawned warm and bright. As usual, Tony Manly our resident Chef was at the controls of the BBQ and produced a superb meal. Fifty-four members and guests attended and we were particularly pleased to see Mrs Sally Wilson with us once again. We also had Mr Harold Covington with us for the first time. Harold was a member of the 1st Parachute Squadron during the war and served with another of our branch members from 1st Sqn, Harold Padfield. It was only due to a chance meeting with Steve Stephenson in Salisbury that he heard about the AEA and has now become a member of our branch. Unfortunately Norman Penny who would have liked to attend was unable to do so because of mobility problems. A raffle was held and as all the prizes were donated a good sum of money was raised and has helped swell the branch coffers. In the absence of Wally Clift, John Smith organised the raffle ably assisted by April and Alexandra Ross, the children of Major and Mrs Frazer Ross.

Forty-seven branch members and wives/partners made the long journey to Harrogate for the AGM/Reunion of the AEA held in Harrogate north Yorkshire. Harrogate is probably the most beautiful location that we have held the AGM since the association was formed eighteen years ago. The hotel is located only a short walk to the main shopping centre and the world renowned "Aunt Betty's Tea-rooms". Also it is only a short drive from Harrogate to the location of the TV soap "Emmerdale Farm." A good number of the wives were able to enjoy a coach trip out to the location on a beautiful Autumn day and see the Yorkshire Dales at their best as the leaves on the trees turn to their most brilliant before shedding for the winter.

The hotel was first class and the organisation of the whole weekend was a great credit to the Yorkshire Branch under the Chairmanship of Bill Rudd MBE. With his organising committee the weekend went off without a hitch and many friendships were re-kindled with people not seen for many years. The longest journey made to attend the re-union was that of George and Rene Jones and their daughter Lesley all the way from their home in Perth Australia, and Dave Norminton over from Spain. The standard has now been re-set and it will be a hard act to follow for future organisers.

Congratulations to John and Glenda Smith on becoming grandparents for the third time. Their daughter Fiona who lives in Australia gave birth to a third son whom they have named Freddy

Our commiseration's to Derek Taylor and his family for the loss of Mrs Margaret Taylor who died suddenly and unexpectedly in October. All members of the Aidershot Branch and all those in the AEA who knew her will sadly miss the bubbly Margaret.

We continue to meet in the Potters International Hotel every third Sunday on alternate months. Our next meeting is to be held on Sunday 16 December 1100hrs for 1130hrs start. Anyone in our catchment area is welcome to attend either as a guest or a potential member of the branch.

## Chatham

### Eric Blenkinsop

Well hello again and no sooner have we met the August issue deadline than we are scribing to meet the December issue.

July 7th Keith King's 60th birthday party. This was not a branch function but as we were all invited and given Keith's involvement in branch activities it merits inclusion.

Unfortunately not many of the branch members were able to attend but it was good to see Frank & Mary Ryan and Mick Fisher in attendance. There were many there from far afield, Louis Gallagher, Barney Rooney, Peter Sudnick and many others. It was a great evening with Keith leading the musical accompaniment and with the guys around him obviously reliving musical evenings (for want of a more appropriate phrase) from days long past. Sue with lots of other ladies were playing "back up" in the kitchen, what else! A great party Keith and Sue.

On then to our July branch meeting. A big welcome to the new RSM Steve Lomas ex 9 Sqn who invited us all to attend the band concert in the mess anteroom, which coincided with our meeting. So those that attended took up the invite and we thoroughly enjoyed a most unusual and amusing presentation. The evening's scenario was built around the RSM's course, which was taking place.

Well we were given a bumper treat, first drinks were on the mess and then we had the pleasure of witnessing six of the RSM's cavorting to the music of "Old Macdonald had a Farm" for all of 15 minutes.

Great stuff — A great evening and yes we did have a meeting despite all of the fervour. Oh, and it was the band of the Royal Corps of Signals as the RE band was not available.

Sunday 9th September - Double Hills. Several of us attended from the branch and it was as always very special.

The weather was superb but somewhat too hot for those officiating or in uniform. It was wonderful to have the Midsomer Norton and Radstock Silver Band in attendance again after an absence of several years.

It was a joy also to see Tom Carpenter accompanied by George Barrett who were able to be there, as, being brought forward the ceremony did not clash with Arnhem or Donington. Finally of course, our own Brig John Hooper was there to take the salute. We look forward now to our main event in 2008.as follows: The Branch Annual John

Rock Dinner Night on Saturday 21st June at the King Charles Hotel Chatham. A tribute to Lt Col John F Rock RE Founder of Airborne Forces (Military.) Also those courageous Sappers of Kent Fortress RE and their link with Air Troop RE in those early days of the Airborne Engineer. Our Guests of Honour are, Lt Col P H (Jock) and Mrs Helen Brazier.

So as we sign off, sufficient to say that by the time that you read this we shall have had a wonderful time in Harrogate.

### **Stop Press: Harrogate AGM / Reunion**

Grand traditional hotel, well organised without too much fuss and so handy for the shopping centre. All credit to Bill and the Yorkshire Branch.

## Yorkshire

### Bill Rudd, Chairman

The Branch continues to flourish in what has been a very busy period since our last article. Our visit to Arnhem in Sept 07 was a most enjoyable success; this is well documented by me in this issue. Whilst on this subject we intend to arrange a visit in Sept 09, this being the 65th Anniversary. Arrangements have to made now, any members of the Association who wish to join us are more than welcome, depending on the response we will arrange a coach, accommodation (Hotel) will be arranged by our Dutch friends, please ring Bill Rudd on Ripon 01765—607898 a.s.a.p.

Our meetings continue to be well attended, but as always we could do with recruiting some new faces. For those who have to travel we offer free accommodation, breakfast and lunch on the day of the meeting, and most important, a friendly atmosphere of Airborne family. I know that there are many out there within shooting distance, so come on lads, showyourface and do the business! It's there for you.

The highlights of this period, firstly our most enjoyable visit for the Arnhem Pilgrimage in September, we thank our Dutch friends for carrying out most of the arrangements, no camping this year! A very nice hotel and we look forward to September 2008. Our highlight of the year has got to be our A.G.M. in Harrogate arranged by the branch.

We thank all members, families and friends who turned out to support this very important event. Most of us are well aware of the large volume of work that goes into such a weekend and it was a pleasure to see all the smiling faces leaving on Sunday morning well satisfied. It is most difficult to please everyone, sorry about the roast potatoes, which somebody complained, had been over cooked! The true friendship of airborne friends more than made up for any shortfall on the food side!

Christmas is now only weeks away and our Xmas Lunch will be held as usual in the Unicorn Hotel on Saturday 15th December, meeting at 1200hrs, please book in with me ASP. Branch members and myself have just returned from South Tyneside after a memorable Remembrance weekend arranged by our Geordie friends. The weekend programme included lunch and drinks in the Mayors parlour where we had a pleasant meeting with there local MP. Lastly, on behalf of myself and the members of the Yorkshire Branch may I wish you all a joyous Xmas and a Prosperous New Year.

## Membership Report

**Steve "Billy" Morris MSM-Membership Secretary**

**We welcome to the "Airborne Engineers Association" the following new members:**

Mark Gilley	9 Para Sqn RE	2003 - still serving
Brian (Ginge) Lincoln	9 Para Sqn RE	
Scott Lovegrove (Sgt)	9 Para Sqn / 51 Para Sqn RE	2005 - still serving
Darren Jones (Sgt)	9 Para Sqn RE	2006 - still serving
Garry Mountcastle (LCpl)	9 Para Sqn RE	2001 - still serving
Philip Foskett	9 Para Sqn RE / 22 SAS	1985 - 1991
Craig Heggie	216 Para Sqn / 9 Para Sqn RE	2004 - still serving
Liam Middleton	9 Para Sqn RE	2006 - still serving
Steven Whitcombe	9 Para Sqn RE 2002	2002 - still serving
Arun Cofax (Lcpl)	9 Para Sqn RE	2004 - still serving
Luke Roberts (Lcpl)	9 Para Sqn RE	2002 - still serving
Matthew Morgan (Lcpl)	9 Para Sqn RE	2005 - still serving
Stefan Gloyn (Lcpl)	9 Para Sqn RE	2006 - still serving
Terry Flaherty	9 Para Sqn RE	2006 - still serving
Jim Panniers (SSgt)	9 Para Sqn RE	1996 - still serving
Billy Forrester (Sgt)	9 Para Sqn RE	1995 - still serving
Ian Leeming (Lcpl)	9 Para Sqn RE	2001 - still serving
Colin Birkenshaw	9 Para Sqn RE	1979 - 1985
Maj Kevin Copsey	OC 9 Para Sqn RE	2006 - still serving
Robert Gravenor	131 Para Engr Regt /131 Indep Para Sqn	1962 - 1974
Mark Donnell	9 Para Sqn RE	1986 - 1993
Daniel Flounders	51 Para Sqn RE	2003 - still serving
Philip Askey	9 Para Sqn RE	2004 - still serving
Joshua Boggi	9 Para Sqn RE	2004 - still serving
Gordon Nicklin	131 Cdo Sqn RE (V)	1983 - 2004
Gordon Greenwood	9 Para Sqn RE	1981 - 1988
Gareth Shepherd	9 Para Sqn RE	2000 - 2006
Paul Garner (Sgt)	51 Para Sqn RE	2001 - 2007
Kieran Dale (Sgt)	9 Para Sqn RE	2006 - still serving
Steve Brooks (Lcpl)	9 Para Sqn / 51 Para Sqn RE	2003 - still serving
Norman Covington	1 <sup>st</sup> Para Sqn RE /1 <sup>st</sup> Airborne Sqn RE	1943 - 1947
Peter Connelly (Sgt)	7 RHA / 23 Engr Regt (Air Asslt)	1993 - still serving
Liam Gray	9 Para Sqn RE	2006 - still serving
Greg Sorby (Lcpl)	51 Para Sqn RE	2003 - still serving
Robert Williams (Sgt)	9 Para Sqn / 51 Para Sqn RE	1996 - still serving
Ian (Stumpy) Campbell	9 Para Sqn RE	1973 - 1979
Mark (Jonah) Jones	9 Para Sqn RE	1979 - 1986

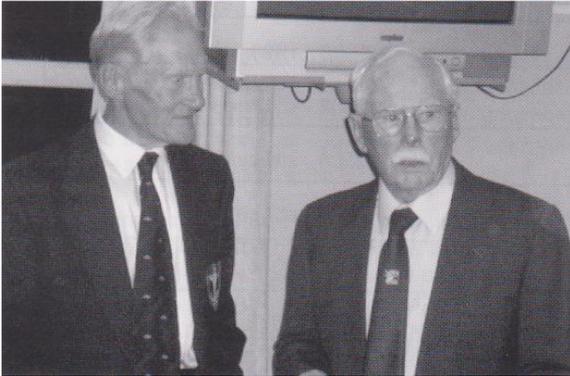
## Rogues Gallery



**Reg Grantham, Dave Leibrick, Mick Stewart, Bruce Dixon, Dave Richards & Mick West - August 2007**



**John Ferry, Jonah Jones & Pete Duffield August 2007**



**Norman Swift & Ron (Pinkie) White 1st Para Sqn Reunion - Donington 2007**



**'Myra' Hindley, (Tom Finney in background), Sqn chef & 'Fitzy' Fitzsimons - August 2007**

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## Mystery Coach Trip

**Pat Henderson**

During the Harrogate reunion weekend, a coach trip was organised to occupy the ladies and a few gentlemen while the majority of the Association members attended their AGM meeting, (and no doubt partake in a few pints of the local brew!). The intended trip was to visit some of the lovely parts of Yorkshire, taking in the magnificent scenic views to the final destination of the lovely village of "Emmerdale". Unfortunately during our excursion we appeared to deviate from the intended route, and whether the coach driver lost HER way, the plot or something, but we had an unscheduled whistle tour of a sewage farm!

You couldn't make it up!



**Don Newman, Bill Rudd & Benny Benson-way back when?**

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## Obituaries



**SSgt Peter John Guerin.**  
**17th October 1944 - 24th October 2007.**

Such was his determination to join 9 Squadron, Pete Guerin reverted to the rank of Sapper, passed 'P' Company and was in time to take part in the 'Ex Larchpole' exercise in Kenya in 1969.

A couple of tours in Northern Ireland, a host of exercises and a construction project in Canada followed during the next three years throughout which Pete proved himself to be the steady, entirely reliable, 'good hand' that he became famous for as he rose through the NCO ranks.

He left The Squadron in December 1972 as a Lance Corporal and went to the Infantry Battle School in Brecon where two years excellent work saw him promoted to Corporal on posting to 28 Regiment in Hameln. These days we hear a lot about 'tour intervals' but, then, the phrase had not been invented and, only six weeks after completing a Northern Ireland tour, he was posted to Osnabruck and told he was going straight back to Ireland.

Promotion to Sergeant softened the blow a bit but, as was his way, Pete accepted it phlegmatically and took the inevitable domestic disruption in his stride. In 1979 he was delighted, finally, to put Germany behind him and get back to 'airborne' soldiering when he was posted to JATE in Brize Norton where he spent a happy and fruitful year becoming acquainted with all manner of air-transportable (and droppable) kit, an experience that was to prove an excellent grounding for his return to The Squadron in 1980 as 2 Troop SSgt. Again, his reputation for being steady, unflappable and focused was enhanced as, patiently and with unfailing good humour, he provided the calming influence among his brood of irrepressible young 'pups'.

In April 1982 his troop was warned at short notice to accompany 2 PARA as the Battalion Group prepared to sail South for the campaign to regain the Falkland Islands.

Coming at such a relatively late stage in his career (he had two years left to serve) Pete might have been forgiven for seeking to avoid such an active and challenging deployment. However, never one to shirk his duty, he stepped up to the mark and acquitted himself with that calm, resigned good humour for which he was well known.

Pete spent his last two years in the Corps with the TA in Hull and, having completed 22 years service, he retired in 1984. Never one to sit still for long, he spent the next 18 months working for Hygena in Scunthorpe where he was commended for his complete reliability and begged to stay longer. However, he felt the pull of uniformed service and, in 1986 he joined the Prison Service where he served with honour for the next nineteen years before, once again, retiring. Having, by this time moved his base from Wiltshire to Lincolnshire, Pete had no thoughts of gently tending his roses and he seized the opportunity to work as the emergency response ambulance driver at RAF's Cranwell and Barkston, a job he enjoyed until shortly before his untimely death.

Pete was always proud of the service he had given during his life and none more so than his time as SSgt of 2 Troop 9 Parachute Squadron. In August 2007 he attended the Troop reunion and was looking forward to many more such occasions when, tragically, he was diagnosed with a brain tumour in September. A successful operation to remove this was, sadly, followed quite quickly by Meningitis and he died from this infection on 24th October. Pete is survived by his wife, Judith and his son, Matthew who were joined by his many friends from his three principal professions for a moving service at Grantham Crematorium on 5th November. A faithful and dependable servant sadly missed.

**Don Pow** - passed away at the age of 87 years on 28th October 2007. An Airborne Sapper Sergeant in 261 Fd Park Coy ( 261 Airborne Squadron RE) & 9th Field Coy after 261 was disbanded he was Orderly Sergeant and close colleague throughout the war with his OC, the late Major John Chivers MBE 261 Fd Park Coy RE. Don was a Bathonian, as were many that served in 261 at the time.

When Double Hills Memorial commenced in the middle 70's, Don Pow who was a distinguished MOD servant after the war, serving in Hong Kong for some of that service, he gave terrific support to Double Hills. With all his many 261 Fd Park Coy colleagues and friends he regularly attended the annual event.

Don served in N Africa, Sicily, Italy, N W Europe and Norway, but did not go to Arnhem....but was responsible for the planning and organisation in sending a small detachment of O R's under Lt Skinner who was later killed in a battlefield atrocity.

Don will be sadly missed by his family and friends.

**Alan Bevan** died on Thursday 14th June. Alan lived in Ferndown and joined the REA Branch in April last year.

Three months later he was diagnosed as having a serious lung condition and was unable to attend further Branch meetings. Alan served in the Corps for six years from 1953 to 1959, most of this time with 9 Indep Para Sqn RE. He held the General Service Medal, with Near East and Cyprus clasps. His funeral took place on 26th June."

**Steve Collins** - 24418683 Ex Cpl Steve Collins passed away in his hometown of Sittingborne, Kent on 12th August 2007 aged 48. His funeral was held in Bobbing crematorium in Kent and was attended by many former and serving 9 Para Sqn personnel. Steve had been suffering from a brain tumour for a long time, having treatments in various hospitals in an attempt to fight it. He took great joy in informing everybody about how his recovery was going and carried his "hospital laser mask" around various events within the Squadron as a trophy.

Steve served twice in Support Troop within the Squadron, interspersed with tours of duty in Hameln and Osnabruck.

During his time away he would try desperately to be posted back to airborne duties. When due to be promoted to Corporal one Christmas he infuriated most people by telling every body he would not accept it unless it involved a return to the Squadron.

He was a one-man recruitment team during his time away, as he enjoyed proving the calibre of an airborne soldier, in all aspects, to anybody who would participate, watch or listen. This normally ended up with another person signing on the dotted line to attempt the course. During his time in the Squadron Steve carried out tours in Kenya and Belize twice.

Steve left the Squadron and the Army prematurely in 1990 and he always regretted it. So much so that this led to him returning for all meetings and reunions he could in Aidershot and to become an active member of the Airborne Engineers Association. He loved every part of that also bringing his boundless energy to the Chatham branch organising many events and attending all functions he could around the country.

Steve's attitude of enjoying life to the full was an inspiration to all that knew him and he will be greatly missed by family, friends and colleagues.

**Thomas Charles Brinkman**  
*by Ron Day*

Tom died in September at the age of 75 years following a harrowing illness. He contracted cancer which, developed from facial melanoma, causing him considerable suffering.

This he bore with great courage to the end; typical of the man.

Tom arrived in 9 Squadron while it was stationed in Aidershot between 1949 and 1951, prior to leaving for Cyprus in that year. He was taken on the strength of 1 Troop, then commanded by Captain Pat Munro ably assisted by Steve Crane, the Troop Sergeant.

By the time the Squadron arrived in Cyprus, Tom had become a member of my section. He was allocated the duty of section Bren gunner where he showed great aptitude for handling the weapon in addition to all the other well-learned sapper skills. As the heaviest loaded section member he seemed to cope with the long route marches the squadron undertook as part of our fitness training at the time.

Tom was well liked and respected as a sapper in the troop.

Always pleasant and very capable. Definitely the type it was a pleasure to soldier with. Utterly reliable in all that he was tasked with, and generally to be considered a stalwart member of the troop. I am not aware if he was ever offered promotion, but his attributes were such, that the troop "missed out" in not appointing him as an NCO.

Tom served as a regular on the then, 5 and 7-year engagement. Hence, on the Squadron's return to the UK in 1954 it was time for him to leave H.M. Forces. However, his time as a civilian was short lived. The Suez Emergency in 1956 saw Tom "sent for" from his Reserve Service. He became part of the seaborne force of Operation Musketeer, which of course, did not after all, see any action.

Therefore, Tom, demobbed again, shortly commenced, sometime in 1957, a career in the Fire Service in the Bristol area, actually at Avonmouth. His career lasted until about 1987, by which time he had "clocked up" some 30 years pensionable service. Now, retiring at the age of 55 years, he and Yvonne were living in Portishead up to the time of his demise.

Tom served the AEA to great effect as Chairman of the South West Branch. In the year 2000 he was further voted in from "the floor" as Vice President of the Association at the Blackpool venue. A significant servant of the Association he drove for many miles to undertake tasks, seemingly often with little regard or thanks, except self-satisfaction. Always apparently available to help out and carry the standard at distances remote from home. I well recall him arriving at Brompton Barracks church for a standard dedication ceremony several years ago now. As usual, "right on the dot".

His funeral was held at the Bristol Crematorium on the 14th September 2007. The chapel was filled to overflowing for the occasion. An excellent "turn out" from association members, and also representatives from 9 Squadron, 23 Engineer Regiment (Air Assault), who had travelled from Woodbridge in Suffolk. As these persons were due to fly, with the Squadron to Kenya on the following day, their presence was most appreciated. Also in attendance were Fire Brigade persons, complete with fire appliance. An impressive gathering as a send off for dear Tom.

Sleep well old friend.

## Last Post

**John Minter CBE** passed away 29 July 2007 **Albert Ball** ex 1 Para Sqn passed away 27 September 07

**Lt Col Ifor (Taff) Anthony** passed away 20 July 2007

**Bob Kennedy (Bob the Dog)** ex 9 Para Sqn passed away 1 September 2007. Bob's obituary will appear in the April edition of the Journal.

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# Association Shop

Ray Coleman

Description	Price	P&P (UK Post Rate)
<b>Ties</b>		
Association Ties (Pegasus logo)	£15-00	£1-00
Anniversary Ties ( Wings & Pegasus logo)	£15-00	£1-00
9 Para Sqn Ties (Wings logo)	£15-00	£1-00
Bow Ties (Pegasus & wings logo)	£9- 50	£1-00
<b>Badges</b>		
Association Blazer Badges	£14-00	£1-00
9 Squadron Blazer Badges	£14-00	£1-00
Lapel Wings - Blue Enamel S/C	£3- 50	£1-00
<b>Clothing</b>		
Association Jumpers (sizes 38 - 48) Maroon or Blue with Pegasus logo embroidered 'Airborne Engineers	£25-00	£3-10
Association Sweatshirts - Maroon with blue logo - Small/med/large or X large	£16-50	£3-10
Association Polo Shirts - Fred Perry style - Maroon or blue with Pegasus logo - small/med/large or X large	£15-50	£2-50
Association 'T' Shirts - Maroon with logo - small/med/large/X large	£9-00	£1-80
Association Shower proof Fleece in Maroon or Blue -with embroidered 'Airborne Engineers' logo - Med/Large/X large	£28-00	£3-00
Baseball Cap (in blue or maroon) - with combined Pegasus & Wings crest	£7-00	£1-00
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Association Shield	£18-00	£2-00
"The 9th " (1787 - 1960) by the late Tom Purves	£7-00	£3-80
Association Cuff Links (slightly smaller than lapel badge)	£8-50	£1-60
Silk Cravats (Wings & Pegasus logo)	£17-50	£1-00
Association Cumberbunds (Wings & Pegasus logo)	£17-50	£1-00
Ladies Association long Polyester Scarves (Pegasus logo)	£15-00	£1-00
Association Directory	£5-00	£2-50
Association Key Ring (Pegasus Logo)	£2-00	£1-00
Association Fridge Magnet (Pegasus Logo)	£2-50	£1-00
Association Paperweight (Pegasus Logo)	£5-00	£2-00

Would overseas members please send cheques in pounds sterling, with a little extra to cover postage, from your local bank or an international money order from the Post Office. Cheques should be made payable to:

**"Airborne Engineers Association"**

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