

THE POSTHORN

Addition 29

November 2014



The **First World War** or the **Great War**, was a global war centred in Europe that began on 28 July 1914 and lasted until 11 November 1918. More than 9 million combatants and 7 million civilians died as a result of the war, a casualty rate exacerbated by the belligerents' technological and industrial sophistication, and tactical stalemate. It was one of the deadliest conflicts in history, paving the way for major political changes, including revolutions in many of the nations involved. The war drew in all the world's economic great powers, which were assembled in two opposing alliances: the Allies (based on the Triple Entente of the United Kingdom, France and the Russian Empire) and the Central Powers of Germany and Austria-Hungary. Although Italy had also been a member of the Triple Alliance alongside Germany and Austria-Hungary, it did not join the Central Powers, as Austria-Hungary had taken the offensive against the terms of the alliance. These alliances were reorganised and expanded as more nations entered the war: Italy, Japan and the United States joined the Allies, and the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria the Central Powers. Ultimately, more than 70 million military personnel, including 60 million Europeans, were mobilised in one of the largest wars in history.

The immediate trigger for war was the 28 June 1914 assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, by Yugoslav nationalist Gavrilo Princip in Sarajevo. This set off a diplomatic crisis when Austria-Hungary delivered an ultimatum to the Kingdom of Serbia, and international alliances formed over the previous decades were invoked. Within weeks, the major powers were at war and the conflict soon spread around the world.

On 28 July, the Austro-Hungarians declared war on Serbia and subsequently invaded. As Russia mobilised in support of Serbia, Germany invaded neutral Belgium and Luxembourg before moving towards France, leading Britain to declare war on Germany. After the German march on Paris was halted, what became known as the Western Front settled into a battle of attrition, with

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Forthcoming Events

**Annual Dinner & Dance RE
PCS Reunion**
4th – 6th April 2015

**75th Anniversary of
Dunkirk 26 May - 3 June
2015**

a trench line that would change little until 1917. Meanwhile, on the Eastern Front, the Russian army was successful against the Austro-Hungarians, but was stopped in its invasion of East Prussia by the Germans. In November 1914, the Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers, opening fronts in the Caucasus, Mesopotamia and the Sinai. Italy joined the Allies in 1915 and Bulgaria joined the Central Powers in the same year, while Romania joined the Allies in 1916, and the United States joined the Allies in 1917.

The war approached a resolution after the Russian government collapsed in March 1917, and a subsequent revolution in November brought the Russians to terms with the Central Powers. On 4 November 1918, the Austro-Hungarian empire agreed to an armistice. After a 1918 German offensive along the western front, the Allies drove back the Germans in a series of successful offensives and began entering the trenches. Germany, which had its own trouble with revolutionaries, agreed to an armistice on 11 November 1918, ending the war in victory for the Allies.

By the end of the war, four major imperial powers—the German, Russian, Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires—ceased to exist. The successor states of the former two lost substantial territory, while the latter two were dismantled. The maps of Europe and Southwest Asia were redrawn, with several independent nations restored or created. During the Paris Peace conference, The Big Four imposed their terms in a series of treaties. The League of Nations was formed with the aim of preventing any repetition of such an appalling conflict. This aim, however, failed with weakened states, renewed European nationalism and the German feeling of humiliation contributing to the rise of fascism. All of these conditions eventually led to World War II.



Royal Mail played a significant role in the First World War as part of the General Post Office.

Our people were integral to the war effort; from distributing recruitment forms for men to enlist, to serving in battle at the Western Front, and ensuring the safe delivery of millions of letters to soldiers in the trenches.

There role in the First World War

They released 75,000 of our own staff to fight in the war. The GPO had its own regiment, the Post Office Rifles, which comprised around 12,000 employees. Like many other regiments, the Post Office Rifles were stationed at the Western Front and were involved in many battles. They fought at The Somme and Passchendaele, Belgium, and suffered tremendous losses. More than half of their fighting force was lost at the Battle of Wurst Farm Ridge in September 1917. Of the 12,000 GPO employees in the Post Office rifles, 1,800 were killed and 4,500 wounded.

The Post Office Rifles Cemetery is just outside the village of Festubert, France, and contains the graves of only twenty-six identified POR men but has over ten times as many unnamed tombstones dedicated simply to 'A Soldier of the Great War'. At least four of our former employees are known to have been Victoria Cross recipients, for valour "in the face of the enemy".

They were Sgt Alfred Knight, Sgt Albert Gill, Major Henry Kelly and Sgt John Hogan.



How letters reached the Western Front



The GPO worked tirelessly to ensure men safely received mail on the front line.

In December 1914, a special sorting office – the Home Depot – was built to deal with mail to the troops. It was constructed in Regent's Park in London and covered five acres. It was said to be the largest wooden structure in the world at the time. With 2,500 employees, mostly female, the depot processed letters and parcels bound for the troops. At its peak 12 million letters and 1 million parcels were passing through the Home Depot each week. The easiest way to transport mail was by sea, but the dangers of enemy ships and mines meant that from 1915 to 1917 mail was transported to many of the war zones overland. In 1917 convoys were introduced to protect the ships and post was once again

transported by sea.

Once post sent from the Home Depot arrived overseas it became the responsibility of the Army Post Office until it was delivered to the postal orderly of each unit. Despite the volume, the service was highly efficient – on average it took only two days for a letter from Britain to reach the Western Front (unless it was held up by the censor). Trench warfare also meant that British positions at the front remained fairly static and this enabled a comprehensive network of lorries and carts to develop for written communications and parcels between units at the front. It was normal practice in the trenches for each days post to be handed out with the evening meal by ration parties. They would also collect the men's letters and postcards for home.



Letters and parcels in numbers

- In 1917 over 19,000 mailbags crossed the channel each day with half a million bags conveyed in the run up to Christmas.
- Outbound letters to soldiers peaked at more than 12 million a week early in the first quarter of 1918.
- Outbound parcels soared to just over a million a week by the spring of 1917.

Supporting the war effort



Postal communications played a vital role in the war effort. The GPO set up telecommunications between Headquarters and the front line. It also ran an internal-army postal system.

Telegraphs and telephones were the main means of communication between the front line and Headquarters during battle. Over 11,000 GPO engineers worked to make this possible throughout the war, using the skills they had acquired as civilians. Writing and receiving letters and parcels were a vital part of sustaining morale and overcoming the boredom, which was a feature of trench life. Many were dedicated correspondents – infantryman Reg Sims, for example, wrote home: 'in exactly twelve months I have received 167 letters besides paper and parcels and have written 242 letters.'

Royal Mail and Post Office Limited are entrusted with the care of around 300 war memorials commemorating those who served in the war. Many of the memorials were established after the war, and feature the names of postal staff who fought for their country.

As part of the company's centenary commemorations, a database of all these memorials has been published online. The database can be seen at www.royalmailmemorials.com. The website provides searchable information about each individual memorial.

All pictures by kind permission of The British Postal Museum and Archive.



Whilst visiting Nottingham Castle I saw these two letters written by young children about the first world war and thought how poignant. So I asked the Museum permission to use them in the Posthorn.

Hannah Mitchell Year 9 Garibaldi College Nottingham.

Day 126 in the trenches

Dear Diary,
Nothing happened today.

Day 127 in the trenches

Dear Diary,
Nothing happened today either.

Day 128 in the trenches

Dear Diary,
I don't know why I even bother keeping this diary. Nothing ever happens and the whole trench is just overcome with boredom. Day after day, we do everything we can to keep the morale up but the mind-numbing, tedious trenches are starting to ebb away at our very souls. Well that was very deep and meaningful wasn't it? These trenches must be getting to me.

Day 130 in the trenches

Dear Diary,
I wish I could go back to the boredom of 2 days ago. Yesterday was the worst day of my life. We were told to attack and all around me all I could see was my friends; the people I had spent all those mind-numbing days with were being struck down around me. I wish I could have stopped to save them but I knew I had to try and survive, for my family if for no one else. And now I'm sat here, back in the trenches, counting the empty spaces around me and wondering how we could ever have wished for something to happen when now all I am wishing for is to go back in time and stop yesterday from happening. All I can hope for is that someone found my friends and saved them. That hope is the only thing that is stopping me from utterly losing my mind.

Day 133 in the trenches

Dear Diary,
I know I haven't written in a few days but so much has been happening. We were told to return home as the war was over. We are supposed to celebrate but how can I? How can I celebrate when I know my friends, my companions are lying cold and dead in the mud? I don't know what I am going to do with my life. My wife and my family, they don't understand. They think I should be happy but they don't know the feeling of guilt, the feeling that you should have saved your friends and couldn't. I know that the memories of my time in the trenches will haunt me for all my life. No matter what I do I'll never be able to escape from them. Everyone says I shouldn't feel guilty but I do and nothing will ever change that. All I can try and do is live my life enough for all the men that died and all the men that I couldn't save. Yes, there's no point moping around; that isn't what they'd want me to do. I think I'll stop keeping this diary as well – too many bad memories. This is the start of my new life. But I won't forget what happened in the trenches. I'll remember but instead of making me sad it will remind me why I should live a full and happy life. Okay then this is my last entry. Goodbye diary and thank you.

I am a Soldier

I am a soldier going to war,
forehead sweating,
nose twitching.

I am a soldier travelling to war,
full of confidence,
full of pride.

I am a soldier in the heart of war,
eager to fire,
scared to kill.

I am a soldier running away in a war,
feet aching,
heart pounding.

I am a soldier ducking for cover in a war
calling for reinforcements,
hoping the tide will turn.

I am one of the soldiers who has won ^{the war}
faces lighting up,
poppies growing?

(I have received an E-Mail from a Mr Neil Howard from the Long Marston Military Railway)

A quick note to introduce Long Marston Military Railway and to ask if there might be a useful discussion about an alliance between us and PCS Branch. There is a long relationship between RE (ROD) and PCS, especially round the Berliner, and one of our projects is to buy the sole surviving Berliner coach, disgracefully neglected in a museum in Hull, restore and use it at LMMR. The ambition is to create the only Military Railway Museum in the world. Our Mission is to preserve the Kit, Culture and Capability of military Railways despite disbandment of the trade by RLC in March. As you know, military Railways heritage is in RE.

Disbandment of British Forces Germany.

There is a rail archive in the care of the G4 Rail Executive at JHQ and we will work with the BFG and Allied Museum Berlin to ensure this is conserved and accessible. Efforts are also underway to bring home the remains of the BAOR C In C Command Train from a scrapyard in Belgium, to act as a Permanent Memorial to 21st Army Group, BAOR, and the occupation forces role in the rehabilitation of Germany to the human race.

Paper and Photographic archives

World War Two Railway Study Group have offered four qualified archivist/historians to manage and conserve the paper railway archives now at Long Marston, Bicester, and Grantham on a volunteer basis. The business plan for archive material includes exploiting what remains for educational and publication purposes and acting as a Portal to archives held in IWM, Army Museum, NRM Search Engine, Royal Engineers Museum Chatham, and RLC Museum as well as private collections.



Cold War Icon: The Berliner British Military Train's legendary dining car was bought to UK by RLC but got caught up in the Beverley Museum closure and now languishes, neglected, at Fort Paull, Hull. We will bring it to Long Marston and again offer meals and the Potsdam Port Ritual as well as teaching new generations about "The Wall"

Editor's note:

("To assist with Neil Howard request has anyone have Photo's, documents or any stories of the Berlin train and Posties involvement with it. Please forward any details to me and I will forward to Neil Howard)

A Blast from the Past Recruitment

ROYAL ENGINEERS



The new Army Pay is excellent (see examples overleaf). If you are unmarried, food, accommodation and laundry are FREE. Your pay is virtually POCKET MONEY. Don't forget you get at least 30 days' holiday a year on full pay with ration allowance. You also get three free railway warrants a year.

ALL THIS AND LEARNING A TRADE TOO

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE
ABOUT HOW TO BECOME

AN ADULT RECRUIT

or

AN APPRENTICE TRADESMAN

or

A JUNIOR LEADER

or

A JUNIOR TRADESMAN

IN THE ROYAL ENGINEERS

Write—or better still—call on your nearest Army Careers Information Office. The address is on the reverse side or FILL IN THIS FORM and send it to the address below.

TEAR OFF ALONG THIS LINE

ENQUIRY FOR ROYAL ENGINEERS

NAME

ADDRESS

AGE

SEND TO: The Commander, H.Q. Training Brigade, R.E., Aldershot, Hants., or to the Army Careers Information Office overleaf.

Your pay as a Royal Engineer

A soldier gets more than just his pay. All his working clothes, uniforms, etc., are issued free and many items are replaced free when they are worn out. He gets an allowance to help him buy the articles that are not replaced free.

Look below the double line for some of the extras.

Here are some examples of WEEKLY pay and allowances for Royal Engineers who have engaged for 6, 9 or 15 years with the colours. Pay went up on 1st April 1966.

BASIC PAY

A Recruit

If you have enlisted for 6 years £7 5 3 (up 19 3)
If you have enlisted for 9 years £9 3 9 (up £1 6 3)

PLUS EXTRAS BELOW

Trained Soldier earning BIII Trademan's rate of pay

Sapper (9 years) £10 4 9 (up £1 9 9)

PLUS EXTRAS BELOW

Corporal earning AII Trademan's rate of pay

Corporal (9 years) £13 11 3 (up £2 0 3)

PLUS EXTRAS BELOW

Sergeant earning AI Trademan's rate of pay

Sergeant (9 to 15 years) £18 5 9 (up £2 14 3)

PLUS EXTRAS BELOW

These are the EXTRAS:

If you are living in Barracks: *Free accommodation*
Free food

Parachute Pay

If you qualify as a Parachutist and join the Royal Engineers Parachute Squadron you get an extra £2 12 6

If you are married you get

Marriage Allowance

If you are under 21 £3 17 0

If you are over 21 and not occupying married quarters £4 18 0

If you are over 21 and occupying married quarters £3 17 0

If you are living with your family or on leave you get

Ration Allowance £2 10 2

You also receive a clothing allowance and may become eligible for children's education allowance, overseas allowance, etc.

~~Your nearest Army Careers Information Office is at:~~

WRITE TO:-

27 TRAINING REG.
1 TRAINING REGIMENT, R.E.,
SOUTHWOOD CAMP, COVE,
Nr. FARNBOROUGH, HANTS.

ERLO 119—4/66

The Forces Press (Nasfi), Crimea Road, Aldershot, Hants. B2538

(Contribution from Geoff Salmon)

(Or my training as a Troglodyte before my first Mediterranean cruise)



In 1958 I was a young Sapper not long out of training and stationed at Home Postal Depot Royal Engineers in London. The Depot was located in an underground garage directly opposite the old Knightsbridge Barracks. Our billets were large houses taken over the War office at the beginnings of hostilities.

The accommodation we used were: 1 Eaton Place, 56 Eaton Place, 64 Eaton Place (Sgts Mess) 48 Egerton Gardens and 8 Lennox Gardens (Officers mess). There were probably one or two others, I have forgotten about. The main other ranks accommodation was 17 Belgrave Square. This was just around the corner from St Georges Hospital which was opposite Hyde Park Corner. At this accommodation there were kitchens in the basement and dining areas on the ground floor with normal billets on the upper floors.

In August, I and five others were placed on a draft posting to GHQ Middle East Land Forces Fayed Egypt, MELP 17, with a ready to move date of 19th October 1953 (this was 2 days before my 18th Birthday). On about the 30th of October we were posted to transit accommodation- Goodge Street Assembly Centre.

Goodge Street Assembly Centre was built as an underground shelter for the people of London; this was one of eight deep underground facilities planned. Seven of which would follow the Northern Tube line. These were; Belsize Park, Camden Town, Goodge Street, Stockwell, Clapham North, Clapham Common and Clapham South. The last of the eight was on the Central Line at Chancery Lane.

Entrance to the shelters was via a circular concrete blockhouse concealing a life shaft around which wound a staircase. The blockhouse was built to prevent a repetition of the tragedy at Bank Underground Station. A bomb fell on the station and slid down the Escalator/Lift shaft before exploding on the platform killing 117 people.

The shelters were 100 feet underground and comprised of two tunnels running parallel to but slightly lower than, either side of both underground rail tunnels. Each was 1200 feet long and 16 feet 6 inches in diameter. Divided into upper and lower segments, Kitchen, Toilet and Medical facilities were provided. Interconnecting tunnels between the two gave inter-tunnel access without encroaching on the Underground rail system. The capacity was eventually decided to be 8000 people sleeping in three bunk beds.



Completed in 1942 Goodge Street was handed over to the Americans as Eisenhower's COSSAC Headquarters. Here it is believed most of the D- Day landings were planned. Goodge Street Underground shelter is now a deep storage resource and is named "The Eisenhower Centre".

It was not by accident that West Indian immigrants originally settled in the Brixton/Clapham area. On arriving on British shores they were moved from Southampton to London housed in deep shelter accommodation in Clapham South until they could find normal housing.

After the war the Goodge Street tunnels were used as an assembly area for troops leaving the country. For instance, all drafts for Egypt would be gathered in the bowels of the earth. When their Troopship was ready they would all be transported to Euston/Waterloo Station. There they would join a troop train for travel to Liverpool/Southampton docks for boarding their particular Ship.

On arrival the six of us were greeted by a Regimental Policeman who gave us our first piece of good news. The lift was only to be used for Senior NCOs and kit, (we were in Full Scale Marching Order with a kitbag plus a second kitbag issued for overseas travel kit and travel - there were no suitcases issued in those days). Happy to have divested ourselves of pouches, packs, straps and bags, we began our decent with a real feeling of adventure. No one had indicated how many steps we would have to merrily trip down. We should have been suspicious of the Regimental Policeman's huge grin when we set off.

After some 399 steps (Writers poetic licence) we collapsed in front of a booking-in desk to find our kit had arrived long before us and had been thrown in a tangled heap against a wall. The booking in Sergeant was not in the best of moods as he felt we had taken too long to descend. Easy for him to say as he always used the lift. We were allocated our beds and told where we could store our kit. Finding our beds we couldn't believe our eyes. The bunks were in tiers of three pushed against the curved tunnel walls. Lying in my bottom bunk I found it was almost impossible to turn over in bed, the middle bunk was so close above. Every few minutes there would be a roaring noise and the walls and bed frame would vibrate and shake as a tube train rattled past a few feet away.

The most outstanding memory after 60 years was the ambient aroma. This was unique to the British Army of the day - a mixture of stale urine, sweaty socks and boiled cabbage, not forgetting several hundred perspiring soldiers breaking wind. It was also very hot down there. My memory fails me regarding messing of toilet and washing arrangements. I am sure these would have been equally salubrious.

It was obvious to us that after two days of being put on general duties parties and finishing up on the wrong end of brooms and shovels we needed a rethink of our position. After dressing and breakfasting, checking Part 1 Orders to see if we were moving in the next 24hrs, our best interests would be served by leaving for the day.

After a weary climb back to the surface we would wander around London until lunchtime. Then we would make our way to 17 Belgrave Square and join the lunchtime queue. After eating we would make our way up to the accommodation find an empty bed and lie on it until teatime. Evening meal consumed we would go out on the town until 2359hrs curfew.

On the town - London Town - was nothing new to us! We had already been stationed in London for some time months, so the novelty had worn off. On top of that I lived only half a hour' bus ride away on a 134 bus to my home in Muswell Hill. The bus stop was right outside the Assembly Centre on Tottenham Court Road.

Our wages were a further restriction on or "living it up". As a regular soldier my pay was £2.9s (£2.45p). A national Serviceman lived on £1.8s (£1.40p) a week. These were gross amounts. You still had to pay your stamp (National Insurance) and any other amounts you wished to allocate such as savings or allowance home and of course barrack damages.

The highlight of our days on the town was a visit to Lyons Corner House for Milk and a Dash. This was a glass of milk with a dash of hot coffee for which we paid 4d (almost one and half new pence)' Hardly the lifestyle that would sweep a young lady off of her feet.

On the 3rd of November we found out that we would be leaving on the morning of the 4th en-route to Waterloo Station, Southampton, the Empire Ken and a 10 day Mediterranean cruise to Port Said. We had escaped!



As teenager youths our every thought was chasing girls! In fact my pal and I struck lucky on the evening of the 3rd and met two nice girls. That was the story of my life. I only every met nice girls when most other lads seemed to meet naughty ones. Life seemed so unfair. To be honest had I met a naughty girl I would not have known how to proceed. For that I still don't.

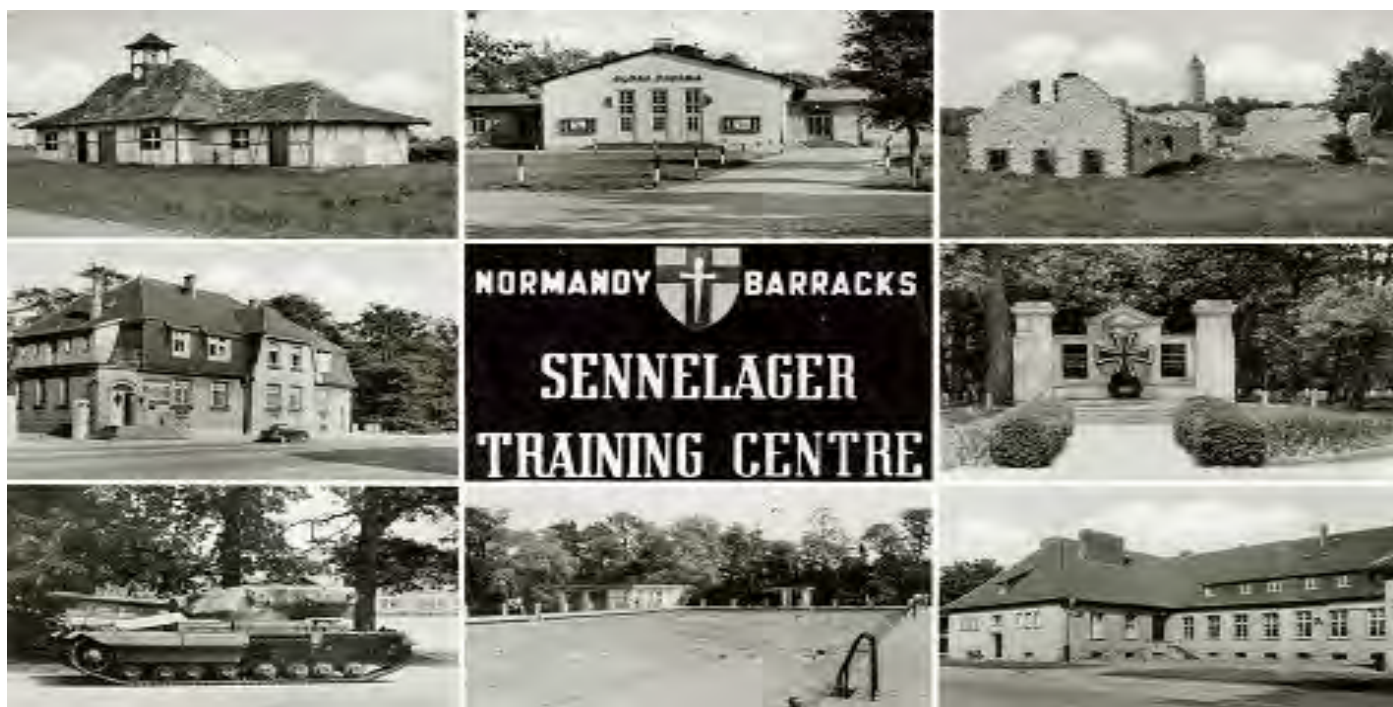
Back to our luck with the ladies. we were among the trees alongside Birdcage Walk kissing and cuddling when I glanced up and saw Big Bens clock face which showed 1130. Yelling to my pal we both ungallantly left the girls among the trees and raced up and across Horse Guards Parade through Whitehall, then to Trafalgar Square and round to Strand Underground Station. Down to the platforms and onto the first North bound train. At Goodge Street station we raced up the stairs and out to the street, racing the two hundred yards or so to the Assembly Centre entrance. Although we were about three minutes late the Regimental Policeman on duty decided not take any action. So ended my last night in London for a few years.

George Brett.

As a footnote, some two and half years later we noticed in the UK papers that Goodge Street Assembly Centre had been destroyed by fire on the 21st of May 1956. There was no loss of life - the residents escaped through emergency exits into the rail tunnels. Because the fire was so difficult to extinguish it was decided that the tunnels would no longer be used as accommodation. The cheers from those who had experienced Goodge Street reverberated around the world.

The Jewel of BAOR

George Brett - My Recollections 1972- 1975



SENNELAGER! That gem of BFPO's situated just outside Paderborn. It was housed in a two storey building just outside the gates of Sennelager Training Centre in an area known as the "STRIP".

The FPO utilised the ground floor and at one time the basement (for storage). The first floor contained several rooms off a central corridor (running parallel to the main road outside) at the end of which was a door with glass panels which opened into a cast iron platform and fire escape. This door was of course kept locked.

The upstairs rooms were used by me for accommodation on my arrival in Sennelager. I only used the sergeants mess for meals and social activity because I had a dog with me. We both lodged above the FPO quite comfortably until my family arrived after which I was allocated a married quarter. There had been some talk of converting the first floor into married quarters for the WO i/c. I was against this as the building was situated on a main road carrying heavy traffic between Paderborn and the Auto-bahn. I was worried about schoolchildren living there and the very heavy traffic just outside the front door.

Sennelager was the hidden jewel of BAOR. it was a NATO training area with huge amount of land. Not big enough for Artillery or Tanks training, it incorporated just about everything else. It also catered for about every sport the Army practised.

In one corner was a field which contained the Armies' only 18 hole golf course. The first 9 holes were on the edge of the sport field. The second 9 holes were cut through forest. The field had polo pitches, rugby pitches and football pitches. There was an Athletics field and of course a free fall parachute centre and aircraft grass strip. The area around this field was also used for the RAF Harrier exercises. Sennelager contained the BAOR School of Physical Training where classes were offered in numerous disciplines including Martial Arts and Athletics Training.

Behind the FPO just inside the camp perimeter was a Squash Court with Tennis Courts nearby. There were stables and the opportunity to take up riding, if that is what took your fancy. If you spoke nicely to the Dog School you may even have gone out into the woods with tracker dogs or see the training of Drug Dogs. Anything was possible in the Jewel of BAOR. As a last resort you could also go to work!

Outside the Camp/Barracks opposite the gates and the FPO was strip of shops. There were several bars and a night club and from 1974 there was even a Fish and Chip shop, opened by a former Catering Corps Sergeant .

It was sad the biggest complaint from soldiers was there was nothing to do!. It was infuriating to hear this complaint time and time again from soldiers. I don't think there was anywhere else with such diverse activities and disciplines to choose from the British Army.

I digress. Back to the FPO. It was the norm for the OC or 2 i/c to visit on a monthly basis to audit this offices account. There would also be surprise visits to make sure we hadn't all gone on holiday.

On one such visit the OC arrived on what must have been a Wednesday Afternoon, when the office was closed for sports afternoon. With only one man on duty and all stock locked in the safes. There was little left to do. We all know what happens to idle hands. With nothing to do in the office the OC decided to have a look upstairs. In one room I had been building parts for a Hovercraft and the room had one or two items of mine. The OC and the driver caught sight of a crossbow. It was decided to put it together, load it and try it out in the corridor. The bolt (arrow) available was not one with a sharp point but with a rubber knob on the end. On the trigger being pulled the bolt flew the length of the corridor, smashed through the glass and vanished into the woods beyond. It took half an hour of searching to find it again.

I was told by the OC later that it was the driver responsible. Then he owned up and admitted responsibility. The Ministry for Public, Building and Works were quick to see the broken window and asked for an explanation. I informed them that it was obviously youths throwing stones from the street. It was accepted and the window was repaired without cost to the office. Naughty boy Colonel Peter, but fun.

The OC used to make adverse comments about parachuting. Now Corporal Grundy had completed a Free Fall Course. I had attested a course but suffered knee injuries on two jumps and was forbidden to jump again by the M.O. We challenged the OC about this and said that if it was so easy why didn't he do it? We then obtained an application form, filled it in with his details and sent it to him in Hannover. The inference being put up or shut up! He put up! He completed the course and received a certificate showing 14 seconds of free fall. All I could think to say on my weekly Sitrep, when he was halfway through the course was:

" OC observed leaping upon Sennelager from a great height - Screaming"

DARTS

It was a lovely sunny afternoon - or was it raining? I can't remember. I do remember that it was Wednesday afternoon in 1968. Sports afternoon in Lubbecke Garrison. Our Chief Clerk, Cpl Taff Jones, had invited myself and the O.C. to the Corporals club for darts exhibition by a professional darts player from the U.K. I have no idea who it was but he was sponsored by a U.K. newspaper (The Daily Express) to tour B.A.O.R. entertaining the troops. After careful consideration the Boss and I leapt at the invitation.



The invite was 1440hrs for 1430hrs. Not wanting to appear pushy we didn't arrive until about 1403ish! We were surprised to find the room packed solid with people who had obviously drinking for an hour or two. Undeterred we did our best to catch up as quickly as possible! We were both in uniform and stood out from the crowd as the only SNCO and Officer in that melee.

At the dartboard were two men who by their sensorial styles were obviously not Military. one was sober and smiling while he tried to placate the other for some reason. The second man was apparently the darts expert. He was taking on all comers at 101 open start and a double finish. He gave all challengers a 50 lead. Although he lost 2 legs he won more than 20 before calling a halt to the games for a rest.

On resumption his handler said that some exhibition darts would be demonstrated. Eagerly we all crowded closer around the dartboard. At this juncture the dart player asked for a volunteer. Not wishing to show off everyone took a step or two

back. With no one rushing to be his dummy - sorry volunteer - he looked around with his bloodshot eyes, took another large swig from his Bacardi bottle. He stopped looking around and pointed into the crowd " Your an officer aren't you ?" He shouted " Just the man I need".

The drunken darts aficionado pulled our reluctant boss, who was protesting most wildly as he struggled to release himself, over to the dartboard. The crowd started baying for blood. Any ones blood would do but that of a Major would be a wonderful bonus. Pulling his victim exactly where he wanted him he placed a cigarette between the Boss's lips. The darts man lined himself up on the Oche and discovered that he was holding an empty bottle. He yelled for a replacement and got quite loud when was not produced immediately.

In the meanwhile his target - sorry his Major - was getting restless and shuffling around nervously having removed the cigarette from his mouth. A bottle of Bacardi appeared and the seal was broken and the bottle opened. A very large swig was taken and the man returned his attention to his volunteer. " How do you expect me to be accurate" he demanded, "If you keep moving around?" He repositioned the Boss, took the cigarette and broke it in half before replacing it between this volunteer's lips!

Taking practice aim he said "He's not right I still need to make adjustments." He then walked forward and removed the half cigarette. He offered the Boss a swig from his bottle, which the Boss refused (I think). He was then moved about a little until the thrower was completely happy with his position. The half cigarette was broken from the tip which was then placed between the Major's lips. The Boss's head was positioned to the thrower's satisfaction and he returned to the Oche. Taking a throwing stance he checked that all was in order before throwing his darts onto a table. Reaching into a bag he produced a fistful of six inch nails.

"I'm ready" he said to his minder who then produced a black bandana and commenced to blindfold the thrower. A hush settled over the assembled people and one could hear the occasional whispered "Oh no!" Our Boss stoically remained in the position he had been placed with barely a quiver of his stiff upper lip, which held the cigarette tip.

A nail hit the edge of the dartboard around the 9 o Clock position. "You are way off," said the handler. "You will need to set yourself up again!" " I'm set up!" exclaimed the thrower. "You'll have to set him up". The handler/manager held the volunteer by the shoulders shuffled him around a little then said "He's all set up now." A nail hit the board just above the bull. The handler described where the nail had struck the board. The next nail hit the side of the Major's nose. A bead of blood appeared which gradually grew larger and slowly trickled southward. Our Boss, being made of stern stuff. never flinched and remained perfectly still.

The next nail just missed the tip of the Boss's proboscis (Nose) There was now a complete hush over the room. Even the clinking of glasses being washed behind the bar ceased. I have never before heard such silence from a crowd of 150 or more people. The last nail never touched our Hero but cleanly took the cigarette tip from his mouth.

There was complete uproar in the room. The cheering and shouting was now deafening. Even the Nail thrower, blindfold removed, seemed surprised that he had succeeded. The Major didn't need to buy his own drinks for the rest of the day. He was now the most respected, liked and popular officer in Lubbecke Garrison and remained so for weeks.

(Do you remember that day Colonel Peter?)

By George Brett.

Medal Update

Changes to Ministry Of Defence Medals and Clasps following Sir John Holmes's Independent Review

The Sir John Holmes Independent Medal Review

The Prime Minister appointed Sir John Holmes in April 2012 to conduct an independent review of the policy governing the award of military medals. He issued his report in July 2012, which concluded that the existing guiding principles were reasonably based but that there should be greater readiness to review past decisions. Sir John was therefore commissioned to review independently a number of cases which had been brought to his attention as possible candidates for changed medallic recognition. The aim was to draw a definitive line under issues which in some cases had been controversial for many years, ensuring that consistency and fairness were respected as far as possible, in a context where the judgments are often difficult, but need to be clear and defensible. This substantial and complex piece of work is now complete. Each of the reviews has been subject to detailed discussion by the Committee on the Grant of Honours, Decorations and Medals and its conclusions have gained Royal approval. Responsibility for the implementation of these new awards rests with the Ministry of Defence Medal Office (MODMO). A phased approach has been adopted to allow time for the design and manufacture of the new awards. The changes and implementation timescales are as follows:

New Clasps

Cyprus 1963-64

Those servicemen who served in Cyprus during the period 21 December 1963 to 26 March 1964 will be awarded the General Service Medal (1962) with clasp "CYPRUS 1963-64". Applications for the new clasp will be accepted from 1

March 2015 onwards. The first of the awards will be dispatched towards the end of that month (however these timings remain under review). Applications will be dealt with in date order.

Berlin Airlift

The General Service Medal 1918-62 with clasp 'BERLIN AIRLIFT' will be awarded for at least one day's service to all aircrew, RAF and civilians who took part in the Berlin Airlift operation from 25 June 1948 to 6 October 1949 inclusive. Applications for the new clasp will be accepted from 1 March 2015 onwards. The first of the awards will be made towards the end of that month (however these timings remain under review). Applications will be dealt with in date order.

Existing Medals/Clasps that are to be awarded under revised qualifying criteria

South Atlantic

The medal with distinguishing rosette was awarded for 1 days' service in the Falkland Islands or their dependencies or in the South Atlantic, south of 35° South and north of 60° South, or for 1 operational sortie south of Ascension Island, between 2 April and 14 June 1982. Following The Sir John Holmes Independent Medal Review the qualifying period for the award of the South Atlantic Medal without the Rosette will be extended from 12 July to 21 October 1982, when the airfield at Mount Pleasant became operational. Applications for the South Atlantic Medal, under the new time extension, will be assessed from 1 October 2014 onwards. The awards will begin to be dispatched towards the end of that month. Applications will be dealt with in date order.

Full details are laid out in DCI JS: RN J 496/82, Army J 274/82 and RAF J 218/82.

Cyprus 1955-59

Those who participated in the suppression of acts of terrorism in Cyprus between 1 April 1955 and 18 April 1959 will qualify for the General Service Medal 1918-62 with clasp 'CYPRUS' if they served for 90 days or more. The qualifying period has been reduced from 120 days, bringing it into line with the qualifying period for service during the Kenya anti-terrorism campaign. Applications for the clasp 'CYPRUS' under the new qualifying period will be accepted from 1 October 2014 onwards. The first of the clasps will be dispatched towards the end of that month. Applications will be dealt with in date order.

How to Claim

Full details on how to claim the new awards are available at <https://www.gov.uk/the-ministry-of-defence-medal-office> but please note the above dates from which applications will be processed. With the exception of the South Atlantic Medal, RAF and Civilian Pilots are encouraged to submit copies of their flying logbooks to provide evidence of eligibility.

HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge

For generations our Armed Forces have served our country across the world in many roles from war fighting, peacekeeping and reconstruction to home defence. In so doing, they have defended our country, our way of life and our cherished values. A large number of our veterans are young and active and now use the skills, the discipline and the leadership they learned in the Armed Forces to benefit their civilian employers and the wider community. The Ministry of Defence Strategy for Veterans highlights that because of all this it is important to focus on supporting veterans of all ages by celebrating, and raising public awareness of, their achievements and their contribution to society. To promote recognition of veterans by the wider British public the unique and unifying symbol of the HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge is available to all those who have served in HM Armed Forces.



Community Registered Design
No 000274493-0001

The HM Armed Forces Veterans' Lapel Badge was launched in May 2004 by the then Minister for Veterans, to raise the profile of veterans by assisting the wider public to recognise them. The first veterans badge was issued to Lord Healey, a veteran of the Battle for Monte Cassino, on 10 May 2004, which initiated the roll out of the badge to the generation who served in the Second World War. Since then eligibility to apply for the badge has been extended in sequential phases and now all veterans are eligible to apply.

The badge is an enamelled, engraved, and pinned, lapel badge featuring the words "HM Armed Forces – Veteran", which encompass the Tri-Service, Anchor, Crossed Swords and Eagle motif. Its symbolism is intended to unite all veterans in recognising the commonality of their service, to encourage a sense of unity and community between surviving veterans and to ignite public recognition of our veterans and their continuing contribution to society.

Criteria

All those who have served in HM Armed Forces, including Volunteer and Regular Reserves Exceptions Veterans who served in Armed Forces of other Countries and those who served alongside HM Armed Forces are not eligible (e.g. Canadian Navy or Royal Australian Air Force).

Posthumous requests

The badge is a survivors badge and therefore is not issued posthumously. The only exception is for War Widows and Widowers who are in receipt of a War Widows/Widowers Pension paid by the Ministry of Defence. This also includes those who have received an award of Survivors Guaranteed Income Payment (SGIP) under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme. This is in recognition of the fact that their death was due to their military service.

How to apply

You can apply by any of the following methods:

Click on one of the links below to access the application form. Application Forms on the Veterans website

- [Acrobat Reader Version](#) (26/09/14)
- [Microsoft Word Version](#) (26/09/14)

Please ensure you complete the form including your service details as fully as possible. You may post or fax your completed form to the Ministry of Defence Medal Office. Another option is to download the form, complete it electronically, save the form and return to the MOD Medal Office by email. If you wish, you may call the Freephone number to apply. Please ensure you have to hand all the details asked for on the application form.

Postal address:

The MOD Medal Office

Innsworth House

Imjin Barracks

Gloucester

GL3 1HW

Fax: 01452 510871 (UK only)

[+44 1452 510871](#) (Overseas)

Email: DBS-MODMO-VetsBadge@mod.uk

Freephone Helpline

Free: 0808 1914 2 18 (UK only)

[+44 1253 866043](#) (Overseas)

Mill Hill Plane Crash



On October 17th 1950 a British European Airways Dakota crashed into trees on Highwood Hill near the Rising Sun in Mill Hill killing all but one of its 29 passengers. Flight attendant James McKissick was the only survivor on the plane headed for Renfrew. The dead included five married couples and an 18 month old baby.

The aircraft was attempting to return to RAF Northolt after suffering an engine failure a few minutes after take-off. In the inquest the court found that the co-pilot, whose licence had lapsed five days previously had a training record which made it inadvisable that he should have been allowed to handle an aircraft in difficult weather conditions.

The Hendon & Finchley Times and Guardian that week reported 'all eyes turned towards the overcast sky. Its noise was strange that many people ran to their doors. Then out of the low clouds the giant plane appeared over Highwood Hill. One propeller was stopped, the machine was losing height rapidly. Housewives dived for shelter. Mrs Katharine Peteman of Highwood Ash Cottage told our reporter.' I had just got in from shopping in Mill Hill Broadway and was emptying my shopping basket on the table in the kitchen. I heard a great roar and then a terrific crash as the plane hit the roof of my house. The kitchen ceiling collapsed around me and I ran into the dining room and flung myself under the table as the demolished chimney stack clattered down into the grate."



The News Chronicle the following day reported that. 'In Highwood Ash, Mrs Gunn was sitting in the front room of her half-timbered Tudor home. "Suddenly" She said, "there was a terrific roar. I ducked. The house rocked. I ran to the back door." Scything the tops of beach trees, ravelling up telegraph wire with one of its wings, the plane twirled down crashed and crumpled on Mrs Gunn's lawn."

The Finchley local paper continued. 'There was a moment of dazed stillness in this part of Mill Hill and then from all the surrounding houses and streets, people began to run towards Highwood Ash. There was nothing they could do. The wreckage was a blazing inferno'.

The Hendon and Finchley Times and Guardian the following week championed the "local heroes" of the disaster. Highwood Ash gardener Mr Tickner and an Australian woman-Nurse Pickering- who was caring for Lady Sellers who lived next door. Mrs Gunn recalled "When the plane crashed Mr Tickner was in the garden and Nurse Pickering was next door. Without any thought for their own safety, they ran towards the wreckage. Together they tried to extricate the pilot At that moment the petrol tanks exploded and the wreckage was engulfed in flames."

Posting on freelanceunbound.com. John Henley said "I recall the crash only too well I was a pupil at Biermont School and in the playground when the Dakota flew overhead. It was obviously far too low and it was just a matter of moments before I heard the explosion as the plane crashed. Of course with the curiosity of the young, and as we were shortly leaving school for the day. I headed up to the crash site and recall bodies wrapped in Union Jacks lined up near the aforementioned brick wall. I stayed around for longer than I should have with the result that my parents went spare, wondering where I was, and I was summoned to the headmaster's study for a serious ticking off the following day. I was ten at the time, and some events in one's life remain engraved forever."

Clifford Heathcote said "My uncle Stanley Brown was the pilot. Uncle Stan had been a spitfire pilot in the war, but died in the first two BEA crashes in the London area in the space of a month. The most awful part of the episode was that my aunt saw the plane go over and recognised that it was having engine trouble. I often wondered what became of the survivor."

No plaque remembers the tragedy that took place on this now busy road more than 60 years ago, but the rebuilt wall of the garden of Highwood Ash opposite Highwood House, is advisable scar for those who know.



Contribution from Pete Holman

The Stick



Curtsey Barry Linden

7 PCCU provided the parade during, their annual Training at Mill Hill for the very historical occasion of presenting "The Stick".

The drill stick was the stick of RSM Archer of the 1st Battalion The 8th (City of London) Battalion the London Regiment (Post Office Rifles) and was gifted to HPCCD as both the City of London Battalion and the Royal Engineers (PCC) share the same lineage from the 24th Battalion Middlesex Rifle Volunteers. RSM Archer enlisted in the 24th Middlesex and was renowned marksman in the Battalion His stick was also well throughout the Battalion and is now over 70 years old.

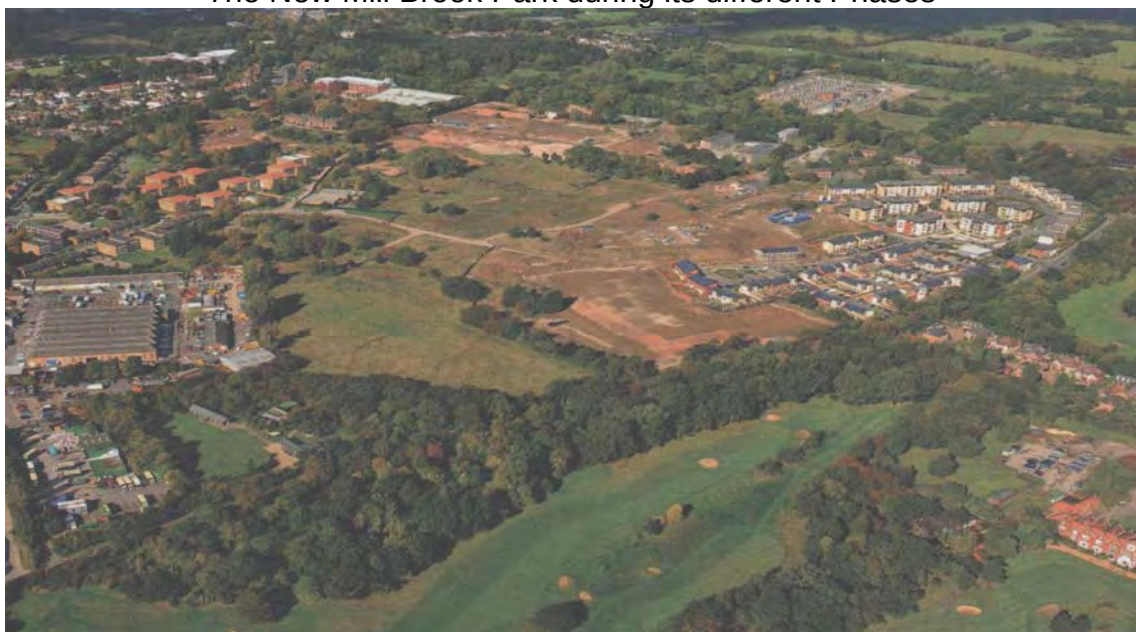
The stick was presented to the Senior Drill Instructor WO12 J. Kelly by the Commandant Colonel A.V. Burge MBE.BEM and was decreed, by the Commandant to be carried on all TAVR parades in the future.

Inglis Barracks Update

Old Officers Mess and the New Millbrook Apartments



The New Mill Brook Park during its different Phases



Historic plaque commemorates distinguished Mill Hill building



L-R Deputy Lieutenant Martin Russell, Colonel Rex Cain, Councillor John Hart, Major Paddy O'Brien and Councillor Sury Khatri



The unveiling of the memorial plaque to guests



Mayor of Barnet Councillor Melvin Cohen, Managing Director of Linden Homes Darren Maddox and Deputy Lieutenant Martin Russell

An historic plaque has been unveiled by the Deputy Lieutenant of Barnet, Martin Russell at Linden Homes' Millbrook Park in Mill Hill to commemorate the fact that the beautifully refurbished Edwardian heart of this development was previously a distinguished Officers' Mess. The building, part of the renowned Inglis Barracks, was home for many years to the officers of the Middlesex Regiment. Latterly it provided a base for the Army Postal Service and the British forces Post Office.

The building, the exterior of which has been carefully preserved, now has a new lease of life and today contains a series of beautiful one and two bedroom Linden Homes' apartments– all of which have now been sold.

During the unveiling ceremony the Deputy Lieutenant praised the building's preservation and told the guests some of its history:

"This substantial building is a proud testament to the loyal military heritage of this place: A fine building with a completely new residential purpose following its renovation. And its original purpose, as a former Mess and home to generations of officers of the Middlesex Regiment, the Royal Engineers Postal and Courier Service, the British Forces Post Office, the Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) and the Women's' Royal Army Corps, will be apparent to subsequent generations through reading this plaque."

Linden Homes' managing director, Darren Maddox said: "We were delighted that so many could join us to witness the unveiling of the commemorative plaque, particularly The Mayor, Cllr Melvin Cohen, the Deputy Lieutenant and Councillor John Hart, who has been instrumental in making the occasion possible. Thank you also to the Council for supporting our efforts to deliver such a well-received, sustainable community.

"This plaque pays tribute to the strong heritage associated with this site and the Inglis Barracks.

We have taken considerable efforts to ensure that the regeneration of the site and the refurbishment of the Officers' Mess be delivered in a tasteful fashion.

"At Linden Homes, we are always keen to invest back into the communities we build. At this site alone, we have created 63 jobs and had 2 apprentices working on site, demonstrating that we when build, we look to build local homes by local people." Although the apartments within the old Officers' Mess are now sold, there will be more opportunities to buy properties at Millbrook Park: Three, four and five bedroom Linden homes will be available later this spring.

(Curtsey Pete Holmes)

A Birthday ode to Ships Division HPCCD RE

On the Glorious 29th July of 1963.

In the Forces Postal History this date will be.

The first day the "Brown Jobs" sent the Navy's mail to sea.

For six weeks before 15 men all handpicked, strove to learn what the GPO did.

They daily reported intelligence to bloke named SID.

Who again sent us off to R.A.H., K.E.B. and Mount Pleasant on their tasks

Not knowing they would with their "TUBE" fares they would bask at least an hour in Frith Lanes Cafes!

Our Geordie R who planned frames, was certain that all S.O. types knew A.B. & C.

Hence alphabetical sorting came to be!

In those early days and nights, the 15 men endeavoured with sweat and skill,
like David's' to beat Goliath British GPO to give the Navy better mails. Which even Roger the dog knew was a bed of nails.

His owner's worried looks drove Roger to wails'.

To seek consolation in peace by the Rations stores waste bones pails.

Most of the Navy's mails went out with speed. That was by all agreed.

Despatch by loyal 15 all tired and brave.

To places picked by Mick Colgrave.

Yes to HM Ships both Home and Overseas the big-un's and little-un's
both brave and meek.

Strangely some went even up proverbial creek!

With relations strained and Sea Lords bristling

Then the hot seats phones did not stop ringing

and in seven days the whereabouts of "Port Edgar", South Queensferry was glistening,

Hard times were had by most and not the least a RNRP. Who had at times must

of thought the RN mails would be our "R.I.P.".

Over each small error an inquest was held.

And with truthfully learning the job prevailed.

With work well done we hardly failed.

The fleet problems in the "TEETHING STAGE" soon came to notice and were solved.

then we won, and were over the Hill.

At times, a good news was a pill.

Hot signals full of scorn on occasions flooded us most readily.

And checking back sometimes the fault did lie in the holiest of the Admiralty.

Then after a while a word of praise from the famous S.N.O.W.I.

On that day the "TWICKERS-CHAMPERS" was almost "FREI".

Sent By Col. S.D. Heron late RLC

HQ British Forces Post Office

Editors Note.

Senior Naval Officer West Indies (S.N.O.W.I.)

Is located on Bermuda an ideal paradise isle. (No Hay fever, So I was informed) I found this out when I visited Bermuda in July 1977 and luckily had a 24 hour stop over courtesy of the Royal Anglian Regiment. The 1st Battalion were exercising in Guyana at the time and the RAF Flight was using Bermuda as a refuelling stop over. On the Island due to the Anglian's training commitment, they had a detachment of two Anglian staff, a Major & SSM, who were training the local Bermudian Infantry. On our return journey from Guyana the VC 10, we were flying in allegedly, broke down. The plane had to fly to Miami to be fixed and all passengers had to be disembarked. It so happen spaces were available in the Warwick Bay training camp. (Oh what a surprise). This meant instead of a grotty exercise in Jungles, a nice bit of R & R was available. This is when I found out that SNOWI was permanently based in Bermuda. Sorry I've jumped several years and digressed from the story of SNOWI.

Back in 1970 I was working a night shift in Ships Tele-printer room when I received an "Immediate" signal from HMS Eagle (I think) stating, that they had arrived at Bermuda and no mail was there for them. On checking their latest mail arrangements, they had been despatched a number of serials of mail including parcels. About 40 bags were involved. Finding this most strange, I noted that the receipt office was C/O SNOWI Bermuda.

Normal procedure was to inform the ship, what was sent and inform them the person responsible for holding the mail for them. Not really thinking, other than this mail must reach the ship in time before it sailed again. I sent an Immediate signal to SNOWI to expedite and deliver ASAP, the mail in question to the ship. That done, I informed my relief what had happened and went to bed happy of my work well done.

Round about midday I was rudely awoken and told to report to the ships office in the depot. Prior to seeing the Navy Lieutenant I was grabbed by the Master at Arms, who informed me of the chaos, I had caused. Apparently SNOWI at that time only consisted of an Admiral and a Naval Commander no other staff. Both these High ranking officers had, had to collect the 40 bags of mail, in their own cars and take it from the airport to the docks, where the ship waited for them. Having done this physical task, they then wanted to know who ordered them to do this ?

When checking with BFPO Ships the S**T hit the Fan. Apparently this was not on, as they were following the instructions from a lowly L/Cpl.

I then went in front of the Naval Officer who informed me of the errors I had made I then took my B*****G like a man. Later I was to save for few years the signal reply from HMS Eagle to BFPO Ships. The signal said in effect "Thank you for what we have received and were truly grateful, they would also be willing to recommend the service they received to other ships" Not many ships can boast that the high up Naval Gods can also be "Posties" at times and get the mail through!!

New Christmas Poem

*Twas the night before Christmas,
he lived all alone,
in a one bedroom house made of
plaster and stone.*

*I had come down the chimney
with presents to give,
and to see just who
in this home did live.*

*I looked all about,
a strange sight I did see,
no tinsel, no presents,
not even a tree.*

*No stocking by mantle,
just boots filled with sand,
on the wall hung pictures
of far distant lands.*

*With medals and badges,
awards of all kinds,
a sober thought
came through my mind.*

*For this house was different,
it was dark and dreary,
I found the home of a soldier,
once I could see clearly.*

*The soldier lay sleeping,
silent, alone,
curled up on the floor
in this one bedroom home.*

*The face was so gentle,
the room in such disorder,
not how I pictured
a British soldier the hero
of whom I'd just read?
curled up on a poncho,
the floor for a bed?*

*I realized the families
that I saw this night,
owed their lives to these soldiers
who were willing to fight.*

*Soon round the world,
the children would play,
and grownups would celebrate
a bright Christmas day.*

*They all enjoyed freedom
each month of the year,
because of the soldiers,
like the one lying here.*

*I couldn't help wonder
how many lay alone,
on a cold Christmas eve
in a land far from home.*

*The very thought
brought a tear to my eye,
I dropped to my knees
and started to cry.
The soldier awakened
and I heard a rough voice,
'Santa don't cry,
this life is my choice;*

*I fight for freedom,
I don't ask for more,
my life is my god,
my! country, my corps. The royal engineers'
the soldier rolled over
and drifted to sleep,
I couldn't control it,
I continued to weep.*

*I kept watch for hours,
so silent and still
and we both shivered
from the cold night's chill.*

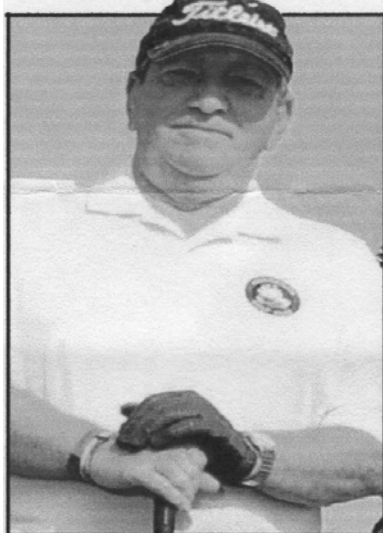
*I didn't want to leave
on that cold, dark, night,
this guardian of honour
so willing to fight.*

*Then the soldier rolled over,
with a voice soft and pure,
whispered, 'carry on Santa,
it's Christmas day, all is secure.'*

*One look at my watch,
and I knew he was right.
'merry Christmas my friend,
and to all a good night.'*

(This poem was written by a veteran British soldier.)

Ace a special reward for past club captain



HOLE-IN-ONE HERO: Chris Connaughton aced the 4th hole at Immingham Golf Club.

FORMER captain Chris Connaughton described his first hole-in-one at Immingham Golf Club as the "pinnacle" of his 34-year golfing career.

The 65-year-old's moment of magic came when he aced the 143-yard 4th hole, using a seven iron.

The 2010 club captain, originally from Ireland, had previously achieved two hole-in-ones – in 1986 and 1992 – while serving as a major for the British Army's Royal Engineers in Germany.

But the latest ace, his first in England, is the one he will savour the most.

Connaughton said: "Being captain at Immingham is the highlight of my career; but this is the pinnacle – the added gloss. To me, it's like the equivalent of a nine-dart finish."

by John Tompson
Sports Writer
john.tompson@gsmg.co.uk

Immingham

"I struck it well and it bounced twice and went straight in the hole."

"My hole-in-ones in Germany felt like a pitch and

It bounced twice and went straight in the hole

Chris Connaughton

putt – we just used to turn up and leave. This one, being at Immingham, meant a lot."

Connaughton has been a member at the club for 12 years and his wife, Brenda,

is a former ladies captain.

His first hole-in-one at the course came in a senior team match against Cleethorpes, which Immingham won.

Playing alongside match partner Mike Hole, Connaughton was the talk of the course after his ace.

"The news spread like wildfire and lots of people came over to congratulate me," he said.

"The hole-in-one put us four up in our match after four holes. But it took a few holes to settle down."

"By the 12th hole it was all square, but we were able to regroup and win 2 and 1."

Meanwhile, in the ladies section, Maureen Lincoln won the Peggy Hindley competition, Lynda Cody triumphed in the MacMillan Spoon, Sue Peacock lifted the President's Cup, and Mary Reed was victorious in the Drv Club Shield.

POST NOTES

The annual Subscriptions has been increased from £5.00 to £10.00 per year. Subscription records have been amended to reflect this increase. !!!!!!!

Make money for the PCS Branch by Using "easyfundraising"

Graham Meacher has set up an "easyfundraising" account for the PCS Branch.

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/pcsbranch.

"Easyfundraising" helps thousands of good causes and charities raise money for free. With over 2,700 retailers shopping via easyfundraising is a great way of fundraising online.

This is an easy way to raise donations, and it doesn't cost you a penny extra to shop online via easyfundraising! So take advantage of this fantastic fundraising idea, and raise money easily and quickly by joining the thousands already using easyfundraising.org.uk.

1. Start at easyfundraising

Let's say you want to buy a pair of shoes from John Lewis. Instead of going to johnlewis.com directly, you first

go to easyfundraising.org.uk.

2. Make a purchase

From the easyfundraising website, click through to John Lewis to make your purchase. This tells John Lewis you came from easyfundraising. The price of the shoes is exactly the same

3. Get a donation

After you buy your shoes, John Lewis will give you a cash reward that you can turn into a donation for your good cause. easyfundraising collect this and send it on at no extra cost.

4. Get the easyfundraising Donation Reminder

You can skip steps 1 and 2 with the [easyfundraising Donation Reminder](#). Just click the reminder when you shop to receive any eligible donations. You'll never forget a free donation again!

Minutes of Annual General Meeting on the 14th April 2013

The President brought the meeting to order and welcomed all those present at 1030hrs at the Village Hotel Cheadle". 56 Members attended including committee.

1. The President's Welcome Address.

The president thanked the members for attending and the good turn out once again. He acknowledged the previous good work done by the outgoing president.

2. Minutes from previous meeting were then read out and confirmed as true.

Proposed By: Jimmy Andrews

Seconded By: Melvyn Bellamy

3. Financial summary.

Treasurers report given and financial statement for the year subject to audit. Thanks were given to the ladies on the raffle committee for the efforts in increasing the branches funds from the Raffle held on Saturday night.

Income/Expenditure 2012/13

Expenditure

Presentations £90.00

Admin/Newsletter/Website

Annual Reunion

(Disco £270 Wine £495 Flowers £30)

Total £3861.47

Subscriptions

£601.47

£3170.00

Total

£3392.64

£580.00

Re-union Raffle

2811.17

Bank Interest

£1.47

Bank Balance as at 31 December 2013 £1465.94

Fixed Assets Branch Standard. £650.00

Branch Balance as at 5th April 2014 £1959.99

(Included was a cheque received from Peter Armitage MBE (Last year's Guest) for £210 donation from Royal Mail towards the cost of the tree planting at the National Arboretum)

Proposed by Chad Timothy

Seconded by Dave Muckle

4. Old Comrades.

The President read out the Old Comrades lost to the branch since the last meeting.

Liz APPEYARD, Dave BOWERS, Gary COPSON, Bob DAVIESON, Anthony DOHERTY, Ronald FULTON, Ronald PYNE, Jack ROUS, Frenchie SHORTELL and Dave VICKERY.

A minutes silence was held in memory of members who had passed away in the last year.

5. Committee. Election of an additional committee members who reside in the South East to be PCS representatives at the REA South East Meetings and REA AGM (Victory Services Club London)

The committee offered up their posts for re-election.

President:

Lt. Col. (Retired) Graham Meacher RE MBE

Chairman.

Maj. (Retired) Brian Felks RE

Treasurer:

Maj. (Retired) Chris Connaughton RE

Secretary:

Larry Peacock

Committee assistant Member.

Mick Atkinson

SE Area & AGM Rep:

(Volunteered after meeting) Geoff Manning supported by Mick Atkinson

A vote was taken and the committee members were confirmed.

Proposed by: Nick Clifton

Seconded by: Norman Harman

6. Increase of annual Subscriptions

A proposal was raised to increase the Annual Subscription from £5.00 to £10.00. A vote was taken and the increase will come into effect April 2015.

Proposed by: Brian Felks

Seconded by: John Jackett

Carried

7. Creating Non-Subscribed Revenue.

A discussion was raised to increase other ways to increase income for the branch a proposal to have details published on the website and Posthorn of how to contribute to branch funds by using the following website www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/pcsbranch. (Graham Meacher has set up an account for PCS Branch REA on www.easyfundraising.org.uk. All you need to do is get into the habit of using it whenever shopping online. Many people now buy things like insurance, ink cartridges, clothes, book hotels and trains, etc. Can you spread the word as much and as often as possible please. He has started already and renewed my home insurance through Easyfundraising. He will put something on Facebook and add something on the website (to replace the reference to ShopForces, which is now defunct anyway). Suggested form of words below (which I am also using as part of my email footer):

Did you know you can help REA PCS Branch AND save money at the same time? It's very simple - just visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/pcsbranch to register and shop with over 2000 well known retailers like Amazon, Argos, M&S, eBay and many more. Whenever you buy something the retailer makes a donation to the PCS Branch. Look out for special offers and vouchers to save you money! The other possible ways of raising extra money was the sale of Ties, Badges

8. Invitation to March- Armed Forces Day 28th June 2014 Stirling Scotland.

An invitation was given to all members to march in the Armed Forces Day held in Stirling Scotland on the 28th June 2014. (A number of branch members attended and photos can be seen inside this Posthorn)

9. Commemorative Cover to mark 2015 Reunion.

A suggestion was made to produce a commemorative cover for 2015 or 20th anniversary of PCS Branch. Details will be given later.

10. The Date and Location of the 2015 event.

The date was agreed for the possible weekend 11th -13th April 2015. Suggestion where given for the location as Nottingham, Harrogate, Perth and Edinburgh. Edinburgh won and Graham Meacher agreed to find out the details and book the hotel.(Details are now at the last page of the Posthorn along with costs.

11. Any other business.

a. Details of forthcoming WW1 & WW2 events 70th Anniversary D. Day landings and Arnhem will be available on the REA HQ Website.

b. John Butt reminded everyone of a sponsored Moonwalk in aid of charity to be held in London in 2014. Details on Moonwalk website.

There being no other business the meeting ended at 1110hrs

REA PCS BRANCH REUNION CHEADLE, MANCHESTER 4-6 APRIL 2014

WOW! What a weekend.

As usual, there was a good gathering on Friday afternoon/evening and the De Vere Village hotel must have been more than pleasantly surprised when they counted the much swelled bar takings.

There was much laughter, hugs and back slapping which set the scene for the rest of the weekend.

On Saturday the arrivals continued to build up with a couple of unexpected friends and despite the absences of a few stalwarts and no Para table, 120 sat down for dinner. That's the best turnout for a number of years. There were a few first timers who it was great to see (I won't name them in case I miss someone out) and there were some 'old and bold' returners who we haven't seen for a number of years. One absentee of note was our Chelsea Pensioner, Michael (Mick) Atkinson who we had expected in his full regalia. Unfortunately, shortly before the reunion, Mick had received two groups of RE visitors and joined them in a few ales which resulted in him falling off a bench and badly damaging his arm and shoulder which prevented him travelling. Mick is undergoing physiotherapy and although it will take time, he expects to make a full recovery. Next year Mick.

As is now a tradition there was a minute applause to celebrate the lives of those we have lost in the last twelve months prior to grace which this year was given by our new president, Graham Meacher.

The food this year was excellent and received many compliments. After the loyal toast the president spoke eloquently for some minutes before introducing this years' speaker, Margaret Grant. Margaret recalled her career and she certainly achieved a few firsts in her time spent in some interesting locations culminating at Mill Hill.

The formalities over, Jez Hernandez then provided the entertainment with some music and some Karaoke. The singers some of whom were rather good and some of whom might have thought they were good enjoyed themselves and a good time seemed to be enjoyed by all.

The AGM took place on Sunday morning and surprisingly as there weren't many Scots in attendance; next years' location was chosen as Edinburgh.

The Mill Hill RSM Board was kindly brought to the reunion by Chris Bennett and handed to Dave Muckle who would convey it to Chatham where a space will be found for it to hang in the RE Museum following an initiative by Peter Capon. Well done Pete.

Before departure there were lots of compliments for a cracking weekend at a good hotel with excellent staff.

NB. Following his TV appearances at the Albert Hall and the Cenotaph, Mick Atkinson resumed his road to fame with another TV appearance at the Army Navy rugby match at Twickenham.

Committee Members

President:

Lt. Col. (Retired) Graham Meacher RE MBE

Chairman:

Maj. (Retired) Brian Felks RE

Treasurer:

Maj. (Retired) Chris Connaughton RE

Secretary:

Larry Peacock

Committee Members

Mr Mick Atkinson

Secretary details

Larry Peacock

31 Pennine Crescent

REDCAR

TS10 4 AE

Telephone:

01642-476380

Email larrypeacock60@hotmail.co.uk

Membership Eligibility

If you have served in the RE (PS) or (PCCU) or (PCS) you are eligible to join the PCS Branch of the REA. (Any other H.M. Armed Forces (Royal Navy and Royal Air Forces) member who has served with or associated with Postal & Courier Units then you can join as an Associate Member). If you served in the ATS or WRAC and were trained as a Postal & Courier Operator you are entitled to join the PCS Branch as an Associate member. Subscriptions £5 per year. Please make cheques payable to:

"The Treasurer PCS Branch REA"

Lost & Found

Members, who have lost contact (LC) with the branch, wish to leave (WL) and those that are over three years behind in their subscriptions (BS):

John BAILEY (BS), Peter CLIFTON (BS), Gerald DAVEY (BS), Andrew FLOOD (BS), Herbert LOCKWOOD (BS), Marie MONAGHAN (BS) and Ian SMITH (BS)

Welcome to new and old branch members:

New Members:

Michael ALLEN, David APPLEBY, Geoff BUSHELL, Robert COATSWORTH, John COULING, Andrew COWBURN, R. GIBBONS, Steven GRIFFITHS, David Paul JOHNSON, Michael JONES, John PEARCE and Dorieen REDDEN

(Returned)

Adam JACK, Norman GRUNDY, Alex HORSBURGH and Mick (PJ) MALLEY.

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Last Post



Over the year the following Posties (members and non-members) are no longer with us and have moved to a higher association. We honour:-

Jim BAZELY, Jim BROKENBOW, Jack BULLEN, Frank CANION, Brummie DEANE, Esther GOODMAN, Johnny GRAHAM, Jack GRIFFITHS, Jim HALLIDAY, Eddie HEFFERMAN, Joe KELLY, Norman LOCKWOOD, George MADGIN, Anna MARABELE, Lenny PERKINS, John ROGERS, Joe ROBERTSON, Frenchie SHORTELL, Johnny SMART, Graham STEWART, Vanessa WARD (Myers), Johnny WHEELAN and Ted WOLTON

Payment code:

2013	Year subs paid up to
LM	Life Member
PNSR	Partner No Subs Required
New	New member

Membership Subscription List

Listed below are the current details of all members subscriptions, paid up to the date shown. Any concerns about the dates shown, then please contact me, Larry Peacock, and I will make the correction or confirm that the details are correct.

The list has been updated to reflect the increased yearly subs of £10. Those paid fully for that year show (2014) or part payment (14+£5 2014 and £5 towards next year)

No	First Name	SURNAME	Year
1	Michael	ALLEN	2014
2	Brian	ANDERSON	2013
3	James	ANDREWS	2015
4	David	APPLEBY	2013
5	Peter	ASKEW	15+£5
6	Michael	ATKINSON	15+£5
7	Mark	ATWELL	14+£5
8	Terence	BAKEWELL	2013
9	Alan	BARKER	2016
10	Martyn	BARRETT	2013
11	Douglas	BAXTER	16+£5
12	Joseph	BEEDELS	2013
13	Melvyn	BELLAMY	14+£5
14	Christopher	BENNETT	2016
15	Gina	BERTIE	14+£5
16	David	BINNINGTON	2011
17	Reg	BLACK	14+£5
18	David	BLANE	2014
19	John	BOWMAN	2014
20	James	BRADSHAW	2016
21	Peter	BRAITHWAITE	2014
22	George	BRETT	2015
23	Eric	BRICE	2015
24	David	BROWN	2016
25	Elizabeth	BROWN	PNSR
26	Anthony	BRYAN	14+£5
27	Richard	BULLOCK	2011
28	Mark	BURTON	2014
29	Geoff	BUSHELL	2014
30	William	BUTT	15+£5
31	Karen	CALDWELL	2012
32	Stuart	CAMBRIDGE	2015
33	Alexander	CARSON	2014
34	Terence	CHADWICK	14+£5
35	George	CHANDLER	14+£5
36	Douglas	CLARK	14+£5
37	George	CLEASBY	2011
38	Nicholas	CLIFTON	2014
39	Tilly	CLIFTON	PNSR
40	Leslie	CLYDESDALE	14+£5
41	Robert	COATSWORTH	14+£5
42	Gilbert	COLE	LM
43	Adrian	COLLINS	2013
44	Thomas	COMPSON	15+£5
45	Christopher	CONNAUGHTON	16+£5

46	Donald	COOPER	2011
47	John	CORRIGAN	15+£5
48	John	COULING	2014
49	Alasdair	COWAN	2013
50	Andrew	COWBURN	2013
51	Carl	COX	2014
52	Stuart	CRAIG	2015
53	Neil	CRAWFORD	2014
54	Audrey	CROOK	2016
55	Humphrey	CRYER	14+£5
56	Michael	CUMMINS	2013
57	Anthony	CURTIS	2014
58	Peter	CUSSONS	2014
59	Alan	DAVIES	2015
60	Joan	DAVIES	PNSR
61	John	DOHERTY	2012
62	John	DOUGLAS	2014
63	Henry	EAGLE	2014
64	Dennis	EASON	2015
65	Patrick	ELLIOTT	2014
66	Derek	EWAN	2014
67	Brian	FELKS	15+£5
68	Simon	FENWICK	LM
69	Frederick	FERGUSON	2014
70	Jeremy	FIELD	2015
71	Reg	FOULKS	LM
72	Don	FOWLER	17+£5
73	Christine	FRETWELL	2014
74	John	GADSBY	14+£5
75	Paul	GAFFNEY	14+£5
76	John	GALLAND	2015
77	Albert	GARRIOCK	14+£5
78	Alistair	GEE	2014
79	Ernest	GENT	2011
80	R	GIBBONS	2013
81	Michael	GIBERTSON	2013
82	Ralph	GILCHRIST	2012
83	Christopher	GOODWIN	2013
84	Melanie	GOODY	2013
85	Margaret	GRANT	14+£5
86	Robert	GRAY	2017
87	Patricia	GRAY	2015
88	Peter	GRIFFITHS	2012
89	Steven	GRIFFITHS	2013
90	Norman	GRUNDY	15+£5
91	P	GRUNDY	2013
92	Norman	HARMAN	2014

93	David	HARMER	2013
94	Brian	HARRIS	14+£5
95	Rebecca	HART	2013
96	John	HARVEY	2011
97	Andrew	HAWKESWORTH	2016
98	William	HAWKINS	2012
99	William	HEATH	2012
100	Dwight	HEDDLE	2015
101	Gerald	HERNANDEZ	14+£5
102	Simon	HEYS	2017
103	Geraldine	HIGGINS	PNSR
104	Pete	HOLMAN	14+£5
105	Alex	HORSBURGH	2013
106	Clifford	HOWES	2014
107	John	HUDSON	2014
108	Rita	HUDSON	PNSR
109	Howard	HUGHES	16+£5
110	Jacqueline	HUGHES	15+£5
111	Roger	HUGHES	2014
112	Terry	HUGHES	2016
113	Yvonne	HUGHES	2011
114	John	HUMPHRIES	2011
115	Colon	HUNTER	2013
116	Pat	HYNES	15+£5
117	Peter	IVE	2012
118	Adam	JACK	2014
119	John	JACKETT	17+£5
120	John	JACKSON	2016
121	Kerry	JAMES	2014
122	Raymond	JENNINGS	2018
123	Ronald	JESSIMAN	15+£5
124	David	JOHNSON	2014
125	David/Paul	JOHNSON	2013
126	Michael	JONES	2013
127	Samuel	JONES	2014
128	James	JOWETT	2014
129	Brig Neil	KELLY	2011
130	Willam	KENEFEC	2011
131	Colin	KENNEDY	2015
132	Ian	KENNEDY	2014
133	Donald	KENT	2011
134	Arthur	KERR	15+£5
135	Mavis	KIRK	2015
136	Julian	KOSTYSZYN	14+£5
137	Cyril	LACEY	2013
138	Mike	LAMBERT	2014
139	Frederick	LATHAM	2013

140	Gerald	LAUDER	2014
141	William	LAWRENSON	2013
142	Frank	LEA	15+£5
143	Harry	LEES	2011
144	Jean	LEGG	2014
145	Richard	LEGG	2014
146	Herbert	LEIGHTON	2015
147	Kathleen	LEIGHTON	PNSR
148	Alistair	LENNIE	14+£5
149	Brian	LEVEY	2013
150	Penny	LIDDICOT	2014
151	Barry	LINDEN	15+£5
152	Ian	LISTER	2015
153	Marian	LOVERIDGE	2014
154	June	LOWE	2015
155	Raymond	LYALL	15+£5
156	Edward	LYONS	2014
157	Gerald	MAGUIRE	2014
158	Michael	MALLEY	2015
159	Geoffrey	MANNING	14+£5
160	Patrick	MARSHALL	2011
161	Peter	MASLIN	2014
162	Mary	MCCABE	2013
163	Sean	MCARTHY	2013
164	John	MCGOVERN	14+£5
165	Robert	MCKEEVER	2014
166	Billy	MCLEOD	2014
167	Ann	MCLEOD	2014
168	Adam	MCQUILLAN	14+£5
169	Lara	MEACHER	2014
170	Charles	MEACHER	2014
171	Graham	MEACHER	15+£5
172	Raymond	MILFORD	2013
173	David	MILSTEAD	2012
174	Raymond	MITCHELL	14+£5
175	Paul	MORRIS	14+£5
176	David	MUCKLE	14+£5
177	Ronald	MURREY	2013
178	Christopher	NELSON	2011
179	Rodney	NORMAN	15+£5
180	Tomas	O GRADY	2011
181	Neville	ORTON	2014
182	Keith	OXER	2016
183	John	PALMER	2011
184	Steve	PATCH	2015
185	Lawrence	PEACOCK	2014
186	Gillian	PEACOCK	PNSR

187	John	PEARCE	2014
188	Adrian	PROSSER	15+£5
189	Sharon	PROWSE	2012
190	Edward	REARDON	14+£5
191	Ella	REAST	14+£5
192	Dorieen	REDDEN	2014
193	Peter	REDFERN	14+£5
194	Arthur	ROBINSON	2012
195	Robert	ROBINSON	2011
196	Joan	ROUND	14+£5
197	Bryan	ROWNEY	2014
198	Geoffrey	SALMON	2015
199	Elizabeth	SAMPSON	2014
200	John	SAMUEL	2015
201	Valerie	SANDERS	14+£5
202	Tommy	SANDS	2014
203	Howard	SCOTT	2013
204	James	SEAR	2015
205	Mark	SEARLE	2012
206	Aidan	SHOEBRIDGE	14+£5
207	John	SHOULDER	2014
208	Richard	SILSBY	2015
209	Neil	SIMS	2013
210	Sam	SINGLETON	2014
211	William	SKEEL	2013
212	Eddie	SMITH	2012
213	Gordon	SMITH	15+£5
214	Kenneth	SMITH	2014
215	Alan	STANDING	2014
216	James	STEER	15+£5
217	Paul	STODDART	2013
218	Edward	STUART	2012
219	Norman	SUSSEX	2015
220	Pamela	SUSSEX	14+£5
221	Douglas	SWANSON	2017
222	Gordon	TAIT	2011
223	David	TEDDER	2013
224	Ivor	THOMAS	2011
225	Frederick	THOMPSON	2014
226	David	THORNTON	2011
227	Charles	TIMOTHY	14+£5
228	Ken	TREVOR	2015
229	George	URBAN	2011
230	David	VAUTIER	2013
231	Maurice	VESSEY	2014
232	Roy	WALKER	2015
233	Albert	WALL	2011

234	Douglas	WALTER	2017
235	Gordon	WARDELL	2014
236	Frances	WARDELL	2014
237	Derek	WATT	2014
238	Margret	WATT	2014
239	Peter	WESCOTT	14+£5
240	Stephen	WHITE	2014
241	Michael	WHITEHEAD	14+£5
242	John	WHITTAKER	2011
243	Dennis	WHITTALL	2014
244	Barry	WILDING	2011
245	Robert	WILLIAMS	2013
246	Eric	WILLIAMSON	2014
247	William	WINFIELD	2011
248	John	WINTERBOTTOM	2012
249	Edward	WOOFFIT	2012
250	Stewart	WRIGHT	2014

Village Hotel Edinburgh

ROYAL ENGINEERS (POSTAL & COURIER SERVICE)

Royal Engineers Association.

ANNUAL GALA DINNER /REUNION 10TH, 11TH (Gala Night) and 12TH APRIL 2015

To make a reservation, telephone 0844 980 0232 quote " Royal Engineers Association PCS Branch 11th April 2015. 45 Double and 15 double for single occupancy rooms have been pre booked for the event.

The Gala Dinner Meal on the Saturday 11th April 2015 is approximately £25 per head. (Any extra payment required, will be paid prior to meal at hotel.) All bookings for this meal need to go through Chris Connaughton with cheques made payable to "The Treasurer PCS Branch REA" sent to:

Gala Meal
C/O Secretary Larry Peacock
31 Pennine Crescent
Redcar
TS10 4AE

Accommodation Rates Per Room Per Night including Breakfast	Costs		
Dates Required	10 th April 14	11 th April 14 (Gala Night)	12 th April 14
Double room Single occupancy Bed, B&B £85 per room	£85	£170	£235
Double Bed, B&B £95 per room	£95	£190	£265
Gala Dinner Saturday Night extra payment required of £25 aprox per person sent to Chris Connaughton	Sat one meal x £25 Sat 2 Meals x £25 = £50	£205 Single £240 Double	£260 Single £315 Double

Address: Village Hotel
Crewe Road South
Edinburgh
EH4 2NY