



The Die-Hards

NEWSLETTER

No. 100

Autumn 2008



Our New President
Colonel R M Cain, OBE DL

President : Colonel R.M. Cain, OBE, DL
Chairman : Major C.L. Lawrence, MC
Vice Chairman : Capt M.J.S. Doran, TD, LL.B.
Secretary : Major D. Bradley, BEM
RHQ PWRR
Howe Barracks
Canterbury, Kent CT1 1JY
Editor : Mr M.J. Ward, BEM
21 Field Close, Cranford,
Hounslow,
Middlesex TW4 6LN

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT, COLONEL R M CAIN OBE DL

To be elected President of the Regimental Association is a tremendous honour and one that I never dreamt would come my way when I was commissioned for the first time in the 2nd (Cadet) Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment in 1948. Since then I have held a Regular commission, a Territorial commission and, finally, returned to the Army Cadet Force as Cadet Commandant for Middlesex and North West London so I can claim to have some understanding of all branches of the Regimental family.

Taking over from Brigadier Tony Pielow is indeed a daunting prospect. No one has done more for the Regiment since the amalgamation in 1966 and our survival as an Association forty two years later is largely due to his determined leadership over more than twenty years. We owe him a great deal. The good news is that he remains a member of the management team as Honorary Vice President.

As you all know the Association will begin to close down in 2015 and our final major event will, fittingly, take place in 2011 when we shall mark the two hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Albuhera. Planning for that occasion has already begun.

Meanwhile, we intend to continue to support the Branches in their activities and will arrange events such as Band Concerts and visits to places of interest as and when the opportunities arise. The service in St Paul's and the Annual Reunion remain our top priority and we shall go on seeking to improve them.

I am also concerned that when we do close down we should leave visible reminders of the Regiment's past military honours and sacrifices in St Paul's and in our War Memorials in the Middlesex Guildhall and at Mill Hill. I expect to be in discussions with the Dean of St Paul's later this year and the Executive Committee will be monitoring progress on safeguarding the two memorials.

Finally, our welfare cases are well looked after by RHQ of the PWRR and I am quite sure that this will be unchanged even after 2015.

So we face the immediate future with confidence and for as long as you, the members, support us the Association will continue to flourish.

This being the last Newsletter before Christmas I will take the opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

With best wishes to you all

Rex Cain

FORECAST OF EVENTS

2008

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 14th October | Association Executive meeting
Union Jack Club London |
| 19th October | Band Concert
Union Jack Club London
17.30hrs for 18.30hrs |
| 5th November | 7Mx Officers Club Dinner |
| 6th November | Garden of Remembrance Westminster Abbey
Service commences 10.50hrs |
| 8th November | MX Ceremony of Remembrance Middlesex Guildhall
10.30hrs Service 10.50hrs |
| 9th November | Remembrance Sunday |

2009

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 15th May | Middlesex Officers Club Dinner |
| 16th May | Association Albuhera Service of Remembrance
Regimental Chapel St Paul's Cathedral London
Seated 10.50hrs Service 11.00hrs |
| 16th May | Association AGM and Annual Reunion
Union Jack Club London |

Officers Club Dinner

The Officers' Club held their annual dinner at the Army and Navy Club on Friday 16th May, Albuhera Day. The principal guest was the Rt Rev Graeme Knowles, Dean of St Paul's Cathedral.

Regimental Guests: Lt Col and Mrs Tony Davies (represented by Capt and Mrs John Lenaghan), Rev Preb Patrick Tuft, Mrs Fran Castle, Mrs Susan Knowles and Mrs Moira Jeffcoat.

Members and private guests: Brig Brian Marciandi, Col and Mrs Rex Cain, Col John Moore, Lt Col & Mrs Mike Deakin, Maj & Mrs Bob Bartlett, Maj & Mrs Dennis Bradley, Sir John & Lady Birch, Maj & Mrs Peter Clarke, Maj & Mrs Harold Couch, Maj & Mrs David Falcke, Maj & Mrs Brian Finch, Maj Derrick Harwood, Maj & Mrs Stewart Henshaw, Maj & Mrs Chris Lawrence, Maj David Margand, Maj & Mrs Ron Morris, Maj & Mrs Barry Reed, Maj Pat Wollocombe, Capt and Mrs Mike Doran, Capt & Mrs John Pollock, Lt & Mrs Peter Ottino and Lt Jeremy Syers.

Col Rex Cain as President Designate welcomed the guests and said that although it was an honour to be taking over from Brig Tony Pielow there was also great sadness that Tony had to stand down due to increasing immobility. No one had done more for the Regiment over the past twenty three years, a longer period of devoted service than any previous Colonel of the Regiment. However, we were determined that his experience and wise counsel should not be lost and therefore he would be appointed. Honorary Vice President and continue to play an important part in Regimental affairs.

PWRR

A comprehensive record of PWRR's activities can be obtained by becoming a subscriber to the annual issue of the Journal of the Regiment which is issued in December. A special concession allows members to take advantage of an introductory offer of £5.00 in the first year and £10.00 per annum thereafter. In addition it also reports on the activities of the OCA's of the former Regiments. You will find it to be money well spent.

To subscribe write to the Editor, the Journal of The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, Howe Barracks, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1JY.

THE ANNUAL SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE SATURDAY 17TH MAY 2008

The Annual Service was held in the Regimental Chapel St. Paul's Cathedral and in accordance with the now established practice of a morning service was very well attended by members of the Association and their guests.

The service opened with the choir and ministers entering to the Regimental slow march "Caledonian". The choir then sang an anthem before the bidding and the Lord's Prayer. The hymns which were chosen for the service were all well known thus the congregation in conjunction, with a very fine choir, were able to sing with conviction. Prayers during the service were led by the Reverend Prebendary Patrick Tuft, the lessons were read by Major C L Lawrence MC and Colonel R M Cain OBE DL. The turning of the page of the Book of Remembrance and the wreath laying was performed by Major R E B Morris MBE. We were honoured in that the address was given by the Reverend D E Wilkes CB OBE QHC Chaplain General H M Land Forces. The blessing was given by the Canon in Residence Reverend Edmund Newell and the service closed with the National Anthem. The music before and after the service was played by the Band of the Royal Yeomanry under the direction of Major R Falshaw BA. FLCM. ARCM. PSM.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND THE ANNUAL REUNION SATURDAY 17TH MAY 2008

The Annual General Meeting was scheduled for 13.00 hrs so, this timing required a speedy movement from St Paul's to the Union Jack Club for those who wished to slake their thirst after the sanctimonious shouting which had been performed on the hymns during the annual service. However, due to Brigadier B A M Pielow having decided to resign as President of the Association after some sixty five years in and connected with the Regiment since he joined the 5th (Cadet) Battalion back in 1942 or 1943, this necessitated an Extraordinary Meeting of the Executive Committee prior to the Association's AGM.

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Middlesex Regimental Association held at the Union Jack Club at 12.30pm on Saturday 17th May 2008.

Present Major C L Lawrence MC Chairman, Colonel R M Cain OBE DL, Major S L Henshaw TD, Major REB Morris MBE, Captain M J S Doran TD LLB, Mr M J Ward BEM, Major D Bradley BEM Secretary.

(a) The Secretary informed members that he had been notified that the President of the Association, Brigadier B.A.M.Pielow J.P. had with reluctance due to ill health resigned as President with immediate effect.

(b) Major Lawrence spoke briefly in appreciation of Brigadier Tony's long service and dedication to the Regiment and the Association so ably supported by his wife, Ann. He has been and will remain the staunchest of Diehards. Col.Cain endorsed the Chairman's sentiments and proposed that Brigadier Tony should be accorded the title of Honorary Vice President of the Association. Seconded by Major Henshaw and carried by acclamation.

(c) Colonel Cain indicated his acceptance and appreciation of the confidence shown in him.

(d) Colonel Cain then formally resigned from the Executive Committee.

(e) Colonel Cain (in accordance with Rule 14) then nominated Major W.G.A.Crumley to fill the vacancy on the Executive.

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 12.40.pm. The Chairman was asked to inform members attending the immediately following A.G.M. of the above decisions and it is hoped that the editor of the Diehard will include a copy of these minutes in the next edition.

Annual General Meeting held at the Union Jack Club on Saturday 17th May 2008

Present Major D Bradley, Secretary, Major W Crumley, Captain M Doran, Major D Harwood, Major S Henshaw, Major C Lawrence, Chairman, Major R Morris, Lt. P Ottino, Messrs I Aldridge, G Barton, E Bedford, A Broadbent, A Brown, A Burford, T Canton, M Deakin, P Dyer, B Finch, J Hamilton, J Hawkins, J Humphrey, M Hutchins, J Innes, G Large, P Long, F Phillips, T Price, J Raby, D Reed, A Richardson, A Rudge, J Shore, B Tate, T Taylor, M Ward, K Williams, J Yates, G Young. 4 Signatures were not legible; 3 late comers did not sign the register.

Major C Lawrence, Chairman, welcomed members to the meeting and announced the change in President and the appointment of Colonel Cain to the office.

Apologies members who had sent their apologies were recorded.

Benevolence The report appertaining to the period 1st January to 31st December 2007 was published in The Spring newsletter.

Finance The Secretary explained to those present the accounts and advised them that during the period 1st January to 31st December that there was an excess of income over expenditure of £14516.46 and it was explained that the figures detailed below were in expressed in Pounds, pence having been ignored.

Dividends from investments	£23749
Sale of shares (Book of Remembrance/Lectern)	£25000
Expenditure on Donations/Benevolence	£12105
ABF annuities	£2160

Expenditure for Service of Remembrance and the Annual Reunion £9525 with a cost to the fund of £6566

The overall value of the fund as at 31st December 2007 was £692,210. The fund remains very healthy, thus meeting the needs of the charity and future benevolence cases.

The figures have been consolidated into the PWRR Benevolent fund and form part of the audited accounts.

Questions No questions had been received in writing by the Secretary prior to the meeting.

Any other business No matters were raised, other than a vote of thanks was recorded to the Executive Committee for their efforts during the year.

Proposed by A. Burford
Seconded by A. Brown
Carried unanimously

Annual Reunion



Presentation of a certificate to Fred Phillips

by the restaurant staff. Once the meal had finished Colonel R Cain gave a short address and the Association presented a framed picture of L/Cpl. Johnson Beharry VC, to join the many other holders of the award which are displayed on the Club walls. The reunion lunch was much enjoyed by all, who then retired to the bar to recall the sunny slopes



Presentation of a certificate to Alf Burford



Presentation of a framed picture of L/Cpl Johnson Beharry VC to the Union Jack Club

The reunion continues to benefit from a lunchtime event with another full house. The members and their guests enjoyed another first class meal comprising of either Crab Mirabelle or Melon, Roast Rack of Lamb, French Apple Tart, Coffee, Petit Fours provided by the catering staff of the Union Jack Club and well served

of yesteryear and who had kept the faith by returning again this year in accordance with last years promises. All vowing God willing they will be there again next year as this year had again proved to be a resounding success.

Report on the current position regarding the War Memorial at Mill Hill Barracks

Following the decision by the Executive Committee at their last meeting that the War Memorial at Inglis Barracks should be relocated on the Ridgeway opposite St Paul's Church and that a sub-committee should be appointed to achieve this aim- letters were written to the leader of the London Borough of Barnet (LBB) and to Mr Kernaghan at Defence Estates on 29 March 2007.

The LBB was requested to note our wish to relocate The Memorial and to support the move and Defence Estates were asked to confirm that the MOD would be responsible for the cost.

In his letter of 22 November 2006 the leader of the Council of LBB had already suggested the Ridgeway site as possible choice and confirmed that the final decision rests with us, so no response to our latest letter was necessarily expected.

However it was still important to establish who would meet the cost of any move and when no reply was received from the MOD a reminder was sent by Colonel Ball on 28 June 2007. At the farewell parade at Mill Hill on 5 July 2007 we were able to speak to General O'Donoghue (Chief Of Defence Materiel) and at his suggestion a letter was sent to Brigadier Hickson (Director BFPO) seeking his help. After two reminders from the Brigadier a reply was received from Mr Kernaghan dated 31 August 2007.

In this letter he indicated that the Area Action Plan which will set out how the Mill Hill East Triangle (including the Barracks) should be developed will shortly be presented to LBB and is expected to recommend the retention of the Officer's Mess and the War Memorial. However the MOD and VSM Estates (the agency responsible for the disposal of MOD land) accept the maintenance of the memorial and any relocation costs if they arise should be an obligation to be met by the Developer when the legal agreement with LBB is prepared and agreed.

It seems to us that both LBB and the MOD hope that we shall accept the Action Plan to retain the Memorial where it is. Clearly, we must wait for the Plan to be published, if only to avoid antagonising LBB, although it is unlikely that we shall change our mind over the Ridgeway Option.

In order to place on record our position we have replied to Mr Kernaghan (with copies to LBB, VSM Estates and Brig. Hickson) making the following points: -

We are willing to wait for the publication of the Area Action Plan.

We do not expect to change our preference for the Ridgeway site.

RHQ PWRR is responsible for the preservation of the heritage of its forebear Regiments and must be consulted before any final decision on the eventual Location of the Memorial is taken.

RMC

An Hundred Years of the Reserve Forces

This year marks a century of the Reserve Forces and the Regiment has had some excellent battalions, who both fought in both World Wars, sadly now all disbanded and their Colours laid up. The only representation and spirit of the regiment being carried on by B (Queens Company) The London Regiment stationed at Edgware.

A short history of the Reserve Forces

The military failures in the second Boer War which resulted in heavy defeats in the early stages, was attributed to the quality of Britain's reserve forces who were poorly trained and ill equipped. A Royal Commission was set up which led to the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act 1907. Richard Burton Haldane was the driving force and the first Territorial Force was formed in April 1908. This brought about a combination of militia and volunteers as the TF promised a better structure of training and equipment in readiness for war on the Continent which was anticipated.

So with the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 the Territorial Force units were all mobilised some units replaced regular units on garrison duties overseas in order that regular troops could join the British Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders. Other units of the TF went to France and the London Scottish became the first Territorial Battalion to go into battle at Messines where they suffered considerable casualties. During World War One Territorial units served on all fronts including Egypt, Gallipoli, Palestine, East Africa, Mesopotamia, Italy, North Russia, France and Flanders.

After WW1 the Territorial Force was reconstituted as the Territorial Army in 1920 and was embodied for 90 days during the general strike of 1926. With the dark clouds gathering in Europe in 1939 and the fear of war the TA was doubled in size and when war broke out in September a number of TA units went to France with the BEF. Again the TA fought in all theatres of the war from North Africa, Europe and the Far East. When the Second World War was over the strength and organisation was drastically changed of the TA, with the infantry having many battalions disbanded. With National Service the TA provided continuation training for men leaving the regular army and the strength of units was much enhanced. Further changes were again made in the 1950's and 1960's but the biggest change was the formation of the Territorial & Army Volunteer Reserve in 1967 with four various categories designated TAVR1 to IV, but by 1969 all TAVR 3 units had been disbanded or reduced to a cadre. The TA was again enlarged in 1971 and during the 1970's and 80's were earmarked as reinforcements for BAOR or Home Defence in the UK. With the break up of the Iron Curtain countries, again the TA was reviewed under options for change and despite reductions has continued to see members mobilised to assist the Regular Army on current operations where ever they may be serving.

On the formation of the Territorial Force in London in April 1908 the units which were administered by the Middlesex Territorial Association were the 7th 8th 9th 10th Battalions the Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex Regiment) and Middlesex Brigade Company Army Service Corps.

Prior to the formation of consolidated units brought about by the 1907 Act, in 1882 Officers and men recruited from the Post Office in London who served with the 24th Middlesex Rifle Volunteers went to Egypt where they were employed as an Army Post Office Corps. For their services they were awarded The Battle Honour Egypt 1882, subsequently because of their success they were requested to form a Field Telegraph Corps which served in the Sudan in 1885.

Thus the long march of the Reserve Forces has been a constantly changing pattern with the amalgamation of units and changing roles.

TA 100 A Service of Thanksgiving at St Paul's Cathedral, March Past and Reception to Mark The Centenary of The Formation of The Territorial Army and Reserve Forces and Cadet Associations 15th May 2008.

Six members of Hounslow Branch were fortunate to be invited by The City of London Corporation to a Reception at the Guildhall after first attending the Service of Thanksgiving at St Paul's Cathedral. At 10.55hrs, a procession, entered the cathedral led by a retired sergeant from the Coldstream Guards carrying the Processional Cross of the Guards' Chapel accompanied by the Choir, the College of Minor Canons, the TA Chaplains, London District, the Chaplain General of HM Forces, and the College of Canons who proceeded from the Dean's Aisle to take their places in Quire and under the Dome. Before the commencement of the Service the Lord Mayor Locums Tenens was received at the Great West Doors. The Service proved to be very moving, music before the service was played by The Band of The Royal Yeomanry and the fanfare by trumpeters of The Royal Artillery.

After the service those present formed up in four detachments to march to the Guildhall, the order of march was No 1 Detachment comprising London's serving Territorials led by the Regimental Goat Mascot, The Corps of Drums and Band of 3rd Battalion The Royal Welch, No 2 Detachment again made up of London Territorials was headed by The Band of The Royal Artillery, No 3 Detachment with The Corps of Drums of The Honourable Artillery leading the Standards and Banners of various Reserve Forces and retired members of the Territorial Army, The Band of the Welsh Guards led No 4 detachment which comprised of retired members of the Reserve Forces. The Salute was taken outside the Cathedral by The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor Locum Tenens, Alderman the Lord Levene of Portsoken KBE, his bodyguard was provided by Pikemen and Musketeers from the Honourable Artillery Company.

On arrival at the Guildhall the marching parties were dismissed and after the relevant security checks, which had been a feature of the morning, had been completed, with two thousand persons on parade the Guildhall, which has a capacity for only 750, had arranged for other venues to cater for the overspill. Fortunately Hounslow Branch members had tickets for the Guildhall, where the meal provided was excellent and much enjoyed after the march from St Paul's to the Guildhall.

Diehards join the Buffs for a week-end in Ypres



Ten Enfield members took advantage of the invitation from Major Peter White (Buffs) to join them on their final visit to honour the dead of WWI at the Menin Gate in Ypres and at the Tyne Cot cemetery close by. We joined the Buffs and the Diehards from the Hounslow branch at Dover and after a smooth channel crossing to Calais we travelled by coach to Ypres arriving a little later than scheduled. Both branches of the Middlesex stayed in the Sultan hotel (the last of the three allocated hotels for the party) just around the corner from the hotel occupied by our friends the Buffs. The Sultan was more like a hostel than a hotel and was something of a disappointment. The rooms were small, cramped and very sparsely

furnished with twin beds two feet six wide and far too low for comfort. The cooked breakfast which consisted of egg on toast or egg on toast was a DIY self catering job which we cooked taking turns on a small griddle along with an ancient one slot electric toaster. On the upside the bar didn't look too bad and appeared to be the best part of the Sultan, optimistically we looked forward to spending an hour or two after dinner, happily quaffing the local brew and swapping tales with our fellow Diehards from Hounslow but shock, horror, it was not to be. The bar remained firmly closed all evening and indeed for the entire duration of our stay. We couldn't help feeling a little put out next morning when we met up with the Buffs and were regaled with details of their spacious air conditioned rooms and lavish full English breakfasts.

Despite our initial misery we soon made light of the situation and there were some memorable moments of hilarity arising from our stay at the Sultan. Sunday morning broke clear and gloriously warm and after our "eggs on toast" there was just time for a quick stroll around the square, taking in the delicious smells from the chocolate shops and stopping to admire the pastry shops with their windows filled with cakes that were works of art, before making our way across the square and beyond the magnificent Cloth Hall



The Parade at the Menin Gate

spectators sang along to the more popular medleys, each in their own language. Brilliant!

Four of the Middlesex contingent were unable to march to the Menin Gate in the evening due to age or immobility. The remaining Diehards decided to support their comrades in the static rear rank in a display of regimental unity and as a mark of respect for the Buffs on their parade at the Gate. Colonel Cain OBE laid a wreath on behalf of the Middlesex Regiment. Monday was another fine day and we were all up and packed early leaving just enough time after cooking our "eggs on toast" for a swift visit to the shops before bidding farewell to the Sultan and travelling to the Tyne Cot cemetery for a short parade and memorial service where Colonel Cain laid a further wreath on our behalf. A visit to the Tyne Cot cemetery can be an emotional experience. Beautifully kept, it is a place where only the birdsong disturbs the quiet, a place where men weep unashamedly and nearly all ask the same question. WHY?

After leaving Tyne Cot we visited Passchendaele Museum before enjoying lunch and leaving for home.

Despite the "dreaded Sultan" this was an excellent weekend. Ypres is a lovely old Flemish city and it was great spending time with the Hounslow lads. Would we do it again? I think we just might.

A Brown

Odd Jottings

A new cemetery is to be created to bury the remains of 400 British and Australian troops who had been buried in a French mass grave. The bodies found in North East France will be interned in individual plots, as close as possible to where they were found. The men will be given full military honours, they died in the Battle of Fromelles in July 1916, where the Australians suffered heavy casualties in one of the bloodiest of battles.

Roy Bishop, who will be ninety in November, made his annual pilgrimage to Europe to lay a wreath on the 64th anniversary of Normandy. Roy wonders if there are any 'D' Coy veterans still around from those days.

Alan Jennings who served on the Enfield Branch committee before moving to Eastbourne has now caught the flying bug and is learning to pilot an aircraft. Alan has made six flights to date.

On Sunday 29th June, several members of Enfield Branch and ladies paraded with their branch standard on the veteran's day parade. The Enfield Brass Band led the parade followed by the Mayor, John Ryan MP, members of the local authority, the Veterans, Cadets and the RAF Cadet Band. The parade marched off from RBL Trinity Street to the War Memorial Chase Side for a short service, before marching through Enfield town centre past the market place where the salute was taken by the Mayor.

Six members of Hounslow branch received invitations to attend the TA100 Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on 10th July last. P Long, J Raby, G Stunt, M Ward, J Wells and G Young accompanied by wives or a guest were extremely lucky with the weather, the event the previous day took place on a very wet day.

Hounslow branch made their annual visit to Harefield to attend the ANZAC Day service in the church of St Mary the Virgin and the short service which is held in Commonwealth War Grave Cemetery afterwards. Whilst there they met John Franks another member of the Association.

Pamela Harrison, wrote to Major Bradley to say that she visits Major Frank Waldron's grave at Christmas and on his birthday to place flowers.

Taffy Evans has written from Manilla to say that he has received a letter from HM The Queen saying that she was touched to learn of Taffy's fifty years of service to the Crown.

Major C J Bellingham wrote to say that he read with interest "Freedom is not Free" by R Jeal. He, Major Bellingham served in Korea with 1 Royal Sussex (1956/57) and was indirectly involved with Gloucester Memorial, mentioned in the article, as he was Intelligence Corporal with HQ Coy.

On Albuhera Day, Alf & Mary Burford accompanied by Jim Innes made the journey to Mill Hill to lay a wreath on the Regimental War Memorial. Alf recited the exaltation.

John (Joe) Mullane, who served in Europe (Normandy) with the 8th and 1st Battalions stationed at Chester, Ripon Yorkshire and Margate from January 1943 to September 1944 has written from New Zealand to wish all members the very best.

An epistle received from John Farnborough, ex 1/7th Battalion, sings the virtues of a long and happy marriage but unfortunately after 67 years of bliss he lost his wife Jenny in May.

Members of the Executive Committee attended Founder's Day at the Royal Hospital Chelsea on Thursday 5th June. Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal reviewed the parade. Currently we have two In Pensioners at the hospital.

National Service Years

It is always a pity to spoil a good story but to preserve the reputation of the Newsletter as an accurate record I must correct some of the flights of fancy in Mr Balaam's "National Service Years".

RSM Britten, Coldstream Guards, never visited our Depot. He was too busy terrorising Mons Officer Cadet School but there was a Mr Britten (Middlesex Regiment) briefly at the Depot before RSM Pat Donovan arrived.

Although I never sailed on the Lancashire I did travel on three other troopships in those days and catering was always strictly under the control of the ship's officers. I would be very surprised if soldiers in transit were involved in the actual cooking.

Army food in Hong Kong in the 1950's was not inspiring but it was adequate and I never heard of scavenging for food and water nor were there cross

border clashes with the Chinese. Collecting illegal immigrants crossing the border was the main task.

Sadly the Regiment was not given the Freedom of the City of London we had to be content with the Freedom of the Borough of Hendon.

The two detachments sent from the Depot to Canvey Island and Shoeburyness were commanded by the late Hugh Evans and myself. Our task was to build sandbag flood defences. The Emergency Services had already dealt with the casualties before we arrived.

Perhaps some other former soldiers from those days would like to add their comments?

RMC

Obituaries

Sgt Ernie Alsop who served with the 2/7th Battalion during World War Two died during April 2008. The funeral was held at Langley Crematorium, Eastbourne on Friday the 18th of April 2008. There was a strong gathering of family and friends and the Regiment was represented by Alan Jennings.

Frank Ashton who was awarded a Military Medal whilst serving with the 2/7th Battalion in World War Two died on the 29th of May 2008. His funeral was held at the Enfield Crematorium on the 12th of June 2008. Fred Phillips, together with members from the Enfield Branch, attended to say goodbye and to represent the Regiment.

Robert Bartholemew (Bart), died on 13th August, he served with 70th Mx young soldiers from where he went to Burma and joined the Commandos, on release from the army he enlisted into 11th Bn Parachute Regiment (8th Mx) TA, when the unit was disbanded he stayed on with 8MX and on the amalgamation of 7th/8th/9th Bn's Mx he served with 5Mx as mortar sergeant. His funeral was held in Cambridge on 20th August.

Richard Child died on the 5th of May 2005. Known as Dickie he served with the Princess Louise's Kensington Regiment during World War Two and thereafter with the 1st Bn the Middlesex Regiment. His funeral was held at Forest Park Crematorium on Saturday the 17th of May 2008.

John Chynoweth who was a National Service Officer served with the 6th Battalion of the Malay Regiment and then undertook his part time TA service with the 7th Battalion died in 2007. That is all the information we have.

Jack Disney died on 2nd July, a staunch member of Enfield Branch, he had been from suffering cancer which he did not allow to keep him from branch meetings. Jack's funeral was held on 17th July at Gordon hill cemetery which was attended by several members of the Enfield branch.

Ginger (Peter) Grant died on the 17th of July 2008. He served with the 1st Battalion and the 4th Battalion the Queen's Regiment in Gibraltar, Northern Ireland and Guyana and then with the Demonstration Battalion at the School of Infantry, Warminster. His funeral was held at the Enfield Crematorium on Monday the 26th of July 2008. Members of the Enfield Branch joined the family to say goodbye.

Major Henry Maxwell Fowler Langley died on the 9th of April 2008 aged 92. This is the only information we currently have. We do know he served as the Adjutant to the 7th Battalion in the late 1940's.

George Pfister died on the 6th of June 2008. His funeral was held at the Brentwood Methodist Church on the 18th of June. Major Derrick Harwood represented the Regiment. George who served with the 1/7th Battalion during World War Two was a regular attendee at the 1/7th Reunions and Lunches.

M M A W Smith known to all as Smudge died on the 11th of April 2008 at the age of 67 whilst a patient in Charing Cross Hospital. Smudge joined the Middlesex Regiment in 1964 and his first posting after basic training was to the 1st Battalion in Gibraltar. During his long career in the Regiment firstly badged as Middlesex and then Queen's (the new large regiment) he served in British Guyana, Northern Ireland, Germany, Belize and then again in Gibraltar. He decided to leave the Army in 1979 at the 15 year point. Some months after leaving he decided to enlist in the TA and he served a further 6 years with 257 General Hospital RAMC. Smudge was the type of soldier so necessary within an infantry battalion. He enjoyed working as an "employed soldier". Batman, barman, silverman and a storeman were all posts that he filled from time to time during his service. I can say how much I appreciated his worth when he worked for me all those years ago.

He was a strong supporter of the Royal British Legion and was a member of the Putney Branch for many years. At the time of his death he was the Branch Vice Chairman.

In civilian life he found a job as a caretaker in a flats and housing complex (Fairacres) in Roehampton quite close to where I live and so over the years we saw a lot of Smudge. When ill health forced him to retire a year or so early he sought the help of the Regimental Association to gain entry as an In Pensioner at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. He settled in well and he enjoyed life as a Chelsea Pensioner and shortly after his arrival in March 2006 he became a Ward Corporal - promotion at last!

His funeral was held on the 28th of April 2008 in the Chapel at the Royal Hospital. There was a large gathering from the In Pensioners, The Middlesex Regimental Association, Putney Branch of the Royal British Legion and his friends from Fairacres to say a fond goodbye.

RM

Ginger Tann has died in Australia aged 88. We currently know nothing more. Ginger fought with the 1st Battalion in Hong Kong and was a Fareast POW.

Avery Frederick White member of the 1st Battalion in Hong Kong and subsequently a Far East POW died in Australia on the 29th of May 2008 aged 89. He survived the sinking of the Lisbon Maru, when on route to Japan, where he finished the war.

John Lofting

John Lofting died on the 28th of May 2008 after a long and courageous fight against cancer. He served with the 1st Battalion and then the Queen's Regiment. His funeral took place on the 5th of June 2008 at St Augustine's Church, Broxbourne. There was a very large congregation with a strong gathering from the Regiment to say farewell.

John joined the Army from school at Hailebury and graduated from Sandhurst in early 1959 - planning to join the Royal Fusiliers, but was persuaded by Colonel Ian Battie to join the Regiment because his cricket prowess would be put to better use. This turned out to be true as his cricket career proceeded along with his military career. Army cricket, (later captain) and combined services cricket were all part of his summertime

activity, together with hockey and rugby for the Regiment in the autumn and winter months. Within the Regiment, his pleasant and outgoing character ensured that he made many friends and supporters. As a young captain, he was chosen to be ADC to General Willoughby, both in UK and Aden in the mid sixties where operational conditions applied.

He left the Army in the late 1960's to join the brewing firm of Watneys and a little later became the Assistant Secretary at the MCC where he continued an active cricket career as well as managing two MCC tours abroad. He was the last in a long line of fine Middlesex regimental officers who played and worked for the MCC over many years before and since the Second World War. He then took a managerial role as director of the local governments sporting and social activities in the Lea Valley area near his home at Hatfield until his retirement.

Throughout his life John was always outward going kind, amiable and very reliable. He had a strong sense of humour, which was always evident and which supported him and his family during his final illness. He leaves a widow, Geraldine, and a son and daughter, Alex and Kate. He was a fine and perhaps classic example of a good regimental Officer.

GB

George Dawson

G C Dawson, Major. As noted in the Spring newsletter (No 99) George died on the 6th of October 2007, aged 94. He was born in 1913 the son of Lt Col A G Dawson who was killed in 1917 near Vimy Ridge whilst commanding the 4th Battalion. Details of George's career are sketchy; he originally studied engineering at Birmingham University but joined the Army before finishing his course. It would appear that he joined the 1st Battalion, serving in Singapore and then Hong Kong where he set up the first Dinghy Sailing Club in the Colony. He was not with the Battalion during the siege and fall for he spent much of the war years with a clandestine unit in China, training locals in basic guerrilla warfare to cause as much trouble as possible to the Japanese. When it became clear that their position was untenable the US Air Force extracted them but the pilot got lost and those on board had to take to parachutes very shortly before the plane crashed into a mountain. It is not known how or where the party emerged. George rejoined the 1st Battalion in 1952 in Hong Kong and went with them to Austria; he commanded the British contingent at the ceremony held in Vienna to mark the formal end of the occupation (see newsletter 84). On leaving Austria George served on the staff at Mons, Cheltenham and

Colchester before becoming an RO at the Staff College, Camberley. Throughout his career, and more so in retirement, George devoted much of his time to sailing; he was an active member of the Army Sailing Association.

CLL

Sadly we have learnt of the death of the following members of the Regiment for which no other details are available.

L W Burbidge; J H Hedgeley; L C Howick; J Pluck; R Usher; A Veryard.

ROUGH JUSTICE The book reviewed

In 1953 the 1st Battalion Middlesex Regiment returning from the Korean War began a two years spell in Austria joining the occupational forces of America, France and the USSR. Whilst regarded as a cushy posting a 'Cold War' existed between east and west. It was essential for the professional core of the battalion to concentrate on moulding the large number of National Servicemen in the lower ranks into highly trained, well-disciplined infantrymen fit for combat in the deep snows of winter or "show-stopping" ceremonials in the summer heat of Vienna. Payment for N.S. men was four shillings a day or 20p today. One such N.S. man was Keith Watson whose book 'Rough Justice' I have just finished reading.

Anyone who served in Austria will instantly recognise the atmosphere. Others will find the description of characters, their attitudes, language, highs and lows, fascinating. The highs, by today's standards may seem ridiculous - the ecstasy of a mess-tin full of compo stew eaten whilst standing up to their loins in deep snow or swigging Gosser beer whilst drenched with sweat after hard drilling in the near tropical heat. The lows, having to tolerate clothing and equipment little better than my father's in 1914-1918.

This historical novel centres on a true event, a catastrophic barn fire at Mattighofen during manoeuvres with the U.S. Army. Four men in 'C' Company died and eight others were severely injured. A Court of Inquiry, held to establish the cause, was non-committal. An officer had admitted placing a 'Firecracker' to wake the men who were sleeping in the barn. The author, who escaped with eighty others, has thoroughly researched the findings of the Tribunal, details of which were obtained from the Public

Record Office. He quotes extensively from the records but suffice to say, all participants have been fictionalised. The fictional element in the book centres on two characters who intend wreaking their own vengeance on the man they hold responsible - rough justice by any stretch of the imagination. They express their opinions of what happened but it is up to the reader to form his own as the story reaches its climax.

As a rare example of what N.S. experience really meant for some it is outstanding. I never hear at the reunions moaning criticisms of "Oh! It was all boredom, bullshit and two wasted years!" We, regulars and N.S. men, learnt to have pride in the Regiment and ourselves.

I thoroughly recommend this book to anybody with an interest in military history, especially to those who, when asked by their grandchildren "What did you do in the Army, granddad?" can reach up to the book shelf, hand them 'Rough Justice' and tell them, "Shut up, read and be thankful that times have changed."

I would finally add that The Court of Inquiry evidence in the book is true in every respect -even the statements of witnesses. Many of them are now dead but the names have been changed. All other characters in the publication are fictitious, apart from MPs who were in the public domain. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead is purely coincidental.

P F Dyer



The Military Funeral of the victims of the fire at Mattighofen

From Canada

A Canloan Officer book re-published.

Rex Fendick a Canloan Officer has sent us the following message :-

Hello All

Greetings to all on the Sixth of June . I take this opportunity to tell of an event of which I am very proud. Sometime after I sold the last of my personal memoir, a Canloan Officer, I was contacted by a publisher in the U.K . He had been told of my book and asked if he could be allowed to republish it. After brief negotiations this was agreed and as of today, the book is now on the market. The only change from the original edition is that, at his request, I sent him my original maps and he has reproduced them in the book in full colour rather than the black and white in my original book.

The publisher is MLRS Books, who publish a wide range of military material. Their website is mlrsbooks.co.uk. My book can be ordered directly through the website or by mail. Needless to say, I am delighted to have such a prestigious publisher re-publish my book.

Best wishes to all and please keep in touch. Although I can no longer use my own computer due to failing eyesight, my son Reg has access to my mailbox and any and all mail will be happily answered.

Every best wish

Rex.

Email address rfendick@nbnet.nb.ca

Our readers will recall the article in our last issue (No 99) together with photograph of a smiling young Diehard and the queries regarding his equipment. The following letter perhaps goes a long way to clarifying the issue of kit during World War 1.

I am delighted that you have found my 'Arthur Carter' material of interest and regarding the query over the equipment, the leather rifle sling was quite common prior too and in August 1914 among the Regular Army battalions. It was probably retained by individual Commanding Officers such as Colonel Hull, long after the Pattern 1908 Web Equipment was issued and is evident in a number of photographs of troops, including Middlesex, heading for Mons. Not all I hasten to add, for I suspect that reservists may have been issued with the 1908 webbing rifle sling, hence the mixture that can be seen. Regarding his missing bayonet scabbard and entrenching tool handle we shall never know now, but he seems to still have the bayonet frog and his rifle is certainly cocked.

The officers' pattern haversack worn by Private Carter was not unusual in 1914 and can be seen in photographs of both infantry and cavalry, although it is not possible to say if it was in common usage in 4th Middlesex. Complete battalions returning home later from India arrived wearing them and did not change on going to France. They were also armed with the long Lee-Enfield that was changed for the SMLE before they embarked for France. There are even photographs of guards at POW camps in the UK armed with the .45 single shot Martini-Henry with one pipe- clayed ammunition pouch around 1915.

Having a particular interest in the method of winding puttees throughout the Army during the Great War, with the 4th Battalion, other than the transport, adopting two vees at the back of the calf and the trousers turned over, our man has the end of the puttee and tape pointing forward. Not in any way unique, but the normal practice in many battalions was for it to finish on the side pointing to the rear. A photograph in the NAM Archives depicts a 4th Battalion post-war guard mounting shortly before the Battalion was disbanded with all of the guard adopting the two vees at the back, although I had previously believed that pre-war it was only the custom for Sergeants and above to adopt this particular pattern.

Some years ago it was my good fortune to repackage the entire collection of photographs held by the NAM and they have numerous examples of the early volunteers wearing odd items of equipment and as late as 1918 some

infantry units are still wearing the 1914 Pattern all leather equipment that was issued to many of the early Service Battalions. Like so many things military, it is a virtual minefield for the uninitiated, for almost anything goes when equipment is in short supply, as it was in 1914-15.

Finally, as you will have probably gathered by now, the Great War has been my abiding interest since early days and I am inclined to ramble on when in full flow. Needless to say, should anything surface, for there are a lot of us with Great War interests about, I have passed on the information to a friend at Canterbury, who in turn has numerous Great War sources that may well turn up something new? Should anything surface I will keep you informed.

D Barrett

We thank Mr Barrett for his informative comments.

New Members

The following have joined the Association since the publication of the last newsletter :-

JC JHarris Cpl Sp Coy 1st Bn 1952 - 1957
D J Lester L/Cpl Band 1950-1959
T C Overton Pte 1st Bn 1955 - 1957

Jeff Howard goes back to Normandy and on to Scotland

On 7th May Jeff together with 240 Normandy Veterans was taken back to Normandy in eighty London taxis, sponsored by the London Taxi Benevolent Association for War Disabled, for a five day visit which included many official receptions and ceremonies. They visited war cemeteries at Ranville and Bayeaux. Jeff was able to lay a Middlesex and 51st Highland Division wreath at the Highland Division memorial at Bois de Monte. There were two other Diehards in the group both were ex 1st Battalion men, it was a most memorable occasion. Jeff also went to Perth on 8th June, on behalf of 1/7th Battalion to attend the final parade of 51st HD where a tapestry was unveiled in St John's Kirk. The tapestry depicts the role of every unit who served with the Division, the Diehards are represented by an illustration of a Vickers Gun and crew in action. Jeff states that it was a very emotional time attended by all the dignitaries of Perth.

An old soldier Remembers

Just out of hospital, Tom Roberts aged 88, took to reading some of his many World War Two books again. He was quite intrigued to re-read the book "The Evacuation of Dunkirk" by Robert Jackson.

The scale of such a successful rescue of 198 thousand men made Tom realise how lucky he was to be alive. Particularly when he read in the book that there were few survivors when the minesweeper "The Skipjack" on which he was travelling went down like a stone in less than five minutes, she was carrying 275 men at the time.

Tom was lucky to be on board The Skipjack and was on the top deck when the mighty explosion of a bomb's direct hit, which went down the funnel, threw him off the deck. In the sea and hanging on to a piece of debris for dear life, until he was picked up by a very small vessel later, along with a handful of others.

Tom recalled that one of the few rescued by this small vessel was not so lucky, as when picked up it was found that he had lost a leg however, he was well cared for under the circumstance of the rescue mission.

Tom never knew did know if the man survived or not. On arrival back in England Tom volunteered to join 1/7th Battalion Middlesex Regiment who were the support battalion for 51st Highland Division and he went to North Africa, followed by the Italian campaign and finally back to the UK to take part in the D Day landings. On reflection Tom feels that he was very lucky man.

DR

News from Spain

With no members of the Regimental Association making the Annual Albuhera Pilgrimage, Celia Denney has written to advise me that the usual commemorations took place in both Elvas and Albuhera. This year there were joint winners of The PWRR Cup, in the absence of any Diehards, Bryan Hazard of the Buffs made the presentation to the two young ladies who had made the most progress in the English language during the academic year. Wreaths were laid at the PWRR Regimental Memorial.



Winners of the PWRR Cup, Carmen Gomez and Paloma Gonzalez with Bryan Hazard who made the presentations

Seeking information - Lost trails replies via the editor

Helen French is seeking information on a former member of the Regiment who served with 4 Bn Queens and was in the steel band and drums. Helen is unsure as whether his name was Hardy or Harding, apparently he was a friend of her sister and she wishes to make contact. Helen's husband served for many years with the Regiment.

P H Adams who served as a carrier driver with the 2nd Battalion in 1942 with 7 platoon C Coy. After being discharged from Palestine, he re-enlisted into 1st Battalion in 1952 serving with the MT Platoon in Cyprus. Mr Adams would like to hear from old comrades.

John Hart has written from New Zealand enclosing the following photograph.



"The Cream"

*Back row L-R: Eels, Gardiner, Palmer, Penfold, Goodwin & Lofty
Front row L-R: Watts, Carter, Hart & Bedwell*

He writes that they were the cream of Albuhera platoon and were knocked into shape by Sgt De Costa and Cpl Buckley: he goes on to say that if anyone remembers him he would be delighted to hear from them. John also points out that the last article in issue (No 99) listed him as a retired dairy farmer which was incorrect.

If any members remember me and would like to get in touch my address is John Hart, 207, Centennial Ave., Thames 3500, Waikato New Zealand

THE ARMY CHILDREN CHRONICLING BRITISH ARMY CHILDREN'S HISTORY

www.airchhistory.co.uk

The Army Children Archive (TACA), which was launched online on 1 October 2007, was established by Clare Gibson, a writer and researcher, history graduate and one-time army child, to collect, record and preserve details of the unique aspects of growing up as the child of a soldier serving in the British Army, whether that growing up was done during the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth or twenty-first century.

Although it is still in its infancy, it is hoped that TACA will eventually provide a useful source for social, military and Family historians, and particularly that it will interest former and current army children, who, on the one hand, may find that it ignites some sparks of recognition that in turn trigger a string of memories, and, on the other, may enjoy the sense of having a rich history all of their own.

Some of the subjects that are covered in TACA online include:

- army children's lives and times;
- modes of travel between postings, and between boarding school and home;
- the reality of life on arrival at postings within the UK and abroad;
- accommodation;
- schooling;
- army children's memories;

- army children in literature;
- famous army children;
- tips on researching army children for family historians;
- links to related websites; and
- recommendations for further reading.

REGIMENTAL GOODS

The following are held in stock and prices are available on request to the Regimental Shop, RHQ PWRR Howe Barracks Canterbury Kent CT1 1JY. Cheques and postal Orders should be made payable to PWRR Account No 0566700 Telephone No 01227 818058.

Prices on application to the Regimental Shop.

Blazer Badges
Ice Buckets miniature side drum with Regimental Emblazon
plus postage and packing
Ties (Old pattern maroon and gold)
Ties (New pattern with maroon and gold thin stripes)
Ties Officers Club (Silk)
Middlesex Regt. Cap badges good quality replicas
Old Comrades lapel badges
Regimental Beret Flashes
Prints 'Steady the Drums & Fifes' unframed - Large Print
- Small Print

Middlesex Regimental Plaques
Middlesex Blazer Buttons Flat stay bright with engraved Middlesex Badge
Set 6 large buttons 6 small buttons
Individual buttons Large & Small
Regimental Cuff Links
Regimental Tie Grip
Regimental Tie Tack & Chain
Regimental Ladies Brooch

