



The Die-Hards

NEWSLETTER

No. 86

December 2001

Price £1



*Bill Hatcher with Major Mike Eastap
at his 104th Birthday Party*

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PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL MESSAGE

The world is undoubtedly a more troubled place than it was this time last year and we are all faced with potentially very dangerous events. If one looks back over the years however we have been faced with danger many times in the past but have always managed to survive them.

That we have been able to do so has invariably been due to our armed forces, and today this situation has not changed. By the time this Newsletter is published some of them may have been committed to ground action in Afghanistan – an area well known to many thousands of their predecessors who fought over the same ground many years ago, joining those who are already in action in the air and on the sea in the area as well as those on National or UN operations elsewhere. We wish them all well.

Against this background, I am happy to report that our Regimental Association continues admirably to carry out its role among our Old Comrades – bringing help and support to those in difficulty or poor health, and cheerful comradeship at the many occasions we meet at throughout the year.

I always enjoy reading the Enfield and Hounslow Branches' Newsletters and the Korean Club and am also heartened by the way that the 1/7th and 2/7th Battalions Old Comrades' Luncheons help, as do the branches, to keep our regimental spirit alive and kicking. We are a truly vibrant association and this is of course entirely due to the support of our members.

I wish each and every one of you, and your families, a Happy Christmas and even if not the traditional "prosperous" New Year, then an equally happy one. May you all keep as fit as you like to be, and as free as possible from the ills, aches and pains that seem to annoy us more and more as the years go by.

Finally, to those of you who support the Association in any sort of administrative capacity I send a very special thank you. I am thinking of members of the Executive Committee and its various sub-committees, and those of you who work in the Branches etc organising events and reunions.

Above all, on behalf of you all as well as personally, I congratulate and thank Major Ron Morris who really "is" the Association and who is always actively supported by his wife Betty. Together they keep the whole regimental show firmly on the road.

Warm wishes to you all,

Tony Pielow

FORECAST OF EVENTS 2002.

4 March	Executive Committee Meeting at 1400 hours followed by the Officers' Club Committee Meeting – Conference Room, RFCA GL, Duke of York's Headquarters, Chelsea
20 April	1/7th Bn MX OCA Annual Luncheon – Venue to be confirmed
10 May	MX Officers' Club Dinner – Army & Navy Club 1900 for 2000 hours
11 May	MX Albuhera Service – Regimental Chapel – St Paul's Cathedral at 1500 hours
11 May	MX All Ranks Reunion – Victory Services Club commencing at 1830 hours – AGM at 1900 hours.
23 May	9th Bn MX Officers' Club Annual Luncheon – The Royal Overseas League, Park Place, London SW1
21 September	MX Korean Club Annual Reunion - AGM at 1830 hours – Victory Services Club
3 October	2/7th Bn MX Annual Luncheon – Victory Services Club 1200 for 1300 hours
7 November	Garden of Remembrance – Westminster Abbey – 1030 hours for 1100 hours – planting of crosses in the MX Regimental and FEPOW Plots
7 November	7th Bn MX Officers' Club Dinner – Officers' Mess The London Regiment, St John's Hill, London SW11
9 November	MX Regiment Ceremony of Remembrance – Middlesex Guildhall 1030 for 1100 hours
10 November	Remembrance Service – Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill assemble at 1000 hours
10 November	7th Bn MX Remembrance Service – Parish Church of St Mary and St George, Hornsey – assemble 1000 hours

DONATIONS AND BENEVOLENCE

Donations made

Piper's Memorial Fund	£50	In memory Pte Latham 16th Bn World War One
Friends British Cemetery Elvas	£100	To assist with upkeep
Korean Club	£217	Grant towards overspend at AGM/Reunion
1/7th OCA	£150	Towards cost of the annual lunch
2/7th OCA	£150	Towards cost of the annual lunch
Enfield Branch	£150	To help with cost of coach for Remembrance Service at Mill Hill
Not Forgotten Association	£50	

(Donations made so far in this FY total £3745)

Bequests/Donations received

R C Shore	£100
J M Robbins	£50
In memory of D Caville	£590
W S O Randle	£100
Topper's Box (2/7th Lunch)	£40
A W J Brown	£50

(Plus very many smaller donations gratefully received)

Benevolent Grants	31 Dec 99	31 Dec 00	To 31 Oct 01
Grants made to individuals	£13746	£13827	£14458
Less ABF Grants	£6914	£6633	£7576
Net	£6832	£7194	£6882

THE POST OF ASSOCIATION SECRETARY

The Regimental Secretary, Major Ron Morris, who works from home, has given notice of his intention to retire from the post as from the last day of May 2003. We are looking for a replacement. Anyone interested in taking on this worthwhile and rewarding task is asked, in the first instance, to telephone Ron Morris on 020 8949 7605 for further information.

THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S ROYAL REGIMENT

It has been a busy period for everyone in the Regiment. The two Regular Battalions returned from the Balkans and the 3rd Battalion welcomed a new Commanding Officer.

The 1st Battalion based in Tidworth were called upon to assist with the foot and mouth epidemic. Battalion Headquarters plus a rifle company were deployed to Taunton and a rifle company to Gloucestershire. This was a difficult task but they carried it out with calm professional efficiency. The Battalion has the continuous role of providing troops for the Regular Army Assistance Tasks (RAAT). This involves providing platoons or individuals for enemy on Brigade Exercises, assisting in the mortar concentration and various trials. In addition the Battalion carried training with various cadres and adventure training and provided assistance to CCF and ACF summer camps. The Drums Platoon had a very successful visit to Albuhera to support the unveiling of the new Regimental Memorial.

The Battalions Sniper Team took part in the International Sniper Symposium. They finished as the top British Army Team. On the sporting side the Battalion supported the Regimental Sailing in the Isle of Wight and won the 5 Div, Infantry and Army Cricket – a triple victory.

On 21st September, Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II of Denmark, in her role as Colonel-in-Chief paid a visit to the Battalion in the field. A very interesting and lively programme was achieved on Salisbury Plain Training Area. Her Majesty thoroughly enjoyed her visit. The Battalion is now gearing itself up to return to Kosovo in the Armoured Warrior role in May 2002.

The 2nd Battalion based in Aldershot was also called to assist in the foot and mouth epidemic. They returned from Bosnia in May and immediately commenced Battalion level courses and cadres. Every soldier in the Battalion is taught to drive to enable them to drive the SAXON vehicle. Along with leave, exercises and numerous RAAT tasks the Battalion is constantly busy. In August 2002 they are scheduled to Arms Plot move from Aldershot (Saxon role) to Ternhill (Shropshire) to take up the role of Mountain Warfare Battalion. This will be a new role for the Army with exercises in Norway, Turkey, USA, Kenya and other mountainous regions. At present the Battalion is on Spearhead until the end of February 2002.

Lt Col P Crowley now commands the 3rd Battalion. The Battalions Annual Camp was changed due to the foot and mouth – Belgium was cancelled and the Battalion went to Lydd and Hythe completing all their various training tasks and firing on the ranges. On the 9th June the Battalion provided the colour escort and troops for the laying up of the 5th Battalion The Queen's Regiment and 5th Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment Colours at Canterbury Cathedral. This was very well attended being the last set of Colours to be laid up. The Colours are now at the Regimental Museum in Dover Castle.

Minden Day on 1st August was commemorated at each company location. Officers and wives presented Minden Roses to all ranks. At Canterbury a parade was held in front of dignitaries followed by refreshments. This (we think) was a first for the Battalion and was introduced by Lt Col Crowley.

The Battalion has 14 FTRS (Full Time Reserve Service) soldiers on loan to the 1st and 2nd Battalions and the KOSB. This provides full time operational service for TA soldiers and is excellent for the Battalion.

"B" (Queen's Regiment) Company The London Regiment is based in Edgware. The foot and mouth epidemic curtailed many of the planned training weekend and exercises. The emphasis was on individual training therefore moving to Drill Halls and Barracks did at least produce some training. Annual Camp was spent at Pirbright, running the ranges for Bisley. The Company has 3 members on FTRS all serving with PWRR. Training is now underway for attending the SF Concentration later this year. Recruiting is going well and spirits are high in the Company.

"C" (The Duke of Connaughts Own) PWRR Company, The Royal Rifle Volunteers. The Company based in Portsmouth, with a Platoon in the Isle of Wight, is going from strength to strength. Annual Camp was split with some of the Company joining a composite company to Cyprus where all sorts of training with helicopters and landing craft took place. Mixed with bush fires, spiders and local riots the two weeks passed quickly. The remainder of the Company went to Sennybridge. Training level was Field Firing at section level. They also threw the new grenade the L109. It packs a punch, is more effective than its predecessors and comes assembled so there is no messing around with a fuse! There are currently 6 members of the Company on FTRS with PWRR.

The Regiment is doing well. The most important point is that recruiting for the Regular Battalions has now reached a level where each Battalion will be about 30 soldiers below establishment by the end of the year. An amazing feat.

AJM

FRIENDS OF THE BRITISH CEMETERY – ELVAS.

Those who attended the ceremonies connected to the unveiling in May of the Regimental Memorial at Albuhera will recall that as part of the programme of visits the first formal event took place at the British Cemetery at Elvas. We recently received an appeal for funds to assist in the upkeep and maintenance of the cemetery and we made a grant of £100. In a letter to Mike Ward, thanking us for the grant, the Chairman of the Friends said he is looking forwards to seeing "the Travelling 57th (Hounslow Branch Members) on parade at Albuhera next year – Albuhera would not be the same without you."

2/7th BATTALION ANNUAL REUNION.

The 2/7th Battalion Old Comrades celebrated their 55th Annual Reunion Luncheon at the Victory Services Club on Thursday the 4th of October 2001. The proceedings were chaired by Lieut Colonel R E Robotham MC TD with some 80 members and their guests present. It is pleasing to see such a good attendance as members are now in their 70's and 80's but they still manage to attend from addresses all over the UK and from farther a field. This year was a special year in that the people of Anzio have produced a Certificate of Honour for all the Veterans of the beach landings in January 1944. The citation reads: "Those who fought so valiantly without fear of their lives on the Beachhead during the Battle of Anzio, Italy". The 2/7th Members received their certificates at the luncheon. Mr Fred Phillips Secretary of the 2/7th Battalion Old Comrades Association has sent, on behalf of the Battalion, a Middlesex Regimental Plaque that will be proudly displayed in the Anzio Museum. Fred at this point mentioned that the Anzio Museum were seeking items of memorabilia from the 2/7th Battalion, photographs, maps, small items of kit etc. He would be pleased to receive anything that members might wish to dispose of and he will see that it is forwarded on to Anzio.

The principle guests at the luncheon were: Brigadier B A M Pielow JP, Colonel R M Cain OBE DL, Major C L Lawrence MC, and Major R E B Morris MBE.

W G HATCHER.

Our oldest member Bill Hatcher was 104 years of age on Saturday the 27th of October 2001. A small gathering of family and friends came together to wish him well at his party that was held at the Residential Home in Bexley where he now resides. Major Mike Eastap represented the Regiment. Bill served with the 8th Battalion and the Machine Gun Corps in World War One. Mike was most surprised when Bill remembered the various IAs on the Vickers. When one considers his age and the fact that he had not handled the weapon for over 80 years it was a remarkable achievement. When asked what he remembered most about his service he replied "When I left!".

THE FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE 2001.

It is quite remarkable how at the age of 101 Her Majesty The Queen Mother continues to honour us each year with her presence at the Westminster Abbey Fields. After a short service starting at 1130 am on Thursday the 8th of November and conducted by the Dean of Westminster Her Majesty planted her own cross and then declared the 2001 Field of Remembrance open. She then, travelling in her "golf buggy", visited each regimental plot in turn. On a very cold and wet day the Secretary was supported by several Diehards some of whom had travelled quite a distance to attend. As is usual crosses were planted in the Regimental Plot in memory of those who fought and made the supreme sacrifice in both world wars and in conflicts since. A cross was also planted in the FAREAST POW Plot to remember those members of the 1st Battalion we lost in Hong Kong and Japan.

7TH MIDDLESEX OFFICERS' CLUB

The 74th Annual Dinner of the 7th Battalion Officers' Club was held in the Officers' Mess of the London Regiment on the 8th of November 2001. Lieut Col D Gunnell presided. The guests were Col Peter Cook, Deputy Colonel PWRR, Lieut Col James Cunliff, CO The London Regiment, Capt B Exeley, PASO Para Med, Maj G M Morgan, London Regiment, Maj R E B Morris, Regimental Association.

The following members attended:

Col I D Brotherton, Lieut A A Dix, Capt M J S Doran, Capt S le M Enthoven, Maj D Harwood, Capt P J T Lane, Maj R J Leighton, Maj A E McManus, Lieut P J Ottino, Lieut J M Phillips, Capt J K E Slack, Capt J Spencer Richards, Col D R W Thomas. The following members expressed their regret for not being able to attend and sent their greetings to all their friends:- Col F G Barber, Rt Rev Mgr R Brown, Maj P D J Clarke, Capt J R W Fisher, Capt M S Gedye, Maj C L Lawrence, Maj D Margand, Capt F S Mayman, Lieut J McMaster, Maj E J Naish, Brig B A M Pielow, Maj B St G A Reed, Lieut Col D E Simpson, Capt P A Stocken, Lieut J A Van de Pol, Lieut Col R L Usher, Maj F Webb and Capt G J Young.

ANNUAL SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE SATURDAY 10TH NOVEMBER 2001.

We held our usual Service at the Middlesex Guildhall on Saturday the 10th of November with our Honorary Chaplain The Reverend Prebendary Patrick Tuft, The Vicar of the Saint Nicholas's Church, Chiswick presiding.

Brigadier Tony Pielow, our President, read the Lesson taken from St Mathew's Gospel 5 vv 1 - 12. Just prior to the two minutes silence the Brigadier laid a Middlesex Badged Wreath on the Guildhall Memorial inscribed "To the memory of our Diehard Comrades who made the supreme sacrifice 1755 - 1966". This joined the Poppy Cross laid earlier by the Greater London County Hall Branch of the Royal British Legion inscribed "In grateful memory of the Staff of the Middlesex County Council who died for their Country."

Numbers were slightly down this year but it is to be expected as age takes its toll. Before leaving for home the gathering enjoyed a glass of sherry provided by the Association and small eats provided by Betty Morris.

CENOTAPH MUSTER - WHITEHALL.

A small party from the Regiment joined the PWRR Association (London Branch) Group, largely made up by those from the former regiments, at the 2001 Cenotaph Service and March Past. Fortunately the weather was cold but fine - no rain!

After the Service we were due to attend drinks and a lunch at the Duke of York's Headquarters Club. Three days before the event the caterers, with no warning, went

into receivership and moved out, overnight, from the Duke of York's. This presented Colonel Peter Cook, Chairman of the London Branch and Secretary to the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for Greater London, with a problem that he quickly resolved by providing a bar run by members of his family and moving the luncheon across to the Royal Hospital where all attending had a most enjoyable meal.

REMEMBRANCE DAY – MILL HILL

The Enfield Branch held their Remembrance Day Parade in Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill at the invitation of the Commanding Officer of the Postal and Courier Depot of the Royal Logistic Corps. They were particularly pleased to welcome eight members of the Hounslow Branch who attended with their standard. The day started with a Service of Remembrance in the Chapel conducted by their Branch Honorary Chaplain, Sister Joan Hornby with readings from the Old and New Testaments by Brigadier B J Cash, Chief Executive of the British Forces Post Office and Captain H R Edwards also of the BFPO. The address was given by Mr John Rowlands a representative of the Soldier's & Airman's Scripture Readers Association. After the wreath laying ceremony at the Regimental War Memorial thirteen members of the Association joined the RLC for the march past. The salute was taken by Brigadier Cash and the Association Standard Bearer was Mr G Patmore. Lunch, by invitation of the RSM WO I L Robey, was enjoyed by all members and guests in the WO & Sgts' Mess after the parade.

GFP

MIDDLESEX AND TENTH QUEEN'S TERRITORIAL TRUST

On Sunday 11th November 2001 the Seventh Middlesex Old Comrades and members of the Queen's Association of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment were joined by B (Queen's Regiment) Company of the London Regiment for the Annual Service of Remembrance in the Parish Church of St Mary with St George in Hornsey. The Standard of the Middlesex Branch was received by the Rector for safe keeping on the Altar during the service.

Following the Act of Remembrance, wreaths were laid before the Altar of the 7th Middlesex Memorial Chapel on behalf of the 7th Middlesex Officers' Club, the 7th Middlesex Old Comrades, the Middlesex Branch of the Queen's Association of the Princes of Wales's Royal Regiment and a representative of 144 Squadron RAMC.

After the Service detachments from B Company and the Old Comrades marched back to the TA Centre where a curry lunch was served.

JGD

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM YESTERYEAR



*A Company, 8th Battalion
Tough Training – September 1960
- Photo Col Keith Barnes -*



*8 Platoon C Company 2/7th Battalion
Rome June 1944
- Photo John Bird -*



*9th Battalion Colour Party Rehearsing for the Coronation of King George VI
- Photo Alec Powell -*

ODD JOTTINGS

Clem Stevens rang to say he was pleased to read in the last newsletter the news of Don Carson. They served together in Austria. Clem told me he has been a West Sussex County Councillor since 1997 and increased his majority at the last election.

Bob Hallman rang to ask for the address of Digger Cousins and at the same time he said how sorry he was to read of the death of Froggy French. He also mentioned that he was to have been the driver to Colonel John Shipster in Belize but for domestic reasons he was unable to go.

Tom Roberts phoned to say it was he and not Tom Broderick who made the long taxi journey to the military cemetery in Sicily. Sorry Tom. Tom did say that the War Graves Commission have sent him, as a thank you, a very nice illustrated book listing their work throughout the world. The missing Roll of Honour at the Cemetery has been replaced.

Vic Barley has written a very nice letter to say how well he remembered Bob Whitehead. They played together in the Battalion Football Team. He also mentioned that their Diamond Wedding celebrations took place in France and not Australia!

Eric Chamberlain telephoned to say that, as a direct result of his name appearing in the newsletter, from the six original members of his platoon that went right through the war with him he is delighted that four have made contact.

Barry Thompson wrote to say that he and his wife go to a much changed Gibraltar each year for their annual holiday. South Barracks and the old Battalion Headquarters have been converted into flats and the swimming pool is now used by the locals. He also mentioned that he has been on the local bench as a JP for the last 13 years

Donald Carson has been in contact to correct my spelling of the Vienna Barracks he visited recently. It is Schonbrun now renamed but still there! He stood on the very spot where the Band, under Bill Jackson, paraded all those years ago for a photograph. He also told me that his son, Peter, with the Band of the Life Guards, has to leave the Army on medical grounds.

George Fickling when reading the obituary for Arthur Chalk recalled that they served together at Colchester in 6 Pln, 1/7th Bn under David Fettes.

Just to prove that he reads the newsletter from cover to cover Major Barry Reed telephoned to say that he too recorded his experiences for the PWRR Video. Paragraph 3 of the Executive Committee Meeting Minutes published at the rear of the newsletter refers. Sorry Barry the minutes will be amended at the next Meeting.

John Bird wrote from the USA to say that he is sorry that he cannot make the 2/7th Luncheon this year. Age is taking its toll and it is becoming more difficult to travel long distances. They are looking forward to celebrating their 60th Wedding Anniversary on the 8th of November. (Hope it went well).

A Mrs Slaughter, a relative of the late Sgt A T Ding killed at Dunkirk, she is not sure of his Battalion, is seeking information about him. If any Association Member knew of him would they please contact the Secretary.

Fred Marrett has sent a copy, from New Zealand, of the July 2001 edition of the 23rd NZ Battalion Association's Newsletter. In the newsletter they send greetings to all members of our 1/7th Battalion that they remember so well from the days they spent together in the desert.

Rowley Johnson wrote to the Enfield Branch, from Australia, seeking information on the Association and asking to join. He served in the 1950's with A and B Companies of the 1st Battalion. His claim to fame is that he travelled to Australia by double decker bus. He covered 200,000 miles in two years. Must have gone the long way round!

Ken Anderson kindly took the trouble to photocopy and send to the Secretary the 571 LAA Regiment (9th Battalion Middlesex) Centenary publication that records the history of the 9th Battalion from 1859 to 1959. Thank you Ken a valuable addition to our reference library.

Les Plumb in a recent letter said he has a contact for the supply of regimental beer mats and coasters - has no idea what the prices are. If there is an interest I will arrange to add to them the range of Regimental Goods.

Taffy Evans wrote from the Philippines to say that his return to the tropics is doing his arthritis the world of good and although he has reached the age of 84 he is still fit and well.

A Mr George Money is seeking information about Bill Hinge who he believes was a member of the 7th Bn at Hornsey just before the last war and was either with the 1/7th or the 2/7th during the war. If anyone remembers him could they please contact the Secretary.

Mike Flynn wrote to me last November to give me a change of address and to tell me he had taken early retirement from the British Red Cross. He and Else have now settled in Dorfmark close to Fallingbommel in Germany. He recently reminded me of his earlier letter and said he would be pleased to see any Diehard who might be visiting his part of Germany. At the time of writing he was about to take up the post of Honorary Secretary to the Fallingbommel-Heide Branch of the Royal British Legion.

Colonel Rex Fendick writing from Canada tells us that he has been in contact with the GOC of 3 Division, Major General J C McColl to send him a copy of his book for the 3 Division Historical Record. In his letter to the General he mentioned that the cap badges of the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers and the Middlesex Regiment are missing from the 3 Division Memorial at Caen. The General is hopeful that the error will be rectified soon and the badges added to the memorial.



Members may recall that in the December 1999 Odd Jottings we mentioned that David, son of Bill Jackson, was doing well and increasing his interest in racing. Bill has been in contact to say that their horse Albuhera has run seven times, had won twice, been second once, and third twice. Might be worth putting a bob or two on him. The photograph shows a proud Bill Jackson leading the horse in after winning at Newmarket on the 29th of July. Note the Colours. He told me his next big race is to be the Cambridgeshire. (I wonder if he won?). I now know he did not do too well in that race. He has had a long season. However he has won over £75,000 in prize money this year. The horse is now out to grass for the winter. David has 22 horses with four running in the regimental colours, Albuhera, Diehard, Roman King and as yet an unnamed yearling.

Joe Mullane, when sending a contribution towards the funds from New Zealand, mentioned that Bob Whitehead was his platoon commander in Normandy. Very sad to see his obituary in the last newsletter.

Peter Gates writing from Australia said he was one of the many who passed through the Depot when Pat Donovan was the RSM. He said that on a visit from the Infantry Boys Battalion he and others were shown round the Depot by the RSM. Some months later, when posted to the Depot, he was greeted by the RSM by name. He had an amazing memory for faces and names.

Allan Jennings attended the St Albans Carnival, held on the 27th of August and obtained a 2nd place in the best kept Military Vehicle Competition. Allan owns a Land Rover FFR 109 with trailer and he displays the badges of the Middlesex Regiment and the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. Well done Allan.

Ernie Stebbing has been in contact to say that he had a short visit to hospital recently. He was pleased to say that all is well in that they found nothing seriously wrong with him. He is now in his 88th year.

Heinz (Jimmy) Johannsen rang to remind me that he is still endeavouring to make contact with those who served in Rendsburg when the war ended. I have his address and telephone number if you are interested. I have also received from him photographs of the gravestones of Pte Derek Abrahams, Pte Joseph Peel and Bdr Ronald Wright (9th Bn) who are post war casualties buried in Munster Military Cemetery. Should anyone wish to have these photographs I would be happy to pass them on.

Ex Wartime Army Cadets from the 3rd Middlesex Cadet Battalion met recently at a reunion and they clubbed together and raised £146 for the Cadet Stephen Menary Appeal. Members will recall that Stephen was badly injured when a bomb, concealed in a torch, exploded when he picked it up whilst attending a parade at the White City TA Centre.

Twenty seven members of the Enfield Branch paid a second visit to the Canvey Island Conservative Club on the 28th of July where they met several "local" Diehards to enjoy an evening of steel band music together with a superb buffet.

Cyril Broome wrote in to send his subs and at the same time to advise a change of address. Moved into the depths of the Kentish Countryside. Sounds idyllic.

Roy Bishop tells me that on his last visit to Normandy he was given some German Mortar shrapnel by his French host Pierre Roger, which he subsequently donated to the National Army Museum. The shrapnel was found in a field where Roy's Mortar Platoon had been in action in 1944. The experts at the Museum seem to think it came from a "Nebelwerfer" which fired a rocket weighing about 1,200 lbs up to a range of 7,750 yards. First used on the Russian Front in 1941. In his letter Roy also mentioned that he has been in contact with Peter Benson-Cooper, John Lowth and Travers Johnson.

It was Traver's 50th Wedding Anniversary on Saturday the 20th of October. Congratulations to you both Travers. Hope the party went well.

Eric Knowles writing from Canada to enclose his dues mentioned that he and his wife had been on a 17 day cruise around the Hawaiian Islands to celebrate their 60th Wedding Anniversary. They obviously thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Congratulations to you both.

Captain Simon Enthoven was in France recently in a little town, Braine to the west of Reims. He discovered in the local municipal cemetery the grave of 9974 Cpl A H Cutts, KIA 26 Sep 1914. Simon has kindly provided photographs. Should any one wish to see them they can apply to the Secretary.

OBITUARIES

CLOHSON – Frank Ernest 6202177 died peacefully in hospital, after two years of ill health, on the 7th of August 2001, aged 86. Frank joined the 2/7th Battalion in 1938 and was mobilized at the start of the War. He served in North Africa and Italy with the Battalion, was at Anzio where he was wounded. After recovering from his wounds he posted to Palestine as a driver from where he was demobbed in 1945. In civilian life he worked for London Transport driving a 102 bus on the Chingford to Golders Green route. Later he worked in Tottenham Bus Garage. His total service with London Transport was almost 34 years. He married Violet at St Mary's Church Tottenham on the 14th of January 1941 and their marriage lasted to January 1986 when sadly Violet died. The funeral took place at Enfield Crematorium on the 30th of August 2001. The coffin was draped with the Regimental Flag and the Regiment was represented by Mr Fred Phillips (2/7th Bn) and Mr Allan Jennings (1st Bn).

GOLDUP – Ray died on the 19th of August 2001 after being involved in a motor accident. He was 70 years of age. Ray was a National Serviceman and he served with the 1st Battalion in Korea where he was wounded and lost a leg. The funeral took place on the 31st of August at the Village Church of Long Compton, Warwickshire. There was a strong contingent of the local branch of the Royal British Legion present together with Messrs George Farmer, Chris Howard, Mick Mulvaney and Bill Rawlinson from the Korean Club. After the internment in the local cemetery a reception for all attending was held in the Village Hall.

JUDGE – Derek who served in Support Company of the 1st Battalion in Korea died on the 16th of October 2001 and was cremated on the 25th of October 2001. It is regretted nothing further is known.

LANGRISH – Harold, 6207925, died on the 28th of August 2001 aged 86. He was with the 2nd Battalion in France in 1940. He then joined the 8th Battalion and subsequently completed his service with the 1st Battalion. Until a few years ago Harold lived in Kingston upon Thames but shortly after his wife died he moved into the Royal British Legion Home, Mais House, in Sussex. His last few years were not easy for him in that he gradually lost his sight and by the time he died he was completely blind.

LAURENCE – John K died on the 25th of June 2001 aged 87. John joined the 7th Battalion in April 1938, was called up in 1939 and was posted to the 2/7th Battalion with whom he served until November 1942 when he transferred to the Royal Artillery staying with them for the remainder of the war. He left the Army in the rank of Captain. We have not been advised of the details of his funeral.

OXLEY – Albert William (Bill), 6123246, passed away on the 12th of July 2001 aged 87. Bill joined the Regiment in the mid 1930s at Colchester aged 18. He served with the 1st Battalion in Egypt, Singapore and Hong Kong. He was wounded at Happy Valley on Christmas Day 1941 and was in St Stephens College when the massacre took place. Fortunately the Japanese did not enter his ward. Bill survived the sinking of the Lisbon Maru and ended up working in the coal mines at Sendai, Japan until being liberated by the Americans in 1945. He was repatriated to the UK travelling via the Philippines and Canada. Bill married Irene Feber in 1946 and they had one daughter Caroline. He worked as a postman in Eastbourne until he retired in the early 1970s. He and his wife moved to Australia in 1982 to join their daughter who was already out there. Life was not easy for them in that his wife suffered a stroke and then she contracted cancer. Bill looked after Irene devotedly until her death in 1992. After his wife died Bill paid a visit to Hong Kong and whilst there he was delighted to discover that many of his old comrades were still alive and some were living in Australia. He was able to regain contact with Tony Hewett, Charlie Bellchamber and George (Ginger) Tan. Bill was cremated at Altona, Victoria, Australia and his ashes are to be joined with his late wife, Irene, at Seymour Cemetery.

CO.

ROCKALL – Thomas Herbert, 6207875 died on the 29th of May 2001 aged 79. Tom joined the 1/7th Battalion in May 1939 but served most of World War Two with the Princess of Louise's Kensington Regiment and the Royal Artillery. In October 1944 he returned to the Regiment when his LAA Regiment disbanded. He was demobbed in May 1946 and he joined the Hornsey Branch of the Association shortly after. Several years later he moved away from London and lost contact for a time rejoining the Association in the mid 1970s. The details of the funeral are not known to us.

SKIPP – James William, 6207384 died on the 24th of October 2001. He served with the 2/7th Battalion in World War Two after joining the TA at Hornsey in 1939. His service took him to North Africa into Italy and he was part of the invasion force into Anzio on the 22nd of January 1944. On the counter attack by the German Panzer Divisions at the end of January he was taken prisoner along with many other colleagues. He was taken to Florence and then onto Stalag 7A at Moosburg near Munich and moved again to Stalag 383 at Hohenfiels and finally he was released by the Americans on the Czech boarder and flown home by Lancaster from Ingoluster Airfield to Ford Airfield near Worthing. He was laid to rest at Bury St Edmunds Crematorium on the 2nd of November 2001. He leaves his wife, Anne, son Jim and his wife, and three grandchildren. His funeral was attended by Fred Phillips, Secretary the 2/7th Old Comrades Association, together with his partner, Mary. The regimental wreath that was presented at Jim's funeral, from the members of the Regiment, was subsequently laid on the Haverhill War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday by Jim's grandson Michael.

FAP

SMITH – Dorothy (Dollie), widow of Major Dick Smith and mother of WOII Mervyn Smith, died on the 31st of October 2001, three days short of her 95th birthday. Dollie was a true daughter of the Regiment, her father being Joe Lambourne, a Middlesex veteran of the Boer War. She married Dick in 1934; Bert (Tich) Mellor says he used to baby-sit for them. She leaves a close and loving family. The funeral took place at the Vale Crematorium, Luton on Thursday the 8th of November and was attended by Tich Mellor, his "chauffer" Bill Rawlinson and Chris and Kay Lawrence.

CLL

SQUIRES – Charles Henry served with the 8th Battalion from 1943 to 1946. He was born in Chertsey in March 1916. He trained as a Master Butcher and joined the firm of Mathews in Weybridge. He became a very keen motorcyclist. He was called up in 1940 and joined the Queen's Regiment transferring to the 8th Battalion in 1943, where he was posted to the Signal Platoon as a Dispatch Rider. Captain Ian Brotherton, then the Signals Officer, remembers him well as a splendid and very steady motorcyclist, and when the Battalion went to France and on to Germany, a very gallant soldier and good friend. His comrades have many happy memories of those days – particularly after the Signals Officer "accidentally" killed a pig near Hill 112 in the Caen area, which Charlie butchered, cooked in a trench heated by an apple wood fire, and gave the Headquarters the best meal they had since leaving England! After the war he became a manager for a number of Mathew's butchers, and he was also a manager for Ryvita. He retired to Wimborne. Sadly Charlie became ill with Alzheimer's disease about four years ago and he died on the 15th of February 2001. Ian Brotherton went to his funeral at Poole on the 26th of February.

IDB

Colonel Ian Battye MBE (1918 – 2001)

Colonel Ian Battye, who died in a Nursing Home in Woodbridge on the 19th of July after a long and debilitating illness which he bore with remarkable fortitude, was born on the 14th of January 1918 in Dehra Dun where his father was a Major in the Gurkhas and was commissioned into the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) on the 27th of January 1938 having been a TA University Candidate at Downing College Cambridge.

Ian had a long, distinguished and varied service before he retired in August 1968. This included serving with 1st Kensington Regiment in France and Italy in 1939/1945 before joining the Middlesex Regiment in 1949 with which Regiment he remained for the rest of his Regimental life, serving with the Diehards in Hong Kong, Austria, Cyprus, Aquaba and BAOR. He commanded the Regimental Depot in Mill Hill from 1957 to 1959 an important period during which he was instrumental in planning and overseeing the extensive refurbishment of the barracks and generally bringing the training and administration up to the standards required of the army during that period of change.



His sound and imaginative command of the Depot earned him the command, on the 25th of November 1959, of the 1st Battalion in Hameln immediately afterwards – the real challenge of service in BAOR at a time when the army was facing up to the problems of possible atomic warfare – reflected in the form and nature of the many exercises with their "modern" theme.

Regimental service concluded, after a tour with HQ NORTHAG, with the appointment of Brigade Colonel of the Home Counties Brigade which he assumed on the 1st of April 1964 and left in December 1966 to serve at HQ ALFCE.

Ian's ERE included postings during WW2 on the staff of 56 Div, as GSO2 on the Middle East Training Team, and GSO2 (Ops) of HQ 5 Div.

He was appointed MBE on the 24th of January 1946, and after the war he spent two years at the War Office as GSO1 in MO1, and later as the Army Instructor at the RAF College Cranwell, where he learnt wholly unofficially but effectively to fly. Ian was not awarded his wings because the RAF did not wish it to appear that they had spent more time on Ian than with their own cadets! He then served as DAQMG at HQ AFNE in Oslo until December 1955, and later on with HQ ALFCE as Colonel (Pers and Admin) before retiring from the Army.

Ian's life after he retired from the army was every bit as varied and busy as was his service career. He and Christina had bought a home in Woodbridge in 1949 and settled there permanently in 1968. Ian was immediately recognised as a "prime catch" for the town and was recruited early on as secretary of the newly formed Community Council a post he held with distinction for the next nine years being largely responsible for the establishment of the town's swimming pool and community hall. Not all the Council's ideas and plans were to Ian's liking and he fought them as necessary but without rancour if he lost – as he did with the idea to build a relief road near his precious harbour. It is said that when he organised a demonstration to prevent the building of the road and encouraged people to lie down in the road, the fact was that only Ian did so. Even this failed to discourage him. Ian was also an early voice to float the idea of a Woodbridge Maritime Museum and if this is achieved it will be due in no small measure to Ian.

He was a leading and active member of the Woodbridge Society – founded by his father-in-law, which he served for some thirty years including acting as Chairman for five of them, and it was one of the many activities he continued to support, despite seriously failing health, right up to the end of his eventful life.

But that was not all. Ian used the advantage of his Cambridge degree in Geography, Anthropology and Archaeology to teach at Deben High School, and then ten years in the Geography Department of Woodbridge School. With all this to do, Ian found time for his life-long love of sailing, and the river Deben was a floating home for him and his beloved 27ft motor/sailer "Sophie Sea". Not a "smart" sailor he looked, so Christina always said like a nautical "Compo" from the TV series. He was the joint founder of the River Deben Association, a long serving trustee of the Woodbridge Cruising Club, and a President of the Woodbridge Rotary Club.

Ian was a gentleman of varied talents and the 30 or so years he spent in his beloved Woodbridge with Christina were as full and as satisfying as those he spent in the Army, and they were years serving his local community in a wide range of authoritative positions. He was forever looking ahead for ways to improve the quality of life for everybody and his expertise in so many fields was much appreciated and made full use of. He was never somebody to take rushed decisions but quietly and confidently formulated his ideas to himself before trying them out on others, whether it was about the town, "his" river or local history. His quiet and sober manner was sometimes, for those who did not know him well, mistaken for aloofness. How wrong this was because he was in fact somebody with a charming sense of fun, full of concern for others and utterly devoid of pomposity.

He adored his family and was quick to give his own children the freedom of expression and adventure that he so cleverly gave to other young people who thus benefited from his wise advice.

Few people and certainly none of his army friends – of which he had many, had any idea that he suffered throughout his life from Crohn's disease, the then little known illness that had first plagued him whilst still at school at Berkhamsted where surgeons, working almost from textbooks sent from the USA, removed no less than 22 feet of his gut. But guts Ian had an abundance of and he cheated his way into the army by bribing an Irish Doctor with a bottle of whisky. This illness, combined with prostate cancer, finally caught up with him and those of us who saw him towards the end of his life could but admire his tenacity. He almost certainly knew his fate but remained cheerful and caring to the end. The famous words of Colonel Inglis Commanding at the Battle of Albuhera on the 16th of May 1811 that the Battalion should "Die Hard" most certainly applied to Ian. He did, and in a most inspiring way, and for this and his many attributes he will be long remembered by all of us in his Regiment, where he was respected for his wide knowledge and many talents – all so generously given to the Regiment.

BAMP

Colonel Nick Carter (1924 – 2001)

The Regiment lost a particularly fine, well respected and widely admired regimental officer when on Friday the 19th of October Colonel Nick Carter was tragically crushed beneath the tractor he was driving which overturned on his farm in Australia.

Nick was born in London on the 17th of August 1924. After attending William Ellis School in Highgate and Wallingford GS, and at 19 years old, he was enlisted into the Queens Own Cameron Highlanders on the 1st of July 1943 serving with them in SEAC, and was commissioned on the 21st of January 1945. His service included time in India and Peshawar with the Cameronians and for short periods he was attached to the 12th Bn Sherwood Foresters and to the 2nd Bn Kings Own Scottish Borderers. Nick was therefore one of the few Diehard Officers of his generation who was awarded the Burma Star.

In January 1947 he returned to UK and fortunately for us he joined the Regiment – in which he served with distinction until he retired from the Army on the 17th of August 1979, settling in Australia with Sue and his two young sons Nicholas and Michael where with Sue he ran the family farm near Canberra in New South Wales.

In 1995 Nick flew to Hong Kong from Canberra to join the small Middlesex party that attended the 50th Anniversary of the end of the Japanese War, in which of course he had taken part. In November 2000 he and Sue paid a rare visit to England and we were all delighted to see them when they joined us at our Annual Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Middlesex Guildhall where Nick read the Lesson and recited the Exhortation. He then marched with the Diehard Korean Contingent at the Cenotaph Ceremony the next day.



Soon after joining the Regiment Nick served with it on Public Duties in 1949, stationed at Chelsea Barracks, and was appointed Adjutant just after 1MX moved from London to Hong Kong in early 1950, and a very fine adjutant he was too, filling the role with expertise, enthusiasm and real flair. Fortunate it was for the Battalion that Nick was in the hot seat when the Battalion was ordered at very short notice to Korea, a move he masterminded with his characteristic efficiency. Once in Korea it soon became clear just how much every member of the Battalion, serving in freezing temperatures and hazardous operations with inadequate clothing and equipment, relied on their outstanding Adjutant. His award of a "Mentioned in Despatches" was universally popular, as indeed was his second MID later for service in Northern Ireland in 1972.

After his time in Korea and on return to Hong Kong with the Battalion he was posted to Brigade HQ, but returned to the Regiment to serve as Adjutant of 7MX (TA) in Hornsey, then as a Company Commander in 1MX in Gibraltar and later as 2IC in Guyana and Holywood Barracks Belfast where he took over command of the Battalion before taking it to the School of Infantry at Warminster, where it served as the Demonstration Battalion.

His sense of humour was well known. When commenting during an exercise on the poor camouflaging on a vehicle his apt remark to the offending driver was simply " we have come on this exercise to practise camouflaging and NOT to practise not camouflaging". When finding a broken down vehicle which the driver, head under the bonnet, was trying in vain to resuscitate, Nick's helpful advice was " perhaps the tappet clearances have fallen into the sump!" When Adjutant in Hong Kong and pointing out to the CO's Stick Orderly that he had his cross strap over the wrong shoulder, the bemused and immaculately turned out Drummer (who happened to be his Batman) countered by saying that it was on the shoulder that Nick only five minutes ago told him to wear it. Nick's reply – "Well I told you wrong didn't I – change it!" All pure Nick.

Nick attended the Staff College in 1958 and his appointments thereafter included Staff Capt Q Headquarters 3 Division, GSO2 Ops/Plans Headquarters Southern Command and DAAG (Bde Adj) Home Counties Brigade. After the disbandment of 4 QUEENS he became Deputy Comd of 39 Brigade in Northern Ireland, followed by his appointment as Col GS at the BDLS (Army) in Ottawa and then to the same job in Australia from where and to where he retired from the Army.

Nick's wide and varied experience of Army life made it easy for him to relate to his fellow officers and soldiers alike in an effective and friendly manner, but when required (as it inevitably was bearing in mind Nick's own high standards) with some short sharp criticism. His greatest asset was perhaps the way that anybody and everybody could rely on his expertise, help and sound advice especially in an emergency situation. It was this asset that stood 1MX in such good stead in Korea where his operational abilities proved so paramount on so many occasions, and made him such a well appreciated and popular Adjutant.

He was the epitome of a truly sound regimental officer. Serving with him was never dull and at close quarters, such as in one of his "O" Groups, pretty well always a testing occasion!

Many of us knew Nick well and valued his friendship. It was only a pity that he finally settled so far away because it was always a pleasure to be in his invigorating company. He is now much missed and he will long be remembered in the Regiment. To Sue and his sons, Nicholas and Michael, we send our heartfelt condolences.

BAMP.

NEW MEMBERS

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

14485866 SSgt J A Brett	3rd Cadet Bn MX then REME 1944 - 1948
22794327 LCpl G J Green	1 QUEENS 1952 – 1953, HQ Coy (MT) 1st Bn 1953 – 1955
Cadet CSM C L Humphrey	ACF Hornsey 1942 - 1946
23945698 WOII V F Hunt	1st Bn (Drums) 1965 – 1970, RAPC 1970 – 1994
23732690 Pte R A Johnson	B Coy, A Coy 1st Bn 1955 - 1961
23056958 LCpl J E Marriott	Sp Coy 1st Bn 1956 - 1958
6206666 WOII (ORQMS) E P Marson MBE	2/7th Bn 1939 - 1945
22624747 LCpl D W Miller	1 QUEENS 1952 – 1953, C Coy 1st Bn 1953 – 1955
6211123 WOII A W Phillips	C Coy 2/7th Bn 1940 – 1946
23281746 Pte A W Poulter	7th Bn MX then RE 1955 - 1957
23493049 Cpl P R Rahmatullah	A & HQ Coys 1st Bn 1956 – 1965
22429627 Pte C A Rumsey	A Coy 1st Bn 1949 – 1952
22153813 Pte R J Sutton	HQ Coy (MT) 1st Bn 1949 – 1951
6200386 Bdsm A Varyard	1st & 2nd Bn Bands 1932 – 1939 Depot RWK 1939 - 1945

AGAINST ALL HAZARDS (Poems of the Peninsular War)

It was a trip organised by Ian Fletcher to the battlefield of Albuera that inspired Harry Turner to write the Slopes of Albuera one of twenty seven poems featured in this moving book dedicated to British Soldiers of all ranks past, present and future. Harry Turner served as a Subaltern in the 1st Battalion from 1953 to 1955. The poems have been arranged chronologically beginning with the evocative The Soldier's Lament and ending with the haunting Last Memories. They cover all aspect of the campaign including the great battles of Talavera, Salamanca and Corunna, the bloody siege of

Badajoz as well as the day to day existence of Wellington's men between 1808 and 1814. The Peninsular War spawned a wealth of memoirs, dairies and letters but, unlike later wars, it never produced what we might now call "war poets" – but here, at last, is a poet equal to the challenge. Published by Spellmount Publishers @ £15.00, illustrated in hardcover.

CYPRUS 1955 – 1959

A Mr David Carter is writing a book about the Cyprus Emergency. He is endeavouring to tell the story through the eyes of the soldiers on the ground. He would be interested in hearing from those who were there. If you wish to contribute he can be contacted via E mail at hackwatchuk@hotmail.com or written to at 8, The Old Drive, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL8 6TB

8TH BATTALION THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT HILL 112 – NORMANDY - JULY 1944.

The Battalion, with "A", "B" and "C" Vickers MMG Companies and "D" 4.2in Heavy Mortar Company, travelled from West India Docks in London aboard a Liberty Ship on the night of the 19th of June, having been shelled going through the Straits of Dover, and anchored off Ouistreham. The Signals Officer, Captain Ian Brotherton in his jeep and with one radio truck were put ashore via a landing craft. It was then decided to abandon the off-loading due to the rough sea until the weather improved three days later. The Battalion was first in action on the 26th of June, helping to secure and hold a bridgehead over the River Odon. By the 30th of June 1, 9, and 10 SS Panzer Tank Divisions with 21 and 22 Panzer Grenadier Divisions were established on the high ground on the ridge south of the Odon and on Carpiquet aerodrome and no further break out from our bridgehead was possible until the ridge around hill 112, had been taken. 43rd Division played a leading part in the heavy fighting in this area. The 8th Battalion provided MMG and 4.2in Mortar support. "D" Company was commanded by Major Dick Kenyon and 12 Platoon by Captain Alex Clark whose driver/radio operator was Jack Jones. Jack's notes give a wonderful insight into part of the battle.

The history "The Middlesex Regiment 1939 – 1952 by Kemp" refers to this action on page 263.

AN OP ON HILL 112 (3rd July to 25th July 1944)

In Normandy I was a member of 12 Platoon, "D" Company (4.2in Mortars) 8th Battalion the Middlesex Regiment. The Platoon Commander/OP Officer was Captain Alec Clark and the OP assistant was Sergeant Robert Tighie (Bob). The two OP Driver/Operators were J W Phillips (Johnnie) and myself. As Johnnie was a far better carrier driver than I could ever be, he did the driving and I sat in the back with the radio sets.

IDB

On the 3rd of July we set up our mortar platoon position 200 yards north of the Fontaine-Etoupefour to Baron road on the outskirts of Fontaine-Etoupefour. It was an open field but behind a clump of trees with a small quarry in it. (later the quarry was the RAP for Hill 112). We carried out our usual OP job looking for targets and liaising with the Infantry and the Artillery for the next few days. Our carrier had an OP on Hill 112 about 400 yards south of the Fontaine-Etoupefour – Baron Road and about 200 yards east of the Via Chemin De Guillaume (a medieval lane or bridle path). We used to occupy this during the day and return to our platoon position before dusk.

On the 7th of July we had a grand stand view of the RAF carrying out a heavy raid on Caen. It was an awesome sight from where we were, three miles away.

On the 10th of July we were in our platoon position when at 0450 hrs the artillery, mortars and machine guns opened up with a fantastic barrage. It was the start of Operation Jupiter. The noise was terrific from hundreds of guns of all calibres, scores of mortars and machine guns. It was pitch black so there was no need for OPs. When daylight came we reported to 130 Brigade Tac HQ in a farmhouse next to the church in Fontaine-Etoupefour for our briefing and instructions. Having got them we went out onto Hill 112 looking for targets and co-operating with the Infantry. We did this until late afternoon when we received an order to report back to the Platoon. When we got there we were met by our "D" Company Commander, Major J R C Kenyon (J.R.C.K.) who told us that as things were there would be another attack going in that evening and that he would be taking over from Captain Clark, and we would be the FOO (Forward Observation Officer) for the attack. He said "Put new batteries in the sets, retune both sets, check the carrier and leave all non essential things behind". (All we had were our pay books). "Have a good meal and I will see you at 1745 hours".

We were on the start line at 1755 hours and nothing appeared to be happening. It seemed that we were waiting for the tanks who had not arrived. After what seemed like ages the artillery and mortars began the overture and things began to move. The Infantry started off and we tucked in behind the leading Company. Progress was very slow and came in fits and starts. We came under heavy fire from a position between Chateau De Fontaine and Maltot and also some from the right front direction of Le Bon Repos and Esquay. The attack came to a halt. Major Kenyon told us to run the carrier into an excavation where a Jerry tank had been hull down. He then went off to find out what the trouble was. In the hole with us were four infantry men (4th Somerset Light Infantry I think). We gave them some rough cider from our Jerrycan. Major Kenyon arrived back and gave us new orders. An Infantry NCO called the four men in our hole to go forward. Minutes later when we were getting the carrier out we noticed that three of the four were lying dead within 25 yards of the hole. During this episode the 5th Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry attached from 214 Brigade took over, and we started moving forward. There was a continuous stream of casualties, but eventually we reached the small wood which was the objective. We hit the wood at about 2315 hours. It was double summer time and the light was only just beginning to fade. We got to the extreme left end of the wood where a ditch reached out to the open. We took up position in the ditch. With long leads from the sets to the ditch, we kept calling the artillery and the mortars, giving instructions, even calling fire down on the wood where

we were. Before it went dark we noticed that there was a Mk IV Jerry Tank about 40 yards to our left rear and a Mk III about 60 yards to our rear. The noise was terrific, both sides were pouring shells by the hundred into the wood. The only light was the occasional very light.

At about 0315 hours, two men came up the ditch and enquired "FOO?" "Yes replied Major Kenyon. One of the men said, "I am the senior officer of the Cornwall's on the hill and I would like you to report back to Tac HQ that the situation is critical and request permission to withdraw". Major Kenyon replied "I can't take that back as a verbal message. You will have to write it and sign it and I will countersign it with the time." This was done in the bottom of the ditch under a groundsheet with the aid of a map reading torch!

Major Kenyon then ordered "All the kit in the carrier, get in, start up Phillips, crawl very slowly forward as quietly as possible". Johnnie did this and after one or two hundred yards Bob Tighe pulled my aerals down. "What's up Bob" I said. "What's this, scotch mist?" came the reply. What we saw was the white cross on the side of a Jerry tank! When we got clear of the tank Major Kenyon said "Foot down Phillips – get a move on!" This was in total darkness now that we had left the wood and its Very lights. Major Kenyon shouted "Never mind the kit, turn right and get moving".

As soon as we had turned right I realised that we were going the wrong way. I said to Bob "He's going behind the hill, it's the wrong way". There was a slight pause and Bob came back with "He knows what he is doing". So we proceeded along this road. We came across a file of Infantry walking in single file at the side of the road, and then another file on the opposite side. There were also one or two vehicles. After a few minutes we came to a road junction where some buildings were on fire and people dashing about.

JRCK "there shouldn't be any buildings on fire here"

JJ "This is Avenay Sir"

JRCK "what!"

JJ "Avenay Sir. When you went forward I looked at the map. The only road past the hill is from Maltot, Fontaine-Etoupefour to Avenay".

JRCK "Phillips get the Bren and follow me. You two stay here and shoot anyone coming through there", indicating a gap between two buildings.

After a few minutes they came back and JRCK said "Get in the carrier and go back the way we came. All the people here are Germans!"

Back we went up the road and joined the column of marching Infantry. We passed some of them and came up behind a half-track which we followed. Each time we passed a road, lane or track junction it was covered with people sitting smoking or resting. I think it was about four times that JRCK got off the carrier to read the sign posts, which we could see silhouetted against the sky. We saw an opening on the left hand side of the road and decided to try to get back to the hill.

We went through a gateway and passed as couple of soldiers, turned, and went all round the field which turned out to be quite small. All round the perimeter were vehicles and two caravans. We did a full circuit and out of the gate and rejoined the marching column.

Ten minutes or so later we found that the Infantry were leaving the road some going to the right to Maltot and some to the left to the hill. We kept to the road and turned left to the Chateau de Fontaine where we were halted by a patrol of the Worcesters. After a very animated conversation we were let through and eventually got to Fontaine Etoupefour at about 0540 hours. It had not been for the cool headedness of Major Kenyon and the driving skill of Johnnie Phillips I am sure we would not have got back at all.

In retrospect:-

The man who came along the ditch to ask us to take the message back to Tac HQ could only have been Major John Fry. The small field with tree we circumnavigated on the way back from Avenay turned out to be the HQ of the 10th SS Panzer Division.

We eventually got back to our platoon at 0700 hours. The dawn was just breaking. It had been quite a night!

11 July.

Round about 0930 hours we went to Tac HQ for our usual briefing. (Captain Clark was again back on board). Instead of parking our carrier in the little field opposite Tac HQ as was our usual practice we had to put it in the courtyard of the farmhouse. This was because a few officers and vehicles were on the hill. Captain Clark went inside and we sat under an open sided building behind the carrier. Two or three other vehicles came and parked including both artillery half-tracks. It was about lunch time when, suddenly, three sticks of four mortar bombs (8cm) straddled the HQ. One landed on the roof of the next building and killed two (one of whom was Alf Green of B Company 8th Middlesex). Two more landed in the courtyard and sprayed shrapnel all over the place. Yet another landed on the canvas roof of the 179 Field Regiment half-track killing Lieut Colonel Blacker and his Sgt Operator. After this we went up the hill to carry on as before until dusk when we returned to the platoon.

13 July

After all day on the hill we got back to the platoon around 2000 hours for a meal. We were then told to go back up the hill where the 4th Wiltshire's had established a Forward Command Post. The post consisted of a big slit trench 10 – 12 feet long and 6 feet deep with a pile of earth on top as a roof. We found this and started to dig our own trench about 5 yards away on the opposite side to the RA trench. We had left our carrier on the corner of an earth "Hedge" so Phillips and I went back for the radio and batteries etc. This meant a carry of 300 yards and we had to make two trips. On our second trip we were returning to the trench when we heard mortar bombs on their way.

We dropped the batteries and dived for a hole. We landed on top of an officer from the Wiltshire Regiment who was also sheltering in the hole. When emerged we found that one of the batteries had been smashed to bits. So I took the good one and Johnnie had to go in the carrier to fetch a replacement from the platoon. During his journey either a bullet or shrapnel had cut his aerial. After getting the set rigged and on net Johnnie took the carrier back to the platoon for the night. I got stuck into the digging. When we were about 18 inches deep a salvo of artillery shells arrived. Captain Clark and I dropped into the hole. One shell landed right in the FCP and killed five or six and wounded all the rest except the CO and an operator. Bob Tighe had also been badly wounded and so we had to sort everything out and get the wounded taken away. Several times during the night we were shelled and mortared but luckily no one else was hurt.

In the morning we were relieved (physically and mentally) and did our usual routine. We had to go to this FCP every other night until we (as 43rd Wessex Division) were relieved by the 53rd Welsh Division on the 25th of July.

The daily routine certainly was not without incident. Once, on our way to the OP we were met by a Jerry who surrendered! On an other occasion the platoon position came under attack from fighter aircraft. Corporal Reg Fraser hit the plane on it's drop tank which burst into flames. The pilot released the tank which burst on the ground. The following day Corporal Fraser and Ernie Buckle were killed when a shell hit their mortar pit. It may have been routine but it certainly was never dull.

J Jones 14428461

REGIMENTAL GOODS

The following are held in stock and are available on request to the Secretary, Major R E B Morris MBE, at 38 Traps Lane, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4SA. Cheques or Postal orders should be **made payable to the Middlesex Regimental Association**, and not directly to Major Morris.

Blazer Badges	£7.50
Car Badges	£10.00
Ice Buckets, miniature side drum with regimental emblazon	£28.00
Ties Regtl (Old Pattern maroon & old gold)	£6.00
Ties Regtl (New Pattern black with maroon & gold thin stripes)	£6.00
Ties Officers' Club (Silk)	£13.50
Good quality replica Middlesex Regt Cap Badges	£5.50
Middlesex Regt Key Rings	£2.50
Old Comrades lapel badges	£2.75
Prints – Steady the Drums & Fifes unframed – large	£8.00
small	£6.00
Christmas Cards:-	
Steady the Drums & Fifes	.35p each
The Guardroom Scene	
Col Graham Egerton, 77th Foot Portsmouth 1854	
Middlesex Blazer Buttons (Flat staybright with engraved Middlesex Badge)	
Sets of 6 Large & 6 Small	£25.00
Individual buttons large or small	£2.25
Regtl cuff links	£7.50
Regtl cuff links with tie grip	£10.50
Tie grip only	£5.00
Regtl Ladies Brooch	£4.75
Regtl tie tack and chain	£4.50

The following are available:
Major A & B (1980-1981)
Chester (1982-1983)
Regimental Magazine

Blazer Badges
Cap Badges
Ice Buttons, including
embroidered
Tie Regt (1980-1981)
Tie Regt (1982-1983)
Tie Officers (1984-1985)
Good quality working
Middlesex Regt (1986-1987)
Old Convoys (1988-1989)
Prints - Steady the Boys

Christmas Cards
Steady the Boys
The Gladiators
Old Convoys

Middlesex Regt (1980-1981)
Middlesex Badges
Sets of 6 Large & 6 Small
Individual buttons (1980-1981)
Regt cuff links
Regt cuff links (1982-1983)
Tie pins only
Regt Ladies Buttons
Regt tie pins (1984-1985)