



# *The Die-Hards*

NEWSLETTER

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*DIEHARDS AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE*

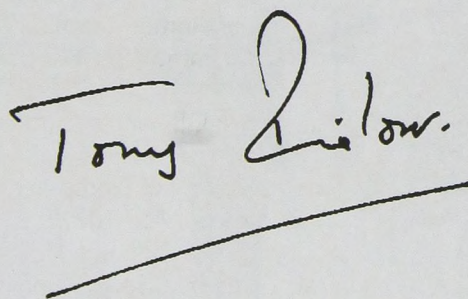


## A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT BRIGADIER TONY PIELOW

Another Christmas lies ahead with a background of international tension and military violence. This has been, and will continue to be, particularly evident with our regimental successors who have figured so valiantly and so frequently in the news from Iraq. 1 PWRR has just returned from a particularly arduous tour in Basra where they built up a fearsome reputation, but at inevitable cost of 2 soldiers killed and over 50 wounded. 2 PWRR will be in Iraq for a 6 month tour over Christmas. 3 PWRR (TA) has had over 60 serving in Iraq or Afghanistan. Our thoughts are with them all.

To all Diehards and their families I send warmest personal and regimental greetings for the festive season. As an association we are fortunate that so many of you support our annual functions including those at St Paul's, the Middlesex Guildhall, the Reunion and branch events, organised either locally or by Mike Ward and the Regimental Committee. My thanks to everybody who organise or support these gatherings which keep so many of us in touch over the years.

God Bless you all



<i>President</i>	:	Brig B.A.M. Pielow, JP
<i>Chairman</i>	:	Major C.L. Lawrence, MC
<i>Vice Chairman</i>	:	Capt M.J.S. Doran, TD, LL.B.
<i>Secretary</i>	:	Major D. Bradley, BEM RHQ PWRR Howe Barracks Canterbury, Kent CT1 1JY
<i>Editor</i>	:	Mr M.J. Ward, BEM 21 Field Close, Cranford, Hounslow, Middlesex TW4 6LN

## FORECAST OF EVENTS 2005

5 March	Queen's Regimental Reunion Victory Services Club
16 April	1/7th Mx OCA Annual Reunion TA Centre Hornsey
13 May	Mx Officer's Club Annual Dinner Army & Navy Club
14 May	Mx Albuhera Service Regimental Chapel St Paul's Cathedral <b>11.00hrs</b>
14 May	Mx All Ranks Reunion Victory Services Club Annual General Meeting
May	9th Bn Mx Officers' Club Annual Luncheon (TBC)
10 September	Mx Korean Club Annual Reunion Victory Services Club
10 November	Garden of Remembrance Westminster Service commences 10.50hrs
10 November	7th Bn Mx Officers' Club Dinner
12 November	Mx Ceremony of Remembrance Middlesex Guildhall 10.30hrs Service 10.50hrs
13 November	Remembrance Service Inglis Barracks Mill Hill Assemble 10.00hrs
13 November	7th Bn Mx Remembrance Service Assemble 10.00hrs at Parish Church St Mary and St George Hornsey



## THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S ROYAL REGIMENT 2004/5

The two subjects which reign supreme in the period covered by these notes are the 1st Battalion in Iraq and the proposed Future Army Structure (FAS) which includes the restructuring of the Infantry.

The 1st Battalion arrived in Iraq in April 2004 and return by 23 October 2004. Many will have seen the press reports,. They have been subjected to continual attack from the moment that they landed until now. The take-over was more a relief in contact. To date the Battalion has lost 1 KIA, 1 killed due to an operational accident and 48 wounded. In one period the Battalion was attacked every day for six weeks. The last time a regiment sustained such a high level of attack was during the Korean War. Individual acts of heroism have been displayed by all ranks. One private soldier (Pte Beharry) with his vehicle ablaze under effective fire, with a bullet in his helmet, his platoon commander wounded, managed to pull him to safety and then lead his platoon through a well organised ambush. In doing so an RPG (Rocket) hit the periscope and blasted open the hatch, badly wounding him. He continued to lead the platoon to safety. In another incident five soldiers put to rout more that one hundred rebels in a well rehearsed bayonet charge clearing the enemy trenches. There are too many stories to tell. We hope that all will deserve some form of recognition. The soldiers went out young boys and will return mature men having seen so much action.

On return the Battalion will go back to Tidworth and in March 2005 move to Padenborn (Germany).

The 2nd Battalion based at Ternhill (Shropshire) had a very successful training period in Canada. Then they went on to 4 months at Spearhead. To date they have not been deployed. Of note is the award of the Military Cross to Sgt P. Kelly of the 2nd Battalion who was platoon Sgt of the composite platoon attached to 1 Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders. They have just been warned for a six months tour of Iraq from January 2005. The plan is for the Battalion to move to Northern Ireland (Ballykelly in December 2005).

The 3rd Battalion has just had a very successful Annual Camp To Kazakhstan. This was the first element of the British Army to train along side what used to be our enemies. The training area was vast and their army learnt how operations should be done properly!

In addition individual reinforcements served with the 1st Battalion in Iraq.

The two independent companies, B Company The London Regiment and C Company Royal Rifle Volunteers continue to supply individual reinforcements to the Regular Army - as an example 17 members of B Company are in Iraq and 7 members in Afghanistan - similar numbers from C Company are also reinforcing units.

The other topic of conversation is the Restructuring of the Army. I must not be directed in making common sense observations so will only quote fact!

The Infantry must reduce by 4 battalions, which must be completed by 2008. The Army Board has made a number of proposals about how the Divisions of Infantry should restructure into larger regiments and these are being considered at the moment. As we go to press, no decisions on who might disband or who will amalgamate with whom have been made.

However, one thing is certain and that is the cessation of arms plotting will be in force by 2010. This means that battalions will be based in home stations and the men will move around the battalions of the Division to give them balanced and challenging careers.

The Regiment is strong and extremely proud of everyone who has or are serving in hostile situations.

A J Martin

## Official Opening of the Visitor's Centre - Thiepval

I am sure most of you know already the Thiepval Military Cemetery contains the remains of those thousands of British Soldiers killed on the Somme during World War One. Overlooking the cemetery is the Thiepval Memorial designed by Sir Edward Lutyens that records the names of over 72000 soldiers who have no known grave.

Some years ago it was appreciated by Sir Frank Sanderson, Chairman of a local Royal British Legion Branch in Sussex that there was no source of information about the Somme Battles available to the many visitors to the cemetery. He thought that this should be rectified and he set about raising the funding for the provision of an information centre at Thiepval where the history of the battles could be displayed.

The Regimental Association made a contribution towards the cost, in total some £1.8 million that was raised by donations from the public matched by



the local authorities in the Somme Area together with a small grant from public funds in Britain.

As a subscriber the Association was invited to send two representatives to Thiepval to attend the opening ceremony on the 27th of September undertaken by HRH The Duke of Kent, together with Sir Frank Sanderson, the Thiepval Project, Pierre Mirabaud, Prefect de la Region Picardie, Prefect de la Somme and Daniel Dubois, President du Conseil General de la Somme. Majors Dennis Bradley and Ron Morris were nominated to represent the Regiment and so on the day they joined the specially chartered Eurostar, Ron Morris at Waterloo and Dennis Bradley at Ashford.

After a three hour journey, at times travelling at just under 190 mile per hour, we arrived at Haute Piracy Station at around midday (local Time) where coaches were waiting to take us on to Thiepval a journey of some 50 minutes duration.

A large marquee had been erected alongside the Centre where those attending were able to listen to HRH The Duke of Kent and the French dignitaries speeches of welcome. Then at 1.15pm the VIPs moved to the entrance of the Centre where two young descendants of those killed on the Somme Jonty Legget (aged 10) from Britain and Emile Poupard (aged 9) from France jointly cut the ribbon and declared the Centre open. Those in the marquee were able to see the ceremony on large TV screens set up for the occasion. A buffet lunch (lots of wine but not much food!) was then available. During the lunch break we were entertained by a quartet from the Band of the Grenadier Guards and a choir from a School in Kent (whose name sadly I did not note down). Both were excellent.

We then moved on to view the Centre. It has been very well put together and gives a good explanation of the Somme Battles. It has a shop selling various publications and gifts and for me, most moving of all, a montage showing the young faces of many of those killed on the Somme.

At 3.00pm Last Post and Reveille were sounded at the War Memorial, the French and British National Anthems played and a joint wreath laid by the VIPs. Then regiments attending were invited to lay their own.

At 3.30pm we returned to the coaches for the journey home. A moving day and well worth the long time spent travelling. Thanks must be expressed to RHQ Grenadier Guards who organised the UK attendance at the ceremony

and for the excellent arrangements they made for the journey in both directions.

As a postscript I must mention that the Regiment were awarded two VCs on the Somme. On the 26th September 1916 the 12th Battalion part of 54 Brigade, 18th Division attacked Thiepval from the south. Private J F Edwards was with a group of Middlesex soldiers who had lost all their officers resulting in confusion and indications of retirement. Private Edwards realising the situation, on his own initiative, attacked a machine gun that was holding up the advance and knocked it out with bombs and so made further advance possible and saved the day. Private R Ryder's Company was held up by heavy rifle fire, all the officers had become casualties, and the attack was flagging. Private Ryder realising the situation dashed forward alone at an enemy trench and skilfully using his Lewis gun cleared the enemy and so turned possible failure into success.

12th Battalion's losses at Thiepval 10 officers killed, 6 wounded. Other Ranks 60 killed 233 wounded 121 missing.

RM

### **Back to Anzio**

While on holiday in Rome recently, and mindful of the celebrations in Normandy I decided to go down to Anzio, where the 2/7th Battalion came ashore in January 1944. After an assortment of misinformation about platforms and train times at Rome Termini, my wife and I boarded a local train for the journey, which took about 40 minutes; the fare was £4 each return.

On arrival we walked down a very attractive tree lined road, as it was a lovely summer day and nearing the sea front I asked two men chatting nearby for directions. I was very pleased and relieved, when one offered to take us round in his car- his companion assured me that it was not a taxi and there would be no charge! It turned out that he was a prominent local surgeon, very interested in the battles and landings and a mine of information.

He drove first to the CWG cemetery, passing on the way the British and American beaches, looking so tranquil by the deep blue sea as if nothing had ever disturbed them, and entered through the imposing gates. It was very moving to see the beautifully laid out grounds, with flowers and shady



trees everywhere, setting off the long rows of white headstones. The good doctor waited patiently while I walked along the quiet avenues searching for our badge among those of many other famous regiments and noting some familiar names, although matching them to faces was not easy after a lapse of 60 years - old men forget, as they say, but not completely. There is a smaller military section in the town cemetery which we visited briefly, and here again the regimental badge stood out here and there, increasing the feelings of sadness about the loss of all those young men.



*The Commonwealth War Grave Cemetery at Anzio*

I had hoped, when approaching Anzio, to see some of the areas so bitterly fought over, away from the port, but not wishing to impose further on our host. It was evident that over the years many changes had taken place and much of the land was dotted with small developments and numerous red roofed houses. No doubt the settlement at Aprilla known as the "factory" Padiglione Woods and the "flyover" were still there but not easily visible in the more peaceful landscape of today.

Finally we were taken to the Villa Adele, quite near the station, where a small museum has been established, with photographs, uniforms and items of military equipment, all neatly arranged. Our friend had asked for the villa to be opened exceptionally, as it was normally open on Mondays. and the curator Signor Salvini made us very welcome. When informed that I had

played a very small part in the landings he disappeared into his office and returned with a certificate and a small bronze plaque which had apparently been issued during a 60th anniversary commemoration ceremony this year, and presented this to me with a flourish. It seemed quite evident that the people of Anzio, who had transformed some extensive damage and ruined buildings into an attractive and colourful resort, were grateful to the Allied forces, who they regarded as liberators rather than invaders from the sea.

Late in the afternoon it was time to say goodbye to our benefactor, Dr. De Dominicis, who had taken such trouble to ensure that our visit was so rewarding and we gave him our warmest thanks then returned to Rome in thoughtful mood but very glad that we had made this excursion into the past.

I was able later to send the doctor an officers bronze cap badge as a souvenir.

C S Hockin

#### **A RETURN TO GIBRALTAR 2004**

Imagine my surprise when Major Steve Bream rang me in May to ask me if I would like to go to Gibraltar for a week, at the expense of the Gibraltar people and its Government. Thinking there was a catch I hesitantly said yes, to be told "right you fly on the 7th June and details will be sent to you from the Gibraltar Government direct to you". The paper work duly arrived explaining that the week was entitled "Veterans Holiday" and the package included a return flight, accommodation and all meals. The only thing that I had to do was to be at Luton airport by 06.20hrs on 7th June. The paperwork also included a comprehensive programme for the week.

I arrived at Luton at 06.00hrs on the 7th to see a number of familiar faces from the past including John O'Sullivan and his wife Shirley (1MX and 3 Queens) Brian Finch and his wife Gillian (1MX and 2 Queens), Bob Hatch and Danny Howard (1MX) to name but a few.

There was a large amount of people with familiar faces wearing Queens ties and Blazers proudly displaying the Queens Regiment Badge (Lads who were Privates or J/Nco's with 2 Queens in 1997-9 in Gib.).



We all duly checked in and off more or less on time on a Monarch Airlines flight arriving from the East to see the Rock of Gibraltar towering to our left and us appearing to land on a postage stamp runway, forgetting the size of the airport.

On arrival we were treated as VIP's , there was a welcoming party from the Tourist Board and we had to stand behind a banner while we had our photo taken for the local press.

Next it was off to the "Retreat", this proved very interesting as the building was the Old WO's & Sgt.'s Mess in Lathbury Barracks, that a number of us lived in when we were posted to Gibraltar in the 1970's.

The building had been totally refurbished and the rooms were En-suite, the bar and dining area were completely changed but it proved to be a very comfortable place for our stay. The week's programme was well arranged and very full with visits to the War Memorial, a tour of all the main tourist sites ( Upper St Michael's Cave & Upper Galleries) the Trafalgar Cemetery, a City Centre walking Tour, lunch with the Mayor in his parlour, a Dolphin watching expedition followed by a Gun Salute by the Gibraltar Regiment. The evening of the 10th saw us attending a Queen's Birthday Parade in Victoria Stadium, this was followed by a group of us who were invited to a Garden Party in the Governor's residence the Convent. A very interesting tour of the Botanical Gardens took place on Thursday followed by a Cable Car trip to the top of the Rock where we had dinner. On Friday evening we were treated to a Re enactment of the Ceremony of the keys by a local "History Alive" society at our accommodation followed by a Bar-B-Q. On Saturday morning we went to the Gibraltar Museum and then onto a Ceremonial Guard mount at the Convent with the Guards being furnished by the Gibraltar Regiment (Old Guard) and the 1st Battalion Royal Anglian Regiment ( New Guard) the Guard is no longer mounted daily, due to security but this was part of the 300th Anniversary celebrations. The Sunday was a variety of church Services for those who wished to attend, followed by a lunch in "The Clipper" pub in Irish Town. After lunch a tour of the WW2 tunnels was arranged for us by a WO2 in the Gibraltar Regiment, it was fascinating afternoon. We had dinner in a variety of restaurants hosted by various people and organisations throughout the week. who were extremely kind and generous. The Monday was a free day and most people took advantage of this to do any last minute shopping.

On one of the days when we were not busy I took the trouble to take a trip

down memory lane and went down Hospital Hill past the old Officers Mess (from the days when I was a Pte and L/cpl in 1MX) I must admit I could not remember initially where the Sergeants Mess was but after a walk around I found the building. Both Mess's are now private housing and were little changed in their outward appearance. The main South Barracks where I and the rest of the Battalion's single lads lived is now a school. The front of the building is still the same but the rest has been modernised in many respects. The two buildings opposite which used to house the Company and Battalion Headquarters are also private housing. The Battalion Assembly Hall is now a kindergarten. The Quartermasters Department in Rosia Bay was totally changed and is now private housing.

All too soon it was time to say goodbye to our hosts and fly back to the UK. The whole week can only be described as a very great act of generosity and kindness from the People of Gibraltar. I am sure that I can say a big thank you from all who attended the week.

J P Hamill

#### **Die Hard Veterans visit 8-15th October 2004**



*Diehard Veterans (L to R) Peter Grant, Terry Slater, Paddy Ryan - MM, Sid Hilton on the recent visit to the Rock*

In January 1756 the British Government authorised the raising of a 59th regiment of Foot. In May of the same year it was despatched to Gibraltar. In December of the same year it was the 57th (still the same old problem that



the government ministers could not count). Since then, battalions of the 57th and the Middlesex Regiment have returned to the Rock for two year tours in 1804, 1892, 1914, 1919 and finally in 1963. Probably the final organised group of Die Hards returned for seven days on the 8th October 2004. It is ironic to note that it was the 57th first overseas posting and the Middlesex Regiment's last overseas two years posting before being absorbed into the Queens Regiment in 1966.



*The Ceremony of the Keys - Gibraltar 2004*

By kind invitation of the Gibraltar Government to celebrate 300 years of British rule, a group of fifty organised by Steve Bream of PWRR RHQ, consisting of 18 Die Hards, and a mixture of ex members from the Royal Sussex, 1st & 2nd Battalions Queen's Regiment, Royal Engineers, Royal Navy and eight Royal Hospital Chelsea Veterans returned to Gibraltar. As we assembled for the arrival photograph on the tarmac of RAF Gibraltar the maroon and gold tie of the Middlesex was everywhere to be seen from thereon our visit was known as the "Die Hard Veterans visit."

It was marvellous to see such a large gathering of ex Die Hards. The group consisted of Paddy and Anne Quinn, Ron and Maureen Wills,

Syd Hilton, John Taylor, Paddy Ryan, Jim Reynolds, Danny Glynn, Harry Steel, Peter Grant, Colin Elliot, Allen Jennings, Terry Slater, Roy Bishop, Les Plumb and Keith Charlton. We were also joined by ex Die Hards now resident on the Rock, which were Brian Coombes, Barry Mason, Tony King and Noddy Davison. You will note that the signals platoon and Corps of Drums were well represented.

We were accommodated in the Sergeants' Mess of Lathbury Barracks situated on Windmill Hill Flats. It is still just as windy as it used to be! To our shock and horror an old Drums member, Brian Coombes was the barman (with much help from his daughter). Our hosts had a full programme of events which included a Rock Tour, the tunnels of the Great Siege and second World War extensions (all 34 miles of them), and St Michaels cave. Our hosts did a marvellous job and many thanks indeed to the Gibraltar Regiment Association and British Legion Club for their wonderful hospitality.

A copious amount of drinks were downed and memories retold of how "the hell did we march up Hospital Hill in Ammunition boots", "where have all the drinking establishments gone from Main Street?" Marks & Spencer and smart restaurants and coffee bars in fact now replaced all these. A few old haunts were still to be seen, for example the Coach & Horses, London Bar and the Wembley Bar. During our 63/65 tour the battalion always had a company away in Tobruk, so some of us did not meet up until the battalion re-assembled in Northern Ireland two years later. There were a few in fact who had never heard of John Taylor's famous tale of three nights in a Spanish Jail.

We all remembered taking part in the "Ceremony of the Keys". This takes place four or five times a year. We were lucky that the Gibraltar Regiment was still keeping this tradition going. The Band and Drums with a platoon from the TA Company of the Gibraltar Regiment paraded on a packed Casemates Square. It was great to watch, and all agreed they were as good, as any regular unit.

Now that there has been a military withdrawal from Gibraltar, except for a few Royal Navy and Royal Air Force many of the barracks and military buildings have been demolished to make way for smart new housing and business premises. To our delight, South Barracks, our old home in 1963 still looked out across the straights and although it is a school it still had its very impressive grandeur. They probably tried to knock it down but as it was built to withstand cannon ball fire it is quite likely it was too difficult.



The seven days was a very great success and telephone numbers were exchanged with old friends. All RHQ has to do now is to organise a Veterans' reunion trip to Georgetown Guyana .... Come on Dennis .....How about it?.

Kevin Brown  
Historic dates Allen Jennings

### **DIE HARDS AT THE PALACE**

Alf Burford, Fred Philips, Bob Cussack and their partners together with the widows of Fred Worley and "Tookie" Poole were invited by the Not Forgotten Association, through Haig Homes to Buckingham Palace on Thursday 22nd July 2004. The party arrived at the Palace at 13.45hrs and after a tight security check they were escorted into the rear garden area, all present enjoyed an excellent high tea which included " fresh strawberries and cream" during this period they were entertained by a fine variation of music. HRH The Princess Royal arrived and spoke to the Ex Service members for approximately two hours. On HRH's departure Pipers of the Scots Guards Association (Berks/Bucks ) gave a fine rendering of pipe music.

To close what had been a wonderful day, the Band of the Scots Guards performed a first class Beating Retreat prior to the departure of the guests at 17.30

For those attending it was an afternoon which will remain in the memory, for sometime to come.

A Burford

### **AUTUMN BREAK**

The 2004 Autumn break at Warner Brothers on Hayling Island was a great success once again. We were delighted that Mr & Mrs Jack Disney were able to make the trip this year. Jack you may remember had to cancel at the last moment in 2003 due to an operation. Both the entertainment and menu were as usual first class, in fact we were spoiled for choice.

On the Saturday evening we were visited by Mr Jack Bradshaw who lives close by at Selsey Bill. Jack had been in the cadets at the same time as Colonel Rex Caine OBE and served between 1950 and 1958 with three

different regiments including the Middlesex. He brought some interesting photographs including one of a very young looking Captain Ken Beale MBE.

Sadly, Alf Burford suffering from a slight touch of the dreaded "gout" was unable to take part in the Sunday morning round of golf which he won last year after much skulduggery. He claimed to have withdrawn not wishing to heap further humiliation on regular golfer Reg Best by thrashing him two years running. As expected, Reg was the eventual winner. The ladies also were very impressive with May Disney completing the nine hole course with an amazing display of golf and superb football skills.

The four days, filled with good companionship, good humour and more fun and laughter than most of us had had in a long time, passed all too quickly and we regretfully said goodbye to rediscovered and new found friends after breakfast on the Monday morning before travelling back to London. All who came are already looking forward to next years autumn break maybe at a different location, and hopefully we shall be joined by a few more of our comrades.

A Brown

### **KOREAN CLUB**

The Korean Club held their annual luncheon and Annual General Meeting at the Victory Services Club London on 11th September. Seventy five members and guests attended among whom were Chris Lawrence, Chairman of the Regimental Association., Ron & Betty Morris our former Regimental Secretary and Barry Reed who had acted as Chairman at the previous years AGM. After brief exchanges at the bar those present sat down to a very enjoyable and convivial meal and with stories exchanged, memories recalled and friendships renewed. The raffle was very ably run by Duggie Francis and Bill Rawlinson. Generous presentations were made in memory of Inger Bennett and Capt. Kitchener by their partners which were much appreciated. The purchase of the Korean Government's new Veteran's Medal was available to members.

### **VISIT TO THE ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA**

Enfield Branch were invited to an evening of entertainment at the Royal Hospital where they were joined by Col. Rex Cain and Major Ron Morris who was accompanied by his wife Betty and members of the Hounslow Branch. Unfortunately the artists who were providing the music were late due to the familiar curse of London traffic. Once they had arrived they got



the place swinging and the In Pensioners were quick to invite the lady guests to dance. An excellent supper was provided and an entertaining evening was had by all. John Morrissey (In Pensioner) was known to some members attending as they had served together.

### **THE ANNUAL SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE MIDDLESEX GUILDHALL**

The annual service was again well attended, unfortunately Brigadier B A M Pielow phoned to say that he was unable to attend, so Colonel R M Cain stepped in at the last moment and read the lesson, Ecclesiasticus 44 verses 1-14, the service was conducted by The Reverend Prebendary Patrick Tuft MA who is our Honorary Chaplain.

The service was running a little early and with Big Ben just across the road, there was no chance to fudge the exact time for Colonel Cain to lay the wreath and to observe the two minutes silence at 11 o'clock, so Reverend Patrick filled the time with a few well chosen words.

As in previous years those attending, rekindled friendships, exchanged stories whilst enjoying a glass of sherry and nibbles for which we are most grateful to Major Ron & Betty Morris for transporting the sherry and glasses and to Betty for the excellent savouries with which she tempts us.

Members are thankful to Ian and Dennis, from the Court who are always so cheerful and helpful to our members. Afterwards Diehards from Enfield and Hounslow walked around the National Garden of Remembrance before proceeding to the Army & Navy Stores for lunch.

### **REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY MILL HILL**

Despite a cold start to the day, Diehards, were not deterred and a sizeable contingent assembled in the Garrison Church for a joint service with the British Forces Post Office. The service was conducted by Canon D Wall and after the singing of the National Anthem the congregation moved outside to the Regimental War Memorial, for a short Service of Remembrance. They were followed by two marching contingents from the BFPO and one from the Association comprising of the combined Enfield and Hounslow Branches, numbering 42 members, headed by the Enfield Branch Standard, carried by G Patmore.

After the service, during which Last Post and Reveille was sounded by a bugler from the Light Infantry, wreaths were laid by Brigadier P J T Maggs CBE for BPFO, Major R G Thornton TD on behalf of the Association and for the Enfield Branch by Mrs Sylvia Poole & Mrs Marge Whitby, widows of members of the Regiment who had been Far East Prisoners of War they were escorted by Joe Read. Those on parade then marched past, the salute was taken by Brigadier Maggs, watched by family and friends and other Diehards who were unable to march.

After the parade members and their families were entertained by the WO's and Sergeants Mess, an enjoyable lunch was served. Alf Burford expressed thanks and good wishes to all members of the mess and to the catering staff for their hospitality. A wonderful and successful day for those of the Association who attended.

### **ODD JOTTINGS**

Joe O'Gorman has retired after 14 years as Finance Secretary at Regimental Headquarters. He has looked after our finances with considerable expertise and skill over the years and we will miss his financial acumen and understanding of our accounts. We wish Joe a long and happy retirement.

Tom Roberts phoned to express his regrets that he could not attend the Normandy commemorations, he was expecting his sister to arrive from Canada during the relevant period.

Taffy Evans who spent July in the UK and visited Enfield Branch whilst here, writes to tell me that while he was staying in Watton he went to the dentist for a check up and was told that it would cost £35 for a visit, as he was not registered plus additional charges for any treatment, Wisely, Taffy waited until he returned to Manila where the total cost was £15.

Reg Warner, 6205138, whom I met in Normandy recently has written to say that whilst he was in France he met another Die Hard and veterans from the 51st Highland Division. Reg served with 1/7 Middlesex joining at Mill Hill in 1939 and served in France at Dunkirk 1940, Western Desert 1942/3 Scilly 1943 Normandy 1944.

Brigadier (Retd) J B Ryall CBE has written to say that he has moved to Bournemouth, brought about by his wife's ill health, they have been married



for sixty two years. Consequently he feels that he cannot participate in any events.

Roy Bishop has written to say that he had an enjoyable trip to Normandy, staying with French farming friends at Estré, went to a splendid dinner given to the veterans present and serving regular Army personnel of the Brigade of Guards which lasted from 8pm to 4am. He does not comment on his state of health at the close of the event.

Fred Phillips has written to say that he has received the medals of the late Sgt Tom Phelps of "C" Group 2/7th Bn Middlesex Regiment from his daughter June and son in law John Druker who wishes them to be in the safe keeping of the Enfield Branch and will be on show in Albuhera Room at The Royal British Legion Holtwhites Hill Enfield. Fred points out that Tom was a great colleague to all who served with the 2/7th Battalion during WW2.

Major John Rogerson has written to say that he has received the diaries of Captain P John Livemore MC 1st Battalion Middlesex which details the Battalion's fighting through Belgium where he was awarded his MC. The official Regimental history does not record the revamped 1st Battalions fighting in NW Europe in 1944, so this very personal account, photographs and newspaper clippings will be placed in the Archives. The diaries and other memorabilia were presented by his daughter Mrs Wendy E Orr.

John H Bird in a letter from USA wrote to say that he hopes to celebrate 63 years of marriage and how he enjoys reading the odd jottings of those who are still around, but is saddened by the obituaries and the passing of old friends.

## OBITUARIES

We advise with the deepest regret that the following have died:-

ASHTON Raymond Sergeant 1st Battalion died at home at Burnham Kent on 4th August 2004. No further details are known.

BELL J T of Hawarden Flintshire, late of the Regiment died recently. No further information is available at present.

BEST J W died on 6th October in hospital, he was suffering from cancer, no further details are available as we go to press

BRADNAM George Stanley 6200132 ex Provost Sgt passed away on 8th February last. George was well known in the Regiment, serving for 23 years making many friends. A slaughterman in civilian life, during the retreat to Dunkirk he killed some livestock then dressed the animals to eat so that our men, who were short of food would have a meal. George always felt that he was lucky to have just left the Far East before the Japanese invaded and captured all his friends who became prisoners of war. The Enfield Branch of The Royal British Legion were in attendance at the funeral.

BROTHERTON Margaret (nee Ponting) widow of Colonel Ian Brotherton TD DL. Died peacefully on 26th October 2004 aged 82, she will be sadly missed by her daughters, family and all who knew her. Cremation was held at Aldershot Crematorium on 3rd November 2004.

CLAYPOLE H A B, Major who served with 2/7th Battalion throughout World War Two, sadly passed away in August 2004 aged 91. He served in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and Palestine. Following his retirement from the Regiment he was the Accountant/Treasurer for 2/7th reunions some 40 years

GREGORY William Haydn passed away on 3rd September last, he served with 2/7th throughout World War II.

HAWES Christopher who served with the 1st Battalion in Cyprus during 1956/7 died on 1st June 2004.

MARSH Bill died on 9th July aged 85. He had been seriously ill for some time, so his passing was a merciful relief. Bill was with the BEF in France in 1940 and came out via Dunkirk. After a period in the UK he was sent as a reinforcement to the 1st Battalion and arrived in Hong Kong just prior to the battle and so became a prisoner of the Japanese in December 1941. After a period as a POW in Hong Kong he was sent on a draft to Japan and was held in Toyama Camp. On release by the Americans in 1945 he travelled back to the UK via Canada. As well as being a supporter of the Dunkirk's Veterans Association, the FEPOW Association and the Not Forgotten Society. He was proud to say that last year, whilst with the Not Forgotten Society he met Her Majesty The Queen. He leaves behind not only his wife Mary but 3 sons and 3 daughters.

PAGE Les, who served as a Sergeant with the 2/8th (1st) Battalion during World War Two. He remained in his own home in Hanwell, West London,



until September but had been poorly for some time. Les much enjoyed the company of his old comrades and remained in touch with the dwindling band of friends. Les died in Eastbourne Hospital on Sunday the 24th October 2004 aged 89. he had been ill for some time so his passing was a merciful release. his funeral was held on Tuesday the 2nd November.

PEART Sidney Malcolm who served with the Regiment, his funeral took place on 15th June at St Mary's church Chapel Street Penzance on 15th June last.

PEMBERTON Frederick, served with the 2nd Battalion during World War Two. In a letter recently received from his son, Robert, to advise us that his father had died late 2002 he said that his father had served with great pride in the Regiment and that he thought that his gazetting to Major was one of his highest personal achievements. Details of the funeral are not known to us.

STAGG William, served during World War Two with 2nd Battalion died on 29th October 2004 aged 90. He was one of the survivors off the Lancastrian. His funeral was held at West London Crematorium Kensal Green on Armistice Day 11th November 2004.

WARD Charles Frederick. died on 8th July 2004 aged 84. Charlie joined the 1/7th Battalion in 1938 and served with them throughout World War Two. He was wounded in the leg in April 1945 just prior to the Battalion reaching Bremerhaven at the end of the War. He met his future wife, Winnifred. when the Battalion returned to Hemel Hempstead from the Middle East to prepare for the invasion of Europe and they were happily married for sixty years. Leaving the Army in the rank of Sergeant, Charlie joined the Home Guard and attained the rank of Company Sergeant Major. There he formed a Shooting Club and as captain he won a silver medal at Bisley. He spent most of his working life, firstly as a fishmonger, and then as a milk roundsman with the London Coop. He and Winnie moved down to the West Country in 1988 to join their son John and his family where they had a very happy retirement. Although living in the West Country he was a regular attender at the annual reunion of 1/7th held at Hornsey Drill Hall. The funeral was held on 19th July at the Penmount Crematorium Truro. As a final tribute to Charlie his coffin was draped with the Regimental Flag. He leaves behind, his wife Winnie, his son John, daughter in law Gill, two grandchildren, two step grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren.

WEBB Leonard Edward Frederick (Ted) died on 19th October 2004 in Louth Hospital after a short illness. He was 82 years of age. We have no further information at this stage.

### **Captain John H Gerrard CBE MC QPM**

Capt. Gerard was the Platoon Commander of No 13 Platoon ( Mortars) 1st Battalion throughout the European Campaign, from France to Lubeck , Germany. A fearless soldier, he was awarded the Military Cross for his leadership in action.

Demobilised in 1946 he had a very successful career in the Metropolitan Police, completing his service as Assitant Commisioner, New Scotland Yard. Captain Gerrard died in June 2003.

### **Colonel Tony Hewitt MBE MC**

Anthony George Hewitt. the son of an Army chaplain was born on September 13th 1914 at Dharwad Southern India in what he descibed as an old pre Mutiny bungalow with a sunken grave in the garden and the ghost of a murdered British officer. He spent his early years in Ahmadnagar north east of Poona, before attending preparatory school in the UK at the age of 10, prior to going to Epsom College.

Tony Hewitt entered Sandhurst in 1933, he was commissioned into the Middlesex Regiment in 1935 and was posted to the 1st Battalion in Egypt, the following year the battalion moved to Singapore and thence to Hong Kong. In December 1941 the Japanese launched an attack on the Crown Colony but despite a gallant defense the garrison was over whelmed and surrendered. Hewitt then a captain and the adjutant of the 1st Battalion was imprisoned in Sham Shui POW camp from which he escaped and walked through enemy and bandit infested New Territories of Hong Kong and across Southern China Burma and India, for which he was awarded a Military Cross, for his daring escape.

Tony Hewitt eventually returned to the Regiment joining the 2nd Battalion and took part in the Normandy landings, the liberation of Brussels and the battle of the Rheichwald and ended the war on the coast of the Baltic.

Post war, after graduating from Army Staff College Camberley he held Senior Command posts in The Gambia, Sierra Leone and was awarded his



MBE following a second tour in West Africa, Germany, Austria, Norway and Ghana, before moving to Canberra in 1962, as military adviser to the British High Commissioner. After two years as deputy commander of Singapore District he retired in 1967.

On retirement, he lived in Sydney Australia for a number of years working as secretary of the University Club before settling in Queensland. He wrote three books Bridge with Three Men, Corridors of Time and Children of the Empire.

Tony Hewitt who died on 30th June last, married in June 1948 Elizabeth Weedon (nee Hayley-Bell ) who survives him with a stepson Mark.

### **Major H J Evans**

Hugh Evans was born in 1928, the only child of an officer in the Indian Police Service. He was educated at Haileybury and the RMA Sandhurst and joined the 1st Battalion in Hong Kong in 1949.

After a period as Regimental Signals Officer in Korea and following the return of the Battalion to Hong Kong Hugh was posted to the reactivated Depot at Mill Hill as one of the Training Subalterns and from there, in due course, back to the 1st Battalion in Austria as Assistant Adjutant.

When the Battalion moved to Cyprus in 1955 he was on the advance party but early in the three year tour returned to the Depot as Adjutant. He then volunteered for secondment to the Trucial Oman Scouts and it was as a company commander there that the vehicle he was travelling in was blown up and Hugh suffered serious leg injuries.

After a lengthy period in hospital and some time recuperating on the held strength of the Depot Hugh decided in 1958 to retire from the Army since his medical category precluded him from remaining in the infantry.

In civilian life Hugh was employed by Whitbread's, initially at the famous Brewery in Chiswell Street, and later in Plymouth, On being threatened with a transfer to Wolverhampton he left Whitbread's and became a partner in a small firm making thatched bird houses which were sold to Harrods and other retail outlets.

On reaching the age of sixty in 1988 Hugh retired to live in France where he died last October.

Having a good appearance and considerable personal charm, Hugh, before he married, enjoyed a reputation among his less successful contemporaries as something of a lady's man.. He was a prominent member of the group which, when off duty, could often be found supporting the bar of the Tattie Bogle club off Beak Street. He will also be remembered for initiating the first Ladies Christmas Party at the Depot despite stiff opposition from the old guard.

He is survived by his wife Vina and four stepsons and daughters.

R.M.C.

### **Regimental Museum Dover Castle**

Miss E A Deeves MBE, daughter of 2nd Lt. Thomas W Deeves CMG CBE MC& Bar 16th (Public Schools) Battalion Middlesex Regiment visited the museum to see her father's medals and uniform which she donated to the



*Major John Rogerson and Miss E A Deeves MBE  
with her father's medals*



museum in 1999. During her visit she made a generous monetary gift which will be put to good use by the museum trustees.

Cheryl Coleman, Secretary of The Friends of Dover Museum, has retired from the post due to her having purchased a house and shop in Ilfracombe with her husband Roly on his forthcoming retirement from the army, we wish them good fortune in their new venture.

### **World War 2 veterans reunited event at Dover Castle "Their Past your Future"/Spirit of the Regiment**

The PWRR & Queen's Museum, The Regimental Recruiters, The Museum Friends Group and The Die Hards Re-enactment Society, in cooperation with English Heritage, intend to run a weekend event at Dover Castle during the National Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Second World War.

A programme to meet all interests;  
Research a Military Relative (in the PWRR & Queens Regiment Museum, find out what life was like in the Second World War and many other wars, attend a Military Music Workshop (bring your own instrument) play in a Concert, cook Army Rations (food) visit the Dover Castle Second World War Tunnels, Watch a WW2 Re-enactment, a Drumming Display and enjoy all the other excellent displays and facilities that Dover Castle has to offer.  
Castle opening times 10.00am-4.00pm

Their Past Your Future is a Museums Libraries & Archive Council (MLA) sponsored event which will give young people the opportunity to learn first hand from Veterans about their experiences of the Second World War.

**The date for this event is 2/3 July 2005 at Dover Castle and World War Two Veterans will be welcome on both days, so please enter in your diaries now so that you will not miss this Regimental Event.**

Other Events at the Museum are

#### **27 April 2005**

Annual Talk and Buffet evening at Leros Barracks Canterbury "mainly military music with flowers". Talk with music by Lt Col Les Wilson and The Kohima Band, Flowers by Janice Luck and auctioned with Regimental sheet music by Major Graham Turner.

#### **5 August 2005**

Social evening in Regimental Cricket Tent during Canterbury Cricket Festival. Enquiries to Brenda Hunter Secretary RHQ Canterbury.

### **Army Widows Association**

On Friday 6th August a group of 22 Army widows met for the weekend at Amport House in Amport Hampshire to discuss how they were informed of their husband's death and the support they had received from their husband's unit.

They have just produced their first Newsletter and further details are available from SAM ROBERTS on 01274 595700

### **New Members**

The following members of the Regiment have joined the Association since the last Newsletter.

23235815 Cpl J W Hawkins	B Coy 1st Battalion
23235816 Pte R E P Hawkins	1st Battalion
23371007 Pte P H Long	B Coy 1st Battalion
22288908 L/cpl F J Meehan	HQ Coy 1st Battalion
23064829 Cpl J T C Peters	RAPC att 1st Battalion
23026849 Pte F R Schofield	1/7th Battalion (TA)

### **News from Spain**

No doubt you will remember that Capt Ken Beale was seeking news about a Middlesex Badge painted on a rock well the reply!

My father, Jimmy Ridler ex 1st Middlesex B Coy Regt No 6214250 has just shown me the July copy of the Diehards newsletter, an article which shows a Middx cap badge on a rock that he painted!





*Jimmy Ridler - The Rock Painter*

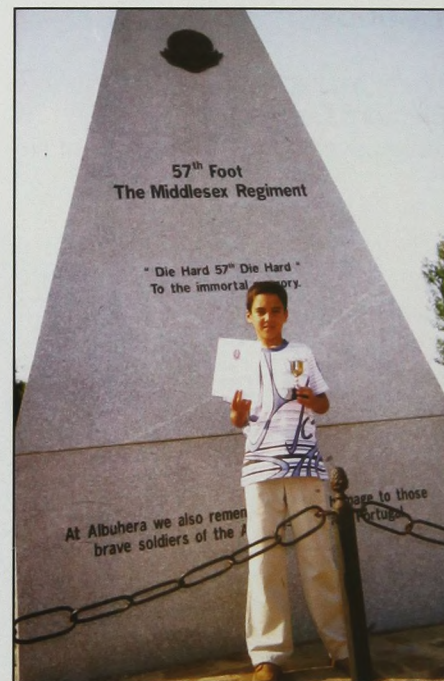
In 1983 my parents, my husband and myself bought a piece of land in Moreira and had a villa built. We agreed to name the villa Casa Albuera (The Spanish spelling) because the family had strong ties to the Regiment. My Grandfather was a regular in the Great War serving in the 4th, 16th and 3rd Battalions and my father fought with the 1st Battalion in the Second World War. In 1985 my father decided to paint the cap badge on a rock and we placed this within the boundary of our land.

We sold the villa in 1990 and as far as I know, the new owners kept the name of the villa and wanted to keep the rock after we told them of the history.

Perhaps the villa has again been sold, as the owners today did not know the answers to Capt Beale's questions. My father is in good health, aged 89, has recently been to Normandy with his two pals, Tony Theobald and Sam Shawyer both ex 1st MX.

We were all excited with the article and glad to hear that the rock is still in existence.

Yours sincerely, Rosalie Penn



*Daniel Sanchez Benegas  
Winner of the PWRR Trophy 2004 -  
La Albuera*

## PWRR Trophy 2004

The winner of the trophy this year was Daniel Sanchez Benegas, the trophy was presented by the PWRR to encourage the pupils of the local school in Albuera to improve their English and is presented to the pupil who makes the most progress in the language during the academic year. This has proved to be a proud moment for his mother, as his sister won the trophy last year, but since there are no more siblings the cup will have to go to another family in 2005.

## Seeking Information

L/cpl E Shaw 6203918 is trying to contact Alf who was his no 2 on the Vickers Machine Gun defending the road to Fort Stanley, if Alf would like to write to me I will pass his letter on to his no 1.

Mr K Croonen, who lives in the village of Kaulille Belgium is seeking information on 3rd Infantry Division which was in his village during WW2, as 2nd Battalion Middlesex were with the Division which was in his village if any one could help he would be delighted his Address:

**Croonen Kristof**  
**Kaulillerweg 216**  
**3950 Bocholt Kaulille**  
**Belgium**

## Charitable Cooperation

Following the recent delivery of a Riser/Recliner to an ex member of the Regiment, donations were made by the Poppy Appeal, Small Arms School Corps, The Middlesex Regiment and the NHS, which shows the wonderful cooperation which exists between the various charities.



## REGIMENTAL GOODS

The following are held in stock and are available on request to the Regimental Shop RHQ PWRR Howe Barracks Canterbury Kent CT1 1JY. Cheques or Postal Orders should be made payable to PWRR Account No 0536700 Telephone No 01227 818058.

Blazer Badges		£8.00
Car Badges (To Order)		£10.00
Ice Buckets miniature side drum with regimental emblazon		£24.00
Plus postage and packing		£5.50
Ties (Old pattern maroon & old gold)		£6.00
Ties (New pattern black with maroon and gold thin stripes)		£6.00
Ties Officers Club (Silk)		£13.50
Good quality replica Middlesex Regt Cap Badges		£2.50
Old Comrades lapel badges		£2.75
Prints Steady the Drums & Fifes unframed	Large	£7.00
	Small	£5.00
Middlesex Regt Plaques		£18.00
Middlesex Blazer Buttons Flat staybright with engraved Middlesex Badge		
Sets of 6 large & 6 small		£28.00
Individual Buttons	Large	£2.50
Individual Buttons	Small	£2.00
Regimental Cuff Links		£8.00
Regimental Tie Grip		£4.50
Regtl Ladies Brooch		£4.75
Regtl Tie Tack and Chain		£4.50

To Order £1.00 post & packing on all small orders, contact shop for larger orders.

**Note recent price changes.**