



The Die-Hards

NEWSLETTER

No. 96

September 2006

Price £1



**Colonel Mike Ball
with the winner of the PWRR Trophy
Maria Marquez Garcia**

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT BRIGADIER TONY PIELOW

Because of the slightly earlier publication of this newsletter it is also slightly early to wish all our members and their families the traditional Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year – I do so nevertheless most warmly.

We must be grateful for the support we get from all our members, and despite the ongoing worries and problems we are all faced with these days – nobody more so than those members of the PWRR who have been actively and operationally engaged.

Association events have again this year been well supported. The Albuhera Service in St Paul's was much improved and the morning start encouraged an especially large regimental congregation. The chapel itself is being renovated, a new notice board is already in place and there will shortly be boundary ropes in regimental colours. For too long we have lacked a regimental Book of Remembrance and it is hoped that one will be in place by the time of our next service - suitably mounted in a specially made cabinet.

The revised timing and venue for the AGM and Annual Reunion, supported by a much improved menu assured the undoubted success of this year's event. The Officers' Club dinner was equally successful and the Colonel of the Regiment was our main guest and gave an impressive account of the outstanding operational work of PWRR and the regimental background in general.

The Middlesex Guildhall which for many years has been the venue for our Remembrance Day service is currently undergoing extensive renovation for the Supreme Court. The old Middlesex County Memorial will be re-positioned in the foyer and will in future include reference to The Middlesex Regiment. Another good innovation.

There is still no firm news about the future of the Regimental Memorial in Inglis Barracks but there is hope that it may yet remain in situ suitably cared for after the barracks have finally closed.

Mention was made at this year's AGM to the eventual closing down of the Association which is still some considerable way off as we will be functioning until 2017. All Diehards will then be looked after by HQ PWRR and our benevolence will continue as now.

I am therefore happy to report another good year for the Association. We owe many thanks for this to the strong support we get from PWRR – especially Major Dennis Bradley, and to our own Executive Committee as well as to Mike Ward and Major Ron Morris, not forgetting the constant and loyal support we enjoy from our own members and their families. It is the combination of all these factors that continues to ensure a healthy, robust and active association of so many Diehards. I personally send my thanks and congratulations to you all.

My warm wishes to you all!

Tony Pielow

FORECAST OF EVENTS 2006/2007

8th November	7th Bn MX Officers' Club Dinner To be confirmed
9th November	Garden of Remembrance Westminster Service commences 10.50hrs
11th November	MX Ceremony of Remembrance Middlesex Guildhall 10.30hrs Service 10.50hrs
12th November	Remembrance Service Inglis Barracks Mill Hill Assemble 10.00hrs
12th November	7th Bn MX Remembrance Service Assemble 10.00hrs at Parish Church St Mary and St George Hornsey

2007

11th May	MX Officers Club Annual Dinner Army & Navy Club
12th May	MX Albuhera Service Regimental Chapel St Paul's Cathedral 11:00 hrs
12th May	Mx All Ranks Reunion Union Jack Club Annual General Meeting 13:15 hrs

THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S ROYAL REGIMENT

The PWRR journal is due for imminent publication therefore a report on PWRR is not included in this newsletter. Members may wish to subscribe to the PWRR journal to acquaint themselves with the Regiment's experiences. The intention is that eventually the Die-Hard Newsletter will be embodied in the PWRR journal. However an update of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment's activities will be reported in the March newsletter. Thus subscription to the PWRR journal is recommended.

OFFICER'S CLUB

The Officers' Club held their annual dinner at the Army and Navy Club, Pall Mall, London SW1 during the evening of Friday the 12th of May 2006. The principal guest was Brigadier Richard Holmes, Colonel of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment.

Regimental Guests: - Capt John Lenaghan, Union Jack Club, Mrs Pam Chattey, Mrs Jean Clayden, Mrs Ann Davies, and Mrs Lizzie Holmes.

Members and Private Guests:- Brig & Mrs Tony Pielow, Brig Brian Marciandi, Brig & Mrs Dennis Rendell, Col & Mrs Mike Ball, Col & Mrs Rex Cain, Col John Moore, Lt Col & Mrs Mike Deakin, Lt Col & Mrs Roger Gancz, Sir John and Lady Birch, Maj & Mrs Dennis Bradley, Maj & Mrs Howard Couch, Maj Stephen Dowse, Maj & Mrs Brian Finch, Maj John Hamill, Maj & Mrs Derrick Harwood, Maj & Mrs Ron Morris, Maj & Mrs Barry Reed, Capt & Mrs Mike Doran, Capt & Mrs John Pollock, Capt & Mrs Peter Walden, Mrs F Castle, Mr H Clayden, Mr T Davies, Lt & Mrs Malcolm Deakin and Lt & Mrs Peter Ortino.

Brig Tony Pielow welcomed our guests and gave a resume of events connected to the Officers' Club and the Regimental Association in particular he said how pleased he was that the move of the AGM and the All Ranks Reunion to a lunch time slot rather than the evening was a popular decision. Despite a falling membership the numbers attending are increasing year by year. He then introduced Brig Richard Holmes who gave an update on regimental activities and said how well the young men of today are serving. The PWRR is in fine heart and has certainly made its mark!

THE ANNUAL SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE SATURDAY 13TH OF MAY 2006

The move to a morning service has been most successful and all present said how much better it was to attend at 11am rather than in the afternoon. It had been thought for some time that the choir had been under represented and so this year, Major Dennis Bradley successfully negotiated with the Cathedral Authorities for the choir to extend their participation. This was appreciated by the congregation and as such made for a greatly improved service. Again this year The Right Reverend Monsignor Ralph Brown could not attend so the Reverend Prebendary Patrick Tuft, our Regimental Chaplain, led both the prayers and gave the address. The first reading from Isaiah 6 verses 1 to 8 was read by Brigadier Tony Pielow, our President. The second from Matthew 8 verses 5 -13 was read by Colonel Mike Ball, the Regimental Secretary of the PWRR.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND THE ANNUAL REUNION

The Annual General Meeting, the first at the Union Jack Club, with Major Chris Lawrence in the Chair started promptly at 1315 hours. Major Dennis Bradley presented a paper on benevolence and gave an outline of the Associations financial position which is very satisfactory. Income exceeding expenditure by some £4K for the year ending 31 Dec 05. The paper, "The future of the Regimental Association" published in the March 2006 edition of the newsletter was explained in some detail and questions were invited. It was agreed that this has to be the way forward.

Major Bradley gave details of the items of memorabilia that had been in the display room at Enfield that had been sent on to Elvas, Albuhera or the National Army Museum. He said he would be writing to the Chairman of the Enfield Branch to keep him informed. All were advised that the 2007 AGM and Reunion would be held on the 12th of May at the Union Jack Club. The meeting closed at 1345 hours and those attending returned to the bar in readiness for the reunion.

The first reunion at the Union Jack Club took on a different form from those in recent years in that it was a lunch time event being held directly after the Service in St Paul's. All attending were called at 1430 hours to a formal sit down lunch. On arrival members were handed a card so that they could mark a place at a table of their choice thus enabling friends and colleagues to sit together and enjoy each others company. This proved very popular. Brigadier Tony Pielow, our President, made a speech of welcome and said how pleased he was to see so many old friends here, over 190. He said this tends to prove how right we were to move to lunch time. He mentioned he was particularly pleased with the arrangements made today, the food and the bar etc, and he thanked Major Dennis Bradley and the staff of the Union Jack Club for all their efforts. He looks forward to seeing us all again in 2007, on the 12th of May, at the Union Jack Club.

After lunch many stayed on in the bar to reminisce about the old days and to have a jar or two before wending their way home. All agreed that the Union Jack Club was the place for future reunions and they will be with us again next year.

RM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Middlesex Regimental Association held on the 13th May 2006 at the Union Jack Club Sandell St. London SE 1

Welcome by Chairman

The Chairman welcomed all members to the Annual General Meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

Benevolence

Copies of the summary of benevolence were distributed outlining how funds had been spent. Letters of appreciation have been sent to the Army Benevolent Fund, SSAFA and the Royal British Legion.

Proposed by Mr R Best
Seconded by Mr P Dyer

Enfield Branch
Hounslow Branch

Passed unanimously with a vote of thanks to Major J Rogerson (RHQ) and the Association Secretary.

A summary of the benevolence review was printed in the March issue of the Newsletter.

Finance

The Association Secretary gave a resume of the accounts for 2005

Proposed by Mr G Barton
Seconded by Mr Abrahams

Carried unanimously with a vote of thanks to Miss P Howie Finance Secretary RHQ and Major D Bradley.

The financial summary for the period 1st January to 31st December was published in the March Newsletter

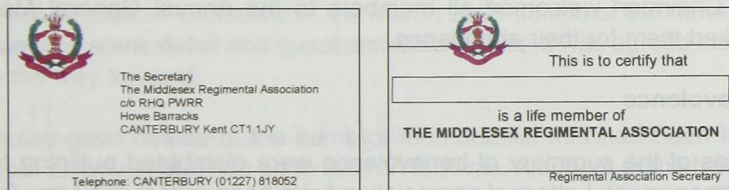
Paper – Future of the Regimental Association

The Association Secretary emphasised the particularly pertinent parts of the paper to which there were no questions, queries or complaints.

New membership cards / Annual subscriptions

The Association Secretary re emphasised the details given in the newsletter with reference to cessation of subscriptions, the cancellation of the subscription card and the issuing of a plastic membership card during late 2006. A template of a future membership card is shown at Annex A to these minutes.

Annex A



Any other business

A vote of thanks was recorded to the Executive Committee for all their hard work during the past year.

Proposed by Mr P Stewart

Seconded by Mr Howard

Carried unanimously.

DATE AND VENUE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2007

The AGM and reunion will take place at the Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, London SE1 8UJ on Saturday 12th May 2007.

THE 50th REUNION OF THE MORTAR PLATOON OF THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT ON 26TH MARCH 2006.

In 1956 the Mortar Platoon of Support Company was serving in Cyprus with the 1st Battalion. A few training trips to Goschi Ranges kept us in touch with firing 3" mortars, but our main duty was Internal Security-relentless patrols around Larnaca and guard duties at remote police stations and Alma Camp.

At that time, we looked ahead to "freedom" and pledged to meet every year in London for a reunion. Such reunions have taken place every year without fail and our 50th on 26th March was held at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill with the kind permission of the CO and RSM of the Royal Logistics Corps. It took the form of a splendid lunch in the Sergeants' Mess and those attending were John Eynon, Alf Goode, Peter Hayford, George Higgins (Anti tank pl.), Bob Holden,



L to R: Bob Holden, Derek Mulquin, Brian Manktelow, Alf Goode, Ges Webb, Brian Richards, John Eynon, Cyril Whitman, Pete Hayford & Keith McGuinness outside a former Middlesex Regiment barrack block.

Brian Manktelow, Keith McGuinness, Derek Mulquin, Brian Richards, Ges Webb, and Cyril Whitman. Jack Denning, Dave Miles and Dave Short were unable to join us for health and travel reasons.

After lunch, the RSM conducted us around the site and we recognised a number of unchanged buildings from the 1950's including the QM stores, The Guard Room and one of the former Middlesex Regiment barrack blocks. The "Square" is now a parking area for military vehicles.

In 2007, the whole complex is expected to be redeveloped so we were fortunate to be able to relive our far off basic training days while the opportunity exists. Clearly we will have to think of another venue for our future reunions.

D Mulquin

ELVAS AND LA ALBUERA 2006

In accordance with their long held custom, members of Hounslow branch departed for Spain on the 11th May to represent the Regiment at Elvas on 12th May and La Albuera on the 16th May.

Those members who had decided to make the journey met at Heathrow Airport and as the flight they were booked on was later than their usual early morning flight they did not arrive in La Albuera until 21:00 hrs which meant a rush to get settled in prior to an early departure for Elvas on the morrow. They travelled in convoy with Celia Denney, who continues to do much both for the Middlesex Regiment and the PWRR and Darren Norris who has written a book on one of his ancestors who fought at Albuhera and throughout the Peninsular War with the 57th Foot

A large crowd consisting of the Friends of the British Cemetery, Portuguese Army, Spanish Army and Civil dignitaries and representatives of the regiments which had fought at Albuhera and Badajoz. The Mayor of Elvas, Colonel Jorge Renderio, Regimento de Infanteria No 8, General Jose Ignacio Medina Cebrian, commander BRIHZ Extremadura X1, each gave an address, after Nick Halladie had first welcomed all present. After prayers and blessings wreaths

were laid on behalf of all the participants followed by Last Post and Reveille, sounded by a bugler from the Portuguese Army. The ceremony closed with re enactors firing a volley from the ramparts.

The party then moved to Clube de Tiro e Caca for lunch where Mike Ward presented to the Friends of the British Cemetery a drum and bugle, which were kindly donated by the Enfield Branch on the closure of their display room, for display in the chapel which adjoins the cemetery.

During the period 13th to 16th May the village of La Albuera staged many events including a play

entitled "La Albuera Historia de Amor y Muerte" performed in the local plaza de toros and a re enactment of The Battle of Albuhera. On Tuesday, Albuhera Day, a large crowd had assembled to watch the proceedings, which commenced with the arrival of the Spanish Army Contingent drawn from BRIMZ Extremadura X1, this was followed by the raising of the flags of the Nations who had fought in the battle. Speeches were made by The Mayor, Military Attaches and Ambassadors. This year we were joined by Colonel Mike Ball and Major Tony Martin who had flown out to be present for the ceremonies, Colonel Mike Ball gave the address on behalf of the British Military Attaché and he received a plaque to mark the occasion. Wreaths were then laid at the memorial in the village square.

The events then moved to Wellington Park where the Regimental Memorial is sited. We were joined by the Spanish Army contingent, Guardia Civil and the inhabitants of the village where wreaths were laid by the Mayor of La Albuera,



*"Steady The Fives & Drums" Presented by Enfield Branch.
Displayed in in the Albuhera Museum*

Colonel Mike Ball on the PWRR elevation, Jim Wells on the Middlesex face and Brian Hazard for The Buffs. Colonel Ball then presented The PWRR Trophy to Maria Marquez Garcia for her progress in the English language, at the same time he presented items from the Enfield collection to the museum including a large painting in oils of "Steady the Fives and Drums" now proudly displayed in the Albuhera Museum.



Re-enactors from the village march to battle

With the formal events now over an excellent banquet was held at the "Ventura Rosario" after which the "Silent Toast" ceremony was held. Before departing from Spain, Hounslow Branch members were entertained to lunch by Celia Denney at her castle at Salvatierra los Barros.

REGIMENTAL BAND CONCERT 15TH JULY 2006

Major Dennis Bradley arranged an excellent band concert at the Union Jack Club which was performed by the Kohima Band PWRR (TA) under the direction of WO1 Bandmaster Ian Harding who proved to be a humorous compere and a first class conductor.

The large audience were entertained to a varied musical programme covering well known marches, popular items including music from Hollywood blockbusters, a selection of Glen Miller's hits, Post Horn Gallop and a feature by the Corps of Drums.

Some audience participation in a sing song; and the finale was the 1812 Overture, which required those attending to inflate and burst paper bags under the direction of the drummers. Having split the audience in to sections to simulate the cannon fire which is a feature of the overture the results of the simulated explosions was hilarious. With some people lacking puff and others unable to burst their bags, not much fire power was produced. The concert closed with the Regimental March to huge applause and Colonel Rex Cain expressed on behalf of all present, appreciation for a wonderful evening.

During the interval sandwiches were served, tea coffee and alcoholic drinks were available and there was a chance to meet old friends and acquaintances. The big question being asked is when is the next one?

FOUNDER'S DAY ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA 8TH JUNE 2006

Members of the Executive Committee were fortunate to attend the parade at which Her Majesty The Queen was the Inspecting Officer; She was accompanied by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. The In Pensioners paraded in Figure Court under the command of the Adjutant, formed up in four Companies under their respective Captain of Invalids. Those who were unable to parade occupied seats on the Parade Ground. Once Her Majesty had received a Royal Salute, She then inspected the Parade and the In Pensioners then marched past by Companies reforming opposite the Saluting Point. Her Majesty then addressed the Parade and The Governor responded and then called for three cheers for "Our Pious Founder" King Charles II followed by three cheers for



Members of the Executive Committee with Smudger Smith our recent admission to R.H.C.

L to R: M. Ward, Col R. Cain, Smudger, Maj. D. Bradley and Major R. Morris.

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and finally for Her Majesty The Queen. Then a Fanfare was sounded followed by the National Anthem.

The Royal Hospital was founded by Charles II, enlarged by James II and completed by William and Mary in 1692 The object being " For the succour and relief of veterans broken by age and war".

The Royal Hospital has launched an appeal to raise £35 million by April 2008, to build a new Infirmary that will satisfy the modern care regulations and to modernise the Long Wards which house the majority of the In Pensioners. It will be the largest building programme the Royal Hospital has undertaken since it was founded; and is essential to meet the expectations and aspirations of today's and tomorrow's veteran soldiers.

Further information regarding the appeal can be obtained from The Appeal Office The Royal Hospital Chelsea, Royal Hospital Road, London SW3 4SR Telephone 020 7881 5516/7.

THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME 1ST JULY 1916

On 1st July 1916, 13 British Divisions attacked from the North between Gommecourt to Maricourt in an endeavour to break the German line as a prelude to the "Big Push". The British 4th Army were supremely confident of success after an artillery barrage which had lasted for seven days. However, the attack met strong resistance from the defensive positions which had been constructed, by the Germans, which had been hardly breached by the long bombardment. The attack was in the main a failure with a few short lived successes. On the Southern Flank at Fricourt and North of Mametz the British Army did enjoy success. The French Army achieved its first day objectives south of the River Somme. The battle continued by the 4th and Reserve Armies throughout July, pushing north capturing a number of villages such as Bazentin, Ovillers and Lonqueval. The German Army continued to dispute every inch of ground and the fighting brought into prominence such well known areas as Delville Wood, High Wood and Mouquet Farm.

September 15th was the start of third phase of the battle and for the first time tanks were used, but the unsuitable ground which had been churned up by the heavy shelling and mechanical failures limited the surprise and advantages which these new weapons could have made to the battle, was squandered. It was during September that both Pte F Edwards and Pte W Ryder won the Victoria Cross whilst serving with the 12th Battalion which had been commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Frank Maxwell VC who on leaving the Battalion gave them an unambiguous message "Remember that the 12th Die Hards, Do kill, don't take prisoners, unless wounded and don't retire".

Attacks both North and East continued in October and November when due to deteriorating weather conditions the battle was closed down.

The overall territory gained was no more than eight miles and the British casualties amounted to 420,000 but this did not break the spirit of the infantry, despite the casualties, hardships and deprivation which the infantry suffered. The battle did exhaust the Germans. Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria acknowledged this when he commented "what still remained of the old first class peace trained German Infantry had been expended on the Battlefield".

Perhaps we should recollect that the 2nd Battalion suffered over 540 casualties near La Boisselle. According to an eye witness, when the Battalion marched away to be relieved on the evening of July 1st it numbered one officer and twenty eight men. Their Commanding Officer Lt Col Edwin Sandys found the

burden of the loss of his men so great that he committed suicide in London. His death was reported in a September issue of The Times.

VISIT TO CANTERBURY BY THE ENFIELD BRANCH

On a drizzly overcast morning, thirty members left Enfield and rather like the pilgrims of old headed towards Canterbury Cathedral, unlike the pilgrims we did not seek the shrine of St Thomas but travelled to lay a wreath at the tomb of our Regiment's most famous soldier Lieutenant General Sir William Inglis (1764 – 1835) who as a Lieutenant Colonel commanded the 1st Battalion during the Peninsular war.

He led a Brigade of the 2nd Division at Busaco and at Albuhera found lasting fame when severely wounded he refused to be carried from the battlefield and lay exhorting his battalion to "Die hard 57th. Die hard". This exploit became legendary in the British Army and conferred upon the regiment the nickname "The Diehards."

Over the years Colonel Inglis's words have been repeated many times in battle to inspire brave men on to victory and although our regiment is no more we still take pride in being known as Diehards. No less proud a regiment than ourselves are the Queen's Own Buffs who have their colours and book of remembrance in the Warriors Chapel sited within the Cathedral and it was a great honour for us to be permitted to parade our standard next to their own at



Alex Brown beneath the tablet to Sir William Inglis - Canterbury Cathedral

the daily ceremony of turning the pages when they remember and pay tribute to their fallen comrades. Later they joined us as we lay our wreath of poppies beneath the tablet dedicated to the memory of Sir William Inglis possibly for the very first time.

After bidding farewell to our new found friends the Buffs we were quickly off up the hill to Howe Barracks where, Alf Burford still recovering from his accident, laid a second wreath at the memorial to those of the Queen's Regiment who lost their lives serving in Northern Ireland. As we left the barracks and returned down the hill the sun came out and a very warm afternoon was spent shopping, dining and sampling the local Kent ale.

All in all a most pleasant day out. Our thanks to Major Bradley for his considerable assistance in arranging access to the cathedral and to Colonel Ball for finding time to greet us at Howe Barracks.

A Brown

MIDDLESEX GUILDHALL

The Annual Service of Remembrance in front of the War Memorial in the Middlesex Guildhall has been an important event in the Regimental calendar since it was unveiled by the Colonel of the Regiment in 1924 but the Guildhall has become progressively more shabby and cluttered since it became a law court.

This is about to change now that the building is to be the home of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom. The interior is to be transformed and the approach to the entrance is to be improved by a team of distinguished architects over a period of two or three years and at very considerable cost.

On 15 May 2006 the architects presented their plans to an invited audience of all those with a legitimate interest in the project. The Middlesex Regimental Association was represented by a team led by Major Dennis Bradley and consisting of Colonel Rex Cain and Major Ron Morris.

After an introduction by Lord Falconer, the Lord Chancellor, the architects explained in detail how the interior of the Guildhall would be transformed and this was followed by informal discussions over drinks and snacks. The intention is to move our War Memorial from its present position to the opposite side of a redesigned entrance hall in an area open to the public.

If all goes well the Regiment will have a permanent memorial in a prestigious public building. We were also assured that we will be able to continue to hold

our annual service there. Lt General Sir Michael Willcocks, Black Rod, offered his personal support if it became necessary to ensure our access to the new Supreme Court. Meanwhile, we may have to accept some disruption as the work progresses but this will be a price worth paying to have a memorial with our name and badge on it in such a prominent public place.

R.M.C.

CONGRATULATIONS

Mrs Hilda Wood, a widow of a soldier who served with the 7th Battalion in World War One, and who has maintained her connection with the Regimental Association, celebrated her hundredth birthday on the 21st of July 2006. Brigadier Tony Pielow, our President, wrote sending the Associations warmest wishes and congratulations on your wonderful 100th birthday and the Regimental Headquarters at Canterbury sent a bouquet of flowers, in the regimental colours, from the Middlesex Regimental Association.

ODD JOTTINGS.

This years Reunion has produced some feedback by telephone and letters, two of which are quoted in part below.

My friend, Jean and I thought your arrangements this year worked extremely well both at St Paul's and the Union Jack Club. We had a most enjoyable day.

Roy Sharp

Many thanks for an excellent day on Saturday. The service at St Paul's was excellent and we could hear it. The reunion at the Union Jack Club was perfect. The meal was excellent and well served. It is the best Die Hard reunion I have been to for years.

Major (QM) John Hamill MBE

Mr G Empson who served with 2/7th Middlesex, who joined them at Godington Park Ashford, served on Anzio Beachhead and remained with the battalion until disbanded in Cairo. Whilst at Anzio he made a brass ashtray from a shell case on which was stamped Anzio. He donated this to the museum at Bruce Castle; he does not wish the ashtray to be returned but is interested in its whereabouts.

Roy Bishop has written in to say that he has had a successful cataract operation and was sorry to miss the St Paul's Service and the reunion. He also

advises that the Mayor of St Charles de Percy is retiring but that his successor will continue the Annual Memorial Service at the British War Graves Cemetery where some of the Middlesex dead are buried.

Thomas "Taffy" Evans is at present in the UK for a health check. We hope all goes well.

B V Kellerman 6202445 writes to enquire if at 88 years old he is the last surviving member of B Company Ealing 8th Battalion Middlesex Regiment. Later he served with The Somerset Light Infantry, The Parachute Regiment and the Durham Light Infantry.

A Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving to mark Anzac Day on Tuesday 25th April was held at St Mary's Parish Church Harefield, which was attended by members of Hounslow Branch. Following the wreath laying ceremony they joined members of the village for tea and cakes in the church hall.

The first Veterans Day 27th June received a successful starter with a programme at the Imperial War Museum to honour the Victoria Cross and George Cross Holders at which the Middlesex Standard was on parade. This year the event has been celebrated across the Country, in a similar way to that in London, at not many huge events, but ones with substance, with a message about the existence of a special group of people the Ex- Service community.

Ken Beale and his wife Millie have contacted us by e-mail to say that they have moved from Spain to France and are now living near Limoges.

Bill Rawlinson has written to say that Bob Yerby still remains poorly. We wish Bob a speedy return to full health.

Alf Burford, Chairman of the Enfield Branch, was the victim of a hit and run driver and was seriously injured. He spent a month in Chase Farm Hospital following the incident.

Recalling the incident Alf said "I was walking up the hill after doing a welfare case for the Legion, whilst crossing at the junction of Perry Mead and Holtwhites a car came speeding round the corner and struck me, flinging me into the air. The driver failed to stop and I ended up on the pavement. In the incident Alf suffered a fractured shoulder and right leg with multiple cuts and bruises. Fortunately Alf is making a slow and steady recovery. To date the perpetrator of this crime has not yet been arrested.

Readers will remember our review of the book "Die Hard Aby" by David Lister. Pte Abraham Beverstein who enlisted under the name of Harris was one of the many young men who gave a false age to enlist. He was subsequently executed on 20th March 1916 for desertion. He is one of the 300 odd soldiers who are to be pardoned by the government along with the other seven members of the Regiment who suffered the same fate.

OBITUARIES.

We advise with the deepest regret that the following have died.

BALL, Brian a Korean Club Member passed away on 6th May. No further information is available.

CAIN, Patrick J 6200720 aged 92 died on 17th June. Patrick joined the army in 1931 and served with the Regiment until 1946.

LT. CAWTHORNE, Anthony Simon died aged 69, on Tuesday the 6th June 2006 after a short illness. Simon will be remembered serving as a subaltern with the 1st Battalion in Cyprus and for a time with the Company detached to Jordan. In recent years he had become a regular attendee, along with his partner Fran Castle, at the Officers' Club Annual Dinners. He will also be remembered for his contributions to the Association Newsletter writing articles about his time with the Regiment. His funeral was held on Monday the 19th of June 2006 at the Parish Church of St Just-in-Roseland located not that far from Truro in Cornwall. The Regiment was represented by Lt Col & Mrs Mike Deakin, Maj & Mrs Brian Finch and Maj & Mrs Chris Lawrence.

EDMONDS, H.C. died on 7th January. No further information other than the date of death.

FORGHAM, John Dennis Sergeant 14887756 served with 1st Battalion 1944-1947 stationed at Rendsburg, Germany. Died 11th April 2006 after a short illness. The funeral took place on 25th April 2006. Coffin flowers were in the Middlesex Regimental colours and the Regimental March was played at the end of the funeral.

C Forgham

HOWARD, Chris (Ginger) served with 1st Battalion in Korea and Hong Kong. Died after a short illness. The funeral was at Enfield Crematorium on 24th July last. His funeral was attended by B Cubitt, M Mulvaney, C Smith, B Penny, J Dayle, B Stroud and B Rawlinson.

PEASLEY, Mrs Elizabeth (Betty) Wife of Major Albert (Bert) Peasley died on 9th April 2006. We were informed by her daughter Mrs E.M. Smith.

PHILLIPS, William Alfred (Bill) 6201806 Sgt. Died in New Zealand on 21st March aged 90. His funeral was held at Canterbury Crematorium Chapel on 27th March the service was conducted by Rev. Malcolm Harris. We were advised by C B Tann who had recently visited Bill.

POLLARD, Christine, widow of Colonel John Pollard, sadly died on Tuesday the 11th of April 2006. The funeral took place at the Wattisfield Parish Church, Wattisfield, Diss, Norfolk on Tuesday the 25th of April 2006. Many of her old friends from the Regiment attended.

Lt.Col. ROBOTHAM, Ralph Edward MC TD died on 22 April 2006. He joined the Artists Rifles in Euston in 1934, an "officer producing unit" and he and seven others from the Artists were commissioned into the 2nd/7th Battalion Middlesex Regiment just before the outbreak of war in 1939, all of them having served in the Artists Vickers Machine Gun Company. In the bitter winter of 39/40 he was attached to the Manchester Regiment on the Franco/German border and there he contracted rheumatism which to dog him all his life. He was then with the battalion when they were based on the Isle of Wight in 1940 to counter any German invasion and told me that one of his proudest moments was to learn that, after an inspection by the famed General Auchinleck, the "Auk" wrote in his report to the War Office: "The finest MG battalion I have ever seen". In 1942 Ralph was with his battalion in North Africa and in May 1943 was on Cape Bon to see the surrender of the Afrika Korps. July 1943 he was in the invasion of Sicily and in January 1944 on Op SHINGLE, the Allied landing at Anzio where he was awarded the Military Cross. In the only time I ever persuaded him to talk of an action, rather than the camaraderie he so much enjoyed, he recalled: "My Number7, MG platoon, was sited just to the right of the fly-over at Carne Farm supporting the Company support weapons base under Major Bill Bartlett. On the night of 19 February the Boche put-in an attack which overran that position. Bill was amongst those killed and several were captured. We went up the following afternoon to get the position back, which we did and recovered some of our guns and men". Ralph or "Robum" as he was affectionately known from his Artists' days went on to the liberation of Rome and the end of the war in Italy, by then a Major.

On return to UK he rejoined the Artists Rifles, now more of "a Club" with so many lost and the remainder all commissioned. With nine others he resigned his commission in 1946 to represent their Regiment on the Victory Parade in London. The selected Artists' ten had ALL been decorated with the Military Cross, serving with different Regiments in different theatres. In 1947 the Artists

Rifles was disbanded but pooled its resources with the newly formed 21 SAS Regiment and, from Corporal, Ralph became that Regiment's first RQMS. A year later, with 21 SAS (Artists) firmly established he was persuaded to be Assistant Commandant of the Middlesex Army Cadet Force in the rank of Lt. Colonel. Later, due to the pressures of business; he had to stand down and, after a time, returned to 21 SAS as a Cpl in an admin capacity for three years. Rarely can a man have sacrificed so much in terms of rank to give so much.

Thereafter he gave much of his time to the 2nd/7th Middlesex Regt Association and the Artists Rifles Association. He recalled his Middlesex Bn's first command structure of Lt Col Mirams MC TD and his 2i/c Major Bower MC TD and that on 2 October 1997, 59 original members of that battalion with 39 guests came together for a reunion lunch. "What wonders it speaks for the esprit de corps initially built-up by those two. God bless them" said Ralph.

He was elected a Senior Vice President of the Artists Rifles Assn and from 1985 to 1996 led a campaign to have the Artists Rifles War Memorial at the Royal Academy restored and thereafter maintained. In its way it stands as a monument to all that he believed-in-his country, his Regiments and his comrades-in-arms whom he so greatly valued.

His funeral was at Malvern Priory. Ralph's three Regiments were represented with the Honorary Colonel of 21 SAS (Artists) Col Johnny Crosland CBE MC; the former Chairman of the Artists Rifles Assn Major Roy Fielder TD and me for "The Diehards". A bugler sounded the Last Post and Reveille. Our sympathies go to his wife Angela and all his family, some coming from Finland, the birthplace of Ralph's mother.

Keith Farnes

SMITH, Brian (Smudger) Sgt. Died on 31st May aged 64 years. Smudger joined the 7th (TA) Battalion in February 1958 and later served with 5 MX and 5 Queen's. He received the BEM in 1987 and in total served 35 years with the Territorial Army. His funeral was held on 15th June at Great St Mary's Church, Sawbridge where his family were joined by a large congregation which included many of his service friends and comrades.

STOKES, Joseph. Ron Morris was contacted by the daughter of Joseph Stokes to say that he had died about three years ago. Attempts to obtain further information have not met with success.

SWEENEY, V.C. (Chum) Sgt passed away on 6th June. He served with 2/7th Bn Middlesex Regiment during World War II in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, Palestine, Syria and Lebanon.

WHITE, Tony (Chalky) served with 1/7th Mx died 18th August 2006. Funeral 29th August West London Crematorium. For many years an excellent secretary 1/7th Association. This is all the information we have at present.

WOODWARD, George Harold His funeral was held on the 6th July at Golders Green Crematorium. No further information is available.

RECOLLECTIONS OF YESTERYEAR

I was born in Nightingale Lane, Hornsey and used to watch the territorials when I was very young, going to camp every year, with their horses and limbers.

I was called up to Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill in December 1939 and joined the 2nd Battalion, Middlesex Regiment. I was called "Titch" as I am very small 5'2".

My real name and number was 6210975, W Warman and joined "A" Company No. 2 Platoon.

I bought a set of walking out "Blue Patrols" from a Sergeant who was made up to an Officer. I think his name was Sgt. Day. After the war, I presented the buttons, collar dogs, cap badge to the museum which was at Bruce Grove, Tottenham.

After "D" Day when we lost several men and officers, we were made up to strength with the "Can loan" officers whom I have still kept in touch with. Lt. Rex Fendick, No.1 Platoon and Lt. McConaghy. Alas, now Lt Col Rex has lost his sight and Lt. McConaghy has got the "shakes" but his wife still writes to me.

When the Regiment went out to Israel in 1945, I was left behind having a low demob number, and joined the 1/7 Middlesex Regiment.

I was given a job with 3 other soldiers who were all in the printing trade before the war. I was a compositor, (setting type), another was a machine minder, the third was a reader, and the fourth a copy holder and also a driver with a truck. We all lived together in a house of our own and went to a printers (The Zeven Zigturn) and produced the first issue of "One Seven" which was the very first magazine of the 1/7 battalion coming out monthly. I have heard from various sources it is still being produced.

As we have been amalgamated once again, and the "Die Hards" are gradually fading away, I would like to know if it is still being produced.

I cannot attend any meetings or annual dinners as I am now 88 and not in the best of health.

W R Warman, 6210975

First, let me introduce myself. I am Major (S.A.) Cyril Walter Barlett ex 6201480. I was a Private in the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Die Hards from May 1934-May 1946. I served in Colchester, Gosport, Singapore and Hong Kong. After release from POW camps I was demobbed in May 1946 and eventually became a Salvation Army Officer and still am (we are never demobbed in the S.A.!).

Although I still love and serve my Lord, a large section of my heart remains with the Die Hards and if there is any person I would raise my hat to it was Lt. Colonel "Monkey" Steward, our C.O. at the time of the capitulation of the Battalion on Christmas Day 1941. Whilst with us in Sham-Shie Po camp he did all he could to rally the spirits of us all.

Incidentally, one month before the surrender I was called in front of our new Coy C.O. Lt Fishbourne about getting a stripe. As he was new to the Coy he said that he would review my case in a month's time.

One month to the day, he was in the same rice queue as myself; I did not feel it was convenient to raise the matter then!

Thank you for the Die Hard magazines. They are treasures that I always appreciate.

I am 88, far too old to go to the festivities advertised!

God bless you and all remaining Die Hards.

Cyril W. Bartlett

I had a very interesting week in Normandy, visiting my French farming friends, Pierre and Laurette Roger, at La Caverie, near Montchamp and Estray, being the site of my platoon's battle experience on the 7th August 1944. We were there in support of the 44 Brigade designed to achieve the xroads and I was escorting a carrier to meet Sgt. Frank Godfrey with his 3 carriers at the xroads and on the way they ran head-on into three enemy Mark 4 tanks which had broken through the Seaforth Highlanders position.

All the carriers were knocked out and then machine-gunned. Sgt Frank Godfrey and Pte Arthur Gleave were killed and many injured. After the incident at the



Roy Bishop with local dignitaries at St Charles De Percy CWG Cemetery

xroads the platoon mortars were concentrated at platoon HQ. It was during this period that we were shelled by the Jerries with mortar fire whereupon we dived in to the slit trenches.

One could see shrapnel creeping up the field towards us and I was a bit too late getting down to earth and was hit at the level of my battle-blouse breast pocket, which fortunately was loaded with my platoon book – a register of bombs fired – my wallet – and at the back of these was my army service watch, attached to a lanyard. The force of the shrapnel pushed me down but I soon got up as three pieces of shrapnel penetrated and smashed the items and had then fallen to the waist-fold of my battle-dress blouse, which had large burn holes.

I let out a terrific yell and undid the blouse immediately and then the hot shrapnel fell on to the ground. (Montchamp, Estray 8/8/44).

When we eventually arrived at Lubeck, Germany, I remember being called to the C.O.'s office and being requested to hand in my platoon service pocket watch on my appointment as CQMS. He had a good laugh when he saw the twisted remains and allowed me to keep the bits as souvenirs. I kept the shrapnel and the watch for 33 years, but when the Middlesex Regimental Museum appealed for souvenirs I sent the items there in 1977.

Roy Bishop, Aged 88

WHO IS A VETERAN?

The word "veteran" often conjures up a particular image – that of our older generation who served so magnificently in WWII. However, anyone who served in HM Forces, regardless of when, how long for and whether in conflict or peacetime is by definition a veteran. If you were in the navy, army or air force,

even if only for one day, you are a veteran and as such can access a vast network of support and guidance.

HOW CAN THE VETERANS AGENCY HELP YOU?

Veterans Agency is the focal point within the Ministry of Defence for providing free information and advice on issues of concern to all veterans and their families. Whatever your enquiry, whether it be accessing service records, finding out entitlement to a War Pension, health concerns or any other issue, the Agency is here to help. If we can't help on the spot, we are positioned at the heart of a wide network of support dedicated to helping ex-Servicemen and women and their families. By working in close partnership with ex-Service organisations, War Pensions Committees and other voluntary groups and statutory bodies we can point you in the right direction for sound practical assistance. To access the wealth of support on offer simply call the Veterans Agency Helpline on:-

FREEPHONE: 0800 169 2277

Veterans Agency also administers the War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Schemes and manages a welfare service through a network of 25 regional offices.

WAR PENSIONS

You may be entitled to a pension or compensation payment. Call the Helpline now if you think you have a medical condition caused or made worse by your service in HM Armed Forces.

THE ARMED FORCES COMPENSATION SCHEME

Since 6 April 2005, the new Armed Forces Compensation Scheme provides a simple and quick means of compensating Service (and ex-Service) personnel for illness or injury sustained as a result of their Service life.

A HOME VISIT

Wherever you live in the UK, one of our dedicated welfare managers can visit you in your home on request. They can provide face-to-face help on issues such as statutory benefits, health, training, employment and housing.

Find us on the Internet

For further information on Veterans Agency, visit our website

www.veteransagency.mod.uk

PS Have you got your Veterans badge yet?

The HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge was launched by the MOD in May 2004 as a visible recognition of a veteran. It has proved to be extremely popular and we have issued over 100,000 to date. Eligibility is about to be extended and with effect from 27 June 2006 will be available to those who served in HM forces up to December 1959.

Other groups entitled to a badge are:-

- Cyprus Regiment;
- Merchant Navy seaman;
- Home Guard;
- Polish forces under UK Command;
- War Widows and Widowers in receipt of a war pension.

To apply for a badge:

Call the Veterans Agency Helpline on 0800 169 2277 (UK only)
Or 0800 169 3458 (Minicom Users)

OR

Complete the application form on-line at www.veteransagency.mod.uk Click the Veterans Lapel Badge button on the Homepage. Complete the form, sign and date it, then either fax or post it to:-

Veterans Badge Team, Veterans Agency, Room 6108, Norcross, Thornton-Cleveleys, FY5 3WP.

NEW MEMBERS.

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

Pte R E Simpson
Cpl A E Potter
Sgt W A Davies
Lt S B Hurst M.A.
L/Cpl V H Gibson

0049-4331 448855
1st Bn driver mech. 1942 - 1947
1st Bn HQ Coy 1954 - 1957
D Company 1st/8th and 1st Bn 1942 - 1948
C Company 7th Middlesex 1959 - 1961
B Company 1st Bn Middlesex 1957 - 1959

POINTS OF INTEREST

CHINESE WHISPERS

A party from the Middlesex and North West London Army Cadet Force recently returned from a visit to Hong Kong bringing a report that the colours of our 1st Battalion, which were buried before the fall of the colony, had been found and were on display in St John's Cathedral.

We were naturally very sceptical about the story because someone would surely have told us if the colours had been found and also it was unlikely that they could have survived being buried so long.

However an investigation was clearly necessary so we asked Major Colin Bellingham, a member of the London branch of the Royal Hong Kong Regimental Association, for his help. He contacted the chairman of their Hong Kong branch who has reported the results of a visit to the cathedral.

He found that there are no colours of the Middlesex Regiment in the cathedral but in the St Michael's Chapel hang the colours of the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps and also the colours which the Royal Hong Kong Regiment carried when it was an infantry battalion and which were laid up in 1971 following the change of roll to a reconnaissance unit with a guidon.

The confusion seems to have arisen because there is also in the chapel a tablet in memory of "all ranks of the 1st Battalion the Middlesex Regiment (Duke of Cambridge's Own) who died defending Hong Kong or as prisoners of war. Below the tablet is a memorial book.

The pamphlet about the chapel, produced by the cathedral, is we are told not very clear but mentions the colours of the HKVDC, which were buried in 1941 and recovered in 1957, for which the later colours were a replacement.

And so another rather splendid rumour is laid to rest but it is good to be reminded that the sacrifice of members of our 1st battalion is still commemorated in Hong Kong's Cathedral. Colonel Nick Carter accompanied by Colonel John Moore laid a wreath at our memorial when they visited Hong Kong for the ceremonies connected with the handover of the colony to China.

RMC

REMEMBER LE HAVRE 1944

Sadly we have been informed of the death of Colonel Francois Poupel, President and Founder of Remember Le Havre 1944 who died on 28th January last on his 79th birthday.

Francois Poupel had been a 17 year old stretcher-bearer during Allied bombardments of the city in 1944 and, later, after military service as an engineer, he became a passionate historian of the siege and battle of Le Havre. It was due to his inspiration that several hundred British participants were invited back to the town in 1989 when they were received by the Mayor and Council. Subsequently, he encouraged studies of Operation Astonia, as the Allied attack on the defences on 10th September 1944 was named. A number of visits by the British Army have taken place to learn lessons from this full-scale assault on a heavily defended position.

He also encouraged the preservation of many of the enemy's defensive bunkers and the erection of a memorial tank and display of regimental plaques on the battlefield. This in turn led to several visits and ceremonies by British veterans and their partners, the latest in 2004. Had it not been for Colonel Poupel none of this French/English collaboration would have occurred.

The Regiment's involvement was by C Company 1/7th Bn MX in support of 153 Brigade and they were engaged 10/11th September before Le Havre surrendered.

BOOK REVIEW

Dunkirk: Fight To The Last Man.

This recently published book contains a new angle on how the 1940 British Expeditionary force came to be evacuated from Dunkirk: it was not just because of the courage of the men on the beaches as they were rescued by the Navy and those celebrated little ships. According to author Hugh Sebag-Montefiore, the evacuation would never have taken place had it not been for the bravery of the British soldiers who were left behind to hold back the Germans while evacuation went ahead.

The troops left behind – which included the 2nd Battalion Middlesex Regiment – were involved in a series of rearguard actions which were fought to the south of Dunkirk. Battle was joined there on 27th May 1940, the day after the commencement of the evacuation, because the British commander-in-chief Lord Gort had decided there was only one way to save the majority of the British troops in France: the infantry had to shield the corridor up which the British Army was retreating to Dunkirk by holding a string of strong points. This, they proceeded to do, and one of the reasons so little has been written about their exploits in previous history books about Dunkirk is that so many were lost during these battles.

Even more men would have been lost had it not been for the decisive action taken by Sergeant Burford (1st/7th Bn Middlesex Regiment) when he and his men were attacked on 25th May 1940 while patrolling to the north of the British line. During the fire fight he was approached by a German staff car which he shot up, killing the driver. Rather than celebrating his survival by immediately rushing back behind British lines, he coolly opened the car door and retrieved a briefcase full of documents that had been left behind by another German soldier. It turned out that one of the documents was an order revealing where the Germans planned to attack next, and it was this which enabled the British generals to defend the target before it was too late. If it had not been for Sergeant Burford's action, it is doubtful whether the evacuation from Dunkirk would have been possible.

The vivid accounts of the fighting in this book may only scratch the surface of what occurred- the author is still looking for more accounts to fill the gaps before the publication of next year's paperback – but they mean that never again will the trials and tribulations of those involved be forgotten.

Dunkirk: Fight to The Last Man published by Viking/Penguin and is available from most bookshops. Price £25.

CAN YOU HELP?.

Mrs Jackie Rowntree, is seeking information regarding her grandfather Sgt Walter James Wilmott, who is believed to have joined the Regiment in 1893/4, he was with 9th Mx during WWI. His Medal Card states Middlesex Reg No. 83 and Labour Corps 163889. He married in 1915 and it is a confirmed fact he was at RE Command Depot Thetford Norfolk during 1915. Mrs Rowntree is seeking clarification as to the status of 83 Middlesex and help on the Labour Corps. If you can help, her address is:- Old Mill, Beckside Kirby in Furness, Cumbria, LA17 7TH.

Information is sought about 6192889 Lance Corporal Frank E Goodall and his brother William Goodall both of whom were useful boxers and were with the Regiment in the 1920's. It is known that Frank Goodall was in Germany in 1922 when he passed his Third Class Education Certificate. Should you be able to help in any way then Mrs E Jempson, daughter of Frank Goodall would be grateful, her address is, 59, Woodcutters Avenue, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 4PN.

Does anyone know the whereabouts of Pte. T. H. Walton 4128196 who was a POW in Japan and was released on 22/09/45. On his return he filled in a "Liberation Questionnaire Form" in which he stated that he had seen D. V. Roebuck an observer, air crew of HMS Victorious in April 1945 at Shinagawa Hospital/Tokyo. This information was accepted by the Admiralty. Strangely, earlier this year information came to hand that D.V. Rosebuck's name is on a memorial plaque which indicates that he was beheaded on a beach at Changi/Singapore. This fact remains unproven so his daughter seeks information to solve the riddle if you can assist please write to, Mrs V Williams, 53 Ashley Road, Altringham, Cheshire, WA14 2DP.

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE WESTMINSTER SATURDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2006

The Annual Service of Remembrance will take place at the Middlesex Guildhall Westminster, members and friends are invited to attend and are requested to assemble at the Guildhall at 10.45am. The service will commence at 10.55am. On conclusion of the service in the Guildhall the Regimental Association will be providing a glass of sherry so that those attending can get together before departing. Medals and Regimental ties should be worn by those attending.

Enter this date in your diary no further notice will be given.

Please note articles submitted for inclusion in the March 2007 issue should be received by the Editor no later than 15th February 2007. It would be helpful if input could be provided on a CD. or Disk.

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 and Postal Orders should be made payable to PWRR Account No 0536700 Telephone No 01227 818058.

Prizes on application to the Regimental Shop.

Blazer Badges
Ice Buckets miniature side drum with Regiment Emblazon
Plus postage and packing
Ties (Old pattern maroon and gold)
Ties (New pattern with maroon and old gold thin stripes)
Ties Officers Club (Silk)

New Stock
Middlesex Regt.Cap Badges good quality replicas
Old Comrades lapel badges
Regimental Beret Flashes
Prints 'Steady the Drums & Fifes' unframed - Large Print
- Small Print

Middlesex Regimental Plaques
Middlesex Blazer Buttons Flat staybright with engraved Middlesex Badge
Set 6 large buttons 6 small buttons
Individual buttons - Large
- Small

Regimental Cuff Links
Regimental Tie Grip
Regimental Tie Tack and Chain
Regimental Ladies Brooch

15 Capel Rd
Sittingbourne

ME 10 4EP
Tel 01795 43125 248