

THE ROYAL PIONEER CORPS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2006



c/o 23 Pnr Regiment RLC - St David's Barracks - Graven Hill - Bicester - OX26 6HF
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Royal Pioneer Corps Association

Shop

Welcome to the RPC Association Shop...

Please send cheques payable to RPC Association with your order.



^ Cufflinks
solid silver **£20**



^ Cufflinks
bronze **£13.50**



^ Tie Pins
lovely **£3.50**

New Corps Tie >
A new tie is now available from HQ RPC Association, although keeping the same pattern the new one contains the Corps Badge on the blade of the tie.

The photograph shows Sgt D Pettit with the first new tie! **£7.50**



^ Tie
polyester **£6**



^ Bow Tie
adjustable **£5.50**



^ Bow Tie
silk **£14**



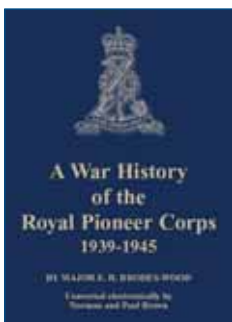
< Blazer Badge
silk & wire **£7**



^ Wall Shields
hand painted **£20**



^ Wall Shields
85-93 badge **£20**



< "A War History of the Royal Pioneer Corps 1939-45" by Major E H Rhodes Wood

This book, long out of print, is now available on CD-Rom at a cost of **£11**



^ Bronze Statue
why not order & collect at Reunion Weekend to save postage
£60 + £5 postage



^ Blazer Buttons
gilt on brass, engraved,
6 small and 6 large **£22**

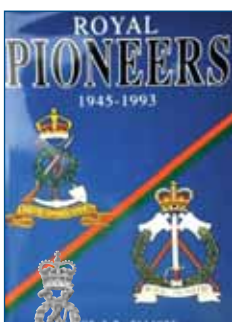


^ Photograph CD's

The Association has a large number of old photographs taken over the years.

They are now available on CDs (each CD contains approx 400 photographs). **£2 each**

They are:
- Named, partially named vol. 1
- Named, partially named vol. 2
- Unknown
- Reunion Weekends
- WOs & SNCOs Pnr Reunion Club



< "Royal Pioneers 1945-1993" by Major Bill Elliott

The Post-War History of the Corps was written by our honorary treasurer, Major Bill Elliott, who generously donated his work and rights entirely for the Association's benefit. It was published by Images, Malvern in May 1993 and is on sale in the book shops at £24. **£14**



^ Seasons Greetings Cards
x10 **£2.50**

Editorial

I must start this column by congratulating 23 Pioneer Regiment RLC on being granted the Liberty of Bicester. This is a great achievement for the Regiment and shows how much they are regarded by the town of Bicester it is also a reflection of the work that the Regiment does for the town most of which is without publicity. Being granted the Liberty of the town means that the Regiment may march through the town with "Bands playing, flags flying and bayonets fixed". It is also an honour for the Association to be asked to march with them on the first occasion, this is to be during the Reunion Weekend on Saturday 8 July 2006. Attendance at these Reunion Weekends has been steadily growing over the past few years; let us hope that this continues so that we can show our full support to the Regiment.

It is hoped that the 'Old Comrades' follow the Regiment with our Standards flying. It must be appreciated that we do not wish to appear as Fred Kanos Army; so Corps Ties and Blazer Badges are requested. Both of these items, are of course, available from the Association - details are shown on page 2. We endeavour to keep the prices of these items as low as possible for the benefit of our members.

After several years of having to use St George's Barracks and the resultant transport problems, accommodation this year will be within St David's Barracks following the rebuild under Project SLAM. Accommodation on the Friday evening will only be given to those members attending who will parade (or for those that are unable to march) are a spectator at the Parade. Although a programme for the Weekend has been included in this Newsletter this is only provisional as at the time of going to press full details of the Parade have yet to be confirmed. A Booking Form for the Weekend is attached please submit by the cut-off date as late applications cannot be accepted for accommodation or catering.

I must thank the Regiment for allowing the move from London to Bicester to take place so smoothly and ensuring that there were no breakages! They have certainly made the Association welcome, let us hope that we can stay in St David's Barracks as long as we stayed in London - some 59 years!

Tickets for the Derby Draw are attached, unless members have already indicated that they do not wish to receive them. It would be appreciated if you would, as always, give this your full support as this is now one of the few opportunities available to the Association to raise funds. If you require additional tickets please do not hesitate to ask for more.

You will notice in this Newsletter that articles have been included on the work of the two Pioneer Regiments, 23 and 168. Although some of the material from 168 is a little dated (it was received some 2 days after we went to press with the last issue) it was felt that it was interesting and informative and gives some idea of what the modern Pioneers do, both Regular and TA.

Our thoughts are with 518 Sqn who have recently departed on a tour of duty in Afghanistan, we wish them an enjoyable tour and a speedy and safe return.

Finally a thank you to those people who have supported me so well in the past year especially our Treasurer Major (Retired) Bill Elliott who is always at the end of the telephone to give much needed advice and guidance.

■ Norman Brown

THE ROYAL PIONEER CORPS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER APRIL 2006

newsletter contents

Page

1	A Pioneer rescues a dog during the Blitz in London, 1941
2	The Royal Pioneer Corps Association Shop
3	Editorial / Contents
4-5	Past and Future Events
5	23 Pioneer Regiment Update
6-7	Letters to the Editor
8-9	St David's Barracks, recently refurbished
10-11	Photo Gallery
12-13	Pioneering Days by W G Ford
14	Holy Sepulchre Church / DUOB Test Programme / Gulf Veterans / War Graves Commission / Wanted
15	New DVD / CLS Direct Leaflet / Accessing Service Records / Christmas Draw / Veterans Awareness in 2006
16	Row over medal for Malay Veteran / Divisional SAAM
17	Honorary Colonel's Commendation / The King's Own Enemy Aliens
18	Lost Trails
19	Obituaries
20	59th Past and Present Officers Dinner



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PAST & FUTURE EVENTS

FIFTY-NINTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PAST AND PRESENT OFFICERS' DINNER

23 Pioneer Regiment RLC, St David's Barracks, Graven Hill, Bicester Friday 14 October 2005

Due to a variety of reasons the numbers were slightly down on previous years, however, a very enjoyable dinner was held with the Director The Royal Logistic Corps, Brig J Little OBE, the principal guest. The other guest being the new Regimental Colonel The RLC, Col M Baker, who is of course well known to many at Bicester as he was CO of the Regiment from 1995 - 1997.

WOs & SNCO's PIONEER REUNION CLUB LADIES DINNER NIGHT

Saturday 15 October 2005

An attendance of 78 made the Ladies Dinner a great success, the guest for the evening was the new Chairman of the Club, WO1 (RSM) J Frame RLC. He is the first RSM of the Regiment not to have a Pioneer background, although it is pleasing to report that he is firmly Pioneer orienteered. Through his leadership the Regiments WOs & Sgts Mess has recently commissioned a new silver centre-piece, this is to a model replica of the Corps War Memorial with an axe-man at either side. A photograph is shown in the photo gallery, it is certainly a stunning centre-piece.

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE

Westminster Abbey, Thursday 10 November 2005

Capt M East fronted the Corps Plot at the Field of Remembrance, unfortunately HM The Queen did not stop at our Plot this year. It was again pleasing to see 2 daughters of the late Cpl G Scully GC who planted a cross in memory of their father.

REMEMBRANCE PARADE

Whitehall, Sunday 13 November 2005

The following marched in the RPC Contingent at the Cenotaph, Whitehall on Sunday 13 November 2005: Capt D Mills, Capt J Barry, Mr DG Paine, Mr WH Pepperhill, Mr TE Whipps, Mr AG Hobbs, Mr HL Bishop, Mr DN Bryant, Mr PN Thomas, Mr J Keare, Mr B O'Donovan, Mr P McPhillips, Mr T Loveridge, Mr SG Swallow, Mr H Mitton, Mr P Willmer, Mr I Easingwood and 1 guest, Mr A Fawcett, Mr J Doble, Mr I Dewsnap, Mr N Brown, Capt M East and 3 guests (2 of whom had travelled from Holland).

It is many years since that number have marched and the Corps received a long mention during the BBC coverage of the event.

39/93 CLUB

Red Lion, 3/4 March 2005

A very successful weekend was held at the Red Lion, Fareham on 3/4 March and 25 members sat down to a very pleasant meal on the Saturday evening. Mr Bill Goode was elected Chairman of the Club at the Club's AGM.



PIONEER REUNION WEEKEND - 2006

The Pioneer Reunion Weekend is once again, thanks to the Commanding Officer 23 Pnr Regt RLC, to be held at Bicester on 7/9 July 2006. A Booking Form is enclosed with this Newsletter, this must be returned to HQ RPC Association by 16 June 2006. With the single soldiers accommodation now complete under Project SLAM all attending will, for the first time in many years, be accommodated in St David's Barracks.

The Weekend this year is to be special as Bicester Town Council has granted 23 Pioneer Regiment RLC the Liberty of Bicester. To be granted the Freedom of a City or Town the municipal authority must have a City or Borough Council and Bicester only has a Town Council. This is still a great honour and reflects the high esteem that the Regiment has with the town of Bicester. The Regiment will therefore march through Bicester with "Flags flying, Bands playing and bayonets fixed" on the morning of 8 July. It is hoped that a contingent of former members of the Corps will march behind the Regiment with Association standards.



A programme of events is as follows:

7 July 2006

EVENT	TIME	LOCATION	DRESS
Bring a Boss	1600 hrs	Cpls Club	Jacket/Tie
Invitation to Sgts' Mess	1900 hrs	Sgts Mess	Jacket/Tie

8 July 2006

EVENT	TIME	LOCATION	DRESS
Church Service	1100 hrs	Bicester Town	Uniform or Jacket/Tie
Bicester Freedom Parade	1200 hrs	Bicester Town	As above
23 Pnr Regt "Open Day"	1400 hrs	Sports Pitch	Uniform /Casual
The Pioneer Night	1930 hrs	Garrison Theatre	Casual

9 July 2006

EVENT	TIME	LOCATION	DRESS
WOs & SNCOs Pnr Reunion Club AGM	1000 hrs Members Only	Sgts Mess	Jacket/Tie
Memorial Service	1045 hrs	Corps War Memorial	Uniform or Jacket/Tie
RPC AGM	1100 hrs	Sgts Mess	Uniform or Jacket/Tie



WOs & SNCOs PIONEER REUNION CLUB

The Club is to hold the following functions during 2006:

GENERATION DINNER - 29 April 2006

Members may bring members of their family either 3 generations up or 3 generations down, the only stipulation is that they must be between 18 and 110!

LADIES DINNER NIGHT - 14 October 2006

Both events are to be held at Bicester. A Newsletter has already been circulated to Club Members, if not received please telephone the secretary on 01869 360694 or Bicester Military Ext 3074.

THE RLC FAMILY OPEN DAY

24 June 2006

This is to be held at Deepcut on 24 June 2006 and all members of the Corps (Regular and TA), members of the Forming Corps and any other family friends are invited to attend. Full details can be obtained from RPC Association.

60th PAST & PRESENT OFFICERS DINNER

Officers Mess, 23 Pioneer Regiment, Bicester,
Friday 13 October 2006

This is to be held in the Officers Mess, 23 Pioneer Regt, Bicester on Friday 13 October 2006. It is intended to celebrate this milestone in the Corps history by making the event extra special so please note the date in your diaries.



FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE

Westminster Abbey
and Cenotaph Parade
9 and 12 November 2006

These are to be held on 9 and 12 November 2006.

Full details will appear in the next Association Newsletter.

LONDON LUNCH

Thursday 9 November 2006

It is intended, once again, to hold a London Lunch. This year it is to be held on Thursday 9 November 2006 following the Field of Remembrance. This hopefully will attract more members to the Field of Remembrance. Full details will be shown in the next Newsletter but please mark the date in your diaries now.

39/93 CLUB

Red Lion Hotel, Fareham
6/7 October 2006

The next meeting of the Club is to be held on 6/7 October 2006, again at the Red Lion Hotel, Fareham. Further details can be obtained from the Secretary of the Club, Mr Les Rowley, 5 Douglas Court, Peacock Road, Marlow, SL7 1UQ. (Tel 0162 889 0913).

23 *Pioneer Regiment*

FEBRUARY
UPDATE

144 (HQ) Squadron:

The Regt has now completed Op FRESCO (W Mids). Although the fire fighting finished in December, there was still the handing back of fire engines and a few thousand items of associated equipment to be completed by mid Jan. The SQMS, MT and QM's department worked flat out to close the accounts and return everything in good order. The Regimental Clay Pigeon Shooting competition organised by WO2 (SSM) Gary Beckett was a great success, made even better by the fact that the 144 Squadron team beat everyone out of sight on a cold crisp day in December. Well done to everyone who took part with a special mention to Pte Rob Locking who had the top score of the day.

187 (TANCRED) Squadron:

We welcome back 2 Troop from a long 6 months providing Force Protection to 3 CS Regt RLC during Op TELIC 6. The Squadron is currently in the Recuperation phase of the Force Operations and Readiness Mechanism (FORM), which means that from Nov 05 through to Feb 06 the main effort is the security of St David's and St George's Barracks in Bicester. Now into the final month of duties, we will soon move in to the Squadron Training Phase where we will be carrying out Troop and Squadron level shakeouts, an ITD package in



Beckingham and a live firing phase in Sennybridge. The remainder of the year will now be packed full of very high quality Formation Training in order to prepare ourselves for the final phase of FORM which will have the Squadron at high readiness for deployment by Nov 06.

206 Pioneer Squadron:

The annual artisan skills camp at Biggar, Scotland was to include bricklaying and carpentry, demolition and construction lessons as well as carrying out some building tasks for local community and several charities. Instead, the Squadron were called up with other elements of the Regiment and members of the Royal Navy and RAF for Op FRESCO (West Midlands). This came as a surprise to those members of 5 Troop who had only been back from Canada for a matter of days. The 400 strong tri-service group spent several weeks getting to grips with each others working practices (the Royal Navy are entitled to two tins of beer a day and don't understand the word 'dry') insignia (RAF rank slides all look the same) and forms of address (apparently the Army shout too much). However, the Squadron was highly praised for its running of the 12 Temporary Service Fire Stations.

518 Pioneer Squadron:

Following the rigours and excitement of

Ex LOYAL LEDGER, the Sqn returned to camp full of news concerning an imminent deployment to Afghanistan on Op HERRICK in support of 39 Engr Regt. The remaining time in camp has passed by in a blur of pre deployment preparation and theatre specific courses. A/Sgt Hart, LCpl Ring and Ptes Herbert and Wild all won the Busman's holiday of a lifetime and sailed with the MV ANVIL POINT to Karachi as part of the boat protection party. The Sqn now awaits its imminent deployment.

522 Pioneer Squadron:

Lt Kirkpatrick and Sgt Lane accompanied by the 'Regimental' select have competed in both the Cambrian Patrol and Gore Trophy. The Cambrian Patrol team began the competition with confidence and in high spirits. The initial CTR went well, the team overtaking the team that had started an hour before. The weather deteriorated on the second day with horizontal rain and 70 mph winds drilled into the team, causing three cold casualties. Despite the visibility being under 20 meters Cpl Burdett, located a REBRO site which provided shelter for the casualties and comms to call for evacuation and then the team reluctantly withdrew from the event.

With 518 Squadron preparing for deployment to Afghanistan in the New Year, 522 Squadron stepped forward as the formation support on NRF 6. 15 Troop deployed to Folkestone on a TSG task to support OPTAG Training for Op HERRICK and will support training with 16 Air Assault Brigade exercises in the future. ■





Letters

to the editor

Oxford

October 2005

Dear Mr N Brown,

I must say I did enjoy myself at the Reunion with some of my friends. I will say you put on a good show. Thank you Norman, a good day allround.

Yours sincerely,

JE White

Weymouth

1 November 2005

Dear Norman,

Many thanks for your sending me the latest edition of the RPC Association Newsletter, as usual it contained some interesting reading. Both my wife and myself enjoy reading it from cover to cover, not only for interest in the articles, but also trying to identify some of the people. In the letters column I noticed that many people commended on the excellent job you do in producing such an interesting newsletter. Which is nice to see that your hard work is appreciated, so please keep up the good work!!

Best Wishes,

Maurice Grange

**Penderyn
Aberdare**

December 2005

Dear Norman,

I was bitterly disappointed not have been able to attend this year's Reunion Weekend, I miss meeting my many old friends, and of course, making new ones. This is the third year that I have missed, but God willing I shall be with you next year. The Welsh Mafia have asked to be remembered to you and I hope next year to bring one or two along to show them how real soldiers work and conduct themselves.

I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on the Corps Newsletter, I have been a proud member of the Association since 1979 and in my opinion these are the best. In the last issue I read with interest a letter from a Mr Whipps who was trying to locate members of 251 Coy in the 1956 era, I served with 251 Coy at Kineton for almost two years as their Provost Cpl from Jan 57 to Nov 58.

I was very pleased to read that the three Old Muskateers were in attendance at this year's Reunion Weekend, namely, Mr G Pringle, Mr A Sullivan and Mr H Ramsey, I hope to drop them a line shortly.

I have enclosed a photograph of myself and the local RBL Standard Bearer taken after this years VE Parade, I was unable to march myself so I stood at the Cenotaph with our standard whilst the Parade marched past.

I look forward to the next time we meet, in the mean time look after yourself there's not many of us left.

Best Wishes,

Derek Luker



Exmoor

25 October 2005

Dear Norman,

You have so improved the content and quality of each issue that it now exceeds the description 'Newsletter'. Adding too those of Tom Appleyard (Oct 05), please accept my congratulations for producing yet again a superb magazine.

Yours sincerely,

Geoffrey Crook

**Northfleet
Kent**

28 October 2005

Dear Norman,

I met an old mate whilst on holiday in North Yorkshire a couple of weeks ago. We served together at Colchester in the 70s. I had not seen him for 23 years and it's all down to the Pioneer web-site.

Through this I contacted his son who was looking for old mates of his father. His name is Dave Minor and I must say it was a bit emotional seeing him after all this time as he has been ill.

All the best,

Geoff Dyson

Manchester

28 September 2005

Dear Mr Brown,

I was very surprised and very touched to have your letter by return giving details of my father's service in the Pioneers during World War 2.

When I showed it to my 95 year old mother I asked her if she had any memories of the war. "We showed Hitler where to get off," she said!

My father took part in the landings in North Africa and Sicilly (where he was injured and sent back to North Africa where he received the last rites) and then the Normandy landings on D Day. He was again injured in an explosion in which his best friend who was beside him was killed. He was returned to UK and spent the rest of the war as a guard in a prisoner of war camp in Scotland.

Of her reflections of D Day my mother was staying with her sister when a neighbour came hammering on the door. The neighbour burst in breathless saying that she had just heard on the radio that the second front had started and said that both your husbands will be there.

She was right both my uncle and father were there, my uncle in the Navy where he rescued six American servicemen for which he received the DSM from the King.

My mother still has some tearful memories of 60 years ago. She has also some very funny ones, of not recognising the foreigner who came walking down the street towards her smiling, then realising it was a very suntanned much thinner husband! And of the time when my sister wrote to father Christmas asking for a black baby doll. There were no toys, so mum painted the only doll she had and made new clothes for it from her headscarf, gave her red lips and painted on red shoes, and my sister was delighted.

My mother remembers the blackouts and the many nights she spent with her two tiny daughters in the air raid shelter and the bombings of Manchester and Salford.

Yours sincerely,

Lynda Healey

**Dovercourt Bay
Essex**

30 October 2005

Norman,

Can I thank you for the constructive war history of 146 Coy and all the achievements. I do wonder just how the war would have gone without us, the strongest Corps in the lines, but so few accolades.

It referred to Sgt Kelly at Callabritlo, I was by his side when he went, with Lt O'Neil (Jimmy), to save a wounded soldier in no man's land. It also referred to Wood Hulse getting shot in the backside in Algiers, the funny thing is when it was talked of in the Sergeants' Mess, it was he was shot in the arse in a Brothel. You see, we had taken over a brothel as Coy HQ, I recall that he got demobbed from lead poisoning.

When the war ended I was at Breman, and I with 12 men and an Austrian interpreter, conducted checks to round up SS Troops. Using a Jewish family to inform us when they came in we consequently put a large number into custody. I do wish to applaud you for your presentation of the Newsletters. Great! Keep up the good work.

Thank you for all your information,

**Bill Rowland
Ex Sgt 146 Coy**

Newcastle Upon Tyne

09 January 2006

Dear Sir,

My grand-daughter has sent me a copy of the history of 12 Centre Pioneer Corps (obtained from your web-site). This has brought back such wonderful memories especially those 12 months of air raids in Liverpool. I reported to Dingle Vale School on 11 Jul 40 and served on HQ Staff until Jun 46. One move seems to have been omitted. Whilst in Oldham a small advance party moved to Middleton Towers Holiday Camp, Heysham, Morecambe. Sgt J Hobson ATS, my fiancée, whom I later married whilst at Prestatyn was one of a number of ATSs who moved with us. Eventually we moved back to Oldham - never found out why.

I served under Capt L Gosling, QM & Transport Officer first of all in the QM Stores then as a driver eventually reaching the position of Transport Sgt. For a time at Prestatyn I was Lieutenant Colonel H Greenwood's driver and remember clearly being involved in an accident with Sir, and Capt Edwards ATS Officer. A double-decker bus passed through a red light and almost overturned the staff car - fortunately no one was injured. Sadly the Colonel died before the trial was held in Crewe.

It was a great privilege to serve under these marvellous officers, humbly called the Boss (Capt) and Father (Colonel), I kept in touch with all my pals (we were like brothers and sisters) but sadly as time has gone by nearly all have passed on, including my wife after 60 years of marriage. One thing remains however - happy memories of my 6 years with the Pioneers.

Many thanks for producing such a splendid report of our Centre.

**John Dixon
Ex Sgt 13050336**

(Ed note: it is pleasing to report that after 60 years since leaving the Army Mr Dixon has now joined the Association)

The following email was received from an ex REME who was tracing the history of ex pupils at his school. In the school's book of remembrance they had Lt Col Haldin as being killed in 1940, they were close - he survived the war and died in 1966 at the age of 75!

Exmoor

January 2006

Norman,

Having been interested to do with anything military for about 60 years, and (amateur) researching those who lost their lives for 46 years, I can honestly say that from memory your extremely prompt reply is the quickest that I have EVER received, unbelievable!

Although a mere thank you seems somewhat inadequate, thank you anyway.

I can also say with a degree of certainty that having transcribed and researched literally hundreds of war memorials, commemoration books and similar over many years it is the very first time that I have ever encountered a survivor being commemorated although I have had others tell me that it had happened to them, no wonder I had not been able to access any data which appertains to Douglas Welsh Haldin's demise.

Of course I will send a donation to the RPC Association today as a token of my appreciation of your kindness and very welcome important input.

Regarding the slower REME response, you are of course quite correct in your assumptions because as you will be aware by traditionally Ruining Everything Mechanical Eventually my former corps probably now extend to having the same effect on computers and the like!

Yours,

David Hughes

The following are just 2 of the letters received by the Association for assistance given:

Dear Sir,

I would just like to say thank-you to everybody who helped my mum to receive her electric wheelchair.

It has been wonderful to see her with a new lease of life in the short time she has had her chair. She has also been out with my dad for the first time in many years.

It has and will continue to open so many doors for her. I can't thank you enough so on behalf of my mum thank you.

Dear Sir,

We are writing to thank you for the generous donation that your Association made towards the cost of providing EPVs and installing an access for them. Due to our ages and disabilities we have been unable to get out for the past year, this has changed our lives. We are enjoying our freedom again it feels like release from prison, it is nice to know in this modern age that people like you care. Once again thank you.

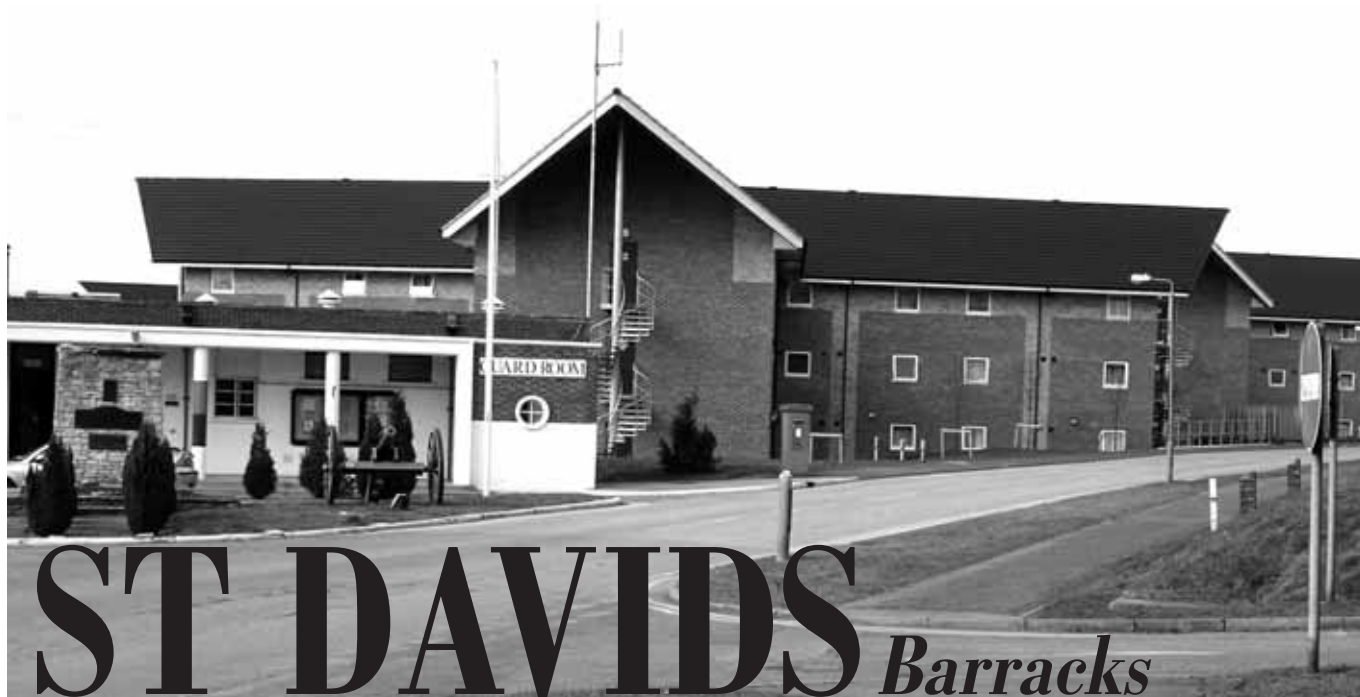


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or email us at
pioneers@rpca.fsnet.co.uk



*Why not
drop us a line...*



ST DAVID'S Barracks

Those who have visited St David's Barracks during the last 2 years must admit that it has looked more like a building site than a Barracks. At long last the new 7 blocks under Project SLAM are now complete and are to be named as follows:

**CHAKA
WILSON
THORBURN
HILLMAN**

**McCONNELL
SIMITCH
SKURNICKI**

These are named after members of the Pioneer Corps who served in World War 2 and committed acts of bravery, copies of their citations are as follows:



**SSgt CHAKA - 1943
(Basuto) Coy (MM)**

This NCO proceeded with a party of Basuto ORs on the night of 5th April 1945, they were given the task of crossing the RENO river to operate 5 smoke points over a distance of 1000 yds to cover the laying of a vital telephone line. The point at which the party was to cross the river was under observation from enemy strong points 400 yds away on the opposite bank of the river. The African troops were wholly unfamiliar with the erection or operation of assault boats; nevertheless these were handled successfully. Instructions given as to the point at which to land were extremely vague and it was known that the enemy bank was heavily mined. In spite of these attendant difficulties, the crossing was made successfully. Indeterminate instructions as to the route to be taken resulted in the party arriving at within 150 yds of an enemy strongpoint and coming under small arms and mortar fire. Owing to the approach of daylight and it being obvious that the position at which the party had arrived was under complete observation it was decided to

concentrate the smoke points to within 700 yds of the river. Smoke was about to be generated when it was

discovered simultaneously that the wind had changed unfavourably and the field telephone had ceased to operate. Under these conditions it was decided to withdraw the party which was successfully accomplished without loss. These African troops had never been called upon to operate under such conditions and there is no doubt that S/Sgt CHAKA's coolness, perseverance and the example he set to his African troops plus the assistance he gave to the British Officer i/c of the party was responsible in no small measure for the success attained.



**Pte CW McCONNELL
(310 Coy) (GM)**

Pte McConnell was a member of the Heavy Rescue Section which had been working on a number of V-bomb incidents during the past 6 weeks and which had rescued about 150 trapped casualties alive during that period. He has been an outstanding member of a first-class rescue section. On several occasions he worked strenuously and voluntarily for over 12 hours at a stretch. He worked under massed heavy concrete debris at the Rex Cinema incident, Antwerp, on 16 Dec 44. He volunteered to go down into a cellar in a very dangerous situation at the Maritime Marine Telephone Exchange incident. At the RAOC Gas unit incident he volunteered to work with 14320146 Pte Porter E, in a very confined space lying on his back under loose flooring with heaped debris on top. The whole floor collapsed shortly after the last casualty was taken out. He has inspired others with his zeal for rescue work and his complete contempt for danger.



**Pte F WILSON
(76 Coy AMPC) (MM)**

On 21st May 1940 at Lievin, S.W. of Lens, N France, after an enemy air raid, a small unexploded (H.E.) bomb was

found in the village street - there was a constant stream of refugees passing down this street. Privates Wilson and Kearns volunteered to remove the bomb. They tossed a coin and Private Wilson won the toss he picked up the bomb, carried it across the street, through a barbed wire fence, and across a field, throwing it in a ditch. Private Wilson was very frightened and he expected to be blown to pieces at any moment. Statement by Capt H J A Rea. "During the course of the afternoon of 20th May 1940, while 76 Company was holding a position in the Bois de Hironnelle, south of Lievin, I witnessed the following act on my return to Company HQ in Lievin. A force of about 30 German bombers had carried out a raid on Lievin and dropped several bombs, immediately afterwards I noticed an unexploded Time Fuse Bomb in the middle of the street - I immediately stopped the stream of refugees and I was examining the bomb and considering what to do with it when two Pioneers from 76 Company passed and volunteered to remove it. They were Privates Wilson and Cairns.

They tossed a coin and Private Wilson won the toss. He picked up the bomb and carried it across the street, under a barbed wire fence while a LCpl of the Company Police lifted the wire, and across a field for approximately 100 yards and threw it into a ditch and returned. He fully realised what he was doing and he was shaking all over when he returned to me. I gave him a drink of Brandy."



Pte R SKURNICKI (MM)

SKURNICKI was captured on 29 Apr 41 at KALAMATA (Greece). Early in Jun 41 he and others escaped from the tailors' shop where he had been put to work.

After two months' freedom in the hills he was chased by a party of Italians, fell off a cliff, broke his leg and was thereupon recaptured. After the Italian Armistice all PW in Camp 57 GRUPPIGNANO were



entrained for Germany. During the first night on the train he squeezed through the window of his cattle truck and jumped from the train. He broke his right leg on landing and was severely bruised. He was cared for by Italian families until Jan 44 when he joined the local partisans in the AMPEZZO area. From then until Sep 44 he organised Partisan activity on both sides of the Tagliamento and participated in many actions against the Germans and in acts of sabotage. In addition to this he organised the passage of scores of escapers and evaders to Yugoslavia, providing guides, food and clothing from Partisan sources. He was asked by the Partisans to command a Battalion but refused under instructions from the head of a British Mission.

In Sep 44 there was a big 'restrallamento' in the AMPEZZO area and he and his band moved over to TRAMONTI. Here he met an officer of a British Mission who ordered him to join a party of escapers going to Yugoslavia. When the party reached the River TAGLIAMENTO, his leg gave him trouble and he was forced to remain behind. He was then made a Commander of the Italian Partisan police and continued, in spite of the dangers involved, to collect and organise parties of escapers and evaders for the crossing into Yugoslavia. In Feb 45 he collected 7 members of a crashed Liberator and looked after them for 2 weeks before sending them with a guide to a British Mission near PORCIA. After 5 days they returned as the Mission had moved. The area had by now become extremely dangerous and after 2 weeks in hiding he decided to lead the party out himself. After 5 weeks wandering among the Yugoslav partisans a dispute arose as to a suitable route and on 15 Apr 45 the Americans left, heading North East. He joined 2 British escapers and on 18 Apr led them to a British Mission at 9th Yugoslav Corps HQ. From this time onwards their journey was arranged for them and they were evacuated from ZARA on 29 Apr 45.



Pte TO THORBURN (807 Coy) (GM)

In Sep 43, the enemy obtained a direct hit on a dump of petrol on the sea front at Salerno. A Corporal was severely wounded and two or three other ranks too badly shaken to take any further part. Private Thorburn although wounded in the back, commenced salvaging petrol. The dump was on fire in several places and petrol tins were exploding in all directions, being in some cases thrown over the roof

shells, he was able with the assistance of a few men who came along later to salvage some thousands of gallons of petrol. He was then evacuated to hospital, where a fist sized piece of shrapnel was removed from his back, the wound dressed, and he returned to duty.



Cpl A SIMITCH (MM) SAS - Yugoslavia

In Apr 43 it was believed that a most important resistance group existed in a certain area in Yugoslavia, but this group was in action against German forces and was being forced to move several miles daily, so its exact location was not known.

It was decided that it would be most advantageous to send a small reconnaissance party to determine whether it would be practicable to send in a British mission. Cpl Simitch volunteered to as leader and wireless operator to the party being sent in which was to consist of two natives of the country and himself. Late in Apr they were parachuted in 'blind'.

It transpired that they did not drop amongst the resistance group but amongst light enemy forces. They immediately had to abandon any idea of collecting most of their equipment, but managed, fortunately, to recover their wireless set, charging engine and certain necessary articles. They had to lay up during the day for three or four days and move by night only, relying solely in information given them by local inhabitants.

Within a week they managed to reach the resistance group to whom they were intended to go and straight away opened up wireless contact with Cairo. The result of this fine effort has been that a British Mission, including Sappers, has been accepted and successfully dropped to this resistance group, and useful sabotage against railway communications has been carried out.

It was entirely due to the leadership of Cpl Simitch and his determination also the operation on his wireless set that success was achieved.



Pte L HILLMAN (SAS Regt) (MM)

On 13 Sep 42 Pte HILLMAN, then a member of the Special Investigation Group, formed part of the force which entered Tobruk from MUFRA under Lt Col

Haseldon. Hillman was dressed in German uniform and it was his job to speak to any enemy guarding check posts on the road, and get the party through in their trucks. When the action started Hillman was in Capt Buck's party which, still in German uniform, took the first objective. The next morning after reinforcements had failed to land, I saw Hillman with one or two others and Lt Col Haseldon holding off and actually advancing on enemy who were greatly superior in numbers. The others made for the trucks, but Hillman refused to leave the Col and attacked with him, killing several Italians and forcing others to run. When within a few yards of the enemy Lt Col Haseldon was hit and rolled over. Hillman went up to him and called his name several times.

Not until he was certain that Lt Col Haseldon was killed did he come back to join us on board the stranded MTB. Here he kept the guns supplied with ammunition until no more could be found on board and then took to the hills with my party when it was apparent that no more could be done. For the next nine weeks during which we were endeavouring to get back to our own lines. Hillman showed courage, endurance and cheerfulness which was a great example to the rest of us.

TODAYS SOLDIER

For those old and bold members who had to endure 8 or 10 man rooms or even spiders with their old coke stoves the following is a description of today's accommodation for the single soldier:

Bedrooms

each has an en suite shower with toilet and washbasin. Storage cupboard with inter changeable shelving, 4 ft beds, computer desk, soft chair, bookcase, 2 x fitted wardrobes, 10 electrical sockets, TV & Satellite plugs. Telephone socket, fitted carpets and curtains, notice/pin board, smoke detectors in each room/corridor (no smoking in the building).

Common Rooms

are fitted with TV/Satellite point's, soft furnishing, coffee tables, fitted carpets and curtains.

Kitchen/utility Rooms

Drying area with fitted coat hangers, two rings Hob, microwave, washing machine, tumble dryer, kettle, fridge.

Outside area

boot wash, cycle rack, bin area. ■





The daughters of Cpl G Scully GC lay a wreath in memory of their father at the Field of Remembrance 2005

PHOTO INDEX

- 1 168 Pnr Regt Royal Logistic Corps (V) 2 Div SAAM Team
- 2 168 Pnr Regt Royal Logistic Corps (V) Wild RIB Ride
- 3 The Logistic Grove at the National Arboretum recently completed by 23 Pnr Regt RLC
- 4-6 39/93 Club Dinner at Fareham - 3 Mar 06
- 7 Association Trustees signing over 51 St George's Drive from Benevolence Trustees in 1993. 13 years later the building sold.
- 8 Part of the RPC contingent on Horseguards for the Cenotaph Parade
- 9 Mr Alan Fawcett chats to two Chelsea Pensioners prior to Cenotaph Parade
- 10 Capt Mat East fronts the RPC Plot at the Field of Remembrance
- 11 Hon Colonel 168 Pnr Regt RLC(V) Maj Gen Lyons presents Pte Pat Morley with Colonels Commendation following 30 years service.
- 12 CO 168 Pnr Regt RLC (V) address No 1 Troop
- 13 RPC Association Trustees at their last meeting at 51 St George's Drive in Nov 05
- 14 23 Pnr Regt WO's & Sgts Mess new centre piece - a replica of the RPC Wall of Remembrance.
- 15 The Pioneer Bench in the Logistic Grove at the National Arboretum
- 16 Who painted round the shelving at 51 St George's Drive - found when the shelving was removed - the name Dunnit has been mentioned!

Pioneering Days

at Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps

by W G Ford

We were a mixed bunch of men who arrived at Westward Ho Holiday Camp, Bideford, Devon on the 4th July 1940. We came into the army from 'civvy street', many of us classed as 'C3' because we wore spectacles!. Certainly we were not all from backgrounds which required a lot of physical strength to do our civilian jobs. Those first weeks in the training camp had their moments; that first army breakfast, everything on one steel plate, the endless rain and wind that reduced our activities; walking backwards from the cookhouse tent to avoid the food being blown off the plate. We left after a month as 'trained Pioneers' to travel Eastwards across Southern England to Kent, close to where many had started from.

We became 10 Company AMPC (most of the officers were reservists, one with a ribbon that we were told was from the Boer War). Our first introduction to Pioneering was shoring up river banks on the side away from the coast to act as tank deterrents!! In that summer of 1940 we watched the battles in the skies above us in Kent and Sussex as the Battle of Britain took place. Sometimes we took cover in the leafy bracken on the hills. Caught up in the defence strategies in preparation for the expected invasion, units were detached to parts of Kent to make camouflaged areas for the big guns at St Margaret's Bay, cutting a culvert and laying railway track to the ordnance depot at Ashford so that tanks could be brought in for repairs. This involved breaking the main Ashford to Tonbridge line to insert a set of points (supervised by one RE Corporal and one Railwayman). Some craftsmen were moved out for 'hush-hush' work for a 'British Underground' (we learned that very much later).

With the coming of the Americans our railway increased to the extent of building two marshalling yards for US Army's use; one of 16 miles of track at Thatcham and the other on Newbury Racecourse amounting to 26 miles of track. Lifting and laying rails and unloading seemingly endless railway trucks of ballast; we always hoped to get a smooth metal floored truck rather than one with wooden planks! There were always interludes such as that at Fort Halstead near to Biggin Hill Airfield, Kent, i.e. washing out the shell cases from the ack-ack guns ready for refilling with explosive.

After 10 Company moved in May 1943 to Staines in Middlesex, I left the Company for a recently (re?) formed unit, 349 Company at Burgess Hill in Sussex where I

became its CQMS. I was informed by the OC, Major McKay, that my first job was to find 250 blankets to replace those that didn't come back from disembarkation leave! (That was completed about ten months later).

1943 began with a change of tempo; a greater emphasis on training when the Company moved in June to Seaford in Sussex, Lee Enfields Mark 3 were withdrawn and the Canadian 1914 War Ross Rifle issued (the one with the interlocking bolt). Later these were replaced with Lee Enfields Mark 4 (short bayonet) and Sten Guns. Good use was made of the Firing Range on Seaford Head, firing out to sea, even when the French-Canadian Commandoes were scaling the cliff. Some sections were still employed at railheads and various detachments.

The secret word 'Overlord' came to us when we were at Crawley, still in Sussex where we had moved to in December 1943. The Company were now working on construction of various concrete pits, etc, which were to be used for the waterproofing of vehicles ready for the invasion. Here our OC and his 2IC were replaced with younger men (Major TA Heasman and Captain NB Wright). Boxes were designed to make the Company Sections self-sufficient with cooking equipment, extra knives being bought from a cutler in Brighton. A 'dummy run' evacuation to a marshalling area resulted in two non-drinkers, myself and Lt Ol West, going on a pub crawl in Crawley to regain the billets we had handed over four days earlier.

Scheduled to go to Normandy on D + 6 we moved a few days before the 6th June 1944 to a wooded camp site at Plumpton, Sussex. Sailing on the night of Sunday 11th June from Newhaven.

We landed on MIKE SECTION of JUNO BEACH in Normandy during Monday 12th June. The astounding sight of the vast armada of Allied ships was awesome and noisy as the guns opened up on a lone German fighter plane. 349 Company climbed the hill to a plateau where we opened one of our 24-hour packs to make our first meal on French soil. Our 3-tonner arrived in convoy from the beach, so we were quickly united with that, but our Jeep was to arrive some time later (our only vehicle not waterproofed came off the landing craft in several feet of water).

As the forwards push hadn't yet developed there was some confusion about the planned work for the Company but there were always 'Pioneering Jobs, roads to mend and temporary airfields to make. The next day we moved from Graye-sur-mer to St Crois-sur-mer, sleeping in holes in the ground amid the orchards. About a week after our arrival an 'Officers at Home' was arranged with a demonstration of rifle shooting for which we scrounged .303 ammo from the RAF - it turned out to be armour piercing and caused a few sore shoulders!

For two months the Company was employed in road and camp constructions and some quarrying until on the 19th August 1944 we moved to a RE Bridging Park at Vassy and moved with the column to the Seine at Vernon on the 25th having made two stop-overs on the way. Work commenced that night to clear the approaches for a new bridge, the French one having been demolished. A house had to be dismantled in the dark, fortunately one of the Company had worked on demolishing buildings in the UK and was able to attach ropes to allow others to pull the building down.

Whilst working on the approaches for the pontoon bridge, the work was attacked by bracketing mortar fire resulting in three men being killed, Privates Fenwick, Goodman and Tyrrell. Six others were wounded. Privates Bowtell, Buck, Hendy, Ramshaw, Scott and H Williams. These were the only casualties 349 Company experienced. Work continued on the Pontoon Bridge and a Bailey Bridge which enabled infantry and the Guards Armour to cross the Seine. We finally left for Gisors taking up residence in the centre of the town. Remaining there from the 1st to the 6th September 1944, we inadvertently provided a B & B for despatch riders as our sentry post was at the side of the main road. The OC, Major TA Heasman, decided that a Memorial Service should be held for the three men who had been killed at Vernon, in the absence of a Padre I was instructed to take that parade. It was at Gisors >

349 Company, Pioneer Corps, Schleswig, Germany. July - November 1945



Officers and SNCO's, 349 Coy, Schleswig, Germany.



Btoo that we took our one and only prisoner at the very point of our leaving. He walked into our arms, as it were, Lt Ol West, our only German speaking officer, took him to the POW cage. The German had identified himself as an 'Ostreich' (Austrian).

There followed a series of one day stays in Belgium until the 11th September when we moved to Evere, Brussels to work on that central airfield situated in a Brussels suburb close to the Central Cemetery. This large airfield became an important point for the unloading of supplies brought in by a 'bus service' of American Dakotas. These appeared as a stream of planes which had only ten minutes on the ground so the Pioneer unloading crews had only five minutes to unload the plane onto a 3-ton lorry then back to unload to be ready for another plane. HQ section was moved on the 16th to Dechy in France with 7 sections to Douai airfield to continue unloading aircraft. 3 sections were left at Evere airfield. HQ section was moved back to Evere on the 19th and it was during this period that we became involved in unloading Arnhem casualties, men worked very late and there were no complaints at the work load!

The Company reassembled at Evere on the 1st October still unloading necessary supplies and this continued until the 12th when the Company moved to La Colonie on the Belgian/Dutch border for training. Moving into Holland on the 20th the Company spent about seven weeks at Veldhoven working with supplies of petrol and ammunition. During this time both the OC and the 2IC were admitted to hospital and replaced by Major EJ Booth and Capt LGW Teat. Moving again, to Weert on 8th December, to begin work at Forward Maintenance Centres and the Army Post Office (Christmas Rush?) since we left there on Christmas Eve 1944. Whilst at Weert we saw our first German Jet Fighter plane and our first 'biro' pen.

Midnight Christmas Eve 1944 found us delivering rations to detachments around Geleen including one at the coal mine, there was heavy snow everywhere and it had been a hard day's travelling. The headquarters, in a school, were kept warm by one of our drivers rolling back the canvas tilt on his lorry and joining a convoy collecting coal from the mine. We also had the luxury of hot showers at the miners' bath unit.

The road surfaces were packed tight by the volume of traffic over the snow and then came the thaw with the resultant flooding. HQ moved into Itteren and next morning the road was under water. With the river Maas fast flowing in flood a training bridging exercise was laid on with our Company assisting the engineers, this in preparation for the bridging of the Rhine. We had been back to Belgium, returning to Holland a few days later. With the war effort gathering pace we, with another Pioneer Company, were leapfrogging each other to set up Forward Maintenance Centres about a mile from the frontline. By 23rd March 1945 we were in Germany at Wissell, staging to be ready for the Rhine crossing. Instead of bridging our task was to cut away the banks down to river level leaving a foot wide wall of earth. This enabled the DKWHs to burst through straight onto the water. The sky was black with planes and gliders on that eventful day. 349 crossed the Rhine at Xantan. Then finding that our map reference for the FMC was still in German hands.

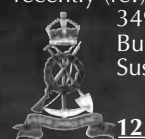
When leave to the UK began my turn came and I was on the way home looking forward to seeing my wife and our new born son, on the 5th May we were told at Brussels railway station that the war was over, what good news to take home. Later the Company moved at

the beginning of July into the Schleswig-Holstein province (that strip of Germany leading up to Denmark). Until now the Company had been involved with FMCs and supplies of petrol and ammunition. Taking up residence in a superb billet we had a base until the unit was disbanded on 21st November 1945. The school was a large, three storey building with dormer windows in the roof. Red bricks with blue pointing made it a very impressive sight. Our CSM, W Machin, had a broken concrete gate post set up in the forecourt with the Pioneer badge painted onto it and flag poles at either side. It was so impressive that Field Marshal Montgomery stopped to enquire what Divisional HQ it was, we have no record as to his remarks when he learned that it was a Pioneer Company. Still involved with supplies one section was allocated to the army bakery - we enjoyed hot rolls and Danish butter for breakfast. Things were slowing down as personnel went home on Demob leave.

I was posted to 41 Group at Lubeck on the 9th November 1945 to be transferred to a German Labour Company, to see these men come in from the 'H' area was an unforgettable experience.

My demob came with 30 Group and I travelled via Tournai arriving home on Whit Sunday May 1946. ■

“We landed on Mike section of Juno Beach in Normandy during Monday 12th June. The astounding sight of the vast armada of Allied ships was awesome and noisy as the guns opened up...”



HOLY SEPULCHRE CHURCH Northampton

In 1961 the Royal Pioneer Corps adopted the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as its Garrison Church, and the Vicar became the Corps' Officiating Chaplain. Pioneers participated fully in the life of Holy Sepulchre and, from its inception, in the work of the Holy Sepulchre Restoration Trust.

A South Aisle Commemoration Door was the gift of the Royal Pioneer Corps Association, through its Northampton Branch. On 6 March 1996 this Door was Dedicated for use by the Right Reverend Paul Barber, Bishop of Brixworth. The Royal Pioneer Door commemorates the service of the Corps in Northampton, its association with Holy Sepulchre and restoration of this church building. It is also intended to contribute to the future well-being of parishioners and visitors, especially the disabled.

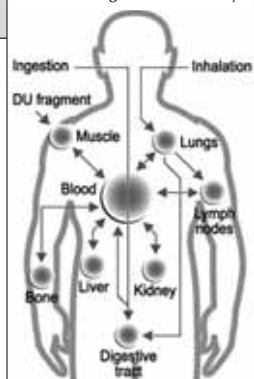
The Trustees need approximately £22,000 to complete all necessary outside works at an overall cost of £1.2 million raised over a 25 year period.

During the year the Church holds a number of fund-raising events, the following two may be of interest to members:

- ABF Concert - Saturday 29 April
The full Corps Band of REME
- Big Band Night - Thursday 19 October
The Minden Band of The Queen's Division

**Bookings and further information can be made on:
01604 754782 or email: patk@lyncrestave.fsnet.co.uk**

How DU might enter the body



DUOB TEST PROGRAMME Closed

The Depleted Uranium Oversight Board has announced the closure of its testing programme from 31 Jan 06. The programme, which was launched on 23 September 2004, is open to veterans of the 1991 Gulf War and of the campaign in former Yugoslavia (including civilians working for the Government or non-Governmental organisations in support of UK military operations), who wish to know whether they have been significantly exposed to DU. The DUOB has decided to

close the scheme unless there is a large increase in requests for testing following announcements in "The Sun" and "The Daily Mail" newspapers.

The test involves the provision of a 24-hour urine sample and its analysis for isotopes of uranium by a highly sensitive mass spectrometric technique. It indicates the total amount of uranium excreted per day, and the extent (if any) to which the excreted uranium comes from past exposure to DU. The test was validated by preliminary experimental studies, and its performance is continually checked.

As of 25 October 2005, analyses had been completed on 280 samples from veterans and none was found to contain DU. A negative test does not necessarily mean that there has been no exposure to DU whatsoever, but implies that any exposure is below the limit of detection of the analytical technique employed. According to mainstream medical and scientific thinking, such low excretion of DU would be below the level at which any material impact on health would be expected.

The DUOB is an independent committee of scientists and veterans' representatives. It was established by the Government in 2001 to oversee the development and operation of a voluntary retrospective testing programme for veterans who are concerned about possible exposure to depleted uranium. Further information about the testing programme can be obtained from the DUOB website (www.duob.org.uk), or by contacting the chairman of the DUOB, Professor David Coggon (02380 777624).



GULF VETERANS Pensions Appeal Tribunal



On 24 Nov 05 the Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Don Touhig) said, "On 31 Oct, a Pensions Appeal Tribunal announced its decision

in the case of Mr Daniel Martin. The Government welcomes the acceptance by the Pensions Appeal Tribunal of the umbrella term Gulf War Syndrome to cover conditions causally linked to the 1990/91 Gulf War. The Government hopes that the use of the umbrella term will address the known concern of some Gulf veterans that we have not recognised a link between their ill-health and the 1990/91 Gulf Conflict. We hope that this will help to provide an element of closure for those who have sought some acknowledgement that their ill-health is connected to their Gulf service.

The Government also welcomes the decision by the Pensions Appeal Tribunal which found that there was no reliable evidence to show that Gulf War Syndrome is a discrete medical condition. This confirms the view which the Ministry of Defence has consistently taken and which is based on the overwhelming consensus of world-wide medical and scientific opinion. The level of awards will not be affected by the use of the umbrella term as it has always been the policy of the Ministry of Defence to award in full where evidence of disablement is shown and where that disablement is due to, or aggravated by, service.

The issues surrounding the ill-health reported by veterans of the 1990/91 Gulf Conflict remain a priority for the Government. We have acknowledged that some veterans of the Gulf Conflict have become ill and that this ill-health may be related to their Gulf service. Since taking office in 1997, the Government has made it a priority to assist veterans or their dependents by providing medical help, initiating scientific research, making information available and providing financial assistance. We will continue this approach, as appropriate, for the future."

WAR GRAVES COMMISSION Update

In our Feb 05 Newsletter we mentioned One Boy, the CD Rom remembrance presentation about Horace Iles, a 16-year-old boy soldier who died in the 1916 Battle of the Somme. A successful application for Big Lottery funding allowed the CWGC to follow this up with another CD, this time with a Second World War emphasis.

The subject of Some Go Early is Jack Banks, also 16, killed in Normandy in 1944. His tragic story shows how the impact of his death is still felt by family, friends and comrades even after 60 years. Designed for use in the classroom or during assembly, the CD Rom was distributed at no charge throughout the year to students, teachers, schools and museums. Copies can be obtained from CWGC.

Education programmes have become a vital part of the Commission's promotional work and will continue to move forward. Plans for the coming year include a further CD 'case history' centred on the sinking of the SS Mendi in 1917 in which 600 men of the South African Native Labour Contingent lost their lives.

WANTED RPC Officers Lists and Company Photographs

The RPC Officers Lists were produced by HQ RPC yearly, although we have copies of most years our library is incomplete. To help us complete our history over the years we require copies of these lists especially those published pre 1955. If you have a copy of one (or more) of these lists it would be appreciated if you would loan it to the Association and we will return it immediately to you. We also hold copies of most of the War Diaries of the units in WW2 and we are now trying to obtain copies of the Company photographs to accompany these diaries. If you have a copy please loan it to RPC Association and we will copy and return it to you immediately.

NEW DVD on Veterans launched

The Veterans Agency has produced a DVD entitled Reaching Out to Veterans - A Partnership on behalf of the Communications Action Team - a group comprising representatives from ex-Service organisations and Government, which seeks to raise awareness of the help available to veterans, from advice and guidance to practical support such as finding accommodation, Falklands hero Simon Weston is the main presenter.

The DVD features a series of case studies to illustrate how individual veterans have been helped to get their lives 'back on track' when facing seemingly intractable problems, whether coping with disability or financial difficulties. It also emphasises the importance of multi-agency solutions and highlights the partnership between ex-Service organisations and the Government.

To obtain a copy, call 0800 169 2277 or write to: Reaching Out to Veterans DVD, Veterans Service Team, Room 6108, Veterans Agency, Norcross, Blackpool, FY5 3WP.

CLS DIRECT INFORMATION LEAFLET 25 "Veterans"

This is a Community Legal Service Direct pamphlet written by LSC and the MOD in association with Citizens Advice. It covers the rights for former servicemen and women and their families: For example:

- Financial Help
- Service Pension
- A place to live
- Finding work
- Medals
- War Disablement Pension
- AF Compensation Scheme
- Copies of Service Record
- Passports

If you wish to obtain a copy of this document please telephone 0845 3000 343 or e-mail ISCLetters@ecgroup.uk.com or fax 020 8867 3225.

It is one of a series of pamphlets produced. e.g. No 1 Dealing with debt, No 2 Employment, No 5 Buying and selling property etc.

ACCESSING SERVICE RECORDS Its not that complicated!

People seek Service records for a variety of reasons, some official such as for medical issues and some in connection with the growing interest in family history. Whatever the reason, obtaining records can be a surprisingly straightforward process if they are your own. The process is slightly more complicated (but not much) if you are seeking those of others.

Seeking your own records. To obtain your own Service records you must complete a Subject Access Request (SAR) Form which can be obtained from either the Ministry of Defence or Veterans Agency websites, the latter (www.veteransagency.mod.uk) being the easier to access as Service Records is highlighted on the Home Page. After completing the form simply post it off, accompanied by proof of identity (a photocopy of your passport, driving licence or a recent utility bill will suffice) to:

**Army Personnel Centre, Disclosure 2, Mail Point 515, Kentigern House, 65 Brown Street, Glasgow, G2 8EX
Tel: 0141 224 2392**

Seeking the record of a family member or of others?

Submit the SAR form to the address below and include a letter of consent from the subject of the record and his/her proof of identity. If the person whose record you are seeking is deceased then you must include a letter of consent from his/her widow/widower or next-of-kin, again with their proof of identity. If you are the widow/widower or next-of-kin applying you should provide proof of death and your relationship:

**Army Personnel Centre, Historical Disclosures, Mail Point 400, Kentigern House, 65 Brown Street Glasgow, G2 8EX
Tel: 0141 224 2392**

CHRISTMAS DRAW Thanks to you we raised £3,600!



Once again the Association Christmas Draw was a great success with over £3,600 profit being made for Association Funds. Thank you for all the people who bought tickets and especially those who requested additional tickets. It is also pleasing to report that a number of individuals made donations to the Association Funds ranging from £5 to £40 when submitting their counterfoils.

The draw was made in the WO's & Sgts Mess, 23 Pnr Regt RLC on 16 Dec 05 and the winners were:

Prize	Ticket No	Name
1st - £500	13586	White
2nd - £250	15508	Vaughan
3rd - £125	34873	Smith
4th - £75	06584	Chivers
5th - £50	24583	Pote

VETERANS AWARENESS IN 2006 27th June 2006

Following the success of Veterans Awareness Week in July 2005 the Minister for Veterans at the MOD, has decided, in consultation with the ex-Service organisations, to launch a National Veterans Day. The purpose of this Day and the events that surround it is:

- To raise public awareness of the veterans' community, its diversity, its contribution and relevance to life in the UK today.
- To highlight the role of ex-Service organisations and the support and advice available to the veterans, individually and collectively, from official and voluntary sources.
- To influence and inform public opinion and to nurture qualities such as respect for veterans in the community, particularly amongst the younger generations.

This is an enormous challenge that could take many years to see tangible results. The first step in this process will be the launch of the first National Veterans Day on 27 June 2006. Although this is a national event, it is only possible for the MOD to finance and arrange an event in London. Ex-Service organisations and local communities who wish to support the initiative are asked, where possible, to arrange their own events locally to raise awareness.

What is a Veteran?

The 2006 message to veterans and the public is that a Veteran need not be elderly. The 60th commemorations of the end of WW2 left the impression that 'veterans' were of the older generation. The MOD definition of a veteran is: anyone who has served in HM Armed Forces, and includes their spouse and/or their dependants. That includes National Service. The National Veterans Day media campaign this year will seek to promote that message.

What is on in London - 27th June

The London focus of the National Veterans Day will be the Imperial War Museum (IWM) in London and the Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park which is next door. The 27th June this year marks the 150th anniversary of the awarding of the first VC and also the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the VC/GC Association. On National Veterans Day the VC/GC's will arrive at the IWM for a formal lunch. Representative standards and a military band will meet them. In the Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park there will be a veteran themed display and exhibition open throughout the day. It is hoped that VC/GC's and their guests will drop in to the Park after their lunch. Entry will be free to the public. It is envisaged that there will be a number of standing exhibits, and three marquees - one for ex-Service organisations, a refreshment tent and an educational exhibit. There will be a display by the APTC and a military Band.



ROW OVER MEDAL FOR MELAY VETERAN

Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal



Tens of thousands of British veterans of the Malayan emergency are to be allowed to receive medals from the Malaysian government commemorating their part in winning a bitter jungle campaign against communist insurgents in the 1950s and 1960s, they may not even be aware of their entitlement.

However, these veterans, the majority of whom were teenage national servicemen at the time, are then to be banned from wearing them at Armistice parades because it would contravene Foreign and Commonwealth Office rules over "foreign medals awarded for events in the distant past". The decision, taken by a special Cabinet Office committee on December 7 2005, but yet to be announced, was branded by regimental campaigners as "a Scrooge-like insult" to a generation of conscript soldiers who spent up to two years at a time fighting in Malayan jungles.

A total of 519 British troops were killed - 95 of them from Scottish regiments - in more than a decade of ambushes and skirmishes against ethnic Chinese guerrillas in some of the most inhospitable terrain on earth. Thousands more became casualties from malaria, scrub typhus, dysentery and jungle sores, as well as booby-traps and snake bites. The Malaysian government, which came into being after the defeat of the insurgency in 1966, decided over a year ago to finally honour the men who underwrote its existence and sovereignty. It offered the Pingat Jasa Malaysia medal to all Commonwealth soldiers, sailors and airmen who served and fought there during the emergency. Australia, New Zealand and Fiji, all of whom committed troops in the late 1950s, accepted the offer and submitted lists of those eligible along with details of their service records.

Britain, which at the height of the conflict had 35,000 troops in Malaya, said it would have to consider its position. In January 05, Baroness Symon, a government spokeswoman, told the House of Lords: "Her majesty's government rules preclude the acceptance and wearing of foreign medals for events in the distant past or more than five years previously. In addition, the rules do not allow for a foreign award to be accepted if a British award has been given for the same service. Eligible veterans of the emergency in Malaya should already have received the Malaya bar to their general service medals." (The "bar" is a small strip across the top of the general service award and not a medal in itself).

George Fleming, is a Belfast veteran who served on a Royal Navy warship in support of the troops ashore, and has been a leading campaigner in trying to persuade the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence to allow the award.

He said: "The government is inconsistent in its own rules. It has recently awarded medals for the 1956 Suez campaign and allowed Russian medals to be pinned on UK survivors of the Murmansk convoys in the 1940s." Brigadier Allan Alstead, who served in Malaya for three years as a young infantry officer, added: "This is not only a snub to the tens of thousands of young Britons who found themselves at war in the jungle, but also to the Malaysian government. The Malayan veterans are being victimised. This is a Scrooge-like insult which does this government no credit."

A spokesman for the FCO confirmed that "an announcement will be made in due course" after a meeting of the review committee on December 7 2005, but declined to say what decision had been reached. "The Foreign Secretary asked the committee to review the rules in the light of exceptions that had already been made and the importance of such medals to veterans. A paper was submitted to the committee and their ruling is pending."

A senior defence source said, "What we have here is classic Whitehall fudge mixed with bloody-mindedness and inflexibility. We have been told that the medals will be issued, but cannot be worn, it's like giving a child a toy at Christmas and telling him he can only play with it in the house. It's ludicrous, given the sacrifice so many made in a forgotten war."



DIVISIONAL SAAM

Pioneers valiant attempt!

OC 104 Pnr Sqn to SSM - "SSM I'd like you to do a little job for me; it would be good to put a team into the 2 Div SAAM especially as we are now producing some creditable shots. What do you think?"

SSM - "Well our last range was cancelled for the cadets and we only have two months until the SAAM. Getting ranges will be a real problem and we need to zero and practice otherwise we will be embarrassed. Plus of course the guys need to turn up and you know how that can be a problem with other commitments."

OC - "Yes. But I'd still like to have a go. If we don't get the support you can only do your best and I shan't hold you responsible!"

So started the raising and training of a Sqn team for the Div SAAM held at Catterick 23/24 Apr 05. Wisely the SSM recruited a surplus to his team which was a blessing as he personally had to take on the mantle of Team Capt on the day rather than Trainer/Manager. With plenty of personal contact and pleading the SPSI acquired a range for the weekend before the competition.

These two days were the only chance to zero and practice the format of the competition. Rather a disadvantage when the 2 Div Inf Bns had all held unit SAAMs to select their teams. Plus four of them, being Regular, had priority in booking ranges and could train during the working week. To make matters worse the five UOTCs were the only units to qualify for minor unit status. The remaining 19 teams were all counted as major units!

Prior to our range weekend we sighted weapons and undertook some intensive weapon handling practice. Come our range weekend we paraded on Friday night starting with more weapon handling - especially stoppage drills. On Saturday we were at Strensall to fire the first round down the range at 0900 hrs. There were nine of us present, which with a requirement for that number meant we had no slack in the system. The weekend was a success and we went home confident that we were ready for the Div SAAM rehearsal the next week.

The following weekend after some frenzied manning problems we were ready to go. Sadly we now had new members in the team who hadn't zeroed their weapons. However, with a little cunning we managed to zero as we progressed round the stands. On completion of the rehearsal we were confident that we would give a good account of ourselves on the SAAM.

At last THE weekend arrived and we had a team of eight, Unfortunately only half the team were zeroed due to some last minute changes in manning. On Friday night we booked in at Catterick and were briefed at 2300 hrs on the format for the weekend. Reveille was at 0500 hrs the following morning and we were firing on the first shoot at 0800 hrs. We gained our confidence on the LMG match and then moved on to the remaining six stands. Our best event was the Section Match (OPTIC) and the other team events rather than on individual shoots. The lack of zeroed weapons handicapped our individual shots. Overall we were ninth at the end of the day.

Sunday morning saw the Parachute Regiment Cup, which was an advance to contact, followed by fire and manoeuvre. This was preceded by a speed march of 500 Metres in 3 minutes just to get the breathing out of kilter. The team were seriously unimpressed when the SSM had them practicing fire and manoeuvre the night before when other teams were enjoying a well-earned beer! However it paid off and we came second in the Parachute Cup, which lifted us to fifth position overall. An excellent result in view of all the difficulties of ranges and manpower availability. The team ended on a high and are already planning for next year where they intend to start training earlier and get a better result in the SAAM.

The team consisted of: - WO2 (SSM) Smith, SSgt Dawson, Cpl Elvidge, Cpl Ovington, LCpl Corbett, LCpl Cortez, LCpl Thompson and LCpl Whitehouse. See centres for mugshots!

HONORARY COLONEL'S COMMENDATION

24371601 Private Patrick John Morley

Private Morley enlisted into the Territorial Army and Voluntary Reserve of the Royal Pioneer Corps on 6 Dec 1975, after seeing a recruitment advertisement in the Liverpool Evening Echo whilst at the barbers. He served with 34 Coy RPC until the amalgamation in April 1993, when the Royal Logistic Corps was formed. Private Morley continued as a Pioneer, and has served with 168 Pioneer Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps since its formation in 1995. Currently he is serving with 101 Pnr Sqn RLC, and has previously served with 34, and 102 Pnr Sqns RLC.

In his 30 years of service, Private Morley has taken part in a large number of camps and exercises. He has actively supported all Squadron and Regimental events and typically undertakes 80-100 training days each year. Over the years he has been on many overseas detachments. In 1997 he exercised in Denmark and in 1998, he spent 4 months in Germany working in support of the Postal & Courier Regiment. In all, he has served in the UK, Italy, Germany 7 times, Denmark 5 times, The Falkland Islands and also 42 days on Exercise ROCKY LANCE in Oman. He regularly takes part in adventure training and still has a very high level of physical fitness. On Ex PIONEER SWORD, Nov 2004, he was awarded the "Morley Cup" for best individual effort during the Commanders Challenge.

Due to his service, dedication and commitment Private Pat Morley is widely known within the RLC TA, both at Grantham and beyond. When he is not serving with the TA he is an active member of the Royal Pioneer Corps Association.

In recognition of his long service, Private Morley received his Territorial Efficiency medal in 1987 and has since earned two further clasps. In addition to these awards, to recognize his loyal service, dedication and commitment for 30 years within Pioneers and the Territorial Army, Private Morley is awarded the Honorary Colonel's Commendation.

Presentation by 168 Pnr Regt RLC Hon. Col. General Adrian Lyons CBE, Friday 23 Sep 05.

Pte Morley's Reply

"I would like to thank all the Officers and Men from 168 Pnr Regt for all the kindness they have shown me over the 30 years. I am personally sad that I have to leave the Regt. I just love the military life and I am dedicated to the Corps."

THE KING'S OWN ENEMY ALIENS

by Captain (Retired) Peter Leighton-Langer RA and RPC

This book is published by Vallentine Mitchell. The author has collated all the facts available concerning the participation in World War 2 of about 10,000 Germans and Austrians, of which he was one, in the British Forces. Although the book is comprehensive and tells, briefly, the stories of many of the participants, it cannot possibly tell everything. However it gives a pretty good picture of what happened, it tells of the Where and the How but not the Why and the Wherefore.

The Where and How are the hard facts which are recorded in the War Diaries of the many units in which they served, in Army Orders and in other documents accessible to those who know where to find them. The Why and Wherefore is not quite so easy as it concerns ideas, opinions and attitudes. These are not as definite and indisputable and are often much more vague. Nevertheless, the Why and the Wherefore are the causes of the Where and How, they came first and without them there would not have been any Where and How.

The enemy aliens who served in the British Forces were not homogeneous. The only thing they had in common at the beginning of the War was that they were classified as enemy nationals by the British authorities. A large number were Jews or people regarded as Jews by the Nazis. They were not all refugees or victims of Nazi persecution, they certainly did not have the same religion or the same opinion in politics nor did they all speak German. After the war many stayed in Britain and became good Brits, some went back to Germany (both

East and West), some to Austria and other places throughout the world. The Jewish who were persecuted accounted for about 90%, the remaining 10% had no connection with Jewry whatsoever and these were not all political refugees. Quite a few were ordinary people of enemy nationality who lived in England, others who should not be forgotten are the remains of the International Brigades who fought in the Spanish Civil War, men of the French Foreign Legion who reached Britain via Dunkirk and at a later stage of the war officers and men of the Wehrmacht who having been taken prisoner decided to throw in their lot with the British.

Pre-War British immigration policy only allowed into the country refugees who had the means to support themselves or skills which the country needed or were fortunate to have been selected for Kindertransport. The result was that most were middle class, wealthy, highly qualified or very young. Many were left wing but no political group was not represented which was the same for religious groups. However, there was one point in which they were united – their hatred for Hitler and his Nazis, they had no traitors in their ranks. The only way to oppose the Nazi rule was to leave the country and fight from outside. It is no exaggeration to say that they were in the war first and Britain became actively involved on their side on 3 September 1939. When they joined His Majesty's Forces they certainly did not change sides.

Nevertheless the attitude of the British authorities was one of suspicion, this took the whole length of the war before it was largely dispelled. This distrust was the cause of much unpleasantness. From 1939 to 1942 the denial of firearms to the soldiers of the Alien Companies of the then Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps was a permanent slight to the men and in particular the disarming of two companies which had been hurriedly armed when they were needed in front of Harfleur nearly caused a mutiny. The internment of almost all male enemy-aliens other than soldiers between the ages of sixteen and forty-five in June 1940 including the thousands who had been classified as friends of Britain by Aliens' Tribunals in the autumn of 1939 was another affront.

These early humiliations made the later ones appear negligible. These included not to permit transfers to the R Signals when the fighting units were opened to enemy aliens in 1943, the refusal of the Admiralty to grant naval commissions to Germans as distinct from Austrians and the general instruction that enemy-alien officers in the RA should only be used in India and the Far East. After six long years of war most had spent between one seventh to one third of their lives in a British environment and felt primarily British, despite the fact that they were still legally enemy aliens.

These enemy aliens had a tremendous respect and a genuine liking for the Sovereign, King George VI especially as he and the rest of his family stayed in London, the principal target area for German air attacks. He was, to them, the epitome of all that was best in Britain. It is for this reason that the author considers the name of his book "The King's Own Enemy-Aliens" to be a very real representation of the state of attachment the great majority of them felt for the person of the King. It is doubted that he had any more loyal subjects than them.



< Captain (Retired)
Peter Leighton-Langer
December 1941,
serving in the
Pioneer Corps,
Ilfracombe.



LOST TRAILS

The following are trying to re-establish contact with members. If no contact details are shown contact through the Association

JOSEPH IRVINE (129 Company)

My father was killed on the 24th December 1944 in Belgium. His Coy diary for this period reads as follows: 6 Dec 44 HQ & 5 Sections moved to Tilburg RE Stores. 5 Sections at S'hertogen-bosch training 25 Dec 44 All sections confined to camp and Xmas passed quickly - ready to take up defensive positions.

Although my father was killed on the 24th Dec the diaries do not show it, he is buried in Wilruk Hoboken Schoonsel-Hof Antwerp. My mother died a year later (1945) and since I was only 9 years old, I only have vague memories of his reported death. However, I believe he and his comrades were bombed near water and their bodies were not recovered until 5 Jan 45. If anyone can fill in the blanks please contact me on 0287 1263189, John Irvine.

CPL FRANK PAINE

My late father was, on his returning from N/Africa, posted to a Italian p.o.w camp at Haydock near Wigan, Lancs, would anyone remember him or this camp? I was, as a five year old taken to see him at this camp, I was amazed to see all these men behind the wire fences with these strange yellow? circles on their knees. Also, does anyone remember a documentary two or three years ago on t.v the theme was of "enemy aliens" joining the ranks of the British Army, one part of this documentary featured the Pioneer Corps the commentator went on to say "It's not uncommon in the British Army today to hear names like Gooldborg, Schultz and Blumberg especially here in this Pioneer Company." It goes on to show an officer inspecting new recruits most of which were Jewish, and there with the officer was my father Cpl Paine. Would anyone remember the title of the documentary and date televised and what channel. Kind regards, fran3258@hotmail.com

STONE

On behalf of my father I would like to find anyone who served with him in the Pioneer Corps from 1952-1954. His name is Reginald Stone ("Reg" "Stoney"). He was a private with 251 company based at Malborough Farm Camp, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. My dad (who is now 72 and living in Essex) is not sure of firstnames but some of the mates and officers surnames he remembers are: "Kinky" "Lawless" "Petaway" "Ronnie Twyner (Twyler)" Sgnt Ryan, Capt Brown, Capt Brennan, Capt Kyler, Capt Leach, Sgt English.

He tells me loads of stories and even some of the camp's ghost stories!! And also about some his mates who went to Korea and sadly never came back. It would be great to put him in touch with anyone who remembers him or some of

his mates from those days when he served his national service. Steven Stone (Son)
youngstone@supanet.com



BARRATT, ANDY

Hi my name is Andy Barratt and I was an ex pioneer with 170 Coy RPC, I am trying to stay in contact with the RPC old boys as I now live in New Zealand. If anyone remembers me please drop a line to barmybarratts@xtra.co.nz

NEAL, JOHN

I served at Hermitage Camp Wrexham and am trying to contact ex members of the Corps shown in the photograph below, they are I to r:

Ernie Tuck from Billingham, Geo (Dave) Price from London, Ron Smith from Norfolk, myself and Dave Pegler also from London. Since this photograph appeared in the British Legion magazine I have 3 replies from members who served at Wrexham but unfortunately none from those in the photograph. Contact J Neal, Wild Cherry Cottage, 6 Redricks Lane, Sawbridge, Herts, CM21 ORL.



BANKS, GARRY

Hello I'm trying to find some old pals of my cousin he served with the dog Sect in Cyprus with 9 Sig Regt from 1975 to 1977, his name was Garry Banks (ginge) if you could help I would be very grateful and it would make our gazzas day many thanks Shaun Banks ex RCT. Please contact: shaun213@tiscali.co.uk

HADDOW, WILLIAM JOHN

I am trying to trace this person last known in Bishop Stortford in 1940. Please contact Gregory Davies: g Davies14@tiscali.co.uk

CUTHBERTSON

I am trying to trace a member of the RPC who I served with in Salalah and Aden in 1967. I can't remember his first name, we called him Cubby and his last name was Cuthbertson. I think he came from Glasgow. I was in 17 Port & Maritime Regt and Cubby served 3 months with me on landing craft. Please contact Bill Lorimer: blorimer@bulldoghome.com

RADWINTER

is in Essex about 5 miles from Saffron Walden. The village history recorder, Mr M Southgate, is trying to contact members of the Corps who served there in World War 2 especially those who helped to build the camp. Contact tel no is 01799 599478.

WARD, PETE

Served in 206 Coy (was in boxing team) in the 60s and 70s. Any information please contact Jimmy Fallon on bravo2zoro@btinternet.com and Mick Bickerdyke on mickBick1@aol.com

EDWARDS, JOE

Used to live in Essex, possibly Baintree, and believed to have returned there following discharge. Contact Mick Bickerdyke on mickBick1@aol.com

CUMBER PARK

The Cumber Park Historical Society is trying to contact personnel who served there during World War 2 with 24 ASD. It is believed that the following units were there during the war 78, 160, 310, 572 and 617 (Italian PW) If you can help please contact jillbeckett@talisman.fsworld.co.uk

CAPT G HILL

I am attempting to locate an old school and ATC friend who also served in the Pioneer Corps. He was last known to be a Captain in about 1967 and his last known posting was Bicester. His name is Geoffrey HILL d.o.b November 1942 and he originates from Anlaby, East Yorkshire. My name is Michael TINDLE and can be contacted via metindle@dialstart.net

JOHNSON, SAMMY

I am trying to find an old buddy, he served in Lisburn in 75/76, then 518 Coy followed by C Coy HQ Rheindahlen Garrison where I served with him. He then returned to 518 before going to 187 Coy at Tidworth where I last saw him. He was a good footballer and his wife is half German so it is possible that he now lives in Germany. Contact Danny Thompson via dj.thompson54@ntlworld.com

CPL JUSTIN KITT (KITTY)

I'm trying to trace anyone who knew my son. He joined 23 PNR Minden Platoon B Coy in 1989. Sadly he died in February and I would like to get in touch with any of his friends. Contact: wendybowden@blueyonder.co.uk

BISHOP, HARRY

Is trying to locate members of the Corps with whom he served especially those in the phot below of No 7 Section II platoon taken at RPC Depot & Trg Centre in 1953. Contact HL Bishop, 8 Grovenor St, Southsea, Portsmouth, PO5 4JG.



LAST POST

It is with sadness that we have to report the following deaths

W A Taylor (Pte)	11 Oct 05	Cambridge (Ex 44 Salvage Unit and 314 Coy 41-45)	Mr LJ Batchelor (Pte)	Dec 05	
Maj N Ashton	14 May 05	Rugby	Mr JF Walker (Pte) (aged 76)	25 Oct 05	
H G Male (Pte)	July 2005		Richard Harrison-Mileham	12 Jul 05	A driver radio operator with 34 (Headquarters) Squadron, 168 Pioneer Regiment.
R McAlley (Cpl)	6 Oct 05		Mr John Perry (Cpl)	8 Feb 06	RTA Bicester, Cpl 521 Coy, Aged 53
Mr J Turner (Pte)	02 Aug 05	Glasgow	Col PE Marot MBE	20 Dec 05	Sherrington, Oxon
Mr K Morris (Pte) (aged 50)	19 Sept 05	Newcastle Upon Tyne	Kitt J (ex Cpl) (aged 35)	14 Feb 06	Kettering, Northants
Mr C Lindsay (Pte)	2002	Dublin			
Mr JS Rodgers (Pte)	11 Sep 05	Crewe			
Mr W Swain (Pte) (aged 71)	6 Oct 05	Sutton Coldfield			
Mr J Houghton (Pte)	18 Oct 05	Wigan			

OBITUARY - Colonel P E 'Steve' Marot MBE 18 January 1922 - 20 December 2005

The 12th of 13 children, Pierre Etienne Marot was born on 18 January 1922, to Lucien Marot and the Countess Irene de Maudave. Leaving Mauritius at aged 18 to enter the Army he enjoyed a highly eventful life through to the very end. His life was shaped and moulded by 2 influences: a long and distinguished military career and the closest of families.

Steve, as he was known as long as anyone in the Corps can remember, started his varied military career in February 1942 in the Royal Artillery and after serving three years with The 6th Kings African Rifles and the East Lancashire Regiment in Madagascar, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Mauritius he was commissioned into the Royal Pioneer Corps in April 1946. His 35 years of soldiering saw him serving in 3 main areas: the Middle East, UK and Germany and in all of these places he imposed his very special personality and brand of humour on those with whom he came into contact, whether on duty or relaxing.

In his early Middle East days, his infectious optimism as Adjutant of 84 Group in Palestine restored many a pessimistic or apathetic soul to cheerful endeavour however his efforts were rewarded with being both wounded and Mentioned in Despatches in 1948 - as well as renaming as 'Steve' because no one could pronounce his name easily.

In 1948 he returned to the Canal Zone and was promoted t/Major at the age of 26, to Command 2046 Mauritian Guard Company at Fayid and later became OC Training Wing at the RPC Depot in Kabrit until 1954 when he joined 260 Company at Basingstoke and served as a Company Officer and with AER Training Camps at Overton-on-Dee. After a tour in BAOR as OIC 46 Detachment PCLU in Monchen-Gladbach and Supervisory Major in Düsseldorf, he again rejoined 260 Company on the Fylingdale Ranges near Scarborough. His drive and enthusiasm in his Scarborough and Weedon days were more than instrumental in maintaining remarkable standards of morale in the ebb and flow of National Service reinforcements.

Another tour in BAOR as OC 4 PCLU was to follow before attending the Long

Course in Personnel Management in 1963 at the Royal College of Science and Technology, now known as Strathclyde University. This was followed by yet another tour from 1964-66 as DADPL Middle East Command, in that bloody conflict that was Aden. His industriousness in the face of daunting difficulty and his ability to surmount any obstacle within his compass was recognised by the award of the MBE before leaving Aden in 1966 at the end of his many years of service in the Middle East. Being honoured with the MBE was particularly special to him as he was intensely proud of being British!! He then assumed the appointment of 2IC Training Centre, when he became involved in the re-grouping of the RPCT& AVR.

Promoted Lt Col in December 1967 he proceeded once again to Germany, as ADPL HQ BAOR, a post he held for two years following which he assumed Command of 13 PCL Group at HQ 1 (BR) Corps. His later appointments as CO 13 Gp and as ADP at HQ BOAR provided him with the opportunity, which he readily seized to prepare for the tasks which were to become his lot, of not only DPL but also as Delegated Military Representative for the Commander in Chief in dealings with the newly formed Highest Level Works Council and on their excursion into new found pastures of power. It was from this post that he retired in 1977.

From 1979 to 1984 he continued in industrial relations by returning to Mauritius where he was the Personnel Manager for a large heavy engineering company. He finally retired back to his house and family in Oxfordshire.

Although soldiering was a career and life of which he was justifiably proud, his real love and passion started in 1956 having met Gwen whilst stationed in North Wales. Four sons and eight grandchildren later, no one can say that he has not continued the Marot tradition of large families! It is for his qualities as the head of this close knit family that he will most clearly be remembered. His humour, fun, generosity, Christianity and moral values; as well as his capacity for friendship, love of life, ability to have fun and laugh; along with an enduring taste for golf, curry, Pink Gin, snooker, quality food, good whisky and "un petit Calvados" are all attributes that are easily brought to mind when thinking of Steve Marot!

He had a real ability to touch people's lives, one way or another, and all that met him will miss him. He believed that his lasting legacy is his children and grandchildren. Steve Marot was always larger than life and great fun; he would want to be remembered for his anecdotes with affection, to remember his values with commitment to embrace them and to remember his humour without 'taking the Mickey' out of his accent!





THE ROYAL PIONEER CORPS ASSOCIATION

59th PAST AND PRESENT OFFICERS' DINNER - 14 OCTOBER 2006

