

The Crossed Quills

Issue 4

August 2000

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FOREWORD

By Major General Mike Shellard CBE, Honorary President

Last winter the Adjutant General, Sir Alex Harley, was due to join us at the Annual Dinner *Sadly, duties in Bosnia and Kosovo got in the way - but he sent us an appropriate message which I was able to deliver to those present.

In particular, he said:

"Comradeship is admirable, whatever form it takes. In an Association like yours, where two organisations, the Adjutant General's Corps and the Royal Regiment of Artillery are able to come together in friendship and mutual support, it is particularly praiseworthy."

This is the theme that we should all adhere to during all our dealings within our Association, and given General Harley's next appointment - I'm not saying, but you will surely know by now - it is a theme which will remain of equal importance in the future.

I hope to see as many of you as possible at our next dinner on 31st March. It is always great fun, and the more who come the merrier it will be.

Please also support the dedication of our Standard at Larkhill on St Barbara's Day - more details elsewhere in this edition.

With best wishes to you all.

Mike Seward

Chairman's Notes by Lt Col Joe Falzon

Welcome to Edition 4 of our Newsletter - I know you will find lots of useful information about our Association in this bumper issue. You will not be surprised to hear that this is quite a mammoth undertaking for the Committee as production blossoms into reproduction and then flows to distribution. But we all feel strongly that even in this electronic age The Crossed Quills is a vital link to our members worldwide.

Communications, as well as comradeship and mutual support, is a vital ingredient to our continued success. With that in mind I would like to draw to your attention to our own website - just visit www.artyclerk.fsnet.co.uk and you will see what I mean.

With every best wish.

Joe Falzon



It is hard to believe a year has passed since I last put pen to paper. My year has flown by, having begun a new job, attended a couple of courses, trained for and deployed to Bosnia returning in March. After the medal parade and a short break, (I had a three week holiday in Florida in May/June) it's back to the grind in Abingdon. I am very grateful to Mel for standing in for me for the duration of my absence in addition, yet again, to organising this year's Dinner. May I take this opportunity in thanking him on your behalf for this year's customary superb arrangements.

Although I would have liked to have made the Dinner, I found it difficult to justify another weekend away from my family so soon after my return from Bosnia. It was heartening to hear that so many of you were able to attend though. Mel showed me the photograph and I must confess to feeling a little left out - it's a good one to be on with the south arch in the background. There is nothing on the horizon that is likely to prevent me from attending next year.

You may be interested to know that the Association was and is in force in Bosnia. I met Bob Smith who was UNICOM's Mr Fixit out there and it wasn't until we got talking that we managed to solve a long standing

conundrum. The name Gillespie-Smith had come up in conversation between Mel and I when trying to track down membership leads. It transpires that Bob was formerly Gillespie-Smith and had reverted back to Smith in recent years - problem solved. It was good to see his face on this year's photograph.

It was good also to see Paul Mudd and 'Alf' Alvin in my final week out there, particularly as they were taking over from us in Sipovo. I hope their tour goes as quickly as mine did and they return safely in September or sooner. At least theirs is a summer tour and they won't be 'staggering on' on Christmas Eve at temperatures of minus twenty!

Having returned to Regimental Duty after over five years at 'staff' (a couple of months after transfer to the AGC), I was a little concerned about the changes I would see. I needn't have worried. Unit administration is the same as it has always been - we use different tools and the manning has changed slightly but essentially there are no surprises. The main difference is of course the loss of the Regimental Chief Clerk post and resultant balance of knowledge shifting from RHQ to the RAO. What does please me though is the quality of people in my Detachment. For most of them, particularly the youngsters, the Bosnia tour was their first and they performed admirably under what turned

out to be very difficult circumstances. In most occupations the enjoyment factor is governed chiefly by the team around you and I consider myself particularly fortunate in that respect.

Some general points now. Plans are afoot to have our branch standard consecrated this year at Larkhill on St Barbara's Day in December. Keep an eye out in Gunner/Soldier magazines for further details or visit our very own web site www.artyclerk.fsnet.co.uk/. We are indebted to Dave Stotan for taking the time and trouble to create it and encourage our members to use it for passing messages and information.

Turning to the future and I must make a plea. It is my intention to resign as Secretary at the next AGM and I seek a replacement. Although I have recently engineered another extension until 2003, my academic aspirations will preclude me from giving the Association the attention it deserves. I have enjoyed playing a part in the creation of our 'Club' but must now stand aside and let someone else have a crack. If you think you are the right person for the job then please let us know as soon as possible so your nomination can go forward. In the meantime 'Ubique'.

Mark Testi

Artillery Clerks' Association Branch Membership as at 1st August 2000 (in alphabetical order)

*Alf Alvin
Richard Ancliffe
Al Artley
John (Black Hat) Baik
Brian Bailey
Pip Bailey
Brian Bassett
Taff Bellis
Chris Berry
Martin Birch
Dave Boulton
Denis Brett
Graham Brown
Phil Buckingham
Martin Butler*

*Steve Callaghan
Charles Camies
Iain Campbell
Walter Carney
Mel Charlton
Rob Clarke
Lawrence Collingwood
Ian Constantine
Paul Corker
Bob Cowan
Kev Crump
Dave Cussell
Jim Cussell
Colin Davidson*

*Steve Davies
Bob Day
Roy Deal
John Dewberry
Ray Dickinson
John Dixon
Jim Doran
Paddy Ennis
Ted Fairbrass
Joe Falzon
Foxy Fox
Jim Findlay
Ron Flemmings
Terry Foster
Chris Freeman*

Branch Members List - *continued*

Eric Frost
Mark Gaines
Martin Geddes
Gerry Gipson
Ian Grant
Mick Grenham
Ian Groom
John Haddock
Ted Hall
'H' Hammond
Steve Hawke
Phil Headford
William Henry
Marty Hester
Alan Hill
Geordie Himlin
Ron Holmes
Vic Holdaway
Paddy Hope
Richard Horner
Mick Hutchinson
Geoff Hyatt
Geoff Janik
Dick Jeavons
Bill Johnson
Mick Johnston
Andrew Jones
Fred Jones
Derek Kelsey
Clive Knaggs
Brian Leadbetter
Russ Lee
Ray Lewis
Bob Lewney
Alan Lowthian
Leo Lyall
Dave Manchester
Tommy McCarthy
John McDermott
George McKinnell
Paul McMahon
James McNamara
Adam Martin
Tim Matthews
Tresh Matthews
Martin Meek
Brian Morgan
Ted Morgan
Bill Morland
Andy Moss
Paul Mudd
Richard Nichol
Dennis Norris

Clive Nuttal
Nick Perkovic
Dennis Phillipson
Chris Piper
Eddie Platts
Jim Pottle
Steve Prowse
Derek Ralphs
Steve Read
John Reynolds
Ian Ridge
Neil Ridout
Des Riley
Jim Roast
Brian Rose
Alex Ross
Arthur Rowell
Andrew Salmon
Alan Sawdon
Vince Scott
Steve Seymour
Mike Shellard
Sid Siddall
Tony Skinner
Bob Smith
Dave Smith
Snowy Snowden
Phil Spencer
Mark Spring
Trevor Spurr
Dave Stotan
Dave Straw
Andy Sykes
John Taylor
Mark Testi
Andy Tibble
Gordon Timmis
Trig Tregower
Frank Trimby
Steve Truslove
Gary Tyson
Pat Verdon
Dick Walmsley
William Wallace
Daz Ward
Ron Waterfield
Duggie Waterhouse
Tom Webb
Andy West
Alan Witts
Woody Wood
John 'Yogi' Yeowell
Bill Young

Ode to the Artillery Clerks
(Millenium Edition)

In April you will find each year
At Woolwich they gather for more good cheer
It's time again to make their mark
At the annual reunion of the Artillery Clerk

They've been around since 1903
Their past is there for all to see
Filing and typing 'til fingers were sore
All those years for the Officer Corps

Ninety years, they served with distinction
The AG Corps saw their extinction
It was 1993 and the end had arrived
As good men's ambitions were sadly deprived

Ambition was something they didn't lack
Though now they could never be a SMAC
So follow on with the admin' tradition
Green beret and badge and a new position

Some left the Army or changed their trade
Some worked with numbers to make a new grade
Others saw it as a brand new goal
As into it went their heart and soul

Chief Clerk no more but RAOWO
Not quite the same for the old CO
He remembered the time when Chief knew it all
The oracle of knowledge, always on call

But the RAO concept was gathering pace
With ex arty clerks at the coal face
And admin's the same wherever you go
PAMPAS now UNICOM, shame it's so slow

Despite this new era you can still be
At Woolwich each April a reunion AC
With tales to tell at the bar leaning
The one about Geordie Corker's dry cleaning

Our Chelsea Pensioner's, everyone a star
With Dougie Waterhouse last at the bar
Other ACs have been a pretender
But only Bob Cowan's been a true contender

1998 and the Association is here
Two years on and the message is clear
Join our ACs for wine, dinner and company
And carry on old traditions into a new century

By WO1 (SSM) R M Testi AGC (SPS)

TREASURERS REPORT 2000 – by Capt Paul Corker

General

As we move into the year 2000, as treasurer it gives me great pleasure to report to all members that the account is healthy and we are growing financially stronger as does the association. I have kept the members of the committee from spending our funds; but seriously a strong bank account may be good for the bank manager however, the committee would like to see the monies we have at our disposal going to worthy causes. So if there are any good ideas out there please don't hesitate to contact me or raise them at the next AGM.

Statement of Account – 31st July 2000: The statement of account as at 31 July 2000 is as follows:

ASSETS

Current Bank Balance - £1709:28
Deposit Bank Balance - £ 116:47
Shop Stock - £ 170:00

Total Assets (A) - £1995:75

LIABILITIES

Function - £1200:43

Total Liabilities (B) - £1200:43

AVAILABLE CASH (A – B) - £ 795:32

Matters Arising – Treasurer's Letter

I have included with this newsletter my letter informing those members who are not paying their annual subscriptions by cheque and those outstanding their 2000 subscriptions. Please do not take the letter personally, at the time of writing I appeared on both accounts. I have enclosed a copy of the mandate and a check on your January 2001 bank statement will confirm if you are subscribing by mandate. If not, please complete the mandate and pass it to **YOUR** own bank. For interest the following statistics are given:

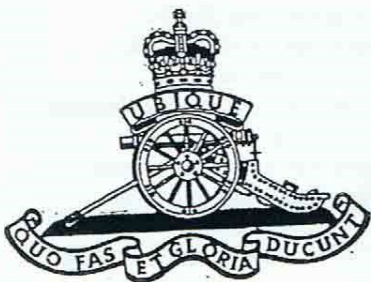
Mandate Subscription - 69 members
Outstanding Subscriptions - 72 members

Welfare Report by Mr Ted Morgan

Although I have had many calls over the last year, most of them were for general advice. However two cases of ex Acs needing special help are of note. The first case was of a family where the husband had looked after his chronically sick wife for over 10 years without outside help and without a break. We arranged separate holidays for them in ex Service holiday accommodation for two weeks each, everything found. The second was of an ex AC who has chronic lung problems (30 years of fags over an Imperial and carbon paper fumes from lighting fires on exercise) who needed a stannah type chairlift to get upstairs to bed and toilet need. Having been advised by his local NHS that there was at least a 2 year waiting list once prescribed – we had the chairlift installed and working within 3 weeks! A huge debt of gratitude must go to Major George Correa, Secretary of the RA Benevolent Fund, who sorted out both cases within 48 hours of receiving our appeal for assistance. I hear that George is being made redundant in the New Year; he will be an tremendous loss to the Ex Service community; I wish to thank him publicly for the help he has selflessly given.

Please bear in mind that all cases enquiries I receive are treated in absolute confidence. If I can be of assistance to any serving or retired AC with any of my hats on as an active member of the Regular Force Employment Association, SSAFA Forces Help or indeed our own Association, please give me a ring on Derby 01332 371217 or at home on 01332 678418.

With every best wish..... Ted Morgan



Reunion Secretary's Notes

On promotion to Sgt (AC) back in April 1974 I was excited and somewhat proud at the prospect of attending the Annual Artillery Clerks' Reunion at Woolwich. About a month later I was attending my first BAOR Reunion Dinner at Lubbecke, Germany. The Dinner was arranged by Ray Dickinson MBE, who at the time was the WO1 (SMAC) at HQRA 2 Div. On arrival at Lubbecke, Ray informed me that I was Mr Vice. For anyone who knows Ray, I was briefed as to the exact words I was to say, and no deviation! Needless to say, I was so concerned about getting it correct, that I had problems with my appetite. I made up for it afterwards joining Ken May at his table for some liquid refreshment. Ken was the Asst Chief Clerk of 22 Lt AD Regt when I was the Bdr Documents Clk. Our Chief Clerk, Bill Morland, had kept us both on the straight and narrow. Fortunately my Artillery Clerk grounding had been firmly put in place by a Dickinson/Morland (no mess around) combination, for which I am eternally grateful.

Enough of the reminiscing - back to the present year. Welcome back to our Secretary Mark Testi after his Bosnia tour. For those of you who are in receipt or able to get hold of a copy of the Gunner magazine, will have had the opportunity of reading details of the 66th (Millennium) Reunion held at Woolwich on Saturday 8th April. The Gunner article is reproduced at page , with a special afternote! This year it was good to see the many new and old faces appearing. The gasps could be heard as Messrs John Taylor and Paddy Hope entered the Mess. 66 members sat down for Dinner (which included 2 guests), 3 never turned up and 52 apologies were received. From a membership of 150.....I rest my case! Major (Retd) John Reynolds is especially thanked for traveling all the way from Canada to attend the Dinner. Lawrence Collingwood is thanked for donating £30 and Andrew Salmon £20 towards the Reunion Dinner. Paul Davies who had to cancel due to torn ligaments is also thanked for donating his £30. Paul McMahon is forgiven for not making it past the soup, plus I am still looking for the individual who was sick in the transit block loo and never cleaned it up!

It would be nice to see more members make the effort to attend Reunion Dinners, although I appreciate that there are those who would like to attend, but unfortunately can't due to ill health. One or two more messages from individuals who cannot attend would also be appreciated!

The Committee has decided that the 67th Reunion will be held on Saturday 31st March 2001. I shall be writing to you all separately in due course with further details. This will give us all a bit of a breathing space before Easter. My soldiering days come to an end on the 17th July next year, therefore this will be my last Reunion Dinner in my capacity as Reunion Secretary. The Committee are now looking for a serving WO1 to take my place..... any volunteers??

Mel Charlton

This copy of the Gunner Grace was kindly sent to the Reunion Secretary by Bill Morland and was read out by Richard Ancliffe prior to members sitting down for the Reunion Dinner:

The Gunner Grace

*Thank you Lord for food and Friend
Thanks to those on whom we depend
Thanks for Service, Thanks for Food,
Thanks for those that set the mood.
We thank you Lord from high to low,
That in Your service we may grow.
From those in charge, to Battery Runners,
We Thank you, Lord,*

God Bless The Gunners

ARMY NUMBERS

The following Association members are requested to inform the Secretary Mark Testi of their army or previous service numbers:

*John Baik, Brian Bailey, Pip Bailey, Taff Bellis,
Phillip Buckingham, John Dixon, Jim Findlay,
Ron Flemmings, Terry Foster, Martin Geddes,
Bill Morland, Clive Nuttall, Dennis Phillipson,
Neil Ridout, Alex Ross, Brian Rose, Vince Scott,
Steve Seymour, Trevor Spurr, Dave Stotan, Ron
Waterfield, Andy West, Woody Wood, John
Yeowell,*

Thank you

The Legend of St. Barbara
The Patron Saint of Artillerymen

According to legend, Saint Barbara was the extremely beautiful daughter of a wealthy heathen named Dioscorus, who lived near Nicomedia in Asia Minor. Because of her singular beauty and fearful that she be demanded in marriage and taken away from him, he jealously shut her up in a tower to protect her from the outside world.

Shortly before embarking on a journey, he commissioned a sumptuous bathhouse to be built for her, approving the design before he departed. Barbara had heard of the teachings of Christ, and while her father was gone spent much time in contemplation. From the windows of her tower she looked out upon the surrounding countryside and marvelled at the growing things; the trees, the animals and the people. She decided that all these must be part of a master plan, and that the idols of wood and stone worshipped by her parents must be condemned as false.

Gradually she came to accept the Christian faith. As her belief became firm, she directed that the builders redesign the bathhouse her father had planned, adding another window so that the three windows might symbolize the Holy Trinity. When her father returned, he was enraged at the changes and infuriated when Barbara acknowledged that she was a Christian. He dragged her before the prefect of the province, who decreed that she be tortured and put to death by beheading. Dioscorus himself carried out the death sentence. On his way home he was struck by lightning and his body consumed.

Saint Barbara lived and died about the year 300 A.D. She was venerated as early as the seventh century. The legend of the lightning bolt which struck down her persecutor caused her to be regarded as the patron saint in time of danger from thunderstorms, fires and sudden death.

When gunpowder made its appearance in the Western world, Saint Barbara was invoked for aid against accidents resulting from explosions - since some of the earlier artillery pieces often blew up instead of firing their projectile, Saint Barbara became the patroness of the artillerymen.

Saint Barbara is usually represented standing by a tower with three windows, carrying the palm of a martyr in her hand. Often, too, she holds a chalice and a sacramental wafer and sometimes cannons are displayed near her.

In the UK, the feast of Saint Barbara is celebrated on December 5th and is traditionally recognised by many branches holding a Church Parade on the closest Sunday to the 5th, some Regiments and Association branches hold a formal dinner

Artillery Clerks' Association Tie

What tie do you wear on a Friday?? The Association tie is available from Des Riley at a cost of £10.00. The ties are of a silk/polyester quality, of zig zag design depicting crossed quills and 'AC' in gold. Send your cheque made payable to 'Artillery Clerks' Association' to:

WO1(SSM) D A Riley AGC(SPS)
21 Engr Regt
BFPO 36

**66th (MILLENNIUM) ARTILLERY
CLERKS' REUNION AND
ASSOCIATION DINNER**

SATURDAY 8TH APRIL 2000

Friday night, in a brighter month of April, saw the arrival of the advance party in Woolwich, for the Artillery Clerks' Reunion in the RA Sgts' Mess bar. Prior to the Reunion Dinner on the Saturday night, an AGM, chaired by Lt Col Joe Falzon was held. Following the AGM, members assembled on the Front Parade to await the arrival of the Hon President Maj Gen Mike Shellard and guest WO 1 (RASM) Chass Broadfoot. A Reunion photograph was taken.

An HAC trumpeter sounded and the Reunion Dinner commenced chaired by the Reunion Secretary WO 1 Mel Charlton. Members sat down to a most excellent meal prepared by the WO2 (RCWO) Joe Bailey and Mr Dennis Angus. The evening was orchestrated under the very professional care of the Mess Manager, Mrs Mary Faulkner, assisted by Mrs Cindy Baker, plus all the ladies and staff. The Brass Quintet of the HAC provided excellent entertainment during the meal, including a rendition of the post horn gallop.

After 'ease springs' the Reunion Secretary gave a hearty welcome to attending members and thanked them for supporting the Reunion and Association Dinner. Thanks were given to those who had travelled great distances, in particular to Maj (Retd) John Reynolds from Canada. The Reunion Secretary explained the absence of a Guest of Honour. Unfortunately the Adjutant General, Gen Sir Alex Harley had to cancel and it was too late to organise another Guest of Honour. The senior guest WO1 (RASM) Chass Broadfoot was welcomed along with WO2 (SQMS) Paul Blythe, the Chief Clerk of our affiliated Regiment, 16 Regt RA.

The unfortunate deaths of former WO1 (SMAC) Tug Wilson and former SSgt (AC) Ches Allen were reported and a toast was taken in their honour. 52 greetings and apologies were read out from the UK and as

far afield as the USA, Germany, France, Cyprus, Riyadh in the Middle East and Belize in Central America, indicating the universal spread of the Association. A toast was given to absent friends.

Congratulations went to Maj Richard Horner for the award of the MBE in the New Years Honours List. Further congratulations went to those recently selected for promotion, Ian Campbell and Chris Piper to WO1, Andy Moss and Gary Tyson to WO2 and Tresh Matthews to SSgt. Mention was made that the Association now has its own padre in the form of Rev (former SSgt (AC)) Denis Brett.

£50.00 worth of raffle tickets had been purchased for the RAA Draw and each member of the Association had been allocated one ticket. The Reunion Secretary stated that it was unfortunate because he held all the counterfoils.

During Dinner, WO1 (RASM) Chass Broadfoot was presented. He gave a most informative "State of the Union" report. The RASM is once again thanked for making our Reunion one of his own official functions, thereby providing a most substantial saving to those in attendance.

The Honorary President, Maj Gen Mike Shellard was presented in the form of an unexpected resume of his career. He read out a message from the Adjutant General, Gen Sir Alex Harley that read, "I am very sorry not to be able to Join you this evening. I should have enjoyed the event, I'm sure, both as Adjutant General and as a Gunner. I was delighted therefore, to have the opportunity to send a message to you through your President. Comradeship is admirable, whatever form it takes. In an Association like yours, where two organisations, the Adjutant General's Corps and The

Royal Regiment of Artillery are able to come together in friendship and mutual support, it is particularly praiseworthy. Throughout my career I have been indebted to the skill, organisation skills, sense of humour, and devotion of the RA Clerks - whether on operations, exercises or in barracks. The stories from the past, and the current experiences of serving members will act as the cement to bind the constituent parts of the Association together, and I hope and believe that tonight will prove to be another such occasion. May I offer my congratulations to Colonel Falzon and his Committee and especially Mr Charlton for his hard work in arranging the evening. I send you my best wishes for the evening, the coming year, and the new Millennium. Long may the Association flourish!"

In closing, the Reunion Secretary stated that an Association to be proud of had been established, with 150 members (now 151). Membership since the previous Reunion had increased by 39 members. There were still a lot of eligible personnel waiting to be recruited into the Association, and openly challenged all members to recruit one member before we met again next year, and not to just sit and wait for the next Association magazine, or the next Reunion notification. Sgt Richard Nichol was thanked for his idea of advertising the Association via UNICOM, which resulted in the recruitment of several new members.

Members were reminded of the St Barbara's Day Church Parade at Larkhill in December, where it was hoped to have the Association Standard dedicated.

The 66th (Millennium) Reunion and Association Dinner continued into the early hours of Sunday morning, in the Ayre's Lounge. Perhaps a gallant mention should be made of the individuals who never made it to bed, who else but In Pensioner Duggie Waterhouse, accompanied by an RAO and a SSgt who's names just slip the memory!

(Afternote which did not appear in GUNNER- it was COWAN and PERKOVIC who led poor Duggie Waterhouse astray!! and don't forget IP George McKinnell, he was there as well).

Soldiered On

Impassioned, mad with rhetoric,
the drilling Sergeant shouts -
'Get sorted-out, or I'll pass out,
you shower of silly louts'

Dispassionate; he's quite at ease,
the Quartermaster croaks -
'I cannot give you anything;
I'm very sorry, blokes'

Rational and meticulous
the Battery Commander speaks -
'We have to stay on here, dear boys,
for hours and days and weeks'

Emotional yet grandiloquent
our General proudly glares,
and gives us back with confidence
his loyal, hopeful stares

Now battles done and victory won.
Get mounted for the last time;
take post no more, that far-off shore
we shall see in our lifetimes.

991855 Rowell. AH (Bap.)
Once a Gunner always a Gunner