

The Beachley Old Boys' Association Newsletter

Beachley Echoes

Edition No.7 - May 2001



BOBA Reunion September 2000 : Another Winner

The Millenium Reunion of BOBA was held at the Old Course Hotel, Chepstow over the weekend of 15th to 17th September. It was another great success .

Many people give their time freely to supporting the Association. Their efforts mean that 'New' BOBA continues to flourish and build on its many achievements. The Executive Committee oversees the arrangements for the annual Reunion but much of the detailed planning of the weekend, including all liaison with the hotel, is the work of Peter Burrridge 43B. He has done a superb job for members since 'New BOBA' got underway. Please shake Peter's hand at this year's Reunion. He deserves it.

A full report of the 2000 Reunion can be found overleaf.



Peter Burrridge

Remembrance Day November 2000 : Beachley Veterans out in force!



BOBA provided two separate contingents at **Royal British Legion Remembrance Day** parades on 12th November last year. Twenty five veterans represented the Association at the Cenotaph in Whitehall while a further eight Beachley boys were on parade in Chepstow.

Full reports from our President, Colonel Alan Holman and Historian, Ron Marie are at pages 5 and 16. The photograph shows Ron proudly displaying the BOBA standard on parade day in Chepstow.

Sadly **Brigadier W M R Addison**, Commandant of AA College in the early 1980s and recent past President of BOBA died in December last. An obituary appears at page 20.

Captain George Crump, Beachley Education lecturer for more than thirty years and Cross - Country officer for much of that time also died last year. Please see his obituary at page 21.

ENCLOSED : APPLICATION FORMS FOR THE REUNION 14/15/16th SEPTEMBER 2001

Please note that numbers for the Reunion Dinner may have to be limited in the event of high demand. Book early to avoid disappointment.

BOBA REUNION 2000

Yet again the third weekend in September brought the Beachley boys back to the Old Course Hotel, Chepstow for the Millennium Reunion. Back in numbers, the members and guests had a great weekend as the hotel staff again provided excellent service and a fine Reunion Dinner. The petrol crisis proved no obstacle to most of the faithful, although a few were unable to make it.

It was the 50th anniversary for the 50 Groups, who though not as plentiful as some previous anniversary intakes, still made their mark.

As in previous years, the hotel staff joined in the fun and rather strange versions of 'mixed dress' were displayed over the weekend.

Again the weekend followed the established three day format from Friday afternoon registration through to dispersal after lunch on Sunday. The thoughts of staging the September Reunion at a holiday camp seem to have at last been put to rest.

The Friday Social & Supper

Friday night, the 15th, saw the hotel packed to the gills as everyone picked up where they left off last year. The bar was full, the food was hot and palatable and Geoff George belted it out on keyboards, guitar and vocal upstairs till the early hours. An official tally for the night was 101 members and 36 ladies - although surely this understates things a bit!

Plenty to do on Saturday

Saturday morning again saw the displays organised by our Historian Ron Maric and Anne Rainsbury from Chepstow Museum. These are improving every year. The BOBA Golf Championship took place again with 18 members taking part. The photo shows, Glen Chalmers receiving the trophy from the president during the BOBA Dinner.

The AGM was held in the hotel rather than St George's Chapel, Beachley because of the petrol crisis. It was something of a 'crush' as the room behind the bar overflowed with ex-boys.

The BOBA Reunion Dinner on Saturday evening, preceded by the President's Reception. This started at the early time of 18.30 hrs., which was thirty minutes before the ladies, in order to get things over in time to allow some dancing time later. It worked well.

166 members attended the Reunion dinner in the ballroom with 66 ladies at their meal downstairs. The chilled melon was followed by a sorbet and then roast leg of pork, apple pie and coffee. Again, the Association was able to provide red and white wines on each table. The loyal toast was ably proposed by Mr A Foster 75C and the Association Toast by Major J Henderson 27 Gp. The Response was by the Chairman Lt Col S Thomas and the President. Col AGR Holman again gave an absorbing and humorous speech to draw things towards a conclusion.

The Reunion dinner breakdown was as follows:

Pre-War	4 to 45 Gps	25
Wartime	42A to 45A	39
Post War	45B to 48A	30
50 th anniversary	50A	8
	51A to 59A	23
	60A to 69C	20
	70C to 75C	16
	Ex-Staff	5

Following the dinner, Richard Harris on keyboards and vocal got people dancing in the quickly cleared ballroom while a fair number preferred to cleave to the bar and environs and talk the night away with the odd drink or two.

Sunday

On Sunday morning it was back to Beachley Camp and St George's Chapel for the annual church parade and service conducted as always by Joe Rooney.

37 members and 12 ladies finished off a fine weekend by taking the Sunday Lunch back at the Old Course Hotel.

I bet even more of you will be back, ready for the three-day event, on 14th September this year!
Ed.

The Chairman's Jottings

Not much changes as the years go by, end of March is the time to write a few lines for the Beachley Echoes, the only problem is what?

Membership

Thanks to the efforts of John Furley and the 1951 Groups we are seeing a big increase in membership. The web site that John has set up, together with the TV coverage of the Cenotaph Parade have produced many contacts - we now get one new member for every three or four contacts.

This upward trend needs your full support - *THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR PERSONAL CONTACT* - write/speak to friends.

HQ - The Old School House

We have a responsibility to maintain the building in good condition - it will need a fair amount spending on roof repairs and general maintenance during the summer. We have 'gone out to tender' and will report at the AGM.

Cenotaph Parade.

Once again the Parade, now a fixture in our calendar, was a very moving but exhilarating experience. Colonel Alan has produced a fuller report. We are no longer restricted to 25 attending and therefore I would ask all those interested to let me have their names, preferably by phone or letter - I missed some at last year's AGM! - sorry.

Your Committee

Just where they find the time and enthusiasm to keep putting in the vast number of hours of work, I don't know? Each year they beaver away to provide the membership with more information, an insight into our past, well-run and enjoyable reunions, new ventures (the Cenotaph Parade), Benevolence, GOLF and generally keeping up standards. I am most grateful for their support, - I am very proud and privileged to be their Chairman. I can but hope that you appreciate them as much as I do.

Our Ladies

I have asked Jo (my other half) to see if she can gather enough material for a 'Ladies Page'. Any short articles, views, comments or what have you to her at my address for next year please.

AGM Business

I will be asking you to approve a new member who, strictly, does not qualify for membership but has given a great deal of support to the Committee in particular and BOBA in general.

The Committee will also propose that Charles Fisher, Number 1 Group be honoured for his work in providing historical information, by being asked to become an Honorary Life Member.

Committee Changes - It is vital that you keep your Membership Books up to date. New address slips should be enclosed with the newsletter

Beachley Echoes

David does a wonderful job of editing BUT he must have something to EDIT. Please, and it's not a lot to ask, let him have some material. God knows you find plenty to talk about when you meet each other - some of it must be suitable and of interest to the general membership.

In Memoriam

At the AGM we listen to a list of those who have sadly passed away since our last meeting, only to later find that you know of others. Please let one of the Committee know if you hear of a death so that we can, where possible and appropriate, write to the bereaved and also add the name to our lists.

Till September, God Bless and I look forward to seeing you all once again.

Fair winds,

Syd.

Not in the Minutes

It was a serious outburst at the Y2K AGM! Dave Chapman, Echoes Editor, asked for articles etc. on floppy disks. I jumped up and said a quick piece which brought some belly laughs.... It wasn't until later that my friend Dicky Coburn explained why I got them!

It seems I said "My floppy is the old-fashioned sort - very difficult to insert.."

Ben D Member

MEMORIES of 58B 'C' COMPANY

Reading Bob Adams' article in the latest edition of the Beachley Echoes (May 2000) has prompted me into responding and jotting down a few memories of my time at 'Chep'.

I arrived at Chepstow Station on 27th August 1958 (58B) having been on unpaid leave since "signing on" the previous week, (19th). The national service L/Cpl waiting for the four of us walked us up the road and put us on a bus with instructions to the conductor to "drop these off at the camp gates". I remember, with a smile, the long walk from the front gate to the Guard Room where we were met by Sgt Major "Bull" Morgan. Welsh Guards. "Bull" Morgan was later to ensure that I and a few others got two days 'jankers' for booking in late after our first Saturday out after passing off the square.

My drill Sgt was "Paddy" Barrett who told us in very colourful language, after we had completed our drill test, that we had "messed it up". I also remember Sgt Amos who I visited in his official capacity many times during my first year. The provost staff also included a Tank Corps L/Cpl who was known by the boys as "Gearbox" because he had one up and three down (good conduct stripes). Does anyone recall the NAAFI breaks where the boys would wait for the trays of rock cakes to be brought out on the shoulders of the national service kitchen staff only to be half emptied before they could be put down? Were we that hungry? Do you remember the mass visual "medical" inspections carried out in the Gym by the 'doc' on us all on returning from leave? Happy days!

I am very grateful to the "system" and the Educational Corps national service Sgts for giving me that extra year of education. I was trained as an Engine Fitter IC & P. I expect all fitters can recall trying to fit one piece of mild steel into another and taking 3 months over it. Mr Bisson (is he still with us?) taught me engines. He once threw a small two stroke (JAP) engine across the bench at me in frustration over my attempt to get it running smoothly. However, I surprised him on my trade test so much that he had to ask me twice if the "purring" engine he had just put several faults on had been put right by me. Always came good when it mattered!!

On the social side, the place for beer and scrumpy was the back room of the Bunch of Grapes. The thoughts of the attempts by the Salvation Army to sell the "War Cry" in a room packed with boys (and girls) all trying to make the most of their short time in town always brings a chuckle. I also remember the Castle Cafe as the place where the boys would gather to confront the Caldicot boys who would assemble, (in far fewer numbers), across the road near the castle. The dances in the hall by the arch were very popular but I don't recall the hall being crowded. Everyone, (Beachley Boys and girls), knew each other, which was a great help, and made you feel part of the Chepstow community. Many Chep lads married local girls after passing out. We had Chris Barber and his band at our passing out dance in 1961. I expect he put that night down to experience!

58B was a large group, and yet I hardly see a reference to it in reunion lists or articles. Maybe its due to the fact that during our time at Chep there was a re-organization and many Harrogate boys came to Beachley and vice versa. I do know that many didn't serve more than nine years in their respective Corps but some did do the full whack. Most of them must still be out there. Where are you?

In my thirty years in the Royal Engineers I have been very lucky and have served in most places around the world including Maralinga Australia and SHAPE (my only trade postings). My son (although not a boy entrant) is in the Corps and I would recommend the life to any youth - as would you all no doubt?

John Phillips DSC 58B C Coy

Getting TV Exposure

It would appear there are a number of factors in obtaining maximum TV exposure for the BOBA contingent at the Cenotaph Parade in Whitehall, which are as follows:

- Wear a funny sky-blue beret (Derek and Stuart Walker)
- Wear a funny bowler hat (Colonel Alan Holman)
- Retire as a Colonel (Syd Thomas)
- Look Right when the 'eyes left' is given (Baz Morgan)

Chalkie White 73A C Coy

<p>Please Note : The BOBA HQ, Old School House, Beachley will only be open after the church service on Sunday 16 September 2001.</p>

CENOTAPH 2000 : 12th November 2000

Once more unto the breach dear friends --

For only the second time in the annals of BOBA history a small 'but select' band of 'youthful' representatives journeyed to the Nation's capital to participate in the Annual Service of Remembrance on a typically dull and chilly November morning. There is no more important single service of remembrance than for us to pay due homage to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Our history, and those that we represent, is as diverse and as honourable as any other. Indeed, as time goes by one could argue that there are few other organisations who are as representative in terms of affiliation, age, and theatre of operations as we are - now there's a provocative thought!

The day itself for all its seriousness invokes all that is best about service life. An excuse for an assembly - a melee of such proportions as to stretch the imagination of even the most understanding of regimental sergeant majors. How the ten thousand or so on this parade are ever herded into some semblance of military order is but a reflection of how willing everyone is to obey a 'cautionary word of command' and a miracle in itself - old habits die hard! Of course in all the confusion especially amongst those attending for the first time there are sure to be some difficulties. This year for example we were unable to find any of those present who could remember a Nigerian party ever being at Chepstow!!

Once the march past had started the TV cameras began to roll and the columns of Ex Serviceman's organisations were exposed to the Nation in time honoured fashion. Such pride reflected in the bearing of those participating and such warmth from all those who had braved the cold conditions to pay their respects. It is difficult to express the extent to which one feels the enormous burden of representing our fallen comrades or indeed those still suffering the long-term effects of their Service, but it is a feeling never to be forgotten.

For us in BOBA it is a representation of which we too can feel justifiably proud. The TV commentary and pictures captured us in all our glory prompting numerous enquiries and more than just a few new members who remembered the College with pride and affection - as indeed we all do.

We were there - we should be there and one hopes that, now that the precedent has been established, that our presence will be as accepted as the occasion itself and our numbers will swell accordingly.

AGRH

BOBA members on parade

Mr RT (Roy) Brown	49A	Mr F (Frank) Pickering	47B
Mr PBH (Peter) Burridge	43B	Mr RW (Rick) Spalding	67B
Mr DR (Dave) Coburn	44A	Mr GR (Digger) Stanley	42A
Mr J (John) Furley	56A	Mr DT (Dave) Stone	49A
Mr RJ (Bob) Harder	50B	Lt Col S (Syd) Thomas	47A
Col AGR (Alan) Holman	Staff	Maj DRO (Derek) Walker	55A
Capt GA (George) Murray	43A	Mr SW (Stuart) Walker	55A
Mr BG (Baz) Morgan	73B	Mr G (Chalkie) White	73A
Mr M (Maurice) Murtagh	43B	Mr G (Geoff) Winter	66C
Mr PP (Peter) Newton	47A	Mr AM (Tony) Waite	60C
Mr AR (Tony) Orchard	56A	Mr AJ (Alf) Chrascina	67B
Mr AA (Alan) Picken	66A	Maj JL (John) Skinner	46B
		Mr M (Mick) Adams	31

Moving House? Or Know of a BOBA member who is, or has moved?

Please inform someone on the BOBA Committee if you have moved, or are about to move house. If you know of a BOBA member who has moved home, please get him, or someone to advise a Committee member of the new address. We waste too much of **your BOBA** money on members who move house and don't let us know. (Another ten since last year). Please don't become one of these statistics yourself!

A phone call or email will do the trick.

Tel : 01291 630491(John Furley) or email : admin@boba-beachley.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

- To contact any BOBA member, please place a letter in a named, stamped and sealed envelope and post it to the Membership Secretary, who will append the member's address and forward it to the BOBA member concerned. This is necessary owing to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act.
- Membership has grown to 687 members in the past seven years. 95 new members have joined new BOBA in the past 12 months, with more new members joining each month.
- New BOBA is on Channel 4 TELETEXT page 173. We have been advertising there for some months; the advertisement appears every 6 / 7 weeks. Many of our recent new BOBA members have joined through this media outlet.
- The BOBA website: Our very own new permanent website address is:
"http://www.boba-beachley.org.uk" www.boba-beachley.org.uk. Visit it and inform all the ex-Beachley Boys you know of the website's existence. If you're not on the Internet you can always see the website at your local library (usually free), or a Cyber shop. Quite a few new members have joined through our new website. Go on, try it! Visit the website and see the nostalgia!
- We have discovered there are two other websites directly associated with Beachley. The first one was set up by Andy Yarrow who lives in Canada and is ex Beachley 76B Group. Andy's excellent website is RE orientated and the web address is: "http://armyapprenticescollege.homestead.com" http://armyapprenticescollege.homestead.com
- The second website about Beachley has been launched by 65B Group 'A' Coy. They have already had a small reunion of their own: all details on the website. Both chaps from 65B are: Terry Evans, organiser of the reunion, and Michael Keeble of Brisbane, Australia, who put the website up. 65B website address is: "http://www.uq.au/~zzwkeeb" www.uq.au/~zzwkeeb
- Last year Joe Kinson of 50A did a wonderful detective job in tracing many of 50A & 50B for their 50th anniversary. This year, Jack Duke, of 51A, has set about the same detective task for 51A & 51 B who celebrate their 50th anniversary. You're doing well Jack, keep up the good work! Who's going to volunteer for 1952 year?
- These new ways of finding new members have been positive with more Beachley Boys joining

from the younger generations, which is the best means to keep new BOBA alive. Success in attracting the younger members, secures BOBA's future. 80% of the 95 new BOBA members to join this last year are from groups in the 50's, 60's & 70's. These are the chaps needed to allow the next BOBA generation to thrive!

- I will not bore members by repeating the article on the Membership Fees of lapsed members. Please read the article in this newsletter to catch up. It is especially important that you ensure absolutely you are not a lapsed member!
- If you have any doubt at all about your membership, please contact the BOBA Membership Secretary: John Furley, 9 Park View, Sedbury, Chepstow, NP16 7BE. Tel: 01291 630491 Fax: 630492 email: "mailto:membership@boba-beachley.org.uk" membership@boba-beachley.org.uk.

THE BEST WAY TO ATTRACT NEW MEMBERS TO THE ASSOCIATION IS BY WORD OF MOUTH! CURRENT MEMBERS NEED TO ENCOURAGE NEW MEMBERS TO JOIN!

John Furley

New members to BOBA in the year to April 2001.

689	Parker BE	Ted	Mr.	49B
690	Beckinsale P	Peter	Mr.	54B
691	Marshall TW	Tim	Mr.	68B
692	Baker J	John	Mr.	48A
693	Bunce MRG	Mike	Mr.	68C
694	Fleming JR	John	Mr.	53B
695	Morley A	Andy	Mr.	63B
696	Bennett FC	Frank	Major	54B
697	Wells REH	Roy	Mr.	50A
698	Birrell RK	Bob	Mr.	47B
699	Duke JM	John	Mr.	51A
700	Rumble IR	Ian	Mr.	50A
701	Crooke MA	Mike	Mr.	58A
702	Elliott B	Brian	Mr.	50A
703	Speed MJ	Michael	Mr.	57B
704	Hyde RC	Richard	Mr.	50A
705	Irish CDV	Chris	Mr.	53A
706	Bignall PA	Peter	Mr.	50A
707	Rowson B	Brian	Mr.	50A
708	Dale FG	George	Mr.	50A
709	Neilson JA	Jim	Mr.	50A
710	Butler F	Frank	Mr.	50A
711	Hardy JRR	Rene	Mr.	50A
712	Brennan JB	John	Mr.	50A
713	Wood EJ	Ean	Mr.	50A
714	Trowsdale K	Ken	Mr.	50A
715	Drury L	Leslie	Mr.	50A
716	Porter LM	Leslie	Mr.	50A
717	Green WM	Wally	Lt. Col.	50B
718	Kaufman M	Mike	Mr.	50A

719	This Ex-BOB did not complete membership.			
720	Finnamore J	John	Mr.	50B
721	Heal M	Michael	Mr.	50B
722	Forster E	Eric	Mr.	50A
723	Stubbington GA	George	Mr.	65B
724	Dallas WC	Bill	Mr.	50B
725	Bright JT	John	Mr.	50A
726	Castell JW	Bill	Mr.	50B
727	Durkan JC	Pat	Mr.	50B
728	Reels TE	Tom	Mr.	48B
729	Dewar WAW	Andy	Mr.	50A
730	Wilde ET	Eddie	Mr.	71C
731	Wright RJ	Ron	Mr.	50A
732	Baugh PM	Peter	Mr.	50A
733	Dearlove JE	John	Mr.	60B
734	Bacon J	John	Mr.	50B
735	This Ex - BOB didn't complete membership.			
736	This Ex - BOB didn't complete membership.			
737	Bryant J	Jamie	Mr.	58B
738	Mullholland A	Paddy	Mr.	44
739	Symes J	John	Mr.	47A
740	Staples K	Kevin	Mr.	66C
741	Old J	John	Capt.	50B
742	Dutton D	Dave	Mr.	60A
743	Milburn A	Jack	Mr.	50A
744	Welch W	Bill	Mr.	55A
745	Mathews R	Reg	Mr.	Staff
746	Smith D	David	Mr.	60C
747	Milburne JC	John	Mr.	60B
748	Cutter LS	Stan	Mr.	51B
749	Middlemass JB	Barry	Mr.	60A
750	Mathews J.	Jack	Mr.	42A
751	Isaacs R	Ron	Mr.	51B
752	Brown DW	Dave	Mr.	60C
753	Fry RM	Rod	Mr.	50B
754	Humphries JE	John	Lt. Col.	38
755	Annear BD	Boyd	Mr.	45B
756	Slater EJ	Ted	Mr.	51A
757	Lumley J	Jim	Mr.	60B
758	Knaggs TH	Trevor	Mr.	51B
759	Fisher K	Fisher	Mr.	53B
760	Collins C	Cyril	Major	14
761	Kennison R	Bob	Mr.	42A
762	Benyon J	John	Mr.	43B
763	Stout K	Ken	Mr.	53B
764	Bradley JP	John	Mr.	67C
765	Page B	Brian	Mr.	62B
766	Amey F	Frank	Mr.	72C
767	Marpole AT	Tony	Mr.	51B
768	Dunn J	Jim	Mr.	56A
769	Drew VG	Vic	Mr.	42B
770	Lacey SB	Bernard	Mr.	32
771	Blount JF	John	Mr.	48B
772	Ford KF	Ken	Mr.	43A
773	Yarrow A	Andy	Mr.	76B
774	Batchelor BL	Brian	Mr.	59C
775	McCreedy R	Robin	Mr.	49B
776	Manston RA	Arthur	Mr.	51B
777	Smith DJ	Donald	Mr.	61A
778	Thomson AW	Alastair	Mr.	51A
779	Bell JJ	Jeff	Mr.	51A
780	Cheek OAG	Cheek	Mr.	50A

781	Bartrum Rex	Slim	Mr.	51B
782	Buckingham AJ	'Buck	Mr.	51B
783	Woodward AF	Albert	Mr.	51A
784	Chambers CA	Colin	Mr.	51B
785	Jenkinson C	Carl	Mr.	51A
786	Morris KHW	Ken	Mr.	34

Getting in the back way

Seeing my old 60A mate Dave Dutton in the new members' list, reminded me of a little story.

The Saturday night dance in Chepstow Town Hall, by the Arch, was a magnet to girls, civvies and Beachley Boys. We usually ended up there after the pubs closed. There was often a fight towards the end, mostly over the 'wimmen', with the town patrol being called to sort things out.

The trouble was you had to pay to get in ... and so athletic young fellows like us might just, on occasions, see fit to scramble over the viciously spiky back gate.

Mr Dutton, a native of Liverpool, like most of us, was a clothes conscious guy. His civilian clothing chit no doubt allowed the standard pair of shoes, Italian suit, shirt and tie. If my memory serves me he also had a new and rather smart grey topcoat.

Anyway, one Saturday in late 62, well-oiled and confident, we scrambled up and over the back gate to the dance - the heavy beat of the band drowning all sound. On entering the back door of the hall I looked for Scouse D, but he was not to be seen.

Retracing my steps I quickly found him. In jumping down from the gate his super top coat had billowed out and had been transfixed by the spikes on the top of the gate. He hung there unable to move but vocal, his coat ruined.

Kindness itself, I helped him from his impalement and we joined the throng.

Ed

ITEMS FOR PUBLICATION

If you have anything you want to say via the BOBA Newsletter then please send your copy to Dave Chapman at 6 Century Road, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 7LE. We always want stories, news, views and letters for publication. You can use the newsletter to find old friends and place appropriate adverts free of charge.

Your copy for publication can be handwritten or typed. However, if you are able to send it on floppy disc to be read into Microsoft Word, so much the better. Alternatively (until 01/07/01) send by e-mail to davec@bryn21.demon.co.uk.

BOBA WELFARE

The BOBA Welfare Officer is **Maurice Murtagh** (Tel : 01279 422937)

The country has been divided into geographical areas and a Welfare Rep. has been (or will be) appointed for each area; see below.

Should any member feel that he requires assistance or a friendly shoulder he can, in the first instance, contact his Area Rep. He can also contact the Area Rep if he has knowledge of another member's demise, serious illness or change of address.

Should you require a lift (or can provide a lift) to the next Reunion, the Area Rep may be able to help you make contact.

Don't fold your tent and steal away - Let us know where you intend to stay.

Welfare Area Representatives are still needed for the following counties:

Essex, Berks/Bucks/Oxon, Suffolk/Norfolk, Hunts/Cambs, N.England, N.Wales, London/Middx

Welfare Area Representatives:-

Kent	C. Whitehead 45A	01634 361801
Surrey/Sussex	R. Smith 43B	01932 863686
Dorset/Wilts	R. Durnall 37	01202 763270
Hampshire	D.Stone 49A	02392 265554
	F.Pickering 47B	02380 847881
Soms/Devon/Cornwall	A.Waite 60C	01884 32660
	R.Currell 46B	01726 64799
Gloucs/Bristol	J. Broad 42A	01454 415143
Worc/Herfd/Warks/W.Mid	G. Waite 42B	01217449117
	G. White 73A	01203 404999
Shropshire	A. Ball 46A	01952 591060
Staffs	A. Roulston 46A	01785 257410
Herts/Beds/Northants	J. Smith 44A	01582 592432
Lincs/Notts/Derby	W. Green 50A	01522 595963
	G. Winter 66C	01623 743560
Yorkshire	T. Medcalf 43A	01904 644569
Cheshire/Lancs	C. Elliott 42A	01619 761916
Scotland	D.Lackie 43B	01313 362268
	A.Hay 46A	01224 822248
S.Wales	J. Furley 56A	01291 630491
	J. Stokes 42A	01974 821697
Germany	J. Bass 44A	0049 220456437

Thank you to all the above for their assistance, commitment and dedication to BOBA.

M.M. April 2001

Snippets from the archives In 1950 the first three places on a Guards Drill Course for all arms went to ex-App CSM W Moore, ex-App Sgt King and ex-App Tdsm Dickson!

In the same year a certain Capt. G A Murray RASC (ex- 43A) became Army Officers Boxing Champion at his weight.



Pen Picture : Allan Ball 46A D Coy

Most members, who attend the Reunion, will know Allan, seen here last year with the Heritage display of Beachley apprentice badges of rank which he produced with Ron Marie.

He passed out to join REME in January 1948, having trained as a sheet metal worker. Allan served in the Near East, Middle East, East Africa, Far East, Germany and the Isle of Sheppey!

After leaving the Service in late 1970, Allan worked as non-regular permanent staff TA at Donnington, Tarmac Construction in Wolverhampton and for local government at Bridgnorth, Salop.

Allan is a total BOBA enthusiast, and was instrumental in successfully finding dozens of 46 Groups for their 50th Reunion in 1996. He keeps busy with military badge collecting, music and gardening.

He once travelled a long way to present one of a series of 'redress of grievances' to be greeted by a young officer who said "Good morning Staff. Are you the one who doesn't like ginger biscuits?"

Call me sir!

This might seem like yesterday to hard-core BOBA members but in 1973, I was playing a bit for the College Football Team. The team had some good players, not me, and an excellent civilian coach, Gordon Tyrell.

OIC Football was a young troop captain from A Coy. He liked involvement and trained with us on Wednesdays, when according to him, we were off-duty and should call each other by our first names. This did not sit easily with us and the new troop officer knew it. However, after a short while he got his chance to break the ice, and he used it to the full!

During a hard training session, we played a match between ourselves. The OIC wanted to prove he was as good a player as any of us, and was screaming

at Nobby Payne to pass the ball to him just at the halfway line. Nobby ignored him as they moved forward with the young troop still yelling for the ball. Nobby still ignored him as they got to the edge of the penalty area, the young troop by now close to a heart attack saw Nobby shoot badly wide. He screamed at Nobby "Next time pass the bloody ball!" Nobby looked across and nonchalantly replied "Oh F--- Off Alan"... ..everything stopped. Both teams stared at Nobby with mouths and eyes wide open in silent disbelief. Cars on the bridge above came to standstill. Surely we had not heard what we thought we heard?

We stood staring towards the young officer for what seemed like hours before he began slowly walking towards Nobby, his face like thunder and steam coming out of his ears. What had Nobby done? Was he mad?

His career was clearly over - they might even jail him!

Finally the troop reached Nobby. The sweat was pouring down Nobby's face, his legs were weak and unconsciousness was seconds away. Thrusting his face within inches of Nobby's, looked him straight in the eye and said "Its F--- Off SIR! Chortling with laughter he walked away.

I suppose now you think I've used a bit of journalistic licence, and that perhaps the young officer never existed. Can't say I blame you. After all, what kind of officer would say that sort of thing to impressionable apprentices. I'll tell you what type - damn good ones! The type that inspire you and make you want to do well. Probably the same type which can't sing cockney songs at Reunion Dinners!!!!

Chalkie White 73A C Coy

IN MEMORIAM

It is with deep regret we record below the list of members and non-members who are reported to have died since the issue of the last newsletter in May 2000.

No	Int.	Name	Group	Date	No	Int	Name	Group	Date
20	WJ	Eaton	45	03/04/00	500	WMR	Addison	Staff	09/12/00
26	A.	Hardie	43B	06/01/01	662	R	Lomax	47A	NK
27	LJ	Spence	42A	11/02/00	670	G	Crump	Staff	01/05/00
78	RJ	Sings	16	25/03/00	673	E	Sloan	43B	NK
124	B	Wickins	47B	03/04/00	NM	PT	Slocombe	51A	1997/98
158	AJ	Wilson	45	NK	NM	R	Leech	37	1998 ?
221	PWG	Collins	49A	09/01/01	NM	BA	Olley	54A	1995
235	WV	Copley	37	25/07/00	NM	F W	Noakes	45A	July '99
240	CC	Jones	43B	21/09/00	NM		Chambers	3	Jun 2000
268	C.	Bolton	43A	17/03/01	NM	DW	Wright	51A	?
300	JE	Hayden	39	Mid 1999	NM	DK	Jeffrey	46B	June '97
327	FH	Rye	8	01/04/00	NM	C	Lusher	56A	late 2000
345	GP	Russell	44	28/02/01	NM	JFB	Bones	51B	11/2000
348	MJ	Farrow	43B	19/09/00	NM	AHP	Hall	46A	30/06/99
360	J.A.N.	McLellan	43A	NK	NM	DG	Miller	42B	20/09/00
361	WJ	Ralph	40	03/04/00	NM	DP	Aston	44	11/10/00
373	JH	Dawes	41	03/04/00	NM	SJ	Stevenson	Staff	12/10/00
396	J	Tooher	39	03/04/00	NM	T	Stokes		12/10/00
398	FT	Couch	23	11/00	NM	JD	Bell	61C	09/00
435	L	Hall	29	18/04/01	NM	CJ	Bell	58?	1998?
442	RE	Williams	36	04/02/00	NM	F	Shepard	43A	18/04/01
443	BD	Miles	39	01/10/00					
498	KCB	Bunch	45	15/01/01					



Pat Perry - Active Lady Member

A change in BOBA's rules a few years ago meant Pat could become a full member. This she did, and now faithfully attends the Reunion, preferring the BOBA Dinner to the company of the ladies!

Pat worked at the College from 1980 to 1994 as a laboratory technician. She holds a BA in Maths and worked previously at Caldicot School.

Pat first got involved with BOBA when Ken Taylor, the Secretary (76-86), asked her to post a tie! This led to manning the Museum on BOBA weekends and much else. Pat says she is honoured to be a member of BOBA having never served in the Armed Forces.

War Office Table of Chepstow Leavers (Spring 1940 - Spring 1946) and produced in 1948

Joined	Left	Group	Officers	WOs	SSgts/Sgts	LCpl/Cpls	Privates
1937	1940	39	8	28	77	36	23
1937	1940	40	7	16	43	29	24
1938	1941	41	6	23	116	80	72
1938	1941	42	6	17	137	117	86
1939	1942	43	9	12	84	92	65
1939	1942	44	10	19	88	117	80
1940	1943	45	14	6	78	105	81
		Total	60	121	623	576	431

BEACHLEY OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE, BEACHLEY, CHEPSTOW, MONS NP16 7YG

Secretary

Capt B Henderson R Mon RE (M)
20 Wyebank Way
Tutshill
CHEPSTOW
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MINUTES OF THE BEACHLEY OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE OLD COURSE HOTEL CHEPSTOW ON SATURDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER 2000

Present	Col AGR Holman OBE	President
	Lt Col S Thomas	Chairman
	Mr AW Waite	Treasurer
	Maj DC Chapman	Vice President
	Mr M Murtagh	Vice President
	Mr G Gasser	Vice President
	Mr R Marie	Vice President
	Mr F Pickering	Vice President
	Mr J Furley	Chepstow Liaison
	Mr D Hayward	Membership Secretary
	Mr B Henderson	Secretary

Due to the fuel crisis and in order to conserve energy, it was decided at short notice to hold the Annual General Meeting in The Old Course Hotel. There were close on 100 members tightly packed in the Monmouth Room for the meeting, a fair number of members had tendered their apologies, many of whom lived overseas. It was estimated that approximately 20 members were unable to attend because of the fuel shortage.

Opening Address.

1. The President opened the meeting by welcoming all present. He expressed his delight at the number of members who had made it to Chepstow especially as most areas of the country were now short of motor vehicle fuel. He continued by stating that it was business as usual and the reunion had already got off to an excellent start with the Supper and Dancing the previous evening. He thanked the members present for their loyalty and support and gave particular thanks to all those members who had travelled many miles from within the UK and abroad in order that they may attend the reunion weekend.

2. The Chairman echoed the President's opening statement and also apologised for the rather cramped conditions in which the meeting was being held. However, he did think this was for the best as some members only had sufficient fuel to get them home and therefore any unnecessary journeys should be avoided.

Item 1. - Minutes of the 1999 Annual General Meeting.

3. As in previous years, the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 18th September 1999 were included in the Beachley Echoes that had been sent to all BOBA members. The Chairman felt that all the members present were aware of the contents of the minutes and asked if there were any comments or observations.

4. There being no comments, observations or matters arising, it was Proposed by G Gasser, and Seconded by F Pickering, that the minutes were a true record of the 1999 Annual General Meeting.

Carried unanimously.

Item 2. - In Memoriam.

5. The Executive Committee had been notified of the deaths of the following Beachley Old Boys during the previous 12 months:

Mem Nb	Name	Group	Memb No.	Name	Group
235	W Copley	37	Non Member	C Bibb	50A
87	M Fletcher	43B	Non Member	R Bindloss	50A
119	P Lillington	46A	Non Member	B Bull	50A
503	K Butcher	47A	Non Member	A Burden	50A
360	J McLellan	43A	Non Member	R Commins	50A
275	F Gray	21	Non Member	A Fowler	50A
526	A Hall	46A	Non Member	T Gleeson	50A
670	G Crump	Staff	Non Member	M Kimber	50A
27	L Spence	42A	Non Member	G Robinson	50A
442	R Williams	36	Non Member	B Taylor	50A
Non Member	P Clarke	43A	Non Member	J Kay	50A
Non Member	F Staples	44A	Non Member	H Boden	39D
Non Member	D Fulford	43B	Non Member	P Heather	39B
Non Member	B Osey	46A	Non Member	C Sherran	43A
Non Member	H Davies	33	Non Member	J Hock	50B
Non Member	B Banyard				

6. The members present stood and observed a period of silent remembrance.

Item 3. - Chairman's Report.

7. The Chairman said it had been quite a year for BOBA. The 75th Anniversary celebrations, the fireworks display, the Queen's telegram and a wonderful 1999 Reunion Weekend. There was also the first Church Parade with music provided by the band of the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia), the Cenotaph Parade and the 'new style' Beachley Echoes.

8. There were, thankfully, just a few Committee changes to be made. The members will recall at the last AGM Dave Hayward declared his intention to step down as Membership Secretary as he wishes to enhance his business interests abroad. Dave has put a very great deal of work to bring lists up to date and has been extremely successful in recruiting many new members. The Chairman asked the members for a show of hands in appreciation of his sterling work.

9. In addition to his current duties of Chepstow Liaison, John Furley had volunteered to take on the appointment of Membership Secretary, the Chairman asked that the members confirm his appointment. It was Proposed by Mr Chandler and Seconded by Mr Brotherhood that Mr J Furley be appointed Membership Secretary.

Carried unanimously.

10. The Chairman continued by informing the members that our senior Elected Vice President, Mr Maurice Murtagh, had taken on the duties of Vice Chairman and had also agreed to be the Chairman of the Benevolent Committee.

11. The Chairman felt that the members were aware of the work and dedication put in by the Committee on their behalf. Special mention has to be made of Ron Marie for his tireless efforts in mapping the history of the School/College, John Furley for his work on the BOBA web site, Dave Chapman for the production of the new look Beachley Echoes, Dave Hayward for maintaining the membership records, Tony Waite for maintaining our accounts and last but not least, Peter Burrridge his efforts organising and running the Reunion Weekend. He said the rest of the Committee played their part by supporting the main workers and gave his personal thanks to them all for making his job easy.

12. The BOBA Golf Tournament as usual was extremely competitive and the Chairman said it was good to see Ken Standen at the golf course once again. He hoped this was a signal of Ken's improvement and, hopefully, a return to full health.

13. Regarding the recruiting of new members, the Chairman felt that personal contact from within the group was the best method of increasing the levels of membership. He mentioned the work done over recent months by Mr Joe Kinson of 50A Group which had resulted in many new members joining the Association.

14. Finally, the Chairman informed the meeting that the current term of office of our President would soon come to an end. Since the closure of Beachley Camp there was no longer a natural successor. However, Col Holman had agreed to continue subject to a change of the BOBA Rules. It was Proposed by Mr J Smith 44A and Seconded by Mr A Orchard 56A that the BOBA Rules be amended to allow past Commandants to complete more than one term of office as President and Col A Holman be elected for a further term.

Carried unanimously.

Item 4. – Committee Reports.

Item 4a. – Treasurer's Report.

15. Copies of an Interim Financial Statement as at 01 Jul 00 was available for the members to examine. The Treasurer, Mr Tony Waite, said that the income in excess of expenditure for the FY 99/00 was around £1800, income was steady from both membership fees and returns on investments. He talked the members through the balance sheet which showed the fund to be in a very healthy state.

16. There being no comments from the floor the Treasurer's report was passed as read and congratulations were given for all his effort in maintaining and presenting the account.

Item 4b. – Secretary's Report.

17. The Secretary, Capt Brian Henderson, opened his report by reading out the letters of apology that had been received prior to the meeting from J Cox 39B, now living in Austria, E Cox 35 Group, now living in Spain, Inky Reeves 28 Group, who is infirm and cannot travel, and T Evans, 65B, who has other commitments this weekend. He said the volume of correspondence received since the 1999 Annual General Meeting had been low but thanked those members who had contacted him on various matters concerning the Association.

18. A letter had also been received from the Army Benevolent Fund thanking the Association for the generous donation of £304.04 following the Founders Day church service.

19. Closing, the Secretary thanked Mr Bob Carrington 36D for informing the Committee of the recent award of the MBE to Mr Sid Moore. Sid had been given this prestigious award for his volunteer work in assisting other less fortunate than ourselves.

Item 4c. – Membership Secretary's Report.

20. The Membership Secretary, Mr Dave Hayward, said that the BOBA database contained 685 records, as always the grim reaper takes his toll but thanks to the sterling work of Mr Joe Kinson and Mr G Horton 50+ new members from 50 Group had been recruited and this showed an increase in membership over the previous twelve months.

21. The Membership Secretary reinforced the Chairman's views that the best method of recruiting was the personal approach and requested that each member present attempt to recruit at least one member during the next few months.

Item 4d. – Historian's Report.

22. The BOBA Historian, Mr Ron Marie, thanked those members who had sent in articles and contributions. He gave particular thanks to Mr A Ball 46A who had assisted greatly.

23. Photographs of last year's Church Parade had been on display and any orders for copies would be appreciated during the course of the weekend.

24. During the forthcoming twelve months Ron intends to update the Roll of Honour which is on display in St George's Church, however in order to complete this task he asked for assistance from the membership in providing any details they thought relevant to this process. He is aware that some members' names appear in the Book of Remembrance but not in the Roll of Honour.

25. The Historian informed the members that Mr Tom Hetherington 45B is poorly and a get-well card is on circulation, any member who knows Tom is welcome to sign the card.

26. A vote of thanks was given to Ron Marie and also Anne Rainsbury of Chepstow Museum for their work that ensures the memories Beachley remain alive.

Item 5. – BOBA Website.

27. Mr John Furley informed the meeting that production of our website was in its early days and the Committee had much work to do on this matter, however any comments from the membership would be welcome. He anticipated that full details of the website, e-mail addresses, etc. would appear in the next issue of the Beachley Echoes in May 2001.

Item 6. – Newsletter.

28. The Editor of Beachley Echoes, Maj Dave Chapman, asked the membership for articles no matter how large or small, important or trivial, be sent to him at their earliest convenience. Work on the document commences early in the spring and articles for inclusion in the 2001 issue should arrive in advance of that date. Articles can be sent in any format, but to make production easier electronic copies eg. floppy disk, e-mail, are preferred.

Item 7. – Cenotaph Parade.

29. The President informed the meeting that attendance at last year's parade had been a moving occasion. BOBA had been invited back again this year and there was no restriction on numbers who could attend.

30. A nominal roll has to be with the RBL by the end of September. Col Holman urged that full support be given to this event and that names of those who wished to attend be given to the Chairman as soon as possible, preferably prior to departure from the Reunion Weekend.

Item 8. – Any Other Business.

31. Our Historian had been approached by Chepstow RBL who asked if the BOBA Standard could be paraded on Remembrance Sunday. Any member willing to carry the standard should give his name to any member of the Executive Committee.

32. Mr Glen Chambers said the golf tournament presentations would take place in the hotel bar commencing at 18:00 hrs.

33. Mr Alan Ball volunteered to store the berets that are worn by the BOBA members attending the Cenotaph parade.

34. Mr Joe Kinson thanked the Executive Committee and other BOBA members who assisted in his search for ex-boys of 50A Group. He suggested that any other group member who was contemplating a similar exercise should make contact with him and he would pass on any lessons

35. The members present were reminded that tonight's the Reunion Dinner was to start at 18:30hrs, the ladies dinner to commence at 19:00hrs.

36. The reunion next year will be held over the period 14 – 16 Sep 2001.

37. In closing the Chairman thanked the members for attending the meeting, he also thanked them for their continuing support and hoped to see them all later at the reunion dinner and at Sunday's church parade.



Secretary



Chairman

OUR HERITAGE

The Beachley Boys Heritage layout comprising intake ledgers, a photo display, a chart showing uniform changes together with memorabilia gathered from recent years, will again be displayed at the Old Course Hotel from 10.00 a.m. to 12.45 p.m. on Saturday 15 September 2001. Anne Rainsbury will also make available again a very fine display of archive photographs from Chepstow Museum.

The framed display of the apprentice badges of rank over the years was well received at last year's Reunion although it was not fully complete. However, more items have now come to hand e.g. Army Apprentice School shoulder flash provided by a 50A member and also a bandsman's brass lyre badge. To complete the display we need a brass Boys Technical School epaulette badge from the era 1924 -1929 e.g. **BTS**

I would like to thank all those members who have contributed various items over recent years and to the member who checked the authenticity and dates of issue of the badges and insignia we have collected. All will be displayed again this year.

Beachley Memorabilia : There are some items which I would especially like to find for the archive.

- Passing out parade and prize giving programmes for 1927-1949, 1954 -1981, 1983 -1994.
- Details of Trade Prizes - All years.
- Details of Western Command Prize for 1945 -50.
- Details of South Wales District Prize for 1945 - 50.
- BOBA Award - presented to App RSMs.
- The Falklands Memorial Award of 17 Dec 1982. Presented to App CSMs in memory of Chepstow apprentices who were casualties in the campaign.
- School colours - lanyards and cloth shields.

Where possible items will be copied and returned.

I stated at last year's AGM that I would be gathering information with a view to updating the existing **Roll Of Honour** and corresponding **Remembrance Book** held in St Georges Chapel, Beachley. I aim to add ex-Beachley boys killed in the service of their country in the various hostilities since the end of WW2. Continuing from the Roll of Honour and Book of Remembrance 1939 - 1945, to date the information reads as follows:

WW2	7904828	H Kimber (40A A Coy)	Trooper RAC	1/8/45
Malaya	2548873	N Hoggett (43B)	LCpl RASC	2/3/50
Korea	14469719	E H Comer (46A)	Spr RE	6/4/52
Aden	2548958	R A Barrett (43B)	Rank NK RASC	Date NK
	22794140	J R Webb (52A)	Sgt REME	16/6/67
EOD Duties:				
Hong Kong	23675156	C C Workman (58B)	Sgt RAOC	28/8/67
Birmingham	23708110	R Wilkinson (59B)	Capt RAOC	19/9/73
Northern Ireland	23968517	A S Butcher (63B)	Sgt RAOC	15/3/72
	23687477	R E Hills (60A)	Sgt RAOC	5/12/72
	236877200	V I Ross (59C)	SSgt RAOC	7/11/74
	23487353	E Garside (56B)	WO2 RAOC	17/7/75
	24305257	J R Howard (75C)	WO2 RAOC	8/7/88
Falklands	23834301	J Prescott (60C)	SSgt RE	24/5/82
	24529017	W D Tarbard (79C)	Spr 9 Para RE	7/6/82
	24317228	S Wilson (73C)	Cpl 9 Para RE	12/6/82
	24484389	C A Jones (79A)	Spr RE	12/6/82

I would be grateful if members can send me any further names they know of so we can build a fuller list.

Note: I have received the name of R P Bootle (48B) Spr RE, killed in Korea. However, there are no entry details in Beachley records of him. Could he have been a Taunton or Harrogate apprentice? Could a member of his group please clarify for me?

Ron Marie BOBA Historian

CHEPSTOW RBL REMEMBRANCE PARADE SUNDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2000

In response to an invitation from the Royal British Legion, Chepstow to the Millenium Muster, BOBA provided a small contingent for the Chepstow parade as follows:

G Horton 50B, BOBA Standard Bearer; R Marie 46A, REA member; K Standen 57A, SSAFA member and S Nimmis 50B, RBL member.

Others on parade were B Morris 50B, RBL Chepstow Parade Master; T Reagan 53B, RBL Chepstow Club Chairman; M Cannaby 48B, RBL Chepstow Club Secretary; L Daish 58A RBL Chepstow, Branch Chairman.

The twelve standards mustered were:

- RBL Chepstow Branch
- RBL Chepstow Womens' Branch
- RNA Chepstow
- Royal Submariners' Association
- RAFA Wales
- RAFA East Glamorgan and Gwent
- REA Chepstow Branch
- RAFA Chepstow Branch
- BOBA Chepstow
- SSAFA
- Chepstow Sqn 2272 ATC
- Chepstow ACF

The BOBA Standard was paraded at both the funeral of Mr C Jones (43B) on 2/10/00 and on Remembrance Sunday. It raised considerable interest as it had not been seen before in Chepstow and had not been paraded (as far as I know). RBL Chepstow expect to invite our Association to provide a contingent for this year's Remembrance Sunday Parade. Any volunteers? Please let me know.

Ron Marie

14469337 Brian William Kingsbury

It is often said there is somebody in life who directs which way you will travel. My somebody was 'Bill' Kingsbury.

We first met in the the autumn of 1945, and were both 'rookie chippies' of 45B D Coy. Encouraged by others, we both joined the School Band under Bandmaster Syd Ord-Hume (a legend of military music).

Bill's dad was a very competent carpenter in their home town of Poole, who died at Dunkirk. His mother was a very experienced pianist. This led him to both carpentry and music at Beachley. He played the organ in church, after Oom-paring his way there in the Band on the Tuba - (I remember him being told off by the Padre for playing "Blues in C Sharp minor" as an in-going voluntary, much to our amusement). His piano skills took him to winning a talent competition at the cinema in Chepstow and to the App Sgts Mess (with me on drums) accompanying one of the App Sgts in his rendering of "The Downtown Poker Club" and "The Slippery Elm Tree". (Remember Phil Harris?).

The appearance of a German POW Band at our Christmas dinner was all it needed to spur Bill to form - with Tony (Jim) Freeman - a very successful apprentices' dance band. On posting to 1 TRRE, Bill and I formed a small Corps of Drums, and also a good enough dance band to perform at the Regimental

Dances at the Winter Gardens, Malvern.

The formation of the RE Band (Aldershot) led us both, with Ron (Curly) Graham to move to a higher musical plane, and transfer to Aldershot in 1950. Bill by then had added trombone to his musical output, not to mention writing and scoring many features for military band. This did not escape the notice of our Director of Music, Major Laurie Dunn MBE (who incidentally will be 100 years old on 1st January 2002). Bill was posted to the Royal Military School of Music for a three year course in 1962, to eventually be appointed Bandmaster. To my knowledge, Bill is the only Beachley Boy to attain this position.

He served with the Royal Irish Fusiliers, Royal Irish Rangers and the Yorkshire Brigade as Bandmaster, before retiring in 1972. Bill then moved to Spain, still playing piano. I lost touch with him at this time, but received tit-bits of news on the 'grapevine'. He died in Spain in November 2000.

In all, I served with Bill from 1945 to 1962 and his enthusiasm for music also led me to a successful military music career. You were a good mate Bill, and I thank you for your friendship, and wherever you are, I hope there is an organ, piano or trombone to knock out a few bars of 'Wings' to keep the angels on their toes!

Laurie Patton 45B D Coy

From The Honorary Secretary : Brian Henderson 65A Group

May I begin by thanking all those members who, in spite of the fuel crisis, attended the Reunion last year. Our Reunion Weekends go from strength to strength mainly due to the efforts of Peter Burrige. I expect this year's Reunion to be no different, planning is well in hand and I for one look forward to seeing some familiar faces and hopefully some new ones.

The Army Benevolent Fund.

Not surprisingly, the numbers who attended the Founders' Day service in St George's Chapel was slightly down on previous years. However a collection was made and the grand sum of £261 was raised. As usual the money was donated to the Army Benevolent Fund for the good and benefit of soldiers, ex-soldiers and their dependants of all arms and corps. The response from the Trustees was as follows:

"Thank you very much for your letter enclosing a cheque in the sum of £261.00 which the Beachley Old Boys' Association raised following their annual reunion this year, aptly titled "BOBA 2000".

Despite the reduction in numbers this year, owing to the fuel crisis, I am sure that those members who did attend had a most enjoyable weekend. Please would you thank them for this generous donation. Since 1995 we have received £1,343.70 from the Association, for which we are extremely grateful. Your continuing valuable support is very much appreciated. With all good wishes and renewed thanks."

Yours sincerely,

Janet Watkins
Secretary Fundraising

Most members will be aware that the demand on all service charities has never been higher, (the ABF disbursed £4.2m during the financial year 1999/2000), and will continue to be so. Therefore, those members who attend the Founders' Day Service your generosity is applauded. Thank you.

BOBA Secretariat

I have received a number of letters, one of which arrived just before Christmas from 22967869 K T Stout 53B Group. Ken is particularly keen to make contact with and meet up with other members of his group for their 50th Anniversary. Should any member out there be intending to organize this anniversary or would just like to make contact, please write or give me a call and I'll pass on Ken's details.

The Association has also received correspondence, including a newsletter, from Maurice Murtagh's old friend in New Zealand, Denys Goldfinch, who is the secretary for the British Services X-Boys Association. Denys enclosed a copy of their newsletter to ensure that any Beachley Boys that are mentioned come to our attention. Their newsletter is too large to include in this issue of the Beachley Echoes but I'll try to display it in the Old Course Hotel at this year's reunion.

Closure

Before I close, I would like to remind the members that you are requested to make contact with the Executive Committee about any subject no matter how large or small. I'm particularly keen to be informed of those members who have passed away, so please write and provide the details in order that I can write to the deceased's relatives.

Finally, I look forward to continue serving you as the Honorary Secretary of the Association and seeing many of you at the 2001 reunion.

Joe Rooney honoured

Joe Rooney, Beachley Chaplain for the last eighteen years, recently received the Lord Lieutenant of Gwent's Certificate of Merit for his fourteen years service as padre with the Gwent Army Cadet Force. As well as the ACF, Joe gives lectures and talks and conducts services for Beachley's current residents, 2nd Battalion, Royal Anglian Regt. Joe will again be conducting our Founders' Day Service at Beachley on Sunday 16th Sept.

Finding friends from your enlistment group

Joe Kinson – 50A Group

I am providing this article on how to find people, based on my experiences when I did so for 50A Group. Like so many of us, I contemplated returning to Chepstow for the 50th Anniversary of our enlistment, and hoped someone would take on the task of finding everyone. As time drew near, all my searching through magazines was in vain; that is until I saw an announcement in the "Craftsman", suggesting a get together of 50A Group Chepstow. The originator lived in Holland, but gave an address for a 50A contact in the UK. I went to the library and found a telephone number for John Cox. I telephoned John that evening much to his surprise. He was pleased to be contacted, and asked how did I manage to locate him, and was surprised when he learned of the announcement in the Craftsman.

I found that John was awaiting heart surgery, so decided that I ought to make a start with the search. Someone has to make the effort, or your numbers attending will be very small. From experience, I started about a year too late, so I hope you will learn from my experience. If you are in touch with a few from your group, get together and share the workload, but decide who will be searching for whom. This will speed up the search, and avoid two or more people searching for the one person.

For those who decide they want to locate their friends, well you are undertaking a big task as most groups had about 100-120 members. If you have as much luck as I did, it will all be well worthwhile; make no mistake it requires a lot of work and determination. You will go through highs and lows during your search. The highs when you locate someone, the lows when you do not receive a response to your letter, or you sadly find that the person being sought has died. I found a single address for one pal who I was trying to find, which was only about 26 miles from me. When I rang I spoke to his wife to find that he had died of cancer on my 65th Birthday some 10 days earlier: I was gutted as you can guess. I was able to put her in touch with two old friends; one was best man at her wedding; this made up for my disappointment.

I found I could remember about 62 names from my group, but the memory plays tricks on you, after such a long time, also many were known by nicknames. Try to get a list of your group from the Beachley Records, which are held by BOBA. I suggest you start your search at least two years before your 50th Anniversary reunion; this helps spread the cost of the search over a couple of years. I only wish I had started earlier, as I might have had the pleasure of being in touch with old pals who sadly had died shortly before I started my search.

The most useful tool, which I found to help me in my search, was the UK Information Disk.. The Standard Edition can be bought for just under £50, or the Professional for just under £200. It requires a computer with a CD Rom drive. If you have access to the Web, you can use People Scoot and other sources. I found that adverts in the Corps magazines did not bear much in the way of results, as I was the only one who responded to the original notice about holding a 50A reunion, placed in the Craftsman by a friend who lived in Holland. There was also one notice in the Sapper magazine and we didn't have any response to it. The Soldier magazine and Legion magazine, often contain information on searching for old friends, but again, not many read them these days. So you can see, it will be mainly letter writing, or telephoning. Some people search the telephone books, but as they only use initials and not Christian names, much time and money can be wasted by searching for people with the same initial, but different Christian name.

When you are ready to start your search, I suggest you make yourself known to the BOBA Membership Secretary, who will know the names of those who have joined BOBA from your group. He may also know of some who have been located, but never joined BOBA. This will avoid your looking for someone already found. I struck up a good relationship with the Membership Secretary and was in touch with him when anyone was located, as I passed their address on to him, so that they could be sent information on the BOBA.

Our BOBA reunions are already advertised on Teletext, so I did not search via this medium.

Assuming you use the UK Information Disk as your main search tool, there are some techniques you can use to reduce your time and costs. Initially, to give yourself confidence, try seeking those with unusual names, and those with more than one Christian name. These usually provide a short (or shorter) list of names. If you are already in touch with some of your group, check with them if they recall where old

friends used to live, or moved to on retirement. This may help you in deciding the order you will contact people on the list. It is worth keeping a record of who you have either written to or telephoned. When I sent a letter to someone on the list, I usually waited 7-10 days for a reply, and then if no reply was received, I wrote to the next possible contact. On the odd occasion, I later received a reply from an earlier enquiry, as the person being sought had been away on holiday. I had at any one time between six to ten letters awaiting reply. I always included my telephone number in my letter, and many people rang me to tell me they were not the person being sought, but wished me well in my search. This meant I could write to someone else on that list much sooner.

Once you are in touch with someone, ask did he complete pensionable service, and did he know the names of any others who completed pensionable service. Also ask who he has met since leaving Chepstow, and where they lived, or retired to. If they know the name of the person's wife, this can help reduce your search time, as you can filter out a lot of names on the list. This can be done by carrying out a search for the wife (by postcode) and checking if the address matches the person initially being sought. When lists were large, I also checked by postcode all those of the same surname, as this showed up other family members. I discovered it sometimes paid to write to those living alone. I had a good deal of success with this on some who were alone at an address, as many of us in our mid sixties become widowed.

I tried initially to locate people without approaching the Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow, until I had exhausted other means. Their address is:

Army Personnel Centre
HQ Secretariat – Relations with the Public Wing
MP 520
Kentigern House
65 Brown Street
Glasgow
G2 8EX

You should only approach them about other ranks who completed pensionable service. They cannot help with those who do not receive a service pension, or who were retired to commission. They will not give you details of the person. I provided letters to those I was seeking, in a stamped unsealed envelope, and the persons service number, forename/s and surname in pencil on the outside of the envelope. The letters were sent under cover of a letter to the Army Personnel Centre (APC) given above. In the letter to the APC, I listed the Service number etc. of the people being sought. I received a reply to my enquiry telling me the names of those they had no record of and had their letters returned. I only made the one approach to the APC, so that they would not become annoyed if they received too many requests over a period of time. You can also search through the Army List Part II, which lists those Retired Officers in receipt of a pension. Most large libraries hold copies of the Army List in their Reference Section. If not on display, ask if they hold a copy, which may not be for general display. The Beachley enlistment data is a great help, as you will have everyone's initial/s, surname and date of birth, which is a great help when searching the Army List. I suggest you try to trace retired officers via someone who was commissioned. Another way a retired officer may be able to help is if he is a member of his Corps Institution. If so, he will have a list of retired officers of his Corps who are also members, and he may be prepared to forward your letter to the person.

Don't be put off by what might appear to be a difficult task, as once you find that first person, and experience the excitement of his having been located, you will want to carry on finding others. From having met so many of my group since I started my search I can tell you it was worth all the time and effort. They are grateful for my efforts in finding them and we are now one large family of friends once more.

When you find someone, ask if you can pass their details on to the membership secretary, as if you leave it to them, they may forget. From experience, about half of those located join BOBA, but do try to increase our membership, so that we can survive as an association.

Good luck in your searches.

Brigadier W M R Addison (1935 - 2000)

Mike Addison, a veteran of 9 Para Sqn RE and 59 Commando Sqn RE, was Commandant of the Army Apprentices College Chepstow from January 1980 to May 1983. He became President of new BOBA at the AGM in 1995, handing over to the current holder, Colonel Alan Holman in 1997. He died on 10th December 2000.

Arriving in early 1980, he was tasked with reviewing military, educational and trade training provided by the College in relation to the likely needs of its apprentices and the Army throughout the 1980s. This was to be set against the College Charter objectives of producing apprentices capable of becoming the future SNCOs, WOs and officers of their Corps. He published his views in two documents during 1980 entitled 'Chepstow in the 80s'. Much was to change!

The three College companies became five, A Coy to E Coy. Each company served only certain trades and military, education and trade training were established in a new military command structure under each company commander. Two of the company commanders were 'workshop officers' in the revamped 'New Model Chepstow'. There was emphasis placed on developing the apprentice in not just his military and trade skills but in bringing him to manhood. The Peninsular Club was a licenced club effectively run by a committee of apprentices. It organised discos, games nights, hired entertainers and brought in female company from near and far. Motor cycles could be brought into camp in the apprentice's second year. TEC courses began and apprentices began taking Regular Army EPC exams.

Mike Addison was an energetic and enthusiastic Commandant whose views about the best ways to develop the apprentices for the benefit of the Service and how the College should be organised did not always find resonance with all the staff at Beachley. He was a deep-thinking, warm and friendly gentleman who was able to talk easily with all ranks. He had retired to the Isle of Seil, just south of Oban in Scotland. The Executive Committee and members of BOBA offer their condolences to his family.



Len is the author of the wonderfully readable story 'A Sapper's War' which is now in its third print and is selling in UK, Canada and Australia.

Both Tom and Len reckon the BOBA Reunion is the main date in their calendar giving them the opportunity of meeting-up with loyal friends of many year's standing. Keep coming boys!

40D Pals at Reunion 2000

Tom Melhuish (left) and Len Watkins, ex-apprentice stone masons, caught enjoying the sun outside the Old Course Hotel last year.

Leaving Beachley in early 1941, Tom served through WW2 and was involved in the D Day landings winning the Military Medal for bravery on mine clearing. He left the Service in 1948 and worked in prison construction.

Len took part in the beach landings in N Africa in November 1942 and Italy in September 1943 and was wounded in 1945.

He became a Military Clerk of Works in 1950 and left the Service in 1959. Len then worked as a civilian Clk Wks and oversaw the demolition and construction of Beachley Camp in 1960. After various MPBW / PSA posts in S Wales, he retired in 1982.

Brigadier SE Chambers CBE

31/10/1912 - 16/06/2000

Brig Sam Chambers, late RE, was the first army apprentice to reach the rank of brigadier. He joined Beachley in 1926, the son of an Army family. He won the MBE and was mentioned in despatches for the Rhine crossing, also being mentioned in despatches later in Palestine. He retired in 1973, 47 years after joining Chepstow.

Captain George Crump MBE (1931 - 2000)

Although confined to a wheelchair for thirty five years, George was a giant personality, a rare wit, and a source of inspiration to thousands of Army Apprentices and athletes, military and civilian, in South Wales and beyond. At the time of his death in May last year George, a full BOBA member, had agreed to write the remaining part of the 'The Story Of The Army Apprentices College Chepstow'.

Born in Droitwich, George joined National service in 1949 with the Royal Welch Regt later becoming a regular with a posting to Singapore. He joined the RAEC in the early 50s and met Sheila at the RAEC HQ at Beaconsfield in 1953; they married the next year. He was one of the youngest WO2s in the Army at the precocious age of 22 and a gifted athlete, having once beaten Christopher Chataway in a middle distance race. After tours to Cyprus and Germany and a year at Goldsmith's College in London, he was commissioned in 1962 and posted to Beachley. He spent the next 32 years on the staff as an RAEC officer and civilian lecturer.

George was offered Boxing or Cross Country on arrival and chose the latter. He loved being OIC X Country but it was while running along the back of Sedbury Park in 1965 that a cliff gave way and he fell suffering the spinal injury that kept him in hospital for seven months and in a wheelchair for the rest of his life. After his discharge from the Service, George took up a civilian post and soon picked up X Country reins again. The list of his achievements and appointments held in Army and South Wales athletics is very long and there is room for no more than a brief mention.

He helped form the Gwent X Country League, was at times its Treasurer, Secretary and Chairman. He was President of the Welsh X Country Association for fourteen years and was heavily involved in bringing the 1976 World Championships to Chepstow. In recognition of their dedication to their sport, George and Sheila won a National Barclaycard 'hidden heroes'.

A Hospital Pass

Fortunately I was in Cardiff Military hospital when several of Nelson's artifacts were stolen from the Monmouth Museum. An Educational Corps Captain had our lot assembled together and all orbs, rapiers, letters and memorabilia were returned. Punishment was never metered out because the captain had to promise immunity before anything, at all, was given back. He had the museum curator breathing down his neck and not wanting the incident to go public he kept the incident to himself ... Thus it was well hushed up inside the Beachley Camp boundaries - and in Monmouth.

Towards the end of my time in Cardiff Military Hospital I was allowed out and one day went with a regular army corporal to the local cinema. I was not yet fifteen and used to help him dress because he had a gammy arm which was still too stiff. We were walking along a busy street and up dashed a chubby woman, "Well look yew, two of our boys" she went on to ask where we'd copped our injuries. The corporal answered and I was cut off with, "Well, would yew ever. And yew such a young boy, an' all, to 'ave been fighting the Jerry in North Africa." She promptly gave us ten shillings each ... a lot of money in 1944!



award in 1988, George having received the MBE back in 1979. During the whole of his service at Beachley right up to the closure, George was X Country.

George was also interested in most kinds of music and was an accomplished linguist. He mainly taught maths and map reading to decades of boys and ran Beachley Library for many years. When he came out of hospital and was still in bed, he wrote the first of five Beachley pantomimes! He also penned an adaption of Dickens' Christmas Carol.

In 1997, George organised the first of the annual BEDROCK Reunions for Beachley Education Staff at the Old Course Hotel, Chepstow. It was a great success and now attracts between 25 and 40 each year in October. In 2000, Sheila organised things after George died in the May and will do so again this year - we wish her luck. However, it won't be easy to replace George's wonderful enthusiasm, wit and host of stories.

John Bass 44A

**BOBA Reunion
50A & 50B Group 50th Anniversary
By Joe Kinson**

The petrol crisis sadly reduced the numbers from the 50 groups able to attend the BOBA Reunion in September 2000. Most of those from our groups were attending the reunion in Chepstow for the first time in many years; in my case the last BOBA Reunion attended was in 1955. It was a special treat for me to meet so many of 50A and 50B located after February 2000, and the BOBA Committee members with whom I have been in contact whilst doing my searches for old friends. All those of us who were attending our 50th Anniversary reunion, were impressed with our welcome to what was for us a very special occasion.

I have already entered the dates of the next reunion in my diary, and hope to be able to attend.

Chepstow has changed much since we left in 1953, and we enjoyed touring the old well known haunts, which brought back memories of friends in days gone by.

Sadly many were unable to attend the Church service at Beachley, for various reasons, but those of us who attended, enjoyed the service. I would personally like to record my thanks to Roy Barnett

(50A) and George Horton (50B) who carried the Standards so professionally; and to those who helped me with the collection in the church. The honour of celebrating their 50th Anniversary falls to 51A and 51B groups in September 2001. So to those who will be attending from 51A and 51B groups, be prepared to carry out these two tasks, after all it is your special weekend.

To those BOBA members who will be attending their 50th Anniversary reunion in the next few years, it is worth making the effort to attend and I trust you will enjoy your reunion as much as those from 50A and 50B groups enjoyed ours last year.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR FEES ARE PAID UP TO DATE?

My predecessor appealed in most 'Beachley Echoes' copies for payment of membership fees. You may be unaware of the following progressive steps in membership fees and the payments voted upon by the members attending the relevant Annual General Meetings:

In 1994 a membership fee of £10 per annum was voted in at the 1994 new BOBA AGM. (That was for £10 to be paid by each member, each year and every year).

At the 1997 AGM, the membership fee was reduced to a paid-up membership of £50, or 5 x £10 payments over five years. (This decision could be reversed by the BOBA membership at any future AGM, should BOBA finances require it. This is certainly not the case at present and is not expected to be in the foreseen future.)

Despite all the appeals in successive newsletters, it sadly became necessary for the incoming Membership Secretary to write to over 190

members to ask for payment of arrears in membership fees, in an attempt to clarify the position. It was an almost impossible task to write a standard letter, which was addressed to 190 people, to make it suit everyone's situation precisely. Nonetheless, a real genuine attempt was made to write the letter with the best interest of all BOBA members and new BOBA Organisation in mind.

In response many members have paid the arrears and become fully paid up. Two members have even proven to be already paid up and BOBA records in error. A very few members resigned stating varying reasons why they considered their resignation necessary! The Committee wishes the resigning ex-Beachley Boys good fortune and good health, but encourage them wholeheartedly to consider re-joining new BOBA in the near future.

Have you paid your membership fees? If the answer is yes, thank you! However, should you suspect, or know you have outstanding fees, please sort out the situation by contacting:

1. The BOBA Membership Secretary: John Furley, 9 Park View, Sedbury, Chepstow, NP16 7BE. .
2. Telephone: 01291 630491 Fax: 630492
3. email: "mailto:membership@bobabeachley.org.uk" membership@boba-beachley.org.uk

Please Cancel Your Standing Order When You become Paid-Up!

BOBA 2000 Golf Report

The BOBA Golfing Society now boasts 32 members, including one lady. Eighteen of our members made it to this year's competition, with only one having to cancel due to the fuel crisis, a reflection of the determination shown by the BOBA members in general. The former farmland of Elwyn Lewis at Dewstow in Caerwent provides two excellent golf courses with some breathtaking views over the Severn estuary, provided you pick the right weather !!

Nine golfers took part in the practice round on the Park course on Friday afternoon, the rest had obviously watched the weather report. This year's competition was the first one not to be organised by Ken Standen who had the original idea. Ken is a member at Dewstow and has done much over the years to further the goodwill which the Society now enjoys. It was great to see him there on the Saturday morning looking so well and although he didn't feel up to playing, he chauffeured one of the co-organisers around in a buggy and assisted with the course signing. All of the golfers wish Ken and Julie all the best for the future, see you next year.

Glen Chalmers and Tony Battle were this year's organisers, with Tony being our man on the spot. One bright idea for the new Millennium was to print personalised score cards for the competition bearing the Association badge and logo. Like many well-laid plans it was fine till the eleventh hour when we discovered we had to play a different course! Undaunted a late switch was made but in haste a small error was made rendering them unusable, maybe 2001.

The golfers received a full copy of the results however, for the record: 18 Hole Stableford Winner with 35 Points - Glen Chalmers 56B, Runner-Up 35 Points John Green - 73C, Third 35 Points - Tony Battle - 57B, Note: In the event of a tie like this the points on the last nine holes are compared to find a winner, they were 18, 17 and 16 respectively. Longest Drive at 4th Hole: Andy Foster 75C, 252 yards.



Nearest the Pin at 18th Hole Peter Robinson 73C, 5 ft 11ins. Best Par 3 Aggregate (4 holes) Kevin Staples 66C, 14 points. Note: We haven't gone Metric yet! The photograph shows the winners with their trophies, (L to R) Andy Foster, Peter Robertson, Glen Chalmers and Kevin Staples. Our thanks to all those who took part, we look forward to seeing you all next year, just complete the application form on the back page.

Glen Chalmers

Pen Picture : Peter Ashford 46A

Peter has attended the Reunion for the last few years, joining New BOBA a few years back.

Peter passed out in 1949 joining RASC / REME as a VM. He spent plenty of time abroad serving in Japan, Korea, Malaya, Cyprus, Kenya and Singapore as well as various UK postings.

Peter married Muriel in 1952 and after a full career left the Service in 1971 going on to work for Security Express. A feathered bird watcher, Peter retired in 1996 and lives in S Wales.



Dear Dave

Just received my Beachley Echoes (2000) and read about the Band. I was in 50A and a band member.

I remember 'Bloggs' Porter 50B, cornet and 'Ush' Usherwood, 48B, clarinet. Ush was my tutor in the time-honoured art of nicking food from the Kitchen and Grocery Store. We had a few narrow escapes.

In February (2000) I wrote to the Director of Music, Coldstream Guards to ask if they had ever recorded "the Army Apprentice" and, if so, was it available to buy. I'm still waiting for a reply.

Joe Kinson's bit about our Reunion at Arborfield left something out which I thought was a rather nice thing to do. When we RE rowdies sang the CRE, RSM Parsons REME joined in and mimed! It was great to see some of the old gang again. My thanks again to Joe Kinson for setting things up.

Best regards. Peter Bignell 50A

(Sorry, no room for the picture Peter)

The 2001 BOBA Open Golf Championships

The BOBA Open is in the form of an 18 hole Stableford competition open to all members and their partners. It will be held at **Dewstow Golf Club, Caerwent on Saturday 15th September 2001**. There is also an opportunity to play on the Friday afternoon under personal arrangements. Please indicate below if you wish to play on the Friday and we will make a block booking tee reservation.

This year a new trophy is being donated by George Murray, 43A Group for "drawn pairs". This does not mean you have to play as a pair, just that the scores of the pair will be added together to decide the winners.

All golfers should assemble in the main clubhouse at 8.15 am on Saturday morning. All those wishing to enter should complete the form below and return it as indicated, with a cheque for £23 made payable to 'BOBA', **BEFORE SATURDAY 8th SEPTEMBER 2001**.

----- PLEASE CUT HERE -----

RETURN TO: **Glen Chalmers, 20 Morrison Road, Swanage, Dorset, BH19 1JL.**

Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS.

Rank/Title: Surname:

Forename: Address:

.....

..... Postcode:

Telephone Numbers: Home..... Mobile.....

Chepstow Group/intake: Member at: (Golf club)

Handicap: I would like to play with:

I wish to play on Friday afternoon: *YES/NO (*Delete as applicable)

I enclose a cheque made payable to "BOBA" to the value of £23.00

Signed: Date: