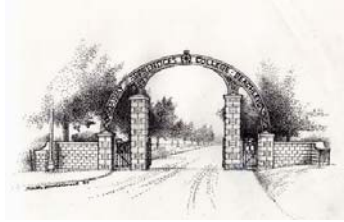




Beachley



Echoes

Edition No. 10 ~ May 2004

Our New Association Headquarters and Virtual Museum: St. John's Chapel (SJC) - v - The Old School House (OSH) Which building is the best for our needs and our pocket?



St. John's at Beachley

The Old School House

The deliberation of which building is the most viable progresses. David Chapman's sub committee is conducting a survey to discover which of the building's is the most viable for our needs. One thing for sure, the BOBA members have made their thoughts abundantly clear, 65% of you want (SJC) as our BOBA new headquarters. A second opinion was required to double check the information John Furley, as Liaison, had already researched. Some of these 2nd results must be questioned, For example the unnecessary use of Government Actuary Life tables; which include all walks of life and decidedly not conducive with ex Beachley Boys, who do not need the misleading variants of 100% civilian life, required in wider research.

Chairman Syd Thomas and Liaison John Furley held a meeting with the '160 Brigade Cwmbran Lands representative' at (OSH). Mr. Fogg the 160 Rep was not convinced the MOD would sell the (OSH) directly to BOBA. In his opinion the MOD, may place it on the open market. The committee decided BOBA members need to know the position on and very soon!

Initially we need to ask ourselves two factual questions: Firstly 'What do we need and not just want?' The second question is: 'What can our Association actually afford?'

The obvious answer to the first question is 65%

our membership have stated BOBA needs a home for our headquarters.

A response to the second question is not quite so simple: facing the quandary in not knowing what the asking price will be for the (OSH) on the open market, please do not forget the extensive costs of refurbishment here too? Added to this we do not yet know if the MOD is, or will be interested in selling the (OSH). On the other hand we do know we have the current opportunity to purchase (SJC) for £5,000:00 right now. Agreed this is plus the extensive cost of refurbishment. However, we could roughly guess that the two choices would run out about the same cost each eventually.

An important factor to consider is: the Diocese terms to purchase (SJC) currently do include a tight restriction on the resale of the building. If we purchased the (OSH) this would not apply and we could sell, or leave it to whom ever we chose. However, we are in a position to use the situation and request the Diocese of Gloucester, to change the restriction clause for resale, to grant BOBA the same latitude as the (OSH) would allow.

The final decision will be down to you the BOBA membership. In considering all the information that will be available by and at the BOBA AGM 2004 reunion and then vote as you see the best way forward for the Association to remedy this fretful situation.

David Chapman's opinion on St. John's & the Old School House + on pages 24 to 33.



BOBA Reunion 2003: 50th of 53A lead by A/T RSM's 'Hector' Hay and 53B by 'Robbo' Robinson

It was early 2002 when I started to think about the 50th Anniversary for 53 Group and as an ex A/T RSM thought that I should do something about trying to get as many as possible to attend the BOBA Reunion in Sept 03. Typically for me it was a matter of getting started, once I got a 'ROUNDTUIT' when out of the blue I received a letter from Chris Irish 53A C Coy saying that he was trying to contact our old group and Alec Beach from 53B D Coy was doing the same for his group. I could not place either Chris or Alec but as they were both regular attendees at the BOBA Reunions we agreed to meet up at Chepstow in the Sept and discuss progress.

Unfortunately due to illness Chris was not able to attend but he and Alec had already gone to a considerable effort to trace people with willing assistance from John Furley our Membership Secretary. The search continued and adverts were placed in the Sapper, Craftsman and Soldier magazines, and the Internet etc. Chris had already made contact with some of 53A with varying responses from *definitely* to *perhaps* the occasional, but minimum, *not interested* and those that sadly were not in the best of health. When some of us found that we were not too far away from each other we had an enjoyable mini gathering at a pub in Larkhill in Oct 02 where plenty of stories were told and gallons of Coke consumed with a parting of see you in Sept '03.

I wrote to all of those who were interested or for whom we had addresses (34 people), encouraging them to join the BOBA, if not already members, and to attend our 50th. There followed a number of phone calls to chase the undecided and advice to book early for accommodation. Sadly some did not heed the advice and there was 'no room at the inn' in more ways than one as the maximum numbers for sitting at the Dinner had been reached and overflowed into Chepstow town to eat elsewhere and return to the Hotel afterwards.

In the end 15 of us made it for the weekend, mostly with their better halves, and Bill Barratt and Ron Greenhalgh, both of who live locally, turned up at the hotel on the Saturday evening. That junior group, 53B, had an even larger attendance with 19 there. The 53A contingent were Pete Ayers, Tony Bunce, Tim Cutler, Vic Diment, Keith Ellis, Tony Formstone, Malcolm Hay, Tim Holt, Chris Irish, Pete Le Provost Frank Lobban, Geoff Watkins, Ken Williams, Bob Wise and John Woods.

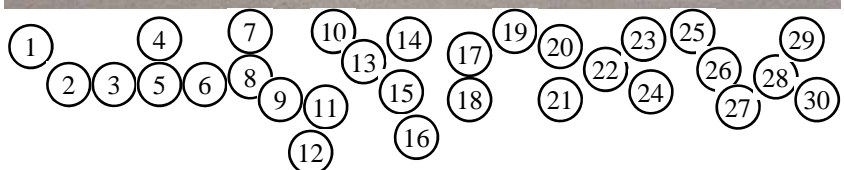
It was a great weekend with most of us not having seen each other for 50 years, with a mixture of those who left the Army at the first opportunity, completed 22 years or were commissioned and went on until they were 55. There were happy stories and sad ones but I think all of us found that we probably did not get round to talking with everyone we knew and often a recognition prompt was needed. The majority were on parade for the Church service on Sunday with the A/T RSM's of both Groups present and carrying the Standards. Promises were made to meet again next year and let's hope that they are kept. To anyone going this year remember: - **BOOK EARLY.**

Malcolm (Hector) Hay 53A



**2003 REUNION CHURCH PARADE
A/T RSM's WITH THE STANDARDS**

Malcolm (Hector) Hay 53A
Chris (Robbo) Robertson 53B



1	Gordon Cook	6	Geoff Watkins	11	Ken Stout	16	Gordon Jefford	21	Pete le Provost	26	Chris Irish
2	Alan Floyd	7	John Fleming	12	Gordon Butcher	17	Stan Wildash	22	Ken Williams	27	Bob Wise
3	Tim Holt	8	Pete Gilbey	13	Bob Bone	18	Terry Williams	23	Joe Redfern	28	Tony Bunce
4	Chris Robertson	9	Terry Stratton	14	Nigel Webb	19	Alan Reed	24	Frank Lobban	29	Hector Hay
5	Terry Riley	10	Rex Baker	15	Alec Beach	20	Roy Williamson	25	John Woods	30	Dave Wilmont



The Chairman's Jottings:



A very busy year ~ as those that attended the AGM will know we debated two very important issues for the future of BOBA.

The main topic was a permanent home for BOBA, involving the purchase of St. Johns Church and its conversion into a suitable home for BOBA. On pages 24 to 30 you will find Dave Chapman's (BOBA HQ Future) progress report and the Editor's cover page and comments. Plenty of 'Food for thought'.

I have tried to get the MOD to release The Old School House, but have not yet received a reply of any substance. The receipt of a £600.00 donation typifies the strength of feeling amongst our BOBA membership; this as a result of "Donation to the BOBA Heritage Project" at the recent funeral of the late Bob Hewitt, 37 Group.

Second we discussed a successor to our now retired President Colonel Alan. Eventually I was nominated and it was agreed to allow me to stay as Chairman to cover the difficult period of the next two years and let the new members of the Committee 'bed in' prior to more changes. As things evolved the change of Committee members did not come about for one reason or another, only two changes were ratified. Nonetheless, I WILL stand down as Chairman at the 2005 AGM and become your President.

Now I come to a most vital plea: –

WE NEED NEW BLOOD ON THE BOBA COMMITTEE!!!

If we are to continue and maintain the Association as a First Class concern there is a need for at least 3 new committee members.

Membership Secretary – John Furley has found a volunteer in Rocky Evershed 61B to take on Membership Secretary. This allows John more time for the charitable jobs he strives with beyond BOBA.

Webmaster – A vital recruiting tool, we need someone to relieve John of this task and develop the site to its full potential. The rewrite of the site is under way and should be complete in the next few weeks.

Treasurer – Tony Waite's must have someone ready to takeover after this year.

Other members of the committee, Dave Chapman and Peter Burridge, have expressed their wish to stand down after 11 years - but will not do so until someone is ready to take over. There must be those amid our 740 + members who are prepared to come forward to ensure continuity of the Association's Committee.

BOBA NEEDS YOU NOW!

Please advise me, or one of the committee, if you are willing to take on a particular post, or perhaps just willing to help out as a committee member.

I expect you will have noted that Junior Training at Arborfield is to be transferred to Harrogate in 2004 with Arborfield Garrison's closure. All Military Trade Training will in future be completed in Regular Army Training Centres. What are the odds that trade training will become Tri Service within a year or two?

There is no Ladies Column this year. Ladies Dinner - as this year will be the last without a 'Chairman's Wife/Partner', I will come to speak to the Ladies after your dinner to say goodbye as Chairman and thank you for your support.

Cenotaph Parade: Went exceptionally well in 2003, BUT we certainly could do with more attending this very emotional and serious event. Think about it: "They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, We will remember them!"

Two suggestions for proposal at the AGM:

1. To ease accounting and enable audited accounts for Echoes publishing date, year end accounting needs to change to - 31st December from 31st March. (Rules for the Treasurer para 1 line 3)
2. Our annual Membership Subscription income has dropped from approx £4000 to £500 we NEED to reintroduce the Annual Fee of £10 for 5 years. This will ensure we have a 'working cash flow' for the next five years.

Hopefully, see you in September!

God bless and may Fair Winds propel you in your chosen direction.

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Reunion 2003 Continued

Some of the 1953 supporters club after reunion church September 2003



Left to right: Sheree Stout, Hilary Riley, Audrey Robertson, Kath Butcher, Chris Beach, Kay Bone and Jennie Reed.

Editors Note:

I apologise to all who have written in with an article that has not been published in this 2004 Echoes issue.

I have a record of all these entries and will endeavour to ensure to publish them in the No 11 2005 Echoes.

It has indeed been a very successful year with regard to article supply, please keep them coming.

John Furley ~ Ed.

Army Junior Entry ~

Modernisation And Rationalisation: (Copied from the REME Magazine 'The Craftsman 4/04').

The Army Training and Recruiting Agency (ATRA) is restructuring and improving the way in which Junior Entry (JE) training is currently provided. This will involve opening the best junior entrants from a broader spectrum of Arms and Services, allowing the closure of the Army Technical Foundation College (ATFC) at Arborfield in August 2004.

- Higher quality recruits destined for the technical Arms and Services will be trained at AFC at Harrogate.
- There will be no reduction in the Army's commitment or ability to accept suitable junior applicants onto appropriate Junior courses.
- The ATFC offers Foundation Modern Apprenticeships (FMA) to 1300 junior soldiers a year, and these will be tailored to meet the requirements of those recruits destined for the technical services.
- The ATRA currently offers nearly 4,000 Junior Entry (JE) course places at its Phase 1 training establishments. JE makes a highly valued and continued contribution to the overall Army entry and is currently delivered in three different formats on three sites (Bassingbourn, Arborfield and Harrogate).
- Three major inefficiencies in the current arrangements have been identified:
- The current ATFC course is neither challenging enough for those JE of the highest quality, nor is it long enough to adequately prepare those of the lower quality for the technical demands of Phase 2 courses.
- There are insufficient high-quality combat arm recruits to fill the 1344 places available annually at the Army Foundation College (AFC) Harrogate.
- Many JE course vacancies are being filled by recruits who are old enough to be placed on the courses at adult Phase 1 training regiments. These individuals filled 22% of last year's JE places.

Under the Defence Training Review (DTR) Rationalisation Programme the whole Arborfield site is a candidate to be alienated, as the Defence individual training community consolidates onto fewer, larger sites. As a lodger unit, it would be uneconomical to operate ATFC in isolation at Arborfield beyond that date. Therefore it has been decided to alter JE Phase 1 training to resolve the current JE inefficiencies and concurrently close the ATRA's significant resource gap. This will result in the closure of the ATFC in August of this year. Army training Regiment (ATR) Bassingbourn will continue to run the Army's other JE entry route for those not entering the ATFC.

As the flagship JE leadership and development college, the ATFC was designed to improve recruiting and retention for the combat arm's higher grade JE recruits. Opening the AFC to the more able JE soldiers in the technical services will undoubtedly raise the standards and ensure a good balance of these high quality junior soldiers across the Army.

The opportunities for more relevant apprenticeship training will continue will be provided as the new courses evolve. Apprenticeship training is not now confined to Phase 1 and Phase 2, but extends into the early years of a soldiers time in the Field Army.

This is exact copy of the article produced by Army Training and Recruitment Agency. It is not meant to be and is not necessarily an opinion of any member of BOBA or its committee.



Dear Members,



*Jack Tennuci 41 Group
BOBA Reunion 2001*

The 2003 BOBA Reunion unfortunately was my last for personal and family reasons, so a letter of thanks is in order. 1988 was the first year I attended a BOBA Reunion, it was the 50th Anniversary of Groups 41 and 42, from that year on I attended alternate years. Other alternate years I attended the Arnhem Pilgrimage after my brother died in November 1983. Those reunions were most enjoyable times and will be in my thoughts for the rest of my life. The one year that I managed to persuade my wife Ellie to attend, she mentioned the camaraderie of the men, and the fine welcome to a stranger by the Ladies, which impressed her immensely. I was fortunate in these past 15 years to meet many interesting personalities; from one in No. 1 Group to the young ones of 1978 year. no names no pack drill. If only I had had the time and energy to compile a list of those stories they might have surpassed the popularity of Aesop's Fables!! Each pint of beer brought forth more details, which would have filled Book Two.

It's not practicable, nor politic to mention all those friends whom I got to know, they know who they are. I thank them again for their comradeship. But thanks are due to all those BOBA Executives and their hardworking assistants who have made, over the years, a great effort to keep the Association going despite the disruptions mainly due to government planning. To all those ex-boys of Beachley that have passed on, I say Rest in Peace Lads.

Goodbye Friends.

Sincerely, Jack and Ellie Tennuci.

God bless Jack ~ John Furley Ed.

50A & 50 B Group Reunion Feb 2004 ~ By Joe Kinson 50A Group

This is the fifth 1950 groups reunion I have organised, and the fourth at which we have held a combined groups reunion. The reunion this year is the second, which was held in Aldershot at the Potters International Hotel, with 22 people attending, sadly not the 24 who had planned to attend. The two having to miss attending the reunion, was due to illness just before the reunion.

The hotel gave us very good service once again, and we plan another reunion next year at the same venue. We enjoyed a very good three-course meal, and from the comments I have received by letter, card, telephone and email, they all enjoyed the function, and are looking forward to another next year.

These reunions give us a chance to meet in a small group and it is not intended to replace the annual BOBA Reunion. I use these reunions to try to glean information from those attending, so that I can continue my search for people whom we still have not located, as although our 50th Anniversary reunion is now in the past, I remain keen to find as many from both Groups as possible. I do this in order to increase attendance at our functions, and the BOBA Reunions each September.

PRO RATA 'PENSIONS FIGHT' BY THOSE WHO DIDN'T SERVE 22 YEARS PRIOR TO 1975.

Formation of the "Combined Armed Forces Federation UK", was made for those who didn't serve 22 years with the Forces prior to 1975, there are a growing number of chaps who have banded together to fight for pro rata pensions specifically for those who served less than 22 years prior to 1975.

Should you be interested to learn more of this subject, the Secretary General of CAFF UK is:

David Robson, 34 Raynes Road, Lee-on-the-Solent, Hampshire, PO13 9AL.
Possible Telephone No: 02392 552661 (Obtained from Electoral Roll)

For Internet users the website address is: <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/david.robson90/id21.htm>

Ed: John Symes of 47A informed the editor of this organisation and Ed. was requested to pass the information on to interested BOBA members, although the founder of CAFF UK, David Robson was Fleet Air Arm, it was realised more than a few ex Beachley Boys may be in this bracket and could be interested in this subject.



Alice Harper's Jungle Story for TV: -

Alice has appeared in a new TV series named 'War in the Jungle', the local Clevedon Mercury newspaper published this extraordinary story of Alice's 'Wonderland'.

This remarkable war story of this Portishead lady was told as part of a new TV series in February last, of this year.

Alice told her story of growing up in war time Malaya and appeared on ITV's 'Hope and Glory' programme as part of a six-part series.

Born in Kuala Lumpur in 1932, Alice, now aged 71, was the daughter of a Scottish rubber plantation manager, who met and later married a dashing young British soldier in Malaya in 1949.

The household in which Alice grew up was the only British one in many miles and therefore her childhood was filled with all the dangers and excitement of the jungle. Often escorted by Tamil 'Tappers' who sported large sticks with which to ward off Tigers, or Elephants from the path of her frequent journeys to Kuala Lumpur.

Alice related, 'When I first moved to England at 17 years of age, I was shocked to realise how different it was in England to the Far East. I really knew little more than I had seen in the movies and Newsreels. However I had learned a great deal about England and its history as a child, so I was able to settle quickly and happily to the British way of life. When Stan and I arrived in England it was winter and absolutely freezing, I was grateful when we were eventually posted back to Malaya, even though it was for the emergency situation, where Stan was employed building barracks for the troops'.

The ITV programme makers appeared interested in my story because of the romantic angle and had been looking for young soldiers of those days from the West. Anyway, programmes like this are good for History, as most of the younger generation are unaware of events in the Far East and how the presence of British service personnel out there formed and shaped the history of today.

Alice has lived in Portishead for eight years, Stan and Alice marked their golden wedding anniversary there in 1999. Sadly Stan died almost two years ago now, but theirs was a long and happy life together. Stan met Alice whilst playing badminton in Malaya and on settling in Portishead, Stan formed the town's badminton club, where a plaque in his honour and memory is displayed.

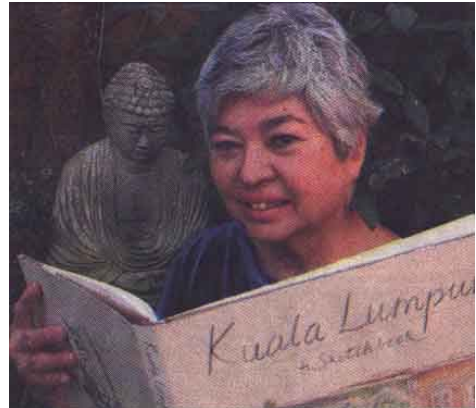
Unusually Stan was given a military funeral by the Malayan and Borneo Veterans' Association, Alice has returned to Malaya to visit some of the places that had become so important to Stan. Alice said: 'As soon as I arrived in Malaya, I knew immediately I could not live there again. Portishead is my home now and I'll live and die here'.

Programme researcher Clair Titley said: 'The programme makes extensive use of the stories of life, that would have otherwise been lost to history. It demonstrates the important role of oral history in understanding the triumphs and tragedies of everyday life in the past. The series uses previously unseen archive footage, much of it in colour, to illustrate the intimate stories of people who journeyed across the Empire to settle in the West.

Alice's story appeared as part of the fourth episode of, 'War In The Jungle', which was broadcast at 19.30 hours on Thursday, 19 February 2004.

Best wishes from Alice Harper.
(Well done Alice, keep you chin up, ED!)

Alice Harper the widow of the late Stan Harper ~ 42A 'D' Coy



Stan & Alice's wedding 3rd September 1949
Kuala Lumpur ~ Malaya

**55A GROUP ARRIVES AT BEACHLEY****The personal memories of Bill (Willy) Welch ~ could be a touch hazy after almost 50 years!**

February 7-12 1955 saw the arrival of approximately 120 apprehensive but willing souls at the gates of Beachley Army Apprentices School, as it was then called, ready for whatever was to come! Little did we know!

February is not a good month to be in Chepstow and for me, who arrived on 9-2-55 it was a little worse as my birthday happens to be 10th February. I cannot remember having a birthday party the following day, in fact we were woken by some screeching apparition exhorting us to put on our socks and stop playing with the hens or something like that! This rude awakening was the beginning of three years of intense action and reaction.

Visits to the MO Doc Bickmore, injections, issues of kit that looked as if it should belong to the guy three places in front of you, whose name you didn't know, the kit was miles too big, small, creased, used, dirty, for ME! Knob-bly boots that would soon be given the hot spoon and spit and polish treatment, whatever that was! Talks by NCO's, and Addresses by Officers, our first indication of the difference between us OR's and them the Officers!

Haircuts etc, all the routine gone through by many before us but so different to what we had left behind at home! Memories of L/Cpl Cagney (stim and gargle), 'G Flog Joe', otherwise known as gearbox, for his L/Cpl one up and three down good conduct stripes proudly displayed for his mailman duties! Major Machin OC HQ Coy, CSM (Bull) Morgan and a host of long forgotten HQ chivvies, forever pushing and insisting that you double to and from and sweep and clean and polish and dust and anything to keep you from legging it down the driveway and disappearing into the wild blue, or since it was Feb, black yonder! My main memory of HQ Coy being three days in hospital after the smallpox jab went berserk. I wound up with a scab that spread from waist to shoulders and all over my back! This ensuring life long immunity to smallpox! And only once did I have to sing "Beep! Beep! I'm a jeep, I'm A Bolo Rookie." Six months of HQ Company survived then on to better things.

By dint of having a name beginning with a 'W', arrived in D Coy and informed that this is the Champion Company and 'YOU' are about to keep it that way! Good Start! Billeted in one of those luxurious black and white beach shacks and being woken by the Band almost daily was not really any compensation for belonging to the Champion Company! When your name begins with a 'W' you accept what life has burdened you with and was also to follow me through army life, always at the end of the pay line and getting the dregs of any treats that came our way! The rest of the W's, S's, T's and R's turned out to be a good bunch of lads and we certainly did our bit.

Two & a half years of memories, being awarded half colours for Athletics - Hammer Throwing of all things! Full colours for Rugby, great team spirit among the players, losing a game to Harrogate 6 - 3 I think, the only game we lost in that season and that through blatant bias from a Harrogate referee who almost created Chepstow's only armed revolt that was finally quelled by non other than "Hairy Harry Hutton" the team coach! Being one of the few with 3 stars, red, blue and black on the sleeve!

Six months worth of filing dovetails and square things to fit in square holes already filed. Seeing Reg Matthews filing our work back to flat instead of a small mountainous hillock! Square bashing, loads of cleaning, polishing, moaning and groaning and the dreaded white belt! Learning how to be soldiers!

A night march on compass bearing during an exercise near Tintern Abbey, me in the lead figuring we were spot on the line required arriving at a lovely dry stone built wall blocking the path. What to do? Obviously over the top and get to the folding boats first and paddle across the river to the trucks for home! Over I went and found myself up to the waist in some glutinous, cloying, faintly, at first, aromatic substance which after a closer inspection I determined was some sort of pig mire!! I was Right, it was!! Calls from the other three lads, whose names I forget, "OK is it Willy?" So I thought why should I be the only one in the mire? Come on in lads the waters lovely! We always stunk together in D Coy!!! For some reason, the other lads were not too keen on letting us on the trucks even though we jumped in the river and removed all the impedimenta they were impolitely objecting to.

All in all, I do not think that those three years did any of us any lasting damage and in fact gave us a great basis for organising our lives in fact even today as I walk the dog on her daily trip to the newsagent I still breathe "In through the nose and out through the mouth" as Harry used to exhort us during his torture, err, training periods and I'm pretty sure I still take a regulation 26" pace? Must measure it one day! Three Years condensed to a page. Chepstow gave us something and then it was gone but not forgotten and we marched off the Square in February 1958 to another life, but that's another lot of memories. Fifty years since our first look at Beachley comes round in 2005. I hope to be there for the reunion and to see lots of old mates not spotted for 47 years or so. See ya then coppers!

Bill Welch ~ 55A 'D' Coy.

From deep in the bush of Western Australia and as far from the nearest piggery as I possibly can be!!



I used 2 fingers to write this.
No! My two index fingers!

“Come in front of me again ~ ~ and I will have you put in The Guardroom!”

By: John Furley 56A ~ Membership Secretary, BOBA Liaison, Webmaster,
Welfare S. Wales Gloucestershire & Bristol and your new Echoes Editor.



I had spent many weeks on 'Jankers', a result of the Beachley Regimental Police repeatedly charging me for petty misdemeanours. Subsequently 'The heading' of this 'article' was the fervent promise of Capt. Goodson, Glorious Gloucester's, the acting O.C. of 'D' Coy, to the Jankers king, 'A/T John (Butch) Furley' 56A 'D' Coy.

In late February 1958, it had transpired that my mother had been very ill, having suffered a severe angina attack and I applied for a 'day pass' to visit her in Forest Green, near Stroud the far side of the River Severn. (In those far off days a day pass was, as I remember, 06:00 hrs to 23:59 hrs). Travel was not an easy exercise, no personal cars, no Severn Bridge and vastly fewer vehicles on the road than later years, hitch hiking wasn't a reliable option for an 18 hours round trip, so I decided to conduct the entire trip of less than 18 hours and travel by train. I started from camp about 06:00 hrs, took off at the gallop and caught the early train out of Chepstow to Gloucester and after some waiting at Gloucester for a connection I arrived in Stroud at about 10:30 hrs. I walked, or ran most of the 5 miles home, visited with Mother for a few hours and very reluctantly set off back. Lucky for me I thought, there were excellent connections all the way back to Chepstow. At 21:00 hrs the train pulled out of Stroud to Gloucester to connect with the 22:00 hrs from Gloucester to Chepstow. All was going well, perhaps too well! Waiting patiently on the platform at Gloucester station, the announcement on the tannoy system expressed the train to Chepstow was running an hour late! The thought of doom clouded my mind, "My God after all my carefully structured planning, now I'm going to be late back to Beachley".

I could hear Capt. Goodson's warning 'Come in front of me again and I will have you put in the guardroom' and the metaphoric slamming of the cell door. I was trying to puzzle a way out, I mulled things over and over in my mind whilst the train sped toward Chepstow, I had to think of something! Ding!!! The penny dropped, there was always someone on duty at Chepstow station, I would get them to sign my pass to inform the Provo Staff in the Guardroom that the train was officially late. Watching with bated breath, as the train slowed in approach to Chepstow station. I couldn't believe my eyes, or my luck, the stationmaster was actually on duty and walking up the platform. I requested very politely if he would sign the back of my pass to relate to the Staff in Beachley that the train was exactly an hour late. With some reluctance he wrote a short message and signed the pass, and after further cajoling he placed a rendition of the station rubber stamp next to his signature. Safe at last I thought! And took off at an extended gallop for Beachley Camp, as fast as my little legs would carry me.

On arrival at the Guardroom at 00:45 hrs I discovered a particular permanent staff RP L/Cpl. was on duty, we didn't have too much time for each other, he was the kind of chap who liked to appear efficient and the more lads he could put on a charge, the better it appeared for him and the more it suited him. He didn't say too much at the time, but the very next day I was summoned to 'D' Coy office and discovered I had been charged with being absent without leave, in reporting 45 minutes late from my 18 hour pass on the previous Sunday. I was whisked in front of Capt. Goodson's desk and very curtly informed, "I warned you Furley, I remand you for CO's orders". From that point on that day a cloud of doom descended upon me, later I was marched down to the HQ block for C.O.'s orders. I had one strand of hope left, that the C.O. would see the fair side of things and realise it wasn't my fault that the train was late! The waiting in the corridor was agonising, I heard long and seemingly agitated discussions coming from the C.O.'s office, further frustrated as I couldn't hear what was said. After what seemed an eternity I was marched in front of the C.O., the charge was read out after which I was permitted to relate my true story of the late train. The C.O. then administered the hammer blow, "There is no excuse for lateness Furley, you should have caught an earlier train, 10 days detention! March out!"

Thunder struck and dumfounded I was marched directly to the Guardroom, to serve my 10 days. The second day of my punishment the new O.C. 'D' Coy commenced duty. Major Harry Porter, (sadly now deceased and buried in St. John's, Beachley cemetery, God rest him.) Major Harry was a pure gentleman and came to visit me on my 7th day of confinement. Following a lengthy 'chat' in my cell, announced I was doing well and I was to complete the sentence. He informed me he had looked into my past two years service at Beachley and I was to look forward to being a future A/T NCO in 'D' Coy. At the end of school term and true to his word I was promoted directly to A/T Cpl, which 'my now recovered Mum' and Dad thought was wonderful. All was forgiven; I much enjoyed the privacy of my bunk at the end of the old spider barrack room in Beachley. 'Food for thought': A couple of years ago 'The Lord Chief Justice, UK' expressed, 'What has justice to do with the law?' I can only think back and ponder, 'Or Army Regulations at Beachley in the 1950's for that matter!'



NEW BOBA MEMBERS JOINING IN THE LAST YEAR:

965	Mr.	Alan	Hart	52B	991	Mr.	Dave	Willmont	53B
966	Mr.	Chris	Wade	67C	992	Mr.	Robert	Rainey	61B
967	Mr.	Mick	Shearwood	69C	993	Mr.	Dave	Jordan	61A
968	Mr.	Tim	Cutler	53A	994	Mr.	Gordon	Cook	53B
969	Mr.	Peter	North	56B	995	Mr.	Keith	Babington-Browne	61A
970	Mr.	Victor	Diment	53A	996	Mr.	Mac	McKinlay	54A
971	Mr.	Vince	Jones	61B	997	Mr.	Stuart	Beveridge	49B
972	Mr.	Jeff	Lowndes	61B	998	Mr.	Tony	Littlewood	54A
973	Mr.	Ray	Hogg	64A	999	Mr.	David	Nicholson	54A
974	Mr.	Eric	Haggie	53B	1000	Mr.	Jim	Warwick	54A
975	Mr.	Tony	Formstone	53A	1001	Mr.	Gordon	Hobbs	63C
976	Mr.	William	Musgrave	68C	1002	Mr.	Eddy	Buckley	72C
977	Mr.	Brian	Walker	55B	1003	Mr.	Bruce	Greaves	54A
978	Mr.	Ron	Field	61A	1004	Mr.	Paul	Phillips	70C
979	Mr.	Bob	Brown	61A	1005	Mr.	Ernest	Ross	43A
980	Mr.	Reg	Pooley	45B	1006	Mr.	Gerald	Murphy	59A
981	Mr.	Keith	Austin	58B	1007	Major	Chris	Brice	54A
982	Mr.	Bill	Excell	53A	1008	Mr.	Bob	Bliss	58B
983	Mr.	Ken	Ellis	53A	1009	Mr.	Taff	Young	48A
984	Mr.	Clive	Pearcey	68B	1010	Mr.	Richard	Marchant	45A
985	Mr.	Les	Murfin	53A	1011	Mr.	Steve	Bryan	54A
986	Mr.	Harry	Care	53B	1012	Mr.	Stan	Jacobs	47A
987	Mr.	Barry	Snook	53B	1013	Mr.	Ron	Treptow	45
988	Mr.	Joe	Redfearn	53B	1014	Mr.	Jack	Shaw	46B
989	Mr.	Tony	Seddon	58B	1015	Ms.	Ann	Rainsbury	Hon
990	Mr.	Leonard	Martin	57B	(Ann Rainsbury is the Chepstow Museum Curator)				

This issues funny!

What Senior Citizens are worth!

(Submitted by: That would be telling!)

Did you know that we old folks are worth a fortune? We have silver in our hair, gold in our teeth, stones in our kidneys, lead in our feet and gas in our stomachs! I have become older since I saw you last and a few changes have come into my life.

Frankly I have become a frivolous old woman!!! I am seeing six gentlemen every day; who are: As soon as I wake 'Will Power' helps me out of bed, then I go to see 'Jimmy Riddle' and then it's time for breakfast with 'Mr. Kellogg', followed closely by the refreshing company of 'Mr. Tetley', or my other great friend who I only know by his initials – 'P. G'. Then comes someone I don't like at all 'Mr. Arthur Itis' he knows he's not welcome, but insists on being present; what's more he stays for the rest of my waking day and even though I don't want him to he travels from joint to joint. After such a hectic day I am glad to get to bed with 'Johnny Walker'. Oh yes! Finally I am now flirting with 'Mr. Al Zheimer'.

The vicar came to call the other day and said that at my age I should be thinking about the hereafter. So I told him I did all the time; no matter where I am, the bedroom, the kitchen, the sitting room, or the garden; I continually ask myself: "Now what am I here after?"

Well I'll close now and hope that 'Will Power' is your constant companion too, but make sure that his girl friend 'Emma Royd' does not creep up on your from behind!!! Finally watch out for the most crafty one of all 'Gerry Attric'.

Take care ~ all of you!

**IN MEMORIAM****REPORTED DEATHS SINCE THE 2003 BEACHLEY ECHOES Issue No. 9.****New BOBA Members:**

734	John	Bacon	50B	09/04/2003
414	Brian	Butcher	43A	23/02/2004
29	Bob	Carrington	36	17/01/2003
238	Bob	Carter	26	08/11/2003
760	Cyril	Collins	14	11/09/2003
669	Douglas	Everett	48B	10/01/2004
471	Frank	Germain	45	21/11/2002
38	Bob	Hewett	37	31/01/2004
358	Jim	Hunt	42A	11/05/2004
425	Ken	Ings	44	22/09/2003
633	Ted	Lane	11	31/10/2003
90	Bill	Moore	46B	22/06/2003
218	EC O'Callaghan	MBE MC Staff		23/05/2003
285	Tom	Riordan	36	01/06/2003
675	Jim	Robertson	45B	11/08/2003
862	Gaff	Sell	45B	01/09/2003
506	Phil	Squires	45B	2002
217	Peter	Stansbury	45B	Jun '97
55	Comrade	Stephens	39	12/12/2003
663	Lionel	Syms	43A	early 2004
222	Taff	Thomas	42B	10/02/2004
260	Jack	Warner	40	17/10/2003
423	Roy	Williamson	45A	May '98

Non BOBA Members:

David	Butters	55A	11-04-03
Peter	Cook	58B	25/10/1960
Peter	Fielding	53A	Feb 2003
Herbert	Good	19	02/10/2003
George	Harmer	20	2002
'Sam'	Harrison (early '40's?)		19-12-02
Doug	Hawkins	58B	1960
Raymond	Higginbottom	49A	Nov. 1997
Gordon	Hodgekinson	43	Mar '03
David	Jeffrey	46B	June '97
Leo	Johnson	43B	10/08/2003
Dave	Kreiner	53A	01/11/2000
John	Meeson	53B	25/06/1905
Paddy	Neilly	43A	NK
Donald	O'Hara	45	04-07-03
Wally	Parrot	42B	21-04-04
Tony	Senior	58B	1998
Eric	Snellgrove	31	NK
Tony	Stunnell	39	NK
Ron	Taylor	45A	05/12/2003
Chris	Webb	42A	early 2003
Charlie	Workman	58B	28-08-67

The late 22526281 SSgt Thomas James Allan Peacock (1935-2003)

Tom (or Jock) Peacock as his friends in 50B Group at Beachley knew him, trained as a Vehicle Mechanic from Sep 1950 to Sep 1953. On passing out his first posting was to 4 AA Workshops REME at Huyton, Liverpool where he met and married Pauline, and in 1955 a son Robert was born.

In 1955, he was posted to HQ 1st Division at Verden where he served until 1962 and while there was promoted to Sgt. During this time two sons and a daughter were born, Jamie in 1956, Tony in 1957 and Caroline in 1959. In 1962 he was posted to 52 Command Workshops in Aden where he remained until 1964. From Aden he was posted to BAOR where he joined 5th RTR at Fallingbostal. In 1965 he moved with the Regiment to Tidworth until 1968, and also when they again moved to Wolfenbittel in BAOR. When the Regiment was disbanded he joined 3rd RTR at Wolfenbittel. This was followed by a six month period with 21 Engineer Regiment when he was promoted to Artisan SSgt and posted back to Wolfenbittel, initially serving with 17/21st Lancers and later 16/5th Lancers. He retired on completion of his 22 year engagement on 10th January 1975.

After leaving the Army, Tom returned to Scotland and worked in several companies until final retirement on 11th Jan 1995 at West Barns, Dunbar, East Lothian, Scotland.

Tom sadly died on 10th Sep 2003 and was cremated on 19th Sep 2003. His funeral was well attended by friends and civilian ex-work colleagues as well as Army acquaintances, which included Gordon (Don) Jolley who is a close family friend and an ex-Chepstow apprentice. The REME and RTR Association Standards were carried by standard bearers at Tom's funeral in front of the coffin, draped with the union flag, which was carried by his three sons and Roberts's son Christopher. On the 20th of Sep 2003 the family and close friends held a gathering to scatter Tom's ashes at the cenotaph at Whittingham, where his father who was killed in action in Italy during WW II, is remembered.

This tribute to Tom has been provided from information proved by Tom's son Jamie to Joe Kinson of 50A Group, as Joe knows, Jamie and Tony Peacock, who were both soldiers, Jamie in REME, and Tony in the RMP. Joe has more information, should any of Tom's old pals like to see the complete details of Tom's military and civilian career.

**THE BOBA MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT:**

New Members: Another very successful year with 51 more new members joining new BOBA from the 1st May 2003 to going to press this year; we now have a total membership of 749, with the latest membership number being 1015. The Internet played a major part in this recruitment, as it has since the website was first inaugurated in early 2001, we have achieved much success, despite being unable to update the website for some 10 months. I must say other guys from varying groups have done their part in finding their group friends and pals, well done chaps, keep up the good work.

Membership Fees: I will be sending a letter to the members who we have no record of payment for last year or two's subscriptions. Perhaps you may receive one of these letters, if you consider this in error, please do inform me of how and when you paid your subs?

Passed on: Sadly we have lost 21 more of our ranks, 16 of which have passed on in the last 12 months, who are now resting in peace after starting their adult lives as Beachley Boys. Their names can be found appended on page 10 of this issue. God keep each and every one of them safe.

The BOBA Website: is as popular as ever and located at: www.boba-beachley.org.uk I just wish I had more time to update and develop it more. Any offers to do this fairly easy task?

Regarding the BOBA website, in 'The Chairman's Jottings' on page 2, our Chairman Syd Thomas has asked one of our lads to take over the webmasters job from me. I ask anyone with some experience, I had none when I started the website. Or anyone who would like to learn about websites and is willing to consider taking it over, please contact Syd, one of the committee, or myself. It will not take that much of your time, that I promise you! Unless that is; you want it too!

The Website of Andy Yarrow of 76B: about Beachley is very interesting, it's well worth a visit, take a look at it at: <http://armyapprenticescollege.homestead.com> .

Channel 4 Teletext: has gone quite, I think we have captured most of the recruits we are going to from this source. A couple of enquiries come in per year, therefore considering it is free we'll keep it open.

Bob Adams of 54A: is completing a sterling job in helping to find over 40 of 54A, 21 of the group have joined new BOBA. I believe he is still looking but the outlook for more finds seems to grow a little bleaker.

54B Group: we still await someone to take on the recruiting for 54B group. Time is getting short, don't tarry too long lads, there is only just over 6 months left to find those long lost pals before your 50th anniversary of joining Beachley.

The Pink Data Protection Cards: I sent out, sadly did not culminate with the desired response. Nonetheless I do use what I have, it just makes it much more difficult to deal with enquiries for the whereabouts of friend's of BOBA members without having an easy system with all members appended, regardless of their wishes as to allow, or not, contact details to be passed to old Beachley pals.

A Replacement Membership Secretary: has been found, in our very own Rocky Evershed 61B. Currently I have six hats within BOBA and I aim give up all but one. Added to this I am the Chairman of the Chepstow Royal British Legion, both the Branch and Club, added to other charity work I complete. All these duties are beginning to show the cracks in in the time I have available, therefore Gill and I have decided to migrate to Spain for at least six months of the year. I am reasonable sure I could continue to produce our newsletter the Beachley Echoes by email, even in Spain; but sadly all the other posts I hold must go, to include Chepstow RB Legion. Come on chaps, I've done four years on the BOBA committee for the members; I need, and I have most certainly have earned a rest and some retirement before I get too old to enjoy it.

By the way, any BOBA member is welcome to visit the Chepstow Royal British Legion Club, it doesn't matter if you are in Chepstow for the BOBA reunion, or just a nostalgic visit. You will be made more than welcome. If you are not a R. B. Legion member you can simply become a temporary member for the day, weekend, or month; that only costs £1:00 and the beer is definitely cheaper than any other public venue in Chepstow! Temporary Club membership is valid for a month from the date you join temporarily.

Take care and God bless you all. I wish for you all, that which you would wish for yourselves. *John Furlley.*



Fragments of my memories of Beachley.

Many are the memories I retain from that period of my life which I spent at Beachley, one of these was being continually hungry and I can not believe that I was a solitary sufferer. Indeed the ensuing scramble following the hallowed shout "Buckshee" would support that belief. The spectacle of a score, or more, of A/T's descending on a table upon which about half a dozen surplus bread, marge and jam rations remained was a sight to behold and it was amazing how quickly one or two individuals (No names No pack drill!) became adept at leading the rush. Supper I recall was a more leisurely affair and fairly spartan too. A couple of slices of dry bread, soup and cocoa were the usual offerings. The soup was a somewhat indeterminate concoction made from the unused remnants of the day's menu made in a large boiling pan and stirred with an implement which could probably have propelled the Beachley to Aust ferry if the latter's normal means of propulsion had broken down. Some times we would take the bread and cocoa back to the hut where the former could be toasted in front of the 'cenotaph' open fire if the meager coal ration hadn't been used up. Who remembers coal fatigues following RSM's Parade on a Saturday morning - *and those other coal fatigues facilitated by kitbags!* I believe that we were told that, being Boy Soldiers, we benefited from double rations. If this was the case then I am sure that our pangs of hunger must have been augmented by pangs of sympathy for those poor unfortunates who were on single rations. I wonder who they were?

From food I turn to personalities, three in particular, and of these none loomed larger than RSM (Busty) Baker, Grenadier Guards. At the time of his departure from Beachley in 1954 he featured in an article in a national newspaper, I think it was the Mirror, in which he was described 'as being constructed from elephant hide and piano wire and whose whisper was audible at 800 yards'. I may not have got the wording correct but it was along these lines. My major brush with the great man occurred when I was recovering after removal of my appendix. Following the operation and hospitalisation I had two weeks sick leave but was still excused marching. The encounter happened during school parade when, as I recall, those of us excused on medical grounds lined up behind the main parade. B.B. commenced interrogating us on our reasons for being sick. When I explained my particular circumstances he demanded to know when I had undergone surgery and I had to confess that it was nearly 4 weeks previously. Upon hearing this he uttered a bellow, which probably was heard in Tutshill and some distance beyond, ordering me to join the parade PDQ. I don't think that Busty had much time for malingerers real or imagined. 'Big Mac' the Provost Sgt was another prominent member of the Permanent Staff. He used to ride a bicycle around the camp and he had a ramrod straight back. He had a habit of suddenly appearing out of nowhere often to the discomfiture of the odd unfortunate A/T. I was emerging from the NAAFI on one occasion, putting my change away when 'Big Mac' came around the corner and threatened to charge me for having my hand in my pocket. Then there was L/Cpl Paddy Cagney the MI Room Orderly who was short in height but extremely rotund. One morning when we were marching away from School Parade he was summoned by RSM Lowe, Busty Baker's successor. It was soon obvious that Paddy's rate of progress was not sufficiently swift and the initial command was quickly followed up by "Double, Cpl Cagney, double and if you can't run then **roll**!!"

Frank Lobban ex 53A D Coy.

It's a Small World

Having been paid by the WD/MOD for 50 years and 56 days, wearing the REME badge or working for it as a Retired Officer, I was dined out at the REME HQ Officers Mess in May 03. During the dinner a brief history of each guest was read out which in my case referred to me reporting to AAS Chepstow in Feb 53. After the dinner a serving Brigadier who I knew asked me if I remembered him as he was at Chepstow at the same time as me. It was with embarrassment that I had to admit I could not but was relieved when he pointed out that he was only a 3 year old on a tricycle, with his father Capt Rickard on the Permanent Staff. If I had been sharp and not under the influence of port I would have realised that a serving Brigadier in 2003 could not have been serving in 1953!

I happened to have a Dec 54 Robot at home and when glancing through it found mention of a Capt Rickard as the Assistant Chief Instructor, he was also in the photograph of Officers of the School so I passed the Robot to Brig Rickard for his interest. The Robot was then passed on to his father who on returning it to me pointed out that the same issue also has him in the photo of the BOBA Sept 54 reunion as an ex 36C Group with his brother, a Capt in the RASC, ex 44A Group. Both brothers are alive and well.

Malcolm (Hector) Hay 53A



'A Tall Story Indeed'. (Come on ~ own up ~ who are you? Ed!)

As you probably know there was a curfew time, which we as apprentices had to check in at the guardroom by a given time. A certain apprentice whom shall remain nameless, a member of 64B group C Company, had gone home for the weekend. His home abode was located on the Bristol side of the Severn River. Flaunting time on Sunday evening, he delayed his return until there was no possible way he could return before curfew by road, on a motorcycle. The Severn Wye bridge was under construction at this time, and so in his wisdom he thought of driving his motorcycle to the Bristol side of the bridge, parking his motorcycle and crossing the formulating bridge to avoid being late and having to sign in to the guardroom after curfew and incurring the penalty. At this time there was no roadway attached to the bridge and so, using his talents, taught him by our capable physical training instructors, climbed up to the catwalk of the bridge. He proceeded along the catwalk over the supporting tower on the Bristol side of the bridge, over the Severn River, up over the corresponding tower on the Beachley side of the bridge. He then scaled his way down into the camp. Sadly his dilemma was not over on having reached the camp, his Severn crossing venture had taken too long, he had run out of time and it was after curfew. His brain racing, the unnamed fellow decided that he needed an excuse as to why he was late and so hatched a plan. Limping his way to the guard room he signed in late using the excuse that he had sprained his ankle, and thereby had been unable to make his connections to return to camp on time. The Beachley Regimental Police Corporal on guard duty told him to report to the camp doctor the following morning. Fear set in as he thought of reporting to the camp doctor with nothing wrong with his ankle. On his return to his barrack room this unfortunate lad needed to hatch another plan. This time the plan involved recruiting his roommate's help, ensuring that there would be some swelling for his Monday morning visit to the doctor. Not to disappoint, his roommates set to work coming up with all kinds of plots to ensure swelling with some extensive imaginative enthusiasm I might add. The following morning his ankle looked good to us, the untrained eyes. Everything a person could ask for needing an excuse, ugly bruising accompanied by swelling together with a legitimate limp. This fellow set off on sick parade to see the camp doctor feeling somewhat relieved, here was the proof he needed to avoid an extra Saturday morning parade. The doctor inspected his injury ascertained quite quickly this injury had been self-inflicted. The unfortunate apprentice was now in a jam, caught in his deceit and his acquired physical pain. The camp doctor realising that the poor fellow had suffered with his injuries, gave him a stern talking to and with some compassion decided not to report the injuries as self inflicted. The apprentice returned to regular duties that day somewhat relieved his ordeal was over. He was the talk of the camp for a considerable period after this incident and somewhat a local folk hero for walking the length of the Severn bridge via the contractor's catwalk.

Yours sincerely, David McMaster 64B ~ from Colossal Canada.

The Man (Nearly) Next Door :

Having finally retired a daily brisk (or leisurely) walk for the papers was the order of the day and though not a nosey person I could not help but see hanging in a neighbour's garage two large badges, Devon and Dorset's and REME. Curious, when I next saw the occupant I asked about the badges and he explained that his wife's father was in the D&D's and that he served in a Corps called REME which stood for Royal quickly explaining I was ex REME we started reminiscing and when he said he was an ex boy I thought pray he is not ex Arborfield (joke) no, he was Chepstow. So I was living just a few yards from Paul Barbara of 49A Group. I lent him the 2003 edition of the Beachley Echoes and the 2002 Reunion Dinner programme, just received, which showed the attendees from his group. Paul is now in contact with some of those from his group and hopefully we have another BOBA member attending the 2004 reunion.

Malcolm (Hector) Hay 53A

2004 REUNION I D NAME HOLDERS:

Here is a sample of a reunion name holder we plan to have available for all members attending the reunion this year. They are of a simple design on laminated card, which will be inserted into a clear plastic sleeve envelope with both a press frog clip and safety pin security mounting with no risk of damage to clothing. Full colour badge with coloured border. Order yours when booking for the reunion, and pick it up when you arrive at the Chepstow Hotel. They are good quality & cheap at just £1.00 each and yours to keep!





B2881 (Later 7592473) The late: ROBERT DOUGLAS HEWETT:

It is with sad heart I report the passing of Robert Douglas (Bob) Hewett 37 group on the 31st January 2004, approaching the age of 84 years. Bob beyond doubt was a devoted man of both Beachley and BOBA, one of the early new BOBA members with new BOBA number 38 to portray his early loyalty to the Association.

Bob journeyed from 'Pompey' Portsmouth to join 37 group and began his service at Beachley as No. B2881 on the winters day 15th January 1936 to serve his time in apprenticeship as a trained Fitter Turner and on 12 August 1938 left to join fully trained to begin his service with the RAOC. After the WW11 Bob returned to Beachley to become a staff instructor from 1945 until 1951. At a later date Bob was to leave the RAOC to be transferred to eventually serve out his time in REME, he was promoted to Warrant Officer 2 prior to demob in 1958. Eventually settling in Stoke on Trent, from where Bob fared us all goodbye.

Bob loved BOBA so much, the stalwart that he was, he insisted all donations at his funeral be presented to the BOBA Heritage fund for the furtherance of St. John's chapel becoming our HQ and home. The princely sum of £650.00 was kindly forwarded by his widow, thank you Peggy and in Bob's memory, the new BOBA executive committee assure you the funds will be utilised within Bob's wishes for a new home for new BOBA.

'God bless' and 'Rest in Peace' Bob our good friend.

**The late Major Edward Horace Lane MBE ~ Royal Engineers
11 Group Boys Technical School Beachley.**



Ted at his 90th 29-06-02



With great sorrow we report the death of Ted Lane MBE on 31st October 2003. B995 Beachley entrant has certainly portrayed a successful life entering Beachley as an Apprentice Carpenter on 9th September 1926, from there a career into the Royal Engineers as No. 1868044, spanning postings to include Chatham, Ireland, Longmoor, Gosport, returned to Chatham for Clerk of Works course, accelerated promotion to S/Sgt., on the Bulford and later to Singapore. Commissioned in the field to Captain on 24.08.42. Narrowly escaped being torpedoed, saved by being on a flat bottomed Chinese river boat whilst on route to Ceylon, the torpedoes passed under the hull and continued on into the Indian ocean. Promoted to Major in Ceylon, at that point the war ended and Ted returned to the UK. Ted spent the next five years in varying posts in Germany under the Deputy Commander Royal Engineers (DCRE), followed by a DCRE post in Warwick UK, then Malta and onto Suez, where Ted received his MBE for services to the Suez Crisis. Then returned to Longmoor for a year before being posted to Nepal to assist constructing the Gurkha recruiting barracks there. Posted back to Bulford in 1960 to 1963. 1964 found Ted on his way to Sabah in Brunei. Ted returned to UK in 1965 and retired from the Royal Engineers, continuing his trade as a 'Building Works site agent' until his final retirement from a working life in 1974. Incidentally Ted's grand father served at Roukes Drift.

John Furley the BOBA Association Standard Bearer had the honour to carry the BOBA Standard at Ted's funeral, the Luton RE Standard Bearer was also in attendance with the Royal Engineers Luton Branch Standard. Wickey Jones of the Royal Mons Militia sounded 'Last Post and Reveille' superbly.

BOBA speeds God bless and fair ye well on your final journey Ted.

**I BOXED MY WAY THROUGH BEACHLEY: by Ivor Evans 52B.**

I arrived at Beachley in September 1952, unimpressed, bleak and windy, strange after life I'd lived as a civvy lad. We were dropped of at Beachley guardroom; I did get to know the inside of that building before leaving Beachley!

We were shown our huts, told this is H.Q. Company and to choose our bed spaces, blankets and sheets were generously supplied and a steel locker at each bedside. We went through 12 weeks of drill training, marching, left, right and about turns, saluting, giddy by end of each session. When we did have time off the square bashing, sports wise we were spoiled for choice, football, rugby and hockey, my main sport 'Boxing' was also included.

Beachley had good boxing team then; a lad called McCann, short stocky light welter filled my weight division. So in the meantime I played football, sadly I injured an ankle, no sport for few weeks. In the meantime boxing was going on, I was so envious, not able to represent the team and the Army titles coming up. McCann pulled out, a vacant position existed, I was asked to fill it so jumped at chance. The army championships were held that year at Beachley, so I had home support. To win this title I had to beat three lads, one at a time thank God, I must add, I did this and won the army title champion in the first year I competed, you can imagine the thrill this gave me.

Next step, imperial services, verses RAF and the Navy. This time at RAF Halton, the RAF team had lad called Smith as their champion. He turned out to be very hard puncher, caught me with one punch in the mouth, it just felt numb, but ended up with points decision, on to the finals. The Navy champion was a good fighter. I had a hard job figuring his style, every time I threw a left jab he hit me with his right. Eventually I thought a of way to get past this punch. There was only one way, let him hit me and reply with two punches, I did this successfully for the next two rounds and was awarded the decision, now I was tri service champion. This was a great start to my army life.

The following season I fought against Harrogate and Arborfield lads, winning both contests, still unbeaten, this time at Harrogate, I had two fights to win, one against Richie from Arborfield, winning on points and the other a lad from Harrogate, again winning on points. I was now the Boy Army champion for the second consecutive year.

Now for the tri service title again. Two more fights verses RAF and then NAVY, won both again for second year holding both titles this time at welterweight, again unbeaten. Not one fight lost and I also had the honour to captain the army team. The team as a whole, won the most contests, hence I was presented with the cup. I was chosen to go into the ring and accept the trophy, newspapers and cameras were there, I was informed after that it was shown in cinemas and later on newsreels, unfortunately I have never seen that footage myself.

Again following year many contests fought, not losing any. I was informed I was too old to box for boys, but asked to go into adult fights, I made no mistake in confirming I was! Special training, just me and sparing partner, Harry Care was very good boxer and very fit, every morning we would be off for our morning run, coach 'Sgt Major Jones' ("Joner") he was strict but very fair, we had many laughs with him. Also as a treat we were both told after training to go to butcher shop and collect a pound of steak each, this was for our breakfast, after collecting steak we would dash to kitchens and while we showered it would be cooking. Don't think I've been fed as well since.

Just a week before the title fights began I went down with boils on legs, couldn't run, couldn't hardly walk, should I pull out, no way I said, I'd had come this far and nothing was not going to stop me now. I went to see M.O. he gave me daily injections of penicillin, it did cure me but by now had lost few days training.

For these contests we had to travel to Donnington, this is where we now know as part of Telford. This was for the mid west title. Again I had three contests, as I was still feeling a little off my first went well. I KO'd my first in three rounds, fairly easy fight, next two were harder but I won again, this time I was MID WEST CHAMPION. Next round WESTERN COMMAND. I was full of confidence and determined to win this as well, for these titles I'd been advised by "Joner" to drop down a weight to light welter. It meant taking off just few pounds, sadly I had none to take off; but with hard training and watching my intake of food we managed to. I won two fights to get to final, met a lad called Haynes, he was good also south paw, we had a terrific battle, I was given the verdict and became WESTERN COMMAND CHAMPION, another title, was I proud. By now the loss of weight was having an effect on me, not too worried I went off to Tidworth for quarterfinals of the army title seniors. I had two fights and won the first, but then lost badly in the final. I was heartbroken, but did have great reception when returning to camp.

Now a question to put to all members about the "Cyril Gallie Boxing Cup Trophy." The cup seems to be missing; this was presented to the boxer with the best record over the three years at Beachley. I won it and I haven't seen it since, I have asked about it, but no one seems to have heard of it. Please look for it, many names from the past on it, mine too I hope. Also above the gym door was large board with names of all captains of Beachley boxing teams, mine should be on it too, ~ Lots of history apparently lost ~ please look for it!

The very best to you all, Ivor Evans ~ 52B 'B' Coy.



The untimely death of Lt. Col. (Ret'd) W. A. J. Bill Moore REME 46B 'D' Coy, was reported by Pete Bell of 47A, in addition the obituaries column of the October '03 Craftsman Magazine carried a similar report. Pete was a distance admirer of Bill's, having the greatest respect for his abilities as military man, an instructor and last but certainly not least, a boxer!

Pete quoted, I had the privilege of knowing Bill as A/T RSM at Beachley. Pete relates: If you can imagine the scene, Bill was 5 ft something and our staff RSM was Busty Baker of the Grenadier Guards was 6 ft something. Anyway Bill had a deep almost gravel sounding voice, whereas Busty Baker had a high pitched squeaky voice which seemed to rise in pitch with every step called: 'Left! right! left! right! left! right! Left!

One day it befell a 'Smudger' (correct name withheld) to iron Busty's trousers. It was quite a laugh on 'Bull night' to see two A/T's fit easily into Busty's trousers, pulling them up to their arm pits and still having to turn the bottoms up, what a memory, when relating it I still see people smile about it today!

Many of the lads serving at Beachley at the time will no doubt remember Bill's prowess in the boxing ring, although I doubt his opponents will remember too much! Bill stood bolt upright, rather in the stance of a 'Gentleman Jim', or 'Duke of Queensbury'. Bill would enter the ring with his jet black hair immaculate, with not a hair out of place and would leave the ring with his hair undisturbed. It was said, if his hair become ruffled in the ring, he would retire. Sadly it did happen once, as I remember it was in a tournament against RAF Holton, I did not see Bill box again. My memory of Bill's boxing, made him a straight boxer, he did not have a hook or uppercut, just a straight right, or was it left? Does anyone remember? His opponents certainly would, they did not see it coming and decidedly didn't come back for more! As I said it was a privilege to have known him and I am pleased he continued to inspire and encourage others during his regular service.

Rest in peace Bill: Pete Bell 47A

An extract from the Craftsman Magazine: On Monday 30th June 2003, BOBA Lads and members of Bill's local Bowls Club, Golf Club and Masonic Lodges filled Cwmbran Crematorium to join Jocelyn and his family in celebrating his life and say goodbye to an old friend. The BOBA Standard was in attendance to bid farewell from the Beachley Old Boys and all Association members.

From: Ken Stout 53B 'A' Coy: 1953 was a very good year: The Coronation, Everest conquered, Stan Matthews won his cup winners medal and Gordon Richards the Derby.

In September 1953 a special group of people arrived at Beachley. 50 years on we rose to the challenge set by Joe Kinson for 50A & 50B and Jack Duke for 51A & 51B, to assemble a wondrous selection of 'Young' codgers, a few of whom had only changed an iota or two from the callow youths who first met on that fateful day in September 1953.

Aided and abetted by those 53A (we reckon) less fortunate souls, 53B claim to have the most attendees from one company of any one group, with nine, unless someone knows better!? Ken says: 'It's a grand old colour Red'. (Ed: I seem to remember 'Blue' being banded about very strongly, shortly after Ken left Beachley!!!). As such have 53B set another standard for all future 50th groups to compete with! On the part of 53B I must surely express my vote of thanks to Alec Beach of 53B, without his remarkable efforts we would not have realised such magnificent turnout. How much more successful would he have been if he had been more fortunate with his company placement, and served in 'A' rather than 'D' Coy!!! (Ed: Oih! I can't agree with that, I was 'D' Coy!!!).

The 2003 reunion sported from 53B at least one of each A/T rank, from RSM to A/T, to include 'A Coy's Drum Major! All of us gathered on Sunday at church parade to test the construction of St. Georges church with our 'young' old codgers voices, it's still standing, I've seen it recently from the old Severn crossing. It should be noted, the thought of meeting with old Beachley pals brought members of 53B flying in from such far flung places as: USA, Australia (multiple), Cyprus and Scotland. Also arranged the escape of Barry Snook from his nursing home to attend the reunion; thanks here in large part to Keith Fisher 53B who conspired to make Barry's escape, by transporting him to and from Chepstow.

Good luck to all future 50th's, especially the 54's, they have one special advantage in that their A/T RSM Berne Olley has returned from the dead, (being posted deceased in Echoes No. 7) and as such has portrayed miracles might be possible! (Ed: Sorry Berne, you know it was me, someone gave me a bum steer!!!)

All the best ~ Ken Stout - 53B (Ed: Ken asks ~ guess which company, he knows 'D' Coy was best really.



BEACHLEY OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

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5th May 2004

MINUTES OF THE BEACHLEY OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT BEACHLEY BARRACKS ON SATURDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER 2003

Present:

Lt Col S Thomas	Chairman
Maj DC Chapman	Vice President
Mr M Murtagh	Vice President
Mr R Marie	Vice President
Mr F Pickering	Vice President
Mr AW Waite	Treasurer
Mr P Burridge	Reunion
Mr J Furley	Membership Secretary & Chepstow Liaison
Maj B Henderson	Secretary

Introduction

1. As in previous years the Annual General Meeting was held in St George's Church, Beachley Barracks. Approximately 130 members were seated in the church and at 1530 hours the Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming those present.

Item 1. Opening Address.

- In the absence of a President, the Chairman welcomed those that were regular attendees, those that had not attended for some time and gave a special welcome to those that were attending for the first time. He continued by extending a welcome to all those members who were not seated at the meeting but would be attending the functions or events that were being held during the reunion weekend.
- The Chairman read out a short greetings message from our last President. "Colonel Holman wished all the members of BOBA well and hoped they had an enjoyable weekend among friends old and new."
- The Chairman closed by saying he looked forward to meeting as many members as possible at the reunion dinner and also at Sunday's church parade.



Item 2. In Memoriam.

5. To prevent confusion this list has been combined with the list of Beachley Old Boys who have passed on since the last published Beachley Echoes, these names now only appear on page 10 of the Beachley Echoes Newsletter.
6. The members present stood and observed a period of silent remembrance.

Item 3. Minutes of the 2002 Annual General Meeting.

7. The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting, held on Saturday 14th September 2002, were included in the last issue of the Beachley Echoes, a copy of which had been sent to all BOBA members. The Chairman felt that all the members present were aware of the contents of these minutes and asked if there were any comments or observations. There being no comments or observations, it was proposed by J Furley, and seconded by A Orchard, that the minutes were a true record of the proceedings. Carried

Item 4. Matters Arising.

8. A contingent would be attending the Cenotaph parade again this year.
9. The association had heard nothing from Col Haskell regarding his tenure as President or the production of the final chapter of the College History.

Item 5. Chairman's Report.

Item 5a. General.

10. Once the again the Chairman commented on the sterling work that the committee had and continued to do so on behalf of the membership. A number changes to the committee were necessary due to resignations and he hoped that some new blood would be forthcoming from the membership. Peter Burrige had agreed to do another year in post and organise the 2004 reunion, Maurice Murtagh was to step down due to his failing eyesight, Tony Waite wishes to hand over the reins of treasurer and finally due to ill health, Ken Standen wished to take a lesser part in the activities of the committee.

Item 5b. Election of Executive Committee.

11. Prior to the election of the executive committee there was much discussion regarding the position of BOBA President. A number of proposals were received from the floor but these were rejected by the members present. As a temporary measure it was agreed that for the next twelve months the Chairman would also carry out the duties of President.
12. The following were re-elected for a further twelve months:
 - a. President/Chairman: Lt Col S Thomas.
 - b. The remainder of the Executive Committee.

Proposed by I Anthony

Seconded by M Murtagh

Carried.



13. The Chairman reminded the meeting that volunteers were required to come forward and shadow the Treasurer, the Heritage and Reunion members with a view of taking over the posts in due course.
14. In recognition of his service to BOBA it was proposed by S Thomas and seconded by C Luger, that M Murtagh be granted Honorary Life Membership.
Carried
15. Also for services to the association and following a change to the BOBA rules, it was proposed by J. Furley and seconded by S Thomas that Mr Keith Underwood be elected an Honorary Member.
Carried

Item 6. Executive Committee Reports.

Item 6a. Treasurer's Report.

16. Copies of the end of year (31 Mar 02) Financial Statement were available for the members to examine. The Treasurer; Mr Tony Waite summarised the balance sheet and answered the comments raised from the floor. The account had been audited and it was proposed by P. Burridge and seconded by F. Pickering that the financial statement be passed as read.
Carried

Item 6b. Secretary's Report.

17. The Secretary; Maj Brian Henderson opened his report by reading out a few letters of apology that had been received prior to the meeting. He also read out other items of correspondence that had been received by the association during the previous twelve months. As in other years, a letter had been received from the Army Benevolent Fund thanking the association for the proceeds from the 2002 Founders Day church service offertory hymn.

Item 6c. Membership Secretary's Report.

18. The Membership Secretary; Mr John Furley, reported that recruitment had continued apace with the past three years, especially by 53 year Groups. The Association had 738 active members and we have 307 names on the list of potential members. The Membership Secretary continued with discussions regarding the website, further means of recruitment, outstanding subscriptions, the Data Protection Act and the computerisation of the enlistment / induction records.

Item 6d. Historian's Report.

19. The BOBA Historian; Mr Ron Marie reported that the Roll of Honour and Book of Remembrance was now complete and these would be re-dedicated at tomorrow's church service. He thanked all those members who had sent in memorabilia, articles, etc but asked the membership to keep the items flowing.

Item 6e. Benevolence.

20. No serious demands on the fund, cards of condolences had been sent and these were well received. Thanks were given to all UK wide representatives for their valuable assistance on benevolence matters .

Item 7. St Johns Project.

21. The Chairman gave a brief summary as to why the association was interested in St Johns church. The building had become available and it was felt that it would be the ideal premises for BOBA HQ. The current HQ is too small and is likely to be taken away from the association by the MoD some time in the future should our encroachment be rescinded. All the members had received a ballot slip and the returns



OUR BEACHLEY HERITAGE: by Ron Marie 46A

The Beachley Boy's Heritage Display will again be presented in the 'Two Rivers Suite' at The Chepstow Hotel from 10:00 hrs to 13:00 hrs. on Saturday 18th September 2004. Ann Rainsbury the curator of the Chepstow Museum, will also display archive photographs spanning some of the history of Beachley. In addition there are still many photographs requiring personnel identification, event and/or dates. Do come along and try to help out.

Beachley Memorabilia:

Over past years many items recording the start of our youthful venture in Boy's Service, tied to completing 8 years with the Regular Army and 4 years with the Reserve, later 9 and 3 years respectively, has surfaced as follows:

1. ATTESTATION PAPER ARMY FORM B271 A - February 1946. Recruiting Office Jersey. (Ron Marie 46A)
 ATTESTATION PAPER ARMY FORM B271 A - February 1956. Recruiting Office Gloucester. (John Furley 56A)
 (Both remembered the forms being green in colour, they were in fact pink when dug out of their resting places.)
2. WAR OFFICE PUBLICATION:
 - COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION OF BOYS FOR ENLISTMENT INTO THE ARMY AS APPRENTICE TRADESMEN.
 - RESULTS OF JULY 1923 EXAMINATION COMPLETE UP TO APRIL 1939 (HOME) EXAMINATION.
 - DETAILING LIST OF CANDIDATES WHO WERE SUCCESSFUL IN OBTAINING VACANCIES IN ORDER OF MERIT AND TABLING MARKS OBTAINED FOR THE RESPECTIVE THREE SUBJECTS: ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, GENERAL KNOWLEDGE. PASS MARKS: 1923 to 1934 - MAXIMUM 300 MINIMUM 120.
 1936 to 1939 - MAXIMUM 300 MINIMUM 150.

(NOTE: No evidence of such publications thereafter.)
3. APPENDIX 'A' to War Office letter No. BM 8295/44 (AG10).
 - INSTRUCTION: To report to the Recruiting Office - Reading. (Bill Lipscombe 45A)
 Having attained the required educational standard at the Army Apprentice Tradesman Examination Dec 1944 and allotted one of the available vacancies. Also detailing items to report with including own padlock as this item of issue has been suspended during the period of hostilities.
5. COMMANDANTS LETTER: to Parent/Ward. No. ATS 552/156B - 1945
 - Acknowledging respective arrival at Beachley together with information of training, to be undertaken and expected standards to be achieved, details of pay, leave allotment, etc. and your general welfare!!!
6. School reports (6 monthly) to Parent/Ward - 1944.

In this respect our archives have received an addition this year:
7. JOINING INSTRUCTIONS FOR A RECRUIT. ARMY FORM B2540 - September 1960.
 Army Information Office - Lincoln. (D. Smith 60C).
 Dave also supplied a 2nd CLASS FORCES DUTY SINGLE - RAIL TICKET ~ UN-PUNCHED.

In conclusion, I must report that after many years as heritage member of the Association and during the recent fifteen months, been ably assisted by Malcolm Hay 53A group (A/T RSM and retired REME Major), I will be handing over the reigns to Malcolm who will become your new Association Heritage member as from the AGM 2004. I wish him well and long may he continue with this very worthwhile task. *Best wishes, Ron Marie.*



I wonder how many of you will remember:

“Who lived in this house?”

It's not so well kept these days, but could be a lot worse. As a matter of interest about 8 years ago the MOD sold it in a closed military sale for a little less than £100,000.00. The chap who purchased it, rented it for eight years and must have made a very nice profit in that alone. Recently it changed hands again, this time for a mere £450,000.00, it makes me wish I could have taken the opportunity to put my life in hock for that sort of prize money, how about you?



February 17th 1954 ~ The day of change ~ for some!

It was a strange beginning and looking back over 50 years of February 17ths, the cold and damp only got a bit colder and perhaps more damp on occasions too.

The day started with a bit of drama, my mother crying and saying, "now look what he's bloody gone and done, he's joined the army." I rather feel that she got over her ordeal rather quicker than I would the one that I was facing. My father escorted me to the tram from Rotherham to Sheffield recruiting office on Ecclesall Road as it was in those days. It was a grey day and a damp start to a career that was to run right up to my retirement at the ripe old age of sixty.

Once at the recruiting office together with three other boys as we must have been then, we were sworn in by the recruiting RSM who just happened to have the same surname as myself. The local newspaper was in attendance and later when on leave I was shown the report and photograph. Sadly modern science is unable to get into its archives to retrieve the article for my collection.

I signed on the dotted line and without much fuss was on the tram off to the railway station with three other boys about my age. We soon got talking and I found out that one lad was from Rotherham my hometown. His surname was Bailey. Another was Joe Gent from Dunscroft / Thorne area of Doncaster, and finally one Pete Burke. We travelled together, it was all new stuff of course and perhaps dare I say it. Rather exciting. The train stopped at Birmingham New Street where you could get a cup of tea by leaning out of the window and a cake too if there were any left. I remember the train was packed and in those days men in uniforms were quite common at railway stations.

Eventually we arrived at Chepstow after travelling all day. I remember the platform at Chepstow was really quiet. Almost ghost like. We were ushered into a truck and next stop Beachley Camp. By now the sun had begun to shine! I suppose if I am honest I have to say that the arrival is a bit of a blur now, however we were eventually given a hut number and platoon number and as I recall a pair of boots and denims. I digress already.

I arrived in hut number 59 after a bit of waiting about. I think at this stage it was grab a bed space and start talking to others in the room. I remember putting my case on a bed about three up from the cenotaph (central fireplace) There was a lull in conversation and then from a small room with a creaky door in the corner of the hut came out this little figure of an older boy. He was short and I recall had a dark whiskery face. He said that he was the room Corporal and that we could call him corporal. I thought that was rather kind of him really because after he had eaten all my sandwiches from my case I could have called him something else. His name was Wright and obviously we called him "lefty" (amongst other things!) It was about this time of my life that I realised that the "learning curve of life in the army" could be very steep indeed.

After we had been told to put on our denims and boots and pack all our civilian clothes into a parcel and address it to our home, I realised that this was for real in no uncertain terms. We were marched with more left legs and unsynchronised arms than I can imagine to the cookhouse for our tea. I recall that we had mashed potatoes and a lot of macaroni cheese in those days.

After tea we were very quickly introduced to the fine art of making bubbly leather smooth and shiny. As the old saying goes, "a little bit more work on the toecaps there lad" and I always thought that candles and spoons had limited uses.

I learned to pray rather quickly at Chepstow it was about the only way to get to sleep and block out the mad days events. Ah! Well tomorrow is another day. But that's another story.

Bruce Greaves ~ 54A

That Army Apprentice College Car Badge (An Ongoing Saga)



The Echoes Issue No 9 gave details of a second car badge being seen at the 2002 Reunion. This latest badge was presented to John Moore (73C) in 1974 with the first reported badge having been presented to Arthur Underwood (Staff) in July 78. Now a third badge has been found by Brian Walker (55B) in Oct 03 at the Farnham Militaria Fair. Has any member any knowledge of the manufacture of these badges, presumably by Apprentices in the 70's and are there any more out there?

Malcolm (Hector) Hay 53A Assistant Heritage Member



BOBA ~ WELFARE.

The country continues to be divided into geographical areas and a welfare representative has been, or will be, when available, allotted for each area, as someone volunteers to fill the vacancy. Should anyone feel they need assistance, please contact your area rep in the first instance.

Please also contact the Area Rep if you have knowledge of a Beachley Old Boy's demise, serious illness, or address change. Many comforting appropriate special BOBA cards have been sent to members and families.

Possibly you may require a lift to the annual reunion. If this is so contact your area rep, who maybe able to help you make contact with someone, who is 'Going from and returning your way'.

Sadly Maurice Murtagh has been forced into retirement from BOBA Welfare with failing eyesight, the BOBA committee urgently need someone to take on this important task. In the meantime if you have any pressing case, or know of anyone who requires assistance, as an interim measure please contact one of the following:

Welfare area representatives:

Location:	Rep's Name:	Group:	Tel. No:
Berks/Bucks/Oxon.	Tom Davitt	54A	01344 825270
Dorset / Wilts.	Ron Durnall	37	01202 763270
Essex	Joe Finerty	43A	01702 554362
Germany	John Bass	44A	(49) 220 456437
Gloucester/ Bristol	VOLUNTEER REQUIRED.		
Hampshire	Dave Stone	49A	02392 265554
Ditto	Frank Pickering	47B	02380 847881
Herts./Beds/Northants.	John Smith	44A	01582 592432
Kent	Charles Whitehead	45A	01634 361801
Lancashire/Cheshire	VOLUNTEER REQUIRED.		
Lincs/Notts/Derby	Wally Green	50B	01522 595963
Ditto	Geoff Winter	66C	01623 743560
London/Middx.	VOLUNTEER REQUIRED.		
N. Wales	VOLUNTEER REQUIRED.		
S. Wales	VOLUNTEER REQUIRED.		
S. Wales (East of)	John Stokes	42A	01974 821697
Scotland	Dave Lackie	43B	01313 362268
Ditto	Sandy Hay	46A	01224 82248
Shropshire	Allan Ball	46A	01952 591060
Som / Devon/ Cornwall	Tony Waite	60C	01823 669336
Ditto	Roy Currell	46A	01726 64799
Staffordshire.	Andy Roulston	46A	01785 257410
Suffolk/Norfolk/Hunts/Camb.	VOLUNTEER REQUIRED.		
Surrey/Sussex	VOLUNTEER REQUIRED.		
Worcs/Hereford/Warks./W Mid.	George Waite	42B	01217 449117
Ditto	Chalkie White	73A	01203 404999
Yorkshire	Trevor Medcalf	43A	01904 644 569

If you do not have a BOBA welfare representative in your area, or the representative is not available, please don't forget if you are an ex serviceman / woman you will be able to secure help from any Royal British Legion (RBL) Branch. It is unnecessary to be an RBL member, the RBL will help all ex service person; their only qualifying point, you must exhaust all Social Security channels initially!

If all else fails contact BOBA Liaison: John Furley on 01291 630491, who will help when & where able.

The BOBA Standard: may be available to attend the funerals of members should the family desire. However owing to the heavy cost of travel these days, we would ask for a donations towards fuel costs at 15p per mile. This donation is not essential, if it cannot be afforded, please request BOBA welfare to cover this cost.

Best wishes, John Furley ~ Chepstow Liaison.



BOBA HEADQUARTERS ~ FUTURE OPTIONS: Beachley Old Boys' Association

LOOKING AHEAD – OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

1. Aim

1.1 This paper presents to members the options now before the Association in respect of future accommodation, storage and exhibition of records and artefacts and how any associated costs may be planned for. The paper also briefly considers the question of charitable status and how membership may vary in the years ahead.

1.2 Some possible ways forward for the Association will be examined in this paper and will be discussed further at the Annual General Meeting in September 2004. Subsequently, at some time before the BOBA AGM in 2005 the Executive Committee expects to make firm recommendations to the membership about the future of the BOBA Association's accommodation and heritage materials. Those recommendations will take into account the wishes expressed by the members and the practical aspects of any project BOBA may consider.

1.3 Any substantive decisions about the future of BOBA will only be made as a result of a vote of the whole membership, either at an AGM or possibly by post, although the latter would need a rule change.

2 Summary

2.1 From 1939 until the College closed in 1994 BOBA was almost entirely run by Beachley staff and effectively funded by MOD. 'New' BOBA inherited a number of artefacts and was given occupation of the Old School House (OSH), Beachley; the status of which has never been clarified. BOBA asked MOD to buy the freehold of the OSH and was also offered the freehold of the adjacent St John's Chapel (SJC) and the option to rent in the meantime.

2.2 Both OSH and the larger SJC if fully refurbished would be suitable for BOBA's HQ and storage needs. The Executive Committee does not favour a permanent BOBA Museum but is considering a 'virtual museum'. The cost of buying the OSH is not yet known whereas that of the SJC is. BOBA probably needs to act by early 2006 to purchase the SJC. An option also exists to give up both OSH and SJC and to store BOBA's possessions.

2.3 Membership of 'New' BOBA has grown strongly since 1994 but is projected to fall over the next twenty years. This will adversely affect reunion numbers and the ability of the currently healthy BOBA Fund to manage large annual expenditures.

2.4 BOBA could apply for registered charitable status and this has some financial attraction at the expense of increased regulation.

2.5 Should BOBA move to purchase either OSH or SJC, project teams will be needed from the membership for the refurbishment work and fund raising.

3 Association History

3.1 In order to understand the current situation that BOBA now finds itself faced with it is worth briefly reviewing the history of the Association.

3.2 'Old' BOBA

The Beachley Old Boys' Association was founded on 21st February 1939 with the first reunion in 1946. On passing out from Beachley boys became life members of the Association for a small **one-off** subscription. Although sub-branches existed at times, the main activity of BOBA is centred on an annual reunion at Beachley, usually on the third weekend in September. The School carried out all of the administration of the Association and organisation of the reunion with all BOBA officers being either military or civilian members of staff.

Inevitably, BOBA was subsidised to a very large extent by the MOD



3.3 'New' BOBA

3.3.1 The College (as it became in 1966) closed at the end of term in June 1994 and thereafter no direct support was available from military sources. However, at a BOBA reunion held at Beachley in April of that year, a 'New' BOBA was formed with an Executive Committee of members being elected to run the reborn organisation.

3.3.2 The new association was given a useful start as the BOBA Fund of some £6,000 was transferred to the new committee. Additionally, the Old School House (OSH) beside St John's Church was partially refurbished by apprentices as part of trade training and was handed over to BOBA as the Association's Headquarters building. 'New' BOBA also took over a number of items deemed to be its property from the College Museum and was given the valuable nominal roll books of apprentices previously held in the College HQ. A number of varnished wall-mounted display boards bearing the names of the Commandants, RSM's etc. were also given to BOBA.

3.3.3 Following closure of the College, it was necessary to find a new venue for the annual reunion, as Beachley Camp was no longer available. The Old Course Hotel (now the Chepstow Hotel) was found to meet most needs and has been used successfully each year since. However, in order to continue to provide a quality reunion weekend it was initially necessary to charge full rates for the functions with minimal subsidies.

3.3.4 Additionally, it was decided by the membership at the first AGM of 'New' BOBA to introduce membership subscriptions in order to put the Association on a more secure financial basis. These were to be £10 pa. although this was later amended to **£50 in total** payable by £10 p.a. or as a one-off payment. However, the membership voted to reserve the right to reintroduce subscriptions should the need arise in the future. With an increasing membership and careful management the value of the BOBA Fund was raised to around £25,000 within three years. It was then possible to provide greater subsidies for the reunion functions while benefiting from some fixed income investments.

3.3.5 The Old School House has been used since 1994 for BOBA committee meetings and for the storage of shop stock, books, nominal rolls, display boards and memorabilia. The Annual General Meeting, usually attended by more than a hundred members and by permission of the CO, has been held in St George's Chapel at Beachley Camp. St George's has also been used for the Founder's Day church service held on the reunion weekend. The social functions, including members' and ladies' dinners have been held at the Chepstow Hotel.

3.3.6 Since 'New BOBA was formed the Association has expanded considerably not only in numbers but in the ways it provides for its members. A very successful BOBA website was launched some years ago and continues to be a principal source of new members. An informative annual newsletter, The Beachley Echoes, has been produced each year since 'New' BOBA was formed and the BOBA Golf Society goes from strength to strength. BOBA also provides a contingent at the Whitehall Remembrance Parade each November.

3.3.7 Membership of 'new' BOBA now stands at more than seven hundred and fifty.

4. Present Situation

4.1 The BOBA Fund

Financially, the BOBA Fund continues to maintain its value above £20,000 but the need to reintroduce membership subscriptions for 'paid up' members is one that will need to be discussed soon. Income to the fund comes mainly from new members' subscriptions and from investment income. Sale of items from the shop also brings in some money. The main expenditure each year is on committee expenses and a variable subsidy for the Reunion Weekend. *Any major expenditure, such as a building purchase and refurbishment could not be met by the current fund but money would need to be raised to do this.*

4.2 The Old School House

4.2.1 BOBA has occupied the Old School House, Beachley since 1994 but without there being any certainty



upon what basis the occupation exists! The last commandant of the College 'gave' the building to BOBA for its HQ but there was never any deed, lease or written rental agreement of any sort. Hence, BOBA has continued to occupy the OSH without paying any rent since 1994. The MOD, which owns the building have made no demands on BOBA nor has it communicated to BOBA about it. However, BOBA, through its Chairman, has made a number of approaches to MOD Estates for clarification of BOBA's right to occupancy of the OSH.

4.2.2 The opportunity for BOBA to buy the adjacent St John's Chapel, Beachley for use as its HQ has prompted the BOBA Committee to redouble efforts to get the MOD to clarify the situation regarding the OSH. Consequently, on 14th January 2004 Mr Fogg of Defence Estates inspected the OSH at the invitation of the BOBA Committee. In his subsequent letter Mr Fogg confirmed there appeared to be no lease or written agreement for BOBA to occupy the OSH. He explained that if the OSH were to be surplus to MOD requirements, and subject to certain other rules, then it might be sold on the open market. Currently such a sale is usually by auction and therefore BOBA would be at risk of not being able to afford the property should it wish to buy. Mr Fogg also thought that a yearly lease on the property could be arranged locally (i.e. at Brecon). However, the Executive Committee is clear that such a lease would be unattractive as The MOD would still be able to sell OSH should it so decide; for example if Beachley Barracks were closed.

4.2.3 At time of writing BOBA has recently written to Defence Estates requesting that the Association be allowed to buy the OSH by private treaty (should the membership so decide). A reply is not yet to hand. At this time it is not known whether the OSH at auction or by private sale would cost just a few thousand pounds or tens of thousands.

4.2.4 The BOBA Executive Committee believes the OSH provides ample room for committee meetings and for storage of all BOBA's various artefacts but is not sufficiently large enough for a display area for BOBA artefacts. We are also aware that currently the roof and upstairs store area need extensive repair. Additionally, the area of repair could well extend to the main roof area as well, which has not been inspected. Repair / refurbishment of the main roof would be likely to increase the overall costs of bringing the OSH up to the required standard quite sharply. Should BOBA purchase the OSH refurbishments would include a heated storeroom upstairs and extra cupboards downstairs. The cost of this work is likely to be more than £10,000. There would be ongoing bills to pay for electricity, water and Council Tax but for a relatively small building with low usage these would not be significant. However, there would be a need to improve the heating and hot water facilities. There is also the possibility that a new mains water connection would be required.

4.2.5 The Executive Committee has recently commissioned a valuation and survey of the OSH to determine what it may cost to purchase at market rates and what approximately it would cost to repair and refurbish the building to make it suitable as a HQ building for the future. The results of this initiative are not yet available but should be known to the Executive Committee by the end of May 2004 and will be put before the 2004 AGM in September.

4.3 St John's Chapel, Beachley.

4.3.1 Adjacent to the OSH and situated within a graveyard is the redundant chapel of St John's, Beachley. The Diocese of Gloucester (Redundant Churches) owns the building and graveyard. Following the collapse of a local organisation, which was interested in purchasing the building, it has subsequently been offered to BOBA.

4.3.2 The Association has negotiated a *two-year rental lease with the Diocese at £250 p.a.* with the first year free but has not yet taken it up although this was authorised at the AGM in September 2003. The delay is because BOBA is waiting for the Diocese to trim back an overhanging tree, which has in the past is caused problems of water ingress by leaves etc. blocking the guttering and hence rainwater spilling over and seeping through the walls and pointing into the church. This is not currently the case as the gutters are cleaned regularly, but could recur if the tree is not cut back. (The Diocese of Gloucester have this in hand. Ed.)

4.3.3 The rental lease would allow BOBA time to consider its position with regard to the possible outright freehold purchase of St John's, *which the Diocese has offered to BOBA for £5,000.* The freehold contract would include covenants restricting the use of the building to that agreed at outset e.g. headquarters, storage facility and display of heritage items. Any future sale or disposal would have to be referred to the Church Commissioners. Currently, any sale contract would prohibit resale of the building in the future for anything but a learning or



resource centre, prohibiting sale for use as domestic / studio or light commercial use. However, the Association has recently received written confirmation that the Diocese and Church Commissioners might become more relaxed over a period of many years about changes of use of the building. An opportunity therefore exists for BOBA to press the Diocese now for an official relaxation of the covenants especially as the OSH, if purchased, would probably carry no such restrictions. Such a relaxation would make eventual disposal of the SJC easier and probably more profitable.

4.3.4 St John's lies entirely within the graveyard, which is maintained by Tidenham Parish Council. Access to the church is by path through the graveyard entrance via a rear door. The graveyard will remain the property of the Diocese but BOBA would have a right of way to the SJC entrance. The church is not in a good state of repair with regard to the interior and stone pointing. It has no heating and would require extensive internal refurbishment to make it suitable for BOBA's needs. However, the main building was found to be sound when an architectural survey was conducted some two years ago. Should the building be repaired / refurbished it would provide an excellent BOBA HQ with plenty of room for meetings, storage and display.

4.3.5 Chepstow Liaison member, John Furley, has initiated much of the progress made with regard to the possible acquisition by BOBA of St John's and has carried out extensive costings for refurbishing / fitting out the building for use by BOBA. John's original estimates were sent to members last year. In short, the works needed would require a sum of some £50,000 (not including the £5,000 purchase fee). Clearly, this sum is not currently available within BOBA funds but a great part of it would have to be raised either from increased subscriptions, donations, or by and large, with grants from external bodies.

4.3.6 In the spring of 2003 John Furley proposed that BOBA secure ownership of SJC and that it was converted to a headquarters and Beachley Heritage Museum. His proposal was circulated to members as part of the annual reunion and newsletter mailing and included costings and introduced possible sources of funding for the project. John's proposal asked for members to return a reply slip indicating whether they were in favour of his proposal and whether they would be willing to contribute financially. Some sixty five percent of BOBA members confirmed their support for the proposal. The matter was discussed at length at the AGM in September 2003 with many points for and against moving to St John's in view of the possibility of the MOD at some time asking BOBA to leave the Old School House. A decision was taken by the Executive Committee to look at the matter more fully and to present proposals to the membership by the AGM of 2005. A working group headed by myself David Chapman was subsequently set up under the Executive Committee direction.

5 The Future

5.1 Association Objectives

The Objectives of the Association are to encourage 'esprit de corps' by uniting all old boys of Beachley Camp and to maintain friendships by means of social gatherings. Issue of an annual newsletter to all members and the Reunion weekend held annually in Chepstow meets these guiding principles. These objectives should be borne in mind when considering any new ventures or purchases that the Association may engage in.

5.2 A BOBA Museum

5.2.1 BOBA holds a number of record books, photos, display boards, flags /standards, presentation swords and memorabilia of various sorts. The BOBA Heritage Member and others have developed an interesting display of this material, which is principally set out for members on the Reunion weekend. Recently it has been suggested that BOBA sets up a 'Heritage Museum' open to members, and possibly the public, in order to permanently display the heritage items mentioned above.

5.2.2 It should be remembered that BOBA's **main need** when considering future accommodation is that committee meetings can be held comfortably (and possibly AGMs in the distant future) coupled with the facility to store all the heritage material in suitable and sustainable conditions.

5.2.3 The idea of a permanent BOBA museum of some type is undoubtedly attractive to many members as this would allow for presentation of more materials and in a more developed way than can be achieved by the annual



display set out on Reunion Weekend. However, members will need to look very carefully at the ramifications of a permanent museum. The possibility of a museum open to the public presents many difficulties with few benefits other than those mentioned above plus the possibility of some income. All of the following should be considered:

- The museum would have to comply with the Museum Registration Scheme run by RESOURCE. This scheme requires high standards of museum management, collections care, public services etc. and would involve inspections and reporting.
- Curatorial staff would need to be appointed and possibly paid.
- The numbers public visitors might be very small. The museum would not be a regimental museum with perhaps hundreds of years of history and tradition to attract the public but a small museum offering a glimpse of seventy years of an army apprentices training establishment.
- BOBA members would be the most likely visitors and a very high proportion of these would visit over the reunion weekend in September.
- Insurance costs would be high.
- Disabled access and toilets would be needed.
- The standard of heating and humidity control needed for a public museum would be very expensive to install and maintain. (Chepstow Museum has a computer-controlled system).
- The museum would almost certainly run at a considerable financial loss.
- There is no off-road parking for either the OSH or St John's Chapel. (*Ed. Use 'Old Gym' Car park*).

5.2.4 A registered BOBA Museum open to the public would be more suited to St John's Chapel than to the OSH, which is considerably smaller. *However, in view of the risks, restraints and regulatory burden of such a venture the Executive Committee does not currently support the public museum option.*

5.2.5 If the Association HQ is in the future located in either the Old School House or in St John's Chapel, and the building is made suitable for a permanent display of heritage items a private BOBA Museum could be set up. Such a museum could be opened for members on request and at the Reunion weekend. There would be no need for the Heritage Member to set up the portable display in the hotel each year or for paid staff etc.

5.2.6 The heritage materials of most interest to members are without doubt the original nominal rolls of apprentices who entered Beachley which show names, numbers, TOS, SOS etc by group order. These records are in handwritten books and are showing considerable signs of wear. A museum curator would very probably consider that these valuable documents should be suitably cared for without direct access to them being generally available to members. A small project was begun some time ago to transcribe the records onto computer but this has not progressed due to the ill health of the volunteer BOBA member who was involved.

5.2.7 Therefore, to protect our BOBA heritage items and make them more accessible to more members in the future the membership may now consider that the time is right to move towards a **BOBA Virtual Museum**. Such a museum would contain *searchable* transcribed lists of all the apprentice records, lists from the display boards, photos, maps, and images of the real items such as swords, standards etc. The museum could be accessible through either a BOBA internet website or on a disk. This form of museum would be appreciated and used by an increasing proportion of members as in future years the great majority of members will own or have access to computers. *Such a museum could also earn an income from sale of disks or access to records.* If a BOBA virtual museum were set up, it would probably mean that any static museum could be less comprehensive and items subject to deterioration could be protected. BOBA members without a home computer would be able to access the BOBA Virtual Museum by visiting their local library or similar centre with computers for public use. Help in learning basic internet skills are usually available.

5.2.8 The Chepstow Museum is currently engaged in setting up a virtual museum for some of its exhibits and the Curator (a BOBA honorary member) would be willing to provide some initial guidance. Clearly, setting up a virtual museum is a major task but not one that would be costly when compared to the cost of setting up and running and staffing a permanent museum.

5.2.9 The Executive Committee has decided that they will support the idea of a virtual museum but however there is an appreciation that should the membership approve such a scheme the project will take much time and effort and will take a number of years to bring to fruition. A considerable number of volunteer members would



be needed for the transcription process.

5.3 Future Membership

5.3.1 The future numbers of BOBA members is a very important factor to consider when the Association is faced with choices about buying, refurbishing and maintaining property over a period of decades and in finding active members to run the Association.

5.3.2 The pool of ex-apprentices and staff eligible to become members of BOBA can never increase and will eventually decline to nothing. A time will come when BOBA will disappear or be disbanded. We may estimate that this will be by 2030 for by this time the youngest members will be approaching 60 and numbers will be falling rapidly. The last apprentices passed out of Beachley ten years ago but unfortunately there are few signs that boys from the 1980s and 1990s are joining BOBA in any significant numbers. The organisation will become less attractive to potential joiners as closure of the College recedes into the past. *(Ed. 1994, I was the first of 56A to join new BOBA , no real involvement with old BOBA until I retired, why should the 80's & 90's be different?)*

5.3.3 It may also be a possibility that later ex-apprentices who completed shorter courses, such as 2 years or less, and who had a smoother and less difficult passage through Beachley than the boys in say 1947 will be less likely to join BOBA.

5.3.4 Nevertheless, the membership of BOBA has changed quite significantly since 'New' BOBA took over in 1994. By hard work of successive Membership Secretaries, the Executive Committee and existing members the number of members has increased from an initial 200 – 300 to 1,000 today of which some 700+ may be termed active members. Only a few years ago the great majority of members were from the pre 1950 groups. However, through membership drives, especially for 50th reunion years, and reduction in numbers of earlier groups the split is now about 56 – 44 for pre and post 1950 members.

5.3.5 Aside from 50th reunions much of the recent recruitment success has been through the BOBA web site. However, this source appears to have peaked in 2002. We can surmise that a good proportion of potential new members who will come from post 1950 groups who already have access to the internet and therefore that many of those who would like to join BOBA have already done so as they will have probably accessed reunion sites.

5.3.6 In order to put the future member numbers in focus some calculations were carried out to model how active membership might decline over a twenty-year period. The table below shows how the current membership may decline over time and assumes that the majority of members over age 75 will not actively take part in the running of the organisation.

	Membership	Aged 75 and over	Active
Current	742*	191	551
10 Years	360	169	191
15 Years	268	144	124
20 Years	183	109	74

*This figure is subject to recent deaths, lapses, etc.

Projections based on Government Actuary's Life Tables for UK males 2000 – 2002.

5.3.7 The table shows that of the current membership only a tenth of them will be active in the Association in 20 years time and that only a quarter will be active in ten years time!

5.3.8 Of course membership will not remain static and using data available since the formation of new BOBA in 1994, recruitment over the next 10 years is likely to produce 235 new members. Applying the same mortality calculations to the figure of 235 indicates that 176 members will survive to 2014 and of these 9 will be 75 or over.

5.3.9 The combined projection for 2014 is 536 members of whom 178 will be aged 75 or over and 358 will be 'active'. Hence, the active organisation will be halved in ten years.



5.3.10 Member Pat Perry using BOBA member records and other sources carried out this membership research.

5.3.11 However, John Furley, the current Membership Secretary, believes that the number of members will not fall as sharply as indicated. John believes numbers will hold over the next twenty years as the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s groups hold 50th year reunions and reach retiring age, which is often the stimulus to join BOBA. John also points out that 235 new members have joined in the past three years.

5.4 Charitable Status

5.4.1 When new BOBA was formed in 1994 there was discussion at the AGM about whether the Association should apply to become a registered charity. The President at the time, Colonel O'Callahan, had investigated the matter and was of the view that BOBA should not become a charity because of the regulation and administrative burden. The membership agreed with this and the matter was closed. **Ed: points out, that was then!**

5.4.2 However, it is now likely that the Association may buy either the Old School House or St John's and may need to raise tens of thousands of pounds to finance these plans. Therefore, members have asked whether future plans might be better served by the Association registering as a charity with the Charity Commissioners.

5.4.3 There are two main advantages in becoming a charity. First, there would be some tax advantages in that tax paid by members could be reclaimed by the Association on members' subscriptions. While subscriptions for paid up members remain suspended this would produce in the region of £1,000 p.a. but this would be greater if annual subscriptions were reintroduced. Second, if the Association needs to raise funds by obtaining grants from other organisations it could be that charitable Status would help.

5.4.5 The Charity Commissioners state that a charity is an organisation set up for exclusively charitable purposes, which carries out activities to achieve these purposes. A charity must be set up to help the public and not particular individuals. Charitable purposes come under four defined categories – relief of financial hardship, old age, sickness or disability – advancement of education – advancement of religion – or other charitable purposes, which help and benefit the community.

5.4.6 Therefore, it might seem that BOBA has little chance of becoming a registered charity as only one of the four purposes seem to be met in any way i.e. the Association does have a Welfare Fund and occasionally makes financial and personal assistance to ex-boys and their families. However, by claiming to promote esprit de Corps and military efficiency a number of Service organisations have obtained charitable status including the Arborfield Old Boys' Association.

5.4.7 A telephone conversation with the Secretary of the Arborfield Association confirms that registration was not difficult although a constitution had to be written. BOBA has the contact details of the person who advised AOBO on their constitution and who previously worked for the Charity Commissioners. Subsequently the annual work required of the Treasurer and Secretary of AOBO has been limited and interference from the Charity Commissioners non-existent. The fund has benefited from the tax relief on subscriptions.

5.5 Headquarters Options

5.5.1 In 2003 the BOBA membership indicated that they strongly approved of the proposal to carry forward plans to purchase the SJC. However, the original letter that set out the proposal (with the approval of the Executive Committee) was drafted by one member of the Committee and was not intended to offer options to members but to promote SJC. After discussion at the 2003 AGM it was agreed that all options should be explored so that the membership could make a more informed choice of location for the BOBA HQ.

5.5.2 However, while matters are being investigated and before decisions are made either at the 2004 AGM or 2005 AGM, the rental lease on SJC will be taken up by BOBA when the building is suitable for handover. This should be in mid 2004.

5.5.3 At time of writing in April 2004 the Executive Committee are actively exploring the purchase of the Old



School House directly from the MOD and is pressing for a firm reply from Defence Estates. It is the current intention of the Committee to recommend purchase of the freehold if this is agreed and the price is acceptable. An acceptable price is likely to be less than £20,000 but the committee would hope for a much lower figure.

5.5.4 Should the OSH be put up for auction before the next AGM then the committee would probably need to write to all members asking them to agree a ceiling to which BOBA should bid.

5.5.5 A further determinant as to whether BOBA continues to aim for purchase of OSH is the cost of repair and refurbishment. Mr Fogg of MOD Lands stated that the MOD would not repair the roof and other defects while BOBA occupies the building. There is an outside chance that BOBA could get some repairs done through Royal Engineers trade training or as a project. However, this possible opportunity has not been explored.

5.5.6 Should the cost of repairs to OSH be unacceptably high to the level where the cost of purchase and repair of OSH approaches that of SJC then the membership will need to decide which building to purchase. Both buildings would provide suitable space for committee meetings and storage of BOBA's artefacts. The SJC would provide greater opportunities for displays but if the virtual museum proceeds this will be less relevant. The SJC will require greater maintenance and will generate greater heating costs, as it is significantly bigger than the OSH.

5.5.7 Should the members agree to purchase the OSH then the committee would expect that the members to give up the rental lease on the SJC and tell the Diocese that we do not intend to purchase.

5.5.8 Should the members decide to purchase the SJC then BOBA will vacate the OSH at a suitable time. There will be a need to raise at least £50,000 for this venture. Some opportunities and sources of such moneys are covered below.

5.5.9 If BOBA proceeds with purchase and refurbishment of SJC or OSH there will need to be a project manager and team appointed to oversee and progress the work. The membership should be aware that the Executive Committee would wish to look outside their own number for such people.

5.5.10 A further possible solution to BOBA's accommodation need is to dispense with a headquarters entirely. Reunions would continue as normal but committee meetings would need to be held several times a year. These could currently be held at the Chepstow Hotel and probably without cost and in more comfort than is currently provided by the OSH.

5.5.11 If the virtual museum proceeds there will be no need for any permanent display of heritage materials but a facility to display items on the reunion weekend at the reunion venue, currently the Chepstow Hotel. However, good storage facilities would need to be found for all of BOBA's possessions. A suitable site would be at the Big Yellow Storage Company in Cardiff where 24-hour access is provided with self-storage rooms from 10 sq ft to 500 sq ft. The cost of a 200 sq ft room is approximately £3,000 per year. Such a room would just about suffice in size allowing storage and room for preparation of materials when needed.

5.5.12 Although this seems a lot of money to spend on storage it is only about 50% more than the projected annual maintenance costs of the SJC researched by John Furley. Furthermore BOBA would not have to find tens of thousands of pounds to buy and renovate either the OSH or SJC. However, in any event, OSH, SJC or storage there would certainly be a need to restart annual subscriptions for members. With the projected fall in members mentioned earlier the maintenance of such rentals would eventually become difficult. Of course, this will also be true of the maintenance costs should the SJC be purchased.

5.6 Raising Money

5.6.1 Unless members decide there is no need for a BOBA HQ building, either rented or owned by the Association, there is likely to be a need to raise substantial amounts of money to purchase and refurbish either the OSH or SJC. There are a number of ways this can be achieved.

5.6.2 The most direct way and which is inevitable for all three options is to re-institute annual subscriptions for membership. A £10 p.a. fee will raise some **£7,500 p.a.** from **current** members and a further **£1,650** from tax



reclaims should BOBA be a registered charity. However, this income would fall when numbers begin to decrease.

5.6.3 Further amounts could be raised from BOBA members by asking for donations towards the Heritage Project Fund. It seems likely that at least 50% of members might be willing to donate an average of £25 per head. This could possibly bring in another **£10,000**. In fact, a number of members have already made significantly generous donations.

5.6.4 John Furley's SJC proposal, sent to all members in 2003, fully detailed a number of sources of external funds. The principal sources of such funds are likely to be the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Landfill Site Operators and local parish, district and county councils. Additionally, there are numerous other sources such as the Redundant Churches Commission, local businesses, regimental associations, and even the MOD.

5.6.5 If BOBA is able to purchase the OSH from the MOD for an acceptably low price e.g. under £10,000 then it should be possible to achieve this via the existing membership as detailed above. However, if the cost of OSH is likely to be in the order of tens of thousands of pounds, then BOBA must look to obtaining external grants as well. However, if the cost of OSH is likely to be in the order of tens of thousands of pounds, then BOBA must look to obtaining external grants as well.

5.6.6 If BOBA is to purchase the SJC then external grants will definitely be needed because the purchase and refurbishment will certainly exceed £50,000.

5.6.7 At this time BOBA is not in a position to start applying for external grants and the position may not be clearer for some time because the MOD are expected to take many months or even a year to positively reply to BOBA's enquiries about the OSH. Nevertheless, at some time BOBA may need to appoint a Grants sub-committee to take on the task of raising money from external (and internal) sources. The Executive Committee would be keen that this group were drawn from the wider membership.

5.6.8 Nevertheless, BOBA may want to consider applying for external grants while the option decisions are made. There is no doubt that BOBA could be well placed to obtain funding from such sources, as we are financially viable and often organisations will offer 50% of the request as long as the applicant can put up the other 50%.

6 2004 Reunion AGM

6.1 The accommodation options and other matters mentioned here will be discussed fully at the AGM in September 2004. If you are planning to attend the BOBA Reunion AGM you will be able to have your say and vote on any proposals made at the AGM in person.

6.2 If you are not attending the 2004 reunion and if you have views to express please write to the BOBA Honorary Secretary, Brian Henderson, before the AGM at 33 Kensington Park, Magor, Caldicot, Monmouthshire, NP26 3QG.

6.3 It is important for members attending the reunion this September to visit both the Old School House (our present HQ) and St John's Chapel to see for themselves the buildings being considered for BOBA's future HQ.

6.4 The Executive Committee will make arrangements for both buildings to be open from 10.00 hrs to 14.30 hrs on Saturday 18th September prior to the AGM.

D C Chapman
Elected Vice President
14th April 2004



Editors notes on the HQ project report:

Re: Dave Chapman's **Heritage Report, 5.3.6 - page 27**: I must ask how accurate are Government Actuary's Life Tables, importantly that is, in relation to our BOBA Association members, hopefully far more accurate than the tax forecasts given some years ago, 60 Stealth Taxes have been invented in recent years, now seem to have reached 61 with another new tax on BOBA membership projected figures! As BOBA members we should realise and hopefully consider Beachley boys are most decidedly different from the average member of the British public and are in general certainly more pointed and determined in conducting their lives and most certainly their futures. The main point of this matter is, all Beachley Boys must commence their service A1 fit (and employed - being Boy Soldiers). All my research, points to the fact our numbers will remain at about the same level for the next ten to twenty years; (ten at the very least) and then begin to very, very slowly to decrease over the ensuing twenty years! Bear in mind over 16,000 lads were trained as apprentices in Beachley over 70 years!

Members should note that the general dates of members being recruited or actually joining BOBA is:

1. When they leave the Army at about 40 years of age, or as proven more popular join:
2. When they retire from their working life at 65.

The following figures are not Governmental statistics - they are **FACTUAL** charts of the decades!

YEAR 2000 MEMBERSHIP FIGURES:

1920's current strength: 15 }	
1930's current strength: 107 }	334 = 60.5%
1940's current strength: 212 }	←
1950's current strength: 110]	
1960's current strength: 78]	
1970's current strength: 28]	218 = 39.5%
1980's current strength: 2]	
1990's current strength: 0]	
Total: = 552	

TODAY'S MEMBERSHIP FIGURES:

1920's current strength: 6 }	
1930's current strength: 98 }	322 = 43.3%
1940's current strength: 218 }	←
1950's current strength: 244]	
1960's current strength: 120]	
1970's current strength: 50]	422 = 56.7%
1980's current strength: 7]	
1990's current strength: 1]	
Total: = 744	

Deaths, Lost touch, Staff etc account for the anomalies in total numbers.

Sadly since 1994, 136 'New' BOBA members of all ages have died, the oldest from No. 1 group, and one from 71A being the youngest, (spanning almost 50 years), from a total membership of 1009, that's a small percentage relatively of New BOBA membership (13.33%). The point to concentrate on is the 'nucleolus era of BOBA members joining'. These come from two retiring eras, 1st military retirement at about 40 years of age, or 2nd working retirement at the age of 65. The main 'nucleolus of new members' is most definitely moving with the 50th anniversary of joining Beachley (arrowed in above lists), the latter of which happens to be the favoured time to join the Association. Please think about this, picture an apprentice who joined Beachley at 15 + 50 years work, retire at 65 and join BOBA. Hence: Cometh the hour, cometh the men!

Finally, in 5.3.3, why Dave Chapman would consider easier passage in the transition of training at Beachley should stop ex Boys' joining BOBA, mystifies my logical comprehension of the situation!?

In conclusion: Are we proud of our Association? If we are, we should be prepared to help a little to make its name endure, even if it be by means a small donation, or alternately a little time to help out with something here or there; possibly by passing on some expertise in raising funds. There are a many ways to help and push this venture forward, there are also a few ways to stop it. Do you want your Association to grow whilst it can, or let it be buried and forgotten in the sands of time? We have a God given opportunity to eventually place the history of the Apprentice Establishments at Beachley in the archives of the Chepstow Museum there to endure forever. We can purchase either the OSH, or SJC, allowing us to eventually sell the building and pass funds on to Chepstow Museum thus perpetuate the name of Beachley Apprentices into eternity.

Let us now go forward with what is right for all ex apprentices ~

~ in being essentially positive about our heritage and our future!



Brian Butcher 43A Group: The Editor was honoured to have been requested to carry the BOBA standard at Brian's funeral, and learnt what an amazing chap he was from his family. Brian from very sickly meningitis baby, to toting cwt sacks of coal, to Beachley Boy, through to the Airborne, bomb disposal to Fortress Squadron RE in Gibraltar. Serving in Beachley, BAOR, Palestine, Korea and the UK. Brian was awarded the WW2 medal, Korean medal, United Nations medal with clasp and his LS&GC. *As a fitting epitaph this poem was read at Brian's funeral by his sister ~ a very moving experience.*

A Soldier.

He was getting old and paunchy, and his hair was falling fast.
He sat around the Legion, telling stories of his past.
Of a war that he had fought in, and deeds that he had done.
Of his exploits with his comrades. 'They were heroes every one'.

And 'tho sometimes to his neighbours, his tales became a joke;
His real comrades always listened, for they knew of where he spoke.
Sad we'll hear his tales no longer, for 'Old Reg' has passed away.
And the world's a little poorer, for a soldier died today.

He won't be mourned by many, most by his children and his wife.
For he lived a very ordinary, quite sort of life.
He worked to raise a family, simply living life his way.
And the world won't know his passing, tho' a soldier died today.

When politicians leave this earth, their bodies lie in state,
Thousands note their passing, and proclaim that they were great.
Papers tell of their life stories, from the time when they were young,
But the passing of a soldier, goes unnoticed and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution, to the welfare of our land?
Some nerd who breaks his promises, and cons his fellow man?
Or just the common fellow, who in times of war and strife,
Goes off to serve his country, and offers up, his life.

The politician's stipend, and the stile in which they live,
Are often disproportionate, to the service that they give.
Whilst the ordinary soldier, who has offered up his all,
Is paid off with a medal, and perhaps a pension small.

It's so easy to forget them, for it seems so long ago,
That our Bob's and Johnny's went to battle, but we know,
It was not the politicians, with their compromise and ploys,
Who won for us our freedom, that our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger, with your enemies at hand?
Would you really want some cop-out, with his ever-waffling stand?
Or would you want a soldier, who has sworn that he'll defend,
His home and kin and country, and will fight to the bitter end.

He was a common soldier, and his ranks are growing thin,
But his absence should remind us; we may need his like again.
When countries are in conflict, then we find the soldier's part,
To clean up all the troubles, that those politician's start.

If we cannot do him honour, while he is here to praise,
Then at least do give him homage, at the ending of his days.
Perhaps a simple headline, in the paper that might say.
"The world should be in mourning, for a soldier died today".

God bless Brian ~ Rest in peace our old friend.



from the Fairway : BOBA Golfing Society

Records continue to be broken; this year saw 39 entries which caused a bit of last minute panic at the golf club. I am pleased to report that everyone sent their entries on time this year with no 'last minute' surprises, which is just as well as we could not have accommodated any late entries. The field this year included four ladies; one new member from Germany, Peter North 56B; and another new member from America !!, Terry Williams 53B, great to see you all. The weather was once again very kind to us and, apart from the hollow tined greens, the courses played well. Before play started Foster Pattison 56B and Tony Battle 57B drew the names for the George Murray Memorial Cup. The results of this year's competition were as follows:

Longest Drive (9 th Hole)	Nearest the Pin (8 th Hole)	Best Par 3's aggregate
Geoff Martin 54B 234 yds	Alan Haywood 58B 14ft 8ins	Tony Battle 57B 13pts

Drawn Pairs (The George Murray Memorial Cup)

Winners	74 points	Tim Holt 53A	&	David Fowle 66C
Second	70 points	Peter Hayward 65C	&	David Fowle 66C
Third	69 points	Peter North 56B	&	Joe Mason 49B

(Note) This is David Fowle's second year as winner. The reason his name appears twice is that we have to re-draw one name to even up the entries.

B.O.B.A. Championship 2003

Winner & 2003 Champion Glen Chalmers 56B 40 pts

Second	Reg Rider 54B	39 pts
Third (on countback)	John Green 73B	
38 pts		

My thanks to all who took part, with a special mention for Tony Waite, Tony Battle, Foster Pattison, Kay & Reg Rider, and Pat & Peter Saunders, your help is really appreciated.

Finally thanks to our President/Chairman Syd for presenting the prizes, we look forward to seeing you all next year.



Tim Holt & David Fowle
Drawn Pairs Winners

Glen Chalmers



The 2004 BOBA Open Golf Championships

The BOBA Open is in the form of an 18 hole Stableford competition open to all members of the BOBA Golfing Society who must be BOBA members and/or their spouses/partners.

It will be held at the Dewstow Golf Club Caerwent on Saturday 18th September 2004.
All golfers are required to meet in the clubhouse at 8.15 am on Saturday morning.

Those wishing to enter should complete the form below and return it, as indicated, with a cheque for £25 made payable to BOBA, **TO REACH ME BEFORE FRIDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER 2004.**

Start times will be allocated on Saturday 11th September and all golfers informed by letter, **so please ensure your entry is on time.**

In the event of too many entries being received, a "first come" system will be operated.

✂ -----

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

Please complete **FULLY** and in **BLOCK CAPITALS.**

RANK/TITLE: SURNAME: FORENAME:

ADDRESS:

.....

.....

POSTCODE: TEL: E-MAIL:

CHEPSTOW GROUP/INTAKE: COMPANY:

GOLF MEMBER AT:(GOLF CLUB) HANDICAP:

I WOULD LIKE TO PLAY WITH:

I WISH TO PLAY FRIDAY AFTERNOON * YES/NO (*DELETE AS APPLICABLE)

I ENCLOSE A CHEQUE MADE PAYABLE TO "B.O.B.A." TO THE VALUE OF £ 25.

SIGNED: DATE: