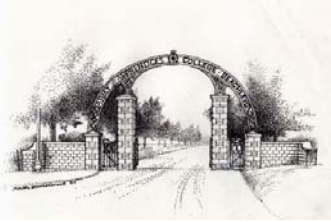




Beachley



Echoes

Edition No. 11 ~ May 2005

Our New Association Headquarters and Virtual Museum: St. John's Chapel (SJC) - & - The Old School House (OSH)

Not so much which building is the best for our needs we could negotiate with both?

Much water has flowed under that metaphoric bridge since our last report, sadly not too much of it has made a great deal of difference to the stage we find our project. The lease is no further forward; this is mainly owing to the beech tree at the North West corner of the church, (rear right of St John's looking at it from the road). The branches of the tree overhang about one third of the rear side of St John's, some of them very, very considerable in size. Negotiations with the Diocese to fell the trees have progressed to the stage of the beech tree at the south east corner of St John's (near the road) has been felled. We await the tree surgeon to return to fell the tree which threatens our project. The costs of felling these trees is believed to be approach 18% of the budget to refurbish St John's, so suffice to say, it is as well we are not footing the bill.

The project costs to refurbish St, John's remain at well below £50,000.00. How do we raise such a sum? This is not as difficult as one might at first perceive, it being more of a manipulation of the property ownership, than actually purchasing to retain and rebuild all that is available to BOBA. The ownership of the School House remains very much in question, even more so since last reunion weekend. During a visit to St, John's, Thelma Duke (wife of Jack 51A) came across a very dirty old wooden plaque in one side vestry of St John's, which when studied closely expressed a record of a donation of the School House, by the founders, to St. John's. This raised a more than interesting

question as to who actually owns the OSH. The MOD cannot find any record of property deeds; we have asked the Diocese to see if they are able to trace deeds? As I write the Church of England is investigating the case, however at this moment ownership of the OSH is at a 'stand off', neither the Diocese nor the MOD can produce any proof of deeds actually in existence. Where does this leaves us? Quite clearly in a quandary, but steps are being taken to ensure the correct answers are found. Much more importantly at this time is that

all our enquiries follow the legal ownership format.

No-one ever said this project was going to be easy and in fact has proven to have become exceedingly frustrating, nonetheless results are nearing achievement.

One thing for certain, we are now able to go ahead with the purchase of St. John's Chapel, without this singular option being

available to our BOBA Association, we could be made homeless!

The School House refurbishment, if considered in simple terms, 'pro rata size for size' with St John's, is a far more expensive option than St John's, this simply because the School House is in a much poorer condition compared to St. John's Chapel.

The lease for St John's is going ahead as the BOBA membership decided at the 2003&4 AGM's, sadly and disappointingly securing the lease is held up by the beech tree threatening St John's by over hanging about one third of the building on the north western corner to a height of some sixty feet.



St. John's at Beachley & The Old School House



The official tree surgeons surveyed the trees in the locality for the Diocese of Gloucester, their report suggested the beech tree at the front of St. John's was a far greater threat to the Diocese than the one at the rear. Therefore in understandable wisdom, the Diocese decided initially to deal with the greater threat; who can blame them for that? Our main problem is to have the tree affecting us felled before leaf break 2005. If this is not complete before the foliage commences to grow we will be fighting a battle with the Diocese to wait until after autumn leaf fall. This is to escape excess costs of extended the time to fell the tree because of reduced vision caused by the newly grown foliage. In simple terms the fellers will be restricted literally by being unable to see what they are doing, this could possibly extending the felling time, by double at least.

You may be able to appreciate; we are very much stuck between a rock and a hard place. We are not able to go ahead with the School House because we literally have not discovered to date who actually owns the building. On the other hand we cannot go ahead with St. John's because the Diocese has not completed their agreed part of the bargain in felling the beech tree over hanging SJC; I assure you, we will keep the pressure on the Diocese. Point of note: Felling trees at St. John's requires the road to have traffic control in place; this permission takes about six weeks to obtain from application. this permission has been applied for, considering the date, it is not looking good to obtain permission before leaf break 2005. With regard to the condition of both buildings, I will start with stating the School House building is in a poor state of repair. Initially we had hoped the MOD would help with repair costs, but now with the ownership of the building in question, all thought of repairs are held in abeyance, no matter who eventually is to pay. On the other hand the St. John's building is in basic good structural condition. Agreed SJC needs extensive basic installations of all services, except

electricity, even this does require complete overhaul; in the main only cosmetic work remains.

The Diocese have already paid for quite extensive masonry repairs, they have also replaced the entire eastern window of the church and paid for all other window glass to be replaced/repaired.

All this to secure a Headquarters for our Association and assurance that the Beachley training establishments are never forgotten. I believe, as do most of our members, that the St. John's project is the only economical option to operate effectively. Should we allow ourselves to falter and consider other less desirable options, I seriously believe the Association will begin to fade away and very quickly. Please never forget the main goal of our project, that is to eventually leave behind for all time a true recorded history of all the Beachley Army Training Establishments. I also do believe our project cannot be entrusted anyone else but us Beachley Old Boys, left in MOD or the Government's hands, local or otherwise, we know what would almost certainly happen, the funds would never be raised, or if we left the funds we raised to those authorities, they would, in our eyes, be diverted to less worthy causes. We cannot and must not allow this; we have decided our Beachley Camp history must live on as a place where Army Apprentice training was conducted for seventy long years. We are relying on you to support our exceptionally worthy project. In my mind, I know I would not have become the man I am today without the guidance / training I secured at Beachley; I am sure I am not alone in this evaluation of what we all truly gained at Beachley. Who can tell about such things, our basic action taken here could be the seed to the reinstatement of Army Apprenticeships at some future date.

Best wishes,

Syd Thomas and John Furley



The President's Thoughts.

What a difference a year makes! ~ This time last year I was writing with the twin hats of President / Chairman and a very busy person. Now with only one hat to wear things are so much different.

Brian Henderson as Chairman has the responsibility to ensure the Association runs smoothly and efficiently also that it is forward looking. The functions of the post seem to be in good hands as I witnessed when I attended Brian's second Executive Committee meeting. There will be changes in minor ways but I feel sure that they will enhance the enjoyment of all members and in particular all those attending

the Reunion. That is their aim.

I have been working closely with John Furley to see that the St Johns (SJC) and Old School House (OSH) projects keep moving, albeit slowly. The OSH, we are still in the market for it should the MOD and Diocese ever decide who owns it. In the meantime we hope the discovery of a SJC/OSH plaque indicating that at one time it was part of the St John's church inventory; this fact alone could more than assist our case.

The delay on the Church lease has been caused by



the Diocese of Gloucester negotiations for the removal of 2 very large beech trees. One has now been felled, the other will follow in the near future.

Last years London Cenotaph Parade was rather poorly attended and yet we had brilliant TV coverage which in turn has generated many ex boys' to make enquires about joining. It also helped us to get many, many more places (tickets) for the World War II 60th Commemoration Events taking place on July 10th. Just about all the 35 BOBA members who applied will get tickets (we were allocated 15 initially). Tickets I understand from other organisations are 'gold dust'. John Overs

has been kind enough to offer to carry our BOBA Standard on the Horse Guards Parade event, he will hand over to John Furley for the final long march down the Mall past Buckingham Palace.

I hope to be accompanied at this year's reunion by Gaynor, who is a long time friend of the Thomas family. The widow of a close REME friend she was very kind to my mother and did a great deal for Jo in her final months. A good friend indeed.

Hopefully, see you in September!

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



The Chairman's Jottings:

It seems such a short time since my election as Chairman and I thank all present at the AGM last September for your vote of confidence. Syd Thomas served us all exceedingly well indeed during his tenure as chairman and I am very pleased that he gained all your support and became the President of our association.

Subsequent to last year's AGM there have been a number of other changes within the Executive Committee, conversely some of its members have changed their minds and have agreed to stay on in post. Peter BurrIDGE has agreed to continue his good work as our reunion organiser, as has Tony Waite who is continuing as Treasurer. John Furley intended to step down from the committee but at my request he agreed to stay on and lead the way on the St John's Project, John is again producing the Beachley Echoes this year. Our new Membership Secretary is Rocky Evershed, two new elected Vice Presidents, namely Baz Morgan and Chalky White and we also have a new Chepstow Liaison officer in Mac Obermaier. Last but by no means least I am grateful that Derek Walker volunteered to take up the Secretary's reins.

Having announced all the changes we should all be mindful of the good work that the outgoing members of the committee achieved. Dave Chapman has served as our Treasurer, Beachley Echoes Editor and as a Vice President, during his time on the committee Dave worked extremely hard for the Association and without his guidance we would not be the success we are. Frank Pickering 47B also stood down, sadly just as the Echoes was going to print we heard that Frank had passed away. Therefore all we can offer are our posthumous appreciations for the work he did on our behalf as Member-

ship Secretary and later as an Elected Vice President. Our real and heartfelt condolences go out to Daphne and other members of Frank's family.

Other changes at the helm, none I hope! But we all know the saying "Many hands make light work" therefore any assistance the members can give the committee will always be appreciated.

The 2004 Reunion was again a great success as was the Cenotaph Parade in London where I believe the association had excellent TV coverage, courtesy of the television companies. That said we must keep our attendance figures up and where possible I ask you all to support this important event in November of this year.

Apart from editing this and the previous edition of the Echoes, John Furley, along with our President, continue to work on the St Johns project. Progress to date has been slow although there have been a number of meetings with the Diocese of Gloucester on various aspects. I encourage you to read John's article on this subject as the outcome of the project could have a direct effect on the association.

I believe that BOBA continues to flourish with the membership growing, every year. However, none of us should get complacent and we should all 'don the recruiting sergeant's hat' and each one of us endeavour to recruit at least one ex boy to join the new BOBA Association per year.

Finally, I and my wife Margaret look forward to meeting you and your ladies again at our Reunion this year.

Until then take care ~ Brian Henderson.



First Ever Editorial of: Maj (Ret'd) Bernard Olley ~ 54A A/T RSM!

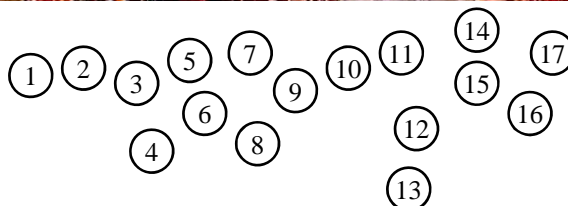
To make the assumption that most Brits have a well developed capacity for acceptance of a little nostalgia and fondness for tradition is fair and I suppose it is quite natural that these instincts become stronger with increasing age. In our 20's, 30's, 40's and even 50's, setting aside time from family and professional careers to visit Chepstow seems not to be a serious consideration. From my own experience I heard word of Chepstow contemporaries and picked up odd news-snippets about how some were progressing and others not, but I relied on my elder peer's to make the annual pilgrimage to reunions. What a mistake on my part this was!

The news that old friends and colleagues are 'passing-on' is difficult to accept. The realisation that acquaintance can never again be made with ex-team and class mates, even (friendly) rivals, is a spur for many to reach out, as I have, to make up for missed opportunity. I now look forward immensely to returning to Chepstow annually and the year 54, 50th anniversary, was as good as we had hoped it would be. These meetings give significant added value to revived memories of an important part of our lives. Speaking to old friends and colleagues and listening to conversations between them on our old 'stamping grounds', one has a real sense of family meetings where boyhood experiences and events take on brotherly style encounters. Looking through and beyond the weathered and lined features of individuals 50 years on, the 'boy' and is identifiable and can be related to specific instances that happened during our time together. (Remember Brad Little swimming the Wye and unable to get back?).

It was a tough and formative period of our lives as we concerned ourselves with survival, struggling to gain ascendancy over the odds against success, at any level. There was keen rivalry where the less academically talented tried hard to make up for class-room deficiencies by excelling in the Gym or on the playing field. Unfortunately, most of the academically talented were good at everything else too! Examples were Jarvis (Jock) Peden 'D' company, clearly the brains of our group, best remembered as a fine rugby player and boxer. Jock left the Army after completing his Artificer training for a career in computer engineering and travelled extensively during the course of his work. Now lives in Lincolnshire and now an annual re-union attendee. Tom Lord could do everything. He went on to look after us by representing our interest at the War Pensions Agency. Chris McGowan needs no description from me, sadly we haven't seen him back. Then there was Mac McKinlay 'C' company who after completing 9 years returned to Kirkwall in the Orkney's where he runs a successful retail business. Still mad keen on rugby, training and coaching all age groups, he is the founder of the Orkney Rugby Club. He attended the reunion with wife Jean.



Above photo taken in St. Georges Church Beachley Barracks. Sunday 19-09-04
L to R: Brian White, Bob Teare, Bern Olley, Reg Rider, Tom Lord, Bob Adams.



Less: Mac McKinley & Les Sheppard

1 Brian White	4 Jim Warwick	7 Jock Peden	10 Chris Brice	13 Reg Rider	16 Peter Lea
2 Peter Nightingale	5 Frank Bennett	8 John Drewery	11 Bob Adams	14 Bob Teare	17 Bern Olley
3 Tom Lord	6 Dave Page	9 Don Powley	12 Dave Nicholson	15 Tom Davitt	



I was re-introduced to the BOBA fold by accident but I am delighted to now make the annual trek and I would be very pleased to persuade others who may have rejected attending in the past to come along in future. The BOBA committee team do a great job every year and those who do not attend are depriving themselves of a part of their own history. The parade, service, AGM, other events, sporting activities and celebrations were exemplary, expertly overseen by our Chairman and now President, Syd Thomas. The committee deserve our sincere thanks for their effort on our behalf, providing the background for so many personal, emotional, reunions.

The team ensures the focus is on member individuals and I am grateful for the opportunity to name other anniversary attendees, who readers, not present (of year 54), will want to hear about: Old team-mate, young Peter Lea and wife Gill, always in good spirit met me at the airport, fit, well, having exhausted even his powers of persuasion, confirmed we could look forward to seeing the 'year-regulars'; Tom Lord, Bob Teare, Dave Page, Tom Davit, Jock Peden, Reg Ryder, Brian White, and Bob Adams. Bob and wife Ann live in Ripon, N. Yorkshire and have family ties with Chepstow. Bob invested a lot of time and effort into increasing the number of likely attendees from our year, which resulted in us welcoming many new faces. Thanks from us all Bob, you did a great job! There were hopes that Joe Senior, 'Buster' (our strong-man) Northy, Tony Littlewood and George Lamb would turn up but other priorities prevailed. Dave Nicholson, Peter Nightingale, Don Powley, John Drewery (& son), Jim Warwick, Les Shepherd, Chris Brice, Mac McKinley, Jeff Martin and Frank Bennett, all arrived on time.

Brian White 'C' company! Served a full career before retiring to the Ramsgate area, where he took up an engineering management position in the National Bus Company. He's a Parish Councillor and a case worker for the RBL. Dave Page 'D' company - completed 9 years, left to join ICI as a mechanic and graduated to running his own (substantial) private postal business in the North of England. Now lives in Cleveland enjoying a comfortable retirement. Tom Davitt 'A' company - completed 9 years, moved to the London area and was employed in civil engineering for most of his working life, latterly in an administrative capacity. Now lives in Crowthorn, Berkshire. Dave Nicholson completed a full term too and then moved to management of transport repair for the Hull Police Force and holding down the rank of Major in the TA, still Yorkshire-through-and-through. Peter Nightingale broke military ties fairly early in his career to practice electronic and instrument work with major UK companies including BUPA, related to Dave N, also residing in our largest county. Chris Brice 'A' company, completed full career plus a few extra years and finished up a Major. Chris and lady still look half their age! Frank Bennett 'B' company and wife Carol live in the Chepstow area. He also served a full career plus, finishing Maj (Ret'd). Reg Rider 'C' company completed 9 years and then spent the next 30 with GCHQ in Cheltenham as an electronics engineer. Reg and Kay, still living in Cheltenham, have attended the last 3 reunions and we are grateful to you Reg for filling in for absent RSM at the parade and service, as well as leading the field for our year at golf!

We all met new and old faces, for my part among the most prominent in my memory were sport affiliated, among them were; Ron Greenhalgh, Harry Care, Hector Hay and especially a man (broke my nose and many others) Ivor Evans who I have been communicating with for some time. There were tales of woe and misfortune too, but these meetings are good for everybody attending. There was much reminiscence, laughter and positive emotion shared, adding value to achieving qualification to join an exclusive and great club. On behalf of year 54, thanks again to all those that made it possible for the likes of my self to turn up, clip on the name-tag and participate in being a member of a community of which one can be very proud.

Yours sincerely, Bernard A Olley 54A Group

Index for Articles appearing in 2005 Echoes

SJC & OSH Lead story ~ cont page 2	1	Memorandum Obituary & Footprints	10	New Members & Info	19
Cont. p1 + The President's Thoughts	2	Memories & Reunion name tags	11	BOBA Heritage Report	20
Pres. Cont. + The Chairman's Jottings	3	Ladies Column & Memories of 55A	12	Heritage & 3 Beachley Stories	21
Reunion 2004 page 1	4	2004 AGM Minutes page-1	13	From Colin Weir 55A	22
Reunion 2004 page 2	5	2004 AGM Minutes page-2	14	Army Apprentice History ~ p-1	23
Welfare Report	6	2004 AGM Minutes page-3	15	Army Apprentice History ~ p-2	24
Memories & Vets Agency Info	7	2004 AGM Minutes page-4 + Tale	16	Army History p 3 + Subs news	25
Obituary ~ Major Ken Standen MBE	8	55A Colin Weir Archives!	17	Bits of info sandwiching a joke.	26
Obituary Les Wood 36 Grp + Suez	9	Membership Report	18	Golf Report & 2005 entry form	27 & 28



BOBA ~ WELFARE: can only supply an interim measure of help, we do not have the resources of the Royal British Legion or SAAFA. The small amount we can accomplish is done by Lt Col. (Ret'd) Ifor Anthony and the BOBA welfare team. The BOBA committee thank Ifor for taking on this important task. For ease of working the country continues to be divided into geographical areas and a welfare representative has been, or will be, when available, allotted to each area, as someone volunteers to fill the vacancy (As shown below). Should anyone feel they need assistance, please contact your area rep in the first instance.

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'.

Please also contact the Area Representative if you have knowledge of a Beachley Old Boy's demise, serious illness, or address change. Many comforting and appropriate specially made supporting BOBA cards have been sent to members and families. If you have any pressing case, or know of any member who requires any 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 Durtnall	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	Ray Armstrong	55A	01942 401140
Lincs/Notts/Derby	Wally Green	50B	01522 595963
Ditto	Geoff Winter	66C	01623 743560
London/Middx.	VOLUNTEER REQUIRED.		
N. Wales	Ray Armstrong	55A	01942 401140
S. Wales (West of)	John Stokes	42A	01974 821697
S. Wales (Central SW)	Pete Ashford	46A	01656 861791
S. Wales (East of)	Ifor Anthony (Control)	48A	01291 420823
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 644569

If you do have 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 have exhausted all Social Security channels initially!

If you would like to help with BOBA Welfare, even with a smaller area than is mentioned above, please do contact Ifor Anthony 48A on Tel: 01291 420823.

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.

John Furley ~ BOBA Standard Bearer. Tel: 01291 630491. Email: boba@johnfurley.plus.com



“Polly”

It was January 1960, about twenty-five of us arrived at Beachley in a Red & White double-decker bus from the Gloucester train. The snow lay deep, and it was dark and cold. We were in the Army like it or not, just callow youths, most of us leaving home for the first time.

We were directed into a dimly lit hut near to the Guard Room where we assembled with our pathetic possessions towel, shaving kit and pyjamas but little else.

Polly was in charge. He was a mighty man of well over six foot, rotund with a taut belt about his mighty waist. Red complexion and sporting a sandy moustache his eyes were everywhere. He was The Sergeant Major Perkins, Coldstream Guards, CSM J Company. We cowered while Polly told us the score. “Hand over all cigarettes – we will pack up all your civvies and send them home to your mothers – get some bits of kit tonight the rest tomorrow – now away with you to your pleasant huts with your kindly apprentice NCO’s who will get you sorted.”

Over the next few weeks of endless drill and kit cleaning we learned that although Polly was stern and unbending in many ways deep down there was a glimmer of decency and even understanding. We passed off the square and did OK the first term drill and turnout and after leave moved into Summer Term. I got on reasonably well with Polly when our paths crossed. Indeed, I was impressed that Polly, the man in charge of our team, should make a rebellious type such as myself J Coy cricket captain. All went well for a few weeks but trouble came when I was found to be an insubordinate soul by the kindly apprentice NCOs. Tragedy, Polly with his full authority reluctantly relieved me of the appointment of J company cricket captain. Following that occurrence things were less happy between us.

After the first year we went on to our training companies and our paths crossed less frequently although he still knew my name and spoke encouragingly when I later captained the school cricket team. He was still on the staff when we passed out from Beachley and went off to find our way in the wider world. However, I think that most of us who met Polly on that first winter night remembered him with some affection long after.

Years later I sported the rank of WO11 and often visited Chepstow, noting which hostelries had closed since my time and occasionally seeing permanent staff who I recognised from those early years. On this particular day Christine and I were walking down High Street, below the town arch, where the Bush once welcomed customers. Some yards away and coming up the street was a much older version of Polly. Still upright, well built, of military swagger and enquiring eye; Polly typified the retired guards sergeant major. I was uncertain it was the great man from my younger past, as we drew closer I wondered whether to speak or nod or perhaps ignore him.

We drew level, shoulder to shoulder, the same height now, older and wiser. I did not speak or indicate any recognition, I missed the first strike. I was already just past his mighty shoulder when with a bark he growled “Morning Chapman”. I turned to look back at him and speak but his eyes were trans-fixed on the arch ahead. I never saw him again.

David Chapman ~ 60A B Coy



VETERANS AGENCY INFORMATION: Formerly ‘War Pensions’ to all ex forces personnel.

If you think you have a claim for a War Pension, there is good information to be had from the Veterans Agency in Blackpool. Here are some contacts:

- Write to: Customer Services Manager: Veterans Agency, Norcross, Black pool, UK, FY5 3WP
- Vets Agency Free phone from UK - telephone No: 0800 169 22 77
- Telephone from overseas: ## 44 1253 866043
- Minicom: 0800 169 34 58
- Email: help@veteransagency.mod.uk
- Warm front: (Energy saving help) 0800 952 0600
- Energy Savings Trust: 0800 512 012

Were you a Japanese POW, if so you may be able to claim £10,000, call the Vets Free-phone line.





Major Ken Standen MBE - REME ~ 2/2/1942 to 1/12/2004. By John Furley - Ex REME.

It is with a heavy heart I announce the passing of Ken Standen. Ken's funeral was held on 8th December 2004, at the Methodist Church in Chepstow, the church was absolutely crowded to overflowing with family and friends. Ken had suffered a serious form of Parkinsonism for a very prolonged period, he finally slipped away peacefully in his sleep on 1st December 2004. For wife Julie and four daughters the passing leaves deep distress, however they are so very thankful that Ken is now beyond the realms of suffering.



Most decidedly Ken was a very thorough, determined and dedicated man among men, whilst also being of strong, unwavering and honest character; a decided rock in his clear and prolonged determined desire to help others, I am certain all those who knew Ken will join me in praying for him and his family, wishing him peace in his ultimate and final rest.

Ken's service in the Army commenced at AAS Beachley in April 1957, achieving the rank of A/T CSM of B Coy. Each September he retained a real enthusiasm for the annual reunions of 'The Beachley Old Boy's Association' (BOBA). The BOBA golfing fraternity knew Ken as 'Mr. BOBA Golf', because of his initiation and organisation of the annual BOBA reunion Golf competition. In latter years Ken was also an 'Elected Vice President' of BOBA.

On completion his very successful training at Beachley in December 1959 was posted to REME attached 'The Prince of Wales Dragoon Guards' ~ 'The 3rd Carabiniers' stationed in Tidworth. Ken travelled with the Regiment taking part in the Aden based, Kuwait 'Peace Keeping Force' from July to September 1961; this occurrence fore-shortened Ken's honeymoon to a 'Brief Encounter'. In August 1962 he was transferred with the Regiment to Detmold. Ken remained with the 3rd Carabiniers until March of 1966. The following words were recently sent in from the 3rd Carabiniers: We must express the gratitude all Carabiniers felt for the excellent support received from our L.A.D., in all weathers, in all sorts of situations, at any time, day or night. Without them, we could not have completed our part of the job." Truly wonderful that Ken's passing brings forth such sentiment from the Regiment.

At 24 years of age Ken achieved an early entry on a 'Vehicle Artificers' course, completing the course in September 1967 and now as an Artificer Vehicle SSgt. Ken was posted to the "11th Hussars" in Hohne and served with them until the Regiment was moved to Tidworth. On the 25th October 1969 the 11th Hussars were amalgamated with the 10th Hussars to become the 'Royal Hussars'. Roy Mansfield Secretary of the 11th Hussars Regiment Association could not praise Ken enough for his outstanding performance. In April 1970 came six months of sunning himself again, this time in Cyprus with the UN, being thwarted by an Arabic Course at Beaconsfield Army Education Centre.

On 12th July 1971 Ken was awarded a commission; following this well-earned promotion he was appointed as Training Officer at Arborfield from July 1971 to 1974. Later in 1974 found Ken back in the Persian Gulf in Abu Dhabi, a serving Major with the British Army Loan Service, this was a part of his service Ken very much coveted and he frequently talked about the wonderful time he and Julie had experienced during this appointment. In 1978 Ken moved to HQ Land Command at Wilton, UK. On the 14th June 1978 Ken was honoured by Her Majesty The Queen by being awarded the MBE for his outstanding commitment with the Abu Dhabi Defence Forces, a well-deserved high decoration. Concluding his colour service in 1980, Ken left REME as Major K. Standen MBE.

Civilian life for Ken began at the Ministry of Transport Bristol, which Ken quickly realised he was unsuited. In 1981 Ken took an appointment as a Ra'aid (Major) in the Sultan of Oman's Armed Forces, commanding the Southern Oman Workshop EME. The period 1983 to '86 Ken spent with a family business in Burnley, after which he returned to his revered Army life style working with TA units in Cwmbran, Cardiff & Newport. In 1988 Ken accepted a PSAO post as Captain with 104 Regt RA 211 Battery in Newport, remaining here until poor health forced him into an unexpected and decidedly unwanted early retirement in 2001. The final gift from Ken was the 14 most recent years of his working life he spent almost all his spare time working with SAAFA, during these years Ken helped literally hundreds of ex service personnel, Ken was indeed an indubitable stalwart, an incredible man, who gave a very large portion of his life for the benefit of others.

God bless Ken ~ rest in peace my dear friend.



Memories of: 'WHEN I WAS THERE.' ~ By: The late **Capt. (Retd.) Les G Wood** 36 Grp C.ENG, M.I.E.E.

It was on 1st May 1935 at the age of 14 ½ years that I arrived at Beachley Camp, Chepstow, the home of the Army Technical School (boys). I spent just over 3 years in this Army Apprentices Training establishment learning the trade of electrician. During these years I was also taught Fitting, Turning, Smithying, Bricklaying and Painting, in addition to my main training as Electrician in 36 Group, B Company. The life was good although sometimes very tough. On leaving the school in June 1938 I joined The Royal Ordnance Corps and was posted to Hilsea Barracks, Portsmouth.

I served in Ordnance Workshops in the RAOC. In November 1939 I became attached to the Lothian and Border Yeomanry and in 1940 after the fall of Dunkirk found ourselves at St. Valery in France. With a few of my unit we were separated as the workshop unit split up to confuse the enemy. They arrived in a St. Valery orchard and were commanded by the workshop Lt. to throw the bolts of their rifles away and to destroy all AB 64's. We were taken POW and transferred to the eastern side of Germany and I was put to work in coal mines until the end of the war.

After the war and whilst a POW I discovered I had been transferred from RAOC to REME and promoted from Private to Corporal on time promotion. After trade refresher courses I was retained as Sergeant Instructor. In ensuing years I studied and gained an HNC and in 1955 was recommended for a commission. I served in REME Wksp. Larkhill, followed by my last twelve months in Arborfield 5 Trgn Bn., which was changing to SEE when I retired in June 1961.

My civilian career was a lecturer, I retired a second time as Senior Lecturer of Southampton Institute of Higher Education in 1982. My POW days had left their mark in that I suffered Nervous Disorder in 1951, have had kidney 3 times 1949, 1964 and 1977 and had a large part of my stomach removed in 1978 also Diabetes diagnosed in 1990. Finally I had major spinal surgery in 1993. Nevertheless, I am still luckier than my comrades who didn't return.

In conclusion I wish to express my thanks to my dear wife (the former Miss Florence Nightingale) for all her loving care and attention during my illnesses and our 51 years of marriage. Like her famous namesake (but not related), 'Flo' was a Ward Sister in a hospital in Gwent when we married.

By son Brian Wood: During these years and after retiring Dad became heavily involved with the Royal British Legion, Dunkirk Veterans Association, The POW's and the REME Association, holding several positions of office in each one and attending numerous functions until reluctantly he gave up due to poor health.

Unfortunately in February 2005 after another 3 weeks in hospital his body had taken enough punishment and he passed away suffering from prostate cancer, bone cancer in the spine and pneumonia. He has gone to rejoin 'Flo' his dear wife and our mother, who passed away in November 1996 with cancer.

Rest in peace Les ~ the BOBA committee and Membership.

SUEZ EMERGENCY: I wonder how many ex-Beachley Boys served in Egypt during the emergency from 16.10.1951 to 19.10.1954. The garrison consisted of 80,000 troops many of them National Servicemen.

I served with 41st Field Regt RA during the last nine months of the Suez emergency. I was a General Duty Bombardier because I had relinquished my trade of gun-fitter as I did not want to serve in REME. I stayed in Egypt until 31.3.1956, then served the rest of my 3 year tour in Cyprus. As I had transferred to the RASC when I qualified for the GSM with bar 'Cyprus' the engraving reflected the fact that I was a Sgt in the RASC.

On learning of Prime Minister Blair's announcement I applied to the Army Medal Office for my new bar on 21.10.2003. I had to return my GSM because the new bar made an inscription on the medal invalid as I was a Bombardier when I qualified. I received my new GSM with my RA rank inscribed and with the two bars 'Canal Zone' and 'Cyprus' on 13.10.2004. A half a century wait but it joins my LS & GC Medal. It also joins my Golden Jubilee Medal which I received from the Canadian Red Cross.

I would encourage any ex-Beachley Boy where qualified to apply for the Canal Zone Medal. I was one of many who lobbied for this recognition; it should have been awarded 50 years ago.

Rodney Travers-Griffin ~ ex 46B 'C' Coy.

**IN MEMORIAM**

REPORTED PASSINGS SINCE THE 2004 BEACHLEY ECHOES Issue No. 10.

New BOBA Members:

594	Mr.	Bill	Brown	14	09/02/2004	61	Capt. Richard Wall	9	12/07/2004
337	Major	Joe	Butler	29	04/07/2004	99	Capt. Les Wood	36	17/02/2005
19	Mr.	George	Carnegie	42	31/07/2004				
686	Major	Neville	Cheese	24	14/08/2004				
165	Mr.	Roy	Cocker	47A	27/11/2004	Major	Bill Alexander MBE	20	14/07/2004
813	Mr.	Derek	Dobson	51A	15/06/2004	Capt.	Ray Beale	47A	13/08/2003
159	Mr.	Fred	Harris	35	25/08/2004	Mr.	Dave Collier	52B	17/03/2005
113	Mr.	Reg	Harper	4	11/02/2005	Mr.	Charles Craven	19	May 2004
876	Mr.	Malcolm	Holmes	53A	01/05/2004	Mr.	Eric James	10	05/06/2004
130	Mr.	John	Lewis	34	01/05/2002	Mr.	Robert Jenkinson	47B	2000
707	Mr.	Brian	Rowson	50A	10/03/2005	Mr.	John McNichol	43A	March '04
357	Major	Ken	Standen MBE	57A	01/12/2004	Mr	Ted Puddy	50B	14/01/2005
42	Mr.	Jock	Taylor	49B	10/05/2004	Mr.	Mick Schenk	56B	April 2004
103	Mr.	Frank	Pickering	47B	02/04/2005	Mr.	Colin Stamp	61B	July 2004

Non BOBA Members:**Reg Harper ~ 4 Group ~ Born: 21st January 1910 ~ Died 14th February 2005, aged 95.**

It is my sad duty to inform members of the passing of our oldest known Beachley Old Boy BOBA member, Reg Harper of 4 Group. Joining Beachley on 1st September 1924 at 14 years and 7 months of age, Reg served his apprenticeship as a Blacksmith and a member of B Company until he left Beachley on 22nd July 1927. He served his 8 years with the colours until 1936 when he was demobilised and transferred to the reserve. In 1939 he was called up again and served in France, India and Burma, with the Royal Corps of Engineers; Reg achieved the rank of W02 by his second demob in 1946.

After his Army Service Reg worked in the Forestry Trade and later as a consultant. He travelled extensively in his work to: Iran, Syria, Sudan, Ghana, Sarawak, Zambia and many places in Wales.

Reg was always an avid BOBA member and only in very recent years was unable to attend his beloved BOBA reunions due to ill health.

Rest in peace Reg ~ God keep you safe.

*A verse for the close one's of all Beachley Old Boys' who have passed on.
The simple words that give you the strength to face every day.*

"Footprints"

One night I had a dream. I dreamed I was walking along a beach with God, and across the sky flashing scenes from my life. For each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand. One belonged to me and the other to God. When the last scene of my life flashed before me I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed that at times along the path of life there was only one set of footprints. I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times of my life. This really bothered me and I questioned God about it. "God you said that once I decided to follow You; You would walk with me all the way, but I noticed that during my most troubled times in my life there was only one set of footprints in the sand. I don't understand why, in the times when I needed You most, You would leave me". God replied, "My precious, precious child, I love you and I would never, never leave you during your times of trials and suffering; when you could see only one set of footprints, it was then when I carried you".



CSM Paddy Nolan Staff CSM D Coy. (Mid 1950's)

The lesson I learned from him: by John Furley 56A D Coy.

Paddy was the Staff CSM of D Coy, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers when I arrived in D Company at Beachley, a more stony gravel sounding Irish voice I had never heard in my life, nor have I since. A wonderful straight and fair man, in my first 18 months in D Coy, Paddy really tried hard to direct me to achieve the A/T RSM post for our Group 56A. Without a doubt if one had only taken note only of my turnout, drill and my application to personal cleanliness etc, I could have achieved that esteemed post; sadly however my academic ability let me down somewhat. Since those days and having always realised that Paddy believed in my abilities, at last instilled deep down my mind that I could achieve any goal I desired if I tried. Paddy had recognised the fact I had what it took to succeed. Sadly I did not recognise the true regard of this until later in my life when I had a wife and two children I decided to go back to school in the evenings to gain these fundamental qualifications, I did succeed in gaining good passes in four main subjects in 1st Class education in the late 60's when I was a Sergeant in REME; I have never regretted that decision.

In 1975 I applied successfully for one of two places in REME for Redundancy of Artificer Vehicles. I remember being asked to quote one reason why I should be considered for redundancy, my reason was plain and simple, I believed there was an imminent recession about to happen. The senior officer interviewing me said, I didn't consider you could present a lame excuse, leave alone a good reason. (The recession did occur, luckily I was well set up in an excellent employment when Britain had three million unemployed.) Redundancy achieved I applied to serve my last 6 months at Beachley where I had been an apprentice 20 years before this, primarily as my wife Gill was a Chepstow lass. I succeeded again and was allotted a post as S/Sgt. in Beachley REME Repair Section as a Vehicle Artificer assisting WO2 Steve Wright REME. Paddy Nolan sadly died during the very early days of those 6 months and is buried in St John's cemetery at Beachley, I still often visit his grave. Paddy's good lady wife survived him by 27 years, but joined him again in 2004 buried in the same grave.

This story was the basic reason I included the note in bold italics at the end of the letter I sent out when I was BOBA Membership Secretary to all interested applicants joining BOBA: The defined reason for success in life I had experienced may well have differed for other Beachley Boys, but the fundamental core of learning would have been much the same for us all, I quote inclusion made in the letter: ~

TRAINING FOR LIFE:

Tens of thousands of young men entered the adult world well prepared and ready for life, primed by the basics they learned at Beachley. For many, this training and way of thinking, was the cornerstone of the fundamental organisation on which they built their lives.

This "Special something" lives on in the "Beachley Old Boys' Association!"

Our members look forward to welcoming you to 'new' BOBA.

Add your special something to 'The Association'.

2004 REUNION ID NAME HOLDERS:

Here again is a sample of a reunion name holder we 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





82 year young Clara Miles, third from the left in the photo, widow of the late Bill Miles of 39 Group. This good lady took part in a charity walk in the very hilly Western Cotswolds in July 2004. Clara and this amazing group of ladies walked five miles for their part and raised £400.00 for the Cotswold Hospice Care.



Clara resides in the Royal British Legion secure sheltered accommodation in Forest Green, near Nailsworth. Clara along with five residents and workers dressed in 'Pirates costumes' walked around Nailsworth and then on to Ebley near Stroud. Fellow resident Dinah Hesketh 62, said: "Clara is wonderful at 82 she didn't flag at all and beat all of us."

In the afternoon the group quenched their thirst, whilst adding another £57.00 to the kitty by holding a 'Tea at three' tea party, joining literally thousands of other fund raisers around in 'Britain's biggest ever tea party' with simultaneous events all over the UK. The hospice events manager Vicki Smith paid tribute by saying: "Our thanks go out to Clara for her amazing feat of endurance."

The editor and all BOB's wish Clara our hearty congratulations for completing this grand feat. Well done!

Beachley memories by: Colin Weir 55A ~ writing an email to some of his group: -

Alright fella's I know how to crawl, but I nearly choked when I typed "Gentlemen" into my greeting, whilst clearly remembering 50 years ago, a crowd of "down at heel, no toes in their shoes, just into long trousers, ragged urchins," destined to be the backbone of the British Army, myself included. We had nothing, but the Queen's shilling, spent our first wages on soap, razors and for some our first toothbrush and toothpaste, black Cherry Blossom polish and white and khaki blanco. We learnt how to make bed-packs and put our posh green blanket on our mattress, complete with hospital corners, we swiftly came to terms with sewing buttons on uniforms and greatcoats (Greatcoats, what were they? In our house they were something that supplemented blankets in the winter. Most of us didn't even own a "Mac" in those days.) The greatcoats were then made into "dolly" fashion and hung on the side of your locker, and were hardly ever used. Ground sheets or Ponchos were the norm for wet weather. There was many a tear shed under the blankets in those days, homesickness and a feeling of hopelessness. With the help of a candle and spoon we were taught how to create mirror images on our boots, yes, on our chin straps as well. Can you remember searching the cookhouse area for cardboard, then putting one layer on your bedsprings, laying your best uniform on it covered with another layer of cardboard, then your mattress, you then slept on it to press it, fortunately this practise was short lived, with the invention of the electric iron. However, their were further uses for the cardboard, F.S.M.O. on top of your locker, had to be blancoed and brasses polished and squared off with the aforesaid.

Then their was learning to drill on the square that most of us young idiots are going to do a march past on in September. The Gym, where all of the physical activity took place along with education exams and medicals and needles. I can remember Wack Butters and Big Mac McBeath fainting at the sight of those prickly things. But at the end of three years, we proudly marched off that same square, we did our thing with the Indian Clubs on it for our parents, showed them our expertise in the Gym with the Horse, Parallel Bars and a Tableau, conducted them around the workshop and education facilities, and then, glory on top of glories, we all descended on the cookhouse for the only decent meal of the year.

Was it worth it, Wel most of us lernt ow to reed an rite, we cud even spel our name, it was a good job we didn't have to type the daily orders.

A report recently published stated that, 40% of Scousers couldn't write, 40% couldn't spell, and the other 30% couldn't add up. (I know you Sappers will have no problem with this, the others can always get their dictionaries and calculators out.)

When I started this it was meant to be a resume of my career, sorry, that will have to wait for another time.

Ter Ra - Colin Weir 55A A Coy.



**BEACHLEY OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION
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Chairman

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March 2005

**MINUTES OF THE BEACHLEY OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT
BEACHLEY BARRACKS ON SATURDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER 2004**

<p>Present</p> <p>Lt Col S Thomas Maj DC Chapman Mr M Murtagh Mr R Marie Mr F Pickering Lt Col I Anthony Mr M Hay Mr AW Waite Mr P Burrige Mr J Furley Maj B Henderson</p>	<p>Chairman Vice President Honorary Life Member Vice President/Historian Vice President Vice President/Welfare Historian Treasurer Reunion Membership Secretary & Chepstow Liaison Secretary</p>
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Introduction.

1. As is the association's custom, the Annual General Meeting was held in St George's Church, Beachley Barracks and the meeting commenced at a little after 1500 hours with approximately 125 members present. The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming those in attendance.

Item 1. Opening Address.

2. Once again the association was without a President so the Chairman gave the opening address. He said it was nice to see so many familiar faces plus a few that had not been present for a period of time. He continued by giving a special welcome to those members who were attending an AGM for the first time and also extended a welcome to all those members who could not be present but would be attending the other events being held over the period of the reunion weekend.

3. Before closing he welcomed those members of 54 Group who were attending the reunion weekend and congratulated them on the celebration of their 50th anniversary.

4. He wished all members well wherever they may be and looked forward to meeting as many members as possible during the course of the weekend.

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 2004 Annual General Meeting.

7. The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting, held on Saturday 18th September 2004,



were included in the 2004 (Edition 10) issue of the Beachley Echoes. Because a copy of the Echoes is sent to all members of the association the Chairman was confident that all the members present were aware of the contents of these minutes and asked if there were any comments or observations. There were none and so it was proposed by R Evershed, and seconded by D Walker, that the minutes were a true record of the proceedings. Carried

Item 4. Matters Arising.

8. A BOBA contingent would again be attending the Cenotaph parade this year.

Item 5. Chairman's Report.

Item 5a. General.

9. The Chairman commented that much work had gone on during the previous twelve months, the main effort being concentrated on the St Johns Project. This project was progressing slowly but said that more detail would be provided later in the meeting. Other areas had not been neglected and the sterling work by our historians continued as did the upkeep of the website. In addition to all this work the Beachley Echoes had again been produced to its usual high standard.

10. Sadly the Chairman announced that a number of long standing members of the executive were standing down as of this AGM. They were Dave Chapman and Frank Pickering, both elected Vice Presidents, and John Furley who carried out a number of roles including Membership Secretary and Editor of the last issue of the 'Echoes'. Volunteers were required to come forward to fill these vital posts.

Item 5b. Election of the Executive Committee.

11. The Chairman pointed out that all readers of the last issue of the 'Echoes' will appreciate that he is also association's acting President. His intention was to stand down from the Chair at the 2005 AGM and assume the appointment proper if it was the desire of the membership. Time had moved on and he felt that the change should be made now. This announcement provoked much discussion from the floor, all of which centred on an alternative nomination for President. Eventually it was unanimously agreed that the Chairman should, with immediate effect, become the President of BOBA.

12. The new President thanked the membership for their vote of confidence and then reminded those present that the association now needed a new Chairman. The Secretary had made it known that he would be content to assume the appointment of chairman, again only if the membership so wished it. Following a proposal by S Thomas that was seconded by P Russell, the Secretary, Brian Henderson, was unanimously voted in as the association's new Chairman.

13. With regards to the remainder of the committee: the following were voted in as Vice Presidents; B Morgan and G White. P Burrige, M Hay and R Marie all agreed to continue to serve on the committee and when put to the members this proposal was carried unanimously. Other posts A. Waite Treasurer position, R. Evershed position as Membership Secretary and I Anthony's position as Welfare Officer were all ratified by the members present.

14. This left the posts of Secretary, Webmaster, Echoes Editor and Chepstow Liaison to be filled. As no volunteers were forthcoming the new Chairman asked that if any of the members had a change of heart and wished to fill any of the posts they should come forward at anytime during the reunion weekend.

15. Post meeting note: Derek Walker agreed to fill the post of Secretary, John Furley agreed to continue with his work on the St. Johns Project and also as Editor of the Beachley Echoes, Mac Obermaier agreed to fill the post of Chepstow Liaison.

Item 6. Executive Committee Reports.

Item 6a. Treasurer's Report.

16. Copies of the end of year (31 Mar 04) Financial Statement were available for the members



scrutiny. 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 Russell and seconded by I Anthony that the financial statement was passed as read. Carried

Item 6b. Secretary's Report.

17. The past Secretary; Maj Brian Henderson opened his report by reading out a few letters of apology that had been received prior to the meeting. With regards to other correspondence, the association had received the usual letter from the Army Benevolent Fund thanking the association for the proceeds from the 2003 Founders Day church service offertory hymn.

Item 6c. Membership Secretary's Report.

18. The outgoing Membership Secretary; Mr. John Furley, reported that since the 2003 reunion a further 45 ex boys had joined new BOBA mainly from the 60's and 70's groups. The association has sadly lost touch with 24 members but still has 762 active members on the list. John gave a special thanks to Bob Adams for his sterling work in recruiting 19 members of 54A group.

Item 6d. Historian's Report.

19. The BOBA Historians; Mr. Ron Marie and Maj. Malcolm Hay were very pleased with the quantity of articles that now came their way. This was reflected in the size of the display that could be seen earlier on the day. That said more memorabilia, articles, etc would always be welcome.

Item 6e. Welfare/Benevolence.

20. The Welfare Officer, Lt. Col. Ifor Anthony reported that there had been little activity and assumed that the UK representatives were coping on their own. Demands on the fund had been only small and a number of condolence cards had been despatched when the details had been made known.

Item 7. St Johns Project.

21. The President reported that progress on the project was slow. Ownership of the Old School House had still to be determined and the association would not be taking up the inexpensive leases on the church until the adjacent trees had been felled. A number of meetings had been held with the Diocesan Office of Gloucester but again progress was very slow, meanwhile the Project Working Group and the Executive Committee continue to monitor the condition of both buildings to ensure they remain in a sound condition. Any progress worth reporting would appear on the website and in the next issue of the Echoes.

Item 8. Any Other Business.

22. The proposal to reintroduce the annual subscription fee of £10 and change the financial reporting year to 01 January – 31 December was carried unanimously.

23. The membership was reminded that 50 tickets were available for the Cenotaph parade and anyone who wished to attend should put their names on the notice board in the hotel foyer.

24. The members present were also informed that the association had been allocated a small number of places at the three events of the WW2 60th Anniversary Celebrations to be held in London on 10 July 2005. A number of conditions applied but any member who wished to attend was advised to speak with the President as soon as possible.

25. A vote of thanks was given by the members present to the executive committee for all the work they did for the good and benefit of the association.

Closure.

26. Next years reunion will be held over the weekend of the 16 – 18 September 2005.



27. The new Chairman closed the meeting by thanking those present for attending and also thanked them for their loyal and continuing support to the Association.

Secretary

Chairman



55A Group HQ Company ~ OC Major Machin, CSM Bull Morgan, Pltn Sgt. Sgt Paddy Barrett.



55A Group Passing out Parade ~ circa Feb 1958

SMOKING COULD ELECTROCUTE YOU!:

Let me explain, if you were a smoker, as I was in 1947, at Beachley there were a few hurdles to tackle. The first was you were not allowed to smoke until you were in Senior Group or an A/T Sergeant. The alternative was to buy a ciggy on the black market, purchasing a single one for a staggering 5d, (2.25p now) when a pack of ten was only 1s 5d (7.25p now) and this was out of 3s 6d (17.5p now) a week (I think) pocket money. Having bought your ciggies we were left with finding a way to light them, as we weren't allowed to smoke we had no real excuse to buy matches, or we couldn't afford them; hence the 'Smoking can kill by electrocution'. 'Please don't try this at home'. We used to unscrew the cover from a light switch, dome shaped tumbler type, to expose the live terminals. A kit of parts was now required, consisting of two lead pencils about three inches long, sharpened at both ends and a small wad of duraglit, we always had plenty of that. The trick was to strike an ark buy holding the two pencils on the terminals, with the other ends about 1/4 inch apart, when the ark was made a piece of duraglit was proffered to the spark, which ignited the duraglit. Your first puff of the ciggy gave a lung full of burning Brasso from the duraglit, (this today would also be on the killer list I think). The lit ciggy would then be puffed with a few others, with one always wafting away the smoke. The cigarette may be stubbed out a few times in it's life, until it became too short to be held and was discreetly disposed of. (We saved our stubs and bought ciggy papers to roll the tobacco from the ends in. ~ Ed).

I don't know how I survived, but I'm still here: Best wishes, Pete Bell 47A

**The 'Weir' Archive System: From Colin Weir 55A A Coy.**

A brief look into the Weir Archive System I discovered before I was dispatched to an AAS, a closer look into things divulged a fairly standard letter from some unseen and anonymous civil servant, setting out to my parents the terms for my apprentice enlistment; I also still have my attestation paper. Upon signing my life away and accepting the Queens shilling, I was on my way to Harrogate, wooden spiders, centrally heated, plenty of hot water, showers, baths and drying room all in one building. Apart from some ' Sergeants' I was in seventh heaven, sadly this was to come to a shuddering halt after six weeks, with a posting to Beachley!

My nightmare had started, as soon as I saw the billet at Beachley. Light and airy comes to mind, it couldn't be anything else with all of the holes in the skirting boards etc just right for the friendly rodents to come through at night. The detached ablution, in the winter if you sat down for more than thirty seconds, your posterior was in danger of becoming frozen to the seat. A route march ensued when your weekly shower time arrived in having to march to the shower block. Seemingly hunger was another pastime; by the time you got back from any cookhouse visit you were always ready for another meal. These were decidedly the days of National Service; the Army Catering Corps claimed within three months, to train a man to be both a soldier and cook. Enough said!!!

Monday to Friday we paraded for church each morning and then on the main square to march down to the workshops. All Friday night, cleaning, polishing boots and brasses, blancoing white belts, soap spin brushing the tops of your Service Dress peaked cap. Saturday, best uniform parade with the Corps of Drums of A Coy, or the School Band from D company. After Saturday morning parade, coal issues, this should have been enough coal to last a week for two fires, factually the issue had all gone by Saturday night or early Sunday, but being Beachley Boys' we were taught how to augment the issue by forays to the workshop utilising kit-bags to collect coal and coke supplies. Sunday, no rest for the wicked, parade and then off to church again, I kept asking myself, is this a training establishment or a religious retreat?

Some more bit of admin of normal everyday life at Beachley, like sending weekly eight articles to the laundry and not getting your own stuff back. I often think of the three years at Beachley and not having a blanket cleaned and having handed them in they were immediately reissued to another incumbent in the same state. Another Saturday morning chore, blanket shaking, a thick fog hung over Beachley when this occurred; me thinks the saying 'don't let the bed bugs bite' could have originated at Beachley.

Weekly Pay Parade: AB 64 part one, total pay, Seven shillings and sixpence per week. You were allowed to draw just five shillings, the other half crown went into credits, less sixpence a fortnight for Bing the barber, kit deficiencies and that good old standby, barrack room damages, in my view a licence for the CQMS to raid your credits, pre-signed by us of course, so who could argue? The remaining cash there after accumulated in credits and you received that when you went on leave. The weekly five bob cash received in hand was soon spent in the NAAFI on polish, blanco, toothpaste, and a packet of "Woodies", and a plate of chips, if you could afford it and that was your money gone. Never mind, a quick note home should sort it!

Dear Mum, no mon, no fun, your son. The reply: Dear Lad, how sad, to bad, your Dad.

I almost forgot, if you were good enough to be promoted to an A/T NCO rank, you received three pence a day extra for each strip you held.

The highlight of the week, Saturday night, the pictures in Chepstow, a little talent spotting, if you missed the last bus it was a long run back to camp. Was it better to stay in camp and watch telly, do you remember the "Telly" with a big magnifying bowed front to the screen? Those were the days; better get off to sleep, lights out now, reveille's at 0600 hours.

Oh sweet memories, regards, Colin Weir 55A A Coy.

Request from Heritage: We are attempting to put together a complete SD Uniform from Beachley and a BD uniform as we wore leaving Beachley. Sadly there doesn't seem to be any to be had anywhere. Do you have one hiding in your attic? Or maybe you know where they could be procured?

If so please contact either Ron Marie or Malcolm (Hector) Hay: This can be done through John Furley on 01291 630491.



NEW BOBA MEMBERS JOINING IN THE LAST YEAR:

1015	Ms.	Ann Rainsbury (Hon	Chepstow Mus)			1039	Mr.	Les Sheppard	54A	D
1016	Mr.	Ray Armstrong	55A	A		1040	Mr.	Pete Evans	59B	C
1017	Mr.	Sid Pryke	58B	A		1041	Mr.	Dennis Hogg	61B	C
1018	Mr.	John Ewen	72B	B		1042	Mr.	Steve Ewing	63C	C
1019	Mr.	Keith Maughan	71B	B		1043	Mr	Foyle Hodges	57B	C
1020	Mr.	Jim Shields	67C	B		1044	Mr	Ray Marritt	59C	A
1021	Mr.	John Lane	64C	C		1045	Mr	Mike Matthews	50A	A/B
1022	Mr.	Robert Donaldson	70B	B		1046	Mr	Colin Weir	55A	A
1023	Mr.	Richard Pickles	64C	C		1047	Mr	Ian Macdonald	55A	A
1024	Mr.	Ian Wilson	66B	B		1048	Mr	Dennis Buck	48A	B
1025	Mr.	John Hogg	50B	B		1049	Mr	George Elliott	61B	B
1026	Mr.	Michael Skipworth	64C	B		1050	Maj	Mike Charlesworth BEM	62B	B
1027	Mr.	Don Powley	54A	D		1051	Mr	Ern Beatrup	54B	A
1028	Mr.	Wally Davidson	43	D		1052	Mr	Dai Vaughan	56B	C
1029	Mr.	Jack Merrell	63B	C		1053	Mr	Carl Parker	58B	C
1030	Mr.	Arthur King	48A	C		1054	Mr	Duncan Jordan	69B	B
1031	Mr.	Graham Letties	66C	B		1055	Mr	Brian Lowes	55A	C
1032	Mr.	Peter Nightingale	54A	C		1056	Mr	Brian Bartholomew	55A	A
1033	Mr.	Jim Porter	50B	D		1057	Mr	Alan Merry	55A	C
1034	Mr.	Jim Cahill	48B	D		1058	Mr	Peter Gillett	61B	B
1035	Mr.	Geoff Norrish	51B	A		1059	Mr	David Marchant	59B	
1036	Mr.	Mike Almond	63B	B		1060	Mr	Mike Delf	55A	A
1037	Mr.	Ray Bird	55A	A		1061	Mr	Dickie Bound	55A	A
1038	Mr.	John Cochran	57A	A						

BOBA INFORMATION PACKS WERE SENT TO THE FOLLOWING Ex BOB's IN THE LAST YEAR:

Patrick Bennett	68B	B	Michael Earley	58B	
Alf Robbins	55A	D	Butch Edwards	58B	
Len Levallee	55A	C	Lou Rex	58B	
Derek Morton	44A		Bill Shaw	58B	
Brian Pitt	68C		Eric Foster	46B	C
Paul Thomas	75C	B	Brian Miskin	58B	
Ron Pooley	64A	C	Brian Miskin	58B	
Roy Goff	65A	C	Melvin Taggart	90A	
Mac Hosking	44A	A	Peter Gatford	62A	
Tony Gibbon	54B	B	Colin Burnett	54A	A
Andrew Fox	55B		Peter Parman	55A	
Jock Birse	61B	C	Peter Riley	57A	
Peter Fennell	55A		Derek Wheeler	43B	A
Richard Reid	72C	B	Frank Allman	58B	
Geordie Kennedy	78A	B	John Bolland	58B	
John Barry BEM	66C	C	David Greig	58B	
Ian Dickins	47B		Geoff Jelly	58B	
Derek Forsythe	58B		Barry Denning	65C	C
Derek Fox	58B		Rod Allen	Staff	
Dave Harland	58B		Stuart McNell	80	
Steve Adkins	71B	B	Chris Ruddlesdin	92	

If you would like to contact any of the above Gentlemen, please place only a letter, in a sealed and stamped envelope with the name on; send it to the Membership Secretary, who will append the address(es) and forward it (them). Sadly the Data Protection Act makes this necessary.

Membership Secretary ~ Rocky Evershed,

19 Sturdee Avenue, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 2JL, UK.

Tel: (0) 1634 850043 Fax: 850207 email: rocky@redex289.f9.co.uk



OUR BEACHLEY HERITAGE: by Ron Marie 46A.

Once more the Beachley Boy's Heritage Display will be presented in the 'Two Rivers Suite' at The Chepstow Hotel, from 10:00 hrs to 13:00 hrs. on Saturday 17th September 2005. Ann Rainsbury the curator of the Chepstow Museum, was unfortunately unable to take part in last year's display owing to personal injury. BOBA members are looking forward to seeing Ann's welcoming smile this year circumstances permitting.

Beachley Memorabilia:

Post their last reunion, Ron Marie received an article from the 'Jersey Evening Post' 29th September 2004, the report dictated the final reunion for four members of the Royal Army Service Corps (Jersey Boys') Association. The article with the photo of the 4 Musketeers is portrayed below.

Both the Royal Army Service Corps (Jersey Boys') and the Royal Engineers (Darland Boys') Associations are now disbanded. The Beachley Old Boys' Association have pledged to be custodians of their respective nominal rolls and history as recorded from their officers and members. The events of WW2 brought us all together at Beachley 1939 - 1945. Their respective historical records will be displayed at this years BOBA reunion.

OLD SOLDIERS UNITE FOR THE FINAL TIME:

Quartet from the Army Apprentice School hold the last reunion at Jersey's St Peter's Church.

Four men who served their Army Apprenticeship in Jersey attended a last reunion service in St. Peter's Parish Church last week.

Left to Right: William Jones, Peter Surcouf, Eric Goodyear and Donald Eaton were all reunited as members of the Royal Army Service Corps 'Jersey Boys Association', which is likely to be the last such foray, although the reunion has been exceedingly popular for years - at one time as many as fifty men attended - however the group felt it was the time to draw the Association to an end.



Peter Surcouf being the host in Jersey, played the part of reacquainting the UK Association members with the Island before joining many St Peter's parishioners for a church service at St. Peter's Church on Wednesday 29th September 2004.

Mr. Eaton who organised the trip from UK, said that they really enjoyed the service . 'It was great to see so many parishioners turn up. We were very well looked after all day from the lovely service to the buffet afterwards.

Strict lifestyle:

The three men from England attended the Jersey Army Technical School in 1939 and were based at St. Peter's Barracks. 'Life was very strict said Mr. Eaton, we weren't allowed to smoke, drink, or talk to girls. When we first arrived, Islanders thought we were in a Borstal.

The boys had to complete three years as Apprentices before drafted to the Regular Army. Because of

the German invasion they had to finish their training in the UK. Mr. Surcouf completed his Apprenticeship in Bingham Barracks in UK.

Wednesday's service was conducted by the Rector, Rev Martin Poolton and was also attended by the Constable of St. Peter's, Tom du Feu, who arranged the reception afterwards in the parish hall.

Mr. Poolton said: ' We have been coming over here for many years, but now thought it was time to wind up the Association, we are pleased we held this remembrance service to say goodbye.' Afterwards they donated their 'Banner' to the church, which displayed their coat of arms. Each one of the four received a parish mug to remember the parish by.

Mr. Eaton and Mr. Goodier also found time to visit St. Peter's Primary School, where they fielded questions from 10 to 12 year olds. Mr Eaton said: 'The children were very bright and alert, a group of really inquisitive youngsters, who were very interested, asking some very relevant questions.

Despite being the last reunion, Mr. Eaton said: 'I will be coming back, Jersey has many good memories for me, including the 50th liberation celebration and I hope to create even more memories.'



OUR BEACHLEY HERITAGE: ~ by Malcolm Hay 53A.

Archives: We continue to seek your photos or copies of groups, activities or events during your time at Beachley. If you can attach a list giving details and names, where known or remembered, all the better but do not write on the back of the photo. We particularly would like photos or memorabilia associated with the Group celebrating their 50th, which for this year is **55A and 55B Groups**.

Electricians REME: We know that in the 50`s boys who joined as Elect REME could at the 18 month point be selected for conversion to Electrician Control Equipment (ECE) and that this trade was re-titled as Control Equipment Technician (CET) in 1960. However do you know ,did the REME Electricians move to AAS Carlisle with the Vehicle Mechanics in 1961?

Answers to: Malcolm (Hector) Hay 53A Heritage Member: 2 Raleigh Crescent, Amesbury, Wiltshire, SP4 7QE. Tel: 01980 591132 Mob: 07974 209762. Email: malcolm.hay148@ntlworld.com

Please note: Ron Marie 46A is now ably supported by Malcolm Hay 53A. Ron has an eye on retirement, but has yet to learn how to sit down for an extended period, if you understand where I'm coming from. Ed.

I WANNA TELL YOU A STORY (With apologies to Max Bygraves) ~ Well perhaps two stories!

Burned at the stake: On leaving HQ Coy I moved to D Coy to join the Corps of Drums. I assume I must have been influenced by the tales of glory when attending local fetes etc! One Sunday afternoon whilst snoozing on my bed, probably with my SD on over my pyjamas, I was rudely awakened, tied to a chair and informed that like all other new members to the Drums I was to be initiated by receiving a scar from a hot fork on the back of the hand. Older members were keen to show me their "four stripe" scars and to reassure me that though initially painful it would be quickly over. I was not impressed and as I watched the glowing fork in the "Cenotaph" fire being checked with regular spitting my suggestion that perhaps I could join the Band fell on deaf ears. Then to calm me, if that was possible, I was blindfolded. Believe me I was far from calm. When the fork hit I screamed and imagined excruciating pain but when the blindfold was removed there was no burn. I had been a victim of auto suggestion, another fork had been left under a cold running tap and the other member's "scars" were marks from burnt matches. Rather like when having to push Smarties with your nose the length of the NAAFI for "jumping" a senior group member in the queue, I was not amused!

The Room Shovel. As a junior member of the Drums I drew the short straw for the foray down to the Tech Training area to liberate some coal to keep the home fires burning. Returning successfully late at night with my booty I realised I had lost the room shovel. I do not think it was the room Cpl's pride and joy but it was clearly painted with our Room No and his name, A/T Cpl Hart NCO i/c, and he was "disappointed", or something like that, with me. Whilst the next few days were of concern to Roger Hart I was also wondering whether this was the end of a promising career for me and what was MCTC Colchester like but nothing more was heard. Some two years later, in our last term and whilst idly kicking grass in the slipway area I unearthed a shovel and though rusty the Room details could still be read, I was off the hook. In the late 80`s whilst visiting my son at the Duke of York's School I met up again with Roger who I had not seen since 1955 and whilst reminiscing was able to reassure him that his shovel had been found.

Malcolm (Hector) Hay 53A

Another story of a shrinking world: by John Furley 56A D Coy.

Whilst serving in the Omani Army in 1985, I was going about my duties one day in my portacabin office when a knock came on the door. A gentleman a little older than myself entered and asked if my name was Furley. 'Yes' said I, 'how can I help you?'. 'My name is Charles Harrison said he and I believe you come from Chepstow?' My reply was 'I live in Chepstow'. 'Where?' said he 'On the Danes' said I. 'So do I' said he. We discovered we actually lived five doors from each other, we were both Beachley Boys, Charles from 43A and I from 56A, he had married a local girl, as had I. Now here we were 4,000 miles from home, reside five doors from each other in UK and we had not met before. Charles still lives in the same house, I have moved twice, but now back in the in Sedbury area of Chepstow. This planet of ours is increasingly becoming a very small place!



THE HISTORY OF ARMY APPRENTICE SOLDIERS: by Allan Ball 46A

The history of boy soldiers in the British Army can be traced back to medieval times when it is known that armies, such as King Harold's at the time of the Norman invasion, comprised of many under aged soldiers.

King Edward III was himself a boy of only fourteen when he came to the throne and set forth with his army to wage war against the Scots. He commanded his Army for over twenty years and there were many young soldiers in its ranks, a good percentage of who were serving apprenticeships. Many commenced military careers as apprentice harness makers, wagon drivers, horsemen, saddlers, farriers, and other trades.

The initial unit to establish formal training for boys was the Royal Artillery in 1741, at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. The boy cadets were between the ages of twelve and fourteen and they were taught the rudiments of military discipline and education.

It was not until 1913 however, that 'technical boy apprentices' were enlisted into the Army Service Corps. Ten years later this practice culminated in the junior ranks intake at Aldershot being transferred to form the first group at the 'boys school' at Beachley, Chepstow.

THE ARMY APPRENTICES – CHEPSTOW PERIOD 1923 TO 1958

The result of an Army Council meeting in 1919 led to the setting up of a War Office Committee to examine the necessity for and practicability of, establishing a School for training boys as tradesmen for the Army. There were already four Army boy-training establishments, but three of these trained less than 250 boys at any one time. The committee wanted to open a central School for training 1000 boys. Eleven trades were planned, in the event only four trades were catered for: blacksmiths, fitters, carpenters and electricians.

The site originally selected for the school was at Blandford Forum, Dorset and Army Order 185/1923, gave authority for the Central School for Boys to be opened there on 1st September 1923.

However, unforeseen difficulties occurred and as a result of a visit by the Army Council to an Inn on the small Beachley Peninsula in Gloucestershire, jutting out where Rivers Wye and Severn meet, it was decided to establish the School on the adjacent camp. Unfortunately, the camp was by no means ready for occupation. It had opened during the First World War as a national shipbuilding yard and had also been used to house prisoners of war.

No: 1 Group - 105 boys reported to Buller Barracks, Aldershot 25th September 1923 being accommodated at No: 1 Corps Depot, RASC. After the Christmas vacation, Number 2 Group duly arrived in Aldershot in January 1924 and on 28th February 1924, the School now numbering approximately 250 all ranks, left its temporary quarters became established at Beachley under its new name "The Boys' Technical School".

On arrival, the newly painted huts were hardly dry; there were no workshops, no administrative offices, no gymnasium, no Sergeants Mess and no roads.

Initially there was only one company, 'A' Company, but with the arrival of Group 7 in September 1925, 'B' Company was formed. At this stage the boys' strength was 860.

The numerical group intake system continued up to the outbreak of the Second World War, when no intakes were recruited between January 1940 (Group 45) and April 1942. Of the five Army technical establishments for boys, only Chepstow and Arborfield (opened 1938) remained open as such and consequently many boys were transferred to Chepstow from these other schools as follows:

1. ARMY TECHNICAL SCHOOL (BOYS) RASC-JERSEY- (OPENED 1936)

The rapid advancement of the Germans across NW Europe in 1940 meant the evacuation of this establishment from St Peter's Barracks, Jersey to Buller Barracks, and Aldershot in June 1940. The School reformed to become the Training Battalion (Boys) RASC. In August 1940 the Battalion was disbanded and orders issued for all 105. RASC boys were transferred to Chepstow on Monday 01 September 1940.



2. **ARMY TECHNICAL SCHOOL (BOYS) ROYAL ENGINEERS – DARLAND (OPENED 1938)**

In May 1940, the Darland Boys were sent on indefinite leave, as their Barracks were needed for the returning B.E.F. from France. After extended leave to the end of 1940, (many boys having taken up civilian apprentice work jobs), 570 Darland Boys were recalled to report to Chepstow to complete their army apprenticeship training.

3. **MILITARY COLLEGE OF SCIENCE – PROBATIONARY ARTIFICERS RA - WOOLWICH**

150 boys from this establishment were transferred to Chepstow for the completion of their training from April 1940 to March 1943.

The above transfers were also allocated Chepstow Group numbers 42, 43, 44, 45 and 46 relating to the dates of their respective enlistment. The transfers also caused some overcrowding as the number of apprentice tradesman strength during 1940-41 was 1,150 boys.

The re-introduction of boy intakes to Chepstow in April 1942 saw the Group intake system changed to two intakes per year. The letter 'A' indicating entry in February and the letter 'B' indicating entry in September of each year, e.g.

42A	joined February 1942
42B	joined September 1942
43A	joined February 1943
43B	joined September 1943

The aim was to have 1,000 Army apprentices entering the Regular Army as tradesmen per year from its schools effective January 1945. This was subsequently amended together with a reorganisation of the general technical training programme in 1959, to produce 750 trained apprentices per year from the four apprentice schools of Chepstow, Arborfield, Harrogate and Carlisle (opened 1959) for future employment in the Royal Engineers, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Royal Signals and Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

From 1960 the majority of Beachley apprentices on posting joined the Royal Engineers with the remainder training as Ammunition Examiners for the Royal Army Ordnance Corps. Arborfield and Carlisle became the responsibility of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and Harrogate respectively the Royal Signals responsibility. At this time the Army Apprentices School cap badge was replaced with the apprentices wearing their Corps badge, i.e., RE, REME, RAOC or Royal Signals. However, the Army Apprentice School collar badges were worn as applicable i.e., on No 2 Dress jacket.

Beachley Camp continued in one guise or another training apprentices for the Royal Engineers up to its closure in 1994, RAOC until 1986 and RCT Marine Engineers between 1965 and 1992.

BEACHLEY CAMP OPTIONS AND CHANGES PERIOD 1958 TO 1994.

The old camp, built in 1916, began to make way for the first of the major improvements during the tenure of Colonel J R Cordy-Simpson, CBE, MC, late 13th/18th Royal Hussars, 1958-1962.

Living accommodation was naturally the first priority, with the Warrant Officers and Sergeants moving one hundred yards nearer the square into a new Mess and thirty-odd married quarters being erected on the School site. Planning for the "new" Beachley was now in earnest – chapels, dining rooms, a NAAFI canteen, gymnasium, library and so on. New barrack blocks to accommodate half-Companies were built – three storey buildings with 37 beds and ample washing facilities on each floor, strip lighting and central heating. Quite a change from the old 1916 huts, which apprentices helped to demolish with relish and yet sadness, nevertheless, for the huts had been the very heart of the School for almost forty years.

The opening of another Army Apprentice School in Carlisle also signified much trade re-organisation, which put the clock back twenty years with all RE apprentice trades once again coming together at Beachley. The building trades returned from Harrogate, accompanied by surveyors and electricians (RE).



Moving north to Carlisle were the vehicle mechanics, fitters REME (General and Gun), whilst electricians REME and the Control Equipment Technicians transferred to Arborfield. In 1961 there was a sad occasion indeed when with the passing out of 59A, Dept 8 (Vehicle Mechanics) closed down; the younger groups having transferred to Carlisle.

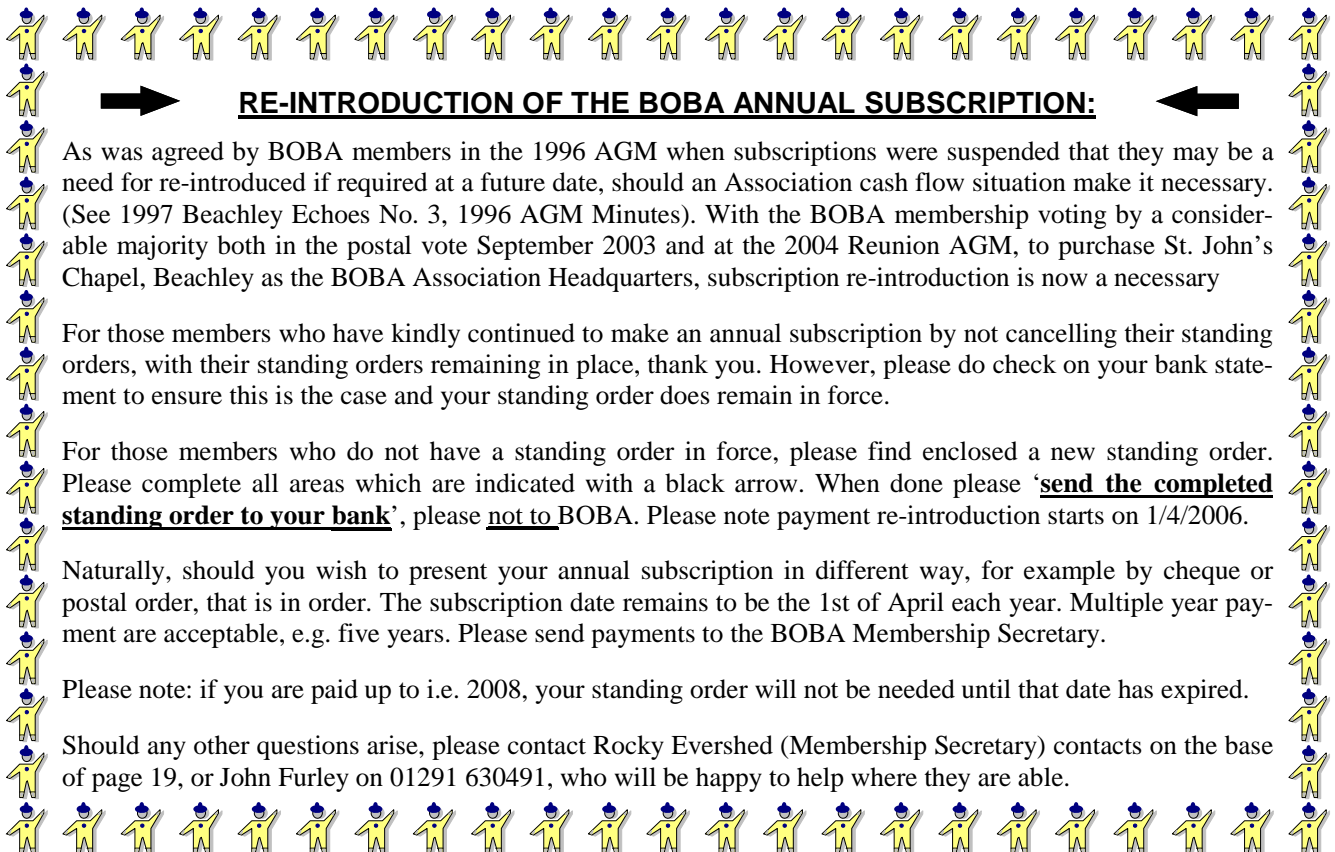
By the end of 1964, the greater part of the School re-building programme had been completed – Sergeants Mess, barrack blocks, cookhouse and dining hall, chapel, education and survey blocks, boiler house, NAAFI families shop, most workshops, Guardroom, MI Room, dental centre and company offices. Work had begun on a new Junior Ranks Club, overlooking the River Wye and plans were produced for a Medical Centre, also a library, an Officers Mess and an Amenity Centre, the latter to include a Other Denomination (OD) chapel, a cinema-come-assembly hall, gymnasium, an indoor swimming pool, two miniature ranges, two squash courts, nine rooms for clubs and hobbies and a Roman Catholic chapel hexagonal shaped. This final phase was due to be completed within three to four years.



The 'Officerisation' of the RAEC, saw the departure in 1963 of the last Warrant Officers and Senior NCOs of the Education Corps; strange to imagine the Sergeants Mess without a 'Schoolie' after 114 years. After many years of hope and frustration, it was a particularly heartening occasion in May 1963, when Mrs. VTR Ford, the widow of the first Commandant, laid the Foundation Stone of the new School Church. As early as 1928, "The Robot" had reported, "surveyors with strange instruments have been sizing out the site for the church". Thirty-five years later project work commenced and in May 1964 the church was dedicated.

On the occasion of the Queen's visit in September 1966 to open the great construction across Severn and Wye (The Severn Bridge), the College having attained it's new title only a few days previously, was very privileged to line part of the route across the bridge as Her Majesty drove across.

The Administrative Block, built by Apprentices of Department 17 in the early 1930's, is the only building which remains from the Apprentices School that the Apprentices had a total hand in building. A true memorial to the earlier bricklayers, masons and carpentry apprentices, it was saved for posterity through the keen persistence of the late Colonel J. R. Cordy - Simpson CBE, MC, 13th/18th Royal Hussars, during his tenure as Commandant 1958 - 1962. The building has been used as the Battalion Headquarters by each Infantry Battalion occupying Beachley Barracks since the Apprentice College closed in 1994.

Take care ~ Allan Ball 46A. (With some archive and typing help).




RE-INTRODUCTION OF THE BOBA ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION:


As was agreed by BOBA members in the 1996 AGM when subscriptions were suspended that they may be a need for re-introduced if required at a future date, should an Association cash flow situation make it necessary. (See 1997 Beachley Echoes No. 3, 1996 AGM Minutes). With the BOBA membership voting by a considerable majority both in the postal vote September 2003 and at the 2004 Reunion AGM, to purchase St. John's Chapel, Beachley as the BOBA Association Headquarters, subscription re-introduction is now a necessary

For those members who have kindly continued to make an annual subscription by not cancelling their standing orders, with their standing orders remaining in place, thank you. However, please do check on your bank statement to ensure this is the case and your standing order does remain in force.

For those members who do not have a standing order in force, please find enclosed a new standing order. Please complete all areas which are indicated with a black arrow. When done please **send the completed standing order to your bank**, please not to BOBA. Please note payment re-introduction starts on 1/4/2006.

Naturally, should you wish to present your annual subscription in different way, for example by cheque or postal order, that is in order. The subscription date remains to be the 1st of April each year. Multiple year payment are acceptable, e.g. five years. Please send payments to the BOBA Membership Secretary.

Please note: if you are paid up to i.e. 2008, your standing order will not be needed until that date has expired.

Should any other questions arise, please contact Rocky Evershed (Membership Secretary) contacts on the base of page 19, or John Furley on 01291 630491, who will be happy to help where they are able.



SOME FIFTY FIVERS MEET AT WARWICK.

by: Alf Robbins 55A D Coy.

In September, Ian "Ginge" Taylor of 55A group D Coy set out on tour of the UK, Europe and Gibraltar, from his home base in Melbourne Australia. He was accompanied by his wife Emily.

Whilst in the UK Ian wanted to meet with as many ex 55A Group as possible. In the planning phase of his tour he had established email contact with a few. Even so it was obvious that time would not allow him to visit all. Those in the UK put their heads together and where able, agreed to meet up with Ian at Warwick on 24th Sept. '04

At the meeting were: Ian Taylor (D Coy), Ray Armstrong (A Coy), Cyril "Moggsie" Morris (C Coy), Chas Spinks (D Coy), Alf Robbins (D Coy), Derek and Lou Walker (D Coy) together with Emily Taylor, Gwen Armstrong and Anne Spinks they all chatted about a million and one things. Rather than give you a narrative account of what happened I offer the following few verses as summarising things from my perspective. Possibly it may inspire others members of our Group to attend for our BOBA 50th year celebrations in 2005.

In addition to those named, contact (or location of) has been established with: Willy Welsh (Australia) Pete Rees (Canada) Peter Brazier (S. Africa) Derek Scott, Gil Warner, Mick Delf, Harry Blunden, Ali Davison, Nev Frost.

The Fifty Fivers Meet at Warwick 24.9.04. (A record of the 55 er's meeting in verse by Alf Robbins)

The sun was shining strong and the sky was blue.
As they say in Oz, a good day to shoot through.
Moggsie Morris arrived well in time, to sample the local beer.
He also checked out the room and found all in order here.

Chorus: Oh we did travel to Warwick fair, Warwick fair and met with other folk there.

Then came Alf Robbins with bits and bobs, photographs and maps,
These would come in handy later on to help confirm the facts.
Even an agenda had been prepared to show that we were able
We also had a special room, with chairs and an oval table.

Then Ray Armstrong arrived and Chas Spinks as well,
And the years rolled back like a magic spell.
Derek and Lou Walker, which one is who,
Recognising the twins, was still challenging a few.

Now who is missing from the list, is there going to be a failure?
No, look who's just walked in, it's that wayward Ian Taylor!
G'day Mate, did you lose your way on the busy highway?
No, I forgot to pack my phrase book and so had to do it my way!

Then we all lined up to have photographs taken,
Some not sure whether to sit or stand at ease, if I'm not mistaken.
Then welcome, thanks and greetings to all for having made the effort,
But this is really Ian's day so the floor Ian, you have it!

Ian produced from his tucker bag magnificent scrolls for those on parade,
Adorned with a `55 Oz penny paying tribute to each named comrade.
The `Old Codgers` poem was produced, written by some of those present,
We reminisced for quite a while and the time was very pleasant.

Then the ladies, Anne, Emily and Gwen joined us for some lunch,
They each received a spray of flowers, which is not quite a bunch!
Now the camera's appeared for a final session, and a video began to spin,
To ensure that we would have a record of those who came and got fell in.



VETERANS BADGE: Press Notice no: 063/04 10 May 2004

Ivor Caplin, Minister for Veterans has launched the Veteran's Badge. The badge has been developed in consultation with veterans' organisations and is intended to reinforce the veterans' identity and to help the wider public recognise veterans. The badge is a lapel badge intended for wear on civilian attire.

Although the badge was initially for War Veterans only, owing to interest levels, this has been extended to encompass all ex Forces personnel who have served five or more years with H. M. Forces and received an honourable discharge.

The application form for the Veterans Badge is available from your current Royal British Legion Branch. If you do not know of an RBL Branch close to you, please call John Furley on Chepstow 01291 630491, who will endeavour to put you in touch with your nearest RBL Branch. You do not need to be a member of the Royal British Legion to qualify for the badge.

THIS YEARS JOKE: Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson decide to go camping in the hills.

The intrepid two lie down for the night to sleep; half way through the night Holmes wakes Watson and the great detective asks:

"Watson, look up into the sky and tell me what you see?"

"Why, I can see millions of stars," Watson replies.

"And what does that tell you?" Holmes inquires, Watson lights his pipe and has a long draw.

"Many things, my dear Holmes," eventually came the reply:

"Astronomically, it tells me that there are billions of galaxies in the cosmos.

"Theologically, it tells me that God is truly great and that we are nothing but insignificant beings.

"Meteorologically, it tells me that we will have a good chance of a beautiful day tomorrow.

"But I doubt that any of these opinions match the powers of your deduction," continues Watson, "What, pray, does it tell you?"

Holmes gives a sideways glance at his friend and replies:

"My dear Watson, somebody's nicked the bleeding tent."

Advertisement ~ Holiday accommodation in Malta?

We have a 400 year old house in Vittoriosa, the Old Capital of Malta. Restored to its original stonework, this property has been extensively renovated, in line with 21st century standards.

The house has 3 bedrooms (One with en suite facilities) and can sleep 6 people comfortably, with an option of utilising two further folding beds, if required.

Vittoriosa is not a tourist area, but located in a very pleasant and quiet area of town.

Hire cost:

Discounted cost:

Peak Season	1st June to 30th September	£40.00 per night	£280.00 per week	£252.00 per week
Off Peak Season.	1st October to 31st May	£35.70 per night	£249.90 per week	£224.90 per week

(These charges are for the ENTIRE HOUSE, therefore the more holidaying, the more economical it becomes.)

The property is owned by an ex serviceman, who with his brother, a BOBA member, is pleased to offer BOBA members, along with all ex service members a full 10% off the above mentioned rental charges.

If you have an Internet facility, please visit our website at: www.holiday-malta.co.uk.

Alternatively to speak directly, please call 01634 850043. An information booklet is available.



from the Fairway : BOBA Golfing Society

With a period of very rough weather passing through in 2004, I thought this may curtail some of the golfing activity, but not a bit of it, some of the lads even found extra time to play St Pierre!
 We had 31 entries this year with two ladies and one new member, Peter Lawther 74C from the Isle of Man, *cur fault er*, Peter. This year saw the introduction of a new trophy which the golfers purchased, the Handicap Cup, the idea being to give the higher handicapped players a chance of winning a trophy. Well, were it not for the Society rules which prevent one player winning more than one trophy, Stuart Burton would have "cleaned up" this year. He won the Championship Cup off a handicap of 22 (not next year !), so could not win the Handicap Cup as well, this went to Rick Spalding on a countback.

Longest Drive (9th Hole) Nearest the Pin (18th Hole) Best Par 3's aggregate

Geoff Winter 54B 232 yds Foster Pattison 56B 5ft 1ins Alan Heywood 58B 12pts

Drawn Pairs (The George Murray Memorial Cup)

Winners 64 points Peter Saunders 51A & John Green 73B
 Second 62 points Andy Foster 75C & Rick Spalding 67B

B.O.B.A. Championship 2004

Winner & 2004 Champion	Stuart Burton 67B	37 pts
Second	Alan Picken 66A	34 pts

Handicap Cup	Rick Spalding 67B	31 pts
Second (on countback)	Peter Saunders 51A	31 pts

My thanks to all the golfers, especially President Syd, Fos Pattison, Tony Battle, Tony Waite, and Kay & Reg Rider. your help is, and has been, really appreciated.

This was my last event as BOBA golf organiser, I thank you all for your support over the last five years, to Alan Heywood for sparing my blushes this year, and hand you over in to the capable hands of Foster Pattison 56B who has agreed to take over from me.

I look forward to meeting you all again in 2006.

Glen Chalmers





It is with great sadness that we golfers acknowledge the passing of Ken Standen 57A following a long illness, Ken was the founder of BOBA Golf.

The 2005 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 2005. 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 2005.**

Start times will be allocated on Saturday 17th September 2005 and all golfers informed by e-mail/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: Foster Pattison,
Flat 1,
12 Marine Parade,
Clevedon,
North Somerset, BS21 7QS.**

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:.....