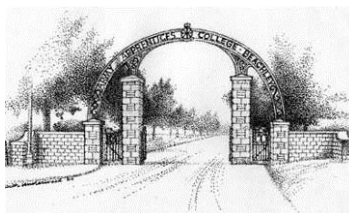




Beachley

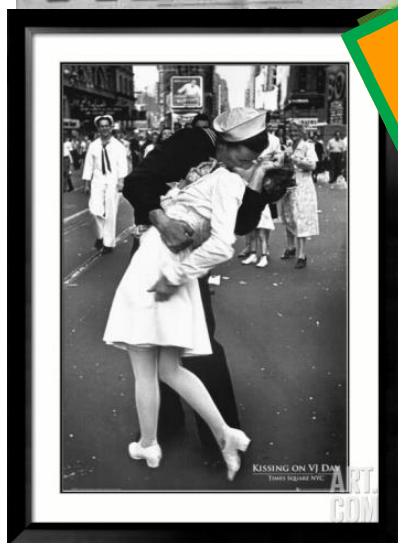


Echoes

Edition No. 21 ~ April 2015



70 Years Ago



Contents

Chairman's Jottings & President's Thoughts	2 & 4	Accommodation Guide	27 & 28
Ken Morris Story	5-9	Financial Summary	29 & 30
John Humpreys OBE	10	Membership Report & Standing Order	31 & 32
Historic Items	13	NOK Form	33
Editor's Hurrah & Heritage	14	Jack Stratford	34
In Memoriam & Cenotaph Parade	15	Digitisation	36
Army Apprentice National Memorial	16	Burma at Last	37 & 38
Ladies Page	17	64C A Coy Reunion	39 & 40
2014 AGM Minutes	18-22	BOBA Shop	41 & 42
Reunion Arrangements	23	Notices	42
Reunion Itinerary & Booking Form	24-26	Golf Report & Application Form	43 & 44



Chairman's Jottings

It seems only yesterday that we were all gathered together at the 2014 reunion weekend and yet here we are with less than six months to the next one and its time to produce another set of "Jottings". I'm a fervent believer that the Echoes is an excellent means of communicating with all ex Beachley Boys and I know that all the articles in the newsletter are put together with thought and due diligence, therefore at this point I'd like to thank all those who have contributed to this particular issue and a special thanks to Ken Reader, the Echoes editor who spends many hours producing what is an excellent publication.

Last years reunion weekend started with our social in the WO's and Sjt's Mess at Beachley. It is very generous of the RSM to allow us to use his mess and it was pleasing that he took the time to don his mess kit and welcome us all on arrival.

Sadly due to a tragic family bereavement Malcolm Hay, our Heritage member could not attend the reunion weekend but thankfully Derek Walker kindly called on Malcolm and collected all the items for his excellent display. On arrival at the racecourse the committee and the normal gang of helpers got things sorted and hopefully those who visited the heritage trail were satisfied with the display and its contents. To round off the display we were grateful that Anne Rainsbury from the Chepstow Museum brought along some of the items she holds.

The AGM was held immediately after the heritage trail closed and I suppose the main item on the agenda was a request by the museum in Chepstow to provide financial support in order to digitise the Beachley camp photographs they hold. Some of the funding would come from the Ministry of Defence and some from Monmouth County Council the remainder to come from BOBA. The team from the museum gave a short presentation that was quickly followed by a question and answer session. Later in the meeting the members present agreed to pledge the sum of £5k to the project. All sounds simple really but we are still somewhat unsure if any of the photographs we hold will be converted or how we as an association will be able to access the finished product. Meanwhile the project has started and the committee is grateful to those ex boys who currently visit the museum and spend a few hours a week identifying 'what's what' on many hundreds of photographs. Meanwhile Malcolm continues to get answers to our queries albeit slowly and rather frustratingly as communications with the museum is at best patchy.

Saturday evening saw us all gather in the racecourse banqueting suite for our reunion dinner. The numbers in attendance were the highest ever and the buzz in the bar at pre-dinner drinks was extraordinary. It was good to see all the guys and their partners from the 1964 groups sat at the centre table enjoying themselves and no doubt exchanging tales spanning the last fifty years. I hope my year group (1965) can put on the same level of attendance this year.

I assume there were a few sore heads present on the Sunday morning at church parade. As usual the weather was fine, we all sang out loud in St George's church and listened with intent to the Reverend Joe Rooney's sermon. As is our custom and practice the collection made during the offertory hymn was donated to The Soldiers Charity (formally known as the Army Benevolent Fund).

The Founders Day service brings the reunion weekend to a close but almost immediately the committee gets on the bus and starts planning the next reunion and attending to the day to day running of the association, on your behalf I'd like to thank all the committee for what they do for BOBA.

Planning for the reunion this year is well in hand, costs for accommodation, transport, food, etc., have been agreed and these will form part of the weekend package. Price increases this year are unavoidable but have been kept to a minimum.

Derek Fox our membership secretary reckons our figures are fairly static, we have lost an awful lot of ex boys to the grim reaper this year and hopefully we have kept you up date via the Absent Friends page on the website. Having said that please do keep us informed if you know of any ex Beachley Boy who has passed away. Likewise I ask you all to become recruiting sergeants and do your best to increase our numbers, Derek is happy to process the paperwork as soon as he receives it.

At this point I'd like to mention the golf, year on year the numbers partaking are reducing. As our President has said the going is easy which makes for an enjoyable day, I also notice he has extended an invitation to the ladies to join the meeting, now there's an offer that I'm sure can be taken up!

You may have already noticed that the President has mentioned some forthcoming changes to various committee appointments. These changes involve the editor of the Echoes, Ken Reader does an excellent job but has indicated to me that he wishes to stand down following the publication of the 2016 newsletter. Likewise the Treasurer, Chris Ricketts who has held the post in excess of five years and has looked after the account with the minimum of supervision. Therefore I agree that the time is now right for him to hand over to a new treasurer, ideally when we close the account at the end of 2015. The other significant change is the appointment of a new



Chairman, my tenure of office ends at the AGM in 2016 by which time I will have held the post for twelve years. I believe this is long enough and hopefully I will be able to handover to a fresher and hopefully younger set of eyes. I've mentioned these changes now and well in advance of this years AGM so that all who read this document will have the opportunity to give the vacancies some thought and possibly put their names forward either now, at the AGM or whenever suitable.

The association currently has adequate funds to meet its immediate needs, for a number of years our annual income has been slightly more than our expenditure, this has come about mainly due to the reduction in postage, Echoes production costs and the generosity of the committee when submitting claims for expenses incurred. As there appears to be little scope for further reduction in our running costs I cannot see this situation continuing and I feel we may experience the opposite and have expenditure in excess of income. The only way we can cover this deficit is to use our reserves unless of course all the members who are registered with the Membership Secretary paid their subscriptions. At this moment in time our income from subscriptions is approximately half of what it should be! The non payment of subscriptions is a concern; we should all be paying £10 per year, preferably by Standing Order. For this small sum you remain within the wider family of apprentice training and experience the comradeship and belonging that only comes by having served at Beachley.

At this point I'd like to briefly mention benevolence, we have a small fund for such cases and are here to help where we can. Please contact any of the committee if you have any queries on this matter.

That's it! I'd like to close by reminding members that much effort will be expended by the executive committee in the next few weeks to ensure the reunion is a success and ask that you join us in September and celebrate that success.

Kind Regards,

Brian Henderson (65A C Coy)

Treasurer's Farewell

Dear Members,

I have been your Honorary Treasurer for the past 6 years and although it has been a steep learning curve I have enjoyed the task despite my many frustrations and I trust that you have all been happy with the results.

However I firmly believe that this particular post should be handed over to someone else on a regular basis in order to maintain Financial Propriety, so with that in mind please accept my decision to step down from the post at the forthcoming AGM. I will of course be pleased to offer my limited experience to a new treasurer to help him take over. I would like you all to consider giving the job a go and hopefully we can welcome a new Treasurer in September.

I would also hope that I could gain another post within the Association and continue to ensure that BOBA retains that bond that we all have.

Many thanks to you all and in particular to Brian Henderson without whose unfailing assistance I would have been lost.

Chris Ricketts (65A CCoy)

Wanted!

Willing volunteers to fill three important positions:

Chairman

Treasurer

Editor

Your Association needs you

Please step forward





The President's Thoughts for 2015

Where the time goes I just don't know but it seems only a short while ago that I sat down to write a few lines for last year's Echoes. Despite being well and truly retired there is so much to do and losing my right hand helper has made it harder.

Once again we look forward to the reunion and I am sure that it will be a good one, your committee have toiled to make sure that many of the little niggles have been rectified and your enjoyment has been their watchword. Whilst they try, there are some people that just cannot be pleased and in this respect I ask them to bear with us or, better still, offer their services to help organise the event.

The Cenotaph Parade – again a good turnout, a nice day was enjoyed by all. Many new faces, some from far, far away who had much to talk about with old friends. It never ceases to amaze me just how the crowds support this event and I for one get a tremendous feeling of pride tempered with a certain humiliation as we march past. How many more I will be able to attend – who knows but I will as long as I am fit enough.

Bids for this year's Parade - Despite trying, I have been unable to increase our allocation of tickets past the normal 30 so if you wish to join us please contact me soonest: email sydney1931@btinternet.com 01656 661180 or text on 07785 282266.

BOBA Open Golf Meeting - I am sure that there are many more of our members that play and we would welcome both you and your ladies. It is a good easy going event that gets you in fine spirits and hunger ready for the evening's Dinner.

Membership - This is very much your responsibility – if we all managed to recruit, cajole, or shame just one extra person to join then we would have very few problems over the coming years. Please give it a go.

Committee Changes - Elsewhere in this edition you will see that both our Chairman and Treasurer intend to stand down. This is not a suicide pact as both will remain committee members. Brian has had a long spell as Chairman and in all fairness has earned a rest. He will not be seeking re-election at the 2016 AGM. Meanwhile in order to maintain the integrity of the BOBA account Chris would like to handover the accounts at the end of our financial year (Dec 2015).

WE NEED TO FIND REPLACEMENTS AT THIS YEAR'S AGM.

The Chairman - has by tradition, come from a present committee member but if there is someone out there who wishes to be considered please put yourself forward.

The Treasurer - I am sure that amongst our membership there is someone who has the ability, interest and time to undertake the duties of Treasurer – Chris will be on hand, to advise over the next year. **WE NEED NEW BLOOD ON THE COMMITTEE.**

AGM This will be an important meeting and I ask you all to make a big effort to attend.

See you all in September and hope the 65 Groups have a good turnout.

May Fair winds propel you in your chosen direction.

Syd Thomas (47A C Coy)



Editors Note: Our President with the BOBA Standard at the REME Association Reunion at Bosworth Hall May 2014.



My Story—Continued

You may remember that we included the start of Ken Morris's story in the 2013 issue of the Beachley Echoes. Last year we continued the story and this year we get to its conclusion. We left Ken in in Stalag VB Villingen, a place he didn't recall and really only passed through; this was in February 1941. You can catch up on the last two episodes by going to our web site.

After a long and unpleasant journey we reached Stalag XXIA at Schildberg (now Ostrzeszow) in Poland. Date 22 March 1941 (from a letter). Quite a large camp organised by English Warrant Officers selected for the job by the Germans so things went a little better.

I got my first Red Cross Parcel here. The contents were very good and well selected. I also received an issue of ten English cigarettes which were welcome. All this was the beginning of an almost regular issue of Red Cross Parcels and cigarettes at the remaining camps I was at. Over the following period until just before going on the march, I received parcels from my parents and Suzanne. Cigarettes came from various kind sources, the local pub, British Legion and individuals I didn't know. Their kindness made a big impression on me.

I went on a work party to a place called Gogolin Poland, I do not remember when. We were housed in an old disused hall. Our job was to sort out large piles of stones, which had been gathered over a long period on various farms. The object was to sort the small stones from the big ones and put them in individual piles. These stones were to go to assist in the reconstruction of the roads for the German advance into Russia. The farmers tried hard to give us food, but were scared of the guards. Marching to and from the worksite, we occasionally saw a dead Jew or some unfortunate hanging from a post. The women passing by did, at great risk, give us pieces of bread for which we were grateful.

From Gogolin we moved to Stalag VIIIB Lamsdorf (now Lambinowice) but it might have been the other way round I am not sure. This was a large camp containing thousands. Well organised as far as possible by British WOs under supervision of the Germans. Date 26 July 1941. There were Russians also in the camp but they were kept separated from the rest, we were sorry for them. Routine was much the same, roll calls, queuing up for soup, bread and perhaps something else; mail call for some lucky chaps, a delousing session or perhaps, when it was the time, a Red Cross parcel. Then, where was the means to boil the water to make some tea, there were many ingenious methods! There were often new comers arriving or chaps returning from work parties. I was not long there, before being detailed along with 20 or 30 others to go on a work party. We marched to the station under guard, and boarded a train. For the first time we were not in a cattle truck. Our destination was not very far, a village out in the country called Waldenstien (now Goradeze). Not far from the station was our final destination, a kalk werks, in English, Lime Works. Stone was quarried, broken up and taken to a large kiln shaped as a circular tunnel. The stone was stacked in until the kiln was full then it was sealed and fired. When cool the stone was ground to a powder and bagged as the finished product.

This then was my introduction to Arbeitskommando E152. We were billeted within the works area. Our accommodation was an old small single story building which was divided into two. One half was a disused barn and the other was for us. We were the first POWs there. The bunks were two high with the usual straw paillasses. A couple of tables with forms to sit on, a small stove, in all, a tight squeeze. Two windows heavily barred and one single door which led into a small compound surrounded with the usual barbed wire, not much room to move about. In one corner was a crudely built wooden latrine, a two seater with half an oil drum per seat. Later in winter we kept a small bar between the seats, your motion tended to freeze quickly and if the next chap sat down without using the bar, he might sit on something else! At night, as the door was locked, we had a drum in the corner of the room. We took it in turns to empty the drums on an adjacent field used for growing potatoes, a good crop! At night before locking up the guard took our boots and trousers away in case we tried to escape. Food, working parties adhered to a scale of rations depending on the type of work. Light, heavy and heaviest. Ours was the latter, but you never had enough, it looked alright on paper.

Peter Hunter a sergeant was detailed by the Germans to take charge of us. He was a very good friend of mine; we had been together since hospital. The guards and civilian foremen picked us out for the various jobs. I was selected with two others for the fitters shop. We were to help in the repair of wagons and skips. This suited me. Unfortunately I did not hit it off with the foreman, a bit bolshie and after a while I was transferred to the quarry, and there I stayed. The quarry was some distance from the factory. We marched under guard, or if lucky got a lift on the empty stone skips. We had to produce and load into the skips 12 cubic metres of stone per man per day, winter included. My first letter home was dated 21 September 1941.

Our work face was at least 30ft to 40ft high. We had to climb up the face onto narrow ledges with a crowbar and lever down the large pieces of stone. It was not particularly safe. On one occasion I did have a fall and injured a knee, and was off for a few weeks. Having got the stone down, we broke it up with large sledgehammers. The larger the piece broken the less required to fill the skip, provided you could lift it! Before we left we had to clear our pitch for the following day, this necessitated filling at least another skip.



Our civilian overseer in the quarry was an old cavalry man from the First World War; a proud old man with a very large white military moustache. He had been taken prisoner by the English; he told us they were all gentlemen. He took great delight in pointing out where to strike to split the stone, he was very pleased when you proved him right, I eventually became an expert.

Washing facilities were in a small building which was about 20 yards from our compound and was quite good. The guard had to let us out to go to the washhouse. In the mornings if it was dark we used to run down into the field, lie down along the furrows and pull out potatoes with our hands. We filled our jackets then proceeded to the washhouse. We were never caught; there was only one guard on duty. But when the civilians came to harvest their potatoes there were problems. Eventually another 20 odd arrived, and were housed in a separate building similar to ours. They were New Zealanders and Australians. They were employed in the woods, felling and cutting up wood for pit props etc. We were allowed to visit each other. A sergeant was employed as our cook, I think he had played cricket for New Zealand.

One day an Australian arrived who was to be our first aid man; we soon found out he hadn't a clue and was not qualified. So, rather than shop him, Maurice Butler who had a little knowledge helped him. Maurice was also at Gent hospital and we had become firm friends. With the regular issue of Red Cross parcels which were a god send, we required a method of heating water to make tea and some of the tinned food so a "blower" was made. This consisted of a small plank of wood on which, near one end, a fan was mounted. The fan blades were made from pieces of tin and mounted on a wooden axle. The axle was fitted into a large tin, so that the ends projected through holes made in the ends of the tin, the lid having been fitted, this allowed the fan to turn. On one end of the axle was fitted a pulley made from pieces of tin, wood and stiff cardboard (Red Cross boxes). At the other end of the plank a similar pulley of slightly larger diameter with a small handle on the circumference was fitted in line with the fan. A belt consisting from whatever you could pinch was fitted. The cooker was made up from anything one could "acquire". A grid was fitted near the top for the fuel and then the cooker was placed at the end of the plank next to the fan. The fan was fitted to the bottom of the cooker by a small diameter tin. By hand turning the fan it produced a forced draught under the fire resulting in a good heat; the whole contraption was portable. No patents were taken out and many different types were produced at various Stalags.

One day two new comers arrived and later informed us that they were New Zealand pilots under false identities. Their intention was to escape as soon as possible and would we help. While we did not give them much hope, we agreed to help. Only three of us knew and were asked not to tell anyone else.

Prior to the various new arrivals, the Germans decided to knock a door in the dividing wall into the barn. This they made into another room in to which some of us were moved in; this included me.

We had decided to use the new window to get out the two airmen. We had to be careful, as the guard often made a habit of peering in the window when on his rounds at night. The grouting around the bars was removed during the night until the bars were loose enough to be pulled out. This took us two or three nights, disguising our work each night. Finally we told the two to get ready, pulled the bars out and they climbed through the window and were away. Immediately we put the bars back and grouted them back in. Having previously pinched some cement. To disguise the new grout we sprinkled old dust over them. I don't think the guards ever found out how they got away. Unfortunately we heard later they were re captured.

Soon after our arrival here, to simplify queuing for food, we decided to divide into small groups of four. We called them families with one member in charge. With the exception of soup, the person in charge received food for his family. On return it was to be divided into four. To ensure fair distribution one person cut the bread etc. into four portions watched by the remaining three. He had the last portion. The other three took it in turns to take a portion. Food being scarce this was a very serious matter. But families became great friends, and when parcels or cigarettes arrived from home they were shared out, the same applied to news in letters. As time passed, the amount of men per loaf increased. We developed a song "vier man ein brot mein gott" pardon my German, eventually it got to eight men, just a thick slice! Sometimes you found pieces of potato in the bread. My family was Maurice Butler, Peter Hunter, Doug Holland and of course myself.

News was scarce, any new arrival especially if they had not long been a POW were bombarded with questions. We did have a loud speaker in the room. But all we heard was the German version spoken in English. Maurice and I discussed the possibility of making a crystal set. We acquired a piece of wood as a base some odd bits of copper wire a few small screws or bolts to secure connections, a wooden former for the coil but we lacked a crystal and earphones. We approached some civilians at work, after hard bargaining with English cigarettes, we acquired a crystal and one earphone which we managed to fix up, the cats whisker was a thin piece of wire. When it was all fixed up, it looked like nothing on earth; we had kept it as small as possible. We tried for hours when suddenly we heard something. It was Ivy Benson and her all girls orchestra a very popular band at that time. I think it was the BBC world service we termed the Drum by virtue of its call theme. It was difficult to get the right spot on the crystal, and we had to try well in advance before news time. We never used the set until the guard had locked us up; also I think he turned the lights out. As our bunks faced the window and the guard could



see all round the room if he looked in with his torch so we operated under a blanket. Maurice was a clerk in civilian life so he scribbled down the news as he heard it; I provided the light by drawing in hard on a cigarette, which was hard going! When we were listening to the news, nobody was to use the bin in the corner of the room in case the noise interrupted us! We only gave the news out the next morning. When we heard news of the D Day landings, we were so excited we had to tell everybody. The row they made alerted the guards who immediately came in. We were lucky to get away with it.

Doug, a member of our family received a letter from home with bad news; his mother had died the rest of us felt for him. When the foreman with whom he worked was told he took Doug into his little office sat him down and got out a bottle of snaps.

Since having been settled in one place for a while, the mail arrived more frequently. I was able to send home a letter about once a fortnight or a month and I always answered with a card to Suzanne. Towards the end of 1944 our incoming mail gradually stopped. During this period we were issued with new clothes from the International Red Cross or captured stocks. As a result, our family had our photo taken and we really cleaned up for the occasion; I still have the photo. Unfortunately it was not long before they were in a bad state again due to the work; we did not have working clothes!

From our crystal set we were reasonably informed as to the situation, and the demeanour of some of the civilians. I remember before I was sent to the quarry discussing the distressing situations we had seen. The foreman replied "no man can do such things" he didn't say "no German". He thought men could not do such things. On the other hand another civilian told me his son belonged to the Hitler Youth. When his son was in the house he was afraid to talk unless his son would report it.

One day in the winter 1944/45 we had a shock. The guards came and told we were to pack as much as we could carry and be prepared to leave. They gave what food was available; I have since read that in the Stalags the men were issued the remaining stocks of Red Cross parcels but I have no recollection of us receiving any, we were too small to be holding stocks. As there was snow some of us managed to make some form of sledge. We gathered that the Russians were advancing, and the Germans were not leaving us to them. The Guards were a bit apprehensive and became quite talkative at times.

From now on, my recollection and memory of events, dates and places are very blurred. Suffice to say it was not very pleasant. We left January/February 1945. Peter Hunter had left the camp earlier.

On the second day we left, marching off with some dragging a sledge to where I don't know. I think the intention was to link up with other groups on the march. We were marching a good distance each day before stopping for the night and herded into a barn, it was very cold. Some times food of some sort was arranged, but this got less and less as the march progressed. At one stop, we could hear automatic gun fire. That night Maurice and I left the barn, I can't remember if our intention was to escape. We walked to a nearby village, and decided to knock on the door of a cottage. An old lady answered and took us in. She knew who we were; we sat by the fire while she got some coffee. As we were having a hot drink and warming ourselves there was a knock on the door and low and behold a guard stood in the room, there was silence. Then he asked for some coffee and sat by the fire with us. I think he was looking for a bed for the night. After he had warmed himself he got up and said "come" and we went wondering what would happen. He took us back to the barn, and disappeared, we were lucky. By now there were considerably more in our marching column. As the march progressed the sledges were discarded together with many other articles as their owners were becoming too weak and tired. Most now carried only the bare essentials for survival. We sometimes stopped at a camp which had been vacated by others on the march.

I quote from a card I sent home, dated 23 March 1945, "In the last couple of months. Things are bad, we have marched about 400 kilometres from our work camp and I am so hungry which I will never forget. I am writing this in a barn and am so cold I can hardly hold my pencil" Ted Bowditch had fallen out with severe frostbite in his feet and could not walk. We used to herd together on the straw in the barns to keep warm, we dare not take our wet boots off, frightened we wouldn't get them on again.

As we progressed things became slower, many had dropped out due to illness or exhaustion. Some of the guards became friendlier. I don't think they knew where we were going. The weather was improving which helped a lot. We were strafed by some Russian planes a few times as we marched. At one stop a couple of lads were shot trying to steal potatoes. Food was becoming scarce, nothing was organised any more. We knew the Russians were not far away. Eventually we appeared to be on our own. One of our guards an elderly sergeant had a horse drawn wagon carrying his family and the contents of his home. They were scared of the Russians some of us helped the family along for a while. We reached a village named Kulm; the guard and family said goodbye and went off. We were in a group of about six. There was a small hill and for some reason we decided to climb to the top. I think we also were worried about the Russians, and from the top we could see what was going on. There was a stream of civilians passing through with a smattering of unarmed German troops. While wondering what to do next, we saw the first Russian tanks appear followed by horse drawn wagons filled with troops. We were



desperate, tired and hungry and decided to go down into the village. A woman answering our knock on her door saw us and looked very alarmed. Finally we managed to persuade her that we were English. Much to our relief we were invited in. There were two women living there and they gave what food they could. They wanted us to stay because we were English and would keep the Russians away. Such optimism, it was shared by other women. We were given a bedroom and all five of us crammed in. I rolled myself in a carpet and slept on the floor. Next morning, we discovered there was very little food available so decided to go out on the scrounge which didn't produce much. We noticed quite a few Yank POWs wandering around, but kept to ourselves.

An elderly lady from a nearby house had come to ask if two of us would come and stay with her. Maurice and I volunteered and we went over. The first thing she did was to get a tin bath. Took us into the kitchen filled the bath with hot water told us to strip off and get into the bath and she scrubbed us all over. When finished, she produced a couple of pairs of knickers and told us to put them on. Our clothes she put into the sink and washed them and hung them out to dry. The knickers which we learned later belonged to her granddaughter were to hide our modesty until our clothes were dry. Needless to say we kept well in doors. She was like a mother to us. On one of our scavenging trips Maurice and I entered a very imposing building. It had been ransacked and there were a few dead bodies lying around, the Russians had been in. We were looking for food. But didn't find any, on the way out I picked up a pair of fur lined shoes and kept them as my boots were finished. As we walked back through the grounds, we turned round and looked back discussing something when a voice behind us said in perfect English "yes that is my house". He introduced himself as Count - the rest I can't remember. He also mentioned that I was wearing a pair of his shoes. I was very embarrassed but he said keep them, and walked away. In Kulm there were many refugees. On another occasion we found an underground store, in it were large vats of pickled eggs. We gathered as many as we could carry. Then in come some Russians, and who is going to argue with guns pointed at you! We had already learnt two words in Russian which came in very handy "English Comrade" It worked, but it did not stop them from making us load up their wagon with eggs. I was on the road side one day when a gun limber drew up and the usual rifle was pointing at me. My two words of magic uttered, and I made two friends. We sat down on the side of the road, a bottle of vodka produced. It was then a succession of "Hail Stalin", "Hail Churchill" - until they departed leaving me half drunk at the side of the road.

During our stay in the house, the old lady insisted we slept in her bed, and she slept in the kitchen and we were to lock the kitchen door. This was fear of the Russians. One evening she told us her granddaughter was coming to stay the night and she was to sleep between Maurice and I. This was to protect her. The girl was about 12 years old. And it happened, a loud knock on the front door, it persisted so I reluctantly went to the door in my shirt tails on opening there was a drunken Russian soldier. He was obviously looking for one thing! My two words, did not work, I don't know how I did it but in sheer desperation I manage to persuade him we were both soldiers, and the woman here was mine. Somehow it sunk in he nodded knowingly gave me a drink and left. I felt terrible. In the morning the lady thanked me.

We frequently heard rumours of American troops being seen. The Russians were anxious to get rid of us. Suddenly we were all ordered to assemble at a certain place and then were taken to a train which was standing by somewhere. The Russians herded us into cattle wagons. After a lot of shouting and pushing, the train started. How long we were moving I don't remember. Suddenly we stopped, miles from anywhere; the Russians then took off with the engine and left us all stranded. There was a lot of consternation as to what we should do next. In the midst of all this indecision, there was suddenly a lot of shouting. An American jeep was coming over the field towards us. It contained some officers. When it stopped it was swamped with American ex POWs shouting at them. Not able to control them, an officer drew his revolver and fired over their heads. From what I heard, he promised to have an engine as soon as possible then quickly disappeared. True to his word, an engine arrived within a couple of hours and towed us to a town held by the Americans. It was a great relief. They were very efficient and soon got things organised. Hospitalised by the Americans 18 May 1945.

We were all checked, Maurice and myself were not well, stomach trouble I think. Having been issued with K rations and cigarettes we were both taken to a German military hospital. The ward we were taken to by a German orderly was full of young German wounded. Things appeared to be in a mess, a lack of supplies. We sat down at a table in the middle of the ward and opened our rations, they looked wonderful to us. There was general silence in the ward, as we started to eat we could feel the atmosphere, eyes boring through our backs looking at the food. We just couldn't eat. By mutual consent we distributed the remaining contents around the ward, they were eagerly accepted. The nurses looked over worked. I asked one if I could have a bath, she took me to the bath room, the baths were all full of dirty washing, she apologised for not having done it. I was so embarrassed when she started to empty one that I told her not to bother. She was so relieved and was nearly in tears. I went to bed determined to leave as soon as possible. The next morning a German doctor came to see us. I asked if he could treat me, he replied, no he was so short of supplies. Maurice who carried a very small pack of bandages from our work camp offered them, and was surprised when he accepted them. I got dressed, and left looking for an American soldier. This I think is when I parted with Maurice for the first time since Gent. What transpired I don't remember, but eventually I ended up under canvas in an American field



hospital, they treated me very well. After a few days I was transported to an airport at Bayreuth. When a flight was available, I was flown by Dakota to Reims in France. Here with many others we were checked, cleaned up and kilted out with clean clothes. I think I was still under a doctor. Eventually we were flown home to an RAF aerodrome, where, I don't remember but it was north of London. We were well received. The Red Cross immediately gave us a telegram to send home. I still have it. I arrived in England on 26 May 1945.

My feeling on arrival was muted. Perhaps quiet satisfaction, I don't know. The next morning ambulances arrived all driven by ATS. We quietly got in without a word. Then the driver came and ordered us out. She was a little annoyed and we a bit sheepish. She had a little welcome home speech prepared and a box of goodies for us, collected from all her friends in the camp with their good wishes. We were all embarrassed, and shook her hand and thanked her. It did break the ice a bit, I wonder if we fully realised we were home. We were driven to the station and boarded on what I thought was a hospital train. There were orderlies and nurses on board who made sure we were all seated. I understood we were going through London; I had a fixation about London and kept asking the nurse on her rounds when would we reach it. It was getting dark when she asked me why I wasn't sleeping; I replied I was waiting to see London. I didn't see much it was too dark, but I was satisfied.

We finally arrived at the Mount Vernon hospital on the outskirts of London. It was late, but the matron had stayed to welcome us with a little barrel of beer in the ward. For the first time I noticed how neat and clean the beds looked, I was a little reluctant to get in at first.

The next day, I wrote a letter home giving my address. It was not long before my parents arrived to see me. The meeting was not emotional but what we felt inside said it all.

One day I was in the treatment room when a corporal orderly made a silly remark about the position of my wound, inferring I was running away, unfortunately I hit him, which could be a serious offence. He reported it and I was up in front of the doctor who was a major. He heard me out, and let me go. That corporal was not on duty there any more while I was there. Finally I was discharged to go home on leave. I arrived at Waterloo station to catch a train for Camberley. While on the platform, I heard my name called I looked around seeing an MP who had already been eyeing me up. Then there was an officer looking at me, had I not saluted him! He smiled and came over. We had been together at the technical school as boys. He was a Colonel and me a humble Sapper. We went and had a drink and a chat then I left to catch my train. Outside was the MP. He stopped me to ask for my pass and what I had on my back. It was a German pack made of hide with the hair still on it. I had pinched it from a German soldier at Kulm. Hearing that I was a returned POW he asked where I was going, took me to my train and found me a seat then wished me luck. Who would believe it! Arriving at Camberley, I asked a lady where I could catch a bus for Yateley. I had not been there before. My parents had moved there during the war. She was going past Yateley, so took me to the bus stop, got me a seat, and paid my fare. I began to think the people were so kind, perhaps I didn't look too good, and I only weighed 8 stone. I was dropped off at the village. A customer at the local grocer's shop where my mother worked told her a soldier had just got off the bus. She came out and called me and walked me to Copse Lane. On reaching the gate of the bungalow I noticed the people next door had flags out, and when they saw me all came out and clapped. My mother opened the front door, I walked in. I WAS HOME!

Having completed my story I realise a lot has been left out. I have tried to be as factual as possible, writing only that which I was reasonably sure of. Five years in captivity was a long time to cover. At 87 my memory is not what it was! Finally I am clear in my mind, if I had not been a POW I should not have met Suzanne, who eventually became my wife and gave me 53 years of love and happiness, and a loving family.

Ken Morris (34 Group)

Editors Note: Ken kindly presented us with his story in 2011 and it is appropriate that we should include the final part as we celebrate 70 years since VE Day. The story, some 17 pages, will be available to read at the Heritage Trail at the reunion – please approach Malcolm Hay if you wish to see it.



Stalag VIII B Lamsdorf



**Personal History of
John E Humphreys OBE**

Born in the Military Hospital at Kitchener Barracks, Chatham on 14 January 1922.

5 November 1935. Sat the entrance examination for the Army Technical School whilst living in Singapore.

May 1936. Sailed for Southampton on HMT Neuralia. Six weeks of cleaning pots and pans and learning that the two most important people were the Adjutant and the RSM.

June 1936. Arrived at Beachley Camp, the home of the Army Technical School. I joined 38 Group, C Company as I was to be apprenticed as a Fitter and Turner plus military and academic lessons. It was essential to pass the First Class exam; this was necessary if one wanted to get above the rank of Sergeant. The subjects were English grammar, English literature, map reading, history and geography and most of the teaching was done in the evening.

April 1939. Left Chepstow for the Training Battalion of the Royal Engineers; they were stationed at Brompton Barracks, Chatham.

August 1939. Half of the Battalion moved to Shorncliffe, Kent and the other half to Elgin in Scotland. War was declared in September and in October I joined a Junior NCO's cadre class. Six weeks of learning how to teach men old enough to be my father how to use explosives and all the other engineer tasks. November 1939. I was appointed an A/U/I/Cpl I was not yet 18 so was still a boy and paid as such.

14 Jan 1940. Started man's service and now paid as a LVCpl. My pay went from 14 shillings a week to the princely sum of £2-2 shillings. Fed up with Training Battalion life I asked for posting to a Field Company was refused-March 1940. After many more visits to the Company office I was finally posted to 296 Field Company as a Sapper. By May I was a Corporal.

August 1940. I went to Africa as an immature as I was not yet 19 years old, but I had my father's permission. Served in Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

March 1941/42. Moved to Egypt then Libya. Did what was known as the 'Benghazi' handicap. We advanced almost to Tripolitania then back pedalled to Tobruk. On the way back I was tasked with the destruction of the mountain road that led into Derna. It was impassable after I blew it up.

January 1942. I spent the next six months in Tobruk most of the time was spent preparing harbour installations for demolition and dodging the Stuka bombing raids June 1942. The Germans captured Tobruk but I had been detailed to blow up the water wells/towers in the event that the Afrika Corps took Tobruk. My position was overrun by tanks in the late afternoon. I managed to carry out my tasks before being wounded and taken prisoner. Sent to hospital in Benghazi.

August 1942 to June 1943. The first POW camp was near Lucca but I was sent from there to one near Ancona. There were hundreds of POWs but none interested in escaping. I finally escaped after several unsuccessful attempts. How people who called themselves soldiers could stand the monotonous routine of POW life without wanting to escape was beyond my comprehension. I hated every minute of life there.

I acquired a Hutchinson Italian Grammar and with the help of a friendly and bored sentry, always the same one I practised my Italian. After four months had gone by I was quite fluent in Italian. The Red Cross had issued me with a Greek army uniform to replace the tropical kit that I was wearing. It looked a lot like the uniform that the Italians were wearing and with the help of the theatrical group was soon made to look alike.

There were three of us; one was a Sapper in my section and the other a Corporal in the Tank Corps. After the evening roll call I marched Dick and Bernard up to the wicket gate that led into the Italian side. I told the sentry that I was taking them to the Commandant for punishment and he let us through into their compound, I think that he was just bored stiff and not interested. After we got out we walked, first only at night with me always in front, as the others could not speak Italian. We later acquired scruffy civilian clothes which made us less obvious. I think it took about six weeks, keeping away from towns and living off the land to reach Bari. We walked all the way apart from a train ride over the Gran Sasso. Our intention was to steal a boat but the Parachute Brigade was landing as we arrived. Apart from a brush with the Carabinieri and a motor cycle patrol of the SS all went as planned.

December 1943. Landed at Glasgow and given six weeks leave. Parents now living near Hereford. I received a





letter from RE Records congratulating me on my escape and pointing out that as I was not a substantiated Sergeant when captured I was to revert to the rank of Corporal and as I had not practised my trade I would lose my trade pay and revert to Pioneer. From the Sgts Mess back to the NAAFI on less than half my pay. So much for escaping. The irony of it was that I never ever looked at a lathe or picked up a hammer and chisel all the time that I served in the Corps, I was more interested in combat engineering. I was informed that I had been mentioned in dispatches for my conduct in Libya.

January-February 1944. I did a refresher course in combat engineering at 1 TBRE, none of the instructors had been out of the UK or handled a live mine. Then I attended a course for potential officers at a local WOSB, told that I had passed but the next OCTU was several weeks away and it was a four months course; whilst waiting I became the RSM's gofer. I had to escort the ration trucks from Preston and carry out any odd job that the RSM required. A few weeks of that was enough and when I saw a poster asking for volunteers for parachute duties, that was it; I applied.

1 Feb 1944. Met Brenda, who would become my wife four years later.

February-March 1944. Went to Hardwick Hall to do my pre-para and from there to Ringway to qualify as a parachutist.

April 1944. Posted to 1st Parachute Squadron Royal Engineers.

September 1944. Jumped into Arnhem on Sunday 17th. Fought from the school until Wednesday when the school was set alight and we were almost out of ammunition and there were few of us left fit to fight. I was finally taken prisoner late that evening and finished up in a POW cage near Emmerich on Thursday afternoon. Having already experienced the despair of being captured I was already looking for a way to escape and did so late that evening, with the aid of an army issue jackknife. Got back to Nijmegen with three others having stolen a rowboat from a barge. Awarded the C-in-C's commendation for outstanding conduct in NW Europe.

May 1945. Went to Norway with the 1st Para Squadron, first to Stavanger, then Kristiansand and finally to Oslo. Our task was to accept the surrender of the Germans. Removed all the explosive charges from the bridges, hydro-electric plants and clear the minefields. Awarded a medal and certificate by King Olav. Posted to 9 Airborne Squadron who were to be the engineer support to the 3rd Para Bde in the assault on the coast of Malaya.

August 1945. Having been issued with jungle warfare weapons and equipment we found ourselves on the train to Liverpool but not to the Far East. The Japanese had surrendered and we were on our way to Palestine.

1945-1947 Palestine. First to Gaza, then Beit Nabala from there to Quastina and finally Haifa. Told that I had been mentioned in despatches again. Promoted to W02 and posted to 298 Indep Sqn as the SSM.

194-1950 An interesting three years trying to build a Squadron from a bunch of enthusiastic volunteers.

1950-1953. Posted to 23 Fd Engr Regt in BAOR as a QMSI. The Regiment was stationed in Hameln but soon moved to Dortmund and my brief honeymoon as a QMSI soon came to a halt. The Colonel was displeased with the SSM of 5 Field Squadron and I was ordered to take his place and sort out the Sqn. I had a great Squadron until I was badly injured during an exercise. My left patella was smashed off and that, plus a few other injuries put me in hospital for a month. The CO told me that I could stay in the Regiment as the Messing officer or go back to the UK as a P7. I could also have my Sqn back when I could run a hundred yards. Twelve months later I won the 100 yards, the 220, the long jump and the hurdles. That was at the annual regimental sports day and two days later I was back in my office at 5 Sqn; the CO kept his word.

July 1953. I learnt that RE Records were looking for someone to take over as SSM of the Sqn that was to relieve the one in Korea, so I volunteered; I was still young and full of fire and wanted more than peace time soldiering.

Halfway to Hong Kong the armistice was declared so I stayed in Hong Kong for the next three years. It was a crap unit; both the OC and the 2i/c were ex Indian army and had no time for the other ranks. The 2i/c and I were soon at loggerheads, I objected to the way we were treated and he developed an intense dislike of me. As was customary, the Sgts Mess entertained the officers once a year, but this year I issued personal invitations to all except the 2i/c. When he came into the Mess I pointed out that he was not welcome and we had an almighty row, I was restrained from thumping him by my Sergeants.

Monday morning I was tapping the boards in front of the Colonel but when he learnt just how bad we were treated by the 2i/c I was posted to Malaya as a QMSI and then posted back to 24 Engr Regt The 2i/c and the OC departed for the UK and a few weeks later I was promoted to RQMS and served the remainder of my time with the Regiment in that rank.

August 1956. I was posted to 9 Trg Regt at Cove as the SSM of 'C' Sqn. We came home on HMT Fowey via Aden, Zanzibar, Cape Town and Dakar, a six-week journey.

February 1958. Posted to 108(Welsh) Fd Engr Regt as the RSM, an enjoyable three years teaching civvies to be soldiers although we did have a lot of people who had been conscripts.



February 1961. Posted to the Junior Leaders Regiment and two years later was commissioned as a Lt (QM)

January 1963 I joined 131 Parachute Engineer Regiment. Whilst with them I went to Cyprus, the Radfan and Aden, plus the odd exercise in Germany.

January 1966 Moved to 9 Indep Para Sqn RE, now a Capt. We were like gypsies, always on the move, Germany, Libya, Kenya, N Ireland and in between were the never ending exercises to keep us on our toes. I must have jumped on to every DZ in the UK, from Salisbury to Machrihanish in Scotland, Black Bog in Ireland and the Channel Islands.

February 1969. Joined 21 SAS Regt as a Capt but soon promoted to Major. It was a very interesting three years.

February 1972. Promoted to Lt Colonel and posted to 23 Combat Engineer Regt. The Regt was stationed in Osnabruck and somewhat to my surprise I thoroughly enjoyed my time with them. It was a different form of soldiering but as a Lt Colonel I was no longer leaping out of aircraft and sleeping in weird and wonderful places. I was sorry when the time came to be dined out and for Brenda and me to leave our 'Hatters Castle, the big house that we lived in, and go into 'Civvy Street' a place that I knew nothing about.

1 January 1977 Appointed OBE

14 January 1977 retired after 41 years' service.

1 April 1977. Deputy, then County Emergency Planning Officer for West Glamorgan and in a voluntary capacity I joined St John Ambulance Brigade.

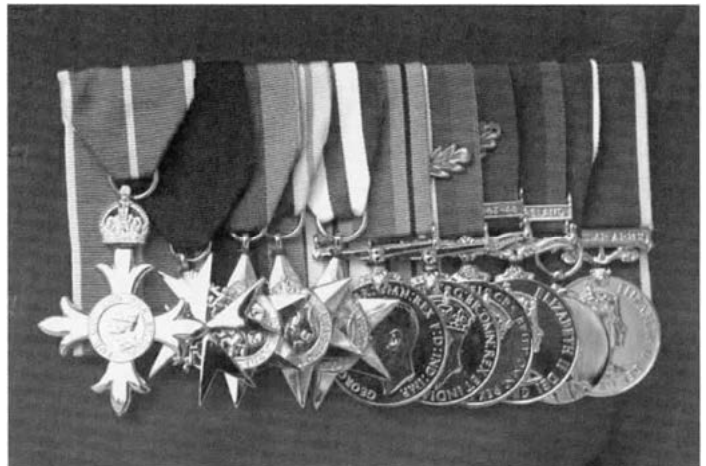
I found both appointments very time consuming, and frustrating as it was a continual battle to carry out my Civil Defence planning against the opposition of the Labour councillors.

There were twenty six Divisions of St John and each one had to be visited at least once a month and in addition I had to plan exercises and exams, turn out at weekends and on top of that there was a huge backlog of administrative details to be sorted out. I also had to devise a system to keep pace with recording attendances, qualifications and making sure that those who qualified for the Long Service medal got it.

February 1986 Granted the dignity of Commander in the Venerable order of St John of Jerusalem.

1 March 1986. I was mentally tired out retired from both appointments.

20 September 1986. Appointed Deputy Lieutenant of the County of West Glamorgan.



Lt Col John Humphreys's medals

We're pleased to record that Col John is enjoying a busy social life at the Royal Chelsea Hospital.

Editor's Note: This article by Lt Col Humphreys first appeared in 'The Airborne Engineers Journal' in June 2014. Our thanks to Col John and the editor for allowing us to use it. I had the privilege of serving in 23 Engr Regt as the Clerk of Works when Col John was the QM; he was a well liked and respected officer.

BOBA Reunion

Images
from our

Founders
Day Church
Parade





New Robots for Old

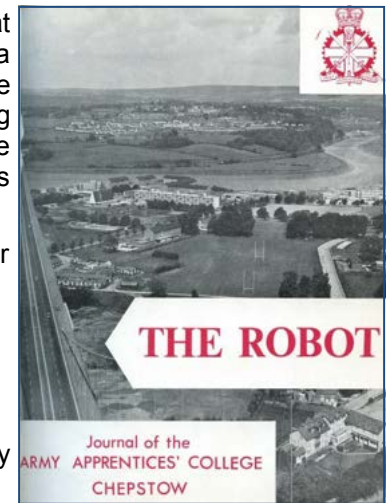
(Figuratively Speaking)

Do you ever wish that you had held onto The Robots covering your time at Beachley? Well you can now get them in PDF (Portable Document Format) on a disc. As the result of a request there is now an ongoing project to scan all of the issues of The Robot from the first edition in 1924. The scanned copies covering your time will be put on a CD along with the first three years worth of issues. The cost of the CD including P&P is £5.00, an element of which will go towards repairing the books holding the original copies.

To obtain a CD with the issues covering your time at Beachley please send your cheque for £5.00 (made Payable to 'Beachley Old Boys' Association') with

- ◆ Your name and group
- ◆ Address
- ◆ Month and year of arrival—month and year of departure

to Ken Reader (contact details on page 42). Please note that there may be a delay if the editions covering your time have not yet been scanned.



Why Robot?

"Robot — noun. Mechanical apparatus resembling, and doing the work of, a human being; soulless automaton, machine- like person." (Oxford English Dictionary)

In this age of science fiction we tend to view things in terms of computer jargon. A Robot is, by definition, the epitome of the efficient but unreasoning machine which, once programmed, will continue to carry out its function with remorseless disregard of anything which may be illogical or not strictly in accord with its predetermined function.

The word 'Robot' is a variant of the Czech word 'Robota', which means a working statue. The term was coined in 1921 by the author Karel Capek in his book 'R.U.R.' or 'Rossum's Universal Robots'. Here the Robots, or mechanical men, were intended to be the tireless servants of humanity, but once programmed with the ability to reason they rebelled at their lot, with dire consequences.

In the popular imagination of the time, the word 'Robot' was accepted as applicable to any mechanical man, with little thought of the wider ethical issues. So it was that our first Apprentice Tradesmen, trained as they were in mechanical skills, became known as 'Robots'. Before many 'years' had elapsed, people must have realised that although our young men were truly men of mechanics, they were far from being mechanical men. So the term 'Robot' very properly fell into disuse, except as a title for the College Magazine.

From time to time it was suggested that we should choose another title, but somehow those suggestions were never followed up and 'Robot' it remained.

A Robot can act only on what has been programmed into it and the same is true of a magazine. The more everyone contributes, whether by writing an article, composing a poem, drawing a cartoon, taking a photograph, writing to the Editor or—dare one say it—by just reading it, the better can this Robot serve the College Community. But the Editor begs leave to assert that this is a Robot with a difference. It reacts less to soulless programming than to feelings, thoughts and ideas: in fact to the very things that set men apart from the machine. Perhaps it is not too much to hope that in another fifty years time Robot will still reflect the life and times of the College—and still not be written by a computer!

Editor's Note: This article appeared in a Robot (date unknown) hence the reference to the future which, sadly, was not to be the case!

The Army Apprentice Badge

Early in 1947, when the name of this establishment was changed from the Army Technical School (Boys) to the Army Apprentices School, a new badge was brought into use. The Commandant at that time (Col P.B. Cuddon, CBE, MC) had for some time felt that the General Service Corps badge then worn by Apprentices was unsuitable. In consort with the Commandant at Arborfield, he approached the War Office on the subject. The result was a meeting with the Inspector of Regimental Colours at the College of Arms and the design of the badge as we know it today was agreed upon.

Colonel Cuddon describes the significance of the badge thus:—

"The cross which forms the spokes of the wheel (the basis of the badge) represents, of course, the Christian virtues and the development of character. The Torch of Learning, which is superimposed upon the Cross, represents that desire to go on learning which it should be the aim of every school to implant in the hearts and minds of all its sons. The Crossed Swords remind us as soldiers of the military qualities of Courage and Discipline and the importance of a high standard of physical fitness. The Wheel, of course, represents the trade and technical training carried out at the Schools, whilst the Crown expresses Loyalty to our King and Country (and therefore to superiors and comrades alike) and devotion to duty."



**Editor's Hurrah**

This year we celebrate the 70th Anniversary of VE and VJ Day so I thought I would try to find something appropriate from the 'Robots' of the time. Sadly I was to be disappointed; there is virtually no mention of the end of

the war! However, we are fortunate enough to have the stories of two ex-boys and, sadly, one who has passed away. This year also saw the passing of our oldest member, Paddy Mulholland, whose story we didn't manage to get; no doubt it would have been very interesting.

It cannot have escaped your notice that volunteering has become part of the political agenda; much of what happens in this country would fall apart if it were not for volunteers. That also holds true for our Association and I am sure that out there will be someone willing to fill the posts to be vacated by the outgoing committee members. Both the Chairman and Treasurer have given sterling service and are to be thanked in no small measure for that.

You may have read elsewhere in this newsletter that I am standing down as editor after next year's Beachley Echoes is published. The reason for this is that one month after that I will become the chairman of my local

University of the Third Age; a very active one with over 500 members and 50 plus interest groups. As the current vice chairman I know how busy I will be and that I will not be able to give the Echoes the attention that it deserves. That said I will be available for any advice required by the new incumbent.

My hurrahs for this year are:

- Beachley Echoes comes of age (21st edition)
- We have achieved forty-four pages this year
- There are a few articles remaining in the file that can be used next year.
- I will probably be around for this year's reunion.

In order to keep the Echoes interesting, I ask that you keep the articles, stories etc. coming in. It is your newsletter and can only progress with your support.

We hope to see many of you at the reunion in September. The time and effort put in by Peter, Chris and team make it a very enjoyable weekend and well worth the journey no matter how long. Also please note that it does not need to be a major anniversary for you to attend. It is always good to talk to people who have been through the same experience—see you there to swap stories!

In the meantime to use those immortal words from Star Trek, 'live long and prosper'.

Ken Reader OBE (62C A Coy)

Paper Copy of the Beachley Echoes

If you require a paper copy of the newsletter please drop me a line stating name, group and address. My contact details are on page 42.

BOBA Website

Most of you reading this edition of the Echoes will be doing so on our website, however, we are aware that a minority are not aware that the site exists. The site be accessed through The Army Apprentice site which has a link to the BOBA site or directly (<http://armyapprenticecollege.homestead.com>).

HERITAGE

Photos and Memorabilia. It is hoped that the members of **65A, 65B and 65C** can search their attics and albums for items and send them to me for display at their 50th anniversary reunion in September.

Honours and Awards Book. We maintain a record of the Honours and Awards presented to ex-Beachley boys, GC, MM, OBE, MSM, MBE, BEM and MiD etc. It records the individual and his years of service at Beachley. Anyone having decorations please notify me with the details.

Missing Passing out Parade Programmes. Our earliest held programme is for 45B's Passing Out where **Field Marshall Montgomery** was the Reviewing Officer. **We are still looking for** any programmes prior to 45B and for 47A, 48A – 49A, 51A, 52A, 59A – 62C, 63A, 64A, 64B, 64C, 65B, 65C, 66A, 66B, 68A, 69C, 70B - 81, 83 - 84 and 86-87. We are happy to copy any that you might have so that you can retain the original.

Missing Robots. We are missing the Spring 1977 issue, Summer 1979 issue, Summer 1980 issue and Spring 1981 issue. Any copies would be appreciated.

Malcolm (Hector) Hay (53A) Heritage Member. Contact: 01980 591132 or malcolm.hay148@ntlworld.com



IN MEMORIAM

REPORTED DECEASED SINCE THE 2014 BEACHLEY ECHOES (No. 20)

W F Andrews	42 Gp A	9 Dec 12	Patrick Newton	47A C	5 May 14
R (Slim) Bartrum	51B A	18 Dec 14	E (Ed) Nicholson	60C C	15 Jul 14
Jack Broomfield	55A A	9 Feb 15	D J Penny	46A B	Dec 14
Andrew Cloutman	57A A	12 Oct 06	Eddie Pope	56A D	2014
Ken Copeland BEM	42A A	17 Feb 15	D (Doug) Robertson	46A A	27 Apr 14
P (Percy) Crockford	59C B	NK	Stanley (Doug) Ross	42A A	2004
Ronald Dales	44&45A	4 Apr 15	A (Andy) Roulston	46A D	1 Jul 14
Brian Elks	50B C	NK	Dick Sidley	54A D	11 Apr 15
Richard Green	45 Gp C	Aug 14	Supt (Tony) Spooner	56A B	NK
Robert (Bob) Jago	47A D	2015	J T (Jack) Stratford	29Gp C	10 Jun 14
Maj J (Jimmie) James	59C B	12 Jan 15	J A (Tony) Terpilowski	66C B	NK
Brian Laurence	54B C	14 Oct 10	D A (Dave) Tierney	41Gp C	2014
Ray Lewis	62B B	NK	Alan Turner	50A ?	11 Dec 14
D H (Dave) Lloyd	42B B	NK	C (Chris) Watts	62C C	Jan 14
J C McKeen	61A B	2012	J (Benson) Williams	84Gp E	Sep 14
Robert McVinnie	55A C	6 Feb 15	Capt James Wilson	46A D	23 Jan 15
N (Hoss) Mayor	68C C	8 Aug 12	W (Wally) Youngman	46B B	30 Sep 14
A (Paddy) Mulholland	Darland	27 Feb 15			

Rest in Peace

BOBA CENOTAPH DETACHMENT 2014

On Remembrance Sunday 2014 those listed below assembled at Horse Guards Parade to march at Whitehall past the Cenotaph to remember and pay respect to our War dead. It is always an extremely moving event. Please consider joining us on November 8th 2015 and use the opportunity to say your thank you to those who gave their everything for the future of others.



Mr R Armstrong
Mr R W Beeston
Mr O Carver
Mr A W Chalton
Mr R E Field
Mr J Goodall
Mr C Gould
Mr D Gwynn
Mr I Harrower
Mr J A F Hasnip
Maj M Hay

Mr J A F Kinson
Maj R S Mullins
Maj R Norton
Mr D J Pomeroy

Mr R Pool
Lt Col K Reader OBE
Mr W H Reid
Mr D M Scaife

Mr M E Simmonds
Mr D Smith
Mr M Stanford
Mr D T Stone

Mr K Stout
Mr M A G Taylor
Lt Col S Thomas
Mr T Ward

Mrs P Wilson - Carer
Lt Col N F Winder MBE
Mr H G Wodehouse
Mr D J Youdle



ARMY APPRENTICE NATIONAL MEMORIAL (AANM)

The AGM of the AANM Charitable Trust (reg no.1137924) was held at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA), Alrewas, Staffs on Saturday 10th May 2014. The meeting was open to all ex-army apprentices. The main points coming out of the meeting are summarised as follows:

- David Castle (Carlisle) was appointed as Secretary, taking over from Gordon Bonner (Arborfield).
- It was agreed to increase the maximum number of Trustees to twelve from ten. All existing trustees were re-elected.
- Major General John Stokoe (Harrogate) was confirmed as the AANM's second Patron, joining Major General Gerry Berragan (Arborfield).
- It was agreed to submit a request to the four sponsoring associations to increase the AANM grant from £50 to £100 per annum. This increase would help maintain the fund sufficient to hold an annual drumhead service at the memorial. *This was subsequently approved by all four associations, including BOBA.*
- The Treasurer, Mike Davis (Arborfield) reported that the AANM account stood at £778.27; this figure being inclusive of the four association grants of £50 each.
- The Events Team presented a detailed account of the planning of the dinner night to be held later on the Saturday evening at the Mickleover Court Hotel and of the inaugural Sunday morning service at the NMA.
- Johnny McGahan (Harrogate), NMA Liaison, reported that the memorial maintenance tasks were being carried out to a satisfactory standard and that the memorial was in pristine condition for the Sunday service. Johnny also reported that the legacy donation paid to the NMA for maintenance, insurance etc. was invested in two year bond due to mature shortly and that its value was as predicted at outset.

The next AGM of the AANM is to be held in the 'Poppy Room' in the NMA Visitor Centre at 1300 hrs on Saturday 9th May 2015. All ex-apprentices are eligible to attend.

The next annual AANM informal dinner with cabaret is to be held at the Menzies Mickleover Court Hotel, Derby at 7.30 p.m. on Saturday 9th May 2015. All ex-apprentices and their guests are eligible to attend. Last year 52 members and guests enjoyed a great evening. Please go to the AANM website for more details.

The second AANM Annual Memorial Service is to be held at the memorial at the NMA at 1100 hrs on Sunday 10th May 2015. It is expected that all four association standards will be on parade as well as a bugler and pipers. All are welcome to attend.

Dave Chapman (60A B Coy)



The Army Apprentice National Memorial



Dedication of the Harrogate Apprentices Standard

L to R. AANM Chairman, Dave Chapman with John McGahan (Harrogate), patrons Maj Gen John Stokoe (Harrogate) and Maj Gen Gerry Berragan (Arborfield). 10 May 2014.





Ladies Column



At last spring has arrived here in Pembrokeshire, we've had a marvellous show of snowdrops this year and of course the national flower of Wales, the daffodil, has been out in abundance.

Spring is also the time of the year when I have to provide a few words for the Beachley Echoes. This year I'm a bit late getting this article to Ken and I'm thankful he has the patience of a saint.

I trust since we all last met in September last year that all has gone well, what did go well was the 2014 reunion weekend and on behalf of all the ladies who attended my thanks go to Peter Burrige and Chris Ricketts for organising the functions that are held in the mess at Beachley and also Chepstow Racecourse, especially the reunion dinner on the Saturday evening.

It was good to see lots of familiar faces at the reunion plus all the 64 Group guys and their respective partners. It's Brian's fiftieth group anniversary this year so we are hoping for a similar attendance at this year's reunion.

I'm told the Executive Committee are already well on the way to finalising the details for the reunion this coming September.

The format of the reunion weekend runs to a steady course some of which might not suit everybody so if any of the lady readers would like to air their views on the annual BOBA reunion please do so. You can contact me by e-mail, phone or when we next get together.

Having read this issue of the Echoes hopefully it might spur you on to accompany your husband or partner to the reunion later this year. I appreciate it can be costly to attend the weekend especially if money has to be spent on accommodation within the Chepstow area, but I believe it is worthwhile as you ladies who have accompanied your partners to various corners of the world have a wealth of experiences and stories that should be shared amongst us all.

Finally if you do intend to come along this year you do not have to attend all the weekend activities but now is the time to start planning.

Meanwhile if you have any questions or queries please e-mail me on brianhend@hotmail.com or call 01437 781273.

Until we all get together in September please take care.

Margaret Henderson

Editors note: Fashion in 1945—This is what the ladies would have worn at the end of WWII.





BEACHLEY OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION

THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE, BEACHLEY, CHEPSTOW, MON. NP16 7YG.



Chairman
Maj.(Retd) Brian Henderson
Walwyns
5 Swanswell Close
Broad Haven
Haverfordwest
Pembs SA62 3LW

Email brianhend@hotmail.com
Tel. 01437 781273

Secretary
Maj. (Retd) Derek Walker
17 Somerset Drive
Westbury
Wilts
BA13 3XA

Email: dchunkywalker@talktalk.net
Tel. 01373 825554

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BEACHLEY OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

HELD AT THE RACE COURSE LOUNGE, CHEPSTOW

ON SATURDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER 2014.

Lt Col (Retd) S Thomas	President
Maj (Retd) B Henderson	Chairman
Mr. A Waite	Elected Member
Mr. D Fox	Membership Secretary
Mr. P Burridge	Reunion Organizer
Mr. C Ricketts	Hon Treasurer
Lt Col (Retd) K Reader OBE BEM	Editor Beachley Echoes
Mr. G White	Elected Member
Maj (Retd) DRO Walker	Hon Secretary

Apologies: Malcolm Hay, John Bass, Stuart Walker, Tony Kemp, Glen Chalmers, Duncan 'Aussie' Jordan, Dave Chapman, Alan Ball, H Wodehouse. (The meeting started at 1330hrs and 47 members were present).

Item 1. Opening (BH): The Chairman welcomed all members to the AGM, especially the new attendees. He informed members that the notice board in the foyer contained all the details for the weekend. He wished to record our sincere condolences to Malcolm Hay, the Heritage Member, for the recent bereavement in his family.

Item 2. Welcoming (ST): The President welcomed all present. He was still concerned at the small number of members that attend the AGM, given the important and main decisions on behalf of BOBA members decided there. He thanked those who attended the 1 Rifles WO's and Sjt's Mess the previous evening, which had been a great success.

He then introduced Anne Rainsbury, the curator of the Chepstow Museum, and Helen Clark, of the Monmouthshire Museum Services, who enlightened members present on the intended digitization of the museum holdings, including those of Beachley, held by the museum. They spoke for some 20 minutes, including questions, and departed the AGM.

(Further detail is given at Item 9.)

Item 3. In Memorium: A period of silence was held for the members departed since the last reunion and those serving in Afghanistan. The Hon Sec read out a list of 12 names of members and non-members, departed. This is appended at the rear of these minutes.

Item 4. Minutes of AGM 2013: The Beachley Echoes contained the 2013 AGM minutes and it was assumed that



these had been read by the members present.

A vote was taken to confirm these reflected a true statement of events. Proposed: R Armstrong 55A

Seconded: J Davey 49B

Agreed: Unanimously

Matters arising:

a. May Mr J M G Johnson, 60C, 'A' Coy, be added to the list of deceased. DF. Done.

b. Ron Marie 42A. If BOBA closes what details are in place in the RULES, to guide the committee as to disposal of memorabilia and funds?

Ans. ST/BH. The committee had looked into this and decided not to tie the hands of any future committee by making a restricting entries in the rules. MOD will not accept such item, other than our official record books. This is already in hand. Therefore decisions will have to be made at the time.

c. John Bass. Do we still need Vice President titles?

Ans. ST. Rules now show these as Elected members.

d. Can efforts be made for the BOBA Reunion weekend not to clash with REA Chatham ? BH. We do this.

e. Web page availability on our web site? BH. This is already there.

Item 5. Executive Committee Report (BH):

a. Chairman (BH): Introduced the Committee Members to the attendees and outlined their responsibilities and functions within the committee. He praised their efforts on behalf of the membership and hoped it would continue through the coming year.

b. Treasurer (CR): Due to retirement, the RAO at R Mon RE(M) has been unable to complete the annual audit for 2013, however the accounts were approved by the BOBA Chairman, who has a military accounting grading. He found no issues, therefore I ask that you accept them as a true and accurate statement of the BOBA financial affairs. Efforts will be made to conduct the 2014 audit by a serving officer at the due date.

The GPF breakdown in the Beachley Echoes indicates an anticipated shortfall in the reunion costs, having retained last year's prices and standards that members expect. Currently this support is affordable. Our fixed gilt investment provides a return of £867 p.a. and our Monmouthshire Building Society account, currently holding £17K, returns £353.46 p.a. Given the low interest rates on offer this is a reasonable income on our investment. The current account has a balance of £10,658K, but there are some bills to be paid. To retain the minimum sum for expenses in the current account, I wish, with your approval, to transfer any excess monies to the Building Society account.

Membership subscriptions continue to be our main income source, with the bulk of payments being made by SO. The voluntary donation scheme by committee members of their expenses back to BOBA has achieved £100, so many thanks to the committee for that generosity. The Welfare Fund has not been called upon this year and remains in good order should it be called upon in the future. I am pleased to say in conclusion that we remain in a healthy financial state and more than able to continue for another year.

Questions were called for from the floor, none arose. The account was made available for scrutiny. A vote confirming the true reflection of the BOBA Fund was taken.

Proposer: Joe Hasnip Staff

Seconded: Ron Marie 42B

Agreed: Unanimously.

c. Membership (DF): 30 new members (listed at the rear) have joined since the last reunion. Last year I promised to e-mail all lapsed members, I failed to complete the task. After completing 100 members I reviewed my efforts: 1 returned (e-mail address changed), 59 ignored my effort, 10 wished to rejoin, 8 did, 2 were not interested. I had reached a point of no return and decided to cease with the venture. I apologize. We now have 391 paid up members, and 385 non-paid up members and 154 lapsed from previous years. It is proposed that the data we hold be split into '**Current Members – paid up**' and a '**Lapse/Deceased list**', thereby operating with a **live** members list system for day to day use, but retaining



an historical record of all previous BOBA, individuals. Should any of these wish to rejoin for any reason they can be moved to the live register easily. This would be fairer than publishing a 'name and shame', on the web site!

Proposed by: R Marie 42B

Seconded by: C Blunden 55A

Agreed: Unanimously.

Next year is the 50th Anniversary of 65 Groups, should any assistance be required without falling foul of the data protection act, please contact the Membership Secretary on 01760 338483 or memsecboba@sky.com. The Reunion activities are confined to '**BOBA Members**' only – so join up!

d. Heritage (DW): Many thanks to those who assisted me in preparing the display area this morning due to Malcom Hay's absence. Very much appreciated.

e. Beachley Echoes (KR): Thank you for your ongoing support. The echoes is now published on our web site but hard copy can still be obtained by giving me your details. Articles are still required to ensure we fill the newsletter, any stories will do relating to your days at Beachley or any events in your service life. I am sure members will be interested and enjoy reading them. Don't forget the £5 CD's with the Robots covering your years at Beachley, plus the original nine! The receipts will be used to bind all the Robots in leather for the future.

f. Memorabilia (AW): Sufficient stock is available without further orders being placed. Sales have been reasonable today. Over the years the shop has raised over £5K for BOBA. I will continue sending out orders within a week of their receipt. All methods of payment are accepted. Paypal carries a 5% fee. Anodized badges are becoming difficult to obtain, due to cost.

Item 6. Election of President (BH): Lt Col (Retd) Syd Thomas's 2 years in post are up so is due for re-election. He is willing to continue as President. No other nominees were put forward. Re-election was:

Proposed by: Jim Winder 57B

Seconded by: Harry Blunden 55A

Carried: Unanimously.

Item 7. Election of the Committee (BH): The present committee members have agreed to continue in their posts. There were no new nominees, it was proposed therefore to re-elect all members 'en-block':

Proposed by: Syd Thomas 47A

Seconded by: Ken Stout 53A

Agreed: Unanimously.

Item 8. Army Apprentice National Memorial (BH): The Chairman gave a brief history of the founding, laying and on-going requirements for the AANM, how fine it is and the need for financial cover for its preservation. Last year we voted for an annual grant of £50 to be donated to the AANM committee for this purpose. This committee has requested we raise this sum to £100. Therefore it is proposed that the annual grant be raised to £100:

Proposed by: D Gwynn 64C

Seconded by: Alan Whitelock 46A

Carried: Unanimously.

Item 9. Digitization of Beachley Photographs by Chepstow Museum (BH): The Chairman introduced the Chepstow museum, personnel recounting the ongoing background for the project, which has been on the books for over ten years.

Helen Clark, Monmouthshire Museum Services Advisor, expanded on the financial backup required (£34K), and the grants applied for (MOD £12K, Museum £17K) to support the project start. There is a shortfall of £5K.



The aim is to digitize the museum's military holdings, which includes Beachley, over a period of one year, onto MODES, a generic computer system designed for nationwide museum use, updated, to allow future profiling. There would be a need for local volunteers to assist in identifying, separating, cataloguing and inputting of data, especially people aware of the Beachley history. Many (22) of those who were recruited here today will join the REA and RBL volunteers involved. There are several stages to go through to achieve approval by October 2014. Skilled staff will be available to support the volunteers. This should result in an inquiry service, manually linked eventually to the BOBA web site. The Chepstow Museum personnel then departed as mentioned previously in Item 2.

Much discussion then took place over the pros and cons of buying into this system. 'On line scams', the 'catalogue' route to enable access; volunteers needed to achieve the time line, a guarantee of eventual linkup with the BOBA web site and an interactive setup with the museum. It was felt generally that if the data held was not captured soon, in time, it would disappear, so far better and cheaper to preserve it now.

A proposal was put forward by Ken Reader 62C, seconded by Reg Rider 54B; **'That BOBA would support the project with a pledge of up to £5K, subject to other grants applied for being fulfilled. And the Association being kept updated with project progress regularly'**. Agreed 40. Opposed 7. Motion carried.

Item 10. BOBA Rule Book Amendment (BH): Detail of the proposed draft amendment has been made available to members present. The changes are limited, to be inputted by members individually, thus updating the Rule Book.

A Vice Chairman by committee selection has been included, Vice Presidents have been replaced by Co-opted Members.

Details for auditing and the benevolent fund have also been included. These will all be discussed at the next committee meeting and put on our website. Mike Heale 58B proposed the update be accepted, seconded by Jim Robertson 58B. The proposal was agreed unanimously.

Item 11. The Cenotaph Parade (ST): Last year was excellent with a very good turnout with good TV coverage. There is Cenotaph list on the BOBA notice board to which, if attending this year's parade, you should append your name after this meeting. Tickets have been limited by the RBL on Police advice so if you are not able to use your ticket please let me know so that it may be passed to another member on the waiting list.

Item 12. Any Other Business.

a. Harry Blunden 55A. May a condolence message be sent to Malcolm Hay, from the association? BH. Will do.

b. A Whitelock 46A. May a letter be sent to the RSM of the Rifles, thanking him for the use of his Mess on Friday evening? BH. Following the reunion 'thank you' letters are sent to all who support us.

Item 13. Date of Next Reunion (DW): The next reunion weekend will be the 18 - 20 Sep 2015, and the AGM will be held Sat 19 Sep 15 at 1330hrs (*The REA Corps Memorial Weekend is scheduled for the second weekend in Sep 2015.*)

The meeting closed at 1510hrs

DRO WALKER
Hon Sec BOBA

B HENDERSON
Chairman BOBA

**Deaths Advised this year:****In Memoriam—Lest we forget.**

Title	Known As	Name	Group/Coy
Mr.	Ray	R Lewis	62B B
Mr.	Jack	JTR Stratford	29C C
Mr.	Andy	A Roulston	46A D
Mr.	Tony (Supt)	T Spooner	56A B
Maj (Retd)	Doug	D Robertson	46A A
Mr.	Ed	E Nicholson	60C C
Mr.	Dick	R Green	45 C
Mr.	Dave	DH Lloyd	42B B
Mr.	Stuart	S Burnham	66A A
Mr.	Chris	C Watts	63C C
Mr.	Ray	RJ Reader	63C C
Mr.	George	G Giles	56A D

May they rest in peace.**New Members.**

Title	Known As	Name	GroupCoy
Mr.	Bill	TW Wigham	69B C
Maj (Retd)	David	D Nicholson	54A C
Mr.	David	D Elener	62C A
Mr.	Keith	K B Brown	64C A
Mr.	Keith	K Ansett	66C A
Mr.	Rod	R B Siggs	64C A
Mr.	Paul	P Ollerton	91 Intake 87 Sqn
Mr.	John	J C Rowan	64C A
Mr.	David	D B Bernasconi	64C A
Mr.	Mick	M E Simmonds	58A B
Mr.	Rodney	R A Bell	58A B
Mr.	Reg	R Proudlock	69A C
Mr.	Chris	C L Yates	64C A
Mr.	Ade	A R Forder	64C A
Mr.	Gordon	G Kent	53B C
Mr.	John	D J Webb	66C A
Mr.	Alan	A R Hunt	64A B
Mr.	Ian	I M Lawford	64C C
Mr.	Dave	D Fyffe	64C A
Mr.	Cyril	P Wright	64C A
Mr.	Jim	JM Howcroft	64C A
Mr.	Derek	T D Armstrong	60C B
Mr.	Ken	K W Down	50B B
Mr.	Stewart	S Roy	64C A
Mr.	David	D A Critchlow	64C A
Mr.	Duncan	D K Stewart	66C A
Mr.	Alfie	A P Ryan	64C A
Mr.	Adrian	A H Gilmour	64C C
Mr.	Scott	D S Allin	64C A



BOBA Reunion 2015 – General Arrangements

We have again managed to obtain accommodation at the Hampton by Hilton Hotel, near Magor. The cost per room per night is slightly higher than last year. Accommodation at the Two Rivers Hotel is limited and it is a case of 'first come first served'. If requesting accommodation at the Two Rivers Hotel please state whether you are prepared to accept alternative accommodation at the Hampton Hotel. Again, on the Saturday we will be based at Chepstow Racecourse, this includes the Heritage Trail, the Annual General Meeting and the Reunion Dinner. The Reunion Dinner (Dress: jacket & tie) will be mixed. The Friday evening 'Get Together' will be held in the WO's and Sjt's Mess at Beachley (Dress: smart casual).

The Hampton Hotel is about 9 miles from Chepstow, therefore we have laid on return transport for both the Friday and Saturday evenings (including pickup and setting down at Tesco and the Two Rivers Hotel) to enable those requiring it to enjoy the festivities without jeopardising their driving licences. You will see from the reunion application form that hotel and transport packages are very attractive but please note that, in order to obtain BOBA concessions, applications must be made through our organiser in the usual manner.

That apart folks, it is almost business as usual. By this we mean that it would be of real benefit to the committee if your reunion applications were made early this year to give us an indication of how many will attend. The catering will not be an issue but extra transport might be and there is also a need to advise the hotel if we need a larger allocation of rooms. Neither element is going to be best served by last minute requests so please help us to assist you!

Points to Note:

Application Apply early and send a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the correct postage please. Attention! There will be no reception desk open on the Friday for the collection of tickets so if you intend to join us in the mess at Beachley that evening please get them posted to your contact address. (The reception desk will be open as usual on Saturday.)

Caravans Parking is available at the racecourse for caravans and motorhomes, however services are limited in terms of electrical hook ups and you may be required to share. There is a water supply and separate toilets and showers are available in the 'Hostel'. Access to the racecourse can be made via the Lion Gate or one of the other entrances off the St Arvan's road. There will be signposts to guide motorists on site.

Those leaving on the Sunday are requested to do so by 2pm, this coincides with the closing time of the market. The Racecourse has offered to extend the booking period to include Sunday night; those leaving on Monday are requested to do so by midday.

Coaches Departure times are printed clearly on the Reunion Programme and the Coach tickets. You are requested to ensure that those involved board coaches on time. This does mean leaving the Racecourse for your return trip before the bar closes (**no time for last orders**). However the Hampton Hotel has promised to keep their bar open for those liking a nightcap or three to welcome you back.

Taxis If you have the misfortune to miss the coach a taxi to the Hampton Hotel will cost approximately £25.00. However we would not be surprised to see fares increase in line with fuel premiums by September.



Members enjoying the Reunion Dinner at the Racecourse



**THE 2015 BOBA REUNION PROGRAMME****FRIDAY 18th SEPTEMBER****DEWSTOW GOLF CLUB – PARK COURSE**

Golf Practice 13.00

BEACHLEY BARRACKS

Coach/Coaches leave the Hampton Hotel for Beachley Barracks calling at Tesco & The Two Rivers Hotel 18.30

Entrance to Beachley Barracks is via the Main Gate (Holders of tickets to 'Friday Get Together' only) 19.00 onwards

WO's & Sjt's Mess, 1st Rifles

BOBA 'Get Together' 19.00 to 23.59

Buffet Supper (Curry + trimmings or lasagne) 20.30 to 21.30

Bar closes 23.30

Coach/Coaches leave Beachley Barracks for The Hampton Hotel calling at Tesco & The Two Rivers Hotel 23.30

SATURDAY 19th SEPTEMBER**DEWSTOW GOLF CLUB**

The BOB's Golf Competition 10.15

CHEPSTOW RACECOURSE**THE PREMIER FOYER**

Members Reception Desk (Closed during AGM) 09.30 to 15.30

THE PREMIER FOYER

Heritage Trail & Chepstow Museum (Including the BOBA Shop) 10.00 to 13.00

THE PREMIER BAR

Bar open for tea/coffee/alcohol and light lunches until demand ceases 09.30 onwards

Annual General Meeting 13.30

Coach/Coaches leave The Hampton Hotel for the Racecourse calling at Tesco & The Two Rivers Hotel 18.00

THE PREMIER FOYER

Members Reception Desk 18.30 to 19.00

THE PREMIER BAR

The President's Reception and Golf Prize Giving 18.30 to 19.30

THE SILKS RESTAURANT

BOBA Reunion Dinner 19.30

After Dinner Dance 21.30 to 23.30

Bar closes 23.30

Coach/Coaches leave the Racecourse for The Hampton Hotel calling at Tesco & The Two Rivers Hotel 23.59

SUNDAY 20th SEPTEMBER**BEACHLEY BARRACKS**

Entrance to Beachley Barracks is via the Old Beachley Gate and is restricted to the holders of a Gate Pass 10.00 onwards

PARADE SQUARE

'Get on Parade' 10.30

St. GEORGE'S CHAPEL

Founders Day Church Service 11.00

**THE BOBA REUNION 2015****18th to 20th September****TICKET APPLICATION FORM**

NAME: GROUP: COY: MEMBERSHIP NO:
 ADDRESS:
 POST CODE:
 TELEPHONE: EMAIL: DATE:

The name(s) of any family and/or guest(s) should be included below

A. B. C.

TICKETS REQUIRED

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------|-------------|
| 1. FRIDAY 'GET TOGETHER' (including the Buffet) | Tickets @ £15.00 | No.... | Cost £..... |
| 2. FRIDAY 'GET TOGETHER' (excluding the Buffet) | Tickets @ £5.00 | No.... | Cost £..... |
| 3. SATURDAY REUNION DINNER (Dinner & Dance) | Tickets @ £35.00 | No.... | Cost £..... |
| 4. SATURDAY REUNION (Dance only after 21.30hrs) | Tickets @ £5.00 | No.... | Cost £..... |
| 5. ACCOMMODATION (B & B) AT THE HAMPTON HOTEL | | | |
| (The price is per room and is the same for either double or single occupancy) | | | |
| TWO NIGHTS FRIDAY & SATURDAY | Tickets @ £130.00 | No... | Cost £..... |
| ONE NIGHT SATURDAY | Tickets @ £65.00 | No... | Cost £..... |
| 6. ACCOMMODATION (B & B) AT THE TWO RIVERS HOTEL | | | |
| (The price is per room and is the same for either double or single occupancy) | | | |
| TWO NIGHTS FRIDAY & SATURDAY | Tickets @ £130.00 | No... | Cost £..... |
| ONE NIGHT SATURDAY | Tickets @ £65.00 | No... | Cost £..... |
| 7. COACH - FRIDAY | | | |
| HAMPTON HOTEL TO BEACHLEY (Return) | Per seat @ £8.00 | No.... | Cost £..... |
| TESCO CHEPSTOW TO BEACHLEY (Return) | Per seat @ £8.00 | No.... | Cost £..... |
| TWO RIVERS HOTEL TO BEACHLEY (Return) | Per seat @ £8.00 | No.... | Cost £..... |
| 8. COACH - SATURDAY | | | |
| HAMPTON HOTEL TO RACECOURSE (Return) | Per seat @ £8.00 | No... | Cost £..... |
| TESCO CHEPSTOW TO RACECOURSE (Return) | Per seat @ £8.00 | No.... | Cost £..... |
| TWO RIVERS HOTEL TO RACECOURSE (Return) | Per seat @ £8.00 | No.... | Cost £..... |
| 9. CARAVAN PARK (CHEPSTOW RACECOURSE) | Per night @ £7.50 | No.... | Cost £..... |
| 10. NAME BADGE HOLDER | Each @ £1.50 | No.... | Cost £..... |

CHEQUE ENCLOSED (NON REFUNDABLE) TO THE TOTAL VALUE OF £.....

CHEQUES SHOULD BE MADE PAYABLE TO THE "BEACHLEY OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION"

Continued overleaf



11. ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS (e.g. DIETARY, DISABLED, ACCESS VIA STAIRS)

.....

12. SEATING ARRANGEMENTS – THE REUNION DINNER

SEATING AT THE DINNER IS MIXED, THE TABLES WILL SEAT UP TO EIGHT (8) PERSONS AND CAN BE ARRANGED BY GROUPS. SHOULD YOU (AND YOUR PARTNER/GUESTS) WISH TO BE SEATED WITH FRIENDS PLEASE INDICATE BELOW:

NAME: GROUP:

13. ENTRY TO BEACHLEY BARRACKS IS RESTRICTED:

A. ACCESS ON FRIDAY 18th SEPT WILL BE RESTRICTED TO THE HOLDERS OF 'GET TOGETHER' TICKETS (BUFFET & DANCE OR DANCE ONLY).

B. ACCESS ON SUNDAY 20th SEPT WILL BE RESTRICTED TO THE HOLDERS OF A GATE PASS.

C. PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU REQUIRE A GATE PASS TO ATTEND THE CHURCH PARADE ON SUNDAY 20th SEPT.

YES / NO

PLEASE ENTER YOUR REQUIREMENTS ON THIS APPLICATION FORM AND SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS SHOWN BELOW TOGETHER WITH YOUR PAYMENT

ALSO INCLUDE A C5 OR C6 STAMPED AND ADDRESSED ENVELOPE FOR YOUR TICKETS

MR PETER BURRIDGE

4 SOUTHBROOK, 1 HERON CLOSE, PRESTON,

WEYMOUTH, DORSET DT3 6SX

Tel: 01305 835989 E-Mail: boba.2015@btinternet.com

THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE RECEIPT OF TICKET APPLICATIONS IS
Saturday 1st AUGUST 2015

IMPORTANT

The attendance at any of this year's Reunion events, and consequently the use of this Application Form, is restricted to paid-up Members of BOBA (with their families and guests) together with the widows of Past-Members (also with their families and guests).

Should you not be a Member of BOBA and wish to join, or re-join, or have any doubts about your subscription status please contact the Membership Secretary – Telephone 01760 338483



CHEPSTOW & AREA ACCOMMODATION LIST: APRIL 2013

The accommodation published has **not** been checked for quality ~ These entries may be changed without notice ~ All Locations are in, or within, a twelve miles radius of Chepstow ~ Please check prices before booking, some are expensive. ~ Any marked * after the telephone number have not confirmed availability ~ SC = Self Catering.

Hotels ~ Chepstow & Area:

Willowbrook Guest House	Pwllmeric, Nr Chepstow	(01291) 645951
The Marriot Hotel (St. Pierre ~ Golf)	Pwllmeric, Nr Chepstow (Note: Expensive)	(01291) 625261
Beaufort Hotel	Beaufort Square, Chepstow	(01291) 622497
Castle View Hotel	Bridge Street, Chepstow	(01291) 620349
The George Hotel	Moore Street, Chepstow	(01291) 625363
The Huntsman Hotel	Usk Road, Shirenewton, Nr. Chepstow	(01291) 641521
Hampton by Hilton	Newport Road, Magor	(01633) 749999

B&B Inns, Pubs etc ~ Chepstow & Area:

The Two Rivers	Newport Road, Chepstow	(01291) 629159
Coach & Horses	Welsh Street, Chepstow	(01291) 622626
Coach & Horses	Caerwent, Nr Caldicot	(01291) 420352
The First Hurdle	9/10 Upper Church St., Chepstow	(01291) 622189
Knovil House	Mathern	(01291) 627191
Old Ferry Inn (Linda & Murray)	Beachley, Nr Chepstow	(01291) 622474
The Wheatsheaf Inn	The Square, Magor	(01633) 880608
The Old Barn	Llanmartin	(01633) 413382

B&B Guest Houses etc ~ Chepstow & Area:

Court Farm , (Mrs. Anstey)	Rogiet, Nr Caldicot	(01633) 880232
Parkfield	St Arvans	(01291) 621860
Cwrt Robert (Mrs Paxton)	Bryn Gwyn, Raglan	(01291) 690709
Coalpits Farm	Shirenewton, Nr Chepstow	(01291) 641820
Private House (Mrs Park)	Redwick, Magor	(01633) 880230
Private House (Mrs Brown)	6 Bigstone Grove, Tutshill, (Prefers doubles)	(01291) 620283
Private House (Josie or Pete Warren)	1 Town Gate Mews, Chepstow	(01291) 626643
Private House (Jan Howells)	45 Bridge Street	(01291) 627191

B&B Guest Houses ~ East of Chepstow (Glos):

Cherry Orchard Farm	Newland, Nr Coleford	(01594) 832212
Deanfield	Folly Road, Parkend, Nr Lydney	0845 347 0029
Woolaston Inn (run by ex Gurkhas)	Woolaston, Lydney (West of)	(01594) 562256
The White House	2 South Road, Broadwell, Coleford	(01594) 837069
Berry Hill House	44 Park Road, Berry Hill, Coleford	(01594) 832325

B&B Guest Houses ~ Caldicot, Monmouthshire:

The Lychgate (Glynis & Gordon Casey)	47 Church Road, Caldicot	(01291) 422378
Ivy Lodge Guest House	Chepstow Road, Caldicot	(01291) 421504
Brooklands Motel	Pill Row, Caldicot	(01291) 430500

Hotel Guest Houses ~ East of Chepstow (Glos):

Millingbrook Lodge (14 Bedrooms)	High Street, Aylburton, Nr Lydney	(01594) 845522
The Wilows	East of Lydney (on A48 1 mile past on right)	(01594) 843795*
Oakfields	Nr Woolaston, (between Sedbury & Aylburton)	(01291) 689776

**Hotels & Inns ~ Wye Valley & Tidenham Chase:**

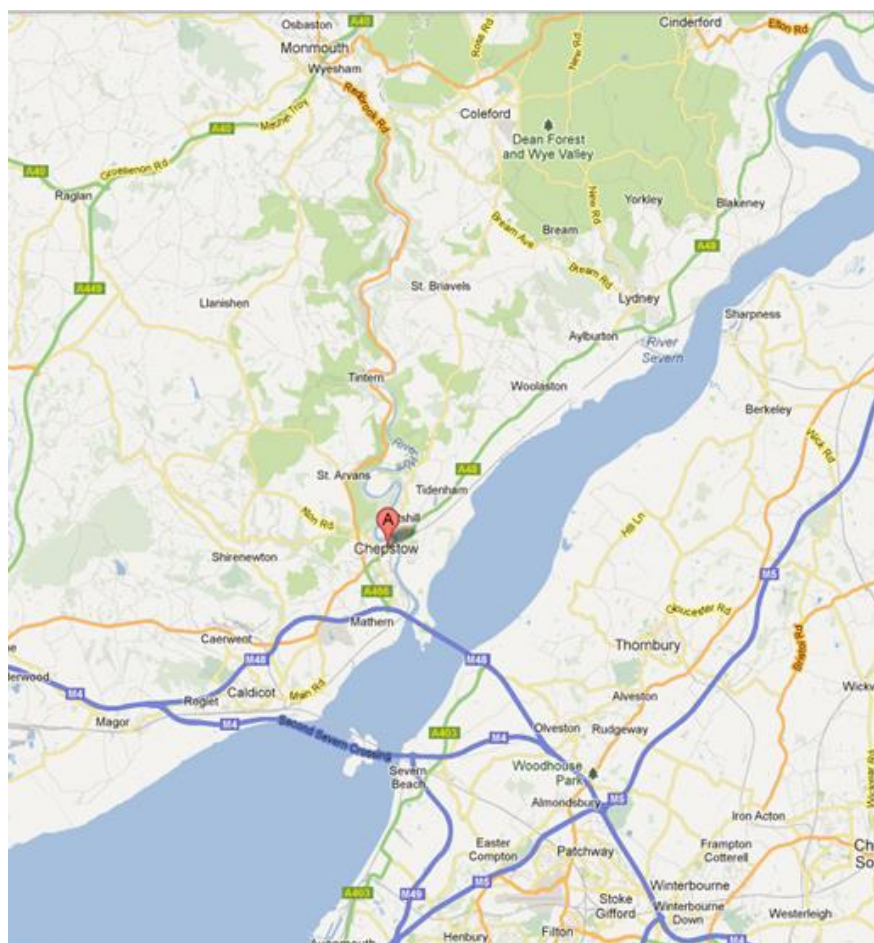
Parva Farmhouse Riverside Guesthouse	Tintern, Nr Chepstow	(01291) 689411
The Crown	Whitebrook, Nr Monmouth	(01600) 860 254
The Royal George	Tintern, Nr Chepstow	(01291) 689205
The Wye Valley Hotel	Tintern, Nr Chepstow	(01291) 689441
The Bush Inn B&B	Penault, Nr Tintern, Monmouth	(01600) 772765
The Florence Country House Hotel	Nr Monmouth, Lower Wye Valley	(01594) 530830
The George Inn	St. Bravels, Tidenham Chase	(01594) 530288*
The Tudor Farmhouse Hotel	Clearwell, Nr Coleford	(01594) 833046
The Bell Hotel	Lords Hill, Coleford	(01594) 832583
The Sloop Inn	Llandogo, Wye Valley	(01594) 530291

B&B Guest Houses ~ Wye Valley & Tidenham Chase:

Cypress Rise (Mrs Alvis)	Llandogo, Wye Valley	(01594) 530651
Prospect Cottage	St. Bravels (GL15 6RR)	(01594) 530566
Offa's Mead (Mrs Lacey)	The Fence, St. Bravels	(01594) 530229
Lugano, (Mrs. Townsend)	Llandogo, Wye Valley	(01594) 530496
Tintern Old Rectory	Tintern, Nr Chepstow	(01291) 689920

B&B Guest Houses - South & East of the Severn (Glos):

Abbots Way Guesthouse	Gloucester Road (A38), Almondsbury	(01454) 613134*
Travel Lodge (Aust Services)	(Special rates occasionally ~ Phone 08700 850950)	(01454) 633199



Editor's note: Obviously things may change by the time you try to book—quite a number of establishments have ceased trading since the last review.

The Hampton by Hilton Hotel is off J23A of the M4 on the B4245 Magor Road. On leaving the M4 by the 1st exit, take the 1st left leading to a roundabout, go left to pass under a bridge. The hotel is soon signposted on your right. Tel. No 01633 749999. Postcode NP26 3DG. Website <http://www.hiltonhotelfinder.co.uk/magor-hilton-hotels>

The Racecourse is sited on the A466. There is an icon (jockey on racing horse) below the word "Woodcroft" giving the location. The Lion Gate entrance is on the roundabout where this road crosses the B4293. Tel. No. 01291 622260. Postcode NP16 6BE. Website <http://www.chepstow-racecourse.co.uk>



**BEACHLEY OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION
BALANCE SHEET at 31st December 2014**

Previous Period Figures			Item	Current Period Figures		
Totals	Sub-Totals	Detail		Totals	Sub-Totals	Detail

ASSETS

	£0.00	Cash in Hand	£0.00
	£9,811.95	Cash in Bank	£5,876.64
£9,811.95		Total Cash	£5,876.64
£17,667.03		Monmouthshire Building Society Account	£26,020.49
£0.00		Sundry Debtors	£0.00
£27,478.98		Total Liquid Assets	£31,897.13

SHOP STOCK

£2,263.56	BOBA/AAS Regalia	£1,720.05
£29,742.54	Total Current Assets	£33,617.18

LIABILITIES

£0.00	Sundry Creditors	£0.00
£100.51	BOBA Golf Fund	£182.07
£426.90	Benevolent Fund	£439.40
£527.41	Total Liabilities	£920.58

£29,215.13	Net Working Capital	£32,696.60
	being Current Assets minus Liabilities	

FIXED ASSETS

£0.00	£0.00	Capital Property	£0.00	£0.00
£15,000.00	£15,000.00	Investments	£15,000.00	£15,000.00

GENERAL PURPOSES FUND

£39,553.44	Balance as per last Balance sheet	£44,215.13
£4,661.69	Add surplus of Income	£3,481.47
	Subtract deficit of Expenditure	
£44,215.13	Accumulated General Purposes Fund	£47,696.60
	being Net Working Capital and Total Fixed Assets	

Audited By:

Name	
Signed	
Date	

Treasurer:

Name	C Ricketts
Signed	
Date	



Expenditure/Losses	2014	2013	Income	2014	2013
Refunds	£10.00	£0.00	Membership Subs	£4,142.50	£4,000.00
Committee Expenses	£1,171.63	£375.44	Donations	£205.00	£202.88
Insurance	£0.00	£100.00	Misc Items	£0.00	£207.00
Property Depreciation	£0.00	£0.00	Investment Dividend	£867.04	£1,030.88
Wreaths	£42.00	£42.00	Shop Profit	£178.49	£113.40
Web Site Fee	£145.86	£162.16	Building Society A/C	£353.46	£261.44
Postage	£318.38	£132.58	Shop Postage	£104.62	£72.05
Stationery	£131.78	£105.55	Church Collection	£293.00	£375.00
Honorarium Treasurer	£0.00	£0.00	Additional Misc Sales	£0.00	£0.00
Honorarium Mem Sec	£0.00	£0.00	Reunion	£0.00	£0.00
Donations	£495.00	£375.00	Transfer	£0.00	£0.00
Reunion Subsidy	£0.00	£254.73	Name Badges	£22.50	£22.50
Misc Purchase	£425.99	£161.50	CD Sales	£105.50	£85.50
AANM Maint Fee	£50.00	£0.00			
Total Expenditure	£2,790.64	£1,708.96	Total Income	£6,272.11	£6,370.65
Surplus to Balance Sheet	£3,481.47	£4,661.69			
Grand Totals	£6,272.11	£6,370.65		£6,272.11	£6,370.65

NOTES:**Subscriptions:**

Whilst income from Subs has increased slightly there are still many who pay 5 years fees at once.

Echoes:

The Echoes continues to be our most expensive item but the introduction of "on-line" availability has helped.

Printing & Postage:

The cost of printing increased significantly this year as we sent the Echoes to fewer but released it "on line".

Committee Expenses:

Once again your Committee have been mindful of costs and have been diligent in saving wherever possible.

Building Society Account:

The Building Society Account has allowed us to receive a reasonable return for our investment this year.

Shop:

The Shop continues to show a reasonable return and now has an increased range of items.

Golf Society:

The Society is still popular and although numbers have declined a small donation has allowed them to continue

Investment Account:

This investment has now been renewed for a fixed term and will give a modest increase in the interest rate.

Additional Income:

Our Heritage Member and the Echoes Editor have successfully launched a new venture to encourage CD Sales.

AANM Maintenance Fee:

This year a fee of £50.00 for maintenance was approved, this will rise to £100.00 next year.

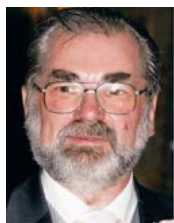
C. Ricketts (65A) Hon Treasurer BOBA

AN URGENT PLEA FROM THE TREASURER!

Please page 3

AGM Agenda

If you have any point you want raised at the AGM in September please let the BOBA Secretary, Derek Walker, know as soon as possible. Derek's contact details are given at the head of the minutes on page 18.



BOBA Membership Secretary's Report

(All information is correct as at 12 March 2015)

Membership / New Members:

There have been 11 new members join since the last reunion (2014). .

New Members.

1376	Mr. J	John	McGuinness	64C
1377	Mr. A	Alan	Coome	78C
1378	Mr. W R	Roy	Goff	65A
1379	Mr. S	Steve	Hobson	65C
1380	Mr. R	Bob	Adams	65C
1382	Mr. C J	Colin	Evans	62B
1383	Mr. G J	Graham	Chambers	67B
1384	Mr. C	Col	Moore	75C
1385	Mr. P N	Pete	Gill	61A
1386	Mr. R D	Roy	Haines	65C
1387	Mr. R J	Robert	Woolmington	N/K
1388	Mr. JA	John	Phipps	65A

Membership Database

The Membership Database will be updated to show only those members who are classed as Paid Members. This will of course give a crystal clear snap-shot of Association Members. All others will be transferred to the Lapsed Member Database. I will have a clear indication of the numbers at the 2015 A.G.M

Beachley Old Boys Association (Objectives and rules) i.e. the BOBA Member Booklet.

This booklet is to be updated as discussed and agreed by attending A.G.M. members (2014). As yet I am unsure as to how this will affect current members, i.e. will each member receive amended pages or a new booklet. I shall consult the fount of all knowledge (the Chairman) for a definitive answer, assuming he has not already started his 50th anniversary celebrations.

1965 Groups ~ 50th Anniversary

Next year sees the golden anniversary of the 1965 groups of Beachley Boys. If I can assist those organizing the reunion (without falling foul of the Data Protection Act) just let me know. Any non-members thinking of attending should understand that any activity within the auspices of BOBA is confined to association members only.

In Memoriam—Lest we forget

I have been informed of the death of 23 Beachley Old Boys since the last issue of The Beachley Echoes. These are listed on page 15.

Subscriptions

Cheques sent to me in regard to annual subscriptions may take some time to be debited from members accounts. This is on account of my having to travel to towns other than that which is nearest in order to access Lloyds Bank. I would ask for your forbearance in this matter.

My Contact Details: You can contact me by any of the following methods -

Membership Secretary ~ Derek Fox (58B)

Home Address: 51 Church Close, Pentney, King's Lynn, Norfolk. PE32 1JJ

Home Tel No: +44 (0) 1760 338483 Mobile Phone No: +44 (0) 7842555110

Email Address: ~ memsecboba@sky.com Please note this address should be used for all Association business)

Derek Fox (58B C Coy)



Your instruction to set up anew, amend or cancel a,

Standing Order

The easy way to make regular payments from your account

1 Your Details

Please write clearly in the white spaces with capital letters or Tick boxes

All sections must be completed

Your full Name or name of business

Branch name

Your contact telephone number

Sort Code

Account number

2 Standing Order details

Does this instruction replace any existing standing order or direct debit instructions?

Yes

No

☒

How often do you want payments made?

Weekly

4 Weekly

Monthly

If 'YES' please complete section overleaf or detail in special instructions opposite.

Quarterly

Half yearly

Yearly

☒

If 'NO' please complete all remaining boxes.

Recipient's name:

Beachley Old Boys' Association

Recipient's bank & branch name:

Lloyds TSB, CHEPSTOW, 7 Manor Way

Recipient's sort code

3 0 9 1 8 9

Recipient's Account number

0 0 0 9 8 8 5 2

First payment amount
(If different to usual amount)

First payment date
(Month & Year)

0 1 2 0

Usual amount

£ 1 0

Usual payment amount in words

TEN POUNDS STERLING

Second payment amount
(If different to usual amount)

Second payment date
(Fill in year)

0 1 0 4 2 0

Until further notice (X)

Special instructions

1. Ensure you fill in all dates where asked.
2. Make sure you sign and date this form.
3. When complete, send to your bank not BOBA.

To Bank

Please note that the second payment and all consequent payments are to be made on

01 April of each year.

Your payment reference (max 18 characters)
(Surname, Initials & Group)

(e.g. Humperdink,E,27A)

3 Your agreement with us

Lloyds TSB Bank plc
Registered office
25 Gresham St
London EC2V 7HN
Registered in England &
Wales No 2065

Lloyds TSB Scotland plc
Registered office
Henry Duncan House
120 George St
Edinburgh EH2 4LH

Registered in Scotland
No 95237

Signatories to the Banking Codes

Please note that we will not;

1. Make any reference to VAT or any other indeterminate element.
2. Advise your address to the person/organisation you are paying.
3. Tell the person/organisation you are not able to pay.
4. Ask the bank of the person/organisation you are paying to tell this person/organisation when payments are received.

I authorise you to debit my/our account, in accordance with the details shown in Section 2.

This request is addressed to the bank which holds my/our account.

For bank use only

From branch name

Sort Code

Contact name

ID confirmed
(for bank use only)

☐

Your signature

Date



This form is to allow an opportunity for members to complete, or submit an update.

BEACHLEY OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE, BEACHLEY



Dear BOBA Member

Re: Next of Kin (NOK)

BOBA ~ Membership Secretary

Derek Fox

51 Church Close, Pentney,

King's Lynn, Norfolk.

PE32 1JJ

Tel. 01760 338483

Mobile: 0784 555110

email: memsecboba@sky.com

This is a particularly difficult subject, however one that decidedly requires to be addressed. When a BOBA member 'passes on', the Executive Committee are left with a quandary as to if and whom they should contact in the family. If such a contact is desired, please be so kind as to complete the details below and in doing so, assist the Executive Committee to help where they are able. The Data Protection Act will apply to all details given.

(Please use block capitals throughout)

NOK Name: NOK Relationship:

NOK Address:

..... NOK Postcode:

NOK Tel. No: NOK Email:

Your Name: **Membership No:**

Please return this information to the Membership Secretary using one of the following means:

Email: memsecboba@sky.com

Telephone: +44 (0) 1760 338483

Mobile: +44 (0)784 555110

By Royal Mail: Send to the address above.

Thank you in anticipation.

Sincere Regards,

Derek Fox ~ BOBA Membership Secretary



Jack Thomas Richard Stratford

29th July 1917 - 10th June 2014

My brother Jack was born on 29th July, 1917 in Deal, Kent.

Our father was a lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery (RFA) and the fourth of six children. In 1920, he retired and took over a furniture and china shop at 152 High Street, Croydon. They lived there for the next seven years and Jack, now joined by two younger brothers, started school. However, in 1927, Dad felt the need to move, probably the post war recession was still having an effect. The change could not have been much greater.

The new home was to be a small village shop in Hutton, only 20 miles from London, on the Southend road, but many years behind regarding amenities and public services. Our Mum must have found it difficult in the small rooms as it was a converted cottage, no gas or electricity, and a standpipe in the neighbour's garden, shared with two other families. In the village, a well was still in use. All the cooking was done on a coal-fired kitchen range, and lighting in the kitchen and living room was by oil lamps and candles. A small red bricked scullery was partly under our neighbour's stairs, and housed a large built-in copper. The room served as a wash-room and larder.

If life was difficult for Mum, we boys enjoyed the experience. We had come from the constant bustle and activity of Croydon, to a quiet, rural environment. We had plenty to explore, and we did! We all went to the village school, two classes, infants and sevens to elevens, with one teacher for each. We got on well with the village children, and were always playing games and joint skipping with a long rope from one side to the other. We three sang in the choir, two services on Sunday and choir practise. Funerals or weddings were an added bonus, sometimes as much as two bob or half a crown. Another event we looked forward to was our Annual Choir Outing to Southend, with a trip on a paddle steamer to Ramsgate or Margate. At home we had a dog (a whippet) and cats, and at times we were a bird sanctuary to homeless thrushes and an owl! Our Dad used to make us work for our leisure. Jack and Ralph both had paper rounds, and I used to help. I had to cycle to Shenfield station before 6.00am, collect the papers and deliver to the scattered houses, and get back home for porridge, then cycle back to Shenfield School before 9.00am.

At the age of fourteen, Jack's life changed. He got a job at the Victoria Wine shop in Shenfield. The pay was meagre and prospects nil as they could easily get another school leaver. Due to the wisdom of our Dad, thankfully for the three of us, he'd thought ahead. In his thirteenth year, Jack sat an examination for entry into the Army, as a boy apprentice. Considering he was the product of a village education, he was well up on the results list of a thousand or more applicants from all over the U.K.

In May, 1932, he went to the Army Technical School (Boys) at Beachley. This was no public school. Life was just as regimental and as strict as the adult recruits in their depots. Once the Square Bashing period was over, the apprenticeship took place and after three years or so Jack was posted to the 1st Royal Tank Regiment as a fully trained vehicle mechanic.

In March 1938, he sailed with the regiment to Egypt and was stationed at El Helmhah near Cairo. Here he enjoyed some peacetime pleasures such as bathing in the Mediterranean from the beaches of Alexandria, visiting Cairo and the Pyramids. He climbed to the top of the main one, Cheops!

September, 1939, war was declared. The regiment moved to the Libyan border. From then on, he was involved in all the advances and retreats along the North African desert, suffering many hardships until the surrender of the Afrika Korps two years later. He took part in the siege of Tobruk, and whilst hurrying to his dugout, he was hit by shrapnel, but escaped injury thanks to the French phrase book in his breast pocket! Following victory in Africa, Jack landed at Salerno in Italy and later joined 7th Armoured Division, The Desert Rats, and returned to the UK to train for D-day.

Jack married Violet, his long time girlfriend who was in the W.A.A.F. (Women's Auxiliary Air Force) in January 1944. Too soon he was away again and landed in France on D Day + 10, on the Mulberry Harbour at Arromanche. I know little of his movements from then on, I was in Egypt, but I know that he advanced through France and Holland on the way to Germany.

After the war and when his service commitment had ended, he made the decision to enter civilian life again after many partings from family and friends. He later mentioned to me that at times he regretted his decision, however, he settled down to a civilian job as a vehicle mechanic. I remember him working in Bow at a small workshop under the railway arches, and living in a flat in Empress Avenue, Ilford. He wasn't satisfied with that and obtained work





more suited to his range skills. This was with a firm which specialised in the maintenance of heavy goods vehicles, earthmoving equipment and tractors. All this time he was living in Brentwood. Jack and Violet had four children, Jeanette, Paul, Angela and Guy. Sadly, Violet died during December, 2002.

In due course, Jack retired and after looking after himself for a time, he moved to Braintree to live with Angela and Brian, and eventually, moved into the Old Deanery Care Home nearby where he was well looked after and regularly visited by Angela and Brian's family as well as other relatives. Jack was proud of his family and loved them all, seven grandchildren, and eleven great grandchildren. Jack was a stalwart veteran of the war, and justly proud of his achievements. He will be well remembered but sorely missed.

Eric Stratford

Aerial Photograph

Back in the 1980s I was invited to join my daughter's future father-in-law on a flight. He had a private pilot's licence and was a member of a local flying club. Knowing that I was a former Beachley inmate he thought I might like to see where some of my formative years were spent.

It was not a fine day, but we were lucky with the state of the tide and I think you will agree the attached photo has turned out fairly well, not only showing Joe Monk's Island but also that the Severn Bridge should really be called the Severn/Wye Bridge. Perhaps others in your organisation might be interested to see it?



Regards, Jack *Editors Note: This article was sent to the Chairman but 'Jack' did not identify himself.*

Editor's Note: I have included an aerial shot taken from the Aust side of the Severn. 'Jack' refers to Joe Monks Island but I can find nothing to validate the name. The island did however have a chapel founded before 1290 (St Twrog's—he was a 6th-century Welsh saint). It is a ruin now and is overshadowed by a navigation light. Apparently for a small promontory, the Beachley peninsula has a remarkably high number of current, or former places of worship (see The Churches and Chapels of the Parish of Tidenham On Page 42).





Our Venerable History in Digital Form

You will be pleased to know that the daunting but very interesting task of digitising our photographic records for the period of 1924-1994 that started in January is well under way. Under the helpful tutelage of Helen Clark (the project co-ordinator) of Monmouthshire Museums Service team based at Chepstow, the processing of some 4000 photographs and documents was firmly on target with a quarter completed as at mid April.

Following receipt of a grant of approximately £18,000 by the Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant Scheme, which makes it all possible, some 31 volunteers have been beavering away at the job every week. They include old boys', ex instructors and family members of the 1st Rifles who with local volunteers are producing quality work. The stock of photographs cover a range of topics, not just apprentices in uniform, their sport, weaponry, trade training but what Beachley looked like. Although input is required by the museum has to be of a meticulous nature, the atmosphere "at the office" is not without the element of humour you would expect where ex-servicemen are involved. On completion this project will ultimately give our members and the general public easier access to a wide range of our history. I'm sure the content will evoke many fond memories and discussion by visitors as has been found by the team.

The project has attracted the interest of local dignitaries and news of it has graced the pages of newspapers covering the Monmouthshire/Gloucestershire area, see below. May I add that the team whom I am assisting is thoroughly deserving of our associations' gratitude and thanks for devoting so much time and effort. Finally, we will notify everyone who would enjoy viewing the record on it's completion, from our website at <http://armyapprenticescollege.homestead.com/10submenu.html>



MOD Community Covenant awards grant to Chepstow Museum for Army Apprentices' College Photo Project. Looking at some of the pictures on display from left to right are Councillor. John Prosser, volunteer James Freeman (45B), Major Craig Middle 1st Rifles, volunteers Mac Obermaier (58B) and Joan Kuss,



With Anne Rainsbury, Andy Kuss, Suzanne Davies, Ron Marie, Cllr. John Prosser, Major Craig Middle and Helen Clark.



Burma at Last

Between 1952 and 1959 thirty three Burmese Army Boys came to Chepstow for training, others went to Arborfield and Harrogate. I became friendly with a number of them who I met between 1953 – 56 especially Maung Kywe (Johnnie) (53A) and over the years we corresponded occasionally. I had always wanted to visit Burma with the first ideal opportunity when stationed in Hong Kong 1983-85 but the advice from the Military Attaché at the Rangoon British Embassy was that it would be difficult and contact restricted by the Military Government.

Later with Burma opening its doors and having started to make contact by email through Win Khin Maung (55B) I decided it was now or never and after a number of adjustments to our itinerary with Trailfinders my wife and I left for Burma in November 2014.

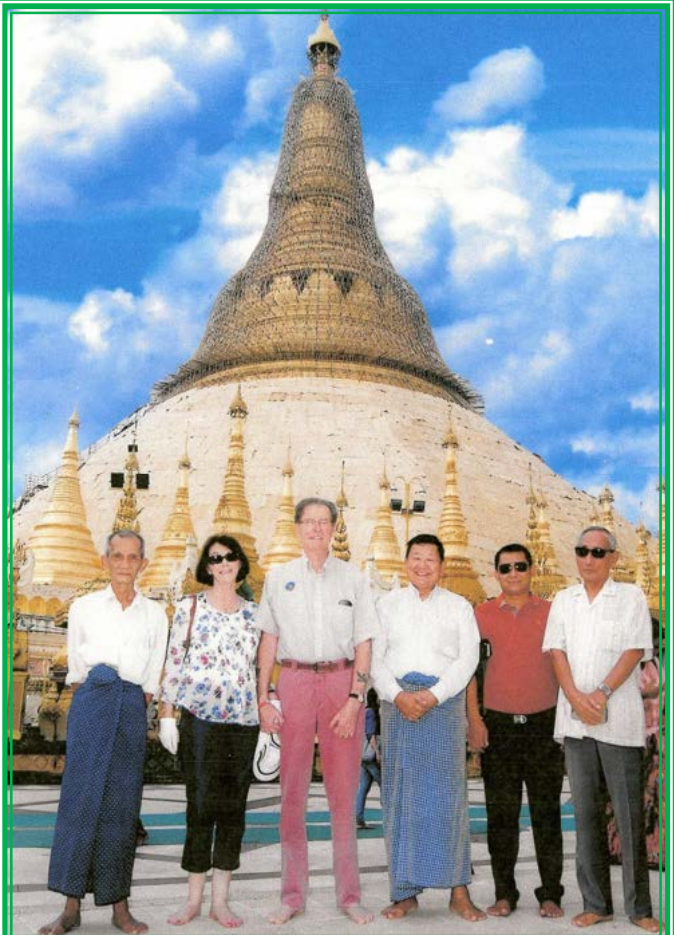
Initially we had planned to fly out via Hong Kong and return via Singapore but because of cost we dropped HK. Never having been to Singapore it was an eye opener, very modern, slick transport and litter free, what a contrast to the banks of the A303! The three day stopover enabled us to be over jet lag by the time we arrived in Rangoon and the journey to our hotel was a contrast from Singapore but with the country now under civilian government it is embracing tourism; change will be slow.



Malcolm & Maung Kywe at
Chepstow in 1953



Shwedagon Pagoda



Maung Kywe, Ileana, Malcolm, Win Khin Maung, Maung
Kywe's son and Nyunt Shwe



Malcolm & Ileana with Maung Kywe and his family

At our hotel we were surprised to be met by Maung Kywe, Win Khin Maung and Nyunt Shwe (Arborfield) none of whom I had seen since 1956. After getting some old photos of our time together from the luggage



and with a cool drink us mature gents were able to reminisce and have a good laugh over our younger selves.

The following day we were on our first tour with our guide and we quickly learnt every Pagoda required bare feet, it was hot and we were grateful for the air coned car, bottled water and the umbrella for the sun.

Two days after arrival we were met again by our Burmese friends and taken to the Shwedagon Pagoda, a magnificent sight and covered in gold leaf, and then on to lunch where Ba Maung (54B) joined us. Afterwards it was on to Maung Kywe's house to meet his family. Our touring continued each day and probably it was a bit of "death by pagoda" but the sights were varied and everywhere the people were welcoming and friendly.

The itinerary included a flight to Mandalay and two day stay where a tour of the sights included craft shops carving marble or wood etc. and where "elf and safety" did not apply. To be at the monastery at the top of Mandalay Hill at sun set was memorable as was the chaos when we came down and joined our transport! There's a memorial plaque at the monastery to the Ghurkha Regiment that captured the hill in WW2.

On our return to Rangoon whilst travelling to our hotel we noticed the Taukkyan War Cemetery, as ever it was immaculate and I took a photo of a column listing REME names but unfortunately couldn't find the book to locate their graves.



Malcolm at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery at Taukkyan

Our friends met us on our return and the following day were there again to say farewell for our flight back to Singapore and then on to UK where we arrived very tired at 0700. It was a memorable trip which we had been considering cancelling after losing our eldest son in September but it was he who had always encouraged his Mum to go.

I was glad that I was able to meet up with my friends Maung Kywe and Win Khin Maung. Other friends, Kyaw Myint and Aung Htoon of 54B have died, in fact, sadly, of the thirty three who went to Chepstow sixteen have attended their last Passing Out Parade.

Malcolm (Hector) Hay (53A A Coy)



The BOBA Standard

Readers may like to know that, should the family wish it, the BOBA Standard can be present at the funeral of members who have passed on. This is of course subject to the availability of a standard bearer.

Please note that where we can assist a donation of £0.30 per mile may be requested to offset the standard bearer's motor vehicle expenses, other than this their services are entirely free of charge.

Alternatively a BOBA flag can be sent directly to the nominated undertaker for use as a coffin drape. Please contact any committee member.

The BOBA standard can be seen on the left of this page ; it was paraded at the opening of the Army Apprentice Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum by Major Derek Walker (55A).



64C 'A' Coy Reunion

The Beachley Old Boys Association (BOBA) weekend provided the perfect forum for the reunion for us 'old boys', with a Friday evening social and buffet at Beachley Camp and a Saturday Reunion Dinner at the Chepstow Race Course, all with transport arranged and all at very modest prices so keeping admin and costs to a minimum. Many of us had not met up for at least 47 years: the time after leaving Chepstow having completed our apprentice trade training and then our short stint at Training Regiments RE, Cove, to make us into Sappers.

Of course over the years those of the Surveyor trades had had a far better chance of crossing paths again, as many did, but the artisan tradesmen seemed to disappear to the four winds, many never having had the chance to practise their trades again. Even so, John Rowan, who undertook all the hard work getting us together for the weekend, managed to track down four 'chippies' for our event and some hard to find ex-surveyors that had not stayed the full career course.



Most of 64C 'A' Coy – Jimmy Howcroft and yours truly are missing, believed to have been 'Gammy's Orderlies' when this was taken.

Fifteen of the above Army Apprentices of intake 64C 'A' Coy, got together over the weekend 19 -21 September 2014, to mark the golden anniversary of having passed through the gates of Beachley Camp. All of us stayed at the same boarding house in Chepstow, so met up on the Friday afternoon and although Dave Bernasconi, sporting a full beard was recognisable only once he spoke, all the others were instantly recognisable. We were all a bit thicker round the middle and a bit thinner on top, but still the same guys as 50 years ago.

One had travelled from Bahrain, another from Cyprus, and yet another had given up part of his holiday in Tenerife and others travelled many miles from all over the UK to get there. Instant chat where, what, how pursued until we had to get ready for the evening social and buffet at Beachley Camp.

Saturday's breakfast was an opportunity for more catching up with those that had missed the night before as was the rest of the Saturday before the BOBA reunion dinner. The organisers had even managed to sit us all at a big open squared table with a surprise addition of four other lads from our group from different companies. Ian (Gramps) Parr, 'A' coy 64B, also shared our table but the biggest surprise was the inclusion of another member of our group, Dave Smith, who had originally thought moving house was sufficient excuse for not attending the weekend but was able to make the Dinner at short notice. What a party! We possibly generated sufficient power from our non- stop jawing to have lit up Chepstow and surrounding area.

Although it takes a great deal of work trying to locate your old pals, it is infinitely rewarding, and for those of us, who went through Chepstow, BOBA provides a perfect platform for a reunion – it is strongly recommended. And don't leave it too late. We are going to get together again in 3 years to celebrate passing out from what had become the **Army Apprentice College** at that time, and hopefully we'll find even more for that event. "Happy Days."

I am also very happy to report that the BOBA weekend itself, was a great success, and very many thanks to the BOBA Committee that organised all the events and provided the facilities for the annual reunion that we were able to share.



Lofty Gwyn, Ron Forder, Dave Fyffe, Dave Ward, John McGuinness, Chris Yates, Dave Bernasconi, Cyril Wright, Alfie Ryan, Stu Roy, John Rowan, David Critchlow, Paddy Gilmour, Joe Brown, Ian O'Neil, Ian Lawford, Rod Siggs, Gramps Parr, Dave Smith, Jimmy Howcroft

Beachley Camp

For those, like me, who have not been back since 'Passing Out', Beachley Camp is now home to 1 Rifles who have made a few changes to those made previously by other occupants since it was home to the Apprentices, but it is still very recognisable. A few buildings are missing - 'J' Coy, the old band huts, old cookhouse, RSM's house and a few others. In their place are new buildings for their junior ranks club, a Londis mini supermarket, "Turkish" barbers (?) (cheapest haircut £6.00) and even beards trimmed (?) - goodness knows who has a beard on camp.

There's a new cookhouse/canteen/restaurant but all the old senior company's accommodation buildings are still there and used for the same purpose, albeit with fire escapes now ('elf 'N' safety of course). Our 'A' Coy HQ block with the SQMS store is still used for the same purpose and going down the hill toward the School/College HQ and trade blocks it all looks remarkably the same.

The larger general store is still there - although with an anti-tank storeroom, and I am happy to report that the Survey block and even the HQ building (built by apprentices before our time) are still there. The HQ building still in use as the current Regt's HQ, but the education block and most of the trade blocks have all gone but with a new, greatly enhanced MT in situ.

Rod Siggs (64C A Coy)



The 64 Groups table at the Reunion Dinner



The BOBA Shop

The following items are available from our shop.

Item	Notes	Price
Fleece Jackets	Sizes M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL	£40.00
"The Beachley Boys" Book	A story written by Brian Elks	£12.00
The Beachley Apprentices Story	Anecdotes by Apprentices compiled by Brian Elks	£12.00
The Story of the Army Apprentices at Beachley Camp 1924-1994	Official College History	£12.00
Tidenham Parish Churches Book *	Edited by Carol Clammer & Keith Underwood (£3.00 P&P)	£15.00
Mugs	Single Badge AAS / BOBA , Dual Badge	£6.00
Embroidered BOBA Blazer Badges		£10.00
Embroidered BOBA Blazer Badges	(Patch Pocket)	£10.00
BOBA Lapel Badges		£5.00
Cap Badge GSC		£5.00
Cap Badge KC		£5.00
Cap Badge QC		£5.00
Cap Badge QC. Anodised		£10.00
Wall Plaques	AAS or AAC	£20.00
Wall Plaques	BOBA	£20.00
BOBA Car Sticker		£2.00
BOBA Wire Wound Blazer Badge		£10.00
AAS Wire Wound Blazer Badge		£10.00
AAC Wire Wound Blazer Badge		£10.00
BOBA Ties		£5.00
BOBA Bow Ties		£5.00

* Covers all Beachley Churches.

All items can be viewed on the BOBA website and are available from the BOBA Shop Manager. Payment must be made with the order and can be:

- Cash
- Cheque (payable to "Beachley Old boys' Association")
- PayPal transfer

Extra fees apply for packing & postage and PayPal use.

Contact:

Anthony Waite

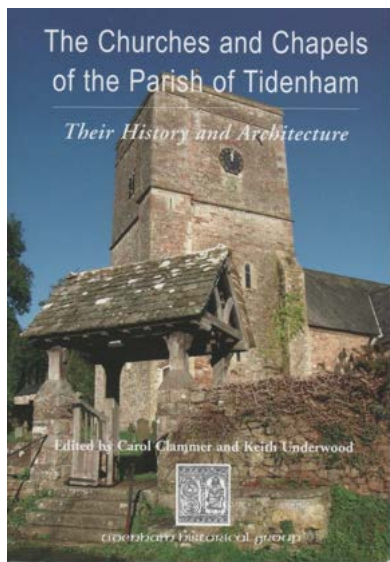
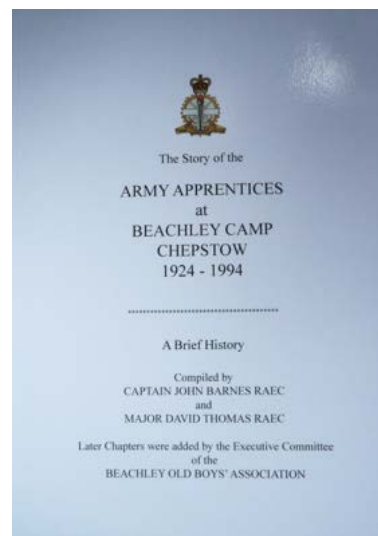
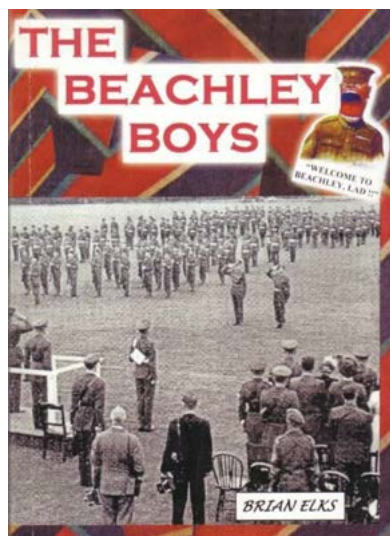
Sutton Lodge, 22 Seymour Street, Wellington, Somerset, TA21 8JU

anthonywaite22ss@hotmail.com

Additional items
illustrated on page 42

Details of Robot CDs on
page 13





2015 REUNION ID NAME HOLDERS

Once again we will be producing a reunion name holder for all members attending the reunion this year. They are of a simple design on laminated card, which will be inserted into the clear plastic sleeve envelope with a press frog clip and secure safety pin mounting. At £1.50 each they are good quality with a coloured badge and border. Order yours on the reunion application form please and pick it up when you arrive for registration at the Racecourse.



**Malcolm
Hay
53A
A Coy**

Editor's Contact Details ~

Ken Reader
Carrick House, 8 Cross Lane, Little Downham, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 2TJ
Tel 01353 699096
email ~ kenreader@msn.com

Notice ~ Please note that the views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise of either the Editor or of The Beachley Old Boys Association and therefore no responsibility for these will be accepted. While all contributions and articles for inclusion in the Echoes are very welcome and gratefully received. When submitting items it would be of assistance (though not essential), if Microsoft Word is used (Rich Text Format). JPEG or TIFF is preferable for photographs with images at or over 200 dpi where possible.
Editor



from the Fairway : BOBA Golfing Society

The BOBA Golf Championship 2014

Everyone was in good spirits and the fine weather made the day. One of the players was Keith Ansett (66C A Coy) who came over from Ontario, Canada to see his family. He said that he really enjoyed his day as there were nine players from groups 65C to 68C playing; they made him particularly welcome.

Sadly the Park course closed in April this year due to the lack of people playing but the Valley course is to remain open. I have been able to secure four teeing times from 10.15am onwards as there is a club championship taking place that morning; consequently we only have places for 16 players so it will be a first come basis for selection. As we are going off in the middle of the competition we must be on time, I would like everyone taking part to be there for 9.30am so that we do not cause any hold ups for those playing in the club competition. We also have two tee times booked for the Friday at 1.00pm, this gives us 8 places. The booking form can be found over the page.

Winners of the 2014 BOBA Golf Championship:

Drawn Pairs—Alan Duncan (67A) & Geoff Winter (66C) 63 points

Longest Drive—Ian Parmley (73A)

Nearest the Pin—Kevin Staples (66C)

Best Par Three—Alan Duncan (47A) 14 points

Handicap Cup—Syd Thomas (47A) 30 points

The Ken Standen Trophy - Alf Crascina (67B) with 36 points

My thanks to all those who helped to make the tournament a success and to Dewstow Golf Club for their hospitality. I look forward to seeing you all and, maybe a few more new and old faces, for the 2015 tournament.

Tony Baile (57B B Coy)



Kevin Staples with the Nearest the Pin trophy



Alan Duncan & Geoff Winter with The Drawn Pairs trophies



Alf Crascina receiving the Ken Standen trophy from the President



The 2015 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 members and/or their spouses/partners.

It will be held at **The Valley Course, Dewstow Golf Club, Caerwent** on Saturday 19th September 2015. All golfers are required to meet at the main restaurant there at 0930 on Saturday morning.

Those entering should complete the form below and return it, as indicated, with a cheque for £30.00 made payable to **Beachley Old Boys' Association** (not BOBA), to reach me **BEFORE SATURDAY 5th SEPTEMBER 2015** please.

Start times will be allocated on Saturday 12th September 2015 and all golfers informed by email, or letter, **so please ensure your entry is received on time.**

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

PLEASE RETURN TO:

Chris Ricketts, 35 Bigstone Grove, Tutshill, Chepstow, Monmouthshire, NP16 7EN

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

RANK/TITLE: SURNAME: FORENAME:

ADDRESS:.....

.....

..... POSTCODE:

TEL: EMAIL:

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 the **Beachley Old Boys' Association** to the value of **£30.00**

SIGNED:.....

DATE:.....