



The Beachley Old Boys' Association Newsletter



Beachley



Echoes

Edition No. 22 ~ April 2016



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**Chairman's Jottings**

Well this is it! My twelfth and last Chairman's Jottings. I still cannot comprehend that it is twelve years since I provided my first article to the then editor of the Echoes. As they say time does fly.

I've said many times that I do enjoy being the Chairman of the association and that statement still stands but I believe the time is now right for someone else to pick up the reins and perhaps look at how we do things through a fresh pair of eyes. Meanwhile I've given my assurance to the President and the committee that there will be a smooth transition between myself and my successor. I've also asked if I could stay on the committee to assist wherever

help is needed.

I'd like to refresh your memories as to what has been achieved in the last 12 years, we now centre our reunion weekend activities in good quality surroundings following the closure and demolition of the Old Course/Two Rivers hotel, the increase in charges for meals and accommodation has been minimal, we have secured year on year excellent accommodation at the newly built Two Rivers and at the Hampton by Hilton. So that none of us fall foul of the drink/drive laws transport is now provided to all venues, our Friday night social gathering is now held in the Sjt's mess (the Light Infantry do spell it with a 'j') at Beachley Barracks, membership fees have not changed since the formation of new BOBA in 1994. And although it seems like we have always held it in this format; the reunion dinner is now mixed, hoorah!! Membership numbers have remained reasonably static despite us making full use of social media, likewise we are making slow progress in attracting new members from the later groups. I have to admit to one failing and that is the AGM, by default some might say that these are boring and should be avoided when ever possible. In order to attract more attendees, we changed the time of the meeting, we moved the meeting from the church to the more comfortable surroundings of the racecourse, to shorten the meeting we now publish the minutes on our website alongside the Echoes, dress at the meeting is informal, there is little else we can do but please be aware that the AGM is where decisions affecting the association are made. Decisions that might not be to your liking so please come along and have your say.

Of course all the above and more, would not have been achieved without the efforts and full support of the committee, they are an excellent bunch of guys and I would like to thank all who I have worked with both past and present. I have been part of many committees and BOBA is one of the best, the association is very privileged to have their commitment.

My attendance at last years' reunion was very brief, in fact I nearly failed to make it. This was due to a move of house just a few days prior to our gathering, not my choice but as many will know your life is not your own when it comes to solicitors, estate agents, bank transfers, etc. After what seemed an eternity in a queue of traffic heading for the rugby world cup in Cardiff I made it just in time for the AGM. I gather the Friday night social went well but the seating arrangements although better than the previous year were still lacking. This has been addressed so hopefully all will be fine this year. The Heritage display with Malcolm, Ken and Peter at the helm was up to its usual standard, sadly the recent passing of Malcolm will leave a difficult void to fill.

The AGM was not well attended and we spent what seemed a long time discussing the digitisation of the photographs held by Chepstow museum. However, we did agree on a strategy and we have a result, but more of that at this years AGM.

Our reunion dinner is the main event of the weekend, we had a number of the 65 Groups attending, including the Treasurer and myself. My thanks go to these ex boys many who had travelled from far outside UK shores. The meal was excellent and the service swift considering the numbers attending. The music after the meal allowed us to shake off some calories and show off our skills on the dance floor.

To close the weekend, we all assembled on the square at Beachley and marched to church for our Founders Day service, the weather was fair, the parade is not at all daunting and the chat within the ranks is good to hear. The service in St George's church is a fitting opportunity to remember those ex boys who are no longer with us. Our Padre, Joe Rooney, is to be thanked for liaising with the regimental Padre on all matters concerning the church service, he is also to be commended on his style of preaching and his sermons are not to be missed. Who can remember Joe's funny last year about the George and the Dragon?

To close on this particular subject, we feel that the reunion last year ran smoothly and true to course and all who were involved in its organisation are to be congratulated.

If I can fast forward to the present we have some good news regarding our tenure in the Old School House, we now have a favourable lease with the MoD that will be shared with the owner of St Johns church, again more details at the AGM

Sadly, Ken Reader, our current editor of the Echoes has recently lost his wife Sandra. I imagine this blow to Ken has been immense and all I can say is that our thoughts are with him at this difficult time.



Rather suddenly we also lost Malcolm Hay in the early part of March. Malcolm had been poorly for some months and was finally admitted to hospital where he died surrounded by his family. I for one will miss Malcolm not just for the sterling work he did on behalf of BOBA but also as a true friend and gentleman.

After twelve years as chairman I believe the Association is in good health, yes like all associations we need more members from the younger generation and as Syd has spelt out quite clearly we need some fresh faces on the committee.

Thank you for your patience, I believe it is time to conclude these jottings and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible later this year in September, until then I wish you all that you would wish yourselves.

Kind Regards,

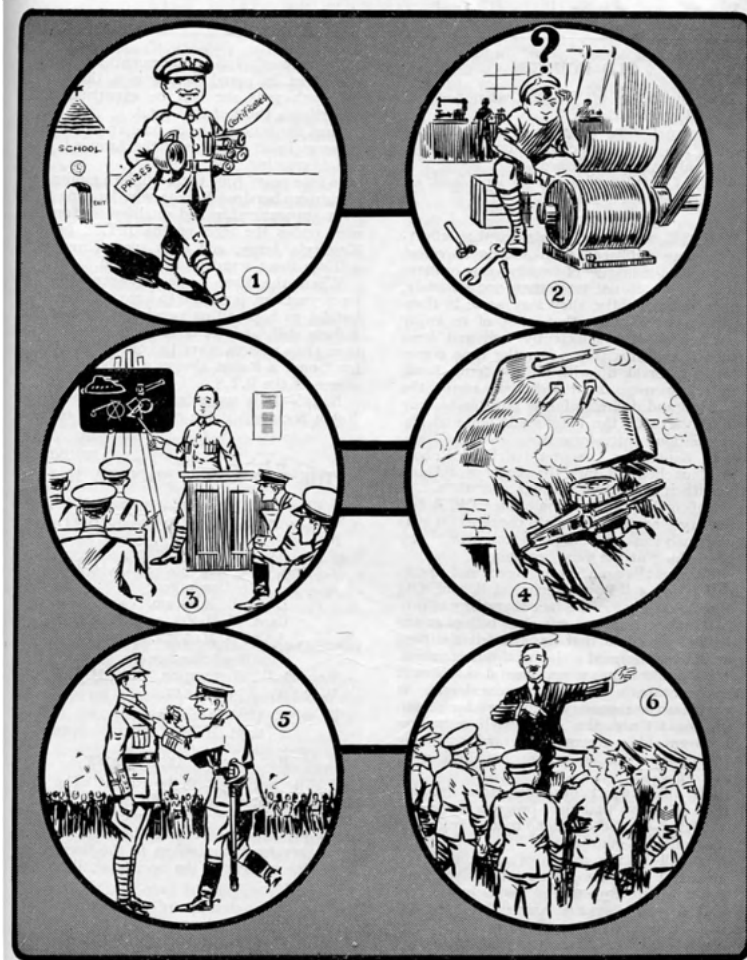
Brian Henderson (65A C Coy)

The Robots Progress

1. *Retires*
2. *Aspires*
3. *Diagramires*
4. *Tank fires*
5. *Acquires*
6. *Inspires*

This is a cartoon from the June 1926 edition of the Robot; although the trades changed over the years the ethos did not!

Show the
Beachley spirit
and step forward
BOBA needs you!



Wanted Urgently!

Willing volunteers to fill three important positions:

Chairman

Treasurer

Heritage Member

Your Association needs you

Please step forward



**The President's thoughts for 2016/17**

I greet you well and hope that you will read what is following !!!!!

WE ARE VERY MUCH AT THE CROSS ROADS IN OUR CONTINUATION OF THE ASSOCIATION.

The very sad and unexpected passing away of our highly respected Heritage Member, Malcolm Hay, prompted me to take a long hard look at our present committee and realise the NEED for an understudy for each post. Only 3 are under 70 and the rest are in their late 70s and 80s. Some have been on the committee since 1994. Gentlemen, we cannot

be expected to continue much longer and therefore some of the younger members (retirees/over 65s) MUST come forward to serve on the committee, maybe as understudies for a year then take over. At the last AGM you were told that the Chairman would stand down at this coming AGM, so would the Treasurer – so far no replacements have been found but they still intend to stand down. The Secretary has indicated that this must be his last year, Peter BurrIDGE, thank God, is to continue. WE NEED a new Heritage member and so on.

This has been discussed at our last committee meeting and we all agreed that at this AGM YOU, THE MEMBERSHIP, MUST COME FORWARD to either replace or understudy/assist a present member. Positions:

Chairman – It is still hoped that a member of the present committee will fill this post. Is anyone else interested?

Vice Chairman – Chris Rickets.

Treasurer – If no one comes forward Brian Henderson will cover for a year BUT we still need an understudy.

Heritage – needs a volunteer and an assistant/understudy

Secretary – Derek Walker needs both a replacement and understudy.

Echoes – Ray Armstrong is in the process of taking over from Ken Reader – we need an understudy. (John Furley will be helping as and when he is well enough).

Membership Secretary – Derek Fox – we need an understudy.

Reunion Organiser – Peter BurrIDGE – Peter is continuing but he MUST have an understudy, to learn 'the ropes' for the future.

BOBA Shop – Tony Waite needs an understudy.

We also have two committee members who fill in as and when required.

We need the Beachley Boy Spirit to exert its self - none of these positions are particularly onerous or time consuming BUT THEY MUST BE FILLED – it is up to you !!!

EVERYONE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THE ASSOCIATION IS IN DANGER OF CLOSING INSIDE TWO or THREE YEARS IF MEMBERS DO NOT COME FORWARD TO FILL THESE POSITIONS.

PLEASE GIVE THIS YOUR SERIOUS CONSIDERATION and BE PREPARED TO PUT YOURSELF FORWARD FOR SELECTION.

No need to wait for the AGM, act now – names to the Secretary please dchunkywalker@talktalk.net or Chairman brianhend@hotmail.com or me sydney1931@btinternet.com

The Cenotaph Parade – again a good turnout, a nice day was enjoyed by all.. 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 particularly the younger groups (65s onwards).

AGM - The AGM is an extremely important meeting and I ask you all to make a big effort to attend. It is vital that you don't leave all the decisions to the older membership – it is the younger element that needs to give their opinions and votes

See you all in September and hope the 66 Groups have a good turnout.

May Fair winds propel you in your chosen direction.

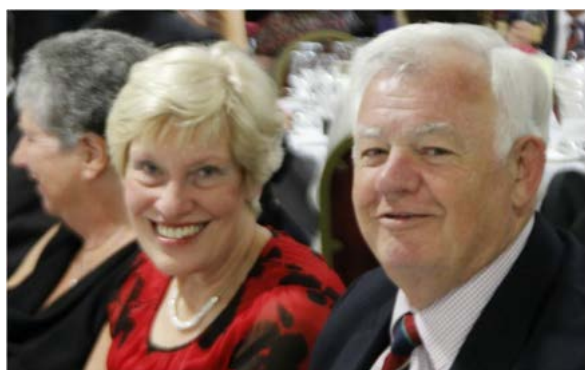
Syd Thomas (47A C Coy)



2015 Reunion Remembered



The 1965 Groups Table



Chris & Wendy Ricketts enjoying the dinner

Some of the '65' Group members (below)



John MacDonald (75C C Coy) piping us to dinner



Catching up



The Ladies not wanting to be left out!



Dancing the night away



BOBA Reunion

Images from our Founders Day Church Parade



From Lieutenant Colonel A S Tuggey DL
Chair Gwent Appeal
(Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen)

T: 020 7219 5373
M: 07917 488323
E: andrew.tuggey@parliament.uk

Craig-y-Dorth House
Craig-y-Dorth
Monmouth NP23 4JT

8 November 2015

Dear Chris,

Many thanks indeed to you and all Beachley Old Boys for the very generous cheque of £335.00 for ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

I should be grateful if you would pass on my thanks to everyone and assure them that the donation will be put to good use. The Soldiers' Charity helps those serving and former soldiers and their families who may have fallen on hard times.

I hope that your own challenges you mentioned are now resolved.

Yours ever, Andrew

Thank you letter from Lt Col A S Tuggey on behalf of The Soldiers Charity for the £335 collected at the church service.



Three Stories of Beachley

Sammy Smyth 53B A Coy

Sammy Smith was probably the youngest of 53B intake. He came from Ireland where one could leave school at 14½. Sammy was, like me, short of stature. His moment in history came during our drill and turnout competition whilst in HQ Coy.

The night before the competition our permanent staff platoon Sgt (Paddy Barrat) came round with his pot of 'hatters black' to improve the shine on the boots of anyone not good at spit and polish.

The following morning, we were all on parade in our best 'bib and tucker' ready for inspection by a young longhaired Guards officer who was brought in for the occasion. He sets off down the front rank making notes and asking questions; passing me I heave a sigh of relief. Then he comes to Paddy and asks him if he has anything on his boots other than polish, "Yus Sor" says Paddy and Sgt Barrat goes white! "And what's that?" asks longhair, "Sput Sor" says Paddy. I'm sure I saw a smile on the officer's face and Sgt Barrat beamed.

Then off we went to do our best bit of marching cheered on by Paddy's 'sput'. We won, how could it have been any different?

Jonny Evans 53B C Coy (CSM)

Jonny Evans was one of the oldest of our intake. He told me this tale when I visited him in Kyrenia about 12 years ago.

He being nearly 17 had been smoking (with parental agreement) for some time. When he got his joining instructions it informed him that smoking was forbidden for the first six months, however, with parental permission it would be allowed. His mum wrote a letter for him to take with him. On arrival at Chepstow Station he and another small group of our intake were met by Cpl Rosendale APTC (he of the striped jersey) and a truck to transport them to Beachley. Luggage and personnel on board off they set and Jonny gets out a fag and lights up. Cpl Rosendale tells him there is to be no smoking for the first six months. Jonny says "It's alright Corp I've got a letter from my mum" and takes the letter out to show the corporal who promptly grabs the lit cigarette and letter, tears both up and throws the resulting bits out the back of the truck.

Only sneaky smokes for Jonny for the next six months!

And now one for the staff.

LCpl Cagney MI Room 'Attendant'

I can't remember who was staff RSM at the time but I believe it was most likely 'Busty' Baker¹ rather than RSM Lowe². We were on passing out rehearsal (don't remember which one) with the whole School on parade. It was warm and after half an hour of standing on parade someone passed out; LCpl Cagney was on duty in case of such an occurrence.

Anyone who remembers LCpl Cagney will know that he was bigger round the middle than he was tall.

The RSM summons the MI Room Attendant and up steps LCpl Cagney. In his effort to declare the seriousness of the situation the RSM screams (which almost certainly means it was Busty Baker) "run Corporal Cagney, run and if you can't run, roll".

I don't think anyone laughed out loud!

Ken Stout (53B)

1. R.S.M. J. Baker, Grenadier Guards

2. R.S.M. S. Lowe, M.M., Grenadier Guards



MEMORIES OF THE SCHOOL

Just a list of memories I still retain of life at Beachley

- Our first Wing Sergeant, Sgt Moody RTR Informing us we could call him Sarn't or Sergeant but NEVER Sarge!
- A Boy CSM and others of the Draft, making us stand by our beds and using a dentist mirror checking the back of our teeth to see if we smoked.
- The regular visits of the Draft to tip us out of bed.
- Never seeing the Camp at night due to the Blackout.
- Wandering to the toilet at night in the dark as the Blackout shutters had been removed at lights out, so no lights could be shown.
- Large Rats that had been known to get on your bed during the night.
- Remembering MUD when TV programmes talk about the beauty of the Wye Valley.
- Lining up in the NAAFI for an FFI (Free from Infection) and hearing the NAAFI girls giggling as they looked through the holes in the counter shutters.
- Rev Waddington Jones giving us a sermon on Self Abuse, saying we were desecrating one of the most beautiful things God ever made. And then trying to stop the laughter by shouting "I Mean, The Human Body."
- CSM Jimmy Ough RE Saying to a Boy who queried why the CSM's boots were not Dubbined as ordered "Do as I say Boy not as I do"
- Titch Watkins APTC teaching us unarmed Combat. "Right lads, you two attack me" and then proceeding to flatten both of them.
- Having to pay for a suit of denims stolen from a secure store by somebody else, and being lectured on the seriousness of losing kit in wartime.
- "Gammy" Baker, Commandant, "Take that Boys name he's naked!". Addressed to a Sergeant drilling a squad where one Boys hat had fallen off.
- Jimmy Law the Corporal who Instructed on Electrical telling us the following:
A Bear went into a Barbers Shop
Boo Boo said the Bear
Good morning Mister Barber
What no soap, no lather?
Now do you rumble?
Every morning he asked us if we had solved it. I still don't know the answer!
- "Active Air Defence" (AAD) and "Passive Air Defence" (PAD). AAD involved manning twin Lewis Machine Guns near the Cookhouse, or manning the Fire Engine which was housed in the Workshop Area and consisted of an ancient Morris pulling a Dennis Medium fire pump. From cold it struggled up the hill to the accommodation area and the crew helped by pushing the vehicle. PAD was better as you sat in a building in the warm waiting for someone to get hurt.
- When, on a Guard of Honour in Chepstow, being called to attention and ordered to Present Arms by a Major who then found out he was saluting a local shop keeper.
- Going to see a documentary film in the Chepstow Cinema one summer evening and while wandering back down the hill towards the Castle we saw an Officer approaching on the other side of the road with a young lady. Word was passed back to spread out and we passed him in small groups requiring him to keep acknowledging our salutes.
- Going to Bristol to see the Merchant of Venice, courtesy of the Education Instructors. Walking from Temple Meads Station to the theatre some of us managed to nip into pubs for a quick drink. There were not enough seats for us all at the Theatre so some went and sat in medieval protected seats, and were thrown out by the manager.



- After finishing our Trade Training we had to refurbish some old RSJ's .This consisted of filling up holes by tapping a thread, screwing in a threaded rod and then riveting over the ends of the rod. We livened this up by all of us hitting the metal at the same time to the rhythm of a popular tune, so consider say fifteen or twenty hammers all hitting the metal at the same time and in rhythm.
- Cpl Cook RASC removing the cone clutch from a Rolls Royce engine and the compression spring embedding itself in the wall of the workshop.
- Bored while on Bench Fitting, playing darts by drawing a chalk dart board on the bench and throwing files, tang end first, at the board. One boy went to pick up his file and received another boy's file in the back of his hand.
- The "Janker's" Defaulters bugle call to which we sang, "You can stay on defaulters as long as you like as long as you answer the call".
- Being charged with "Eluding a Warrant Officer" two of us ran away when he shouted "You Boys come here".
- For some reason firing Ross Rifles into the banks of the River.
- The open air swimming pool that was often flooded by the river which meant we had to overhaul the filtering equipment.
- Replacing the body on a Ford V8 that had been converted into an Armoured Car by the School in the early stages of the War.
- Stripping down some surplus civilian vehicles received from the Auxiliary Fire Service, and finding that Humber cars had chicken wire in the roof.
- Slipping out of the camp after lights out to go scrumping apples from a nearby orchard and getting back without being caught. Only to find that an NCO had been round the rooms and we were on a charge for being absent from our beds after Lights Out.
- Medical Officer's Rounds in the hospital, when we had to sit or lay at attention in a bed that had the covers so tightly pulled down that we couldn't move anyway.
- Going to a Mixed Ack Ack site near Newport to remove an old Petter two-cylinder engine and generator and finding it only had one piston and con rod.
- Sunday Church Parade which was intended to prevent us having at least one day to ourselves. This also included Boys marching in the band pretending to play an instrument to bulk up the band numbers.
- Sports which we were taught to do, but not to enjoy. I enjoyed boxing, rugby, and running the mile but was forced to play cricket and football.
- APTC instructors who we were sure had been drummed out of the Gestapo for cruelty. Some of them displayed no humanity what so ever, and they were quite often professional sportsmen. It gave me an aversion to professional sportsmen for life.
- Learning that dirty water would not extinguish fires. Why else would the CSM make us refill the buckets with clean water?
- Just to finish. I had three most enjoyable years at the School, all of the above happened, some were enjoyable, some not, but all were part of the rich tapestry of life, and certainly provided us with all we needed to face a career in the Regular Army. I have since given an interview to an Author who was writing about the tendency of the public to forget Past Campaigns. He quoted me in his book and in one of the quotes he asks me if I would I do it all again? To which I replied YES!

John Eveleigh (42A A Coy)

**Tribute to Major (Retd) Malcolm (Hector) Hay**

Malcolm was born in 1937, he lived his early "war time" years in Mistley in Essex. He was head boy at school, a keen cross country runner and also a member of the church choir. His interest in the army started early and he could be seen many a day marching up and down Mistley Green with the wooden gun his dad had made him.

At the young old age of 15, he started army boy service at the Army Apprentices School Beachley Chepstow on 18 February 1953. He originally wanted to drive tanks, but his dad said why don't you join REME - you can fix them and you never know they may let you drive them as well.

At Chepstow he was in 53A Group and became the Apprentice RSM for that particular group. At one point during his boys service he was the only boy soldier to have a beard. He used the excuse of a rash on his face to get a doctors excused shaving chit and was very proud of this stubbly face.

Malcolm attended his REME artificers course at Bordon in 1960 and it was during this time that he met the love of his life, Ileana.

In all Malcolm served the Crown for 50 years. Forty in uniform and ten as a civilian retired officer. This included service with the 14/20th Kings Hussars, which he thoroughly enjoyed and the Amphibious Engineers in Hameln. In 1975 he was awarded a commission as a late entry REME officer.

His service took him and his family to Germany, Cyprus, North Ireland, Hong Kong and even the UK. He visited Belize, Kenya, Gibraltar, Canada, the Falkland Island, and nearly Uganda during Idi Amin's rule.

Malcolm's other love was his collections. Many will know that he collected military Dinky toys and German beer glasses.

In retirement he continued supporting his family and his growing number of grandchildren as well as adding to his Dinky toy collection. He also became a more active member of the Beachley Old Boys' Association as the Heritage Secretary, a position he excelled at.

Malcolm's final post was with HQ 3 Div Bulford as an RO and below is an extract from his final confidential report when he was 65 years old:

Maj Hay's reputation as a font of knowledge on a wide range of subjects bears testimony to the esteem in which he is held through the Division... Maj Hay is a much respected member of the branch.

This is Maj Hay's final year of service before his retirement having completed 50 years' service. Indeed he has agreed to serve an extra 3 months to ensure his post is not gapped. I believe that it would be fully understandable for him to have his mind on life post-retirement, yet to his immense credit, at no time did he waiver from providing 100% commitment to his job.

...and it is the same way in which Malcolm spent his last year of life knowing that he had a serious medical condition, but remained 100% committed to all those around him as he used to say "Better to wear out than rust out".

We thank Malcolm for all he gave to BOBA, we miss him now and will miss him for a long time to come.

Yesterday I met some really nice people.

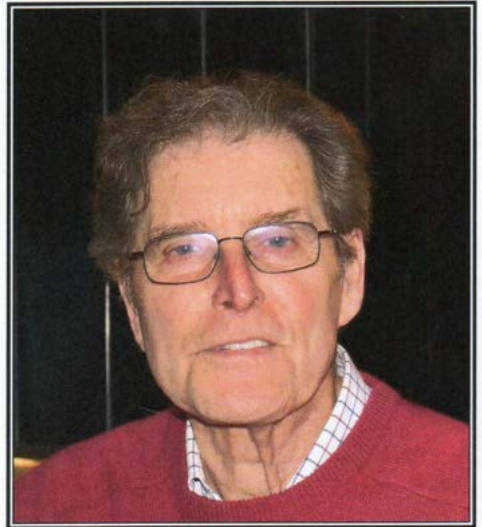
It was sad, because the group were the family of Malcolm "Hector" Hay, and the reason for the gathering was the Celebration of Malcolm's Life.

I first met Malcolm when I was a very naïve fifteen year old. Malcolm was our Apprentice Tradesman Company Sergeant Major (AT CSM) and was the much more mature seventeen year old guy who led us through our first term of six months at Beachley during our sojourn in HQ Company.

At the start of our second term we were dispersed basically alphabetically into our four main company's, in my case A Coy. Malcolm continued to be a mentor for us in the guise of Apprentice Tradesman Regimental Sergeant Major (AT RSM).

I was still a naïve sixteen year old boy when Malcolm departed from Beachley and went on to carve himself a very distinguished and meritorious career in the Army.

Unfortunately for me it was many years before our paths crossed again, this time through The Beachley Old Boys





Association (BOBA).

During the BOBA years Malcolm and I became rather close and certainly he made it obvious that he enjoyed Gwen's company when we gathered. He would entertain her whilst I was off doing my dashing around mixing with everyone else. He also gave me the honourable task of assisting him with the spreadsheet listing of his marvellous Dinky collection.

Malcolm was fulfilling the role of Heritage Secretary in a magnanimous way. His presence was marked in many ways especially on the Saturday mornings of our Reunion weekends where he always laid on a very informative Heritage Trail Display. It will need very large boots to fill only this relatively small part of what Malcolm managed.

Malcolm, A true gentleman. Sleep peacefully my friend.

Ray Armstrong (55A)

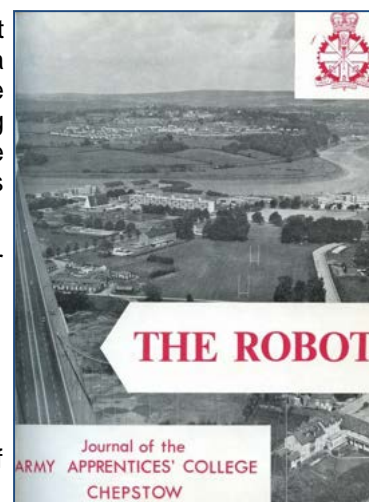
New Robots for Old

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 below). Please note that there may be a delay if the editions covering your time have not yet been scanned.



Lt Col (Retd) Ken Reader OBE BEM MInstRE

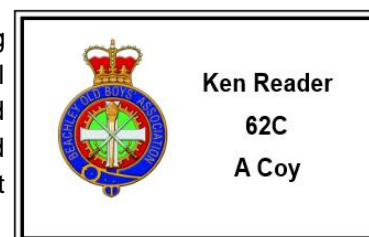
Carrick House, 8 Cross Lane, Little Downham, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 2TJ

Tel 01353 699096

email ~ kenreader@msn.com

2016 Reunion ID Badge and Holder

Once again we will be producing a reunion name holder for 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.



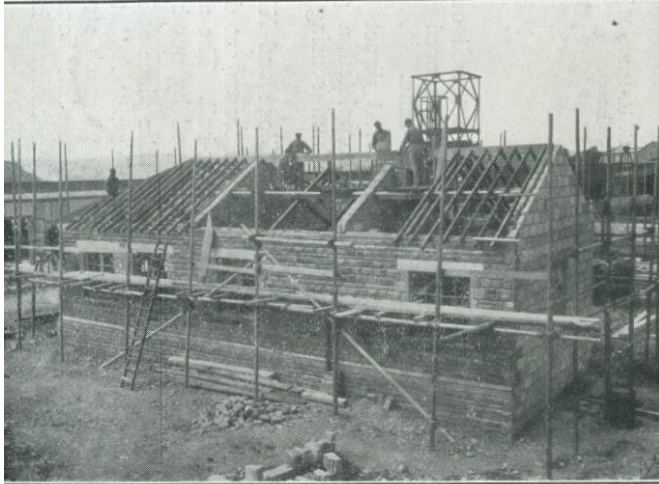
HERITAGE

Photos and Memorabilia. It is hoped that the members of **66A, 66B and 66C** can search their attics and albums for items and send them to Ken Reader for display at their 50th anniversary reunion in September.

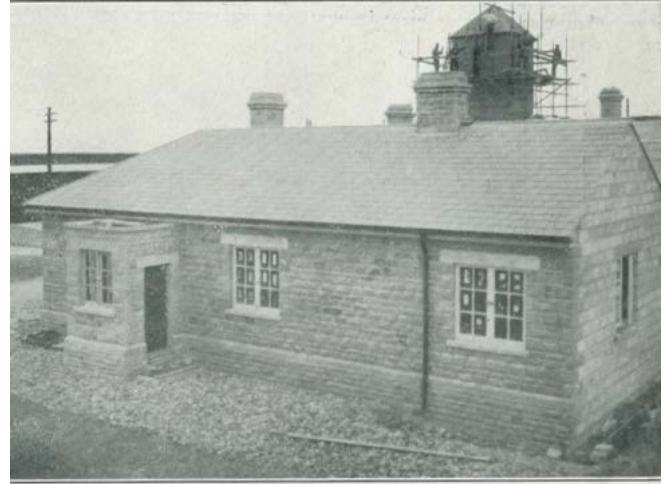
Honours and Awards Book. We maintain a record of the Honours and Awards presented to ex-Beachley boys, GC, MM, OBE, MSM, MBE, BEM and MiD etc. It records the individual and his years of service at Beachley. Anyone having decorations please notify a Committee member with the details.

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.

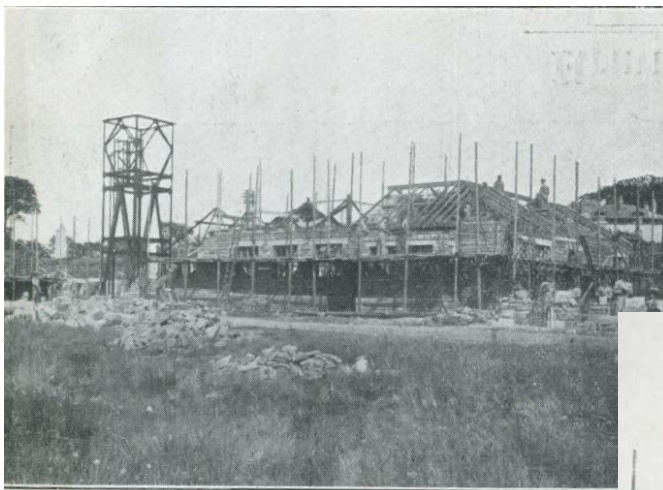
Missing Robots. We are missing the Spring 1977 issue, Summer 1979 issue, Summer 1980 issue and Spring 1981 issue. Any copies would be appreciated.



SOUTH WING, 1931.



SOUTH WING, 1932.



FRONT VIEW, 1931.

The Headquarters office block was built in the early 30's by the Apprentices. It is an enduring tribute to the standard of instruction and boys skill that it is still in use some 80 years after its construction.

The three construction photographs are from the December 1932 edition of the Robot while the completed building one is from April 1935.



THE HEADQUARTER OFFICES BUILT BY APPRENTICE TRADESMEN



The Headquarters Building as it is now



Reunion 2016 Booking Etc

Our observant readers will have spotted that the usual booking forms and information on the Reunion weekend is missing from this year's edition of the Beachley Echoes. However, all is not lost as you will be able to view the Reunion booklet which is on the website; those receiving a printed copy of the Echoes will have received the booklet also in printed format.

An piece of information that arrived too late for the booklet is that the disco is confirmed with Mr Chandler as last year. Members are advised that all they need to do is to ask Dick Chandler and *virtually any song* can be found somewhere in his collection and then played for them.

Make sure to book your place at the event of the year!
BOBA Reunion—16th to 18th September 2016

New Editor's Contact Details:

Ray Armstrong
125 Baker Street, Wigan, WN3 5HG
Tel: 01942 491140
email ~ r.armstrong@virgin.net

Puzzle Time

This puzzle was sent to me by Brian Elkins (51A) who made it up. The answers to the clues represent a value in old money which must add up to the total value shown.

I was so impressed (Brian is a member of Mensa!) that I am offering a bottle of Bushmills whiskey as a prize to the first correct answer drawn out of the hat.

Clue	Answer	Value in £ s. d.
A Leather worker		
A boys' name		
Transport		
An ill fish		
A girl's name		
A pig		
A hat		
A singer		
A Ruler		
Saturn, Mars & Pluto		
Tobacco		
A Thief		
	Total value =	£20 7s 9d

Send your answers and details to Ken Reader (see page 11)

**Ladies Column**

Although our time at last years' reunion was shorter than most, like Brian I thoroughly enjoyed the reunion and on behalf of all the ladies who attended my thanks go to Peter Burrigge and Chris Ricketts for organising the functions that are held in Beachley Barracks and Chepstow Racecourse, especially the reunion dinner on the Saturday evening. As always the Executive Committee are already well on the way to finalising the details for the reunion this coming September.

Every year I ask if any of the lady readers would like to air their views regarding the reunion and this year is no different, so please if you have something to say that you feel would improve the reunion weekend please do not hesitate contact me by phone or when we next meet. (My details are shown below.)

It was good to see lots of familiar faces at the reunion plus all the guys from the 65 Groups and their respective partners who were celebrating their fiftieth anniversary.

Looking ahead I would encourage you all to accompany your husband or partner to the reunion later this year. I appreciate there is a cost attached to 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 may have accompanied your men folk around the world have a wealth of experiences and stories that should be shared amongst us all.

Sadly this year we will not have Malcolm Hay with us, Malcolm was a true gentleman and he always made me feel at ease in his company, the association will miss his presence.

Most of us attend the Founders Day service on the Sunday in St George's church at Beachley Barracks. Joe Rooney very kindly organises all to do with the church and my thanks also go to his wife Mary for the assistance she provides on the day.

So until we meet in September please look after yourselves.

Margaret Henderson

Tel: 01271 871716 Email : brianhend@hotmail.com



This is what the ladies were wearing in 1966!





Editor's Last Hurrah

This year we celebrate Her Majesty the Queen's 90th birthday. This very definitely deserves a Hurrah!, my last!

As I hand over to Ray Armstrong I have to reflect on a number of events that do not get a Hurrah!

The first was the very sad passing of Malcolm Hay whose sterling work will be very apparent now that he is no longer around to carry it out!

The second is of a more personal nature and is probable cause for any delays in getting this edition of the Beachley Echoes to you. In March my wife Sandra passed away very unexpectedly; those of you who have had the misfortune of losing a partner will know how deeply it can affect one. We were together a long time and Sandra attended my Passing Out parade as my fiancé.

Moving on! As I mentioned earlier the editorial duties for the Beachley Echoes will pass to Ray Armstrong who bravely (madly) volunteered. They say a volunteer is worth ten pressed men and I am sure that Ray will carry on in the tradition of continual improvement building on the hard work of those who have gone

before us.

Apart from taking over as chairman of another large organisation I thought five years of one person's ideas and ramblings is more than sufficient and I am sure that you will welcome Ray's fresh eyes on the newsletter.



Ray Armstrong

Being all out of Hurrahs I would ask that you get the pen out and write an article for next year's edition as we are now **very** thin on material. Everyone who attended Beachley will have at least a dozen stories of the exploits that they or their mates were involved in during their time at the school/college—lets hear your tales of daring do!

All that remains is for me to thank everyone who has contributed over the last five years, especially Margaret Henderson who has produced words for the Ladies Page from before my time.

I wish you all good fortune in your ongoing adventure that is life

Ken Reader OBE (62C A Coy)

Paper Copy of the Beachley Echoes

If you require a paper copy of the newsletter please drop the new Editor a line stating name, group and address. His contact details are on page 13.

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 can be accessed through The Army Apprentice site which has a link to the BOBA site or directly (<http://armyapprenticecollege.homestead.com>).



2015 Cenotaph Detachment waiting to be dismissed after the parade



In Memoriam

REPORTED DECEASED SINCE THE 2015 BEACHLEY ECHOES (No. 21)

F Aldred	43B	NK	Maj M (Hector) Hay	53A	A	1 Mar 16
P F (Peter) Beard	54B	A NK	JMG Johnson	60C	A	NK
Simon Birmingham	78C	A 31 Jan 15	Wallace Jones	56B		28 Mar 16
Robert J Brown	64B	A 10 Aug 15	Arthur L King	48A		23 Jun 15
Kevin M Cooper	87	87Sqn Dec 15	Bill Lipscombe	45A	C	24 Aug 15
Leonard R Couzens	38 GpD	31 Mar 15	Maj Trevor Medcalf	43A	B	15 Aug 15
Ronald Dales	42/45A Gp	30 Mar 15	Anthony T Raynor	53A	A	Nov 07
K C (Ken) Dawson	46B	C 5 Dec 15	John H Robertson	67C	A	2 Jan 15
J J (Eddy) Edwards	44A	A 25 Dec 15	F W Tadier	45B	B	17 Apr 16
W J (Joe) Finnerty	43A	C 23 Dec 15	Maj Richard Taylor	50A		13 Sept 15
Lt Col R A Gibbens	47A	C 27 Oct 15	Joe Wilson	47B	A	1 May 15
George Giles	56A	D NK				

Rest in Peace

BOBA CENOTAPH DETACHMENT 2015

On Remembrance Sunday 2015 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 13th 2016 and use the opportunity to say your thank you to those who gave their everything for the future of others.



Mr R T Armstrong
Mr R W Beeston
Mr A W Chatty
Mr R E Field
Mr P Furley
Mr J Goodall
Mr I Harrower
Mr J A F Hasnip
Maj M Hay
M J A F Kinson

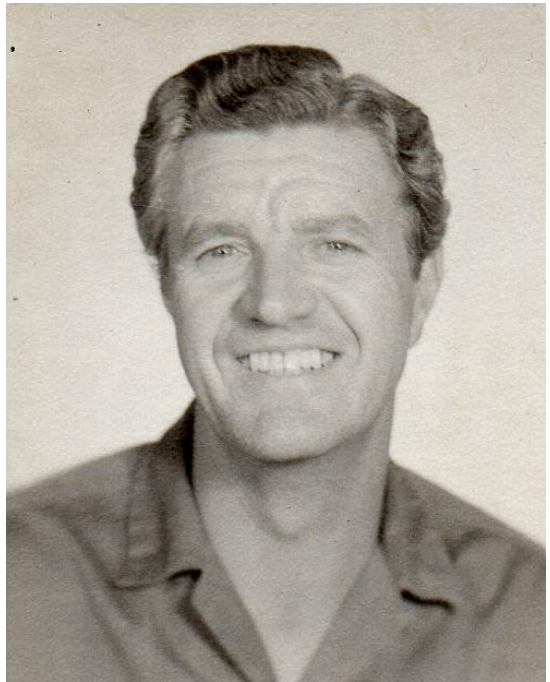
Maj R S Mullins
Mr M Murtagh
Mr R Pool
Mr D J Pomeroy
Lt Col K Reader OBE
Mr W H Reid
Mr P Rickard
Mr M E Simmonds
Mr D Smith
Mr M Stanford

Mr K Stout
Lt Col S Thomas
Mr G White
Mr B White
Mr J Williams
Lt Col N F Winder MBE
Mr H G Wodhouse
Mr D J Youldle

**Ex Warrant Officer Class Two RONALD DALES (RON)**

Obituary compiled by Maj (Retd) D R O Walker.

It is with much regret that I inform The BOBA, of the passing of Ronald Dales, Ex 42/45A Group, on the 30th of March 2015, after a protracted period of illness. He was born on the 15th of November 1928, in Cumbria. He enlisted into the Army, at Kendal, in February 1944, at fifteen years of age, for training as a Vehicle Mechanic, at the Army Apprentice School, Beachley Camp, Chepstow, passing out in November 1946, for service in the RASC, initially in UK until August 1947, and then overseas in Hong Kong. He transferred to REME in August 1949, but remained in Hong Kong, until September 1952, when he returned to UK, remaining there until October 1958. During this time he met Eileen, his wife to be, and they were married in 1954. Ronald had been a keen motorcycle trials rider, Captain of the Army and Sandhurst Cricket Teams, also a very good badminton player, achieving recognition as an umpire at the Wimbledon Badminton Championships. In 1958 he and his family were posted to Singapore, where they had a very memorable time, so the family recall. Returning in December 1959, after selection for Artificer Training, which on successful completion in January 1961, he was posted to BAOR, returning for Home Service for a short spell in 1963 before moving overseas once more for Malaya, in January 1964. He returned to UK, for his final posting, after declining a commission, to depart the service on completion of 25 years, in May 1969.



Both Eileen and his daughter Yvonne, as a child, have many fond memories of Ronald, as being a protective father against 'spiders' in Singapore, and a very dependable, patient, loving and a safe, secure guardian at all other times. He was always a gentleman, and a man who could turn his hand to all manner of things, and produce a positive outcome. After his service life Ronald and Eileen ran a Public House for a couple of years, until taking up a post with the Crown Agents, in Iran, to run training for five years, at a Military Engineering Training establishment at Masjid Suleiman, until rapid evacuation by RAF, C130, when religious conflict broke out in the country. Yvonne remembers at this time meeting up for a quick reunion in Regents Park, from her Boarding School, prior to her father and mother proceeding to Nigeria, to take up a training post in Lagos, with The Nigerian Brewing Co. Ltd., a pioneering task, which lasted for six years, one he enjoyed immensely, being very proud of his achievements there.

Numerous stories could be retold about Ronald's life and his personal undertakings, but one in particular stands out to his family, and that was the 4000 mile round trip to Iran, to 'Break' his new car in! More than a 'daunting feat' for many others.

He will be remembered as a wonderful father and husband, and the deep loyalty and love for him shown by Eileen, during his protracted illness by her care, 24/7, spoke volumes of this. Throughout he was 'always alright, how are you?' such stoicism. Ronald leaves behind his wife Eileen and daughter Yvonne, son in law David, and granddaughter Phoebe. He will be sorely missed, but remembered as Mr 'Fix It', a brave man and positive battler, who loved them all, deeply, always inducing happiness with his smile, and fond memories, forever, in a time of deep family sorrow. Our sympathies go with them in their sorrow.

There is no doubt he put to use in life his training from Beachley, as Ronald was a keen member and attendee at the BOBA reunions and was a member of The Royal Society of St George, too, whose functions he also attended with his family and friends. He often talked of Beachley with his family and recalled many antidotes which endeared him to all. A service of thanksgiving was held for him at The Priory Church, Edington, Wilts, on the April 2015, his commendation being accompanied by 'Lille Bollero'.

Derek Walker (55A)

**DEPARTMENT 6. MUSE**

My final ode, I'll write no more, the same old stuff becomes a bore.
Who has come and who has gone, what has finished what's begun.
With tongue in cheek, with words I fiddle, to steer a course right down the middle.
Don't try to offend, don't put it on thick, rub that out, don't take the "mick."
"Old Fink has gone, we wish him well," tell the truth he can go to H-ll.
We welcome SO and SO, "our new Boss, someone's gain is our loss."
"The last group was the best we've had," two were good the rest were bad.
"The shop's a credit, you've all worked hard," looks like ruddy Steptoe's yard.
"The programme's hard, you've never shirked," I am amazed it ever worked.
Decisions made just meant to help us, led to weeks and weeks of chaos.
Organised visits, things to be seen, nothing to write about, we've never been.
Future events cast their shadows before, Marine engineers this term to the fore.
Day trips to France, duty free fags, Mademoiselles waving gay little flags,
Engine room smells, fog getting thick, please stop the boat I want to be sick.
Our plant has done well and I am happy to say, thanks for the comfort in our new plant bay
To use a bulldozer inside is insane, so out you go soldier in the cold and the rain.
The shop heating is super efficient, the only snag is fresh air's deficient.
The exhaust gas system a War Office joke, you run all your engines, you can't see for smoke
The camping in Wales, a marvellous success, you went out quite fit and came back a mess
Schemes were designed to give you a kick, now that you're back, "Why are you sick?"
Potential poets telling you news, always paint things in the rosier of hues,
Because if you de-bunk, tell the truth for a change, you'll join me quite soon at the Labour Exchange.

Steady

DING-DONG

Gazing up at HQ Block
One can see a stone-bound clock
Still and silent, praised in rhyme,
Why can't it, won't it tell the time?

Can it be that it has read
What things about it have been said
And deep within itself has mused
"Poor time-piece, you are sore ill-used!"

"Don't the College poets know
What peace they need there down below
While riffling through Headquarters files
(of which there are ten thousand miles)."

Cannot these budding Shakespeares see
What consequences there would be
Should I disturb by just one sound
Administrators on their round!

Such chaos there could then ensue
To turn their honest faces blue
And Leave and Postings (and Promotions)
Would throw them into wild commotions!

So let me watch with timeless eye
While all of Beachley passes by.
Time will elapse without my aid,
For it was not by mortal made!

WO Norfolk.

ODE TO THE CLOCK—A REPLY

As one of those who made the clock,
Who made it tick and made it tock,
I was distressed by Norfolk's rhyme
To learn it doesn't tell the time.
He must not blame those "boyish hands
Now serving in far distant lands",
They made it well to last for e'er
With proper maintenance and care.
The still clock's due to lack of toil
Failure to clean, adjust and oil,
The later groups deserve this censure
For their neglect ending in seizure.
Cannot the present generation
Effect a grand resuscitation,
And make the clock, now in their care
Resume its true tick-tocking air?

JACEE

Editors note: All three poems on this page came from the 1966 editions of the Robot—possibly those attending the reunion in this 50th year since they entered Beachley will recall reading them all those years ago!



BEACHLEY OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION

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

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Maj.(Retd) Brian Henderson
21 Hartland View Road
Mortehoe
Woolacombe
North Devon
EX34 7HB



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

Email brianhend@hotmail.com
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MINUTES OF THE BEACHLEY OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**HELD AT CHEPSTOW RACECOURSE ON SATURDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER 2015.**

Present:

Lt Col (Retd) S Thomas	President
Maj (Retd) B Henderson TD	Chairman
Mr T Waite	Co-opted Member (Memorabilia)
Maj (Retd) M Hay	Heritage 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
Maj (Retd) DRO Walker	Hon Secretary

Item 1. Opening (BH): The meeting started at 1330hrs, 45 members were present. The Chairman apologized for his lateness due to the volume of world cup rugby traffic on the motorways, and welcomed all members to the AGM, especially the new attendees. Having recently moved house he had difficulty in locating a copy of last years minutes, therefore was unable to reflect on last year's proceedings before attending. He hoped all had enjoyed the previous evening's entertainment and reflected on Sunday's weather, thanking all for attending.

Item 2. Welcoming (ST): A warm welcome was proffered by the President to all present. He had hoped for a greater attendance at the AGM, as it is at this gathering that BOBA business is carried out and authorized, and at present this reflects 10% of the membership. For the future, in the coming year, he stated a number of committee members were standing down, after considerable time in their appointments. Brian Henderson, the Chairman, Chris Rickets, the Treasurer, and Ken Reader, the Beachley Echoes (BE), Editor, and likely, the following year, the Secretary. There is a need to replace these members, so any volunteers would be most welcome during the coming year. Please contact the chairman or secretary with your intentions.

Item 3. Apologies (DW): Apologies were received from Mr. Colin Weir, Mr. Gary White, and Mr. Mac Obermaier. A letter of apology and good wishes for 55A's (60th Anniversary) was read out, from Mr. Peter Rees, residing in Canada, being unable to travel long distances these days.

Item 4. In Memoriam (DW): The Hon Sec read out a list of 17 names of members and non-members, departed since the last issue of the Beachley Echoes, these are appended at the rear. A two minute silence was



held for the members departed since the last Reunion and for those serving in Afghanistan.

Item 5. Minutes of AGM 2014:

a. BE contained the 2014 AGM minutes, and were taken as read by members.

A vote was taken to confirm this reflected a true statement of events.

Proposed: R Armstrong 55A

Seconded: Alan Ball 46.

Agreed: Unanimously.

b. Matters arising:

i. Items 4, 5 and 6a to be dealt with in any other business. BH.

ii. Due to the secretary's error, Mr. John Bass, was reported as being at the last two reunions and proposing items in AOB, as he was not there, his name will be removed from the minutes. Members present identified themselves as having put forward such proposals. (Item 4(e) 2013 AGM, item 4(c) 2013 AGM). Apologies to Mr. Bass for any inconvenience caused by this error. (DW)

Item 6. Executive Committee Report (BH):

a. Chairman (BH): For new attendees, he introduced the Committee Members outlining their responsibilities and functions within the committee. He reiterated the fact that volunteers for the committee were essential to ensure the Association continued.

b. Treasurer (CR): The GPF breakdown in the BE's, shows in 2014 a small increase in expenditure due to reunion costs, despite maintaining 2013 prices, which hopefully retained the standard members have come to expect. The 2015 reunion costs are maintained at 2014 prices, resulting in a small return, this despite a drop in income of £1378.00, due to numbers declining with age and finances being more stretched. Membership Standing Orders continues to provide our main income along with the shop, which remains extremely popular. We are fortunate therefore, to have new members joining. The Gilt investments remain fixed and provide a return of £867.00 p.a. Our account with the Monmouthshire B.S. holding a little over £26,020.00, returns a lesser annual interest sum due to rate cuts, despite the low rates we are still showing a reasonable income from our investments. The Current Account balance is £10477.00, with one bill to pay and, subject to your approval, a minimum will be retained in the account, transferring any excess to the Bldg Soc Account. The Welfare Fund remains in good order, thanks to a very generous anonymous gift, and has not been called upon this year, but remains available to assist. The Committee continues to monitor and negotiate expenditure, obtaining the best rates for our members. The accounts were examined and approved by the Chairman of BOBA, a military accountant, with no issues reported. The 'Account' remains in a healthy financial position and more than able to continue for another year. As you have heard I have decided to stand down as Treasurer this year to protect the integrity of the Accounts, and hope that amongst the membership there will be a keen volunteer prepared to take on these duties. Be assured, my support will be available during the transitional period. Please accept this statement as a true and accurate record of the BOBA, financial affairs.

Questions were called for from the floor. None arose. The account was made available for scrutiny.

It was proposed that the account be accepted as a true and accurate statement.

Proposer: H. Wodehouse 58B

Seconded: J. Davy 49B

Agreed: Unanimously



- c. Membership (DW): The membership secretary (DF) was called away, the secretary (DW) took over. He informed members that the web-site information was now up to date and 36 new members had joined during the year (details are appended at the back), mainly from the 60's and 70's Groups, which extends BOBA's life somewhat. The data base showed 403 active and 537 lapsed members. The BOBA Handbook (Rules and Objectives) has been updated as discussed last year, new members will receive a copy on joining, and current members can access the changes on line as required. Next year is the 50th Anniversary of 66 Groups, should any assistance be required without falling foul of the data protection act, please contact the MS on (Tel: 01760 338483). (email – memsec.boba@homecall.co.uk). The Reunion activities are confined to **'BOBA Members' only** – so join up! Please fore bare any delay in dealing with your cheque's, as my nearest bank is many miles away and I don't make visits very often.
- d. Heritage (MH): Many thanks to those who assisted me in preparing the display area this morning, very much appreciated. We have new display boards, which are quicker and easier to erect. The Old School House (OSH) is still adequate for storage, but if required, our belongings, most of which are in my house, could be assembled more compactly for storage elsewhere, such as a container with the battalion QM, or whatever is considered. The Committee is to analyze fully the BOBA holdings, determine requirements and needs for facilities, reporting back to members next year. Digitization was not as expected (direct link in) but may require an appointment request to Chepstow Museum to view completed data.
(Further discussion on this point is shown at Item 9).
- e. Beachley Echoes (KR): The 2014 BE's consisted of 44 pages and required a 100 hard copies to be distributed. Eight were e-mailed direct to addressees. More stories and tales of members are required to replenish the diminishing stock! This will be Ken's last year as Editor, due to other commitments, although he should be available to assist any volunteer replacement, as needed. The assembled company gave a strong round of applause for the editor.
- f. Memorabilia (AW): Many thanks to all shoppers today, we took £200 at the stall, so please keep buying and support the Association.

Item 7. Election of the Executive Committee (and Co-opted members) (BH):

- a. The President is halfway through his term of office so does not require a vote, but is considering standing down at his next election.
- b. The Chairman will continue for one more year, but will then be standing down after 12 years' service on the Committee.
- c. The Treasurer is offering his resignation (January 2016), after 5 years to ensure propriety of the association's accounts.
- d. The Beachley Echoes' editor has found that his continuation in this activity is not possible due to other commitments. He will continue to fulfill his duties until the publication of the 2016 issue.
- e. Volunteers were called for from the floor. Mr. Ray Armstrong, volunteered to shadow the Beachley Echoes editor for the coming year, prior to making his decision. There were no other volunteers. It was pronounced that the Committee as now, would continue subject to the pronouncements in sub paras a to d, above. The Secretary indicated that he is considering relinquishing his appointment through 2016/2017. If any association members are interested in undertaking any of these appointments, please inform the President, Chairman or Secretary through the appropriate channels.

The President reminded all that without an effective committee, the Association is unable to continue, especially without the posts of Chairman and Treasurer, and members should give serious thought and consideration to applying for any of the committee posts. Young Sapper Blood is required!



Item 8. Army Apprentice National Memorial (DC): The Trustee reminded members that the AANM Trustees Committee had now been formed for three years. Donations of £100 from all the Apprentice Associations towards the annual running costs have proved to be adequate at this time. The annual service was held earlier this year with a dinner, AGM and drumhead church service at the memorial. Thank you to those who attended, Mr. Colin Weir and Mr. Tony Waite from the Association. There will be a similar ceremony and dinner again in 2016. Thank you.

Item 9. Support for Chepstow Museum: Digitization of Beachley Photographs. (BH): The Chairman updated members on progress of the digitization (MATES) of Beachley material held by Chepstow Museum, and any expenditure of the sum (up to £5K) agreed in 2014. Volunteers and local members have been involved through the year giving their support in sorting, identifying and assisting the museum members in digital compilation. In the foyer this morning a number of lap-top computers were made available by the museum to enable the present fruition of their work to be seen. Although many of the photographs are of early school days, the MATES system utilized, displays the eventual format and investigative depth that can be achieved, although much relies on availability of facts, dates and names for the in putters to enable compilation.

At present we as an association have spent nothing (ST).

The project appears to be funded for a year (this needs to be confirmed BH).

The Chairman then opened this item to the floor, and a long and torturous discussion unfolded. The Treasurer and some other members were against the project, as we would not own or have directly any control over the data generated/compiled. This was countered by a long discussion over what would happen to the historical data if it were not captured or remained with the museum. Arguments were also put forward about the work the volunteers had so far put in, their future need to chronologically perceive the historical data, and sort the material, for the museum to proceed. Above all, having agreed the money to enable the project to go ahead, would it not be an enormous slight against the Association's credibility, to now withdraw? After all, it is our history, whether in BOBA files or digitally displayed on MATES in Chepstow Museum, and is so recognized and retained.

An e-mail address (www.facebook.com/amgueddfa.chepstow) was given to check out the albums held on line at present, so further, missing detail, could be appended by membership country wide.

After the discussion, the following motion (from many) was put forward:

The Committee is to investigate and decide, without further recourse to the membership, any payment terms for this project.

Proposer:	The President
Seconded:	Ray Armstrong 55A
Vote:	For, 42. Against, 5

Item10. The Cenotaph Parade (ST): Last year's support was first class and a vote of thanks to all who attended. Members were informed that attendance at Whitehall was an experience not to be missed in one's life time. A list was available for attendees in the foyer on the notice board. This year's date is the 8th of November.

Item11. Any Other Business: Mr. Gilby 42A. Proposed a vote of thanks for the Committee and all the work they do throughout the year.



Item 12. Date of Next Reunion (DW): The next reunion weekend will be the 16 - 18 Sep 2016, and the AGM the 17 Sep 2016 at 1330hrs. The meeting closed at 1515hrs

DRO WALKER
Hon Sec BOBA

B HENDERSON
Chairman BOBA

Deaths advised this year—Lest we forget

<i>Title</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Coy</i>	<i>Date of Death</i>	<i>Mem No/Non Mem</i>
Mr. Jan	JA Anthony	66C	B	D/K/N	NM
Mr. Alan	A Turner	50A		11/12/2013	NM
Mr. Jerome (Benson)	J Williams	84Gp	E	00/09/2014	NM
Capt. James	J Wilson	46A	D	10/01/2015	NM
Mr. Wall	W Youngman	46B	B	30/09/2014	634
Mr.	JMG Johnson	60C	A	D/N/K	
Mr. Joe	J Wilson	47B	A	01/05/2015	141
Mr. Leonard	LR Couzens	38	D	31/03/2015	334
Mr.	F Aldred	43B		D/N/K	NM
Mr.	WF Andrews	42	A	09/12/2010	NM
Mr. Bryan	BC Laurence	54B	C	14/10/2010	581
Mr. George	G Giles	56A	D	?/02/2015	NM
Mr. Arthur	AL King	48A	C	23/06/2015	1030
Mr. John Henry	JH Robertson	67C	A	02/01/2015	NM
Mr. Robert Charlie	RC Brown	64B	A	10/08/2015	NM
Mr. Trevor	TJ Metcalf	43A	B	15/08/2015	138
Mr. Bill	WF Lipscombe	45A	C	24/08/2015	648
Mr. Simon	S Birmingham	78C	A?	31/01/2015	
Mr. Ronald	R Dales	44A	A	30/06/2015	

May they rest in peace

New Members

<i>Title</i>	<i>Known As</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Group/Coy</i>
Mr. John		J McGuinness	64C A
Mr. Alan		A Coombe	78C B
Mr. Roy		WR Goff	65A C
Mr. Steve		S Hobson	65C C



Mr.	Bob	R Adams	65C	C
Mr.	Colin	CJ Evans	62B	A
Mr.	Graham	GJ Chambers	67B	B
Mr.	Col	C Moore	75C	C
Mr.	Pete	PN Gill	61A	B
Mr.	Roy	RD Haynes	65C	C
Mr.	Robert	RJ Woolmington	77A/BB	
Mr.	John	JA Phipps	65A	A
Mr.	Tim	T Crane	62C	A
Mr.	Mal	MJ Forder	66C	C
Maj	Ernie	ER Giddings	42A	C
Mr.	Peter	PW Cowing	65C	C
Mr.	Johnathon	JS Crosbie	66C	A
Mr.	John/Jock	JM Kidd	75C	C
Mr.	Chris	CJ Airey	75C	C
Mr.	Donald/Don	D Peacock	75C	C
Mr.	Mike	MW Blythe	66C	B
Mr.	Jim	JA Dalgarno	75C	C
Mr.	Jonathon/Jon/Tiny	J Marsden	75C	B
Mr.	Andrew/Paul/Andy	AP Gilbert	75C	C
Mr.	Michael/Robert/Mike	MR Pether	66C	A
Mr.	David/Dave	D Attmere	75C	C
Mr.	Lee	LR Knight	75C	C
Mr.	George	WG Russell	65C	C
Mr.	David	D Asbury	75C	C
Mr.	Gregory/Greg	G Hill	75C	C
Mr.	Arthur/Archie/Paul	A Soan	66C	A
Mr.	William/Henry/Bill	WH Harper	69A/BC	
Mr.	Raymond/James/Ray	RJ Hannan	61A	C
Mr.	Derek/Del/Paddy	D Cross	65C	C
Mr.	Gerald/Sam	G Francis	65A	A
Mr.	Mike	MH Clare	62C	C



**BEACHLEY OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION
BALANCE SHEET at 31st December 2015**

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

ASSETS

	£0.00	Cash in Hand	£0.00
	£5,876.64	Cash in Bank	
£5,876.64		Total Cash	£8,950.02
£26,020.49		Monmouthshire Building Society Account	£26,401.22
£0.00		Sundry Debtors	£0.00
£31,897.13		Total Liquid Assets	£35,351.24

SHOP STOCK

£1,720.05	BOBA/AAS Regalia	£1,893.38
£33,617.18	Total Current Assets	£37,244.62

LIABILITIES

£299.11	Reunion	£912.38
£182.07	BOBA Golf Fund	£173.37
£439.40	Benevolent Fund	£539.40
£920.58	Total Liabilities	£1,625

£32,696.60	Net Working Capital being Current Assets minus Liabilities	£35,619.47
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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

£44,215.13	Balance as per last Balance sheet	£47,696.60
£3,481.47	Add surplus of Income	£2,922.87
	Subtract deficit of Expenditure	

£47,696.60	Accumulated General Purposes Fund being Net Working Capital and Total Fixed Assets	£50,619.47
------------	--	------------

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 decreased slightly there are still many who pay 5 years fees at once.

Echoes:

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

Printing & Postage:

This year we sent the Echoes to fewer as a result of the "on line" release, but still had requests for postal delivery

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 reasonable turn-out was made.

Investment Account:

This investment has continued to give a modest increase despite the low interest rates.

Additional Income:

Our late Heritage Member and the current Echoes Editor have continued to encourage CD Sales.

AANM Maintenance Fee:

This year a fee of £100.00 for maintenance was paid and will continue at this rate.

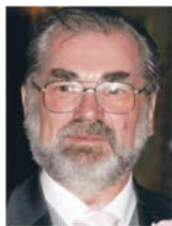
C. Ricketts (65A) Hon Treasurer BOBA

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 19.



BOBA Membership Secretary's Report

(All information is correct as at 31 March 2016)

Membership / New Members:

There have been 7 new members join since the last reunion (2015). .

New Members.

Mr	DJ	David/Dave	Griffin	66C	A
Mr	C S	Christopher/Chris	Dowrick	69C/70A	A/C
Mr	F	Francis / Frank	O'Meara	81C	E
Mr	P G	Peter	Gauterin	66C	A
Mr	G W	Gary	Gates	79A	B/D
Mr	K	Kenneth/Ken	Mackinnon	66C	A
Mr	J S	John	Spriggs	66C	B

Membership Database

The Membership Database has been updated to show only those members who are classed as Paid Members. This will of course give a crystal clear snap-shot of Association Member numbers. All others will be transferred to the Lapsed Member Database.

I am now in a position to give you the definitive number of Paid Members; it is 418.

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). New members will receive a reprinted booklet. Existing members can access the changes online as required therefore saving on postage.

1966 Groups ~ 50th Anniversary

Next year sees the golden anniversary of the 1966 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 18 Beachley Old Boys since the last issue of The Beachley Echoes, they are listed on page 16.

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) 1760788159

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

Quarterly

Half yearly

Yearly

☒

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

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

Recipient's Account number

First payment amount
(If different to usual amount)

First payment date
(Month & Year)

Usual amount

Usual payment amount in words

Second payment amount
(If different to usual amount)

Second payment date
(Fill in year)

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)

Please allow up to three working days for the funds to reach the recipient's account

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. 01760788159

Mobile: 07842 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) 1760788159

Mobile: +44 (0)7842 555110

By Royal Mail: Send to the address above.

Thank you in anticipation.

Sincere Regards,

Derek Fox ~ BOBA Membership Secretary

**John James 'Eddie' Edwards - 44A A Coy and Joe Finnerty 43A A Coy**

My last telephone chat with Eddie was about 12 days before Christmas. He was my main source of *select* news from Blighty in the form of newspapers clippings (regularly, considerable amount about Adolph H... for Irmgard!) and regular telephone chats (promising Army tax-free *nylons*) became habit...

As every year, the calendar *This England* arrived at the beginning of December 2015 and although I knew he was being treated for cancer it came as a shock to be told on December 28th (by his daughter Jaqui) that he had died on Christmas day... Shock doubled when told Joe Finnerty 43A A Coy had died three days before Ed...

Eddie was born in Hampshire and as a child he lived in married quarters at Shoeburyness (far eastern end of Southend). Joe also lived in Southend; the reason understandable. Both of the fathers of Ed and Joe served in the Artillery Garrison at Shoeburyness and had their sons enrolled in the Duke of York's military school at Dumfries at ten years of age... This scheme was available for sons of serving soldiers about to be posted overseas, seemingly to alleviate the load on the mother - Ed had five sisters! Joe and Ed came back to Southend after serving out their regular service time and both were BOBA members with Joe being BOBA Essex Welfare Rep at one time.

Eddie was my best buddy at Beachley; we signed-on on the same day, 21st Feb 1944 and resided in Barrack Rm No 1 for our first year as rookies, then we were in Barrack Rm No 3 as boy NCOs in charge of Rookies for another whole year. During the third year - when I had increased my weight by 4 stone - we were *volunteered* for company boxing and because we were the only pair of Middleweight class 11stone 6lb we had to fight each other which neither of us wanted to do... I was ahead on points at the end of the second round but points did not matter in the final and last round: after Ed's fast, first punch I could see nothing but blackness and stars. He apologised afterwards whilst we drank cha in the NAAFI.

21st Feb 1944... That first afternoon and evening in Barrack Rm No1 Beachley was, at first, a nightmare. What had I done? Just signed away 15 years of my life - just like the snap of the fingers - and here I was - at 14 and a puny 7stone 4lbs, my first time, properly, away from home with strange, hulking brutes speaking many different idiomatic accents milling around and questioning. Several cliques had formed and I'd been questioned in a manner hardly understandable, "Wirr youse frumm, then?" and had heard later, such sentences about me as, "A reet yokel from Essex. Come fra' outta the sticks an' sleeps wiw 'is chickens, place called Honger — Plonger stick it up yer conger."

Then it all changed. Eddie introduced himself, told me he was from Essex, and sat on my bed,

"Feeling rough are you?" he asked, "It'll pass. It did for me when I joined the Jukies, Army Boys school four years ago and was sent to a cold and miserable old ruin of a place in Scotland, salted porridge for breakfast and all ..." I automatically questioned the 4 years and he proudly told me he was *an Old Soldier*. We got onto Essex and other things including if any of those other rough looking types tried anything I just had to give him a call - he and his Jukey & *Queen Vic* mates would be there to sort them out ...

Ed was in the Company soccer team which I wanted to get into but could not because Old Shack (gym buster staff Shackleton)



Eddie about to do business



Joe and Dickie Coburn (44A A Coy) reading up on the odds at Chepstow races during a BOBA reunion



insisted I play rugby... (This was mentioned in an earlier Echoes...

We left Beachley on 5th Feb 1947, Ed went into the RA and I into the RASC and next time we saw each other was in Nairobi Military Dock in 1949 after which he went on serving in Hong Kong and places overseas whilst I was shipped back to Blighty, invalided out of the army... Ed had been sent south from Nanyuki to have *special operations* done on his knees at Nairobi Dock and was somewhat vexed that football was out of the question after the ops ... He had trouble with his knees thereafter. Coupled with that was that every time his immune system got low, a microscopic parasite family — probably from a Hong Kong beach — multiplied in its home in his left knee causing it to swell and rendering him immobile with fever and sickness for a couple of days.

Ed's regular service finished in 1955. He and new wife Sally came looking and found me at home in our little village near Ongar in Essex. Shortly after that I got married, Ed was my Best man — and Judy and I lived in Barking, Essex, about an hour's car-run from Ed and his family at Southend. His three children and our two kids often played happily together on Southend mud and clearly remembered is one of our holidays together at Appledore, north Devon in 1966 when Germany were controversially beaten by England in the world cup football final. Ed and I listened to the game on the radio whilst we repaired my Ford car which had blown its head gasket. That was whilst Sally and Judy watched the game on the TV indoors.

In those days all car repairs were done at home, or at the roadside etc... etc... Money was not that tight just close-fitting and after all we could never forget were trained as Fitters-VM for the use of ...and the car had to be Serviceable next day for return to Essex.

Eddie's early civvy-street job was as a Buyer of aircraft spares - mostly at ex-WD auctions -- and I'd get fascinating calls of

amazing things he'd bought, like a Catalina Flying Boat's complete tail and fin which was already sold as he drove back to Southend. Such was the demand.... Probably still is... In those days, our families and Ed & I were constantly in touch and it was early in his buying capacity that he suffered one of the instances of worm- in-the-knee problem. He was on the way to an auction and had to stop the car because of a bout of nausea and fever with his knee dreadfully swollen. This happened several times over two decades with puzzled specialists giving some relief but not a perfect solution. It eventually went away, or, perhaps, he stopped mentioning it. Nowadays the lawyers would have got him some sort of compensation yet I doubt whether Ed would have done much about taking it up with MoD, War Department or even the Royal British Legion

I went with him on three of those buying trips and one was a free-clearing-out of three hangars at Sevenoaks airfield where just three Marconi Encoders (size of radio and were still required, although obsolete without Marconi being able to supply) - were among acres of supposed rubbish and *junk* — which paid Ed's boss an awesome, 4-figure sum. Small wonder Eddie and a partner started their own aircraft spares company, which later became Ed's own company, Flightspares, Southend with a branch in Toronto, Canada run by his son Dene.

Before that though, in Summer 1967, when Ed & Sally were still living in Westcliff she phoned us in Barking with a request for me to take Ed off on a holiday. This, because he was in that state of indecision and anxiety one gets into, when making the giant step to be one's own boss. So at my suggestion we put a two-seater canoe - Judy and (woman-friend) Patricia had built at evening classes whilst I was full-time studying - on his car roof-rack and we took off for Hereford to DO the River Wye. Contrary to my normal procedure we did not put our clothes into sealed plastic bags before starting and on the third day rued the decision because an angry swan capsized us and we had to walk three miles in sopping wet clothes: Ed with his swollen knee and all! Before that, earlier in the day, we had gone out of control backwards through the rapids of Symond's Yat, taking the fishing lines - with hooks, of course - from two angry anglers' rods.

It was some miles farther downstream when rounding a sharp curve that we came to a very wide part of the river and saw on the far bank a swan on her nest with her faithful male close- by. I expressed my fear and Ed, sitting in front, told me it was no sweat, only a swan.

Much as most time, we weren't paddling, just letting the river push us along.

I heard noises from behind: harsh hissing sounds. Then came loud *Blatt-Blatt-Blatt* ... from the whacking of wings on the water which was followed almost immediately by a really hard blow in my back and left shoulder. The swan had his neck curled back so that the wings and chest hit first followed by the beak. The rollover was rapid. I saw weeds and yellow water but managed to hang onto the coaming of the canoe as we came up. The canoe was almost full of water



Eddie, Joe, Peter Foyle, Jay Bee and Dickie Coburn



and we saw the paddles and seats floating off downstream with the male swan still glaring and hissing at us from about two yards away. We got the canoe onto the bank and left it there. Then plodded across the field to the road where we met a cheerful old chap at his garden gate who cheerfully told us, ours was the fifth canoe to be turned over that week, "... Thett female, she be sittin' arn addled eggs..." - he chortled "...and, no, there bain't be no telephone ner houses fer another three mile afore ye gets ter the pub...."

The two fishermen cheerfully greeted us when we arrived. On the payment of two beers each for each of them we could have our paddles and seats back.

Because of the weir we took the canoe out at Tintern and next day drove through Beachley Camp's main-gate with no one there to stop us. We drew up on the slipway by the workshops. A young captain came out and told us we could not launch our *kayak* on WD property and when we told him we were ex Beachley Boys he took us inside, gave us tea and the address of Ted Peacock so that we could join Beachley Old Boys' Association.

That was how I came to know Joe Finnerty; predominantly we met at BOBA reunions and not so often in Southend. What I didn't know during the last three months of the Palestine mandate was that an ex-Beachley Boy, Joe, was in Sarafand Garrison whilst I was there. Two decades later, much the same happened, Joe was working for Ford at the same time I was...

Eddie had a thing about Volvo cars and about a year later he bought his first Volvo. A call from Sally had us all down at their place again and the first thing noticed was the canoe outside, upside down. Whilst the wives and kids were indoors Ed took me to the detached garage to show his *new car* ... I admired it and with amazement saw a groove - about 1¼ inches wide - dead centre in the roof, running almost the total, longitudinal length of the Volvo roof. Before the notion hit me I said, "New piece of styling — eh oh! A roof rack - "

"No!" he snarled, "Your blasted canoe." As my spirits sank he laughed, "My fault. I hung the canoe up there in the roof and over a couple of months the rain leaked slowly in until the weight was enough to break the thin cord I'd used. Looks neat though don't it."

Ed had a quick dry humour the rapport of which suited the audience of the spontaneous moment of scenarios as they occurred. During a BOBA reunion weekend we were at an extinct mine which had been turned into a tourist trap, museum and souvenir outlet which was above the tunnel tourists were expected to go down into. On our way there a woman came out of the souvenir shop with a long bodied, short-legged sausage type of dog and Ed said loudly,

"I'm not going in there - that dog was as tall as a greyhound when it went in -- look at it now!"

As I wrote that, just now, it did not seem funny yet at the time, all of them there -- including me - were laughing, even the dog-owner. Not what is said, is it? - it is *HOW* it is said, with the right timing, which reminds of his put-on Scottish accent, which at times, had me quite embarrassed - and worried. Such was when we took the canoe - at Ed's insistence - to the river Arun and launched it at Littlehampton. I guessed afterwards that Ed had looked up the tide times because we were travelling at about 2mph without paddling whilst going inland towards Arundel. Another canoe with man and woman crewing, came level at about 20 yards across from us. What I thought had been a beret I realised was a Tam o' Shanter and was too late to stop him. Ed shouted.

"Och aye the noo. Wirr be yer frae?"

The Scot yelled back, "Lochmaben on the Annan, de' ye ken ?"

Ed yelled, "Ah doo thett! ~ castle and loch an aril. Dumfries wirr - "

The Scot interrupted, "Wee'll ah'll gae ter me grannies. Ett be ney mehr als sechs mile" he spoke loudly to his partner, "Yon 'marn be ons'err ney-bar."

I was glad they were paddling faster and pulled away

It also occurred to me - afterwards - that Ed had planned the trip to suit him. We gently paddled about 6 miles along the river at about 5 mph so that we arrived at the famous *Black Rabbit* pub just after opening time. Although Ed was not a drinker he did like a pub with good grub along with a half of cider or light ale and as we tied up I saw with horror the other canoe was already there. It happened exactly as I thought it would and Ed kept up the charade of being the complete stranger's neighbour. The man had looked small in the canoe. Out of it he was over 6 feet tall and built like a bull. The woman, however was the opposite, petite and dainty and she probably saved Ed's hide by telling him he looked like some Laird or other, who was extremely handsome, like Ed. Ed's reply was,



The late Capt (Retd) Paddy Greer (44A A Coy) and Joe



"Och, thartah'd be mah twin brither Haemish, 'e's effer in shtook wi the Poaleese. Et's the poachen' da yer see, he cannae keep his fingers off n them sall-mon an' bambies an'arll. " The couple eventually left whilst we were eating, convinced, it seemed, Ed was born in Dumfries.

I didn't get to know Joe all that well. He hardly ever spoke about himself. His wife died a short time before we first met at Beachley. Ed told me that, along with Joe having a daughter who lived in Devon. After reunions I'd eventually end up in Essex and on three of those occasions we had a drink and a meal together when Ed took me to the golf club Joe used. I never got to know any more about his time in Palestine nor Ford than already told here but I did manage to squeeze out of him that he was a Chartered Mechanical Engineer and he'd been to Ireland to establish that his correct surname had two *n*'s and not with only one as he was christened ...

At the end of November 2015 I rang Joe because I could not get Ed on the phone and Joe told of Ed having been in hospital being very ill from Chemotherapy. Joe had played 9 holes of golf a few days earlier and sounded in good condition....

If Eddie had been spared another month more our personal association would have been a full 72 years of REAL friendship. At our last chat, he said he'd had enough of Chemotherapy — it was that which had made him feel *really ill* and was going to give a *cannabis- extract* a try that his son Dene in Canada was going to get for him. Not hearing from him I assumed he'd gone to Canada. I tried Joe's number which was not available, no reason given. Then being told on 28th December that Ed had died on Christmas Day had me shocked. I said I'd call Joe Finnerty and the shock was doubled when Jaqui told me Joe had died three days before Ed.... Septicaemia they said and I thought of lost balls and blackberry bush thorns on golf courses but the *experts reckon old folk can suffer internal ruptures that turn septic*. I still don't know... there doesn't seem to be much said about Joe Finnerty's passing — does there?

John Bass (44A A Coy)

Editor's Contact Details ~

Ray Armstrong
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Tel: 01942 491140
email ~ r.armstrong@virgin.net

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. 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

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 Ex WO2 (AQMS), Lou Walker, REME, 55A Group.

Paper Copy of the Beachley Echoes

If you require a paper copy of the newsletter please drop the new Editor a line stating name, group and address. His contact details are on page 13.



Apprentices at Aberfan

However, one major episode in the life of the "Beachley Boys" has never been reported. I refer to the tragedy of Aberfan in which no fewer than 144 people lost their lives; but more poignant was the fact that 116 of those were young children. I know that numerous survey apprentices were involved in the rescue operations and bearing in mind that the 21st October marks the 40th anniversary of that disaster I thought it would be fitting to recall my memoirs of the Chepstow Apprentices involvement.

Aberfan was a dreary, perhaps rather a dirty, small village built on an incline with the Merthyr Vale deep mine at the lower end and Pantglas Junior School perched at the top. Lurking some 2000 metres behind the school were the slag tips with their daily feed of colliery waste climbing ever higher towards the sky. Those tips were to prove so significant on that damp foggy day. But the weather could not dampen the joy of the children as they entered the school at nine o'clock on that Friday morning of the 21st October, for in six hours' time they would be breaking up for a week half term holiday. But that holiday, or any other holiday, never came for less than sixteen minutes later one hundred and sixteen of those tiny children were dead!

Days of rain and underground streams had turned the waste slag tips into molten slurry until without warning a complete tip became unstable, turning into a gigantic unstoppable wave estimated at over 80 miles per hour heading directly for the village. Three houses stood in its path, all three were swept away together with their occupants. But another building was also situated in its path--Pantglas Junior School --where 141 young pupils aged ten and under had just answered the register. The slurry hit the school, smashed walls and windows, brought down heavy beams and smothered the children with tons of that black death, burying them alive. Only 25 children survived!

On the day of the disaster I was a SSgt instructing potential Field Surveyors at the Army Apprentices College in nearby Chepstow and being the nearest military unit to Aberfan it was perhaps natural that we were put on stand-by in case we were needed. However during those desperate first hours no thought of outside help was considered as the distraught local miners dug with their bare hands to clutch at anything which might help them rescue those poor children. But the last child to be brought out alive was registered at 11 am, less than two hours after the slurry had hit the school, all others were presumed dead!. It was now time to seek help.

We moved into the village some 24 hours later, the Squadron consisting of 150 adult apprentices and a few specialist equipment operators plus medical staff. Nothing will ever dim my memory of the sight which greeted us. A great mass of thick, deep black slurry covering an area a mile in length from the now contorted tips to the village streets. And clambering in that mess the villagers still working with spade and shovel seeking the lost children. All around stood those young mothers, their faces now etched and aged with grief looking tearfully towards the school ruins still praying that somewhere under that slurry their son or daughter may have survived. In fact they were praying for a miracle! Our first task, with the authority and assistance of the local police, was to throw a cordon around the village allowing only essential personnel to enter. Yes, the ghouls and sight seers were already arriving! Dividing our troops in two we established an eight hour on, four hour off, shift pattern working a triangular system between the three major tasks that confronted us. This would continue for another week for it took five days before the last person was found, an occupant of one of the houses swept away in the avalanche. Firstly, the slurry was still moving so a sand bag wall was essential to avoid the tip engulfing more of the village. Next was the gruesome task of hand sorting the slurry being excavated by mechanical methods to look for bodies or parts of bodies dislocated by the terrible force inflicted upon them. The third task was the Mortuary deployment where those young bodies were washed, cleaned and laid out so that in sudden death dignity could be afforded them. No Mother could ever be allowed to see the state of those youngsters prior to our harrowing task.

Before we left for the safety and calm of Chepstow the official death total was established as one hundred and forty four dead, 28 adults and 116 children. In this day and age we would probably be given counselling, but the part we played was nothing compared to the grief of those parents who even today wonder why it happened.

I have often revisited that little village. Gone are the tips, gone is the colliery, gone is the school but more to the point-gone are the children, for a complete generation was wiped out on that damp October morning. Aberfan to me ,and I'm sure those Chepstow Apprentices, will be forever known as the town without children!

A memorial garden now stands on the site of Pantglas School. small stone walls show where the classrooms once were, whilst each gravestone has a photograph of each child lying beneath in that mass grave.

Ron Birch 21 Oct 1966

Editor's Note: This article was published 10 years ago on, I think, the RE Survey School website. As it is now 50 years since this terrible tragedy I thought it was fitting to remember the lives lost and the part played by Beachley Boys.



The Kit Exchange in 1942

The monthly Kit Exchange was an event we all looked forward to. This was the day you changed all your worn out items of kit and equipment and went back to your room laden with new items in their place, IN YOUR DREAMS!

The reality was somewhat different.

When the day came, Boys with kit for exchange were paraded and marched to the QM Stores. Here we waited in three ranks while the RQMS finished his cup of tea and then came out of the store, if it was not raining, and shouted out the name of an item of kit, Shirts or Boots etc. If it was Shirts then all the boys who had shirts for exchange fell out of the Ranks and ran up to the Quartermaster, eventually forming into a queue. We ran because there were never enough stocks in the store to enable all the Boys to have their kit replaced, only so many replacement items were available and regardless of the condition of your kit if there were none of your item left, you went without. So first in the queue was the idea.



The QM had several ways of dealing with each item, he would say, "Serviceable" and you had to keep using it, "Repair", which meant the boy could repair it himself, or "Tailor" then you were given a Chit to take to the tailor for a repair, there was also "Neglect" this meant you had to pay for a replacement, and then there was the magical word "Replace" which meant you were getting a new item.

So there were many obstacles to overcome before you could get a new item. When we joined the School there was one item of kit that to some of us was not to our liking, and that was the Greatcoat. A lot depended on your size, there seemed to be plenty of medium sized coats but for the larger

Boys there always seemed to be a shortage. Therefore some Boys got new coats but some of us taller boys got second hand coats of unusual patterns. My first coat was more of a mustard colour than Khaki and was a very long single breasted coat with turned up cuffs on the sleeves. It was very old and the seams were giving way, but it took me three visits to the kit exchange, after tearing a seam apart each time, only to be given tailors chit, before finally on the fourth attempt I got a new coat.



The worst shortage was socks, they were always in short supply and knowing this the rush to get in the queue could be quite dangerous, elbows being used and if possible you would try to trip up the person in front of you. Happy Days. Socks were a quandary because if they had not been repaired properly i.e. with a neat lattice work of wool, you were told to repair them or pay for new, but if you had repaired them neatly, then, despite the number of darns they could be classed as serviceable

Our Service Caps were rather drab and formless so we all made an effort to improve them. This consisted of cutting the peak and pulling it down rather than leaving it straight out, and then inserting an old toothbrush handle inside the hat to make the front of the top above the badge, more upright. All of these modifications had tacit approval as the hats definitely looked better. On our final visit to the QM Stores to hand in our Service Dress the QM looked at every hat and said "Neglect" and we had to pay for them.



Boots were another pitfall, in order to achieve the required shine we were encouraged to either burn the boots with a hot spoon handle, which produced a smooth surface, or buff them with usually a toothbrush handle, which also produced a good surface but with a lot more effort. When the boots were due for exchange they usually had cracks in the area where the toe caps joined the uppers and the QM put this down to neglect due to the method used to achieve the necessary shine, and we had to pay for replacements. All of this stopped when the order came out that we were no longer permitted to polish boots, but must use Dubbin in order to preserve them. It was rumored that some of the Regimental staff had been heard crying when they received that order.



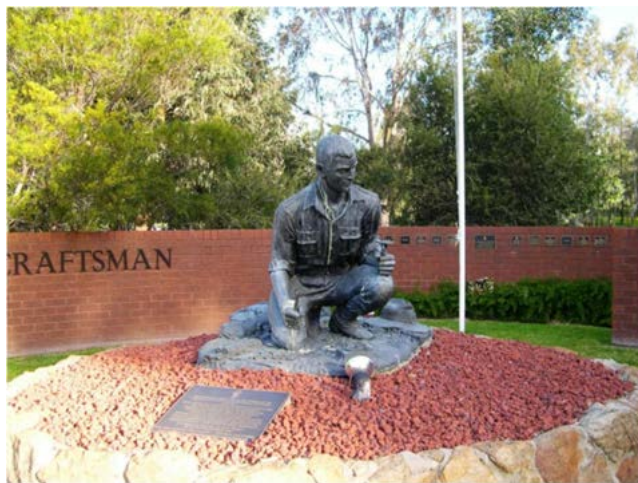
John Eveleigh (42A A Coy)

RAEME Museum at Bandiana

Our 'Shop Manager' Anthony Waite is in the process of taking over the AANM Website from Max Warwick who has been doing it since its inception; the process will probably be complete by the time you receive this edition of the Beachley Echoes. As part of the process Tony has been in contact with our Australian Apprentice Colleagues regarding the AANM Memorial at Alrewas and will be putting some information regarding their memorial and exhibition onto the AANM website.

The photographs below are of the Australian Apprentices Memorial and Exhibition Corner in the RAEME Museum at Bandiana, in Victoria, Australia. You will note that their Badges, Plaque and Pavoirs are similar to those on our National Site.

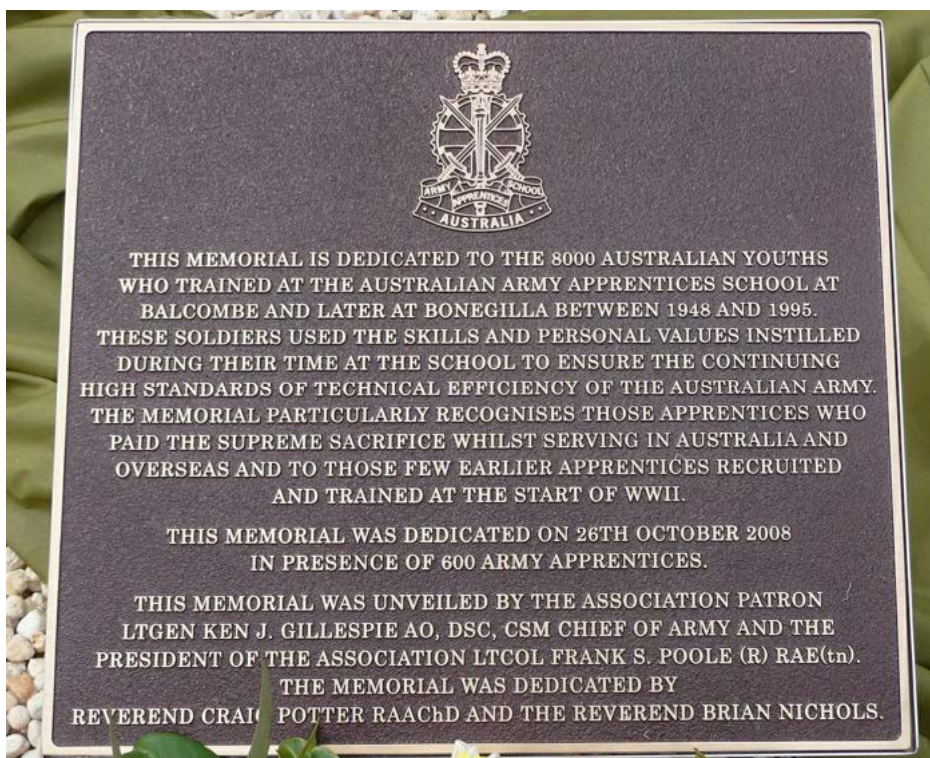
Tony has asked his Australian contact if the AAA Association is interested in forging stronger links with the 4 UK Old Boys' Association's and the AANM. Watch this space next year for an update.



Australian Army Apprentices Memorial



Apprentices Corner in the Museum

Apprentices Badge
& Pavoirs (below)

Plaque on Apprentices Memorial



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

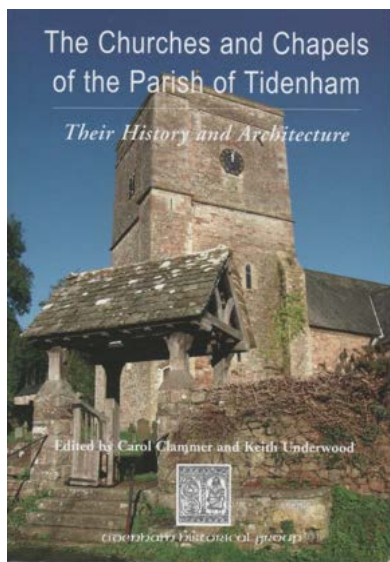
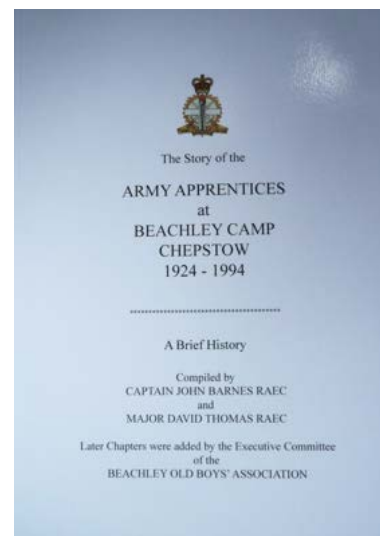
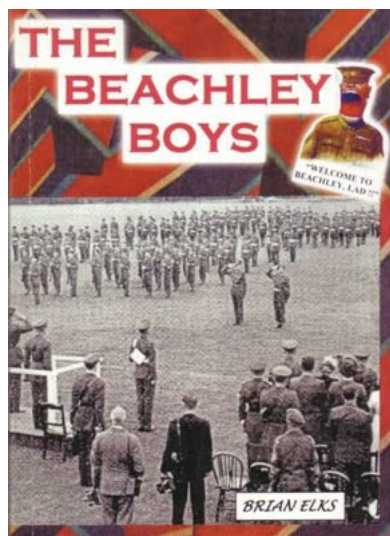
Sutton Lodge, 22 Seymor Street, Wellington, Somerset, TA21 8JU

anthonywaite22ss@hotmail.com

Additional items
illustrated on page 38

Details of Robot CDs on
page 11





New additions to the Shop List this year are as follows, all to order + £3.00 p&p (Small quantity of some items in stock)



- BOBA T Shirts @ £10.00 each in Navy & other Colours, S,M,L, XL, XXL
- BOBA Polo Shirts @ £12.00 each in Navy & other Colours, S,M,L, XL, XXL
- BOBA Sweat Shirts @ £15.00 each in Navy & other Colours, S,M,L, XL, XXL
- The New Car Stickers @ £2.00 + £1.00 p&p (8.7cm/2.5inch dia—see photo on right)





from the Fairway : BOBA Golfing Society

The 2015 BOBA Open Golf Championship

Once again the weather was kind to and everybody was very complimentary on the excellent condition of the course and how picturesque it is. I have booked the course for 17th September 2016 but have been told that we can't start until 11.00am I am trying to contact the owner of the course to see if they can move us to 10.00am or there about; so we stick to the 9.30am assembly time. The booking form is, as usual, over the page. I will send out on Saturday 10th September, by email, the timings.

The 2015 Results:

Congratulations to John Green who, playing off 7 handicap, parred the course.

Drawn Pairs	Alf Crascina (67B) 30 points & Tony Battle (57B) 32 points = 62 points
Best Par Three	Kevin Staples (66C)
Handicap Cup	Ron Devereux (65C)

The Ken Standen Trophy **John Green** (73B) with 36 points

I hope to see you all in September. Please keep you finger crossed that I can resolve the teeing off times.

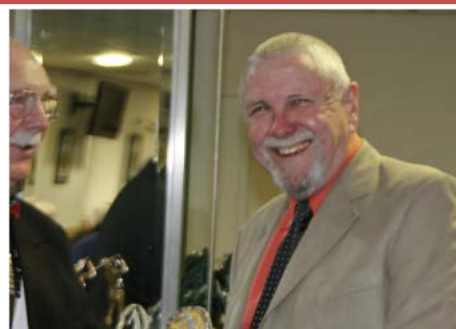
Tony Battle (57B B Coy)



John Green receiving the Ken Standen trophy from the President



Tony Battle & Alf Crascina with The Drawn Pairs trophies



Kevin Staples with the Best Par Three trophy



The 2016 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 17th September 2016. 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 3rd SEPTEMBER 2016** please.

Start times will be allocated on Saturday 10th September 2016 and all golfers informed by email, or letter, **so please ensure your entry is received on time and that email addresses are written clearly.**

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

PLEASE RETURN TO:

Tony Battle, 31 High Beech Lane, Chepstow, Monmouthshire, NP16 5BQ (Tel: 01291 622392)

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:.....