



ROYAL MILITARY POLICE OLD COMRADES LINK UP NEWSLETTER #137 NOVEMBER 2018



NEW CONTACTS



JOHNSON (nee LILLEY)

Former W/455144 Corporal Susan Johnson, Squad 7503. Sue served from 1974 until 1978 with London District Provost Company, 181 Provost Company and 158 Provost Company.

WHITTICK

Former 24494653 Corporal Neale Whittick, Squad 8103 but moved to 8104 for MT Training. Neale enlisted into the REME in 1979 and transferred to the RMP in 1980. After training he served with 160 Provost Company and 175 Provost Company until 1983.

YOUR CORRESPONDENCE

I am receipt of yet another letter and once again it refers to 6th Armoured Division Provost Company. Ron Holroyd has added to the ongoing tales of this company. He said, "The Commanding Officer was Major LF 'Dicky' Richards of the Essex regiment. The 2IC was Captain Marshman, Royal Artillery. The MTO was Lieutenant DM Hall Royal Artillery. The Junior Officer was 2nd Lieutenant Roskams. The RSM was 'Jock' Weir. I can list the Sergeants, Corporals and Lance-Corporals if so desired. In January 1952 the Company moved to BAOR, BFPO 15 with HQ Section at Bad Salzufflen and other sections at Bunde (Sgt Freddie Boulter), Minden (Sgt Early, Munster (Sgt Jimmy Lawton).

The Company was disbanded in 1959 and amalgamated with 2nd Infantry Provost Company and became 2 Division.

The 'Mailed Fist' Club was formed in 2002 by the late 'Johnny' Johnson and held its reunions at Blackpool in Hackett's York House Hotel. I believe these reunions have now ceased.

There are now very few members of the Company still in existence, most having gone to that Great Duty Room in the sky but I am sure that amongst the long list of past members there will be some that Mr Howe remembers. Serving at the same time as himself was Brian (then known as Bill) Bonsor, 'Spud' Bonner, Leatherland, Rathbone, Ashton, Price, O'Keefe, Cann, Parker, Mourby and many others too numerous to mention" *ED: Thank you Ron and you concluded that there*



was more information available - I look forward to future correspondence arriving on my doorstep.



The photograph on the left was taken on Corps Day, 23rd April 1953

Charles Husband also commented on the Company, he said. "Spent a little time stirring up the grey matter. Some names I remember are Maj LF Richards, Maj DB Smith, Capt Floweth, Lt Hall, Lt Woods, RSM Weir, RSM Mooney, CQMS Miller (how did he manage to work in that

smoke laden office?). Capt Floweth had the honour of failing me on my first driving test in Aldershot', at the completion of my signals course, How many remember 31 Pro Sig Wing At Inkerman Barracks, never saw a radio set after that! The doubtful award of crossed signal flags on my tunic sleeve. (Looked good on No 1 Dress). What memories of the 6th Armd and the Mailed Fist."

ooOoo-

David Leigh-Howarth said, "Thanks again for yet another first-class newsletter. So sorry to hear of Roy Oswick's passing. He was a real gentleman and a genuine developer of his people, indeed, he was one of those rare people who got real pleasure from helping others.

We first met in Cyprus early 1960's, which was the only time we served together. We last met in Northern Cyprus, about 8 years ago, where I had the pleasure of meeting Gloria, another delightful person. Farewell to a real gentleman and soldier. Returning to my normal optimistic self, Carol and I are fine and enjoying life to the full, even more than usual having had my second hip resurfacing op last month so I am now fully bionic in my hip region."

-ooOoo-

I had a short message from former Corporal Barry Wrankmore who said, "Thanks for your ever interesting Newsletters I finished a 6 year stint in 1969 and went on to complete A levels and a degree. Following 28 years of teaching I retired 10 years ago I have lived alone since my wife died 10 years ago. I would be delighted to hear from any ex colleagues." *Ed: If you have a message for Barry please contact through me. According to the information I have Barry was in R4 Squad and served in 101 Provost Company, HQ Rheindahlen, and 156 Provost Company.*

-ooOoo-

A simple message from Ian Oldaker, "Any ex corps members living up in Inverness like me? *Ed: If there is anyone out there please contact me.*

-ooOoo-

Peter Beeby said, "I am one of your avid readers mainly looking for friends I served with in Aden and reading the excellent reports with interest. Unfortunately it is mostly people who have passed away this time, one was John O'Donnell. I spent many a happy hours together with him and another close friend Tony Jay. With a sad heart I have to report that Tony Jay passed away on the 21st September 2018, a few days after a stroke" *Ed: I do not have any information on the late Tony Jay and would welcome any information on his service.*

-ooOoo-

During my recent visit to London I had the opportunity to visit The Shrouds of the Somme at London's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Of the British and Commonwealth soldiers who fell at the Battle of the Somme, more than 72,000 were never recovered. Their bodies still lie beneath the battlefields in France. One man has spent four years creating a shrouded figure to represent each one of these men. Shrouds of the Somme is a unique depiction of the losses of the First World War which brings home the true scale



of sacrifice. All 72,396 Shrouds were laid out shoulder to shoulder. The artwork by Rob Heard, seen in the photograph above left, is a graphic representation of loss, giving those men a name and a place in our memories forever.

The visit was one of the most emotional moments in my life and I defy any visitor not to have that familiar lump in the throat. It was difficult to fully understand the somewhat futile loss of life and the only way I could, at that precise moment in time, attempt to show respect was to remove my poppy and attach it to one of the figures. Sadly the figures were removed on the 18th November.

-ooOoo-

I was made aware of yet another annual ceremony that takes place on the 10th November at Victoria Station. Each year the Western Front Association commemorates the arrival on Platform 8, at 8.32 pm on the 10th November 1920 on the Unknown Warrior. He lay at the station overnight before interment at Westminster Abbey on the 11th November 1920.

-ooOoo-

Following an exchange of e-mails Don Woodiwiss sends his regards to anyone who remembers him.

-ooOoo-

My thanks to Andy Banks for sending the following item.

Great War Remembrance

25th November 2018

We all know that the guns on the Western Front fell silent at 11am on 11th November 1918. What is not so well known is that the BSAP was part of an Allied Force in East Africa which continued in action until 24th November 1918 when German forces under Gen. Von Lettow surrendered at Abercorn (now Mbala) in the north east of Northern Rhodesia.

A ceremony commemorating Von Lettow's surrender will take place at Mbala, Zambia this year on 25th November 2018 at 12 noon, the actual time the surrender took place in 1918.

The ceremony will be attended by dignitaries including the President of Zambia, the Presidents of the King's African Rifles and East African Forces Association and representatives of all nations on all sides of the conflict. A plaque containing the names of 29 men, including 12 British South Africa Police who were previously buried in the cemetery there will be unveiled by General Lord Richards, former British Chief of Defence Staff.

Arrangements have been made for a wreath to be laid on behalf of the President and all Members of the British South Africa Police Regimental Association in memory of 'Murray's Column' as the British South Africa Police Service Companies involved were known. 68 members of the column died in the campaign.

Lest We Forget.

CAN YOU HELP

A message from Clare at RHQ. "I am trying to find a 24527858 R Yates whose last address I have is the Great Barr area of Birmingham. I don't know if he's even still alive, he has a Journal account but is not known at the address we have for him. His standing order has been coming in for the last 11 years without us able to send a Journal, as you can imagine the funds are stacking up. Can you shed any light? Contract Clare at RHQ RMP Tel: 02392284564 if you have any information.

NOTICES AND INFORMATION



Rats Reunion 2019

The 3rd Hohne reunion is due to take place on the weekend of 29-31 March 2019 at The Holiday Inn, Junct 10, M6 Walsall. Tel: 01922618800 option 2 speak to Sharna. Quote Booking reference: EMP pay £60 pp deposit balance on arrival. Once you have booked please e-mail Pete Richards at peter589richards@btinternet.com with name of your partner and booking reference.

Christmas Cards

The RHQ Regt Shop has now got a wide selection of Christmas Cards (in packs priced at either £4.50 or £5.00 for ten cards) from The Soldier's Charity (The ABF) for sale and also in production, a more pricey (price TBC) limited edition one-off card (based on a 1918 original sent by the APM in Dieppe) commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Armistice, which will be sold in aid of the RMP CBF along with the timeless cap badge embossed and be-ribboned classic. To order, ring 02392 284651 (between 1000 hrs and 1600hrs weekdays).

DEATHS

CHAPMAN

Former 24091814 Corporal Ian Chapman died on Thursday the 8th November 2018 in St Richards Hospital, Chichester. Before joining the Corps in 1967 Ian was a Police Cadet at East Sussex. Whilst in training at Roussillon Barracks he met Evy whom he later married. On completion of training he was posted to BAOR serving at Sennelager and Dortmund, during this period he managed a short holiday in Canada on detachment with the battle group to BATUS. There followed a tour with 178 Provost Company, first working for a very short time with the Court Witness Section and then as a SOCO. On completion of his tour in NI he left the RMP and settled in Chichester before moving to Selsey, West Sussex. In civilian life Ian had diverse jobs that included security and as an owner driver of a taxi. Post military service he was injured and this resulted in spinal damage that affected him in later life. He also suffered from heart problems and had survived serious heart surgery over the years. Ian underwent an operation to remove his gall-bladder some 11 weeks before his death and spent most of the time following the operation in St Richards Hospital where he died peacefully with Evy and daughter Claire at his bedside.

JAY

Tony Jay passed away on the 21st September 2018 following a stroke. I understand that he served in Aden 1969 to 1971. At the time of writing no other information is available.

ROBERTS

Former 23234673 Lance-Corporal Brian Roberts died on the 11th November 2018 at a Liverpool hospital following a stroke. He had travel to Chester from his home in Belfast to take part in a remembrance Parade in Chester. Brian, seen on the left, served from 1955 until 1959 when he was medically discharged following receiving a gunshot wound to the head. He was a long standing member of the Northern Ireland Branch. On the 19th November three members from the Northern Ireland Branch travelled to Wrexham for Brian's funeral. The branch standard was carried by Doug Sim. The members of the Northern Ireland Branch wish to thank Cheshire/North Wales RMPA and members of the RBL who also found time to attend the service.



SWEENEY

Former 23847318 Sergeant John Sweeney passed away on the 2nd November 2018, aged 75 years, following a long illness. John enlisted into the QOH in 1960 before transferring to the Corps two years later. Following training with R25A Squad he went on to serve with 2 Division Provost Unit, 24 Brigade Provost Unit (Aden and Plymouth), SIB Detachment Taunton, 200 Provost Company, London District Provost Company, UNFICYP and 111 Provost Company. He was discharged in 1975 and joined the West Midlands Police. John was a long standing member of the Coventry and Warwickshire Branch and was present at the first Branch meeting on the 28th July 2001. Our thoughts will be with Dee and her family at this sad time. Dee's address is 29, Freesland Rise, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV10 9QE if you wish to send condolences.

-ooOoo-

KEEPING A PROMISE

By Mike Hewitt

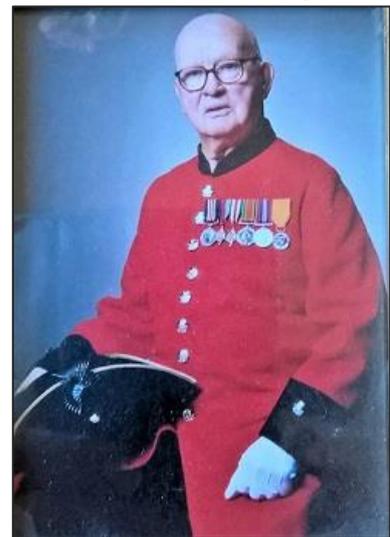
Every story has a beginning and this one is no exception and I hope that it will be interesting to all.

Twenty-eight years ago as a very enthusiastic RMPA and Branch Member I became very closely involved with the Royal Hospital Chelsea mainly through the connection of In Pensioners badged CMP/RMP but not exclusively and the fact that I was in those days a Regional Association Representative and Standard Bearer for the Branch which allowed me to be involved with the RMP/RMPA on a National level and local. In 1992 I was fortunate to meet a WW2 Veteran CMP who had just joined the RHC by the name of John Welsh MM, at that time there were approximately five ex CMP/RMP in the RHC and of course they were always available to attend the Reunion Dinners and other events when required. My relationship with John became much more than the others due his Scottish decent and connections with old family friends in Northern Ireland in fact he became close to all my family, in a way like a father figure and this allowed some very long and close conversations between us and so visits to the RHC for all of us became very regular.

It was in 1996 that I tried to get John over to N Ireland for a Branch Dinner, however due to airline strikes that never happened. August 1998 saw the IRA Terrorist Bomb in Omagh and at the time John expressed his outrage and revulsion at such a cowardly act and it seemed to stick in his mind. In that same year the Portadown Branch (RBL) sent an invitation to the RHC for Pensioners to travel over for the November Remembrance Period, John and two others volunteered. For me it was a dilemma because I always travelled to London for that period however John insisted that I did not divert from my usual attendance in London as he knew that Phyllis (my Wife) would be keeping in touch with him and in his company.

It was on the Friday prior to Armistice Sunday 1998 not long after his arrival in Portadown he contacted Phyllis with the idea of travelling to Omagh to see the people there so as he could offer his sympathy and support in person. Contact was made with the Omagh Branch RBL for a visit to be made the next day (Saturday) for himself and one of the other In Pensioners called Harry in their Scarlet Dress with Phyllis agreeing to transport them in our car. On arrival in Omagh a great welcome was given by the Omagh Branch of the RBL not only for John and Harry for making the effort but it was the first time ever that Chelsea Pensioners had been seen in their scarlets in Omagh. After a short meet in the RBL Club they then went to the actual site of the Bomb where they met local people who were so pleased and overwhelmed by their effort to be there, flowers were laid by John who had purchased them personally and this made a significant time in Omagh's history. Unfortunately John and Harry could not attend the Armistice Day parade that year and so they returned to Portadown. It was a talking point for a long period of time after that weekend and I remember being in London to see John later and it was still a vivid memory for him and he said that perhaps on a future date he would like return to Omagh to take part in the Armistice Day Parade in Omagh.

This was never to be completed because it was only a few years later that John died, however I made a promise that at some time in the future I would return to Omagh on an Armistice Day Sunday and parade with the veterans on his behalf and memory. It has been 20 years until the opportunity to carry out that promise became possible.





Due to personal reasons I did not travel to London, but I still intended to parade somewhere in Northern Ireland for that special occasion. It came to me in a flash (I could go to Omagh and complete that promise). So contact was made with the Chairman of the Omagh Branch RBL and I explained to him about the In Pensioners and the promise. Without any questions my attendance was welcomed and details of the Day were sent to me. I was given a warm friendly welcome and the only *REDCAP* that had ever paraded in Omagh, the day was so well organised and the number of veteran's on parade was exceptional boosted by Cadet Forces and civilian support groups. The Guest of Honour was Mr Bob Lingwood (*seen on the left with Mike*) an Ex Royal Corps of Signals NCO and his age was 100 years and 4 months which means he was born just before the Armistice was signed and one of only a few still with us today. After the parade I managed to meet him and a photo was taken. The conversation was excellent and he was originally from Suffolk (England) he served here in N Ireland and at the outbreak of WW2 was immediately posted to England, from there his story cannot be repeated here. It was a really awakening experience for me as in reality I was a total stranger to all those in Omagh and yet I was accepted with open arms and have been asked to return.

To sum it all up we should never, if at all possible renege on promises made even if a long period of time has passed as the

reward remains the same and that is satisfaction within oneself.

Compiled by: Bob Egelton
02392 265645
07913997233
joybob@btinternet.com
Skype: pompeybob65