

The Crossed Quills



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The Magazine of the
Artillery Clerks' Association

Edition 16
December 2012

Chairman's Foreword and Notes by Lt Col Joe Falzon BEM OSJ

What an exiting year it's been for everyone!! 2012 will stick in our minds as our nation has seen celebrations for Her Majesty The Queen's Diamond Jubilee, including the Thames Pageant, a spectacular flotilla reflecting Britain's maritime heritage. We now have a Tour de France Champion for the first time and also a Grand Slam winner after God knows how many years. In the middle of September, we proudly finished hosting the best ever Olympics and the inspiring Paralympics.

The Association had a good year too, with Members enjoying two outstanding, well supported annual reunions, one in Larkhill and the other in Hereford, Germany. Both are fully reported and well supported by photographic evidence in this edition of The Crossed Quills. Over the past twelve months we also welcomed George Mould as a new Member and Paddy Butler as an Honorary Member.

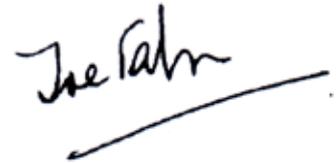
This edition of The Crossed Quills is only possible due to a huge co-ordinating effort by Andy Tibble, supported by all the contributors far and wide. I give them all full credit for putting together another memorable, which goes a long way to ensure that our Association remains vibrant and relevant.

In December 2012, a number of members based on Salisbury Plain, accompanied by our Association Standard Bearer, attended the St Barbara's Day Church Service and lunch at Larkhill. I am pleased to inform you that the planning for the next Association Weekend and Reunion Dinner has started in earnest, gradually gearing up and culminating with an intense period of activity in the four weeks leading up to Saturday 22nd June 2013.

We are extremely fortunate in the wonderful commitment and hard work shown by our Committee, past and present. Please continue to support and encourage them to deliver what you need, be it

newsletters, websites, parades, reunions, comradeship, mutual support or just a friendly chat over the phone. On behalf of the entire Membership, I would like to thank Andy Tibble, Ian Constantine, Paul Corker, Ron Holmes, Roy Deal, David Stotan, Dennis Norris and Joe Hoggins most sincerely.

Finally, I know you would all want to join me in wishing all the best to our Members currently on operations and to pray for their safe return home.



Secretary's Report by Andy Tibble MSM (former WO1(SSM))

Once again this has been a very busy year, but a successful one with both Her Majesty The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations and also with the Olympics. I can't believe that it is now time for me to start editing another edition of 'The Crossed Quills'. This has been once again a very busy year for the Association. The Association has been represented by our Standard Bearer, Andrew Jones at the St Barbara's Day Service which was held at Larkhill on Sunday 4th December 2011, Royal Artillery

Parade at Esher on Thursday 17th February 2012, Gunner Sunday at the Royal Hospital Chelsea on Friday 22nd April 2012 as well as this year's St Barbara's Day Service which was held at Larkhill on Sunday 2nd December 2012. On behalf of the Committee and members I would like to thank Andrew for his commitment in representing the Association at so many venues throughout the year.

Once again we had a most excellent Reunion Dinner which

was held at the WO's & Sgt's Mess in Horne Barracks, Larkhill on Saturday 16th June 2012 under the auspices of Mr Andy Tibble MSM. Although the numbers were down on previous years due to other commitments, we were all proud to welcome the Maj Gen Matthew Sykes as our Guest of Honour and SSgt Rob Green from 14 Regt RA who represented the RSM 14 Regt who was unable to attend due to the RASM's dine out. A full report on the Dinner by our Secretary can be read later in

the magazine. On behalf of those members who attended, I would like to say a big thank you to all of those who were involved in assisting me in making this a most memorable evening and a most enjoyable weekend.

WO1 (SSM) Ron Holmes MSM (Germany Reunion Secretary) organised a very successful Germany Reunion weekend that took place in 1(UK) Armd Div HQ & Signal Regt's WO's & Sgt's Mess in Hereford on Saturday 20th October 2012. A full report on the Dinner by our Germany reunion Secretary can be read later in the magazine. Further details regarding the Germany Reunion in 2013 will be sent out in due course. Thank you also to WO1 (SSM) Ron Holmes MSM (Germany Reunion Secretary) and WO Hauke Michelson (Honorary Member) for supplying photographs from the two Reunion weekends for this edition of 'The Crossed Quills'.

It was evident from this year's Reunion that the number of those members attending was down from previous years. This is the only opportunity for all members of the Artillery Clerks' Association to meet up over a weekend in the UK and therefore, it would be good to seek the support of all members in supporting this event each year. I know from speaking to some members who didn't attend the Reunion at Larkhill this year that transport had been a possible reason for non-attendance and if this is the case, I would be most grateful if you could either let me or Ian know as soon as possible as this is easily rectified with perhaps car sharing etc. This should be included on your Reunion return when sending them back to Ian, so that we can assist you where possible. I can appreciate that this might be slightly more difficult for those travelling from Germany to the UK. If you wish to attend,

however, have transport issues, then you should speak to Ron Holmes or myself as we may be able to come up with a possible solution to ensure that you are able to attend. Our Germany Reunion Secretary, WO1 (SSM) Ron Holmes organises an excellent Reunion Weekend in Germany every year and it would be really good to see those Artillery Clerks' who live in Germany supporting this event especially if you can't make it to the UK dinner each year.

Congratulations and well done to Lt Col Russ Lee RA who was awarded the MBE in the 2012 New Years Honours List and also to WO1 (SSM) Ron Holmes who was awarded the MSM in the 2012 Queen's Birthday Honours List. Congratulations also to Capt Ian Constantine RA on being selected for promotion to Acting Major with effect from January 2013 and also to WO2 (SQMS) Chris Harvey on being selected for promotion to WO1 (SSM) during the FY2012/13. Well done to you all. I have not been informed of any other promotions or awards or anything else during the past 12 months.

The 79th Artillery Clerks' Reunion will take place over the weekend of the 21st to 23rd June 2013 in the new Central WO's & Sgt's Mess at Larkhill. The Reunion dinner will take place on Saturday 22nd June 2013. Major General Richard Nugee, Director General (Personnel) has kindly accepted our invitation to join us as our Guest of Honour. Further details regarding the reunion weekend is enclosed with this edition of 'The Crossed Quills'.

Once again the 'Crossed Quills' has grown in size! I would like to take this opportunity in thanking those Association members who have contributed to this edition by forwarding articles and photographs for inclusion into this

edition. Donations for this year's magazine have been received from the Committee members, Vic Holdaway, Steve Callaghan and Steve Seymour. Many thanks for your contribution. Issue 17 of the Crossed Quills is due to be published and by the beginning of December 2013. I would be most grateful if you could all look through your individual archives to see if you have something of interest, old photographs that you would like to be published in next years' edition. These articles, with photographs should reach me by no later than Friday 6th September 2013. Please remember to forward all articles in typed script where possible, including a CD-ROM with the articles on, along with any original photographs that you may have. The photographs will be returned back to you once they have been scanned onto the system.

Our current membership stands at 205. There are currently 174 Potential New members on the Wanted List who were Artillery Clerks', but have not yet joined the Association. I am sure that there are Potential Members on the Wanted List that you know of their whereabouts. I would ask all Members of the Association to make a consolidated effort this year to try and encourage them to join the Association. Recruiting has currently slowed down and I urge you all to try and motivate either a formerly appointed Artillery Clerk or former Junior Rank Clerk's in the Gunners who has subsequently been promoted to Sgt or above within the AGC. A copy of the Application for Membership is enclosed within this edition of the Crossed Quills. Further copies can be obtained from the Secretary.

Unfortunately, I have lost contact with the following members who have moved and have failed to

notify me of their new forwarding addresses:

John McDermott,
Dave Smith,
Chris Wood,
Foxy Fox,
Neil Ridout,
Roger Essex,
Paul Davies,
Ritchie Syme,
Alan Foot,
Steve Hawke,
Dave Larcombe,
Lawrence Collingwood
& Rob Clarke

If anyone is in touch with those members listed above, grateful if you could ask them to make contact me or if you have contact details for them, grateful if you could let me have them so that I can re-establish contact with them.

Due to membership being spread over the Globe and not having in my possession everyone's e-mail address (or up to date one) may I please ask you all to make a point of reading the Notice Board on the Association Website www.artyclerkassn.org. There is no other way I can get details of promotions, deaths, etc to you in a timely fashion. In return may I please ask you to keep me up to date with any news, promotions, deaths, award of medals, change of address including e-mail, etc, etc.

Mr Steve Read gave those members present at the AGM at Larkhill an update on the progress that had been made in drawing up an Artillery Clerks' Association Family Tree which showed all of those individual Artillery HQs, Regiments and units where members have served which would include details of Chief Clerks, Assistant Chief Clerks going all the way down, in time, to Battery Clerks. I am glad to say that a lot of additional information

was obtained from members at the recent Reunion weekend. More information can be found by visiting our website at www.artyclerkassn.org. On behalf of us all, I would like to thank Steve for the amount of time and effort on behalf of the Association that he is putting into this project which is part of our history.

In the meantime have a good Christmas and New Year. Please remember those members and families who are ill at home and to those members of the Association who are deployed on military operations during the festive season. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

See you at Larkhill, if not sooner. Ubique.



Assistant Secretary's Report by Roy Deal MBE (former WO1(SSM))

Hello fellow AC's, my intent is to continue to make my main aim one of recruiting, a task I cannot carry out alone. I still need information – which is where you can help. Using the evolving technology available (Facebook, e mail, Twitter, to name a few) I ask you to seek out colleagues and friends who have lost touch with our exclusive club. If you could forward to me any details you have I will then write to individuals, enclosing previous newsletters etc and invite them back into the fold. Please do not hesitate to use my personal

email: roydeal@hotmail.co.uk or find me on facebook and forward any information you have about past AC's.

Andy and I intend to look at coming up with a plan that will delegate responsibilities down to a more regional group allowing the area secretary's to try and organise local low profile and low cost events just to help us get together more frequently, and during the process hopefully encourage more members.

I am getting low on ties (4 left) so would like to take this opportunity to conduct a survey of members in order to see if we have enough interest to do another run and if you have any useful retailers that accept small orders please pass details to me.

New cuff links, ties pins are now available @ £28.50 please contact me if you would like a set. Another plea to all those who have joined the civil service; Do we have enough AC's out there to get together over coffee when we attend meetings etc! If you are out there and interested I am happy to be a Point of Contact and maintain a register dealr288@mod.uk drop me an e mail, it would be nice to see a familiar face when going to meetings.

Lots to do – but I need your help! I look forward to hearing from you.

Roy Deal
Assistant Secretary

Association Committee 2012 - 2013

Honorary President	Lt Gen Sir Freddie Viggers KCB CMG MBE DL
Chairman	Lt Col Joe Falzon BEM OSJ
Secretary	Andy Tibble MSM - former WO1(SSM)
Assistant Secretary	Roy Deal MBE - former WO1(SSM)
Reunion Secretary	Maj Ian Constantine RA
Treasurer	Maj Paul Corker AGC(SPS)
Standard Bearer	Andrew Jones - former Sgt(AC))
Association Padre	Rev Dennis Brett - former WO2(QMS(AC))
Welfare Secretary	Dennis Norris - former WO2(QMS(AC))
Webmaster	David Stotan - former WO2(QMS(AC))
Historical Secretary	Joe Hoggins BSc - former WO1(SMAC)

Regional Secretaries

North	Vacant
North West	Dennis Norris – former WO2(QMS(AC))
Midlands	Steve Callaghan – former WO2(QMS(AC))
East	Capt Chris Berry BA
South	Graham Brown – former WO1(SMAC)
West	Roy Deal MBE – former WO1(SSM)
London Area	Steve Truslove – former Sgt(AC)
Scotland	Ted Fairbrass – former Sgt(AC)
Wales	The Secretary
Northern Ireland	The Secretary
Germany	WO1(SSM) Ron Holmes MSM LSL/AGC(SPS)
Rest of the World	The Secretary

Contact with Area Secretaries

The duties of Area Secretaries referred to as Regional Representatives in the Association Charter are as follows:

- The Recruitment of new members.
- Maintaining an area membership list.
- Coordinating travel to Reunions and other Association activities

Area Secretaries should also be keeping an active eye on the health and well being of members

in their area of responsibility and report anything untoward to the Secretary, Andy Tibble.

All members are encouraged to establish contact and ‘touch base’ with their Area Secretary as follows:

The North West -

Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Cheshire. Contact Dennis Norris at dn001k3794@blueyonder.co.uk

The North – Durham, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Cleveland, North, West and South Yorkshire and Humberside. Contact The Secretary at andytibble@btinternet.com

The Midlands –

Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, West Midlands, Leicestershire, Hereford and Worcestershire and Warwickshire. Contact Steve Callaghan at ao@inracf.demon.co.uk

The East –

Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Essex, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. Contact Chris Berry BA at berry3@tinyworld.co.uk

The South –

Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Surrey, West Sussex, East Sussex and Kent. Contact Graham Brown at lancing@ntlworld.com

The West –

Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Avon and Wiltshire. Contact Roy Deal MBE at roydeal@hotmail.com

The London Area.

Contact Steve Truslove at stevetruslove@aol.com

Scotland. Contact Ted Fairbrass at tedfairbrass@btinternet.com

Germany. Contact Ron Holmes at ronandkadja@aol.com

Rest of the World.

Contact the Association Secretary, Andy Tibble.

Webmaster's Report by David Stotan (former WO2(QMS(AC)))

My goodness where has the year gone! Hope we all enjoyed the London Olympics and Paralympic Games.

Security is second nature to us all, it comes with the job, but when it comes to protecting ourselves from the Internet against scams, viruses and hacks most leave ourselves vulnerable to attack. As a rule in my annual article I generally cover malware and virus threats but on this occasion I will focus on Facebook because I am aware a growing number of members are now using this social media. I personally do not use Facebook so I decided to source my information directly from: http://www.facebook.com/security/app_10442206389, there are more links on this page which you may find useful and informative.

WHAT THEY SAY

Facebook has systems to detect the rare cases when an account is taken over and used to send spam. When this happens, we shut off access to the account. The next time you visit Facebook, we ask you to complete a few steps to re-secure the account. When we talk about security, we're talking about scams, viruses, and hacks that could infect your computer or take over your Facebook account and result in a lot of annoyance for you and your friends. Security isn't just an issue on Facebook, but all over the web, which is why it's important to be aware online, and to learn how to protect your accounts and your computer.

WHAT YOU DO

if your account has been taken over and used to send spam, you should follow these steps immediately:

Reset your Facebook password. You can do this by clicking the "Forgot your password?" link on the login page or by going to the Account Settings page once logged in.

If you can't reset your password because the email address you use to log in has changed, or if your account has been disabled, visit our help page.

Make sure you have up-to-date security software on your computer, run a scan, and remove any malicious files. If you don't do this, and your computer is infected, your account may be taken over again. If you don't yet have protection for your computer, you can download a complimentary six-month subscription of McAfee security software. Learn more on the Software tab.

If a friend's account has been taken over and used to send spam, you should follow these steps immediately:

Tell your friend to check out this Page and follow the steps above.

Warn those who received the spam not to click on it, and to delete it from their Walls and Inboxes.

Here are some ways to be smart and aware on Facebook and across the Internet:

Don't click on links or open attachments in suspicious emails. If the email looks weird, don't trust it, and delete it from your inbox immediately.

Be wary of where you enter your password. Just because a page on the Internet looks like Facebook or another site you use, it doesn't mean that it is. Check the address bar in your browser, and learn to tell the difference between a good URL and a bad one. If you ever have doubts about the legitimacy of a link, simply type the website's URL (for example, <http://www.facebook.com>) into the address bar.

Be suspicious of any email or message that contains an urgent request or asks you to update your information or provide new information.

Be suspicious of emails or messages that contain misspellings or use bad grammar, especially if they're from someone who is usually a good writer.

Make sure you have an up-to-date web browser equipped with an anti-phishing blacklist. Some examples are Internet Explorer 8.0 and Firefox 3.0.10.

Make sure you have up-to-date comprehensive security software on your computer that includes anti-virus, anti-spyware, anti-phishing, and a firewall.

Make sure you've set your operating system to update automatically.

Make sure you've listed a security question and answer for your online accounts. This will come

in handy if you ever lose access and need to prove who you are. You can do this on Facebook from the Account Settings page. You should also add a mobile phone number from this page, which will help if we ever need to send you a text message to confirm your identity.

Don't share your passwords with anyone. Don't do it. Most reputable online services will never ask for your password through any form of communication.

Use different passwords for your various online accounts. If you use the same password everywhere, and it's stolen, you could lose access to all of your accounts at once.

Use a complex password that can't be easily guessed. Avoid common words, and make sure your password is at least eight characters long and includes capital and lower case letters, numbers, and symbols.

Remember that you choose what you share and with whom you share it. Think before you post, especially if the information is sensitive or personal in nature. You can learn more about how to control your information on Facebook, including how to choose an audience for each and every post you make, in our Privacy Guide.

Use caution when accessing or sending information over an unsecured public wireless network. Unless you can verify that a Wi-Fi network is secure, you may want to avoid transmitting sensitive information.

Help stop spam



remove all e mail addresses and use Bcc when you forward messages

Treasurer's Report by Major Paul Corker AGC(SPS)

General

A lot has happened since the Reunion and Dinner in Larhill last year. I have now deployed on Op HERRICK and now reside for the next 6 months in Afghanistan. There is no getting away from people is there: Ian Constantine and I bumped into each other in the 'Cookhouse' and I brought him up to speed on what was an excellent reunion. I told him 'that he owed the fund backdated subscriptions and that I had come to collect'. I passed on everyone's good wishes especially, his promotion. He sends his regards to all.

The update on the fund is that available cash has remained static from last year which totalled £3,181:00. Although the function is showing an overspend this was within the parameters set by the Committee. The outstanding amount will be recovered by some non-payments of attendees (Secretary to action) and the remainder will be offset by the General Purpose Fund.

I have prepared letters to those members who have outstanding subscriptions and the Secretary will convey to them the agenda points from the 2012 AGM. Those members with outstanding debts will receive clear direction of what action is required by them to remain within the Association.

That said the nucleus of the association remains steadfast and sustainable. I thank you all again for making my life as the Treasurer easier and I promise to support you throughout the coming year.

Main Action Areas. The following is highlighted for members:

With effect 1 Jan 13 subscriptions to rise to £10 per year. Members to change their standing orders with their own banks.

Outstanding Subscriptions - £2,315:00. £305.00 from 2012.
Mandate - 61 Members not paying by Direct Mandate.
Gift Aid - 53 Members failed to lodge their forms with the Treasurer.

Statement of Account As At 31 Aug 12

ASSETS		LIABILITIES	
Cash	£ 9.85	Function	-£171.06
Current Bank Account	£ 675.08		
Deposit Account	£2257.80		
Shop Stock			£ 52.00
Total Assets (A)	£2994.73	Total Liabilities (B)	- £171.06
AVAILABLE CASH (A-B)	£3165.79		

Summary

I continue to enjoy supporting you the members of the Association and yet again the Taxman donated £161.25 to our cause. Should we recover some of the outstanding subscriptions, the fund will be in a stronger position to support future reunions and you the members. I wish you all the very best from Helmand and hope to see you all in 2013.

Welfare Secretary's Report by Dennis Norris (former WO2 (QMS(AC)))

I am pleased to report that there are no outstanding welfare cases for our members and wish to remind everyone that there is help and support available for individuals in the Association that can be given in the strictest of confidence for those who feel they require help. Please feel free to make contact with the Association Secretary or I for advice on what help is available. Below is an extract from the Army Benevolent Fund website which advertises itself as "The Soldiers' Charity". Remember, please do not suffer in silence – your friends and colleagues are here to help via our associations.

Ubique
Dennis Norris
Welfare Secretary

ARMY BENEVOLENT FUND (ABF) – “The Soldiers’ Charity”

Who is Eligible

- Members and former members of the British Regular Army and the Reserve Army (TA).
- Dependant spouses and children of the above.

How do I apply for Help?

The ABF has seen a 30% rise over the past two years of soldiers, former soldiers and their dependants seeking help and this is set to increase.

The scope and scale of the work of the ABF is vast and we currently help over 4,000 people a year. ABF, “The Soldiers’ Charity,” help individuals directly, working through the Regimental and Corp Associations.

Contact Details

Email: info@soldierscharity.org
Tel: 020-7901-8900
Fax: 020-7901-8901

Case Study

In 2010 a Soldier, whilst serving in Nareh- Saraj, Afghanistan, was involved in an incident that resulted in him completely losing his hearing ability.

Following his medical discharge from the Army he moved into the Royal British Legion village in Maidstone, Kent, which is short term housing designed to assist former members of HM Forces to integrate back into civilian life.

The Soldiers’ Charity helped support him by making a number of grants to help smooth this transition. Through our partnership with BAE Systems we funded an online course in numeracy, literacy, computing and web design, and also paid for driving lessons. He passed his driving test in February 2012 and said that being able to drive has given him the independence and ability to visit his old colleagues from the Army back on camp.

The ex soldier hopes that with his training and subsequent qualifications he can pursue a career in computing and web design. He told us ‘I just want to say thank you to The Soldiers’ Charity, it has given me the chance to live my life unassisted and I am very grateful for your support’.

The Soldiers’ Charity works closely with Army Welfare Trusts to support the welfare of soldiers in the UK.





Your RAA On-Line

The Royal Artillery Association is widely publicised on the Internet and is currently undergoing major changes and additions. As well as our own website, *theraa.co.uk*, we now have a presence on Facebook, the British Army Website (*www.army.mod.uk/artillery*) and on ArmyNET. It will take a little while for the latter two sites to be fully operational so I kindly ask for your patience. These websites provide you with an informative and fun way of finding out what's going on in the Gunner world and for keeping in touch with Gunner friends and comrades. Many branches now have websites of their own and more and more branch members are able to access the internet. It's a good way to advertise your branch and maybe attract new, younger members and an invaluable method of advertising your reunions and get-togethers.

Artillery Clerks' Association Ties

The Association tie is of a silk/ polyester Gunner zig zag design depicting the crossed quills and the 'AC' in gold. Please send a cheque to the value of £13.00 made payable to The Artillery Clerks' Association to:

Mr Roy Deal MBE,
34 Birchwood Drive,
Durrington,
Salisbury,
Wiltshire SP4 8ER.

Artillery Clerks Family Tree Update by Steve Read (former WO2 (QMS(AC)))

Following the AGM a number of documents were received from members that have added more information to the family tree. The information held currently covers 324 Artillery Clerks and 109 units. The family tree information has been updated and is available through Google Drive. If members would like access they should email me at *artyclkproject@gmail.com* however, please note that to subscribe a GMail account is required. This can be signed up to, free of charge, at *www.google.co.uk*.

I am especially interested in obtaining copies of Artillery Clerks Location lists, Artillery Clerks Seniority Rolls and Promotion Board Results letters. I have been sent a number from 1987, 1988 and 1990, if members hold any others; copies of them would be greatly appreciated.



The Elizabeth Cross

The first Elizabeth Crosses and Memorial Scrolls are to be granted from 1 August 2009 (and will be retrospective to the end of the Second World War). The Elizabeth Cross is made of hallmarked silver and is in the form of a cross with a laurel wreath passing between the arms. The arms of the Cross bear floral symbols representing England (Rose), Scotland (Thistle), Ireland (Shamrock) and Wales (Daffodil). The Elizabeth Cross will be granted to the next of kin of Armed Forces personnel killed on operations or as a result of terrorism in a mark of national recognition for their loss.

Next of kin will receive the Elizabeth Cross - a sterling silver emblem in the shape of a cross over a wreath - plus a Memorial Scroll signed by The Queen which will bear the name of the person who died.

The Elizabeth Cross and Memorial Scroll will not just be granted to families who have lost loved ones in the recent operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; The Queen's recognition will also be available to the families of those who died in conflicts dating back to 1948, including the Korean War, the Falklands conflict and operations in Northern Ireland.



Artillery Clerks' Association Charter

General

1. The Association, entitled the "Artillery Clerks' Association" was formed at Woolwich on Saturday 7th March 1998. This Charter is being adopted to guide its activities. The Charter may be changed at any time by the Committee to reflect the wishes of the Association members.
2. The Aim and Object of the Artillery Clerks' Association is to promote comradeship amongst its members, both serving and retired and to provide a focal point for all members of the Association. The Association is essentially an old comrades association of former Artillery Clerks, either serving or retired.
3. The Artillery Clerks' Association is affiliated to and is a Branch of the Royal Artillery Association (RAA). All members of the Royal Artillery Association will be granted life membership of the RAA on acceptance.

Eligibility

4. **Full Members.** Full membership of the Association is open to any former Artillery Clerk in the rank range from Sergeant to Warrant Officer Class 1, either serving or retired. Membership may also be granted, with the recommendation of a former Artillery Clerk or member of the Association, to clerks who served in the Royal Artillery in the rank range from Gunner to Bombardier, and have subsequently been promoted to Sergeant in the Adjutant General's Corps.
5. **Honorary Membership.** Honorary Membership of the Association is specially designed to cover the widows and relatives of deceased Artillery Clerks. Other special cases of honorary membership will be considered on merit by the Committee and voted upon by the Committee and voted upon by the members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Honorary members may not vote on matters voted upon at the AGM.
6. **Authorization.** Membership of the Association may be sought by anyone under these rules. In the event of there being some doubt regarding application, the Artillery Clerks' Association Committee will arbitrate. The Association Committee has the right to refuse any application for membership, or cancel any existing membership, for example, for disciplinary reasons.

Purpose

7. The specific purpose of the Association is to provide:
 - a. A focal point for comradeship, largely through periodic reunion of:
 - (1) A formal Annual Reunion Dinner.
 - (2) An informal Dinner to be held at a frequency and location to be decided by the Committee, to include wives, girlfriends and widows.
 - (3) A very limited welfare service. This essentially means that the Artillery Clerks' Association, in promoting contacts between members, provides a network through which help can be given to any member. The focus for this activity within the Association is the Secretary.

Organisation

8. The affairs of the Artillery Clerks' Association will be overseen by the Artillery Clerks' Association Committee. The Committee will meet at intervals decided upon by the Chairman, and will comprise of:
 - a. President (Honorary).
 - b. Chairman.

c. Secretary. Responsibilities cover:

- (1) Association Membership.
- (2) Correspondence.
- (3) Providing a focus for the Association's welfare work and links to the RAA.
- (4) Production of a periodic newsletter.
- (5) Coordinating the activities of the Area Representatives.

d. Treasurer. Responsibilities cover:

- (1) Maintenance of a bank account entitled the "Artillery Clerks' Association".
- (2) Accounting for all the finances of the Artillery Clerks' Association.
- (3) Presenting a Statement of Account to the Committee (as and when required) and annually at the AGM

e. Regional Representatives. Responsibilities cover:

- (1) The recruitment of new members.
- (2) Maintaining an area membership list.
- (3) Coordinating travel to Reunions and other Association activities.

Areas covered are:

- (1) Northern Ireland.
- (2) Scotland.
- (3) Wales.
- (4) The North West consisting of Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Cheshire.
- (5) The North consisting of Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham, Cleveland, North, West and South Yorkshire and Humberside.
- (6) The Midlands consisting of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, West Midlands, Leicestershire, Hereford and Worcestershire and Warwickshire.
- (7) The East consisting of Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Essex, Northamptonshire, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.
- (8) London Area
- (9) The South consisting of Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Surrey, West Sussex, East Sussex and Kent.
- (10) The West consisting of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Avon and Wiltshire.
- (11) Germany.
- (12) The Rest of the World – covered by the Secretary.

9. Additional members of the Committee may be appointed by the Chairman as required, for example, Reunion Secretary and Assistant Secretary.

Fees

10. Membership fees are to be determined by the Committee. There is to be a fee to join the Association and the annual renewal fee.

11. Fees are to cover the costs of administration, including telephone calls, postage and stationery.

12. Reunions are to be self-financing, that is, those attending are to meet the full cost of all activities of the Reunion.

WANTED

for membership of the Association

John Adams
Ron Allen
Peter Allwright
Jimmy Anderson
Ron Anson
Dave Askham
Robbie Astick
Bob Barber
Gary Barker
Baz Barry
Ron Baynes
Benny Bennett
James Bond
Dave Boswell
Adrian Boxall
Ron Bristo
Dave Brookes
Alan Broomhead
Tom Browne
Dave Burfitt
Paul Buxton
Tom Carmichael
Stuart Carnegie
Fred Carroll
Jeff Carter
Mick Carter
Les Carton
Merv Chadwick
Chris Chamberlain
Bill Charlsworth
Dick Cliffe
M Collinge
Andy Collins
S Cornwell
Fred Cullingford
Alan Cosgrove
Sandy Cran
Keith Creswell
Harold Deacon
John DeMaria
Pat DeMaria
Jim Diamond
Derek Donovan
P Drury
Mick Dunn
Dave Dunn
Mel Durrant
Roger Escott
Karl Ezard
Steve Edgeley
Paul Evans

Paul Fairbank
TH Fairweather
Vic Ferguson
PE Field
Clif Fields
Dick Finch
Dave Fisher
Keith Garbett
Derek Gauci
Les Gillard
Chris Gluning
Paul Green
Mike Greening
John Haddow
CJ Hamley
Bob Hagen
Brian Harrington
Terry Hart
Ted Harvey
Adrian Hawker
Bill Heaven
Andy Holder
John Hopkins
Mick Hopkins
Steve Hoyle
Eric Hubbard
Pete Hubbard
Derek Hughes
Tony Hunt
Tab Hunter
Jim Hutch
Pete Hutchinson
Brian Hyland
G Jacobs
Alan Jeffery
Chris Jones
Steve Jones
Bob Kindness
Jack Knott
Steve Jukes
Kev Keast
Trevor Kemish
Dick Kibble
Alan King
Roy Kinsley
Dave Langstaff
Steve Lee
Mark Lindsay-Smith
Harry Lomax
Derick Lund
Mick Lynch

Ron Marsh
C McCusker
Steve McKenna
Alistair McKenzie
Maurice Metcalfe
Eric Miller
Ken Moore
Pete Murphy
Jim Mutch
John Nicholas
Bill Ogilvie
Gil O'Mallo
John Osman
Pete Oxley
Dave Parkinson
Bill Pattison
Ken Peacock
Jim Peggie
Duncan Pettit
Peter Petts
Clem Pooke
Nick Powell
John Pratt
Len Price
Mick Price
Richie Pryor
Fred Pulfer
Mick Regan
Ron Reid
Graham Roberts
Dave Robertson
P Robinson
Tom Rooney
Jim Rostron
Dick Scatcherd
Mick Scaife
Dave Scott
Syd Simpson
Martin Smith
Alex Stelfox
Colin Stephenson
Bill Tasker
Jock Stewart
Joe Stockhill
Trevor Stokes
Dave Stoneham
Paul Stratton
Roy Swann
Bernie Swift
Derek Taylor
Tom Taylor

Graham Telford
Bob Thompson
Charlie Thompson
Harry Thompson
Frank Thorne
Jimmy Treanor
Dave Townley
John Turner
Harry Waldron
RVM Walker
Bob Walkinshaw
Nigel Waring
LS Warren
Kev Watkins
Fred Westwell
Chalky White
Chris Williams
TC Williams
Tony Wilson
Brian Wolstenholme
Malcolm Wynn

174 Potential New
Members

Plus any member of the
AGC(SPS) who served in
the Gunners as a clerk and
has subsequently been
promoted to Sgt or above.

WE NEED
YOU

Artillery Clerks Association - Members list as at 29 December 2012

Sparky Allen	Alan Foot	George McLachlan	Mark Spring
Alf Alvin	Foxy Fox	Paul McMahon	Trevor Spurr
Richard Ancliffe	Peter Gauci	James McNamara	Will Stirman
Alan Ashcroft	Martin Geddes	Martin Meek	David Stotan
Al Artley	Ian Grant	Tony Meek	Dave Straw
Brian Bailey	Mick Grenham	Eddie Mills	Andy Sykes
Pip Bailey	Ian Groom	Tam Millsip	Ritchie Syme
Derek Baldry	John Haddock	Hauke Michelson	John Taylor
Brian Bassett	Colin Haime	Brian Morgan	Mark Testi
Brian Baylis	Ted Hall	Bill Morland	Mark Thorington
Taff Bellis	Graham Hampton	Ian Morris	Andy Tibble
Chris Berry	Gary Harland	Andy Moss	Gordon Timmis
Martin Birch	Adrian Harrison	Tony Mott	Trig Tregower
Dave Boulton	Chris Harvey	George Mould	Frank Trimby
Peter Bradburn	Steve Hawke	Paul Mudd	Steve Truslove
Denis Brett	Phil Hayes	Richard Nichol	Mel Turpie
Graham Brown	Phil Headford	Dennis Norris	Dave Tyler
David Brown	Marty Hester	Tony Nuttall	Gary Tyson
Phil Buckingham	Alan Hill	Andy O'Neill	Pat Verdon
Titch Buckley	Geordie Himlin	Steve Paton	Dave Vesty
Budgie Burgess	Joe Hoggins	Roy Penhallurick	Freddie Viggers
Martin Butler	Vic Holdaway	Nick Perkovic	William Wallace
Paddy Butler	Ron Holmes	Paul Perry	Dick Walmsley
Steve Callaghan	Paddy Hope	Joe Phelps	Daz Ward
Iain Campbell	Richard Horner	Alan Phillips	Ken Ward
Walter Carney	Stu Hunt	Dennis Phillipson	Ron Waterfield
Rob Clarke	Mick Hutchinson	Chris Piper	Tom Webb
Lawrence Collingwood	Geoff Hyatt	Eddie Platts	Andy West
Ian Constantine	Geoff Janik	Jim Pottle	Ronnie Whelan
Paul Corker	Dick Jeavons	Garry Prottey	Geoff Whitby
Stan Cornwell	Bill Johnson	Steve Prowse	Wills Williams
Mike Cottrell	Mick Johnston	Derek Ralphs	Jeff Williams
Bob Cowan	Andrew Jones	Steve Read	Ian Williams
Dennis Crawford	Ted Jones	John Reynolds	Mick Williams
Kev Crump	Derek Kelsey	Howard Richardson	Alan Witts
Peter Currie	Clive Knaggs	Neil Ridout	Chris Wood
Dave Cussell	Ralph Lalabalavu	Des Riley	Al Wood
Colin Davidson	John Lane	Jim Roast	Woody Woodford
Paul Davies	Dave Larcombe	Brian Rose	Robert Worley
Steve Davies	Russ Lee	Arthur Rowell	Den Wright
Roy Deal	Ray Lewis	Ken Russell	Bill Young
Pete Deverall	Bob Lewney	Alan Sawdon	
John Dewberry	John Lindley	Vince Scott	Membership stands at 205
Ray Dickinson	Alan Lowthian	Steve Seymour	
John Dixon	Leon Lyall	Mike Shellard	
Jim Doran	Dave Manchester	Chris Shuter	
Paddy Ennis	Adam Martin	Sid Siddall	
Roger Essex	Tony Martin	Dougie Silver	
Sid Evans	George Martin	Tony Skinner	
Ted Fairbrass	Tim Mathews	Bob Smith	
Joe Falzon	Tresh Matthews	Dave Smith	
Jim Findlay	Ken May	Brian Smith	
Ron Flemmings	Tommy McCarthy	Snowy Snowdon	
Graham Flint	John McDermott	Phil Spencer	

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Central Sgts Mess Larkhill, Saturday 16th June 2012

1. Opening Remarks by the Chairman

The Chairman opened the meeting and took the opportunity to warmly welcome everyone to Larkhill, especially those who had travelled long distances and those who had not attended an Association Reunion for some time. He hoped that all the arrangements made by the Committee were satisfactory and that all members were looking forward to a constructive AGM and an enjoyable dinner with the Guest of Honour, Major General Matthew Sykes.

2. Apologies for Absence

There were 24 apologies for absence, the majority of which were listed in the Reunion Dinner Menu Card.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 7th May 2011

The Secretary stated that the Minutes had been circulated to all members via Crossed Quills Issue 16 and it was not intended to read them out again unless a member wished it to be done so. A proposal was taken to ensure that they were a true record:

Proposer:

Lt Col Richard Horner RA

Seconder:

Capt (Retd) Dick Jeavons

CARRIED Unanimously

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 7th May 2011

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 7th May 2011.

5. Chairman's Report

The Chairman thanked everyone for making the effort to attend the AGM and Reunion weekend, especially those who had travelled from overseas. He added that it was a special personal pleasure to see both Pat Verdon and Steve Seymour, as their determination to be present was a great inspiration to all.

The Chairman was hopeful that, in spite of the bad weather, all the arrangements made by the Committee for the weekend were satisfactory.

The Chairman was pleased to report that the Honorary President continues to make slow but reassuring progress. General Freddie remains upbeat and had sent his best wishes to you all for another successful reunion.

The Chairman added that this had been a really frustrating year as far as setting up the reunion weekend went. Various factors had conspired to get in the way – the Queens Birthday Parade, the Euro 2012 tournament, the 30th Anniversary of the Falklands conflict, the economic situation, continuing operational tours, the RASMs dining out and to a lesser extent Father's Day – all impacted here and there on the administrative arrangements and the attendance figures. The bad weather too had disrupted plans for many.

The Chairman reported that the Association remains in rude health – with membership over 200 strong. The introduction of the Facebook Group earlier in the year had now taken off, almost, but hopefully not to the detriment of the Message Board on the Website. It had been great fun keeping track of Steve Seymour's epic bike ride from Germany to get to the Reunion, and the messages posted by Mark Testi in Australia, Ian Constantine in Afghanistan and Chris Shuter somewhere in the West Indies. He added that Steve Read would report later on progress made with his proposed database, and that Ron Holmes would be canvassing for support to the Reunion weekend in Germany in October.

The Chairman concluded his report by thanking all the Committee members for their unstinting hard work. He recorded that all Committee members have demanding day jobs - Ian Constantine is currently operations and Paul Corker joins him on another (and hopefully last) tour. Andy Tibble has, in spite of high pressure day job, been looking after the interests of the Association by, amongst other things, stepping in as Reunion Secretary and producing another excellent edition of Crossed Quills. Roy Deal, Andrew Jones, David Stotan, Dennis Norton and Joe Hoggins have also played their full part in keeping the Association alive and visible. The Chairman thanked them all, on behalf of the members, for their combined huge commitment.

The Chairman ended his report by wishing everyone a most enjoyable

evening and a safe journey home after the Reunion.

6. Secretary's Report

The Secretary, Mr Andy Tibble MSM made the following comments:

Membership stands at 204. Last year the total stood as 202.

- New Members

WO1(SSM) Jim Mutch who joined us on the 17th January 2012. Jim lives in Cardiff. Jim is currently the Superintendent Clerk at HQ 3 Div at Bulford

Former LBdr Peter Lynch who joined us on the 30th March 2012. Peter lives in Andover.

- Deaths

Former SSgt (AC) Brian Leadbetter who died on Saturday 10th December 2011. Aged 73.

- Honours & Awards

Lt Col Russ Lee was awarded the MBE in the 2012 New Year Honours List. .

WO1 (SSM) Ron Holmes was awarded the MSM in the 2012 Queen's Birthday Honours List. Congratulations Ron.

- Promotions

Capt Ian Constantine selected for promotion to Acting Major with effect from January 2013. Ian will be posted as the QM 32 Regt.

WO2 (SQMS) Ron Holmes promoted to WO1 (SSM).

WO2 Hauke Michelsen promoted to WO in the Bundeswehr.

WO2 (SQMS) Chris Harvey selected for promotion to WO1(SSM) during the FY 2012/13

- St Barbara's Day Service

St Barbara's Day Service will be held at Larkhill in the Church of St Alban the Martyr on the 2nd December 2012. The Service will be followed by lunch in the Sgts' Mess. Further details will follow in due course.

- Ties

Ties are available from at a cost of £13.00.

- Change in personal details

Reminder to keep the Secretary informed of any changes of rank, address, telephone numbers, email addresses, awards etc, etc.

- Crossed Quills

Items for Crossed Quills Issue No 16 to the Secretary by Monday 3rd September 2012.

- Recruitment

Attention of all Members drawn to the importance of recruiting new members.

- Standard Bearer

Andrew Jones has represented the Association at the following events:

4th December 2011

St Barbara's Day Service

17th February 2012

Royal Artillery Parade at Esher

22nd April 2012

Gunner Sunday (Royal Hospital Chelsea)

He is also earmarked to attend the Royal Artillery Association (RAA) Service of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas on 7th July 2012.

7. Assistant Secretary's Report

The Assistant Secretary, Mr Roy Deal MBE, informed those present

that:

He was planning on ordering some more cuff links and ties pin sets, however the supplier required a minimum order of 5 sets.

There was a requirement to order some new Association ties as stocks were running low. The Assistant Secretary asked that for information of a potential new supplier willing to accept a small order.

Any member wishing to place an order for one of the above items should contact the Assistant Secretary on either: roydeal@hotmail.co.uk or Roy.deal288@mod.uk

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Major Paul Corker AGC (SPS) made the following comments:

Liquidity state as at 16th June 2012

Assets

Current Bank Balance	£3692.84
Deposit Bank Balance	£2257.51
Shop Stock	£65.00

Total Assets (A) £6015.35

Liabilities

Function	£2920.49
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Total Liabilities(B) £2920.40

Available Cash (A-B) £3094.86

Notes:

Subscriptions. There is £1805.00 owed in outstanding subscriptions. For the current year there are 68 members who have failed to pay their subscriptions. This equates to 58.33% of our worth lost to debtors.

Mandate. 61 members are not paying by the Standing Order Mandate. Members are

continuously encouraged to subscribe by this method.

Gift Aid. The Treasurer has received a total of £2,374:81 from the Inland Revenue. There are 53 members who are yet to join the gift aid scheme. Annual income is approx £150:00.

Treasurer's Updates. All members are reminded of their subscriptions within the Crossed Quills and at the AGM. They are also invited to join the mandate system and gift aid.

Debtors. The sum of £1805:00 is too big for the fund to continue. Some of the debtors go back to the year 1999. The Treasurer mentioned that urgent action was now required to recover these outstanding funds. He proposed that those members who were long term debtors to the Association should be written to as soon as possible with an ultimatum that they pay off these outstanding debts within 3 months or they will be asked to leave the Association.

This proposal was put to the vote and was CARRIED unanimously.

Insurance. The insurance for the fund is valid until 31 Mar 13. It is with the firm Towergate Wilsons. The cost this year was £304:41. This includes personal accident cover for the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Reunion Secretary, Standard Bearer and Regional Secretaries when on Association duty.

Shop Stock. Ties cost £13:00 and there are 5 in stock.

RAA Draw Tickets. The Association supports the RAA Draw by purchasing tickets. This year £100:00 worth of tickets was purchased and allocated to Association members.

Increase in Annual Subscriptions.

The Treasurer informed those present that that costs and charges, such as insurance and postage, to the Association were increasing. He added that it was now time that the Association's annual subscription was raised from £5.00 to £10.00 per member with effect from 1st January 2013. This would also allow the General Purpose Funds to offset some of the costs for the Reunion dinners especially now that we no longer enjoyed the benefit of an 'official dinner's status' that was provided by the RASM

Mr John Taylor proposed and WO1 (SSM) Ron Holmes seconded that the Artillery Clerks' Association annual subscription be increased from £5.00 to £10.00 with effect from 1st January 2013. This proposal was put to the vote and was CARRIED unanimously.

As a result, the Treasurer asked all members to inform their individual banks to make sure that the appropriate changes to their Standing Orders were made in time for January 2013.

Maj (Retd) Pat Verdon proposed and Mr Graham Brown seconded that the Treasurer's Report is accepted. This proposal was put to the vote and CARRIED unanimously.

9. Welfare Secretary's Report.

The Welfare Secretary, Mr Dennis Norris, informed those present that he was not aware of any members who required any assistance at this time.

He asked members to inform him as soon as they become aware of any individual in need of support from the Association. Contact details can be found on the Association web page.

He assured members that all contacts will be dealt with in the

strictest confidence and sensitivity. He added that in the event that the Association cannot give direct help details of the case would be referred to partner service organisations and charities to try to secure the assistance required.

10. Historical Secretary's Report.

In the absence of the Historical Secretary, Mr Joe Hoggins, the Secretary passed on Joe's thanks to those who had sent him information and photographs. He went on to make a further request for Association members to send in any photographs from the past, so that they can be included in the Association's History.

11. Artillery Clerks' Association Family Tree update by Steve Reid

Steve Reid gave an update on the progress in creating an AC Family Tree. He stated that the project had been running for 2 years and that it now contained information on 99 units and 293 Artillery Clerks (ACs). He estimated that there was still a great deal of work to be done.

To date there had been 19 contributors, including recent significant contributions from the wife of WO2 John Wilson and especially Judy Sparks (Jump), who had provided an RA Directory April 1990 and an Artillery Clerks Location List for November 1991.

Steve asked those members holding copies of other editions of the RA Directory and the Artillery Clerks Location List to share them with him on a "short term loan" basis.

A new source of information had recently been identified in the Gunner Magazine Postings and Promotion Pages. A visit to RHQ RA to review the Gunner Magazine archive had shown that:

a. 1st Seniority list Amendment in Gunner Magazine May 1956 – LBdr P M G Squibb to Bdr (AC).

b. December 1970 new format Gunner Magazine with Soldier Promotions & Postings - WO1 R E W Croucher to HQ BAOR 13 Sep 71, Sgt C L Fields to SSgt 20 Jul 71

Steve stated that the AC Family Tree had recently been made available online through Google Documents, with controlled access to overcome DPA issues. Members interested in gaining access should email him at ArtyClkProject@gmail.com. They will be required, if they do not already have one, to sign up for a free Gmail account from www.google.co.uk.

He asked that his thanks be recorded to Geoff Janik who had helped him test and refine the Google Documents system.

Steve stated that paper copies of the AC Family Tree were held in the History Room and he encouraged members to browse through them and update/correct/add information to the files. He encouraged members to continue to provide him with family tree information.

12. Germany Secretary's Report.

The Germany Secretary, WO2 (SQMS) Ron Holmes informed those present that the 2012 Germany Artillery Clerks' Association Reunion would take place over the weekend of 19th - 21st October 2012. He also mentioned that the calling letter for the forthcoming Reunion had been sent out and asked that those members wishing to attend submit their returns back to him as soon as possible. It is likely that this year Reunion will be held in HQ 1 Armd Div in Hereford and not at Gutersloh as 26 Regiment Royal

Artillery would have just returned from operations.

13. Reunion Secretary's Report

The Secretary, Mr Andy Tibble MSM who was also covering as the Reunion Secretary gave a comprehensive briefing on the format of the Reunion Dinner and the evening.

14. Approval of Honorary Members.

The Secretary, Mr Andy Tibble MSM informed those present that he had received an application from WO2 (SQMS) Paddy Butler for Honorary Membership of the Association. The Secretary gave a background brief on WO2 Butler and a copy of his Service History was circulated to all members present.

Proposer:
Mr Andy Tibble MSM (Secretary)

This proposal was put to the vote and CARRIED unanimously.

15. Election or re-election of Committee

The Secretary stated that the present Committee wished to remain in office as follows:

Chairman
Lt Col (Retd) Joe Falzon BEM OSJ
Secretary
Mr Andy Tibble MSM
Assistant Secretary
Mr Roy Deal MBE
Treasurer
Maj Paul Corker AGC (SPS)
Reunion Secretary
Capt Ian Constantine RA
Welfare Secretary
Mr Dennis Norris
Historical Secretary
Mr Joe Hoggins
Webmaster
Mr David Stotan

Maj (Retd) Pat Verdon proposed

and Mr David Stotan seconded this proposal. The proposal was put to the vote and was CARRIED unanimously.

16 Any other Business

a. Maj (Retd) Pat Verdon recorded a vote of thanks on behalf of the Artillery Clerks' Association to all members of the Committee who had done a sterling job over the past year looking after the interests of the Association.

b. Future Format of Reunion Dinners. Mr David Stotan informed those present that he would like to see wives/partners attending the official dinners at future reunions. He went on to say that perhaps the proposed change could be planned every second year, starting with a trial for the 2013 dinner at Larkhill. The Chairman invited comments from the floor. In the discussion that followed:

The Secretary pointed out that accommodation may present a problem as it was not clear what facilities were available in Larkhill. The Chairman said that there were a number of hotels quite close to Larkhill.

Mr Dave Cussell and Mr Jim Young registered their opposition to the proposal.

Mr David Stotan formally proposed that wives/partners are allowed to attend Association Reunion Dinners on alternate years, starting with a trial in 2013. The proposal was seconded by WO1 (SSM) Ron Holmes.

The Chairman put the proposal to the vote. The proposal was CARRIED with a majority decision.

The Chairman said that this would pose a challenge to the Committee and to the Association.

c. Donation to The Firepower

Museum. Mr Andy Tibble MSM, Secretary informed those present that he had received notification from Mr Bill Johnson that he had donated a specially commissioned plate made by Spode China which was given to many senior officers at that time and was in a presentation case. This Commemoration Plate was given to celebrate Her Majesty's Silver Jubilee in 1967. Bill has donated this to the Firepower with the caption 'Donated on behalf of the Royal Artillery Clerks' Association' A copy of the relevant documentation has been forwarded by the Secretary to our Historical Secretary and a letter of thanks has been sent to Bill Johnson on behalf of all members.

17. Date of Next Meeting

The next AGM will take place at Larkhill on Saturday 22nd June 2013.

Andy Tibble
Secretary

Membership Recruiting - Eligibility for Membership

Full membership of the Association is open to any former Artillery Clerk in the rank range from Sergeant to Warrant Officer Class 1, either serving or retired. Membership may also be granted, with the recommendation of a former Artillery Clerk or member of the Association, to clerks who served in the Royal Artillery in the rank range from Gunner to Bombardier, and have subsequently been promoted to Sergeant and above in the Adjutant General's Corps.



The Service Personnel and Veterans Agency - SPVA

The Service Personnel and Veterans Agency - SPVA is aimed at improving personnel, pensions, welfare and support services to members of the Armed Forces and veterans.

The (MOD) places great store on the provision of high quality support services to serving military personnel, ex-Servicemen and women and their respective dependents.

There are clear customer and business benefits in merging the Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency (AFPAA) with the Veterans Agency to form the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA).

The formation of SPVA has led to the provision of a fully integrated set of 'through life' personnel services to our serving and veterans community - where a single contact with the Agency will grant access to customer information and advice on pay, pensions, compensation payments, records of service and medal entitlement.

SPVA is staffed by caring and experienced people, who make it their business to understand and empathise with the serving and veterans' community and are committed to delivering a high quality service.

The responsibility for all pension provision, whether a War pension or an Armed Forces pension falls

under the direct control of SPVA, reducing the risk of omitting or duplicating information and providing for the first time, a truly joined up pension service. There is a free helpline on 0800 169 2277 and further information is available online at: <http://www.veterans-uk.infor/>



Planning for the future

The UK State Pension has changed.

The UK State Pension changed on 6 April 2010. People over 55 or who have recently retired may need to take action now to make sure they don't miss out on money for the future. For more information on how the State Pension is changing, visit the Direct Gov website at: www.direct.gov.uk/pensions and follow Pensions and Retirement Planning, State Pension, Changes to State Pensions from 6 April 2010.

1000 kilometres by Bicycle

By Former WO2(QMS(AC)) Steve Seymour

Ron Holmes, as usual, suggested I attend the Annual Clerks` Reunion at Larkhill in June, and that he would take me there in his car, however, he was only going for the weekend. This was fine by me, but meant that I would not have the opportunity to see my mother or sisters, whilst I was in England.

As a sufferer of poly-arthritis, I use a bicycle to keep my muscles toned, and also as pain relief. Walking is, at times, extremely painful. I have cycled long distances in the past, and knew my capabilities, even if I am a 60 year old invalid.

As it was June, it seemed a good idea to make a holiday of arriving at the union by cycling through Germany, Holland, and Belgium, towing a trolley containing a tent, enjoying a quiet journey at a slower pace than normal, whilst enjoying summer sunshine (how wrong I was).

On Sunday 3 June, I set off for Larkhill from Paderborn in heavy rain, and it lashed it down for the next two days, with scarcely any respite. My intention was to cycle between 50 to 100 kilometres a day, and reach Larkhill by Friday afternoon.

After leaving Paderborn I followed the Römer cycle route, which follows the course of the river Lippe. My intention was to cycle 50 kms on the first day, which was not quite achieved on the first day. I arrived at a German gastätte, totally drenched, begging for a "grog" and a room, but as in the case of "Mary and Joseph" I was offered the barn for free. Of I went to the barn and arranged the hay

bales for the night (reminded me of many a cold war exercise), and parked the bicycle on the other side of tennis table! The Landlord allowed me to dry my clothes on the radiator.

The next day I set off for Selm (near Hamm), where I was to make a pre-arranged visit to German friends, who were to put me up for the second night. At the crack of dawn I set off in a slight rain shower, which gradually got worse, and during the second half of the day turned to a heavy downpour, and yet again I was drenched. My German hosts made me very welcome, and it was nice to have a few luxuries, a shower and a warm bed. They sent me on my way with 4 schnitzels, and some filled rolls. Of course, it was raining yet again, but finally became drier during the course of the day. I discovered later that I had chosen the worst June weather for 50 years!

My next aim was to meet up with Alan Witts (former WO2 (QMS

(AC)), who was my Assistant Chief Clerk, during my tour as Chief Clerk 39 Regt RA. This meant another 80 kms cycling to reach Xanten. He welcomed me with an alcohol free Weizen, and plenty of old memories. Alan can also cook very good spaghetti bolognese, and showed me his impressive model houses. After an evening spent chatting over past military experiences, I slept yet again in comfortable surroundings, on the sofa, and set off again (you have guessed it - pouring rain). Alan told me he would be looking for a house in Goch that morning, which was lucky for me, as he overtook me drenched after only 30 minutes, and said, «you forgot this». He had no sooner disappeared into the horizon, as the familiar feeling of having a puncture to the front tyre, occurred! It was pouring so heavily, I knocked on a German's door and asked if I could fix it in her garage, for which I was very grateful, so grateful, I sang her my party piece «its time to say



goodbye in Italian». After drinking a cup of coffee, I resumed my journey yes- pouring rain), and it rained hard for most of the day.

I headed south west to meet the river «Maas» north of Venlo, following it south to Roermond, and incredibly, this was the place where, perhaps, because it was too easy to map read, took a turning which took me away from the Maas, but soon realised my mistake, and headed back south, my relaxed mood, interrupted by a motorist driving too fast towards a bend, where there were three Dutch vans, who were lost, looking for somewhere (doesn't just happen to me), so I gave a «slow down» gesture with my hand to the driver coming towards me.

I was astonished, as he reversed his car and proceeded to rant and rave at me (in German, but Arabic accent), and after a few chosen words, he steps out of his car, and rants and raves at me again. So, I casually called him a idiot (seems to be internationally understood), as he chased me, but I was on a bicycle (hi, hi), and witnessed him wheezing to catch up, and that was the last I saw of him! Moral of the story, slow down if you see me give a slow down gesture (there is

a reason), and if you rant and rave, instead of slowing down, it will lengthen your journey by 3 minutes!

After fuming inside for a few minutes, I returned into a relaxed mode, again following the Maas. As I was taking in the views, along the Maas, I was overtaken by three ladies, about my age, being led by a lady on an electric bike (why don't they buy a moped), who tried desperately to keep ahead of me, but after overtaking me a few times, disappeared behind me, after taking the third wrong turning, during our mini-competition!

And, even better, the weather improved, and for a full two hours, I occasionally saw the sun shine through the clouds.

This allowed me to find a simple camp site near Roermond. Strange, when you pull up alone with a bicycle pulling a shopping trolley with tent, you get attention, and my Dutch neighbours, offered me a blanket, as it was cold. This was warm compared to Bergen-Hohne in a tent (remember that Steve Callaghan, in your warm Binner), whilst we 1 RHA lads had a tent! That is probably the reason Dave Brown stayed in the office!

Once again, the Dutch being hospitable offered me a coffee (I have only ever had positive experiences with the Dutch), and accepted it!

The night was fine, and I slept to sound of rain hitting the tent (surprised?). Next morning I woke up to fair weather, and returned blanket to Dutch (still sleeping), and again followed the Maas, towards Maastricht, with just the occasional shower, taking in the sights of Llamas (Dutch seem to like Llamas), and barges (Dutch seem to like barges), before meeting a group of orange clad natives, who spoke to me, and posed with me for a photo shot (sorry your football EM was worse than our English experience). On nearing Maastricht I took a right turn (West) towards Ostende, where I wanted to catch the ferry to Ramsgate (I did check on Internet and entered fact that it was just one person plus bicycle, which seemed OK). It was along this road, which runs parallel to Autobahn I saw a brothel, then another one, then another one, and yet another one (decided not to stop, as outside budget, and would cause delay to schedule of half an hour or so)!

First I took the smallest ferry I have used to cross Maas (50 cents) into Belgium, and headed towards Genk, and after cycling along tracks through woodlands I was confronted with my first sight of Genk (the football stadium)! Continuing my journey I eventually reached a campsite, and erected my tent. As it was 1900 hours, I visited the swimming pool, (what luxury), but was told, I must wait until 2100 hrs, as it had been privately booked. Yes, you have guessed it, the inevitable happened and it started to rain very heavy, but I had used the tent many times before, and was not at all worried, as I had all my belongings under cover. I used the



two hours to update Quills Blog, to the sound of rain literally hammering on the roof!

I then went for a swim, and a steam bath (life could not be better!). Refreshed and extremely clean I returned to my tent to find it half blowing in the wind, surrounded by muddy pools! On entering I see my belongings in water, and throughly wet through!

Glad they have dryers at camping sites. I fetch a token for dryer and push token in, only to discover dryer did not function. A kind Dutch lady (yet again Dutch hospitable), tells me that this token is for washing machine, so I return to reception (sod's law, receptionist has left and all locked up).

The nice Dutch lady was joined by a nice Dutch man, who both offers me blankets to replace my wet sleeping bag. I gratefully accept, and sleep badly on a wet mat, on a wet floor!

Next day I get up to be confronted by Dutch neighbours with a cup of coffee, and am invited to Breakfast (just love these Dutch people). During the short chat, they informed they heard on the radio, there had been a mini tornado at this location. As they were so good to me, I sang "Its time to say Goodbye» in Italian, and set off on my way. No it was not raining, that was to come later!

This part of Belgium is surprising hilly, and I headed off towards Brussels, skirting around it to reach Waterloo, only to discover there is not much there (Ron Holmes was right), and Napoleon had already left 200 years before, being hotly pursued by Wellington. Here I enjoyed a quick pit stop, and lunch. The weather had finally turned drier, and I cycled on towards Ostende, but was a little behind schedule, so I cat napped

along the way. The first time on a verge, only to be woken after an hour and a half by a policewoman, who said some thought I had an accident, or was unwell, then I heard the sound of a siren, and an ambulance arrives (wonder if the person calling emergency services was Dutch).

The Belgian policewoman was impressed with my safety procedure of hanging a bright orange vest over the shopping trolley, and I was allowed to proceed. Did they know what would happen two hours later, when a motorist came too close, causing me to wobble, and crash into a ditch, pinning me to the deck, unable to move from underneath the heavy bicycle. This resulted in a raised hand, and shouts, of "help», and relief as three minutes later another cyclist frees me from the stinging nettles and embarrassing position.

As evening approached, I had my second confrontation with Belgian police, who were setting up a police blockade (there must have been sixty of them)! On watching them, an evidently bored police motorcyclist, comes over and reminds me that the orange vest was very good (heard that before), but my rear light could not be seen properly. I escape without a fine! And, subsequently disappear into the fading daylight. And keep cycling (remember the film Gump!) through the night, before finding a bench in, what I thought was an isolated area. I put my head down at 0300, and IT WAS NOT RAINING, to be awoken at 0700 by joggers, cyclists and dog walkers! I continued my journey and come across a piece of artillery parked up on a bridge (brain reminds me it is a M109), but Belgians must have shaved one millimetre off barrel diameter (this was a M108), that had been presented to the local town by the Belgian Artillery. I was going to

take a photo, but sod's law strikes again, and at this very moment the rechargeable battery loses power! (Sorry there is no photo).

I continue my journey heading slightly north to reach Ostend (wish I had cycled direct west) at 1600 hours. Now this has to be a super sod's law. I read a sign at ticket office, next ferry 0400 hours on Monday and foot passengers not allowed!

I curse Internet, and decide to head towards Dunkirk, past seaside cafes and restaurants. At De Panne (French/Dutch border), I come across two English guys with two commercial vans, having a beer at roadside. We have a chat, and as always happen, when I say I come from Paderborn. The answer is „I was stationed there». This was the second QRIH I had met! I am offered a very tasty chicken sandwich and a beer (allowed one I believe), and after eating I sing its «Time to say Goodbye», and resume the 80 km long journey south along the coast with (yes you have guessed it - heavy rain!).

Reaching Dunkirk by car is fine, but it is a nightmare trying to reach the ferry terminal by bicycle, without using the main route (prohibited to bicycles). After an endless last 10 kms past Dunkirk I arrive at the terminal, in time for 0400 hrs ferry, and a much needed cap nap on the ferry. I had just completed 260 kms, with only five hours sleep, and another hour on ferry, before next proper sleep at Romney Marsh, Kent.

I proceed to cycle up that steep slope, on cycle path, where the lorry engines groan en-route to London! I did not dismount, but admit to groaning! My path was extremely peaceful at 6.00 in the morning, just the odd person walking dogs, under an ominous sky. On reaching summit I go to cliff edge to take a photo of

Folkestone from above, and come across a guy, who was also touring by bicycle, and had slept in an old pillar box protecting the straits of Dover. We chatted for half an hour about our common knowledge of cycling tours, before I set off past the channel tunnel exit at Folkestone, where the clouds opened up, so I cycled to nearest TESCOE store for replenishment, and an English breakfast. My route took me past Lydd, which I had last visited in 1971, during military basic training, and on past the narrow gauge railway at Dymchurch. It rained, but believe it or not, nowhere as bad as on the continent, but it rained heavily! I did have one embarrassing confrontation with a camera (is there no respite from Big Brother?), as I was having a pee at a lonely farm gate, I looked up to see, a sign, «CCTV» is looking at you!

I cycled on to New Romney, but could not find a bed and breakfast, that was not full, so I continued my journey to Appledore, where I took sustenance at a pub, and watch England beat Ukraine 2-0 at the Euros. The Landlady then kindly rang around for me and found me a room at the Railway Hotel. The first bed for six days, this was now day eight. The last two days were uneventful with rain showers. My route taking me to Eastbourne and Brighton (where I camped the night in dry weather), and subsequently onto my final destination of Portsmouth, where I was given the floor for two weeks. Floors are more fordable than those awful sagging spring mattress beds, we had in Barracks. I had set off on Sun 3rd June lunchtime and arrived in Pompey at 1600 on Wed 13th June. Which gave me time to refresh myself before reunion on Sat 16th June?

Lessons learnt.

- Sod's law is always applicable.
- Sleeping on the floor is better

than an MOD bed, if under cover.

- Sleeping on hay bale is even more comfortable.
- And a park bench is better than a wet muddy surface in the open.
- There are many good Samaritans, who help you on your way.
- A M109 can be used for culture (ask Belgians).
- Do not pee in front of farm gate.
- Learn to sing «I am singing in the Rain» to keep spirits up.
- Make sure modern typewriter (laptop) is well covered. Used Rucksack!
- Never believe you are alone.
- You can never beat the weather; just accept

The best part of the Journey was to come. Reunion with my suit and dinner jacket (thanks Ron Holmes for taking it with you). Reunion with all the guys, who were ACs.

Would I do it again - YES, of course!

Idris Hughes

Former WO2 (QMS(AC)) Idris Hughes passed away on Monday 13th August 2012 after a long illness. Idris was a popular member of the Artillery Clerks' Association and will be missed by all of those members who knew him. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Idris's family. Rest in peace Idris.

John Wilson

Former WO2 (QMS(AC)) (David) John Wilson passed away on Saturday 29th December 2012 after a long illness aged 66. John was a popular member of the Artillery Clerks' Association and will be missed by all of those members who knew him. The Association was represented at his funeral by Mr Andy Tibble (Secretary) and Andrew Jones (Standard Bearer). Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife Pen and his family. Rest in peace John.

£75.00 (Seventy Five Pounds) by Mr Steve Callaghan (Former WO2(QMS(AC)))

My apologies for the heading, only "A Weekend in Larkhill" doesn't seem to have the same impact. I hope this is taken in the light hearted manner in which it is written. I apologise now if it comes across otherwise.

I wondered just what we could get nowadays for £75.00. So having sat quietly and pondered the question on Saturday morning the 16 June 2012 in my bunk, I guessed that I could go to Greenwoods the outfitters and with my discount card, I could get a 2 piece suit, nice shirt and tie and a pair of socks. However, as wonderful as this would be I had no doubt that it would join my other go to Church on Sunday suits that already hangs in my wardrobe alongside my occasional jacket and slacks for night out times. Which are few and far between, if the truth be known. Plenty of jeans nights though.

I could I thought purchase a nice, skirt and blouse from Bon Marche and a pair of shoes from the Co-op for Sue, which she could then hang in her wardrobe alongside her other outfits for night times out or again for Church on Sunday dress.

Oh how depressed I was now feeling and wished I hadn't started this, however I soon picked up when I thought of how I had just spent £75.00. What had gone before and what was still yet to come.

For £75.00 I got, on arrival a room allocated for my 2 nights accommodation. I enjoyed a 2 course evening meal with a cup of

tea. I would also then enjoy 2 full brunches with all the trimmings, a full sit down evening meal with wine, port, coffee, chocolates and the cheeseboard. Yes certainly sounds about right for £75.00. However, let's not forget the other add ons:

Friday evening the Artillery Clerks (AC) assembled in the main bar at 1900 hrs and the banter started, which would continue right into the early hours of the next morning. Apart from the pulling of pints, the swish of cans being opened, and the clink of Ice with shorts, the pop of a cork being removed from a bottle of Port, well several bottles of Port, there was also the shots of Artillery Fire in the Bar, celebrating Hauke's promotion to our equivalent WO1. The stories of past dinners and passed Artillery Clerks being recalled along with what has happened between the last Dinners in 2011 until now. How about Steve Seymour epic cycle ride of over 1000 kms and to then arrive a day early, however, as Steve said forget the ride, my hairs starting to grow back. A slow fade out ready for Saturday lunchtime. Lunchtime a few more beers and shorts, no port as it was needed for the Dinner until 2 p.m. and then away to prepare for the AGM and Dinner. A good AGM, a photo call, a look at the history boards, some warmers into the bank and then the Dinner itself. A very good meal, good speeches and then the gathering in the Bar for the remainder of the evening, and celebrating Ron Holmes award of the MSM in the Queens Birthday Honours List. I clearly remember the whole Saturday evening due to the soft drinks but hey I had

enjoyed the Friday night, if memory serves me well.

All too soon we were back in the Mess for a full brunch, rooms made down, keys returned, cars loaded and time to say a few goodbyes until the next time, possibly October in Germany or 2013 in the stunning new Mess at Larkhill.

This £75.00 will not be hanging in a wardrobe until needed, it was spent on memories and as far as I know, for so many people nowadays, they will tell you that memories are priceless. Or as Artillery Clerks will tell you memories can be purchased for just £75.00.

On behalf of those of us who were there, we do sincerely hope that with the decision to look to subsidise the Dinner next year, that some more of you will be able to attend as it was felt that £75.00 may have been a slight stumbling block, but when you break it down, to B & B, evening meals etc maybe it is not too bad.

Here's to next year, after I have placed on record the thanks of all those there to Our Committee who once again came through with an exceptionally well organised reunion weekend.

Thank you.

Steve Callaghan
Midlands Secretary

The Sand Years – Egypt (26 Field Regiment RA)

by Lt Col (Retd) Vic Holdaway BEM

History lesson. In 1929 IV Field Brigade RA departed Southampton for India. At the start of World War 2 in 1939 they moved to Egypt as part of 4th Indian Division. From 1940 to 1943 they move to and fro across North Africa until the German / Italian surrender in May 1943. They then returned to India to prepare for the Far East campaigns. In 1948, now 26 Field Regiment, they were stationed at Tampin in Malaya, just in time for the start of the Emergency. The next three years were spent in an infantry role chasing terrorists through the jungle. In May 1951 the Regiment move to Homs, near Tripoli in Libya. They formed part of 1st Infantry Division, in support of 1st Guards Brigade, who were spread across Libya. HQ 1 Division was located in Egypt, with one brigade in Cyprus and the other in Egypt.

In November 1951 trouble erupted in Egypt causing 1 Infantry Division to concentrate into the Suez Canal Zone. They were joined by elements of 3rd Division and 16 Parachute Brigade. These, together with Base Troops Egypt and the RAF numbered in excess of 80,000 service personnel. The Gunner element of this lot consisted of HQRA MELF, HQRA 1 Inf Div with 26, 29 and 41 Fd Regts, 34 LAA Regt, 82 Loc Bty and 181 Lt Bty. Theatre troops included HQ 7 AGRA with 71 and 73 HAA Regiments and 188 Fire Control Battery under command and 6 (SP) Field Regiment. 33 AB Light Regiment was under command 16 Para Brigade.

The vast influx of troops resulted in a string of temporary, and very basic camps, being built. One such was Arakan Camp, Geneifa.

The Garrison consisted of 10 Base Ordnance Depot, a huge complex which was supported by a RE Railway Squadron, 67 Animal Transport Company RASC (mules!), an East African Pioneer Company, and a Mauritian Pioneer Company. There was also a Cypriot Guard Unit. There was a strong Gunner element consisting of 26 and 29 Field Regiments, 82 Loc Bty and 181 Lt Bty, together with the permanent residents, 73 HAA Regiment.

It was into this vast Army that Bdr (AC) Holdaway (4 weeks seniority) arrived in June 1952 to join 26 Field Regiment, who were out of camp on exercise. It was only on meeting the Chief Clerk, Sgt (AC) Inky Cornwell, who was slightly the worse for wear, that I discovered I was his replacement. This caused me some concern. The camp caused me even more concern. All living accommodation, Battery offices / stores etc were in EPIP tents. Living tent walls were rolled back, washing / shower facilities were open air and the latrines were of the deep trench variety.



Oct 52, On exercise "somewhere in the desert". The group includes 3 x RHQ clerks, the command post driver, Adjutant's Don R and myself. The fourth RHQ clerk was back in camp

Tents were pitched onto the sand. Two old Ordnance store buildings, concrete with corrugated iron roofs, had been modified to house the Officers' Mess at one end, the Sgts' Mess at the other, with RHQ, MI Room, QM Stores and Post Room in between. The other consisted of the cookhouse, Ration store and NAAFI. There were no paved roads or paths. The only other permanent structure was a Nissen Hut shower block for use in the winter months. An Indian contractor provided laundry, tailoring and barber facilities.

26 Field Regiment consisted of 17, 16 and 159 Batterys, E Troop Royal Signals and LAD REME. 181 Light Battery were co-located but not under command. On the day I joined the Regiment the Rear Party of 159 Battery departed back to Homs to look after the barracks and families. Arakan Camp was a monastic institution.

I had a three day handover before Inky Cornwell departed to Port Said to catch a troopship home. It was another three days before the Regiment returned to camp. The Sgts Mess were to a man World War 2 veterans and the majority had been with the Regiment in Malaya. There was, inevitably, a serious attempt to drink the bar dry. At some stage it was decreed that I would henceforth be known as "Inky". U/A/Sgt (AC) Holdaway was very much the new boy and at 22 years old, the youngest member of the Mess.

The CO, Lt Col JMA Chestnutt DSO, was less than impressed with his new Chief Clerk but the Adjutant was more supportive. I don't think the Assistant Adjutant even noticed there had been a

change. RHQ staff consisted of four National Servicemen, one of whom was close to demob. Another shock was that I was required to sleep at the back of the regimental office, in a curtained off area without windows. A portable fan provided little relief from the



Nov 52, Post exercise at Bir Odeib on the Gulf of Suez. I am seated.

heat. There was a duty clerk but my presence was required to sift through all incoming signals to decide whether or not an officer be alerted or whether they could be left to the morning. As most signals from the UK arrived between 0200 – 0300 hrs it was unusual to have an undisturbed night.

The basic procedures for running a regimental office soon fell into place. Having run two battery offices, been a Part 2/3 Orders and Documents clerk and a Movements clerk I had enough experience to keep the office running to a reasonable standard. The peculiarities of dealing with Field Records, Command and District Paymasters and Movements staff, monthly returns to everyone in creation were soon sorted out. We had no RASC staff so I was the presumed expert on Pay and Allowances. Each Battery had its own Imprest Account, run by the BK, with one battery clerk designated as pay clerk. Claims for allowances, other than LOA, were few and far between. Life was

hectic, with the regiment, including the Chief Clerk, spending a lot of time out of camp on exercise. The inevitable backlog awaited me on return.

Working hours in summer were 0600-0700, breakfast 0700-0730, and then 0730-1300. The one bright spot came from an unexpected quarter. RSM Webber, ASM Bliss and RQMS Pender had a daily swimming expedition to RAF Kabrit on the Great Bitter Lake. I was instructed to join them, complete with sten gun and one full magazine. This got me out of camp for 2 – 3 hours but meant the evenings were spent working.

At periodic intervals the regiment was tasked for Internal Security duties. These included guarding Ammunition Depots, Water Filtration Plants, goods train escorts, and cable patrols (the Egyptians were experts at removing buried cables). These were additional to the normal duties which included a 24 hour armed guard on the camp, armed vehicle escorts and double vehicle running after sunset.

In the autumn the camp was winterised. The tents received concrete bases, tent walls were closed and paraffin heaters issued. We went onto winter hours of 0830-1230 and 1330-1600. Dress changed from PT shorts, boots and jungle hat or Khaki Drill to battledress, pullover order by day, full battledress by night. Swimming was a thing of the past. Admin inspections loomed, including a documents check by Field Records. Christmas was an excess of alcohol, the Officers v WOs & Sgts fancy dress football match and little else, but my repertoire of bawdy songs was enhanced.

1953 started on a good note with the ASM taking a party on an adventure training trip to St Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai

desert. The Adjutant, reluctantly, allowed me to go. Four jeeps/trailers, four men per jeep, sleeping under the stars. We crossed the Suez Canal by ferry, hours later than intended due to a sandstorm and a southbound convoy, but reached Abu Zeneima in time to join the Coptic Christmas celebrations. It was then onward and upward into the mountains. St Catherine's Monastery is now a major tourist attraction, for which you can pay a lot of money to visit. Things improved further in April when an RASC Sgt arrived. He gathered the battery and RHQ pay clerks together to form a Pay Office, but he still had three Imprest holders to deal with.

181 Lt Bty moved out of Arakan camp, making space for a football pitch. The Pay Sgt was closely followed by a Padre and a new CO, Lt Col HG Croly. We went into summer routine with more frequent exercises and swimming trips were resumed. I calculated that in my first 12 months I had spent more time out on exercise than in camp. In August the Pay Sgt and I took advantage of the free leave scheme to Cyprus and spent a fortnight at the NAAFI run leave camp in Famagusta. Situated on Golden Sands beach, freedom to wander into town without guns, plenty of fresh food, a complete contrast to the Canal Zone.

In October I attended a Staff Clerks course at RASC School, Gebel Maryam and qualified as a B1 Clerk and was then put in quarantine as some wretched cook had caught chickenpox. I spent two weeks doing guards, sorting out the Clerk's course stationery store and trading insults with passing troopships on the Canal just outside the camp.

1954 was a routine year, punctuated by exercises and another two weeks leave in Cyprus. Later in the year the regiment was warned it would be

returning to the UK in early 1955. The regiment was then tasked to provide labour to help clear 10 BOD. At the same time rationing of stationery, forms/books etc was a thing of the past. I demanded more packing cases from the QM to take advantage of this manna from heaven. The Advance Party left in December, with the regiment due to move in January 1955. Murphy's law predicted our troopship, HMT Empire Halladale, would break

On the Halladale this was located at the stern of the ship, over the propeller. The first night out of Port Said we hit bad weather. No stabilisers, maximum speed 9 knots and the air intake picking up the smell of frying bacon, not a good combination for a very queasy tummy. 8 February brought no improvement but RSM Mason found me on deck, pale-faced but upright. I was instructed to join him in marching up and

My Last Operation by Maj P Corker AGC(SPS) - Operation HERRICK 16/17

The heading refers to my 'hip operation' which was carried out in December 11 and yes this will be my last operation in the British Army. I have written to you in my tenure as Treasurer from Northern Ireland, The Green Line in Cyprus, Kosovo, Iraq and now finally from Afghanistan. That is not a sequence of boasting it is a statement of how many demands Joe and Andy have placed upon me throughout the years!!

Was I a volunteer? I really don't know!! I sort of did!! My memory is somewhat blank Upon reflection, I had a meeting with my CO about the Gurkha deployment, which led to me attending a briefing at 4 Brigade and when the haze settled I was leaving Brize Norton at 4.30 in the morning bound for Camp Bastion.

Arriving in theatre at the end of July 12, I immediately took over my bailiwick as RAO of the J1 Cell in Camp Bastion. A group of 15 well and trusted individuals from across the piste. I did have WO2 Maclean (the RAWO/Chief Clerk) from 4 Regt RA and 2 of his administrators. It was good to discuss how a Gunner Regiment operates after watching from the sidelines for the past 19 years.

I can hear you all say what will I be doing for 6 months? Well that was my question when given this chalice but I quickly learned that I was not going to be bored. Very quickly my team do the following – note I said 'my team':



Jan 53, Hooked up prior to leaving St Catherine's Monastery.

down in The Red Sea and had to be towed to Aden for repairs. In the meantime we were allowed a one day visit to Cairo to do the sights. The rest of the time was spent packing boxes, dismantling tents, returning vehicles/ammo/stores to Ordnance. On 7 February 1955 the regiment mustered in Arakan Camp for the last time. I called the regimental roll and we then marched to Geneifa Station to board a train for Port Said. One final duty awaited me, I had to clear the regiment through Egyptian Customs. All went well until we came to Signalman Ali. They took some convincing that he was a Welshman, born and bred in Cardiff. On troopships WOs and Ssgts travelled second class in cabins, Sgts travelled in a separate troopdeck in bunks.

down the deck all morning. This was quite a feat as the deck was never where you expected it to be. However I was ready for lunch. There was plenty of it for the few who made it to the dining room. Fourteen days later having navigated a flat calm Bay of Biscay and sailed up the Irish Sea in a blizzard and listing 9degrees to starboard, we finally reached Liverpool. After yet another tussle with Customs we faced a very long rail journey, by a very devious route, south to Kent and Ross Barracks, Shorncliffe. Snow and ice awaited us. Welcome to Blighty! After almost 27 years overseas 26 Regiment had finally returned to the UK.

24/7 strat hub to OPLOC inbound/outbound pax. Steady state OPLOC during the RiP is 1000+ pax weekly.

Functional administration for 400-500 pers daily, including cashing cheques, pay enquiries, Paradigm phone cards (over 13,000), bidding and distributing ISAF medals and the movement requests of 500+ personnel.

JPA Hub dealing with 500+ help requests per month.

Force Cashier with a turnover of 4m in cheque encashment per month and stabilisation funds for the theatre.

Keeping the rest of Task Force Helmand happy – this is by far the most difficult of my responsibilities.

I have staff located at MOB PRICE who support 40 Cdo and a myriad of other units. Monthly I fly there and jump on the first flight available. I travelled by the new American helicopter called the Osprey – it takes off like a helicopter, turns into a plane and then cruises like nothing I have ever been in. I did not mention anything at all to the crew regarding the American defeat in the Ryder Cup because they were heavily armed and looked deadly serious. Corker's sense of humour did not come out that day.

I have witnessed a few things over here. One Friday night as I was leaving work the Taliban decided to attack Camp Bastion. To say it was eventful is the understatement of the year. It was one of my female soldier's 21st birthday and I can honestly say that the flashes, large bangs and thunder of small arms was not for her celebration. On a serious note I was just thankful that no British personnel within Camp Bastion were seriously injured but sadly the Americans had a few fatalities. Captain Wales (Prince Harry) turned up and he had to sit through one of my lectures during RSOI. He did not fall asleep like many of the audience (long trip from the UK) and he did smile at some of the jokes I used. A female soldier gave birth in Camp Bastion which was widely reported on the news so all in all it has been quite a challenging tour with some strange happenings going on. Just like the annual Clerks' reunion which most of us are more than happy when we come through it unscathed!!

During the tour I have met a few of our members, Ian Constantine



grabbed me in the Theatre Restaurant so I informed him of the happenings at this year's Reunion. He was pleased that so many had enjoyed themselves and is looking forward to next year. Mark Thornington bumped into me a few times as I went about my business and he passes his best to all. I also received a letter from General Freddie, who would be delighted to let you all know that he is well and sends his regards. I have promised to visit him on my return and it is a visit I am really looking forward to.

So you can see your Treasurer is enjoying life to the full, I am not missing the pint of John Smith's that is normally in my hand, or the 10 lbs that I have lost in weight as I go everywhere with armour that is heavier than me, but what I do miss is good friends, good company and I say to you all Ubique – See you all soon and best wishes for Christmas and New Year and I hope 2013 is a good year for you and your families. So as my last operation reaches the half-way point, I will only be too happy to hear from our members who have future challenges to face and I will be honest, the beer will be waiting on the bar.

To absent Friends

Paul Corker



Six Months in Bastion

by Capt Ian Constantine RA

When Andy Tibble first e-mailed and asked me to knock something up for the Crossed Quills I wasn't sure what I could write about as the unit is somewhat specialized and kept well out of the limelight, but I thought I should do something, so here goes!

Having missed out on previous tours of Afghanistan with 19 Regiment I was keen to volunteer so put myself forward for an E2 job and was pleasantly surprised to be offered the chance to deploy as the Adjutant of the Intelligence Exploitation Force (IEF), a tri-service organisation that only exists in theatre. The unit, as the title suggests, is involved in gathering intelligence, from numerous sources, to support UK and coalition forces in the fight against the insurgency. Interestingly, while conducting some of the pre-deployment training I bumped into a certain Squadron Leader Dick Jeavons, proving that Artillery Clerks do move in the strangest circles.

Commanded by an Intelligence

Corps Lieutenant Colonel and with a RAF Chief of Staff, the Headquarters is a lean organisation responsible for coordinating the efforts of 7 sub-units with elements spread throughout Afghanistan. My responsibilities are those traditionally associated with the appointment (discipline, MS etc and making sure the CO is in the right place at the right time) and I think the CO is rather pleased to have an LE Officer doing the job. As I'm sure you are all aware, life as an Adjutant can be fairly busy, although my previous experience gained over 28 years has meant that I can bluff my case fairly successfully and my darts average has improved considerably during the past 5 months. With a small clerical team consisting of an RAF Sergeant as Chief Clerk and a Royal Navy Leading Hand providing coffee and biscuits we have things pretty well sewn up. Life in Camp Bastion is fairly structured, although as I'm sure you will have seen on the news, we are not exempt from moments of kinetic excitement and the events of 15 September

have certainly changed the routine within the camp with Sanger duties for everyone, up to and including the rank of Major, now a common occurrence.

This is probably the first operational tour I've been on where there is a real possibility of returning home having gained weight. The food provided is, quite frankly, outstanding. Thankfully the climate, long working hours and regular visits to the gym act as a counter to the fantastic food offered up. Obviously it's a very different story for the boys and girls deployed forward and in daily contact with the insurgency. I did find that I had to tighten my belt an extra notch whilst on R&R, although with my post tour leave covering the Christmas period I don't imagine that will last!

I've been fortunate so far during this tour; I've been lucky to work with a professional and dedicated team in a unit that is making a real impact on operations in theatre; there have been no frayed nerves amongst workmates (surprising as my RSM is a Royal Engineer) and very little to bother adjutant on the discipline front. As I write this I have six weeks left and although I'm obviously looking forward to getting home (and fitting the kitchen I've been saving for whilst out here) I will look back on this as a positive experience. Working with a tri-service organisation (we also a bunch of civilian specialists – so perhaps we're quad service) has opened my eyes to our sister services – although they are obviously inferior (as I repeatedly point out to the RAF)!

I'll finish off with my usual plea as the (absent this year) Reunion Secretary, I hope to see you all in



Lakhill in 2013. This will be our first Dinner in the newly refurbished Central Sergeants' Mess, so it is right and proper that we make it a memorable one. I will be back in the real world in January 2013, so expect some more news then.

Ubique



Lt Col (Retd) Joe Falzon BEM OSJ (Chairman) & Peter Gauci after the Remembrance Sunday Parade which took place in Valletta, Malta on 13th November 2012

Nothing is more consuming, or more illogical, that the desire for Remembrance by Lt Col Joe Falzon BEM OSJ

Last year I had the privilege of leading the annual "Journey of Remembrance to Malta" organised by The Royal British Legion which took place from 3rd – 10th October 2012. The party of 22 included John Carrington (aged 88), a veteran of Operation Husky – the invasion of Sicily masterminded from the Lascaris War Rooms in Valletta.

Special emphasis was made to visit the locations on the island where inconspicuous gallantry by British servicemen resulted in the award of one Victoria Cross and seven individual awards of the George Cross, the four beautifully maintained Commonwealth War Cemeteries and the various related museums such as the Malta

At War Museum, The Aviation Museum, The Maritime Museum and the National War Museum. The highlight was a wreath laying ceremony at the Royal Malta Artillery memorial on the bastions of Fort St Elmo. We gathered at that special place in history, to pay tribute to the six brave men, who, on the 11th June 1940, remained steadfast in the face of danger, and whose actions and ultimate sacrifice on the first day of the 2nd World War in Malta established the traditions that that small nation holds so dear to this day. One of the "pilgrims" jotted down his reflections of his Malta Experience – I thought I would share them with you.....

Joe Falzon.



Reflections by a British Veteran on tour with The Royal British Legion “2012 Journey of Remembrance - Malta”

The temples in Malta predate Stonehenge by a thousand years. It is also the location of an official miracle when St Paul was bitten by a viper and suffered no ill-effects in AD 60.

But faith was never more apparent than at the height of WWII when it reached its peak at 4.42pm on 9 April 1942; the exact time a bomb pierced Mosta Dome, the Rotunda of St Marija Assunta. The bomb came through the roof and fell among the 300-strong congregation, rolling along the floor, without exploding. Incredibly, no-one was hurt and it became the “Miracle of Mosta”

The fact that the Maltese people had any faith left by that point is remarkable in itself, since the island had been subject to a ferocious battering from German and Italian bombers for the best part of 18 months. During the first six months of 1942, there was only one 24-hour period without air raids. Luftwaffe records show that between 20 March and 28 April 1942, Malta was subjected to 11,819 sorties and 6,557 tonnes of bombs – an intensity that not even London’s long-suffering population could match.

Shortly after the Miracle of Mosta came the award of the George Cross. In a letter dated 13 April 1942, King George VI wrote: “To honour her brave people, I award the George Cross to the Island Fortress of Malta, to bear witness to a heroism and devotion that will long be famous in history.” The original medal is now on display in the newly refurbished National War Museum in Fort St. Elmo, Valletta.

Looking back, the twin events

marked a turning point. Within four months the Convoy of Santa Marija arrived on 15 August, and the islanders, who had been on their knees, sheltering below ground and facing starvation, began to see the light at the end of their underground tunnels. Fortunately their darkest days were nearly over. It was just as well, because the population was near to giving in. Food had been rationed to three boiled sweets, half a sardine and a spoonful of jam a day – hardly enough to survive on.

Today, all visitors are welcome, none more than the British. There is a deep bond between the two nations and tourists will find much to interest them. For non-military buffs, there is the warm climate, the colourful festas, the delicious food and the genuine hospitality of the vibrant Maltese.

For those with an interest in military history, however, the island is a treasure trove. At one end of the scale are the various locations dotted round the island where inconspicuous gallantry by British servicemen resulted in the award of one Victoria Cross and seven awards of the George Cross. At the other end is the steam-powered 100-ton gun at Fort Rinella, which dates from the late 1800s - at full range it could penetrate 12.8 inches of metal armour. Ironically, it was never fired in anger.

The island is also the final resting place for many service people of a number of nations, chiefly British. Almost 2,000 from WWI and just over 1,500 from WWII are buried in four beautifully maintained

Commonwealth War Cemeteries. Another 2,298 airmen of WWII who were lost in the Mediterranean operating area are commemorated on the Commonwealth Air Forces Memorial at Floriana.

Yet for all the island’s reliance on spiritual help, an exhibit at the National War Museum reminds us that more temporal things are also important. The front page of the Sunday Times of Malta from 17 May 1942, sits proudly in a display case. Among the headlines are: “Island fighter squadron bags 100th victim”, “Dardanelles raid on Hitler’s convoys”, “Dock gates and railways shot up,” and “Mass in London for Malta”. Yet still demanding space on the front page is one vital piece of information that could make or break people’s day: “Football results – see page 7”.

The brand new, already unmissable, 5D show of Malta’s History (Old Bakery Street, Valletta) concludes with the following sentiment – The Maltese are proud of their history, content with their present and excited about their future. There is plenty of evidence all over Malta and Gozo to back up that statement; you just have to be there to feel it.

78th Artillery Clerks' Reunion and Association Dinner

The 78th Artillery Clerks' Reunion and Association Dinner took place in the Sergeants' Mess, Horne Barracks, Larkhill over the weekend 15th - 17th June 2012. As ever the weekend started with the early arrivals meeting for a drink and the chance to rekindle old friendships on the Friday evening. The night was well supported with Association members arriving in time to enjoy a pint and the chance to catch up on gossip over the past 12 months. It was pleasing to see so many making the effort to arrive early and enjoy the camaraderie for which the Association is so well known.

The Reunion commenced with the Association Annual General Meeting on the evening of Saturday 16th June. This was followed by the now traditional reunion photograph, coordinated by the Secretary. Pre-dinner drinks followed which allowed the Guest of Honour, Major General Matthew Sykes the opportunity to meet members of the Committee.

Accompanied by the Piper, Mr John Hilton, the Top Tables took their place and the gathered Association Members and guests, sat down to an excellent meal. Our compliments once again to the Mess Manager, Mrs Jacqui Rowe-Cousins and to all the staff who looked after us so well throughout the evening. Entertainment during the meal was provided by Inspired Brass, a civilian quintet led by former Staff Sergeant Neil Armstrong, ending with an outstanding rendition of the Post Horn Gallop. After a superb bagpipe set from Mr John Hilton the Dinner concluded with the speeches. The Chairman, Lieutenant Colonel Joe Falzon read the Loyal Message from Her

Majesty the Queen, adding a few words of his own. The Secretary who was standing in for the Reunion Secretary then spoke, giving the usual thank-yous to those who had made for another excellent evening. The toast to 'absent friends' was also made.

The Secretary then introduced Major General Matthew Sykes who gave a very informative speech to those present. It was then time to retire to the bar, pull up a sandbag, swing a lantern or two and continue the motion into the night. I'm pleased to say that, in time honoured tradition, there were still plenty of Artillery Clerks at the bar when the shutters came down!

The 79th Artillery Clerks' Reunion will take place over the weekend 21st - 23rd June 2013 in the new Central Sergeants' Mess in Larkhill. The Guest of Honour will be Maj Gen Richard Nugee Director General (Personnel). The reunion calling letter is enclosed with this edition of 'The Crossed Quills'.

All Association members are encouraged to attend, the more the merrier is definitely true when it comes to reunions! For further details please contact the Reunion Secretary, Maj Ian Constantine, (QM 32 Regt RA, Roberts Barracks, Larkhill, Sailsbury, Wiltshire SP4 8QU).



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Lieutenant Colonel J. F. Falzon BEM,
Chairman,
The Artillery Clerks' Association.

Please convey my warm thanks to the Members of the Artillery Clerks' Association for their message of loyal greetings, sent on the occasion of their seventy-eighth Reunion and Association Dinner which is being held tonight at the Royal Artillery Sergeants' Mess, Larkhill.

As your Captain-General, I much appreciate your kind words on the Sixtieth Anniversary of my Accession to the Throne and, in return, send my best wishes to you all for a memorable and successful event.

ELIZABETH R.

12th June, 2012.





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a. Lt Col Joe Falzon, Maj Gen Mathew Sykes (Guest of Honour) and Hauke Michelson. Inset: Maj Dick Jeavons

b. Marty Hester and Maj Gen Mathew Sykes (Guest of Honour)

c. WO1(SSM) Jim Mutch, Hauke Michelson, Mick Johnston & Pete Deverall

d. 50 Msl Regt Reunion - Rear row: WO1(SSM) Ron Holmes, WO1(SSM) Jim Mutch, Andy Tibble, WO1(SSM) Paddy Stirman & Lt Col Joe Falzon. Front Row: Pete Deverall, Maj Pat Verdon & Mick Johnston

e. Marty Hester, Maj Pat Verdon & Mick Johnston are in shock as Hauke prepares to issue out another round of 'Artillery Fire'!

f. Geoff Hyatt, Maj Gen Mathew Sykes (Guest of Honour) & Lt Col Joe Falzon



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g. WO2 (SQMS) Paddy Butler & SSgt Rob Green (Guest)

h. Friday evening gathering - WO1 (SSM) Jim Mutch, John Taylor, Mick Hutchinson, Maj Paul Corker, Steve Callaghan, Dennis Norris, Hauke Michelson, William Wallace, Roy Deal, WO1 (SSM) Ron Holmes, Peter Gauci, Lt Col Joe Falzon, Steve Seymour, Andy Tibble & WO2 (SQMS) Paddy Butler

i. Graham Brown, Maj Dave Cussell, Bill Young, Marty Hester & Maj Pat Verdon

j. WO1 (SSM) Will Stirman, Maj Paul Corker & Lt Col Joe Falzon

k. Maj Gen Mathew Sykes (Guest of Honour) & Andy Tibble

l. WO1 (SSM) Jim Mutch & Roy Deal



m. Maj Pat Verdon, Maj Dick Jeavons & John Taylor
 n. Steve Read & Steve Callaghan. Inset: Bill Young
 o. Left: John Lindley, Andrew Jones & Peter Gauci. Right: WO2 Bob Smith, Pete Deverall & Marty Hester
 p. Left: Marty Hester & Pete Deverall. Right: Dave Manchester, Peter Gauci & Andrew Jones
 q. Mick Hutchinson, SSgt Rob Green (Guest) & WO1(SSM) Ron Holmes
 r. Lt Col Joe Falzon & Lt Col Russ Lee
 s. Maj Gen Mathew Sykes (Guest of Honour), Mr Neil Armstrong (Inspired Brass) & Andy Tibble
 t. Steve Callaghan & David Stotan singing to the audience!



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u. Hauke Michelson, Maj Pat Verdon & Marty Hester

v. Andy Tibble, Pete Deverall, Hauke Michelson, WO1(SSM) Ron Holmes & Maj Pat Verdon checking over the records!

w. A group photograph of those still standing!

x. Artillery Clerks' Dinner, Herford, Germany

Artillery Clerks' Dinner, Harewood Barracks, Herford Saturday 20 October 2012

The Royal Artillery Clerks Germany weekend took place with the kind permission of WO1 (RSM) Kev East of 1st (United Kingdom) Armoured Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment, Mess in Herford, the former home of HQ 4 Div. True to his word, at the last Larkhill dinner, John Taylor booked his ticket on the spot and came to Germany for the dinner. Arriving on Friday, after checking into their excellent accommodation, 10 of us met up with the local members in the Mess Cellar bar and had a cracking evening. The evening ended up being morning in some interesting pub down the road followed by a whirl in a disco before crawling into the Bks at 0500 hrs. Pat Verdon and Steve Seymour amazed me with their stamina showing the youngens how to move on the dance floor (thankfully we have no photographic evidence this time).

Saturday morning started off with a leisurely brunch with Joe arriving just in time for the days programme. As we had glorious weather it was a unanimous decision to head off into town instead of touring old Barracks around Herford which was just as well as their where a few dogs to nurse. We ended up meeting together in the main town square with sunshine and beers, watching the whole town go by, giving us some interesting viewing and ammo for banter making a great relaxed afternoon. Mrs Taylor phoned John whilst we were there which gave me the opportunity to say hello and convince her that he was behaving. A few of us stopped off at the famous Herford Chip Shop "Schalks" (just before the Bks) which is favourite of the local Germans as well as the Brits,

to gather the usual pre dinner nourishment (with lashings of mayo). We had an hour to get ready and be in the mess for 7.

'The Dinner'

After having the group photo (taken by Chris Atkins of Paderborn) dinner was called at 8 and we found the table was laid out to perfection. With a mix of ACs, Div HQ staff, twenty three sat down to a superb dinner in the warm and congenial atmosphere of the 1 Div Sgts' Mess. The Dinner Evening Manager, Karen and her staff did us proud. Tom Webb our Mr Vice gave the loyal toast and Joe Falzon read out the "Loyal Message" from Her Majesty the Queen. The apologies and messages received had been carefully filed in a folder for all to read and peruse at their leisure after the dinner. I made a slight change to the dinner programme, in that we toasted absent friends with 'Artillerie Feuer', with compliments from Hauke Michelsen who was also absent, biking across Corsica. Hauke did phone us that evening to wish us all well. This toast caused a few gasps from our guests after their first taste of the 'Feuer' which certainly livened a few up at the end of the dinner phase. WO1(SSM) Jane Knight, Superintendant Clerk of the Headquarters, stood and thanked our association on behalf of all the guests attending and said what an honour and a privilege it was to be amongst our company and that she could not think of any association like ours in the services.

Our dinners are normally Gunner affairs, keeping up with tradition as has been for the last seventy

odd dinners. This time we had a number of Adjutant General Corps (Staff and Personnel Support) or (AGC(SPS) for short) brethren and sister from the Div HQ. Our AC members found that we had much in common with many amusing discussions on what was and what is now and how some of the challenges the 'Clerk' faced have never changed. Our regular Gunner attendance that evening was my colleague Sgt Gary Parkinson who had served many years in various peace time and operational appointments with our president General Freddie Viggers. We also had WO2 (SMIG) Andy Herry of HQRA who read out the Gunner Collect at the end of the dinner which was a nice finishing touch much appreciated by our AC brethren.

Needles to say, we had a brilliant evening with a marvellous atmosphere which carried on to the wee hours in some bar not far from the barracks. I promised Pat Verdon that we would not publish the photos which will probably end up on Face Book, not by me I may add.

A special mention of thanks must go to Dennis Norris for bringing Pat Verdon across in his car (took him back as well) and Allan Hurn, Tom Webb's son in law, without whom Tom Webb simply would have not made the weekend due to poor health. Tom had true grit and never complained. I promise that you will live on the ground floor next time Tom.

Sorry to those who could not make this, once again fantastic and memorable weekend.

Ubique
Ron Holmes

78th Artillery Clerks' Reunion and Association Dinner
 Royal Artillery Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Mess, Horne Barracks, Larkhill
 Saturday 16th June 2012



2nd Row – Mr J Hilton (Piper), Mr AJ Jones (Standard Bearer), Mr WM Young, Mr DG Stotan, Mr SP Callaghan, Mr M Johnston, Mr GO Hyatt, Mr SR Seymour, Mr D Norris (Welfare Secretary), Mr J Taylor, Mr JM Hutchinson, Mr PJ Deverall, Mr SV Read, Mr P Gauci, Mr WM Wallace, Mr DC Manchester, Mr M Hester, WO (GE) H Michelson, WO2(SQMS) PG Butler & Mr J Lindley

Front Row – Mr M I Grenham, WO1(SSM) W Stirman, Mr RH Deal MBE (Assistant Secretary), WO1(SSM) RJ Holmes MSM, Maj (Retd) DJ Cusell, Lt Col (Retd) R H Horner MBE, Lt Col (Retd) J F Falzon BEM OSJ (Chairman), Maj Gen RMM Sykes CVO (Guest of Honour), Mr AM Tibble MSM (Secretary), Lt Col R Lee RA MBE, Maj P Corker AGC(PS), Maj (Retd) PJ Verdon, Mr RA Jeavons, SSgt R Green (14 Regt RA), WO1 (SSM) JJ Mutch