

The Waggoner

Newsletter of RASC & RCT



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Editorial

We continue to update the Association Membership database with correct addresses which require postcodes for everyone. Without them the Royal Mail will not post the Waggoners to your homes, so do make sure that Branch Secretaries have your details! I welcome articles submitted by the Branches and individual members.

Diary Dates 2012/13

6 October 2012

Association Annual Conference
Deepcut (application form enclosed)

28 October 2012

Officers' Club Autumn Curry Lunch Deepcut
(application form enclosed)

23 March 2013

Officers' Club Spring Curry Lunch, Deepcut

19 April 2013

Officers' Club AGM and Dinner
Deepcut

7 May 2013

Officers' Club Over 90s Lunch
Deepcut

President RASC & RCT Council Brig P A D Evans OBE

As we approach the first anniversary of our convergence with The Royal Logistic Corps, I thought that now would be an appropriate time to report progress. In terms of the governance arrangements we have put in place, the RASC & RCT Council is already well established and is meeting every six months to review all aspects of our relationship and engagement with The Royal Logistic Corps. The work of the Council is made significantly easier by having an RASC & RCT representative on all key RLC committees, including the RLC Association Trust and the RLC Council.

While I am sure that there have been a number of minor teething difficulties in the initial stages of integration, I hope that you would agree that we enjoy excellent support from RHQ The RLC in general and from our Secretary, Lt Col Jonathan Knowles in particular. Benevolence arrangements are working well and our chattels continue to be extremely well managed. All events have been well organised and executed and I am delighted to report that our various activities have been well supported by the members of the Association and Officers' Club. It was particularly pleasing to see so many attending the various Corps Weekend events. I would continue to encourage all members to make every effort to attend where they can and, in turn, encourage others to come along and support the Corps.

We can therefore look back on, what has been, a most successful year in terms of integration. We can look to the future with high confidence in the level of support we will receive from The Royal Logistic Corps.

Chairman Officers' Club Col G E Vaughan

There have been a few bright spots in this dank, damp summer, some metaphorical such as the Jubilee and the Olympics; some actual, like the warm spell in May. However one bright spot that was both was Corps Sunday, 15 July. A break in the prevailing wet weather meant a fine, sunny, warm day for the annual Church Parade and lunch. The usual flower arrangements and the immaculate church pleased a large congregation for our traditional service. The turnout was larger than in some recent years, perhaps reflecting the first of these events to be fully organised under the auspices of The RLC, since convergence last year. As always a number of family parties were escorted by volunteer hosts to see the Corps tribute to the memory of their father, brother, son, husband. These are inevitably sad, but moving occasions. The sermon, preached by the Reverend Deacon Jeremy Oliver MBE OCM (RC), once again was a thoughtful message, and related well to our service lives.

There was an attendance of some of our members from the Royal Hospital Chelsea, most of whom managed the

short march to the Memorial in Buller Barracks. This march was enlivened by the music - played at a suitable tempo - of the Band of The Rifles. It is a reflection of how difficult life has become in today's army that it proved impossible to book The RLC Band, and difficult even to get a band. The wreath laying ceremony went ahead as usual and a further period of silence was observed to remember fallen comrades. It is pleasing to think that some 19 years after the RCT ceased to be an active Corps we can still muster a good representation at such a traditional event.

This note has largely focussed on the Church service and parade, but it is worth recording that before it on the Saturday there was a packed house for a Band Concert by the RASC & RCT Band Association Branch, followed by a Dinner Dance in the evening. After the service there were two lunches held in Aldershot and Deepcut.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Lt Col Jonathan Knowles for his detailed arrangements for the event. It is a comfort to know that our affairs are in such good hands. We look forward to continuing social activity throughout the rest of the year, and more of the same next July.

**Chairman RASC & RCT Association
Col N E L Gilbert**

The RASC Association was formed on 1 October 1927, 85 years ago, and throughout the years since, the objects of the Association have continued, and remain as important now as they were then, in particular the need for the maintenance of contact between members through social gatherings in one form or another.

Since the last newsletter in December, the Association Committee of Management has met twice, and Regional representatives in their reports have highlighted the various activities that had taken place since the start of the year. On the whole, the reports were encouraging, particularly as our members are declining, due mainly to 'anno domini'. It reinforced what I have seen for myself, when Maureen and I attended the Birmingham Branch Dinner Dance in May. It was excellent evening, and was well supported and included members from Coventry, Tamworth and Preston Branches.

This year's Corps Weekend was held on 14/15 July, and despite the clash of dates with the Farnborough Air Show, the numbers attending the functions were better than expected. On the Saturday afternoon, the RASC and RCT Musicians Association Band performed a most enjoyable concert to a packed audience in the Princes Hall, Aldershot. The programme included many items specifically chosen to pay tribute to HM The Queen in her Diamond Jubilee Year. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces from the Band's past years performing together again, and was a very obvious example of old friendships rekindled. The Dinner Dance

was held at the Holiday Inn, Farnborough on Saturday evening enjoyed by all, and my thanks to the Aldershot Branch for helping Lt Col Knowles with its administration on the night.

Corps Sunday saw the sun come out, which enabled the march from St Michael and St George's Church to the Corps War Memorial to take place. The Band and Bugles of The Rifles led the parade, but at a slower pace for them, which allowed us all to keep together! It was a delight that the eight Chelsea Pensioners who attended the day joined the marchers; such was the persuasion of this retired Captain of Invalids! Readers may be interested to know that there are currently 12 RASC and 9 RCT In-Pensioners at the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

The relationship between our Corps Association and The RLC Association is strong. I am a member of The RLC and Forming Corps Associations Committee, and as such, am given the opportunity of raising any matters of concern. The President of The RLC Association is currently Maj Gen Ian Copeland (late RCT). Since taking up his appointment in February, he has made it clear that he is very keen for there to be a close linkage between the Serving Army and the Forming Corps. I am certain this is the right way to go, and an example of a successful partnership is the close link between the Chelmsford Branch and 13 Air Assault Regiment RLC in Colchester. I urge Branches and Regions to do all they can to foster relations with nearby RLC Regiments, where this is possible.

Maureen and I look forward to attending Regional and Branch events in the coming months, and in particular I look forward to meeting delegates at our Annual Conference in the Tela Theatre, The Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut on Saturday 6 October.

RASC Association Rallies

On 19 November 1949, the RASC Association held its first rally in the Royal Albert Hall which was filled to its capacity of 5,000 members and their families. Many more members who had applied for tickets were to be disappointed. The Representative Colonel Commandant, Lt Gen Sir Humphrey Gale, addressed the audience in the absence of the Duke of Gloucester, who was unable to attend. The audience was kept informed by Lt N I B Speller as 42 Branch Standards were paraded, led by the first Branch to be formed, Portsmouth. At the 1956 Rally, HRH The Duke of Gloucester attended with the two surviving members of the Corps who were holders of the Victoria Cross; Maj A C Herring VC and Mr R G Masters VC, both decorated in World War I.

The rallies continued every other year, and then every third year until in 1980 the attendance was down to 2,000, while the capacity in the Albert Hall was now 6,500. It was decided that due to the reduction in attendance and

the fact that the Regular Army could no longer support the rally on the scale that had been done previously either as arena display parties or as support for the Controller to enable him to do his job. The DGTM had expressed his concerns that he would not be prepared to order Regular soldiers to attend the rally since the pressures are such that what little private and spare time was left to them was precious and it would be unfair to encroach on that time. So it was agreed that there was little choice but to cancel the rally. It was also recognised that membership of the Association for many years owed its success to wartime soldiers finding Branches an ideal means of continuing their wartime comradeship in civilian life. The post-war Regular soldier could not readily identify with the wartime generation and in the 1970s it was recognised that in spite of substantial efforts it was not easy to interest the Regular soldier in joining his local Branch when he left the Regular service. It is a simple fact that times; people and social customs change. Thirty years later in 2012, that evolution continues, with twenty-four hour television, computers and the internet which all provide alternative lifestyles.

The strength of the RASC at the beginning of World War II was just 9,000, but by the end of the war had grown to over 340,000. Since then the Association recruiting pool has continued to reduce over the years. When the RCT was formed on 15 July 1965 it had a strength of 23,500. That figure was further reduced in 1982 to 20,500. Today the RLC has a total establishment of 15,172, which represents 15% of the Army's manpower liability. The Army 2020 proposition is for the British Army to be reduced to 82,000, so if The RLC maintains (unlikely) its 15% share of the Army's manpower, it will lose some 3,000 posts and be left with a strength of 12,300. In reality it is scheduled to reduce to 10,600.

However that is far from the big picture as there are thousands of former members of the RASC & RCT and The RLC who have chosen not to join the Association or the Officers' Club for many reasons, some mentioned above. These are the people we should be persuading to join. Many RASC & RCT unit reunions take place each year, but they have chosen not to join the Association, some do not know that there is an Association. Hopefully the distribution of the Waggoner might be the recruiting tool that is needed.



**The RASC & RCT Association Concert Band
14 July 2012
A Full House**

The Corps Association Concert Band once again performed to a full house at the Princes Hall, Aldershot on 14 July 2012, Corps Weekend. There were many fine individual performances including an excellent arrangement of Midnight Blue by Paul Dodge and admirably played by Mark Atkins. This was followed by the wonderful voice of Evelyn Tubb who sang her brother Alf's arrangement of James Bond. Evelyn sang with the band while learning her trade to becoming a world famous professional singer.

The Old Basing British Legion Corps of Drums closed the first half and under the fine leadership of Bill Prendergast, a former tapper and Drum Major of the original Corps Band, performed with the band during Bolero. They went on to do their "black light" show, before being marched off by Jim Madden a former and retired Drum Major of the Corps to a wonderful round of applause.

The second half began with one of the songs from Behind the Bike Sheds written by the magical pen of Paul Tickner. He writes musicals to an extremely high standard and raises money for Phyllis Tuckwell. Several other pieces were played which are some of HM The Queen's favourites and included Housewives Choice and Berwick Green. It was the turn of the sectional solos, the trumpets gave a great rendition of Yesterday and the Trombones followed with Frolic for Trombones. The clarinets were represented by Mike Keen who played Sweet Georgia Brown and finally Richard Anderson brought the house down with a splendid rendition on the xylophone of On The Track.

The finale was patriotic as expected with the return of Evelyn Tubb singing Rule Britannia and the whole concert finished off with the finest Regimental March of the British Army; Wait For The Waggon. The encore of Sing, Sing, Sing stunned the audience into silence with a complete blackout and then rapturous applause from a wonderful full house.



(Photo by Nathan O'Nions)

**The Worthing and West Sussex Branch Christmas
Draw 2011**



Maj Derek Fuller (Chairman) with the dodgy tie, with Maj Ted Lipscombe (Treasurer) on his right, and Mr Michael Coomber (Secretary) on his left

The Stoke-on-Trent Diamond Jubilee Dinner



The Stoke-On-Trent Branch held a dinner on 2 June 2012 to celebrate HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The guests of honour were Lt Col Roger Wills and Maj Andy Davidson, with their wives Valerie and Jill. All the ladies were presented with a glass diamond ornament, one of which was also presented to HM The Queen. Buckingham Palace wrote to thank the Branch and to say HM was touched by the gift.

Malaya



God's Little Acre in Batu Gajah Christian Cemetery, Ipoh, Perak. David Haddon paraded the Royal British Legion Standard, and Mrs Dorothy Knowles laid the RASC wreath and crosses for the nine members of the RASC whose names are on the memorial in the Ipoh Cemetery. Five of those men were serving with 3 Coy RASC and were killed or died from their wounds in the Cameron Highlands on 2 March 1950, when their convoy was attacked by an overwhelming number of bandits. Those killed were 2Lt W J Richards, Sgt C R Ritter, Cpl F Hand, LCpl N Hoggett and Dvr R H Jones. The four other men named on the memorial are Capt P B Jessop, Dvr C E Whitwell, Dvr R Baldwin and Dvr T F J Hooper.

In addition to the many civilians killed, a total 1,287 British servicemen plus 369 members of the Gurkha Brigade died during the 12 year Malaya Emergency from 1948 to 1960. One hundred and sixteen members of the RASC died, the highest number of Army fatalities for one cap badge, of which 23 were serving in 55 AD Coy RASC.

Malay Emergency Casualties Buried

On 25 August 1950 an RAF Dakota set off on a target marking mission with four RASC Air Despatchers from 55 AD Coy RASC on board. The aircraft crashed into the dense jungle near Kempong Jendera, and it was several days before the search party arrived at the scene to discover all 12 crew and passengers had died. The Air Despatchers were Cpl Phillip Bryant from Southend-on-Sea, Dvr Peter Taylor from Bournemouth, Dvr Roy Wilson from Birkenhead and Dvr Oliver Goldsmith from Cheshire. The security situation and lack of resources meant that the bodies were hastily buried in shallow graves near the crash site. Five decades later Geoffrey, the brother of the plane's navigator Flt Lt Carpenter, wrote to the Malaysian High Commissioner in London asking if they could give him a map of the region in which the plane had crashed. From that simple request, the Malaysian Army mounted a huge expedition and found the crash site in November 2008. It was not possible to identify remains for all those who had been killed; apart from three men whose DNA matched Cpl Bryant, Dvr Taylor and a Malay Police Officer.

On 15 March 2012 at the Commonwealth Graves in the Cheras Cemetery, the remains were reburied with full military honours. Relatives of all four Air Despatchers were present, as was Col Sean English (formerly RCT, RLC and AD), plus three NCOs from 14 AD Sqn RLC who joined members of The Queen's Colour Squadron RAF to form the bearer party. Col English said of the occasion; "There is something very personal to the Air Despatch community whenever you bury someone in that community. We hold our forbears very dear and there is clear linkage for the soldiers of today with the soldiers of the 1950s".



The Bearer Party led by members of 47 AD Squadron RLC

Army Maritime Officers' Reunion 11 May 2012

The Army Maritime Officers' Reunion was held at Byams House Officers' Mess, Marchwood on Friday 11 May 2012, courtesy of Lt Col Rob Askew, CO 17 Port & Maritime Regiment RLC. There were 29 in attendance, mainly old and bold but with a sprinkling of younger officers who are probably still suffering shell shock owing to the valiant, doughty and awe-inspiring tales they were forced to endure at the bar. As has become the norm on these occasions, the reflection was a veritable delight, the staff attentive and all operated with a smooth efficiency under the vigilant eye of the Mess Manager, Mrs Debbie Cramb. The dinner table was bedecked with many a trophy (although not the Dunford Wood Trophy!) reminding us of the trials and tribulations, dangers yet few rewards but above all the honour of going to sea in the service of Her Majesty.

We hope Rob Askew will be able to join us next year providing he is not on tour in some foreign land and trust the next reunion will see many of us reunited once more and that we may again benefit from the CO's generosity in being able to enjoy what is now our ancestral home.

NB: Lt Col C D C Dunford Wood DFC RCT presented a sailing trophy in his name to the Corps, when he was the Flag Officer of the RCT Yacht Club circa 1969/70. We are trying to trace its whereabouts. Please contact the Secretary if you know.



The following members attended: Col J P Ash, Col H Bentley-Marchant, Col C A Butterfield, Col R H Dadswell OBE, Col D B Green, Lt Col J C Hope, Lt Col D G Pepperell, Lt Col T C Street, Lt Col R Vaughan-Stanley, Maj P D Anderson, Maj R H G Barton MBE, Maj T O Broadfoot, Maj T M Coppin, Maj A P Couzens, Maj J G Dermody, Maj D G Hammett MBE, Maj O M Jones, Maj D Nichols MBE, Maj P C Oliver, Maj A M Paterson, Maj C Pedley, Maj C C Pugh, Maj P J Robyns, Maj K A Rollinson, Maj J P Venmore, Maj P B Wilkie, Maj D R Woodford, Capt P Bakx, Capt I F Peardon.



Maj A M Paterson,
Maj D Nichols
MBE and Col R H
Dadswell OBE

