



Airborne Engineers Association

Regd Charity No: 1009201

NEWS LETTER

JUNE 1996

PRESIDENT

Major General G Field CB OBE

Contents

From the Chair!	4
No Indispensable Man!	5
Committee Members	6
Ray Coleman - Secretary	7
Appeal - A Comrade requiring Information.....	7
News from "The Squadron" and Around the Branches	8
"The Squadron"	8
Aldershot Branch.....	9
Birmingham Branch.....	10
Chatham Branch.....	10
Branch News	10
Yorkshire Branch	11
North West Branch.....	12
Chris Chambers, Association Membership Secretary	13
News Items.....	15
Information	15
Falkland Islands.....	15
Murphy's Law of Combat	15
Football - Palestine '46.....	16
9 Airborne Squadron - Army Cup Hockey Team in Egypt 1952.....	16
Additions to the Committee.....	16
"Letter of thanks from the Queen"	16
Lost Touch with Pals?	16
Historian - Fred Gray	18
The Bridge at Troarn.....	18
Major Roseveare's Account.....	18
Obituaries.....	20
591 (Antrim) Parachute Squadron R.E.	20
9 Independent Parachute Squadron R.E.	20
591 Squadron R.E.	21
1st Parachute Squadron R.E.	21
261 Field Park Company (Airborne) R.E.	21
9 Parachute Squadron R.E.	21
Diary of Events 1996	22
Airborne Forces Weekend.....	22

Functions:.....	22
Association Shop.....	23
Association News Letter - Payment.....	24
Airborne Engineers Association Reunion.....	25
Accommodation in the Aldershot Area.....	26
From the Editor.....	27
News Letter – Proforma.....	29

From the Chair!

Dear Members,

Welcome to the second Newsletter of 1996! At the last count, approximately a quarter of the membership had paid the annual subscription of £4.00 towards the production of the Newsletter. Many of our members will not receive this issue, which is disappointing. The Newsletter represents our only means of communication and with the content and standard improved so much over the last eighteen months, makes it doubly disappointing. I trust we count on those who have received their Newsletter, to remind those who have not, what a wonderful medium they have to communicate and remain in touch with so many friends! Please support this excellent Newsletter and we shall just have to wait and see the outcome of all our efforts!

Again the Squadron has been on their travels, taking part in Exercise "Purple Star," which took place in the US. Needless to say, there was a very small group left behind on rear party! Nonetheless, they have again contributed to this edition of the Newsletter, even under these circumstances, which gives us hope for the future of the Association. I hope you all enjoy this issue of the Newsletter and continue to use the Newsletter to keep in touch.

Mrs Qarikau's letter to the President of the Association, expressing the family's grateful thanks for the support given to Mick, arrived too late for submission in our last issue. However, we have taken the opportunity of reproducing the letter in this issue. Sadly, just as this issue was going to final proofing, the Association has learnt of the sad death of Mick on the 6th June last. I am sure all who knew Mick and he had many friends, will wish with me, sincere condolences to the family. A fuller obituary will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Tom Ormiston - Chairman Airborne Engineers Association

*Mrs Brenda Qarikau
8 Jabley Gardens
Ridge Road, Marple
Stockport, Cheshire. SK6*

Dear Geoff,

Once again, thank you so very much for the chance to take the trip to Fiji, it was just the right time to go and the warmth and kindness of his family will always be with us. It did Mick the world of good and although he is very tired on his return, part jet lag and part not feeling well, he is still feeling the benefit of going to Fiji.

We cannot thank all the individuals and service charities enough for their support and help, enclosed is a copy of expenditure, for the trip and receipts for most of the accommodation, travel and items. Hoping, this letter finds you well.

Our kind regards,
Brenda. XX

No Indispensable Man!

Sometimes when you're feeling important,
Sometimes when your ego's in bloom,
Sometimes when you go around thinking,
You're the best qualified in the room,
Sometime when you think that your going would leave an unfillable hole,
Take heed of this little poem, and see how it humbles your soul.

Take a bucket and fill it with water, plunge your hand in up to your wrist,
Pull it out and the hole that's remaining is a measure of how much you'll be missed.

You may splash all you like when you enter, you can stir up the water galore,
but STOP! And you'll see in a moment that it looks just the same as before.

The moral to this little story is, do just the best that you can, be proud of yourself, but remember,
There is No Indispensable Man!

Committee Members

Position	Member	Address	Code	Phone
President	Geoff Field			
Vice President	Ian Wilson			
Chairman	Tom Ormiston			
Secretary	Ray Coleman			
Membership	Chris Chambers			
Treasurer	Bob Mathews			
Historian	Fred Gray			
Entertainments	Dave Rutter			
Editor	Colin Parker			
1 Sqn	Bob Jones			
2 Sqn	Ollie Atkins			
3Sqn	Bob Sullivan			
4 Sqn	Eric Richards			
OC, SSM, Cpl	9 Sqn			
Bunny Brown	131 TA			
Moggy Metcalfe	Aldershot			
Birmingham	George Barrett			
Chatham	Eric Blenkinsop			
Yorkshire	Bill Rudd			
Northwest	Alan Marshall			
Northern Ireland	RSM R Brown			
Shop	Jan Chambers			

Ray Coleman- Secretary

Activity in the Branches goes on unabatedly and it is good to see the numbers of personnel joining the Association increasing each month. This is the first Newsletter to be sent out, where members need to make a contribution towards the production cost. I believe, every member agrees, the Newsletter offers a superb medium for us all to remain in touch with those comrades and friends who have travelled different paths over the years. The standard of the Newsletter, now make it an event to look forward to and an item avidly read by all recipients. Unfortunately, there will be many among our number who will not receive this issue, in most cases, it will be because they forgot to send the cheque for £4.00, to cover a year's subscription!

The Association needs its members and its members need the communication, so the Association can continue beyond our own mortality. If you know of a member who has not made his contribution, for whatever reason, please remind him of what he is missing. Until Chatham, I wish you well and hope we can count on your support at this superb event!

Appeal- A Comrade requiring Information

The Association recently received a letter from John "Tommo" Thompson, our former Association Secretary. As you know, John was at one time quite ill and as part of his on-going recuperation, he has elected to write his "autobiography." So it is with pleasure the Association reproduces John's request!

Dear Editor,

As a purely therapeutical exercise, after an illness, I am writing my autobiography, Nine of the best years of my life were spent with 9 Independent Parachute Squadron RE. I have been researching this period, but I find that as far as the Airborne Brigade is concerned, 9 Squadron seems like the lost legion! The majority of information has come mainly from old comrades, to whom I have written or called frantically on the telephone.

Although it is an autobiography, I am trying to keep it as humorous as possible and mention the many characters and laughable incidents during my time with the Squadron. My first few years were spent with 3 Troop from 1961 to early 1963. After that, I was the Squadron Plant Fitter for a period, before being posted to 1 Troop. After six years' service. I tried civvy street, but could not settle. In June of 1969 I returned to the Squadron and back to my old Troop of 3 Troop. I remained with 3 Troop until January 1970, before I was posted to the Royal Engineers Diving School.

I would appreciate any information on the Squadron during this period i.e. Dates, times, places of exercise, humorous incidents and especially any photographs. All photographs will be copied and returned to the sender. Please help a frustrated writer to achieve his life ambition!

All the Best

"Tommo"

News from "The Squadron" and Around the Branches

"The Squadron"

Since The Squadron returned from a very successful tour of Northern Ireland, a short spell of leave was taken over the Easter period, with everyone returning to Aldershot by the 9th April 1996. It had been some two and half years since The Squadron as a whole had worked with 5 Airborne Brigade. Construction tasks had taken up most of the time, so we wished to make sure our Infantry and Combat Engineer skills were brought back to our normal high standard. The Training Officer was tasked to produce an intensive programme, incorporating all the soldiering and sapper disciplines. Many long hours of "wheeling & dealing" followed, which paid off, with all troops enjoying an exhausting but very rewarding three week training package.

Subsequently, The Squadron deployed on Exercise "Purple Star" for one month, which was an overseas airborne exercise with 5 Airborne Brigade in America. One hundred & twenty three (123) members of the Squadron flew to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, home of 82 Airborne Division, for cross training and field exercises. The Squadron was hosted by 'C' Company, 37 Battalion, who are part of 20 Engineer Brigade. Worthy of note, the Americans have an Airborne Corps, where we have a Brigade, also having a Brigade of Airborne Engineers, where we have a Squadron! We were not daunted, as none of them had passed 'P' Company!

We enjoyed a tremendous ten day training package on their backdoor training area, which seemed the size of Hampshire! They demonstrated several improvised charges on the demolition range and some of their impressive "scatterable" mine laying equipment. They also held copious quantities of plant, most of which can be air dropped and are experts in runway construction and maintenance. We also parachuted with the "notorious" T10-C parachute, more of which later!

The whole Squadron was awarded American "Blood Wings" - "thumped" into the chest by the presenting officer! The Officer Commanding had the dubious honour of having his wings knocked into his chest by an "overzealous" American "Bird" Colonel, with a 20-pound mallet on the end of a broom handle!

Following the cross training and hard earned rugby victory, which was achieved on a pitch resembling a gravel pit, The Squadron deployed to their forward mounting base. This was at Cherry Point, near the US Marine Base at Camp Lejeune. After two days battle preparation, the Squadron deployed in support of the Brigade, to secure a lodgement in support of 3 Commando Brigades' amphibious landings. Unfortunately, two American helicopters collided on the first night, killing 17 US Marines and the exercise was understandably curtailed. Nonetheless, we had completed most of our tasks. The second phase was the highlight of the tour, with the fourth largest parachute drop in history. The Squadron, with a company of American Engineers under command, parachuted at night onto one of five Brigade Drop Zones used in the Fort Bragg area. The exercise went to plan, except Sapper Allen Craven who experienced double parachute malfunction. Miraculously he survived, but is currently in hospital in North Carolina with many breaks, including a broken pelvis. Unfortunately, his was not the only malfunction that evening.

Our main effort was to construct and maintain a Hercules C130 landing strip. Members of Support Troop gained tremendous experience and acquired vital skills in this role. These skills will be required to carry out similar work, in our new Joint Rapid Deployment Force role.

In summary the exercise was a tremendous success and it proved an excellent opportunity to soldier again, following our three recent construction tours in the last two years. For the remainder of the calendar year. The Squadron will deploy troops to Cyprus, Canada, Bosnia and Belize, before our training exercises in Kenya at the end of the year. Morale is extremely high and the men look forward to seeing Association Members at Airborne Forces Day!

Aldershot Branch

The change of meeting day from Friday evening to Sunday lunch has been a great success. Our first meeting attracted fifty members with families, guests and friends, all of whom attended the lunch. The lunch was held in the 5 Brigade Sergeants Mess dining room and full bar facilities were available. Three course lunch with wine available at extra cost was the order of the day at the unbelievable price of £3.50 per person, which proved to be excellent value Unfortunately; gone are the days when a military chef cooked the meal and one of your own lads behind the bar! The civilians have moved in and everything has to be paid for. Extra duty pay alone came to a little under one hundred pounds!

Fortunately, the cost was offset, by members providing a very good contribution of prizes to the raffle and a bit of "arm twisting" by the ladies selling the raffle tickets. We nearly managed to cover the extra duty pay, so our bank balance didn't suffer too much. Future lunches must be increased to £5.00 per head to cover for these charges, but it appears from canvassing, this will not deter anyone from attending! Our second lunch had to be cancelled at short notice, due to 5 Brigade deploying to the US, in the latter part of April and early May.

Entertainment for the balance of the year has yet to be decided, but we look forward to Airborne Forces weekend and the re-union in October Activity currently being considered is, the ever popular Sunday Lunch on the river Wey at Guildford and a theatre night. These type of events do cause a problem as long term booking is required and not all members can or are willing to commit that far ahead.

At one of our recent meetings, we were particularly pleased to see the reappearance of John "Tommo" Thompson. Most members know, John served as the Association Secretary for the first five years, until ill health caused him to resign. He is now well on the way to recovery after a "nightmare" eighteen months and we look forward to John playing an active part in Branch activities again! (Hopefully as Secretary!)

Our congratulations go to Mabel, wife of George Fairs, on her ninetieth birthday! Mabel has accompanied George on all the social activities organised by the Branch. Climbing in and out of a river barge on the Wey, is no mean feat for a lady half her age! This minor detail has not deterred her in any way and we hope to see her attend many more Branch functions

There are several AEA members in the Aldershot area who are not members of the Branch Please come and join us, you will be made most welcome at any time, to drop in for a chat and a beer. Dates of meetings cannot be published in advance, as we only decide at the preceding meeting, when the next meeting will be! Anyone who would like to come along to a meeting, either as a guest, or member, you can ring Fred Gray on 01252-617584.

We look forward to seeing you!

Birmingham Branch

We have moved ...!! to a new location! The Branch now meets, every first Wednesday of the month, at the Royal British Legion, Ivy Leaf Club in Birmingham on the A45 Coventry Road The venue is about a mile past the Airport and NEC, going towards the City. The move has been painless and was prompted by a Royal British Legion member of the Branch. This member felt it would be good "Public Relations" to support the Royal British Legion. A Branch vote was carried unanimously and the Committee of the "Ivy Leaf house accepted us with "open arms." The new venue has many attractions, with many bars, function rooms, gun rooms and committee rooms. It appears we have made a good choice of venue and it keeps us in touch with many old soldiers. We also hope to find a few Airborne Sappers who will wish to join the Branch!

The Branch decided to purchase a "Centre Piece" for the top table, which will be displayed at our formal functions. This purchase will identify the function and provide a focal point, reminiscent of the "Mess & Dinner" nights we remember with affection. It will also complement the trophies retrieved last year from New Zealand and Spain respectively! The Branch continues to enjoy good attendance's at our meetings, which is very satisfactory, as it proves members are keen to continue their support for the Branch.

This year's functions have been planned with different members tasked to explore venues, cost and timings. Idea's currently prevailing, BBQ's, Clay Pigeon Shoot, Museums and Dog Racing. So if you are in Birmingham and some of you will visit the NEC this year, remember our meeting date and come and see us, we are fifteen minutes from the NEC!

Chatham Branch

Games Night on the 26th April

Although lightly attended, was nevertheless a most successful evening. Many laughs and much more fun than a monthly meeting! Our thanks are due to Mike Fisher for his supreme efforts in organizing this event. We also thank all the ladies for producing the "goodies," which rounded off the evening nicely! At the end of the night, Graham was to be seen with a rather contented grin on his face, so we presume we also swelled the "coffers" slightly!

We now look forward to events later in the year:

Sunday 16th June-Branch BBQ-Start 14:00 Hours

Unfortunately, by the time you receive this Newsletter, the event will have come and gone. (See Editor's notes). The event coincides with the Branch hosting the Association's June OGM from 12:00 Hours to 14:00 Hours at the WO's and Sgt's Mess, Brompton Barracks. We hope to have had a good attendance from Branch members and we will have extended our usual warm welcome to all Association members, to join us at the family function afternoon following the OGM.

Weekend September 13th/14th/ & 15th - Chatham REA Veterans

This is by tradition, a well-organised and most enjoyable weekend. This can be confirmed by all those regulars who attend, such as, Bill Rudd, Kenn Hart and the Yorkshire Branch lads and the lads from the Potteries, besides many others We look forward to seeing you all again this year. So to you all, "Be Bold" and come to Chatham for the weekend, where on Friday 13th September at 20:00 Hours, you can be sure of a warm welcome at our "Buffett Dance." We hope the price of the ticket for this event, can be "pegged" at £5.00 per head, obtainable at the door on the evening!

Branch News

Membership remains rather static now, but would you believe there has been a stirring from across the water in Essex! A warm welcome was extended to Ben Taverner from Rayleigh at the March meeting. We have also received communication from Ron Gibson from Hornchurch, concerning the Chatham Veterans Weekend Could this be a sign of things to come?

Yorkshire Branch

There is a saga emanating from the news submitted from the Branch for this newsletter, which when told, reads on the verge of farce! Nonetheless, we press on and advise, our Branch AGM was cancelled at the last minute, because the security state was increased and we had to quickly get in touch with members, to stop them travelling to Harrogate. When the dust finally settled and we managed to meet, we found the guys who were members of the Committee for 1995/96, were the same ones who were going to do it in 1996/97, Amazing! However, Tom Thornton accepted the position of Branch President and John Dickson took over as Vice-Chairman. So for those out there, who like to "spot old mates" in the Newsletter, here is the current listing of Committee members:

President:	Tom Thornton
Chairman:	Bill Rudd MBE
Vice Chairman:	John Dickson
Secretary:	Kenn Hart
Vice Secretary:	Charlie Dunk
Treasurer:	Roy King
Vice Treasurer:	Bob Jasper
Entertainments:	"Ginge" Goodfellow
Welfare:	Charlie Dunk
Recruiting:	Dave Ruddock (Volunteered in his absence!)
Raffle:	Barney Barnwell
Vice Raffle:	Phil Poulton

It was good to see so many AEA members on the Sunday morning parade during the Ripon Veterans Weekend. Not exactly on parade but hiding behind her sunglasses "taking photo's" was Jan "The Shop" Chambers, who along with Chris had a memorable weekend, I believe! There were ninety seven (97) AEA/REA members on parade, along with nineteen standards and 38 Engineer Regiment. In a tradition we started some years ago in Chatham, The Squadron, formed to the rear of the parade and all wore their berets, with the casual grace found in all Airborne soldiers! Sorry, "Barney" Barnwell forgot his beret and his excuse that he was only in Ripon for the beer was not accepted, "Take 5!"

Our weekend celebrations were clouded by the sad news of Mick Quarikau passing away. On behalf of the Yorkshire Branch, we would take this opportunity to extend our sincere condolences to Brenda and her family. Bill Rudd, "Ginge" Goodfellow and myself (Kenn Hart), will be attending the funeral in Stockport, as friends and representatives of our Branch

Lastly, regards from the county of "hosepipe" bans, don't mention the profits the water company is making and look forward to meeting old friends again at Chatham this year!

North West Branch

The Branch AGM was held at the Royal British Legion Club, St. Helens (**see Editor's note**) on Saturday 27th April 1996. The Branch Officers are as follows:

Chairman	-	Brian Jones
Secretary	-	Alan Marshall
Treasurer	-	Ken Cole
Social Member	-	Jim Percey

Tony Koran "reluctantly" gave up the Treasurer post and Ken was installed. Meetings are held quarterly and scheduled for the following dates:

Saturday 27th July

Saturday 26th October-

Saturday 25th January 1997

Saturday 19th April 1997

Being a newer branch to the AEA, we are still recruiting and gladly welcome all new members from anywhere in the North West region. Please call us; you can be assured of a warm welcome. The Branch is seeking to hold a social function and we are currently reviewing suitable venues'!

The Chairman recently attended the REA Families reunion at the Pontins Centre, Pakefield, Nr Lowestoft. There were three hundred and fifty (350) Ex-Sappers and partners at the event! It was good to meet up with Les Teague and Roy King. There was one member from 9 Field Coy (Airborne) and this gentleman's name was Bill Owen. I am pleased to report, he is doing well despite his years and it was extremely pleasant to meet him.

On a much lighter note, as well as Chairman of the NW Branch of the AEA, I am Divisional Secretary with SSAFA. My Division is entering the Charity Raft Race at the Albert Dock in Liverpool on the 16th June 1996. Unfortunately, by the time the Newsletter has been received, this event will have come and gone. Nonetheless, you can be assured I am not "paddling", but it will be fun to exercise some Combat Engineering Skills again, to design and construct the raft! Thanks for the rope, it works and floats well!

Chris Chambers, Association Membership Secretary

Since the January "Newsletter," a further twenty-eight (28) have joined us, details as follows:

Geoffrey Barlow	9 Ind. Parachute Squadron R.E.	1975-1982
William Rogers	9 Ind. Para Field Sqn R.E.	1955-1957
Bob Phillips	9 Para Sqn RE/HQ. 5 Airborne Bde	1990-1995
Dilwyn Rogers	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1979-1984
Nick Tidmarsh	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1994-to present
Harry Wood	131 A/B Engr. Regt/9 Para Sqn R.E.	1953-1960
David Richards	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1988-to present
Michael Stewart	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1988-to present
William Shield	9 Para Sqn R.E./301 Sqn R.E.	1958-1960/1962-1966
Michael Robson	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1977-1984
Richard Clydesdale	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1992-to present
Peter Woods	9 independent Para Sqn R.E.	1961-1966
James Welsh	249 Field Coy. R.E.	1943-1944
William Davies	131 Para Field Regt R.E. (TA)	1961-1964
Robert Taylor	9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1959-1960
Joseph McDonough	131 Para Engr. Regt. R.E. (TA)	1950-1967
Kenneth Williams	9 Para Sqn R.E.	1949-1952
Gordon Spicer	1 st Para Sqn R.E.	1942-1945
John Hinshelwood	591 (Antrim) Para Sqn R.E. 300 Airborne Sqn. R.E.	1943-1946 1946-1948
Leslie Teague	3 Airborne Sqn R.E. 9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1948-1949 1949-1957
Dennis Bennett	9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1959-1962
John Roseveare	6 Field Park Sqn. R.E. 3 Para Sqn. R.E.	1943 1943-1945
Mick Lobb	9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1963-1965 1975-1978
Frederick Barrett	1 st Airborne Div. 131 Para Engr. Regt.	Dates TBC
Herbert Dray	6th Airborne Div. 249/1 & 9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1945-1949
Gareth Hughes	299/300 Para Sqn. 131 Regt. R.E.	1960-1966
Leonard Noble	6th Airborne Div.	1942
Peter Cambell	9 Independent Para Sqn R.E.	1955-1956

To all the Above, "Welcome to the Association"

Please **REMEMBER** to keep me informed of any changes of address or change of units. Also, if you change your telephone number or post code, please advise me, as this needs to be amended as well. Send all your details to:
Chris Chambers Membership Secretary 24 Longfield Road Ash, Nr Aldershot Hants. GU12 6NA

Many thanks to all those who have written, your letters are very welcome. Thanks to those of you who supply me with the names of potential members and as you will note, most are persuaded to join! I hope to meet up with you at the various functions throughout the year, until then.

"Happy Landings"

Chris

👉*****Stop Press*****

Welcome back, to all 9 Squadron personnel from the US exercise "Purple Star". Best wishes for a speedy recovery to those who were injured on the mass parachute drop

News Items

Information

You will recall in the last Newsletter, a former glider pilot asked if we could locate the passengers he took to Arnhem in 1944. Because of this item, Mr Ken Hannabus could contact the pilot, Mr Tom Smith. Ken was the Sergeant in the Glider and along with his brother Ivor, went to Arnhem with 9 Field Coy. (Airborne) R.E. The other passengers of the Glider remain untraced. Ken and Tom have spoken on the telephone and intend to correspond in due course.



Falkland Islands

Mr Alec Smith, formally of 9 Squadron, lays a wreath at the Falkland Islands War Memorial. This wreath is laid in memory of those men of 9 Parachute Squadron and other Engineer units who died in the 1982 conflict. Alec has carried out this task every year since the end of the war at his own expense!

Murphy's Law of Combat

(Cliff Joy-Taupo New Zealand)

1. If the enemy is in range, so are you!
2. Incoming fire has right of way!
3. Do not look conspicuous, it draws fire!
4. There is always a way!
5. The easy way is always mined!
6. Try to look unimportant, they may be short of ammo!
7. Professionals are predictable, it's the amateurs who are dangerous!
8. The enemy invariably attack on two occasions, when you are ready for them and when you are not ready for them!
9. Teamwork is essential, it gives them something to shoot at!
10. If you can't remember, then the claymore is pointed towards you!
11. The enemy diversion you have been ignoring will be the main attack!
12. A "sucking chest wound" is nature's way of telling you to slow down!
13. If the attack is going well, you have walked into an ambush!
14. Never draw fire, it irritates those around you!
15. Anything you do, can get you shot, including doing nothing!
16. Make it tough enough for the enemy to get in, and you will not get out!
17. Never share a foxhole with anyone braver than yourself!
18. If you are short of everything but the enemy, then you are in a combat zone!
19. When you have secured an area, do not forget to tell the enemy!
20. Never forget your weapon is made by the lowest bidder!



Football- Palestine '46

The photograph below, was sent in by George Barrett residing in Cranbrook, Canada. This shows the first football team of the newly formed 9 Airborne Squadron in Palestine in 1946. Unfortunately, George could only identify one player other than himself, which is Jim Gavin (I hope we spelt this name correctly) second from the left in the back row. George is the goalkeeper. Can anyone put names to the rest, if you can, contact Fred Gray and he will advise George accordingly.

9 Airborne Squadron- Army Cup Hockey Team in Egypt 1952

Come on all you sport fans, 1952 was not that long ago! See if you can advise Fred Gray or Chris Chambers of their whereabouts and whether they are members, which is more to the point!



Rear Left to Right:

Cpl Elford, Capt Munro, L/Cpl Smith,
Sgt Heads

Mid Row Left to Right:

Cpl Knowles, Capt Wade, Major Lyall-Grant,
SQMS Wren, Sgt Martin

Front Sitting:

Sgt. Follows, Sgt Whittaker

Additions to the Committee

We welcome aboard, Major Ian Robbie, who joined the AEA Committee as the representative of 286 Field Park Squadron R.E. and 147 Airborne Park Squadron R.E. The address and telephone number of Major Robbie is listed below, welcome Ian!

"Letter of thanks from the Queen"

The AEA through the good offices of Jan Chambers, sent a greeting message to the Queen on the occasion of her seventieth birthday! We have reproduced a copy of the response

Lost Touch with Pals?

A free service is offered by Channel IV teletex No: 676, in placing adverts, to enable tracing of service pals you may have lost touch with over the years! Next time you have a spare minute, tune in and see what you can offer, remember it's FREE!



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

22nd April, 1996.

Dear Mrs. Chambers,

I am commanded by The Queen to thank you and all members of the Airborne Engineers Association for your kind message of greetings, sent on the occasion of Her Majesty's seventieth birthday.

The Queen much appreciated this message and has asked me to send her warm thanks for the sentiments in your message and good wishes to everyone concerned.

Yours sincerely,

(SIMON GIMSON)

Mrs. J. Chambers.

COPY

Historian- Fred Gray

The Bridge at Troarn

One of many engineer tasks allotted to the Sapper Squadrons and Companies of the 6th Airborne Division, during the hours preceding the allied invasion of Normandy on the 6th June 1944, was the destruction of six bridges on the **River Dives**. This was to prevent any attempt by the Germans, to cross the river and attack the left flank of the invading forces. The task had been allocated to 3 parachute Squadron R.E. under the command of Major J.C.A. Roseveare. Infantry protection was provided by a Company from the 8th Parachute Battalion, for the targets in the south (**Bridges Bures and Troarn**). In the north (**Varavil and Robehomme**) protection was offered by the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion. **DZ's** were allocated to each formation, to be as near their targets as possible, but in the fog, plans invariably go wrong and they did! Major Roseveare was in the leading aircraft, with plans to drop on **DZ 'K'** with the main demolition force. Needless to say, they landed on **DZ 'N,'** which was much farther away and to the North West of their target. The drop was scattered over a large area; by using Sapper initiative, they could form an adequate size of party to set out for the Bridges at Troarn and Bures.

Major Roseveare's Account

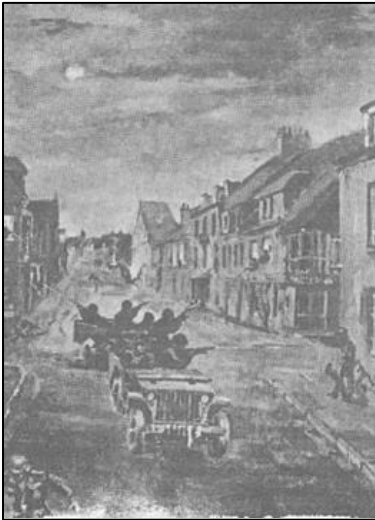
Heavily laden, we set off on the long march to our objectives. As we went, a jeep and trailer appeared out of the murk, belonging to 224 Para Field Ambulance. I had no compunction in commandeering the jeep and trailer. Lack of transport, may make all the difference between success and failure. The long pull was punishing, as some men had injuries from the drop and this did not help matters. At some cross roads we reorganized and all the medical stores were unloaded and replaced with "General Wade" charges. I split the party into two groups and sent the second group, under Captain Tim Jukes, with the bulk of Sappers to attack the bridges at **Bures**.

Without infantry protection it was evident only a "**coup de main**" operation against the **Troarn** bridge was likely to succeed. I took the wheel of the jeep and we set off. On board was Lt. David Breese, L/Sgt's. Henderson & Irving, Cpl's Fellows, Knight & Wideatt, Sappers Peachey, Prince, & Moon and half a ton of explosives. It was still rather dark and gloomy and before I could stop, I ran into a barbed wire roadblock. By the "Grace of God" L/Sgt Irving had "borrowed" a pair of wire cutters from 8 Battalion to deal with telephone wires during our march. Without them, we would have got no further! Disentangling and cutting the wire, seemed to take an age and we were apprehensive as we waited! We were now entering the town and stopped just short of the crossroads. David Breese and Sgt. Irving went forward to have a look and were peering around the corner to the left, when I spotted a German with a rifle riding towards us on a bicycle! I had to shout "look the other way" and the German immediately started shouting, if he had stopped shouting and let go of his bicycle and used his rifle, he would be alive today. Because we had used a Sten Gun, instead of the preferable knife, we had to make the best possible speed through the town, as the element of surprise had been lost! We were travelling at no more than 30mph, because of the heavy load, when we came round a sharp bend and met some Germans, which resulted in a "fire fight" starting. One German set up an MG34 and as we sped on through the town and a stream of tracer bullets passed overhead. All our rifles protruded from the jeep and a large plate glass window in the town would have to be replaced.

Sapper Peachy was rear gunner on the trailer with his Bren Gun and as we drove through the town on a careering Jeep and bucking trailer, he maintained a steady all round fire! The steep gradient out of town helped our speed, but unfortunately Sapper Peachy was thrown out of the almost uncontrollable trailer and subsequently captured. On reaching the target, a "hasty" demolition was completed in seven minutes by the OC and eight men. This was instead of a planned deliberate method by thirty men, taking up to one hour to complete!

To return through the town would have been suicidal! As we had no further means of carrying out damage to the bridge and only Sten Guns for protection, we set out along a track by the river. After ditching the Jeep, we swam for several water courses before taking to the woods, eventually we came across an elderly Frenchman milking a cow! When I told him, he had been liberated, he was not impressed! Perhaps he did not understand

my accent! Finally we arrived a 3-Brigade HQ at midday, a very bedraggled and exhausted party, having been shot at by the Germans, bombed by the RAF, shelled by the Navy and unappreciated by the French!



Major Roseveare was awarded an immediate Distinguished Service Order. Three other officers were awarded the Military Cross and two NCO's received the Military Medal and all six bridges tasked, were destroyed against the odds!

Obituaries

591 (Antrim) Parachute Squadron R.E.

Arthur ("Herman") Goreing, who died in 1995 was a member of No: 1 Troop. He joined the Squadron in 1943 and served in Normandy from 'D' Day onwards, in the Ardennes and on the Rhine Crossing. His Troop Commander was Frank Harbord who was killed on the Rhine march in 1945.

Arthur was stalwart character who took great pride in his wartime service with 591 Squadron. After retirement from the Construction Industry, he was severely handicapped by emphysema but regularly attended the annual reunions of 6 Airborne Divisional Engineers in London and Normandy Pilgrimages. In spite of his failing health, he attended the **D** Day Anniversary Ceremonies in June 1994, where he was presented with a commemorative medal, awarded to the Normandy Veterans by the French.

He was an active member of his local branch of the PRA and joined the AEA shortly after its formation. He will be remembered for all he did to keep the Squadron spirit alive. When fifteen members of 591 Squadron met at the "Dedication Ceremony" for the memorial to Airborne Forces at Hardwick Hall in 1987, it was almost entirely due to the efforts of Arthur. He sought out former members and encouraged them to attend, an effort rewarded by the high turnout.

Arthur was a great enthusiast for all matters to do with Airborne Engineers and in particular his Squadron of 591.

He will be greatly missed by his many friends.

9 Independent Parachute Squadron R.E.

Sid Mandy passed away on Easter Sunday, after a very long and determined fight against cancer. Sid joined The Squadron in the early fifties and was with them in the Canal Zone and in Cyprus, until The Squadron returned to Aldershot in 1954. He met and married his wife Mavis in the Middle East, among doubts that the marriage would last, but it survived for forty-two years!

After The Squadron returned to Aldershot, he gained promotion to Corporal and then in 1958 was promoted to Sergeant. He played for The Squadron rugby team and was a member of winning side, when they won the Ismalia Trophy in 1959! He accompanied The Squadron to Cyprus, Jordan, Libya and Singapore, before he departed to BOAR in the early sixties. Life in Germany was not to his liking and he decided to return to civilian life, before he had completed his intended full career in the Army.

On returning to civilian life he joined the Fire Service and served with them for nineteen years. He then went into partnership in a taxi business and it was in this occupation he continued, until his death. He served on the Sports Council of Stafford and took a great interest in all types of sport, particularly Athletics. His one great wish was to stay alive until the Atlanta Olympics this year, so he could see his son Mark, represent Ireland in the High Jump for the second time. Mark has a twin brother Paul, sister Pauline and a second brother Michael.

Sid was cremated in Stafford and forty firefighters attended the funeral. The AEA was represented by Norman Penny, Reg Emberson and Bert Gregory. Our condolences go to Mavis and her family; he will be sadly missed by all his friends.

591 Squadron R.E.

Major Tony Jackson has been informed of the death of **Mr Donald Duncan**, who died on the 27th January 1996. Unfortunately, very little is known of Mr Duncan, other than he was in 3 Troop and later transferred to 3 Parachute Squadron R E A letter of condolence was sent to his widow by Major Jackson.

1st Parachute Squadron R.E.

A service of Thanksgiving for the life of Major General Eric Mackay CBE, was held in the Garrison Church Aldershot, Tuesday 19th March 1996. The congregation included not only close family, by the Mayor of Arnhem, many high ranking officers, friends from civilian and business life and a small group of Sappers who had fought with him in the school house at Arnhem. The congregation was told of his exploits in the second world war, as a Troop Commander in 1st Parachute Squadron and his zest for life. Especially anything fast, as told by his friend for over fifty years, Mr Peter Edwards. The Mayor of Arnhem Mr Paul Scholten, paid tribute to General Mackay and the British, for their resistance to an enemy when all seemed lost, and for the eventual freedom of Europe. The service was conducted by the Reverend R.A. Owen CF, assisted by the Reverend C. Gale. The Last Post and Reveille were played by a musician from the RE Band.

261 Field Park Company (Airborne) R.E.

The **Reverend Raymond Coats**, Padre to the Field Park Company during the latter part of the war years, died during April 1996. His funeral was attended by Colonel Ian Wilson MBE MC.

9 Parachute Squadron R.E.

Wilfred (Wilf) Robert Jones joined the Corps as a Darland Boy Soldier in 1939 and served continuously until 1968, where he attained the rank of WO1 His service life took to many theatres of operations, including Western Europe ('D' Day & Rhine Crossing), The Baltic, India, Palestine, Korea, Malaya and Singapore. He was mentioned in dispatches for "Gallant & distinguished Service" during his service in Malaya.

The ten medals Wilf earned were worn with great pride and he continued his public service, working in local government until his retirement. In today's world of falling standards, Wilf was a shining example, of that rare breed "A Perfect Gentleman." He will be sadly missed and our condolences go to his wife Marianne.

Wilf passed away on the 31st December 1995. His funeral was attended by the Standards from Hull Branch of the Royal Engineers Association and the Hull Branch of the Parachute Regimental Association, accompanied by members from both branches. Members of the AEA also attended.

Diary of Events 1996

Date	Event
6th July	Airborne Forces Day, Aldershot
7th September	6th Airborne Div. RE Reunion, London
13th/14th/15th September	Chatham Veterans Weekend
22nd September	Double Hills Ceremony, Paulton
28th September	1 st Para Sqn RE Reunion - Donnington
5th October	10 th Anniversary AGM Dinner & Dance, Aldershot
11 th November	Armistice Parade 22 Engr. Regt. Tidworth

Airborne Forces Weekend

Friday/Saturday 5th & 6th July 1996

Functions:

Friday 5th July Band Concert

Princess Hall Aldershot 19:30 Hours

(Tickets priced at £4.00)

Saturday 6th July

5 Airborne Brigade Parade - Montgomery Square 11:00 Hours (Free Entry)

Tickets are required, but only four per applicant will be issued. Ticket holders are required to purchase a programme at a cost of £1.00 per person. These can be obtained on the Saturday on production of your ticket. Tickets are obtainable from **The Parachute Regiment RHQ**, Browning Barracks, Aldershot.

Beating Retreat	Montgomery Square 17.00 Hours (Tickets Required)
Officers Luncheon	1 Para Officers Mess 12.30-14.30 Hours (Tickets Required-£20.00 per head)
Officers Cocktail Party	1 Para Officers Mess 18.00-20:00 Hours (Tickets Required-£15.00 per head)
Car Parking	The major car parking area is on Queens Parade. The car park for disabled drivers is Montgomery Lines
Enquiries	All enquiries for Airborne Forces Weekend, should be made to RHQ Para, 01252-24431 Ext. 4614 or 01252- 349614

Association Shop

Items available & applicable pricing!

Description	Price	Postage & Packing UK
Association Ties	£12.50	£0.60p
Association Blazer Badges	£11.00	£0.60p
Association Jumpers Maroon with Blue Pegasus & words "Airborne Engineers" (Sizes: 38" -48" to order)	£18.00	£2.60p Recorded Delivery
Association Sweatshirt Maroon & logo as jumpers-Sizes: Med/Large/X-Large to order	£13.40	£2.60p Recorded Delivery
Association Polo Shirts Fred Perry Style, Maroon with Logo- Sizes: Large/X-Large	£13.60	£2.40p Recorded Delivery
Association Shields	£15.50	£2.50p Recorded Delivery
Book "The 9th" by Tom Purves	£14.00 Membership Price	£3.50p Recorded Delivery
Stick Pins c/w Parachute Wings	£2.60	£0.60p
Christmas Cards c/w AEA badge on cover-Packs of six	£3.25	£0.60p

Cheques should be made payable to **Airborne Engineers Association**

Please note the small increase in postal charges. Thanks to you all for your continued support, I hope to see you at the forthcoming events and hope you are all in the best of Spirits, "**See You Soon.**"

Until next time, I remain

Yours Aye!

Jan

Association News Letter- Payment

The response to members for them to contribute to the cost of production and mailing of the Newsletter, has achieved a 40% response so far. Should any of your colleague members comment, they have not received this issue, **please remind them, only those who have paid, plus a few "special" cases, will now receive the Newsletter!**

To those members who subscribed an additional fee, over the requirement of £4.00, we extend our sincere thanks! In particular to, Bernie Baldwin, Sid Burrell, Don Spary, Bob Sullivan and Alfie McLean for their generous donations Our friends in New Zealand, Australia, Canada and South Africa have responded well to our Appeal. We also appreciate the items of news and photographs forwarded with their payments.

To offset some workload from the Association Treasurer-Capt. Bob Mathews (SqN Admin. Officer) Dave Rutter offered to assist in the collection of members subscriptions. The January Newsletter, is unfortunately the last you will have received **Free of Charge**, as the Association will be bearing the full cost thereafter. Payment must reach Dave Rutter quickly, if your colleagues require this issue and following issues. Should their subscription not be forthcoming, unfortunately, it will be assumed you no longer wish to receive the Newsletter.

Method of Payment

By Cheque-Made Payable to the Airborne Engineers Association for £4.00
By Postal Order-Made Payable to the Airborne Engineers Association for £4.00

Please ensure all cheques and Postal Orders are crossed, for security of payment to the AEA. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH!

To ensure all members making a payment, receive their copies, please complete the Proforma attached to the rear of this Edition (**tearing out Via the perforated Strip!**) and send this with your payment. If you would like a receipt, please enclose a Stamp Addressed Envelope (SAE) and a will be sent back to you.

The News Letter is the only medium we have, of staying in touch with all our members, especially those who cannot make the various branch and/or national functions, for whatever reason. Editions over the last year, have received a very favourable reaction, we wish to continue this style of Newsletter and improve on it. Not only do we need your subscription, we also need your ideas, by way of stories and photographs. I trust we can count on your support to maintain this Camaraderie and this Unique Association!

Airborne Engineers Association Reunion

If you intend to join us at the Grand Reunion in Aldershot on Saturday 5th October and have not forwarded payment for your tickets, **PLEASE** do so as soon as possible. This will allow us to cater for all those attending. Following the AGM of the AEA to be held in 5 Brigade Sergeants' Mess during the afternoon of Saturday 5th October 1996, a Grand Reunion Buffet/Dance is to be held in the Princess Hall, Aldershot. As we pointed out in the last Newsletter, increasing contractor involvement of catering staff and facilities in MOD establishments, means' we can no longer expect to pay greatly reduced prices for our catering at these events. Simultaneously, we needed to find a suitable location to hold this reunion. These two factors, unfortunately are reflected in the increased price for these tickets.

Entry to the function will be by ticket only!

Due to the employment of civilian catering contractors, we cannot cater for individuals arriving on the night.

Ticket sales will close on Friday 27th September 1996.

Location:	Princes Hall, Aldershot
Date:	5th October 1996
Timings:	Commencing 19:00 Hours till late
Bar Timings:	19:00 Hours until 2am
Buffet:	20:30 Hours-21:30 Hours
Dance Band:	Val Miller (should inspire Fred Gray to get up and strut his stuff!) Drawn
Grand Raffle:	at 23:00 Hours
Cost:	£15.00 per person
Tickets:	By application and payment Only!

Method of Payment

By Cheque-Made Payable to the Airborne Engineers Association for £15.00 per person
By Postal Order-Made Payable to the Airborne Engineers Association for £15.00 per person

Please ensure all cheques and Postal Orders are crossed, for security of payment to the AEA. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH!

To ensure all members making a payment, receive their tickets, please complete the Proforma attached to the rear of this edition (**tearing out via the perforated Strip!**) and send this with your payment. If you would like a receipt, please enclose a Stamp Addressed Envelope (SAE) and a copy will be sent back to you Please support this reunion and this **Unique Association!**

Accommodation in the Aldershot Area

Cedar Court Hotel	Eggars Hill, Aldershot. Tel: 01252-20931 £45.00 per couple, bed & breakfast with en-suite
George Hotel	Wellington Street, Aldershot. Tel: 01252-330800 £40.00 per couple, bed & breakfast sharing bathroom (Double & twin bedded rooms)
Beehive Pub	264 High St. Aldershot. Tel: 01252-23179 £25.00 per couple, bed & breakfast sharing bathroom
Rose & Crown	Grosvenor Road, Aldershot. Tel: 01252-20621 £30.00 per couple, bed & breakfast sharing bathroom £15.00 single bed and breakfast
Brewers Fayre Travel Inn (New Complex)	Willems Park, Aldershot. Tel: 01252-344063 £35-50.00 per double/family room with en-suite (Recommended) Colour TV & Coffee/Tea making facilities Meals are not included (40 rooms available)
Avalon House	41 Queens Road, Aldershot. Tel: 01252-21615 £32.00 per couple, bed & breakfast sharing bathroom £16.00 single bed and breakfast (Recommended)
White Swan Inn	161 North Lane, Aldershot. Tel: 01252-20528 £32.00 per couple, bed & breakfast £20.00 single bed and breakfast
Trafalgar Inn	1 Short Street, Aldershot. Tel: 01252-543500 2 singles, 3 twins & 1 x 3 bedded room £10.00 per person, per room only
Mrs Davies	123 Church Lane East, Aldershot Tel: 01252-330865 £15.00 per person, bed & breakfast
Mrs Coe	45 Elston Road, Aldershot. Tel: 01252-21410 from £13.00 per person, bed & breakfast
Potters International Hotel	1 Fleet Road, Aldershot. Tel: 01252-344000 £65.00 double room £45.00 single room All rooms en-suite, plus usual extra's £16.00 single bed and breakfast

From the Editor

Dear Members,

Clearly there is a need to introduce myself. My name is Colin Parker and I served in The Squadron from 1966 to 1972, in Plant Troop (Rick Mogg, Pete McCabe, "Buster" Crabbe were my peers and colleagues then), along with my two brothers Bob (2 Troop) & Paul (3 Troop), who many of you will know. I left the Army in 1974, having been refused a return to The Squadron, because of "Career Planning," whatever that meant then or even now, I am not sure! However, I found the "Crap Hat" lifestyle of 12 RSME, just not my scene, it was really quite boring and certainly provided no challenge!

I elected to purchase my discharge and seek more interesting pastures in civilian life. I joined SLD Olding (Hanson Trust Company) and continued my career in Plant Equipment, first as a demonstrator, becoming Export Sales Manager in 1980. After receiving an approach, I subsequently left the company in 1982 to become General Manager of Mitsubishi Hydraulic Excavators, Nationally throughout the UK. Due to political pressures in 1985, the company was disbanded and I left to become Managing Director of medium size Distributor of Equipment in the South East. I returned to Mitsubishi in 1991, to become the Managing Director of what was then, another new company. We elected to base ourselves in Ash Vale and that is where we remain today.

When I elected to become more involved with the Association, it was clear the Newsletter served an important function. It kept colleagues who had moved in all directions, in touch. Additionally, for our less fortunate colleagues who were unable to make Branch meetings for whatever reason, it gave them a sense of purpose and belonging, to what is a rather Unique Association Therefore, the Newsletter was serving its purpose. In discussion with Committee members at the time, I felt the true cost of production was not being identified and more value for expenditure could be achieved. This function, from the many good comments received, has been the case and the cost in real terms has been reduced. I also felt the Association, which had grown beyond the early aspirations and was continuing to grow, needed to ensure through this excellent medium, a maintenance of interest for current members and an attraction for new and perhaps, dare I say, younger members!

I felt by sponsoring the new version of Newsletter, it gave the chance to members to assess the new style and indicate their preference for the future. It would then be for members to decide how the Newsletter was to continue. Clearly the majority and I do not know of a dissenting voice at present, wished the Newsletter to continue in its current format. That being decided, when asked to continue as Editor, I responded positively so I could continue to strive for the improvement of the general layout and quality, such as the inclusion of photographs, content of stories and articles It also had given me and continues to give me, an opportunity to put something back, as clearly part of my good fortune and success is owed to the training given by the Army and the Airborne Engineers Unfortunately, with an increasing membership list, I could not continue sponsoring the Newsletter This resulted in a vote being taken at the last AGM, for members to contribute to the production and mailing of the same. The response to date I believe has been good, with Dave Rutter reporting a 40% up take so far. I believe the balance of our members (60%), actually wish to receive the Newsletter, but time and the very conservative contribution has not reminded them sufficiently, to put the cheque in the post!

Come on guys, there are an awful lot of members who work extremely hard to provide you with this excellent medium, they need your support to maintain the camaraderie of this Unique Association, for which the Newsletter provides a major focusing and enthusiasm point. **Get after your colleagues who have not paid!**

Lastly, before I bid farewell to this issue, I need to remind all contributors, submission of articles is not restricted to those Committee members and/or Branch Secretaries, whose names appear against various articles in this issue or previous issues. Every member probably has an interesting story to tell, a photograph to remind both themselves and their colleagues of their time spent with the Airborne Engineers. Don't keep it a secret lads, let's all share in the joy of those times! Please don't worry for your spelling or grammar, we have machines to sort out that problem! Just put pen to paper or better still for you "budding" PC/internet users, send me a disk. This makes my life an awful lot easier and ensures the timely issue of Newsletter. I can take your disk in practically any format, but preferably in Word Perfect!

The Chairman has managed to encourage "The Squadron" to contribute and I must say with interesting and varied stories of their exercises and tours. It is "The Squadron" of today that maintains the link between past and present Airborne Engineers and it is important, their role in this Unique Association is not diminished by either party.

You can send articles any time by post or fax, but for Branch News, we require the latest information. Consequently, Branch Secretaries or those responsible for submission of Branch News, need to get their copy to me at least three weeks before "hard copy" issue. In this respect the next issue will be in the first week of November 1996. This allows news of the AGM in October to be included. Accordingly, "cut off" date for copy, for the November issue is, Monday 14th October 1996.

Apologies for past or even present mistakes in the spelling of names or places, or even giving out the incorrect meeting point for the North West Branch in the last issue. Timely submission of copy allows me time to check with the sender and/or improve your writing!

My Home Address:

34 Forest Dean Fleet Hants. GU13 8TT Tel/Fax:(01252)621371

News Letter – Proforma

Members Name & Initials:
Payment by Cheque or Postal Order: £
Membership No:
Full Postal Address:
Post Code:
Send To: <p style="text-align: center;">D J. Rutter "Fermain" Hazel Road Ash Green Aldershot Hants. GU12 6HR</p>
Please do not delay in forwarding your payment and proforma, the News Letter can only continue to flourish with your support!