



Airborne Engineers Association

Regd Charity No: 1009201

NEWS LETTER

MARCH 1997

PRESIDENT

Major General G Field CB OBE

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From the Chair!

Dear Members,

Well 1996 is over and again the AEA has quietly gone from strength to strength. Representation at services and events throughout the year has been a great credit to everyone concerned.

I would like to express my thanks and admiration to everyone who gives up their time to support the AEA. Of course I must not forget the Ladies, who may have thought that at the end of your service life it was all over, only to find that being part of "Airborne," it's never ever all over! Thanks to them for the time off for meetings and for their support at functions and events!

1997 will be another busy year with the AGM being held at Chatham. Much work has already been carried out and without doubt the Branch will keep us informed. Again, thanks for your support and I hope to meet many more of you in the coming year!

Tom Ormiston - Chairman
Airborne Engineers Association

Ray Coleman – Secretary

1997 will see another busy year for the Association and the AGM is being held at the Chatham Branch. Included in this Newsletter is a "Draft" outline of the day's events and I am sure many members will find this helpful in planning their attendance. It is encouraging to see this Unique Association continuing to grow and long may it continue. For my part, just like the Chairman and other members of the committee; I hope to see many of you at the various functions around the country, health and wellbeing permitting for us all!

Diary of Events 1997

Date	Event
13th-15th June	Ripon Weekend
7th July	Airborne Forces Day-Aldershot
6th September	6th Airborne Div. RE Reunion-London
5th, 6th & 7th September	Chatham Veterans Weekend
?	Double Hills Ceremony-Paulton
10th & 11th October	A.E.A - Annual AGNI - Hosted by Chatham Branch

Committee Members

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

News from "The Squadron" and Around the Branches

"The Squadron"

Since the last Newsletter, "The Squadron" has been on tour in Kenya and unfortunately there is no news item for this issue. However, we have been promised a "bumper" edition for the next Newsletter in June!

Aldershot Branch

by Fred Gray

Chairman:- Derek Taylor
Entertainment's:- Dave Rutter and Tony Manly
Secretary:- Fred Gray [REDACTED]

Christmas has been and gone and we can now look forward to 1997. The branch Christmas dinner was again held in the Falcon Hotel, Farnborough. As in previous years, the meal was excellent and made even more so by the very generous gesture of George and Mable Fairs to pay for the wine. Members came from quite a distance to be with us on the night and we were very pleased to see Ron Burgess and Pam all the way from Croydon. Also over from Croydon were Bryan and Betty Andrews. Ray and Eve Coleman came up from Gosport and Bob and Eileen Ferguson from Southampton. We were particularly pleased to see Mick Leather and Izzy who had travelled from Luton. Mick is our newest member and we all extend a warm welcome to him and Izzy to our branch.

In January a number of our branch travelled to London to see the "Riverdance Show," a spectacular demonstration of Irish Folk dancing! For those of us who had not seen it on stage before, to experience the electric atmosphere of the audience was unforgettable! So enjoyable was the evening; we would like to try this recipe again. Well worth the effort to drive to London where parking did not turn out to be the nightmare that we expected, although more expensive than some of us thought.

A mini re-union was held in the "Surrey Hut on Bisley Ranges," when "Taffy" Brice arrived on a very rare visit from his home in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. Members of the branch enjoyed an evening of reminiscing with "Taff" and greatly appreciated the buffet laid on by the hosts Ian and Una Maclellan

Trying to arrange a Sunday lunch in the local W.O.'s and Sergeants messes in and around Aldershot is turning out to be very frustrating. Most messes are now in the hands of "civvies" and it would appear; money and not service is the order of the day!

Long gone are the days of the superb buffets and sit down meals at a relatively low cost. Mess staff expect to be paid £25.00 each, and in one case a charge of £3.00 per person is levied; just to go into the mess. We are now looking at other civilian establishments in the area where we might enjoy a pleasant Sunday lunch after our meetings.

Wally Clift has not been in the best of health in recent months but has now recovered and we look forward to seeing him at our meetings again very soon. His wife Kath has also been going through a bad patch and we wish her a speedy recovery. Rick Mogg has fully recovered from his recent surgery and is back in the pool swimming his usual forty to fifty lengths. Charlie Edwards has left for the wilds of Gloucestershire, but has promised he will return to Aldershot to attend meetings when possible and will remain a member of our branch. We look forward to seeing him again soon! We still meet on a Sunday lunch time during the Winter months (this is to allow those with long distances to travel the opportunity to drive in daylight hours). In the Summer months we will revert to Friday evenings in the John Rock Room. If you live in our catchment area of Hampshire, Surrey and Wiltshire and would like to join our branch, then you would be most welcome. If you live outside that area but would still like to be a member then that presents no problems. We look forward to seeing you.

Birmingham Branch

by Pete Thornett

1996 has come and gone so very quickly and 1997 has started. Our year finished on a very high note, with a Dinner and Dance being held during December at a Hotel in Birmingham Airport. The Dinner was our first that had been held away from Birmingham City Centre for some years and it proved to be very successful! An excellent turnout of our members ensures these events remain as popular as ever and we will continue to hold them each year!

The Branch AGM was held in January and all existing officers were re-elected. "What would we do if members did not give their time so freely, to fill the positions that are essential to keep all informed and organise the various functions, so necessary to keep the Branch in good health?"

Entertainment for this year is in the planning stage and a visit from a "Black Country" entertainer has already been organised. For those members of 131 Squadron in "Brum" a 50th Anniversary is being organised at the Troop location in Squadron H.Q. in Kingsbury. More information on this event will follow in May, but this is a good time to do a "bit" of canvassing, to encourage ex-Sappers to join our Branch.

From this Branch to all other Branches, we wish you well in 1997 and if you are passing on any first Wednesday in the month, come and see us at the RBL Ivy Leaf Club, Coventry Road, Birmingham.

Chatham Branch

by Eric Blenkinsop

We were most fortunate to be able to run up to the end of the year on a real HIGH, with October being the crowning month of the year!

A.E.A - AGM Hosted by Aldershot Branch

This was a superb weekend and a "big" thank you to Derek Taylor, Dave Rutter and all the Aldershot Branch members for their efforts and the warm welcome given. Many of the visiting members received a welcome beyond that of the official programme. We are most grateful to John & Glenda Smith, Fred & Betty Gray and others for their hospitality.

Also, thanks to Sir Donald and Lady Sylvia Spiers for attending the Lunchtime function as such short notice. It was a real pleasure for so many ex-9 Squadron and 131 Regiment members to meet you again!

New Branch Venue

On Monday 28th October we held our first meeting in the W.O's and Sgt's Mess, 1 RSME Brompton Barracks, where we were made to feel very much at home! The attendance of sixteen (16) was extremely good, considering the atrocious weather conditions on the night! We have had to "opt" for the last Monday in each month, as this is the quietest evening of the week, in terms of Mess use. Unfortunately, this is not the best evening for those members who still have to go to work the next morning, to earn a "crust!" However, that's life and you cannot have everything; can you?

The Branch Xmas Lunch-Sunday 15th December 1996

We had a most enjoyable get together at the "Ingle Nook" restaurant in Newington. Many thanks again to Mike Fisher for the organisation and our financial duo of Graham Harrison and Frank Martin. Rumour has it that Graham did his pre-release course as a "Tax Inspector!"

The Essex Members

Well, would you believe it; only days before Xmas another recruit to the association appeared from Essex! Welcome back into the fold, "Monty" Woolley ex-9 Squadron from the Canal Zone era! We trust we can anticipate your company at some of the Chatham meetings and functions throughout the year.

1997

Another year and more challenges, this time it's the "Big One," as it is our turn to host the Association AGM! Enclosed within this Newsletter is the "Draft" outline to give you all a flavour of what is in store!

Chatham REA Veterans Weekend - 5th,6th & 7th September 1997

Now we are ensconced in the same building as the Medway Branch of the REA, so it will be difficult, but not impossible, to organise a separate Friday night reception. At this point, we ask you to leave this with us and we will "Diligently" apply our "ABI" to the problem and more details will be given nearer the date!

6th AB Div RE Re-union - Saturday 6th September 1997

Once again a coach will be provided to the "Victory Club" and a separate dinner will be arranged for the Ladies in the Grill Room. This will be organised on a "pay on the day basis," but for administrative and economical purposes; we do need to know in good time if you wish to avail yourself of these services. To this end; please telephone me on [REDACTED]

A.E.A. AGM - Friday & Saturday 10th & 11th October 1997

We are most fortunate in having such a splendid venue at our disposal. Additionally, we have the benefit of learning from previous presentations of other Branches. This of course does not make the task any less daunting, as the standard to date has been so high. Nonetheless, we shall "give it our best" and hope it is all right on the day!

Not much more to be said on this package of events; I just refer you to the composite "Draft" package presented by Graham Harrison within this Newsletter. To play your part, all we ask is that you give us your support, but you are strongly advised to make an early bid, in order to avoid disappointment. Unfortunately, due to the limitations on numbers, initially we must restrict "bids" for the Dinner and Dance to members plus one guest!

Yorkshire Branch

By Kenn Hart & Charlie Dunk

Charlie: It was a very foggy, cold and miserable day; but 40 members of the Yorkshire Branch made the Christmas Lunch on Saturday 7th December 1996 at the Selby Fork Hotel. First Parade was at 1230 hours and after one or several beers; we sat down to traditional Christmas fare. Lunch over, the bar was revisited where old stories were renewed and black and white (or were they sepia)? photographs shown. Unfortunately, everyone behaved and there is no scandal to report! Atrocious weather conditions (or was it hotel beer prices)? forced those who were driving to depart around 6pm. I suspect Brian Jones who had driven over the Pennines from the North West Branch; had the worst journey home! Thanks to everyone who attended and made the afternoon a great success! Regards to everyone in the AEA, may you all win the lottery on a rollover week in 1997 (if you do my address is...!!!)

Kenn: AGM held Saturday 25th January 1997. Well, I thought it was all over and it is now! Charlie did a "no show," due to health reasons so in the deathly hush that followed "Who will be Vice -Secretary?" I found myself volunteering and so I just carried on but with a different title! The traditional "bean feast" was prepared by some of the ladies; our regular Master Chef being otherwise engaged in Kenya! If it carries on like this, we will be opening a sub-branch over there! I think one or two of the girls were considering hiring the kitchen to cook their next Christmas dinner from the comments that were floating about! After much muttering in the corner of the bar "The Management" decided the food was gratis - as usual!

The roller blading section of the branch appears to be getting smaller in physical size; with young "Ty" Harrap manfully powering his way around the gym. Myra Barnwell managed to win the mirror in the raffle; even though she was busy in the kitchen at the time! Perhaps it was just "Barny" wanting it for himself; you know what these (former) soccer players are like. There was a good selection of prizes at this meeting and our raffle must be unique in the amount of times' one hears; "Draw it again I've already won one!" I hope someone informed "Baz" his "pot pourri jar" was not for drinking out of, he was last seen trying to! Our meetings always seem to bring out from hidden pockets, lots of photos, some yellow with age and others more recent and in colour. This meeting was no exception and they ranged from the early 50's & 60's, Sean's recent "holiday" snaps (who had to Russ 'er for the meeting - terrible pun!) and really up to date with the branch member's en-route to, and at Chatham 96 last September! Our venue, being the Sgt. Mess of the TA Centre is excellent with Bob and Chris looking after us extremely well. The Branch is developing a real family atmosphere and it is hoped in the future; more ladies and children will come along and enjoy themselves; while the men get on with swinging a few lanterns. For details of overnight accommodation; please contact Bill! With our future bi-monthly meeting times it will be possible to get details to the Newsletter on time! Previously, to have a meeting on a Saturday and be expected to have the contribution with the editor for the Sunday is just a bit awkward! Especially, when one thinks one as stood down! Our Branch now meets every two months in the same venue; with the next meeting being on Saturday 5th April 1997 at 1300 hrs. Anyone requiring further details please contact Bill Rudd on [REDACTED].

Date for your diary, 13th - 15th June 1997; this being the Ripon Weekend and every year we get more AEA members attending. We hope to have a mini Airborne Reunion this year! Looking forward to seeing Chris and Jan there, plus all our other friends from all over. Details from again are available from Bill!

These are definitely my last Minutes, so all the best to all our readers, Kenn Hart. A note to all Branch Secretaries: Please forward your Minutes to Charlie Dunk, [REDACTED].
Tel: [REDACTED].

North West Branch

No news from the North West - hope we hear from you next time!

Northern Ireland Branch

No news from the Northern Ireland Branch - hope we hear from you next time!

News Items

One for the old and the bold!

We met, we married, a long time ago
We worked long hours when wages were low
No T.V., no bath, times were hard
Just a cold water tap and a walk down the yard
No holidays abroad, no posh carpets on the floor
But we had coal on the fire and we didn't lock doors
Our children arrived, no pills in those days
And we brought them up without state aid
They were quite safe to go and play in the park
And the old folks could go for a walk in the dark.
No Valium, no drugs and no L.S.D
We cured most of our ills with a nice cup of tea
But if you were sick you were treated at once
Not fill out the form and come back in six months
No vandals no muggings there was nothing to rob
And we were quite rich on a couple of bob
People were happy in those far off days
Kinder and caring in so many ways
Milkmen and paperboys used to whistle and sing
A night at the pictures was our mad fling
We all got our share of trouble and strife
And we all had to face it, the pattern of life
But now I'm alone and look back through the years
I don't think of the bad times, the troubles and tears
I remember the blessings our home and our love
And we could share them together
And thank God above

Ripon Veterans Weekend 13th, 14th & 15th July 1997

As Chairman of the Ripon & District Branch REA, the above weekend will be attended by some 200 ex-Sappers and their ladies. I believe this is an ideal opportunity to try and get as many A.E.A. members to come along and join us. The weekend is set, so it is no great "hassle" to cater for our "Airborne Family." Many ex-9 Squadron already attend year after year!

The weekend will include accommodation and all meals up to and including lunch on Sunday. Bar-B-Que, Buffet Dance and full entertainment are only part of this weekend and finishing with a "Freedom of the City" Ripon parade on the Sunday morning. The complete weekend will cost a total of £33.50 (Maximum). After all, there is no show without the "Red Beret" Please contact Bill Rudd on [REDACTED], if interested. Currently, no Airborne Standard will be on display.

Arnhem Veterans Parachute Team

We have received a letter from F.A. "Gus" Woods, Honorary Treasurer of the above team, we print this letter below:

Heaven's Gate
The Freedom
Llandogo
Monmouth
NP5 4TP
Tel: Dean [REDACTED]

Date: 18th March 1997

Dear Sir,

This year; will be the last year the Arnhem Veterans Parachute Team will jump at the Commemoration, as funding for the aircraft has finished. Last year, the team raised £14,000.00 for the Macmillan Nurses. This year the team is raising money for the "Star & Garter Home" at Richmond for disabled service men and women. Should any member of the A.E.A. wish to support the Home, their Registered Charity No: 210119 should be put on any donation cheque. The donation should then be forwarded to the above address. The team totals twenty-three (23) personnel and the Royal Engineers are represented by Tom Hicks and myself.

Yours Faithfully

F.A. "Gus" Woods
Honorary Treasurer

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!

Historian - Fred Gray

Suez Re-Union - 40th Anniversary

On 5th November 1996; fifteen (15) former members of 3 Troop, 9 Parachute Squadron RE who parachuted on to El Gamil Airfield forty years ago, held their first ever re-union in the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess Gibraltar Barracks

The idea of the re-union was that of John Smith, Troop Sergeant of 3 Troop at the time of what became known as the "Suez Crisis" in November 1956. It had proved exceptionally difficult to trace and contact the fifty odd members who had made what was the first major parachute assault by the British Army since the end of the Second World War. At his own expense, and juggling time with his business requirements, John wrote to all known addresses of the Suez Troop, and advertised through a number of mediums in the attempt to bring them together. Eventually fifteen made the re-union. It is known; some members have passed away and others departed for foreign shores and were unable to travel because of distance.

After an excellent dinner served by the very efficient mess staff, Lt Col Jock Brazier, the Troop Commander at Suez, welcomed the four guests, Major David Hudson RE, present OC 9 Parachute Squadron RE, WO2 (SSM) Nick Blair RE, Mr Chris Chambers and Mr Fred Gray. He thanked the RSM of the RE Training Regiment, WO1 (RSM) Burke RE, for allowing the use of the mess, and WO2 (SSM) Fox, who as the PMC went to great lengths to ensure everything was made available and ready for the event. He then went on to welcome those former members of his troop, many of whom he had not seen in almost forty years. Without any swinging on the chandeliers, he recalled the events of what had turned out to be "a window in time" for those who had made that historic jump and the envy of the other two troops and HQ who had to go by sea! The "Loyal Toast" was proposed by Colonel John Hill and to "Absent Friends" by John Smith. After dinner everyone retired to the bar to be joined by the Engineer in Chief, Brigadier Ian McGill RE. Unfortunately, who due to a previous engagement in London had not been able to accept an invitation to dinner. However, he managed to join the party later in the evening.

From remarks made and letters received, the evening was a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by all those who attended. They would be able to look back on the evening by watching the video and looking at the photographs taken by Fred Gray. Chris Chambers took the opportunity to recruit six new members to the association and it is hoped many more can be contacted for a second re-union sometime in the not too distant future.

Those of 3 Troop attending were: Lt Col Jock Brazier, (Troop Commander), Colonel John Hill (Troop Officer), John Smith (Tp Sgt), Colonel Ifor Anthony (Sec Cpl), Brian Gibson, Jim O'Hagan, Alex Scott, Barry Ladlow, Jock Dalgano, Ken Moore, Bert Flatters, Steve Stephenson, "Taffy" Bevan (Sec Cpl), Bob Bruce and Jack Braithwaite.

A photograph album has been purchased and will be used solely to hold and preserve "selected" photographs, documents, and newspaper cuttings relating to the Suez operation. Anyone who has any such items and would like to have them included please send them to me, Fred Gray, or John Smith, at [REDACTED].



Suez Re-Union - 40th Anniversary

Standing L-R.

Ken Moore, Col John Hill, Brian Gibson,
Col Ifor Anthony, Jack Braithwaite,
Steve Stephenson, Lt Col Jock Brazier,
Jim O'Hagan, Jock Dalgarno, Barry Ladlow,
Sandy Scott

Front L-R.

John Smith, Taffy Bevan, Bert Flatters,
Bob Bruce

50th Anniversary of 9 Squadron RE

Next year, 1998, will be the fiftieth anniversary of "The Squadron" changing its title from 9 Airborne Squadron RE to 9 Parachute Squadron RE. I would very much like to make a nominal roll of the officers and men of the Squadron at that time. From photographs sent to me and from other sources I have managed to produce some kind of list. However, this is far from complete, so if you served in the squadron at that time, I would appreciate it if you would send me names of anyone you can remember. If you remember their rank, Christian names and troop all the better, but a little information is better than none!

My request for photographs has had quite a good response, especially from Ken Trego, Steve Stephenson, Dave Elias, Norman Penny and a few others who do not readily spring to mind. The types of photographs we need are of groups (large or small, any activity) with names, location and dates. Faces should be identifiable and the photos be of a reasonable quality if they have to be copied. Individual studio photographs taken in uniform are also very welcome. It will all help to build up a picture of the Airborne Engineers during their fifty-five year history. I am also trying to complete the nominal roll of the Squadron at the time of Suez. John Smith has furnished fifty (50) odd names of 3 Troop and Bryan Andrews forty-five (45) of 2 Troop. That leaves 1 Troop, Park Troop and HQ. Please send any names you may remember.

Fifty Years Ago



Led by Drum Major Ogilvie, the massed band of 9 Para Squadron entertain the crowd at the Army Football Cup final, BAOR 1948. If you know the names of these talented musicians we would like to know. The man at the right rear is L/Cpl Andrews who became MT Sgt in 1957

L/Sgt "Gilly" Mervin Potter

261 Field Park Company (Airborne) RE

One of the tasks L/Sgt Gilly Potter had been given to do on landing by glider, Horsa No B27, piloted by Lt Brazier and Sgt Hibbert on LZ.X. North west of Arnhem on 18th September 1944, was to clear the LZ of damaged gliders and any other debris. Additionally, he was to prepare a possible landing strip for aircraft. For this purpose he had a Clark CA1 Airdozer, which had been transported in the same glider as himself and nine other Sappers.

They knew before take-off; the dozer could not be unloaded through the door; so they carried explosives; with which they could blow the undercarriage and wheels off. This would enable them to drive the dozer through the side of the aircraft. Due to the situation developing around the battlefield; they could not carry out their allotted tasks and the dozer was parked on the LZ and left there. The "Sappers" then fought as infantry for the remainder of the battle.

"Gilly" Potter, being a member of the Arnhem Veterans Club has made many trips back to the town over the years, never giving a thought to what happened to the bulldozer. Imagine his surprise in September last year when on his annual pilgrimage to Arnhem he came upon it loaded on a parked low loader. He discovered the dozer had been found in a shed in Belgium; by members of the Dutch Historical Society and had been purchased for their museum. It had been in a shed for over thirty-years (30+) and the Belgium owner was unaware of its history. It was only by chance "Gilly" Potter saw it last year, the Dutch people now intend to give the discovery maximum publicity during the 1997 pilgrimage. They would also wish to possibly unite the other two drivers, "Sappers" Tommy Cheetham who lives in Oldham, Lancs and Arthur Boden who resides in Wellington New Zealand, with their wartime airdozer.

6th AB Div RE Cadre 1945-46



Back:-

Geordie ?. Keating (1st) Bradley (9th) Jacques(9th) T.J. (9th) Sid ? (9th) Stanton (9th) Clarke (1st) Brewer (1st) Brown(9th) Groome (1st) Covington (1st) Shaw(9th) Robson (9th) Dixon G (1st) Jones (9th) Jock ?(9th) Griffin (9th) Duffy (1st) Trego (1st) Spencer (286) Clever (9th) Paddy ? Jock ? (1st) Hartshorne (1st) Gili (1st) Dixon (1st)

Front:-

"Spike" (1st) Sgt Sayers (9th) Lt Holdway (1st) Capt Brown (9th) RSM Lambert (HQRE) Sgt Player (1st) L/Cpl Waites (1st) L/Cpl Arnold (1st) Clarke, Brewer, Dixon G, Trego, Paddy ? Jock ?, and Hartshorne were all formally with 249 Company (Airborne) Spencer and possibly "Spike" were with 591 (Antrim) Para Sqn RE. Sgt Player and L/Cpl Waites formally with 2nd Para Sqn RE L/Sgt "Gilly" Mervin Potter 261 Field Park Company (Airborne) RE

Please help us to identify the missing names - XXXXXXXXXX

QUO FAS ET GLORIA DUCUNT UBIQUE

Chris Chambers

Association Membership Secretary

Since the last "Newsletter," a further twenty-two (22) members have joined, detail as follows:

Michael Leather	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1979-1984
Stephen McCardle	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1978-1981
Frederick Page	12 Para Sqn RE	18 Months
Ray Richards	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1956-1976
Thomas Duffy	9 Field Coy. RE (Airborne) 9 Independent Airborne Sqn RE	1946-1947 1947-1955
William Bellshaw	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1966-1973
Eric Rundle	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1954-1957
Thomas Tuddenham	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1952-1958
Eric Mathews	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1953-1957
Robert Hodge	HQ/RE 6th Airborne Div.	1944-1947
William Cox	3 A/B Sqn & 9 Independent Airborne Sqn RE	1947-1952
Robert Bruce	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1953-1956
Kenneth Moore	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1955-1957
Alex Scott	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1956-1962
Roy Gaines	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1942-War End
James Crozier	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1960-1965
Ronald Evans	591 Para Sqn & 3 A/B Sqn RE	1944-1948
Ifor Anthony	9 Independent Para Sqn RE 131 Para Engr. Regt. RE	1952-1963/1969-1971 1963-1967
John Moran	131 Para Field Regt RE	1962-1968
Roger Rumbellow	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1953-1956
Patrick Flinn	9 Field Coy. RE (Airborne)	1938-1943
Robert Woolley	9 Independent Para Squadron RE	1951-1957

To all the Above, "Welcome to the Association"

At this time, the 1997 Membership Directory is being printed and hopefully it will be available to be purchased shortly. All information produced in the Directory comes from the Membership Secretary's Records, which are held on file. While cross referencing addresses with members on the Newsletter list, it came to my attention, there were several differences. It is essential you keep me informed when you move house or unit and/or change your telephone number. This enables us to keep an accurate record and not waste the Association funds by sending material to an incorrect address! Send all changes to:

Chris Chambers Membership Secretary [REDACTED]

Christmas Greetings and Best Wishes for the New Year to all members, were received from the Airborne Sappers Association in Australia and New Zealand and from our Branches at home!

The membership is still growing steadily, thanks to all of you who help by sending names for recruitment. Keep it up, there are still many ex-Sappers out there who are not aware of our existence and perhaps this year will be the year they hear about us! I hope to meet up with you all at one of the events scheduled for this year. Take care!

"Happy Landings" Chris

Obituaries

9 Field Coy RE (Airborne)

Alfred George Pratt 1914-1996. On the 5th November 1996, after a short illness bravely borne, Alfred passed away. His funeral was attended by the Membership Secretary Chris Chambers, on behalf of the Association.

Alfred served with 9 Field Coy RE (Airborne) from 1942 until 1946 and took part in operation "Market Garden." Alfred was dropped behind enemy lines by Glider, where he was captured along with many others. During his imprisonment, Alfred worked down the coalmines and managed to escape on two occasions. He will be sorely missed by his many friends and comrades, both here and abroad.

We send our deepest condolences to his two daughters and their families at home and in Canada. R.I.P.

1st Parachute Squadron RE (1942-44)

Fred "Lucky" Luckhurst. After a six-year battle against leukaemia "Lucky" died in the Princes Margaret Hospital, Swindon on Friday 10 January, he was in his eightieth year

"Lucky", as he has always been known, joined 1st Parachute Squadron in the dark days of 1942. A big humorous Cockney, he soon made friends amongst his peers in "C" Troop of the Squadron and fought with them in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and the final battle at Arnhem.

Along with his great sense of humour, he also had a good singing voice. After the war he sang popular folk songs in many of the pubs and clubs where he lived. He also enjoyed a good political debate and would argue for or against all sides of the political spectrum. He took up employment with the civil engineering company Vickers making aeroplanes, his speciality being the wings. He stayed with the company until he retired at the age of sixty-five. He was a regular at the Squadron reunions in Donington with his wife Winifred, and it was only in the last two years that illness prevented him attending.

His funeral was held in the Swindon crematorium, attended by his family, many of his friends, and members of 1st Parachute Squadron. Additionally, about twenty members of the PRA including Lt Gen Walsh, also attended. The funeral was a celebration of his life and the music included a tape of his own folk songs sung by himself. "Lucky" is survived by his wife Winifred, daughters' Audrey and Sylvia and five grandchildren.

Association Shop

Items available & applicable pricing!

Description	Price	Postage & Packing UK
Association Ties (Pegasus Logo)	£12.50	£0.75p
Association Bow Ties (Pegasus Logo)	£7.50	£0.75p
Association Blazer Badges	£11.00	£0.75p
Association Jumpers Maroon with Blue Pegasus & words "Airborne Engineers" (Sizes: 38" -48" to order)	£18.50	£2.60p Recorded Delivery
Association Sweatshirt Maroon & logo as jumpers-Sizes: Med/Large/X-Large to order	£14.00	£2.60p Recorded Delivery
Association Polo Shirts Fred Perry Style, Maroon with Logo- Sizes: Large/X-Large	£14.50	£2.50p Recorded Delivery
Association Shields	£15.50	£2.60p Recorded Delivery
Book "The 9th" by Tom Purves	£14.00 Membership Price	£3.50p Recorded Delivery
A Memoir of 9 Parachute Squadron RE, in the Falklands Campaign 1982 by Major C.M. Davies MBE RE	£12.00	£1.00
Stick Pins c/w Parachute Wings	£2.60	£0.60p
Christmas Cards c/w AEA badge on cover-Packs of six	£3.25	£0.75p
Anniversary Ties (Silk, featuring Double Logo Pegasus & Wings)	£15.00	£0.75p

Cheques should be made payable to Airborne Engineers Association My thanks for all your continued Support!

==Stop Press==

New Shop Stock - Silk "Anniversary Ties" featuring double logo (Pegasus & Wings) - see last item above!!

Until next time, I remain-Yours Aye!!

Jan

From the Editor

Dear Members,

This is the first Newsletter of 1997 and I would ask you all to accept my apologies for the late submission of the same. Unfortunately, there have been several disasters, not least of which was to lose the "hard drive" on my computer. Initially, much of the material for this Newsletter was late in arriving and in some cases, regular contributors, sent no material at all! This caused its problems; as by then, my business commitments became such that I was unable to Edit the material until just before the major disaster. For anyone who has had this happen, they will know the agony it can cause. It has taken nearly four weeks to get only 50% of the information back on the drive and all other material has had to be retyped. Again, please accept my apologies and normal service will be resumed for the next Newsletter.

The Newsletter is the only medium we have to ensure that our Worldwide Membership can stay in touch with us all! The members and I appreciate the contributions made by many members who gave their time freely. I also know and accept those same people; lead as busy a life or busier than I. However, I implore them to try to ensure their copy does come in on time, which will allow the timely publication of the Newsletter! Please help me to ensure all our members keep and stay in touch with this Unique Association!

Closing Date for Copy on the June/July Newsletter is the last week of June, please be on time!

“Draft Outline”

1997 AGM Hosted by the Chatham Branch 10th/11th October 1997.

Friday 10th October:

From 14:00 hours onwards, there will be a reception and welcome for those who booked accommodation in the mess. We believe officers have their own accommodation facilities available at Brompton. Limited W.O. & Sgt's Mess single room accommodation will be available on a first come first served basis for males only. The cost for this will be £10.00 per night or £12.00 for two nights and the price includes breakfast All bookings for accommodation must be via Graham Harrison and NOT the Mess Manager!

20:00 Hours - 23:59 Hours is Welcome night in the Mess.

Saturday 11th October:

10:00 Hrs-12:00 Hrs	Visit to RE Museum (New display, not to be missed!)
12:00 Hrs-17:00 Hrs	Bar Open
12:30 Hrs	Curry or Vegetarian salad for lunch TICKETS ONLY
14:30 Hrs	AGM & OGM
14:30 Hrs	Ladies programme of Flower arranging, hair & beauty consultants available.
19:00 Hrs	Welcomed with a drink and a smile!
19:30 Hrs	Guests arrive
20:00 Hrs	Dinner
22:00 Hrs	Coffee & Mints while the dining room is cleared. (All hands on deck please!)
22:00 Hrs - late!	Dancing to the magic of the RE Band, then to a Disco
02:00 Hrs - 03:00 Hrs	Champagne Breakfast
03:00 Hrs	Bar Closes

Should anyone require a dedicated table for campaign, squadron, troops, branch or for friends, we will attempt to arrange the same; just indicate your requirements or requests on you booking form.

Sunday 12th October: All rooms to be vacated by 10:00 Hrs

A mini bus will be available from 10:00 Hours Saturday until 04:00 Hours Sunday to ferry people to and from their Hotel or to take the Ladies shopping etc. We will also take home any local members who would prefer to leave their car at home if at all possible or those who prefer to collect their car the next day! Again; all requirements for transport are to be booked via Graham Harrison. The cost of this service will be met by the Branch, but members using the service will be invited to "tip" into a central collection box.

We are able to offer a maximum of 240 places for the silver service dinner arranged on a first come first served basis. We hope to have the services of a photographer throughout the evening. You will be invited to have your photograph taken with a Bandsman in the picture, upon arrival at the mess. The photograph will be delivered to you later in the evening at a cost of £1.00. We hope to arrange collective group photographs after the meal for those who wish to have this service.

Dress

You are asked to observe and respect the dress code in the mess. Smart casual wear will be accepted, but no jeans, trainers or tee shirts please! On the Friday and Saturday evenings, Lounge suits or Mufti and Ladies are respectfully asked not to wear trousers or culottes. Failure to observe the dress code will result in admission being refused. DJ's and evening gowns will not be out of place for those with the nerve. Normal mess rules and behaviour are expected.

Early reservations would be appreciated and the closing date for booking is 1st September 1997. (Maximum seating 240 people). Cheques to accompany bookings and are to be made payable to "A.E.A. No: 2 Account," please.

With the advent of contracted services in Army establishments, there is very little room for flexibility. You must not and cannot turn up and purchase a meal ticket when you wish or want under this type of regime! The caterer demands prior notice of our needs, your assistance in prior bookings and advanced payment would be much appreciated and is a requirement for this weekend.

Costs

	(A)	Accommodation	£10.00 or £12.00 per room
Friday	(B)	Lunch	£ 4.00
	(C)	Evening Meal	£ 4.00
Saturday	(D)	Curry/Salad Lunch	£ 4.00
	(E)	Formal Dinner	£15.00
	(F)	Champagne Breakfast	£ 4.00
	(G)	Transport request	Yes/No
	(H)	Attendance Only	£ 5.00

We have built into these prices an anticipated increase in the cost of food and staff wages between now and the event. Hopefully, prices will not exceed these projected figures; so please bear with us on this point. Should you not wish to attend the dinner, there will be an admission charge of £5.00 for all attendee's to help offset the costs of the overall benefits arranged for your enjoyment. Please indicate on the booking form if this is your preference!

Hotel Accommodation A.E.A - AGM Weekend

South Eastern Hotel,

Station Road, Strood, Kent. Tel: 01634-719958

Situated 2 miles from Brompton Barracks

Prices Per Night:

Small Single: £18.80

Single: £21.00

Double: £31.00

3 Bedroom Family: £43.38

All prices exclusive of VAT-Prices include shower, TV and English breakfast.

St. George Hotel,

7 New Road Avenue, Chatham, Kent. Tel: 01634-841012

Situated 1.5 miles from Brompton Barracks Prices Per Night:

Single: £29.00

Double: £42.00

Twin: £42.00

Prices include VAT, bath or shower en-suite, TV and English breakfast.

King Charles Hotel,

Brompton Road, Gillingham, Kent. Tel: 01634-830303

Situated 300 metres from Brompton Barracks Prices Per Night:

Single: £25.00

Double: £34.00

Three Bed: £51.00

Four Bed: £60.00

All prices exclusive of VAT-Prices include bath & shower, TV, English breakfast and newspaper.

Note: Prices are due to increase as of June, an early booking may prove to be a saver!

Mayfield Guest House,

34 Kingswood Road, Gillingham, Kent. Tel: 01634-852606

Situated 5 minutes from Brompton Barracks Prices Per Night:

Single: £16.50

Double/Twin: £30.00

Family: £40.00

Four to Share: £13.00 per head

All rooms have TV, tea making facilities & hot/cold water. Prices inclusive of VAT

Caravans:

Those of you who wish to bring your own caravan into the barracks, please apply direct to: RSM I. George,
1 RSME Regiment, Royal School of Military Engineering, Brompton Barracks, Chatham, Kent. ME4 4UG. Tel:
[REDACTED]

AEA Weekend 10th/11th October 1997

Booking Form

Cheques Payable to A.E.A. No: 2 A/C

Send to Graham Harrison, [REDACTED]

Tel/Fax: [REDACTED]

Full Name(s):	Address:
	Post Code:

I/We require:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
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Indicate Quantity Requirements in the respective box.

Comments:

Seating Preference:

Receipt Required:	Yes	No
Cheque No:		
Total Enclosed	£	
