



OLD PARKY

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Twice Yearly Journal

Of the Junior Leaders RGT. RE

Branch of the REA

Lead by Example

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Committee News

Gentlemen, our annual reunion get together is almost upon us, so if you haven't yet been able to secure your place(s) at this prestigious event please make sure to book up and choose your meals as soon as you can – so as to avoid disappointment. We have secured the Ramada Hotel at Dover (tel. 01304821230) which is located in Whitfield, so very close to the site of Old Park Barracks and the Sunday Drumhead service at our cairn.

The booking reference is 21912, but full details and order forms including the evening meal choices, can be found in the documents section of our website at www.rejuniorleaders.co.uk

Please make every effort to come along as it really is the main reason for our Branch's existence, aside from keeping the heritage of boy soldiering in our Corps alive.

Thanks as usual go to Pete O'Callaghan, Mick Dobson, Dave Bishop, and the indomitable Dave Ormsby (newly returned from adventures in the East) for their tireless efforts in arranging yet another smoothly run event.

Many of you will be able to thank your lucky stars that you will not have a whizzing balloon knocking aside your wine glass this year or be assaulted visually and physically by over energetic "dancing".

Visit the branch website at:

www.rejuniorleaders.co.uk to see the latest news,

I will be undertaking a boat handling and navigation course as part of my move to the Marine Policing Unit on the Thames (the old Thames Division) and will not therefore be able to attend this year – my first AWOL from a reunion bash. The statuesque form of Colin Kirby will support the Branch Standard, I did consider Colin's sidekick Bernard – but then remembered that he is to the perpendicular what Mother Theresa was to face cream.

THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM VISIT BY THE BRANCH – 26/27TH JUNE

In June the committee held a meeting at the Cathedral Lodge Hotel, Lichfield. This gave us access to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, Staffs. We had discussed this month previously, and Mick Dobson and Dave Bishop arranged for us to both hold a meeting and visit the site to pay our respects to fallen service personnel – some of whom are inevitably known to us.

The site covers many acres of land previously owned by Lafarge engineering and construction, and is leased to the Arboretum for £1 a year for the long foreseeable future. The national lottery helped greatly with the transformation of what was a quarry into the wonderful and beautifully maintained collection of gardens and memorials seen today – including the Armed services rotunda which serves to remember all those killed on duty since 1945. On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month each year, a shaft of light shines through a "door" in the wall of the rotunda to fall on the memorial to an unknown serviceman or woman. On the back page of this newsletter can be seen some photographs of both the rotunda and the RE memorial close to the entrance to the site, where four huge boulders from Port Stanley are raised around a slate cap badge, creating a very peaceful site of remembrance for all those from the Corps who have made the ultimate sacrifice. It would look far better on my patio.

Try if you can to visit this amazing and tranquil place, but do allow at least a whole day to do it, it can't be fully appreciated in a matter of hours. It is a sad fact that all of us who visited knew at least a few of the Men commemorated there, from the 60's 70's 80's and indeed from the first Gulf War where I got my lovely tan.

The website can be found at www.thenma.org.uk , 01283 792333

A Look through the Junior Leaders Regiment Archive

I have had in my possession for the last three or four years the treasured artefacts of many members, who have passed over their memories in the form of photographs and written articles on our time at Aldershot and also at Old Park Dover. A wet afternoon on the moors of Yorkshire was the reason to delve through, the many memories that are ensconced in this collection. The first thing that struck me was the fact that someone had the foresight to actively start the collecting, and we must thank Tom for this.

I call it an Archive and to me it is, to an academic I don't think it would amount to much. To us it's our memories of a common and collective way forward in our lives.

What did we find? Quite a lot from the days at Aldershot. Dover of course had the most items in the collection. We have Junior Sapper magazines from issue two, which was Easter term 1959, we have six which are from Autumn term 1965 to Winter 1967. These were given by Alfie Iffla at the tenth celebrations last year. A pass out parade from Oct. 1991, and the final one from the Regimental parade at the disbandment of the Junior Leaders. Looking at the first magazines, our motto was "Iron Sharpeneth Iron" When you arrived at Dover as I did in January 1960 you were in no doubt that the Regimental motto, meant a great deal to the permanent staff. They were the Iron, and we were the stuff that went into the crucible, to make their sort of Iron. Looking back, you could say they were more than successful. When the motto changed to "Lead by Example", there is nothing here to advise us of the date. Probably, it was deemed to be better P.C.

The last magazine was called **Holdfast**. It was Edition 32 entitled the last Edition. A Lt. P.H. Heyland RAEC was the editor of this last magazine. The favours he asked, must have called in his goodwill. The editor tells us it's a celebration from January 1959 to October 1991. We find that The C.O. was G.P.Chilton Lt.Col.R.E., whose last words to his troops was "God bless and keep smiling." The J.R.S.M. was J.A. Gillespie. What a day it must have been for him. The editor tells us that being at Old Park "made them grow up quickly." You may say ,(and so say all of us.) Looking through the magazine, a photo from 27th November 1959 catches my eye. It shows the first X1 football team after they won the Army Cup, 2 x1 against the Army Apprentices Chepstow. A Lt. Stibbon is on the photograph. He is obviously one of the coaches, and he went on to become C.R.E. It just shows what a start at Dover can give you. The sporting achievements over the years brought great credit to the Regiment. The sporting roll of honour in "**Holdfast**" lists from 1959-1991 as follows. Basketball ..11 times Army Junior Champions. Cycling..4 Times Army Junior Champions. Fencing..13 Times Army Junior Champions. Football..5 Times Army Junior Champions. Swimming.. 3 Times Army Long Distance, 3 Times Junior Leaders Cup, 2 Times Soldier Magazine. Water Polo..10 Times Junior Champions (1964 to 1973 inclusive) 2 Times Army Senior Champions, 2 Times Army Inter Services Champions. **You may say what a record.**

There is a lot more in this issue of Holdfast of interest. Unfortunately space has defeated us. If space permits, we will continue in future issues.

By Dave Bishop

Armed Services Memorial.



Shot at Dawn.

The Armed Services Memorial.

Mick Dobson, Dave Bishop

Bernard Davis, Colin Kirby,

Ray Ellis and Simon Crowley.



Royal Engineers Memorial

With guests - R E Memorial



Ready for a night out...

A.G.M. Notice

On the 9th October 2010 election of officers for the branch at the A.G.M. will be held. Candidates for all committee members positions, should be with the branch secretary Mr Michael Dobson by Saturday the 25th September 2010.

Committees Members:

Larry Inge, - President, Dave Bishop - Chairman, Peter O'Callaghan - Vice Chairman, Dave Ormsby - Treasurer
Mick Dobson - Branch & Minutes Secretary
Simon Crowley - Newsletter Editor & Standard Bearer, Major Nigel Spencer - Serving Member