

**ROYAL MILITARY POLICE
CYPRUS VETERANS' NEWSLETTER
Number 42 – November 2009**

Welcome to the final Newsletter of 2009. Many thanks for all the articles – please keep them coming! If you don't see your piece here, rest assured it will be in the next edition early in the New Year. Along with this issue is important information from Peter Harrison about the 2009 reunion, the Group, its finances and advance information about the 2010 reunion.

Members. It was good to see so many of our members hale and hearty at the recent reunion. Sadly, though, this issue of the Newsletter has to report several recent losses amongst our number:

Willie Campbell passed away on 4 September 2009.

Harry Dulake passed away suddenly on Saturday the 5th September 2009. His family reported that he had a good send off with the local RMPA Branch providing a guard of honour and standard, and his coffin was draped with the Union flag.

Brian Tansey also passed away in September 2009 and some Cyprus Vets attended his funeral.

Letters, emails, photographs and other contributions for this edition have been received from:

Gordon Haywood – photos from the 2009 reunion

Alan Williams – response to Derek Hagger's article in Newsletter 41

Philip Wade – more about the open air cinema

John Moss – previously known as John Moss-Norbury

Martin Round – Star and Garter Homes

Dave Roberts – in response to the Inkerman Barracks story – the start of a beautiful friendship

Bob Edwards – the 'belt' story

Tony Fish – tribute to those lost in Cyprus

Keith Nightingale – Cyprus Memorial

Peter Harrison - reminder about subs

Interesting points to note:

- RMP Journal - Southwick Park - 023 9228 4564
- Old Comrades Link-Up - Bob Eggelton - 02392 693437
- National RMPA Reunion at Portsmouth 14-16 May 2010. Contact Maj (Rtd) A K Barley 01904 427422
- RMP Shop 023 92284651 or email rhqrmp@btconnect.com

Gordon Haywood – *Photos from the October 2009 Cyprus Veterans' Reunion*

The picture to the right shows Peter Harrison with the wreath which I will be very proud to carry on behalf of the Cyprus Veterans, at the Cenotaph in London on 8 November 2009. The one on the left shows (left to right) Jim Wynd, Shiner Wright, myself and Peter Harrison.



Jim, Shiner and I proposed the following toasts:
Loyal Toast,
The Corps and
Absent Friends.

Peter gave a short address before dinner – details with this newsletter.



Alan Williams – *memories awakened by the article by Derek Hagger in Newsletter 41*

Brian Lovett and I arrived in May 58 to replace the two lads who had been shot earlier that year. I remember that mine and Brian's tent burnt down when we 'accidentally' left the heater on when we went to the pictures in the tennis courts near to our tents. That cost us a few 'words of wisdom' from Neddy and Frater the

CSM and a fine of £5 which Frater redeemed for us from Company Funds, God bless him. As you remember £5 was a lot of money in those days for a National Serviceman.

As to the time we went into the Old City, I remember I was in the back of Derek Hagger's landrover with another Lance Jack whose name I cannot remember and a Sergeant in front with Derek. I think it was Sgt Dulake. I was armed with a Stirling Machine-gun between my knees and was ordered to be ready, but not to look ready. Like Derek, I remember those dark narrow streets and the sudden hash as we arrived in the square. I don't mind telling you my heart was in my mouth as those unsmiling men surrounded the vehicles, remembering the violence of the Turkish Riots we had attended, and then the sudden change in atmosphere after the speech. I did not actually see the bull killed but I did see the blood later on.

Brian, who sadly passed away earlier this year, and I have been back to Fama G now called Gazimagusa three times with friends. The

welcome we had in the second half of our visit to the square is still there, we just had to say we were in 51 Bde and people could not do enough for us.

We met a number of Police Constables who accompanied us when we did patrols in Varosha and that brought back many happy memories.

We also met a Turk who, as a child, lived just outside the wire of our compound. He now has a Tavern just a few miles outside the city. He took us to where 51 Bde had been and we were able to find the 9 concrete blocks on which the tents were situated.



This photo shows some of us getting ready for a 'CALLOUT', I'm the one in the back row, 3rd from the left with Taff Marshal kneeling in the front.

Philip Wade – prompted by Bob Holt's memories the Open Air Cinema

The open air cinema memories of Bob Holt triggered recollections of being taken from 6 Dog Company on an evening patrol in Larnaca by two other MP's, L/Cpl Dow & L/Cpl Williams (where would they have been based?) and spending a lot of the evening parked on a small hillock overlooking two separate open air cinemas – both films were European i.e. not British, with sub titles in Greek or Turkish – very educational. The Garrison cinema at Episkopi had the advantage of John Wayne riding the range and being buzzed by RAF jets practising night flying over Akrotiri Bay – and of romantic evening moonlight encounters suddenly being illuminated by two moons.

John Moss – from Melbourne, Australia tells of a get-together a few years ago & memories of his late Wife Pat and her involvement with the Cyprus RMP

About 1999 David Newman (2ic 227) asked Geoff Crosthwaite to find 'that Moss fellow'. Geoff did a great job, phoning my siste-in-law in Bozeat, Norhtants. She said "johnnybiglegs is in or-stralia" and Geoff sent me a letter a few weeks before we flew to London in March 2000. Geoff and Mike Ramsay put on lunch in London including David Newman, Bill Epps, John Rosier, Jonathan Price, Maurice Nicholls, John Redfern and John Blakesley,. It was really 'bonza' to see them all after 40 years.

In 1956 my wife Pat worked for Captain Ian Ellis, Cyprus District Pro Coy, she typed the 252s and 2100s. Being only 20 years old she was a bit shocked at the verbatim reporting "and he said to me XXX!" etc. In Cyprus, as you know there were only showers in camp. My wife Pat invited 'some of the lads' over for a bath (bring your own wood). **[Ed: I wonder if any readers of the newsletter remember enjoying that luxury]** Sadly, Pat had a brain op in November and died last month age 74, so we lost another 'Cyprus Vet'. Both of our sons, Simon (born in Cyprus) and Mike (born when I was an instructor in Woking) were able to go to her funeral. I had not seen her for 40 years – I called her my RMP wife.

On a lighter note, after leaving RMP I found I always got an interview for a job, if I put on my CV 'Inspector of Brothels'.

Martin Round – following attendance at a band concert where Simon Weston OBE was guest of honour.

The concert had a particular resonance for me as my son Peter, with me at the event, played trumpet/cornet with his regiment, having trained at Kneller Hall alongside sons of the musicians playing at the concert. Simon Weston emphasized the importance of the Royal Star and Garter Homes in caring for widows, widowers, spouses and partners of ex-service men and women who are eligible for admission. Who knows, any of us might at some time be in need of such support. The main S&G home is in Richmond Surrey but is closing when two others are built. Another one has opened in Solihull and I will be offering my help as a volunteer.

Dave Roberts – who is now the very best of friends with Gordon Genders. **[Ed: I spoke to Gordon at the recent reunion. He was very happy for this piece to be published – saying ‘Yes, Dave and I are great friends. He read the piece to me over the phone and it’s all true, so please go ahead and publish it!’]**

In the summer of 1956 life at Inkerman Barracks in 580 Squad was going quite smoothly for me as Squad L/Cpl. Then we had a back squaddie join our ranks. He had apparently been in sickbay for some time and had lost training. I was to find myself within a short time wishing it was terminal! Having been in the army two months longer than me he didn’t like having to take my orders. When I tell you his name is Gordon ‘Lofty’ Genders you will understand as I believe to this day he can be found throwing his weight around and bullying all and sundry every October at the Consort Hotel Rotherham. **[Ed: that bit’s definitely not true!!]**

One evening, completely unaware that S/Sergeant Adams, the Company Drill Sergeant was standing in the doorway of our spider, Lofty decided to verbalise his objections to my authority. Sgt Adams ripped into Gordon and ordered him to run around the spider until I told him to stop. The sun was setting over Woking as Lofty’s little head was passing the windows going slower and slower... A later more physical confrontation resulted in the sleeve of his army shirt being ripped off. I cannot recall the detail of this incident but I am pleased it eventually cost him money. What I can recall is that we did become the best of pals and it’s a friendship I cherish to this day.

Bob Edwards – the belt story

In 1958 Jock (Gordon) Chapman decided to come back to the UK to get married. He had previously applied for and been granted a place on a course as a PTI in the Middle School of Physical Training, but love had got the better of him, so he offered me the place on the course. It was whilst on this course that ‘Topsy’ Turvey and Jock Cameron were shot and killed by a member of EOKA. I felt guilty in that Topsy, who was our armourer, had volunteered for the duty as we were short of men and he didn’t normally go out on street duty. Because of the course, I couldn’t even get to the funerals so some years later I decided to visit their graves at Waynes Keep. I tried to get there from the Greek side of the island but was told that if I went into the buffer zone, to return I would have to go out through the Turkish side, then onto Turkey, then Greece to get back to Paphos. A few years later I visited Kyrenia, and of course, things were so much easier. I had a British army escort meet me at the Ledra Palace, was taken to the graves and spent some time trying to come to terms with the loss of our friends. I signed the book of condolence and noticed the names of others who I had served with during 1957-8 at Famagusta who had also made a similar visit. This led to me being contacted and invited to the Cyprus RMP Vets reunion at Rotherham.

I entered the room with some trepidation wondering if I would recognise anyone after 45 years. Sitting at the bar was a gentleman of ‘fair proportions’ who said, ‘Bob Edwards!’. I replied, ‘Yes, but I am sorry I don’t remember you.’ He introduced himself as Ian Carpenter and he went on to introduce me to his lovely wife and bought me a drink. He is that sort of a bloke as we all know. I apologised for not recognising him but explained that when I had last seen him he was an eleven and a half stone blonde haired Adonis, and now he was slightly different. I then went on to thank him for a leather belt that he had given me. He didn’t remember the incident so I went on to remind him that I had been walking past his tent as he was throwing things out before going home on demob. On the pile of kit was the belt and I asked if I could have it to keep up my trousers when on fatigue duties. The belt then became mine and I carved into the leather the words ‘Roll on Demob’. It was about 38 inches long with a large brass buckle. I told Ian that I still had the belt and promised to give it back to him the following year at the next reunion.

As I walked into the room, Ian was at the same bar, possibly on the same stool, but I don’t think he had been sitting there since the previous reunion, although I suppose it was a possibility! As I walked to the bar he said to me ‘I bet you have forgotten your promise’. He was unaware I had arranged to share a table with him so I replied ‘Just wait until after our meal’. Having enjoyed our usual excellent fare I asked if those round the table would give me a moment to make a presentation and told them how I came to be in possession of the contents of the parcel I was presenting to Ian. He stood up, unwrapped the belt (with brass buckle properly bulled of course) and put it round his waist. There was quite a gap between the buckle and the other end of the belt and he said ‘You b...! You have cut a foot out of it’. For Christmas I sent him a piece of leather to bridge the gap! I suppose I could have sent him an application form for a PTI course instead!

Tony Fish – *inspired by the new memorial in Kyrenia*

To the Memory of those young members of the Corps of Royal Military Police who gave their lives in Cyprus 1955-1958

They came from town and country, those striplings of our youth
To serve the Queen they volunteered or conscripts to the cause.
All knew the barracks Inkerman as on the square they trod;
How could they know in that Corps time they'd shortly meet their maker?
They earned their stripe and cover cap and to their units went;
Some came straight, and others came to Cyprus from afar.
To Larnaca, Limassol, Fama G, Kyrenia and other venues too
Came those young men our British striplings their MP work to do.
All tasks were at the bidding of politicians sure that in their thinking
They were right - the other side was wrong.
By bomb and car and bullet these tender striplings fell.
Not once did they question 'Why?', just 'Oh My God --- Hell!'
Like saplings in the autumn their green leaves did they shed,
Never into large oaks would they grow.
They will never be forgotten by us remaining men
Who worked and played with striplings now long gone.
Those that survived, yes, we all know that one day
We shall meet those friends - those that we left behind
In Wayne's Keep's sandy soil and underneath the wind.

Keith Nightingale – *Cyprus Memorial*

Here is a picture of the new memorial in Kyrenia. I found this on the very interesting website <http://www.britishcyprusmemorial.org/> as a result of an article in the Daily Mail. **[Ed: I hope to have more information about the memorial and the ceremony unveiling it on 8 November 09, in the next Newsletter]**



Peter Harrison - *reminder.*

All members are reminded that the subscription of £5 per year is due on the 1st January each year. Those of you that have not already paid for 2010 please could forward your £5 by cheque made payable to 'The Cyprus Veterans Group'. Failure to do this will mean that you will not receive your copy of future Newsletters. If anyone is finding it difficult to pay the subscription, please contact me, Group Organiser – details below – I will, of course, treat the matter confidentially.

Finally – the members' phone list referred to in the last Newsletter isn't yet available but hopefully it will be distributed with a newsletter early next year . A Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year to all.

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