



ROYAL MILITARY POLICE
OLD COMRADES LINK UP
NEWSLETTER #128 FEBRUARY 2018



NEW CONTACTS



WADE

Former 23791774 Lance-Corporal Philip Wade, Squad 787. Philip enlisted into the Royal Army Service Corps in May 1960 and in the same month transferred to the Corps. Following training he was posted to 6 Dog Company, Cambrai Barracks, Cyprus. In January 1961 he was a member of the CinC's Escort Section, Episkopi. He later returned to the Dog Company and in the November of the same year was posted to the Cyprus Provost Unit, Episkopi. In March 1962 he board the TT Navasa and headed home and was finally demobbed in May. Philip is currently a member of the Fenland Branch.

YOUR CORRESPONDENCE

In the last edition I featured a painting which was entitled "*Another Hot Day in Nicosia*". Den Wilson was stirred by the painting and said, 'Thanks for latest newsletter, as usual another great read, The painting brought back memories of when I was posted to 227 Provost Company in May 1960 until August 1960 doing various patrols all over the area, before being posted to 6 Dog Company at Dhekelia. From there I was posted out with my dog, *Hasset* to patrolling General Sir Dudley Ward's residence at Episkopi. Some great memories whilst doing my national service.'

Maurice Nicholls, who served in Cyprus during the EOKA campaign said, 'Very many thanks for the latest edition of your newsletter which, as usual, I have read with great interest.

'As you might imagine, my eye was immediately drawn to the long-awaited Cyprus painting. Although excellent in most respects, it is a pity that the painting did not capture more of the essence of the Cyprus campaign by showing our chaps in Khaki Drill (KD) (worn the majority of the year) rather than the more mundane Battle Dress (BD) uniforms. The intense and prolonged heat is probably one of the more evocative memories that many Cyprus Veterans retain of their time on the island in the 1950s. One or two other less evident detractors such as the Black Swan tac sign on the rear of the landrover, indicating its role as a 51 Bde vehicle based in Famagusta (and not in Nicosia!), could also have been avoided had advice proffered by Cyprus veterans been heeded.

'As for the picture's title, "Another hot day in Nicosia", in view of the foregoing I am tempted to think that it might have been more aptly entitled "Another cold day in Famagusta"! Having got all that off my chest, may I say how delighted I am that our Corps' role in the EOKA campaign is at last being immortalised by this otherwise excellent painting.'

Chas Baily also had a few words to say. 'Thanks again for the newsletter, the troopships photos triggered the one I sailed on, the Empire Ken which sailed with a marked tilt to the left. With regard to the painting, to my memory I, cannot remember ever having either 40 or 60 on the rear of the landrovers. The main point on the one shown is the unit badge, it appears to be that 51 Brigade, nicknamed the *Dying Duck*. If it is, then during the three years I spent in Famagusta, where 51 Brigade was based, we did not have enough vehicles to loan out. Can anyone tell me what secret weapon was the White Things they were wearing on their heads, and did they work, because if they did why was RMP Famagusta not issued with the same? Might have saved a few headaches!'

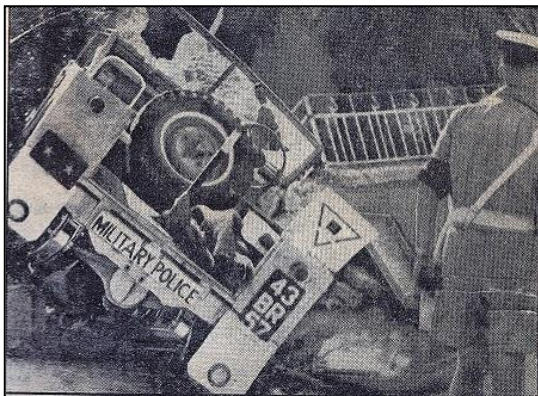


From what I know and have been told about the painting then there is some artistic licence prevails, as there is in most paintings of this nature. Yes, it was a 51 Brigade vehicle and it is accepted that that Brigade was in Famagusta. The buildings were researched by the artist and accurate. The focal point of the painting, Lance-Corporal Keeling was taken from a photograph which is archived at the Corps Museum. My personal stand point is that the painting was compiled to capture the general atmosphere of the time. As for the *White Things* referred

to by Chas Baily they did exist as can be seen in another photograph taken in Nicosia in 1956. I copied this (hence the poor quality of reproduction) from the book *The Redcaps* by GD Sheffield but the original photograph will be in the Museum.

I understand that signed, limited copies of the painting will soon become available and I am sure their arrival will be well broadcasted via RHQ.

Bob Holt e-mailed from his home in Blackpool and said, 'Thanks very much for your latest newsletter, as always it makes excellent reading, especially with regard to the Cyprus painting. I have never seen this before and I must admit it certainly captures the moment and brings back plenty of memories. During this period I was stationed in Limassol. Can I be allowed to be a bit "picky" with regards to the painting. Do I detect a distinct Turkish flavour to the content? I certainly do not remember being issued with a "tin hat" to go out on patrol nor a police issue truncheon, admittedly when needs must we used riot batons, about 1 metre in length and very flexible, they would make you wince and run if you were unlucky enough to get a swipe from one. I do recall that when we went out on foot patrol, a 2 man team, we were issued with a .38 revolver and 5 rounds of ammunition each and we packed our ammo pouch with cardboard to make it look smart, fortunately we never got involved in a gun fight. We never went out in a Land Rover with the tailgate fixed, these were removed for ease of getting in and out in a hurry. The vehicle signage is a bit of a mystery to me 227 Pro Coy was within the Cyprus District (the arm flashes depicted on the NCO's in the picture) not 51st Ind Inf Bde, but I do stand to be corrected on that one.



I always look back with sadness to this part of history, how such a lovely place and people could be disturbed in such a way. I wouldn't want to become embroiled in a political dispute but I think we should always remember that there was a Turkish conflict going on at the same time. Taksim "partition" was the organised cry of the Turkish Cypriots, which we all know now became a reality in 1974 with the UN "Green Line". Having said this I have wonderful memories of my time there, and many visits since, of both the people and the country and obviously friends and colleagues I had the privilege to serve with. I enclose a few photos which you may, or may not, wish to use, hopefully they will make interesting

viewing for the "Cyprus Vets" and others.'

Ed: The picture above left was featured in the Sketch newspaper headlined "Just Part of a day's work". The caption read "All that was left yesterday of the Land-Rover blown up by terrorist mines in Nicosia, Cyprus, as it escorted Major-General Douglas Kendrew, Director of Anti-Terrorist Operations. The speed of General Kendrew's car saved him. He was 20 yards past the spot before the mines, operated electronically from a house garden, exploded. General Kendrew told the Sketch by telephone last night: "Forget it. It was just another bomb. They go off quite often here".

I understand from Bob Holt that Lance-Corporal William Bell lost his life; it is a pity that this loss of life was not mentioned in the same report. The photograph on the right shows a Turkish demonstration which, according to Bob, got a bit nasty.



-ooOoo-

John Allen commented on two recent deaths. 'Devastated to hear that Stuart Ramage has passed away – lovely guy. Also Derek Cole – we were next door neighbours in Chichester and remember hiring the Depot PRI Bus and the two families spending a week in a holiday home in North Devon. So sad.'

-ooOoo-

David Hartley sent in the following after an exchange of e-mails. 'I left you in peace to watch the Rugby yesterday (*Ed: I was watching the Italy v England game and had made reference to Scotland's game with Wales - nothing derogative*), as for Scotland, I only came up here to start a 5th column. You mentioned boots, and that brought back a memory. Sixty-one years ago, right now, I was in the Depot, and I discovered *Instant Shine*. Put it on my toecaps, and went on a big parade. We were about the last to be inspected. Harry Burden was the RSM. The Sun came out and the *Instant Shine* melted. The wind got up and blew all the dust off the Parade Ground onto my toecaps. When I glanced down, I had a pair of toecaps that looked like sandpaper. A passing sergeant suggested I pretend to faint and get carried off, before Harry arrived, and he fainted. Too late, he arrived, and his hat nearly blew off. However, our old Celtic Gods gifted me with the Art of Lying, I managed to persuade him in my eagerness to look smart I had put on too much polish, and that it had melted and caused the problem. I got the usual bollocking, but survived. I do not honestly think he had heard of *Instant Shine* at that time. I threw the bottle away, in case of a snap inspection. Amazing what memories can be triggered by just one word.' *Ed: I mentioned to David that when in Germany in the early 60s something called "Straboleen" (that is a more phonetic spelling than the correct one) came onto the scene. I applied it as directed and to my horror after a while my toecaps turn a somewhat whitish colour. Lesson completed, do it the hard way with those little magic circles.*

-ooOoo-

I received a letter (yes they still exist) from Arthur Elliot which read, 'It was with great sadness that I read in the Old Comrades Link-Up Newsletter 127 of the death of Jack James. I first met Jack at a RMPA Bristol and Somerset Branch dinner, when Jack attended as a member of the Taunton Branch. After the dinner we were discussing our service and found that on several occasions over the years we had been in close proximity to each other without knowing it.

It started in 1945 when we were stationed in the same camp in Crick Howell, South Wales. Jack served with the South Wales Borderers whilst I was with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers and both Regiments were in the same camp. We eventually boarded a train to Liverpool where we embarked on the troopship SS Georgic bound for India. We dis-embarked at Bombay and then travelled by train to Kalyan, east of Bombay. This was the transit camp for the troops entering or leaving India via Bombay. On the same day we volunteered to transfer to the Corps of Military Police. We travelled by train to Secundrabad for training at the Police School, I was in No.9 Platoon and Jack was in No.10 Platoon. On passing out Jack went north whilst I went to Bombay.

In 1947, when India obtained independence, the Military Police assembled at Trimulgory Barracks, a former prison, prior to leaving India. We went by train to Mudras and embarked on the troopship Ascanius. We dis-embarked at Pireus, Greece and whilst I was posted to Athens, Jack again went north.

After the Branch dinner Jack and I kept in touch with telephone calls, when humorous and jovial Jack enjoyed relating his adventures during police service. RIP.'

-ooOoo-

Allan Rooke (Squad 600) contacted me and related the following tale to me. 'It was one of those days in the classroom, boring and too warm. I sat at the front in full view of the instructor Sgt Grandison and I was fighting to stay awake. Then the sergeant looked at me and asked me to come out to the front. Thinking I was in for a telling off, I was relieved to hear him say I want you to go on an errand, just where to I have long since forgotten, but it was to the other side of Inkerman Barracks. I stepped out into that long corridor that ran the length of the main block not a soul about, I can make this last a while I said to myself, as I marched windmill fashion down the corridor. I looked to my right onto the square *Harry's hallowed ground*. There was not a soul in view and an idea went across my mind that I could make this last a while, take a short cut around the square whiz past the guardroom (how daft) and back the long way through the MT lines. By this time I was at the last window that looked out onto the square I slowed down still no one insight on the square or the corridor, risk it I said to myself, I opened the last door and out onto the square.

Still no one about, windmill fashion I set off, I had gone about six feet from the door when that familiar gravel voice shouted out "*HALT PROBATIONER*". I stood afraid to look, you twerp I thought. I cursed myself, it's the guardroom now. But what a surprise, he stepped up to me, and like a father speaking to a son, asked me to go to the tailor and ask for RSM Burden's Battle Dress jacket and take it to his house and hand it to Mrs Burden who will be waiting for you. A much relieved probationer set off at a run, but just where he came from I just don't know. But just a point of interest,

when I collected item, the tailor told me that he had just sown on a new ribbon, an award from the Queen.' Ed: I would guess that the ribbon was that of the MBE.

ROYAL MILITARY POLICE ASSOCIATION



The Hull and East Riding Branch are holding their annual Dinner which will take place in Hull on the 22nd September 2018. Further information can be obtained from Pete Watson secretary@rmpa-hull.org

Calling all you bikers, serving and retired. Why not join the Provost Ride to The NMA, Saturday 2nd June 2018. For further details contact Hugh.Mcvey719@mod.uk

The Depot Branch will be holding their Summer Dinner on the 30th June 2018. Further information can be obtained from me; contact details are below.



INFORMATION AND NOTICES

An organ recital at our Church in aid of a new Stained Glass Window

The Service Police Memorial Church at Southwick Park is blessed to have the considerable musical talents of Canon Peter Gould at its disposal.

Having given recitals in St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral, Birmingham Town Hall, King's College Cambridge and York Minster and at least one organ recital in Derby Cathedral in each of the 32 years that he was organist there, Peter has kindly agreed to give a recital at Southwick Park in aid of the 'D-Day Stained Glass Window Appeal' at our Service Police Memorial Church on **Tuesday, July 10th**.

Starting at 1700 hours the recital will be followed by drinks and 'nibbles' in the Officers' Mess until 2000 hrs. Individual tickets cost £15.00 and a double ticket £25.00. All proceeds will go to the D-Day Stained Glass Window Appeal with tickets sold on a strictly first-come-first basis on application to:



Organ Recital

Regimental Headquarters, Royal Military Police
The Old Stables (PP 38),
Southwick House,
Southwick Park, Near Fareham,
Hampshire. PO17 6EJ
rhqrmpp@btconnect.com

CAN YOU HELP

David Brown, a former Sergeant in the Corps, contacted me with what I term as a 'long shot' but one never knows. He said, 'I am making an appeal to any of our WW2 veterans who were serving in Italy from 1944 to late 1946 including in the AMG (Allied Military Government) in the Naples, Bolzano and Trieste areas. I am researching my grandfather's wartime history with the intention of writing a book covering this time both in the Army and in the police. He was Capt Gordon W Brown and was commissioned in the GSC (General Service Corps) but attached to the AMG at the end of hostilities

and had a number of members of the CMP under him. I would like any information of places he was billeted, worked at at incidents covered. He started the war in Northumberland County Constabulary as a police sergeant before applying to join the army in 1943. At the end of hostilities he was in Bolzano before returning to Naples and then to Trieste. I have included several war time photos of him which may jog some memories. He returned to the Northumberland CC where he retired in the mid-1960s as Assistant Chief Constable. As an after note, both his sons were in the RMP during the 50s during the national service followed by me 79-94.

DEATHS

BOYER (Nee BATT)

The following was taken from a Facebook entry. "It is with much sadness that I report the death of our mother Ruth Mary Boyer, nee Batt, on 1st February. In November 1944 she enlisted in the ATS and after training was transferred to Provost Wing of the ATS Military Police. In November 1946 she was posted to Germany and served in Bad-Oeynhausen, Hamburg, Cuxhaven and also was present at the Hamburg Trials. During her time serving in Cuxhaven (December 1946) Ruth met Charles, a sergeant in the Military Police. They married in 1947. After honeymooning Ruth returned to Hamburg to await her demob and subsequent move to married quarters in Luneburg. Ruth was the first woman to be demobbed abroad not in the UK. Ruth and Charles stayed in Germany until February 1952 moving to Singapore until 1954 and on to the UK, going back to Germany in 1958 and finally to the UK until Charles retired from the army in September 1966."



BROWN

David Brown, who was mentioned in Contacts above sent in the following message. 'I regret to announce the passing of my father former 23190451 LCpl Gordon Brown, Squad 573 (Cpl Clennel squad instructor) 1955-57. He attained the best recruit of his intake and top recruit for his pass out parade (March 1956). He fondly recalled WO2 Fred Tucker and also the RSM, Harry Burden at Woking. He was to have been posted to SHAFE, Paris, however due to an emergency operation on his stomach, he ended up going to 150 Pro Coy, Beachhead Lines, Catterick Garrison. He was involved in the weekly pay of all ranks at the Company however was still involved in policing both the busiest and biggest garrison in the UK and also Darlington where there were numerous fights involving rival battalions. He was offered promotion and posting to anywhere in the world if he had stayed in however, opted to leave after his two year national service and re-joined Northumberland County Constabulary. Following amalgamation with Newcastle City Police and the Durham Constabulary areas covered by Tyne & Wear, achieved the rank of Chief Superintendent in Northumbria Police retiring in

1988. His brother John Brown also served in RMP from 1951-53 Squad 241 and remained at the depot.



HOWARD

Former 23658834 Lance-Corporal Lawrence "Larry" Howard, seen of the left, passed away during the night of the 13th and 14th February 2018. Larry, who was in Squad 711, served with 17 Gurkha Division, 63 Brigade, 99 Brigade 1 (Br) Corps and 150 Provost companies between 1959 and 1964. After his military service Larry joined the Lincoln Police for a short period before becoming a professional driver until he retired a few years ago. He was a founder member of the Fenland Branch in 2000 and was Chairman for three years but it was as Standard Bearer he will best be remembered.

MAYOH

Former 14477405 Corporal Ralph Mayoh died on the 23rd January 2018 aged eighty-nine. Initially served in the Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry before transferring to RMP. He served in Hamburg with 194 Provost Company and

Berlin with 247 Provost Company Coy. He also saw service in the Suez Canal Zone. He is survived by his son Leigh, daughter-in-law Sharon and two grandsons Darren and Craig. Ralph was a keen member of Aldershot Branch RMPA.

McCANN

The following message was taken from an entry Facebook. "I regret to inform everyone that Cath McCann, ex WRAC Provost, passed away this morning after a heroic battle with cancer. Those that knew her will know of her willpower and indomitable spirit and she fought to the end."

McCREADY

Former Staff Sergeant Jim McCready passed away during the evening of the 28th January 2018. Jim first served in the Irish Guards and later transferred to the Corps circa 1958/59. Jim served a number of tours with Para Provost.

PARMINTER

The following message was received from Maurice Nicholls. 'It is with great regret that I have to advise you of the death of Major John Parminter RMP (Retd). John was a long-standing member of SIB. He died peacefully on Tuesday 20th February after many years ill-health.

John's funeral will take place at The Kent and Sussex Crematorium, Benhall Mill Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5JJ on Monday 12th March at 1345 hrs, followed by a reception at the nearby Neville Crest and Gun Restaurant. Those wishing to attend the funeral are asked to let me know so that appropriate catering arrangements may be made.'

TREE

Former 22949533 Lance-Corporal John Ernest Tree passed away on the 11th February 2018. John completed his National Service 1954 - 1956 and later went on to serve for 30 years in initially Portsmouth City Police and then Hampshire Constabulary when the two amalgamated in 1967.

-ooOoo-

February is the month that seems to sneak up on you and suddenly the 28th day (29th some years) is upon you and then a slight panic sets in to get everything completed in time. I think I just about made it this time. It is the last day of the month and it is currently -4C in my rear garden. Those of you in warmer climes stop sniggering!

Compiled by: Bob Eggelton

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