



OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

22nd REGIMENT ROYAL ARTILLERY



March 2004

Farewell Parade 15 December 2003

This was a day that I (and I suspect, many members) weren't looking forward to; it was a very sad day, though carried off in true military style.

The members attending the parade congregated in the Sgt's Mess for a warm drink. Though with the day being very clear and very, very cold, hot water bottles would not have been amiss.

Come the time for the parade every one congregated at the 12 x 12 erected by the square, some of the seats had blankets, those lucky enough to grab one had some protection from the elements. Though having the chairs on grass proved to require a little body management to stop them sinking. I did notice that the more overweight of us seemed to sink faster than others.

It was nice to see the 40/70 Bofors on the square, like many others bought up on the sounds of 'Held', 'Elevate' and 'Make Safe', I have many memories of getting into action and 'camming up' with this gun and it's associated FCE7 and 27 ½ KVA Gene. So to see it on this final parade made the day all the more poignant.

The parade like so many other seen and participated in, followed a set pattern. Each part looked forward to the more the colder I got. But then the part of the parade that I and so many others were not looking forward to, that of 'Sunset' and the lowering of the Regimental Flag for the final time on a Regimental parade, in speaking to other members and Officers and men from the Regiment, I know that my eyes weren't the only ones that turned a little dewy at that moment.

In fact I was so caught up in this moment, I omitted to take a photo of the occasion, so if someone did, I would be grateful for a copy.

Just before the final 'March Off' Old Comrades and other ex-service organisations were called out to line the exit road and as the Regiment marched through the two lines of Old Comrades, the members clapped and applauded the Regiment.

Finally we all made our way to the Gym for a hot drink for which there was a queue, or for the ready poured beers for which there wasn't. Not that people weren't drinking the beer, it was that there the Quartermaster must have cleared out the cellar. Well Done!

There was a lot of mingling and getting a last few words before leaving and starting the long drive home, a sad day? Of course. But as with all thing military, well organised.

I am sure everyone present recalled and had lots of good memories to take away.

Reunion 14 December 2003

When I planned this reunion, I asked how many the venue could hold, I was told up to 140, and so full of hope sent out information to the membership, initially the response was good, but then tailed off.

In the end I went firm at a figure of 75 with 83 turning up on the night.

But although the venue only had just over half its capacity, the evening was a resounding success due to the members who had come. It was they that made the evening the success that it was, and my thanks to them.

I was a great pleasure to see so many faces from the past, most of whom I recognised, some, I am afraid, I needed a little prompting with, made all the more embarrassing as they obviously knew me.

The venue supplied a superb buffet, which I am afraid the members did not do justice to, though to be fair, I suspect they didn't want to slow their talking down by filling their mouths with food.

www.22oca.org.uk

A letter from the webmaster

The Old Comrades web site has been up and running for several months now but we desperately need more content to make it interesting for all our visitors.

To that end could I ask all of you to consider sending in your old photos or stories so that we can improve the site.

Photographs - I can accept them in any format no matter how big the file size, all I need is a caption to go with it.

Stories - Likewise I can accept stories in any format, it doesn't have to be worthy of a Booker prize, just so long as it would interest the membership.

If you would like to send in contributions by land mail I promise to send you back the originals.

Best Regards

Trevor

Have you moved?

Silly question? Not really, I have been putting return labels on the back of everything I send out, and if yours is returned to me because you have moved and not told me, then your details will be moved to my 'File 13' a file that is growing every time I send out a newsletter.

But this does not just apply to your main details, if you are on e-mail, then I can

send you the newsletter electronically and save on postage, but again when I e-mail out anything, there is always a significant 'bounce' of e-mails.

So PLEASE, keep me informed.

Ta muchly.

E-mailing the Secretary

Because I get a huge amount of spam or junk e-mails, would anyone e-mailing me please place '22OCA' in the subject line.

If you don't, there is a danger that I will delete it without opening.

Next Reunion in Wales

There will be a reunion on Saturday 10th April 2004. It is to be held at the Dolphin Hotel in Swansea. The cost for tickets to this event is £15.00 per person

The Dolphin has 66 rooms with singles being priced at £35.00 and Doubles at £58.00; these prices have been negotiated for the association and when booking your rooms quote 22 OCA Reunion to take advantage of them.

So if you want to come, send your cheque for the full amount made out to 22 Regiment RA OCA together with the full names of those wishing to come.

Please enclose an SAE with your application, and send to Mike Hall, 30 Pares Close, Woking, Surrey. GU21 4QN

The cut off date for tickets is the 15th of March, so get your applications in now!!

Tywyn High School Reunion

Did your kids go to Tywyn High School around 1968, if so Rhian Williams (nee Lloyd) would like to hear from them.

Rhian is organising the reunion in September this year for the children that attended Tywyn High School, Tywyn, Merionethshire.

She say's 'I would love to hear from anyone that can help me trace these pupils'.

If your children were there and cannot get to the reunion, then they can send a photo of themselves as they were in '68 and as they are now with a paragraph or two to say what they have done between then and now. If they wish they can add their contact details.

Rhian can be contacted at

Mrs Rhian Williams
Caerddaniel Farmhouse
Llanaber
Barmouth
Gwynedd
LL42 1RR

Telephone 01341 280611

Looking for John Ryder (Rider) based at Menden 1950

The following e-mail was received from Kay Kempers

I am writing on behalf of a German friend of mine who would like to trace a soldier by the name of John Ryder (or possibly Rider) posted in Menden in 1950, at which time the 22nd LAA was there.

My uncle, himself a retired serviceman suggested that your organisation would be the best place to try

Maybe one of your members can give us some further information, and help would

be greatly appreciated.

Many Thanks,
Kay Kempers

If you have any information please contact Mike Hall on 01483 858 794 or e-mail mike@hall220.demon.co.uk

Wanted - Tales from Borneo

During the tour of Borneo there was a detachment on the border issued with Mortars. Were you in that detachment?

42 Battery were also near the border but issued with searchlights to provide artificial daylight by bouncing the light off of clouds at night. Were you there?

If so, let me know the full story, who was with you? What did you do? Where were you? No names mentioned unless you say so.

Firepower Museum

If you get the chance, visit the Firepower Museum, now completed, it is the place every gunner should visit, if you can't get to Woolwich, then visit the museum on line at <http://www.firepower.org.uk>.

The museum needs your support, so consider becoming a friend, it will only cost you £12.50 per year and will help keep the Gunner museum going.

Gunner Magazine

While pushing things 'Gunner' why not visit the Gunner Magazine, this is online at <http://www.gunnermag.pwp.Blueyonder.co.uk>

Subscription to the magazine is a paltry £15.00 per year. (A hint to your nearest and dearest) This makes an ideal present, a reminder of your affection delivered to your door every month.

Because There is nothing to fill this space I have dug the following from the depths of my computer, you only have yourselves to blame.....Send in some stories, or the next newsletter will be one page of news and five of terrible jokes.

Abort, Retry, Ignore?

-- by Anonymous

A poem based on Edgar Allen Poe's "The Raven"

**Once upon a midnight dreary, fingers cramped and vision leery,
System manuals piled high and wasted paper on the floor,
Longing for the warmth of bed sheets,
still I sat there doing spreadsheets.**

**Having reached the bottom line I took a floppy from the drawer
I then invoked the SAVE command and waited for the disk to store,
Only this and nothing more.**

**Deep into the monitor peering, long I sat there wond'ring, fearing.
Doubting, while the disk kept churning, turning yet to churn some more.
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token.
"Save!" I cried, "You cursed mother! Save my data from before!"
One thing did the phosphors answer, only this and nothing more,
Just: "Abort, Retry, Ignore?"**

**Was this some occult illusion, some maniacal intrusion?
These were choices undesired, ones I'd never faced before.
Carefully I weighed the choices as the disk made impish noises.
The cursor flashed, insistent, waiting, baiting me to type some more.
Clearly I must press a key, choosing one and nothing more,
From this: "Abort, Retry, Ignore?"**

**With fingers pale and trembling, slowly toward the keyboard bending,
Longing for a happy ending, hoping all would be restored,
Praying for some guarantee, timidly, I pressed a key.
But on the screen there still persisted words appearing as before.
Ghastly grim they blinked and taunted, haunted, as my patience wore,
Saying, "Abort, Retry, Ignore?"**

I tried to catch the chips off guard, and pressed again, but twice as hard.

**I pleaded with the cursed machine: I begged and cried and then I swore.
Now in mighty desperation, trying random combinations,
Still there came the incantation, just as senseless as before.
Cursor blinking, angrily winking, blinking nonsense as before.
Reading, "Abort, Retry, Ignore?"**

**There I sat, distraught, exhausted, by my own machine accosted.
Getting up I turned away and paced across the office floor.
And then I saw a dreadful sight: a lightning bolt cut through the night.
A gasp of horror overtook me, shook me to my very core.
The lightning zapped my previous data, lost and gone forevermore.
Not even, "Abort, Retry, Ignore?"**

**To this day I do not know the place to which lost data go.
What demonic nether world is wrought where lost data will be stored,
Beyond the reach of mortal souls, beyond the ether, into black holes?
But sure as there's C, Pascal, Lotus, Ashton-Tate and more,
You will one day be left to wander, lost on some Plutonium shore,
Pleading, "Abort, Retry, Ignore?"**