

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION



**NEWSLETTER
2011**

FOREWORD BY BRIGADIER N F WOOD DL, CHAIRMAN RSA

All too often I seem to start this Foreword by saying that we are living in challenging times, and this year is no exception. The full effects of last year's Strategic Defence and Security Review have yet to be announced, but they are almost bound to have a marked impact on the Corps. Then from an individual point of view, we are all going to be feeling the pinch with increases in costs due to inflation and the recent VAT rise. It is with some relief, therefore, that I am able to reassure you that the Corps' Benevolent Fund is in a strong financial position and well placed to support the many calls for benevolence that RHQ receives every month.



Last year saw the departure of Brigadier Ted Flint as Signal Officer in Chief, and I am sure you will all wish to join me in thanking Brigadier Ted and his wife, Gillian, for their sterling support of the Association over the past 3 years or so. Brigadier Tim Watts (photo left) took over from Brigadier Ted last September and I know that you will make him and his wife, Claire, warmly welcome at a variety of Association activities.

I haven't been able to take part in as many events over the past year as I would have liked, and I was very sorry to miss the Reunion. One memorable event that I did get to in early December was the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, accompanied by the Corps Band, which the North West Area of the Association had arranged in Liverpool Cathedral on 3 December. It was a really splendid event, with some

200 in the congregation, and I congratulate Colonel Ian Thompson and his team for an excellent event, which they plan to repeat on 7 December 2011 – get there if you can!

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your support and hospitality over the past year, which has been a difficult one for me personally. I am "back in circulation" again now, and very much hope to be able to get around to some of the Branches that I haven't had the opportunity to meet yet.

* * *

Front cover: Taken at the RSA reunion on 19 June, our Colonel in Chief arriving to officially open Blandford Garrison Church as the new Corps Chapel. On the left is Keith Bates (standard bearer Rotherham Branch) and on the right is Dan Millan (Sale Branch). On the left of HRH is Garrison Commander Brig T J P Watts OBE ADC (before he became SOinC(A)) and behind him is Lt Gen R Baxter CBE (Master of Signals). At the very back you may just make out Col Terry Canham (General Secretary RSA).

* * *

ADMIN OFFICER'S REPORT

RHQ News. In August we said farewell to the Corps Webmaster, WO2 (FofS) Andy Soward as he retired from the Army. Andy was a good friend to the RSA over the past few years ensuring that our website (and those of our branches) was up there with the best. Andy also created a really useful link between the databases of the RSA, RSI, Welfare, WIRE and Accounts Office thus enabling us to share data within the HQ. In Andy's place we welcomed WO2 Dave Sawyers. In January 2011 Alan Wilkinson retired after 23 years service as the Corps Accountant, looking after the Corps Funds and investments. We welcomed the WIRE Office back to Griffin House after their one year stay in the SOinC(A)'s building on the other side of Blandford Camp. During the year Lt Col (Retd) Alan Wallace retired as Editor of the WIRE magazine, handing over to Maj (Retd) Keith Pritchard before heading off to live in France. Our congratulations to WO1 Mick Yendell (RSM 11 Sig Regt) on his selection for commissioning. Those of you who attended recent reunions at Blandford will know what a good friend Mick has been to the RSA over the years. We wish him well on his first tour as an officer (no doubt as Families Officer

somewhere?). Brig T J P Watts OBE ADC took over from Brig Ted Flint as SOinC(A) and WO1 Anthony McBean took over as Corps RSM from WO1 Dave Taylor.

Branch News

Sadly the **Bournemouth Branch** was forced to close due to lack of sufficient membership. Some of their members accepted the invitation to join the **Poole Branch**. Our thanks go to Harry Hawke for keeping the Bournemouth Branch going for so long. On the brighter side, the **36 Sig Regt (V)** Assn had their inaugural meeting in September and anyone who served with the regiment is welcome to become a member. The **14 Sig Regt (EW)** Assn continues to thrive and anyone wishing to join should contact Maj (Retd) Rollo Rumford on: 01905-726967. The former Sgt Neil Cole is currently trying to form an association for the numerous ex Corps members presently working in Riyadh. Our 67 branches and 28 affiliated assns provide valuable support to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund through regular donations. During 2010 the total donations from branch and affiliated assns was £5815.59. This amount, when used by the Welfare Committee, helped provide much needed assistance to those less fortunate present and former Corps members.

For your interest, here is a 'flavour' of branch/assn activities during the year - 17 members of the **Eastbourne Branch** visited Bletchley Park for a "Y" reunion in September. The **Darlington Branch** (complete with standard) and **Catterick Branch** turned out to support the Freedom of Richmond and Medal Parade in October, when 204 Sig Sqn received their medals for the Afghanistan campaign. John Robson (Chair) and Steve Bland (Secretary) from **56 Div Sigs Assn** joined members of the **West London Branch**, **South London Branch** and our In-Pensioners at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, to take part in the "Governor's Parade" in September. The salute was taken by Maj Ron (Dusty) Miller TD: a former SSM of 83 Sqn.



The **Birmingham Branch** enjoyed a good day supporting 19 Sig Regt Association at National Memorial Arboretum for their tree dedication and the rededication of the Indian Signals Association tree. All 3 Standard Bearers shown in the photo are from the Birmingham Branch: Tony Holmes (B'ham std), John Horne (Air Formation Sigs Assn std) and George Hedge with the Indian Signals Association std. Pat Soward, Tom Bewsey OBE and Charles Little MBE laid wreaths. Tom Bewsey was Chairman of the now defunct Indian Signals Assn of Gt Britain and his wreath was for all ranks lost in Burma in WW2.

The Aldershot Branch enjoyed a visit to Hever Castle and the Kneller Hall concert, whilst continuing with its popular quiz nights. The Guernsey Branch held its Traditional Liberation Day dinner in May, to which yours truly was kindly invited. My thanks again to Eric le Quesne and Alec and Sheila Forty for showing me around their lovely island.

Birgelen Veterans Assn. The BVA helped a young German boy (in the vicinity of the former 13 Sig Regt) who suffers from Cystic Fibrosis. When payments cease this year, the BVA will have donated some £19K. A charity walk along the Liverpool-Leeds canal was organised by Tom McMahon in June. This raised £5,452.00 which was split between the MacMillan Cancer Care and their own charity. In September the BVA celebrated its 10th anniversary with another very successful reunion held in Torquay.

56 Div Sigs OCA. 2010 saw the demise of 31 (City of London) Sig Regt (V) with which the OCA had close association through 83 Sqn based at Southfields. The Sqn has been reduced to 831 Tp as part of 47 Sig Sqn, but the link with the OCA remains and membership is pretty constant at around 110. Their annual Ladies night was held in Eastbourne when the Guest of Honour was Lt Col Dick Thwaites, an ex CO of 31 Sig Regt (V) and now President of the Eastbourne Branch.

Col Terry Canham was Guest of Honour at their annual dinner held in the Union Jack Club in November.

Being a member of a branch is not a 24/7 affair and your local branch would be very pleased to see you no matter how many of their activities you could manage to attend. Wives and partners are also made most welcome by branches. Most branches have their contact details on the RSA website, but they are also available from Assn HQ.

RSA Area 2 Carol Service (a report by David Barnes)

On the afternoon of Friday 3 December, a Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, organised by the RSA Area 2 (NW) was held in the beautiful setting of Liverpool Cathedral. The Organising Committee consisted of President, Col Ian Thomson (Area 2 Representative), Chairman and event organiser David Barnes, Padre Chris Quine, Treasurer Royston Mallabone and Cathedral co-ordinator James Johnson, all of the Southport Branch, with Daniel Millan and Kane Gunter of the Sale Branch. The event was organised primarily to provide members with an opportunity to attend a Christmas Carol Service to complement the Corps Carol Service held in London during December, which owing to travel and overnight accommodation costs as well as physical limitations due to age and infirmity, most are not able to attend. It was also intended to donate as much money as possible to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund and other service charities.

Our Guest of Honour was The Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside, Dame Lorna Muirhead DBE, other honoured guests were the Chairman of the Royal Signals Association Brigadier Nigel Wood and the Mayor and Mayoress of West Lancashire District Council John and Jill Baldock, Area 2 members of The Royal Signals Association from as far afield as the Birmingham and Shropshire Branches, Veterans of other Regiments, Corps, Services, and Members of the Liverpool Community - all 300 plus of them who attended, despite the freezing weather conditions. Our sympathies are extended to Major General Tony Boyle and The Rev Peter Clemett (Hon Padre to the RSA) who were snowed in and couldn't join us.

The Band of the Royal Corps of Signals led by the Director of Music Captain David Barringer and the Bandmaster WO1 Claire Milgate battled through from Blandford to provide the Music in superb style more than ably assisted by the St Nicholas Singers led by Stuart Keen and, the lovely singer Emma James who gave a show-stopping rendition of 'You'll Never Walk Alone', there were not many dry eyes in the congregation after that! Individually they were superb but, combined, it was a 'once in a lifetime' experience which resulted in a well deserved and prolonged standing ovation at the end. Liverpool rarely gets snow but we were blessed with a powder coating on the day, which added to the atmosphere and the occasion.



The Service was followed by a well attended reception of coffee and mince pies in the Weston Room of the Cathedral for RSA members and their guests. In the evening a Buffet and Cabaret was held at The Prince of Wales Hotel in Southport where members were entertained by Emma James who followed her afternoon performance in the Cathedral with a splendid variety of songs. On the Saturday evening, Southport Branch kindly invited those who were staying the weekend to join them at their Annual Dinner which also featured the Band of the Royal Corps of Signals, and the one hundred

and two members and guests enjoyed a most wonderful evening.

Finally this report cannot end without acknowledging the help given by Canon Myles Davies, Canon Precentor of Liverpool Cathedral, Steve Brisk of Liverpool Branch and Fraser Gordon of Southport Branch, the very well turned out young members of the Merseyside Army Cadet Force

who provided the necessary support functions such as, escorts to the VIP's, ticket collectors and camera assistants. They were a credit to their Unit and a fine example of their generation.

It was an event that the project team feel has a future and it is intended that another event be run next year, so watch this space. A donation page will be set up so that we can start fund raising to pay for the next event. In the meantime visit our website www.area2rsa.co.uk and sign our guest book.

Retired Officers List

After much delay, the latest edition of the Retired Officers List (RO List) should be produced soon. The delay was due to the General Secretary being obliged to write to all those in the last issue (2007) asking for permission to include their personal details in the list. All of those who returned the slip giving their consent should be included in the List and be sent a copy. If you are a retired officer and do not receive a copy, there could be several reasons:

- a. Your permission slip was not received by RHQ R Signals.
- b. You are not contributing to Corps Funds and therefore are not entitled to receive the List.
- c. We no longer hold your current address.
- d. You are not interested.

For the minimum annual contribution of £25.00 to Corps Funds, ROs are entitled to receive the following publications; the six issues of the WIRE, the RSI Journal, the RO List, plus a 50% discount of the cost to attend any of the annual Corps Luncheons/Dinners (Blandford, London, Catterick, Glasgow). Any retired officer wishing to take advantage of this should contact the Assistant Accountant on 01258-482087.

Membership News. During the year 651 new Life Members were enrolled (plus 660 soldiers starting their trade trg at Blandford). Membership of the RSA now stands at around 17,000. (These are members with known addresses – there are many thousands more, for whom we sadly have no contact details). The Chairman RSA continues to write to all soldiers as they leave the Corps, inviting them to become Life Members. Around 40 soldiers leave each month with the uptake of membership at around 15%. We understand that, at that point in their life, they have greater priorities (job, school, house etc) but we hope that they retain the RSA details and perhaps 'come back to the Corps family' later on when things are more settled.

Corps Memorial Book. A proposal for a Royal Signals on-line Memorial Book for deceased Corps members has been agreed and will be trialed for a three year period starting in January 2011. The Memorial Book is linked from the Royal Signals Association's 'Home page'; www.royalsignalsassociation.co.uk and again from its "Last Post" page. A link to a dedicated page for each individual can be created from the list of deceased members. On this dedicated page, friends and relations will be welcome to add tributes (plus a photograph if they wish). Although there is no charge for any entry, there will be the facility to make a donation to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund in memory of a loved one or former friend. All such donations will be gratefully received and will be used specifically in providing welfare assistance to those less fortunate present and former members of the Corps and their families who require our help. Initially there will be an entry only in respect of those who passed away in 2010, however friends and relations are welcome to add a name whenever they wish. Regimental Headquarters will act as 'Moderator' to oversee accuracy and to eliminate any abuse or disrespect.

Corps Memorial. There are plans to increase, by up to 3 metres, the area of the stone paving that surrounds the Corps Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas. This should enhance the look and, hopefully help reduce the problem of rutting in the nearby ground caused by maintenance vehicles. Capt Tom Lappin (QM 37 Sig Regt (V)) has kindly offered to work as Project Manager and to take in and re-varnish the various 'Royal Signals' benches sited around the Memorial. We are hopeful that the work will be completed by Spring 2011.

Cenotaph Parade, Whitehall. Our thanks go to Jim Gwinnell for acting as 'right marker' for the Corps contingent at the Cenotaph Parade at Whitehall on 11 November. Several members who had been issued with tickets were unable to attend, but the following did fall in on Jim on Horse Guards Parade; Dave Hardy, Duncan Kennerson, Julie Silver, Andy Motteram, Les Wood, Bob Cherrie, Stephen Hickman, Peter Charles, Gordon Hickson, Doug Anderson, Bob Cranmer, Derek Thorps and Len Jeffery. Sadly this year the BBC chose not to show our group as they passed. Watching the TV, I did notice several 'Jimmies' within other groups. Our photo shows the group at Horse Guards Parade.



Field of Remembrance. Around 25 members gathered around the Corps plot at Westminster Abbey to see the Duke of Edinburgh open the Field of Remembrance. Bill Barnard (West London Branch) was given the honour of fronting the plot and meet HRH. A last minute decision by the organizers to make it an 'all ticket' event, caused some distress to several members of other Regts/Corps who were denied access through having no such ticket. Fortunately I was able to place myself outside and issue tickets to our members. Those wishing to attend this year should ensure that they give their name, address and RSA LM number to Assn HQ, in order that a ticket can be sent.

Postings. If you haven't done so already, may I invite you to send in the details of your postings whilst with the Corps? This service has proven very useful when it comes to tracing former friends. All we need are the unit titles and the from..... to..... years at each. (the relevant sqn, tp, or appt would also be useful). Once your details are registered on the RSA database, I can send you the list of those RSA members who served in your units around the same time. Following on from that, I would be pleased to help you get in touch with any familiar names on the lists.

Donations in 2010. In addition to the previously mentioned £5815 donations by RSA branches to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund, donations from individuals amounted to £18175. A further £8349 was donated by units and £835 was received through remittance for Life Membership of the RSA. For interest, donations received through the RSA on-line "Just Giving" page amounted to £1817 and sales of Corps wristbands came to £3247.

* * *

WELFARE REPORT

2010 has been a difficult year for many what with biting austerity measures, rising utility prices and job uncertainty to name but a few worries. I'm sure we could all do with some good news to cheer us up so hopefully the new year will bring more hope and optimism than we have had lately.

Although we saw a reduction in applications during the middle of 2010 we are now noticing a rise again over the Xmas period and into January. All applications are judged on their merits but in all cases the question of *need* is the most significant factor. Timing is a very important factor when dealing with cases of need as we endeavour to deal with applications as quickly as possible. It is amazing how one grant at the right time can really make a difference to the quality of someone's life and their future. Grants are not made to individuals direct but through the sponsoring welfare organisation.

We rely heavily on the casework carried out by SSAFA Forces Help and the Royal British Legion to provide all the relevant information upon which decisions can be made. If necessary we liaise with the Army Benevolent Fund – The Soldiers Charity, The Officers' Association, the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League, Combat Stress, Veterans Agency and many more.

The photo below shows a recent Major Grants Meeting at which the applications requiring assistance over £601 up to the maximum of £1,200 are considered. The Major Grants (MG) meetings take place once a month. Each meeting is attended by me (Linda) the Welfare Secretary, a retired Officer, a serving Field Officer and an NCO. On this occasion they were Lt Col Andrew Symmons, Maj Ally Lawson and L/Cpl Christopher Bunn. The Retired Officer is selected from a list of nine volunteer Chairmen who kindly give up their time once or twice a year to lead a meeting. The Field Officer is selected from within HQ SOinC(A) so as there is a limited number to nominate we are often lucky to see the same officer attend more than once during their posting at Blandford Camp. Each attendee has the task of considering the applications and deciding the level of assistance they feel appropriate.



From left to right:
Welfare Secretary: Mrs Linda Sizeland,
Chairman: Lt Col Andrew Symmons,
Maj Ally Lawson and LCpl Christopher Bunn

We usually have an average of 12 cases per meeting although it has been known to reach over 20 in busier periods. Our average spend (using the figures from January 2007 – December 2009) is £11,776 per meeting.

All other cases for £600 and below are considered on a daily basis by our Assistant Regimental Secretary; Major Ian Greig. Over the past twelve months the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund (regular and major grants) provided £340,621 of assistance to 681 applicants. These grants have been instrumental in providing 72 Electric Scooters, 15 stair lifts and 17 level access showers. There are numerous other types of assistance requested such as help with priority bills (rent or utilities), clothing, emergency house repairs etc.



Assistant Regimental Secretary
Major Ian Greig authorising a grant.

The numerous thank you cards and letters are always a pleasure to receive and below are just a couple of extracts from the messages of appreciation received.

From a Gentleman of 88 who served during the war:

'I can't think of words enough to say my thanks for your very generous help. You have contributed towards my well being in later life. I joined the Royal Signals in 1942; I am a member of the Association and attend the meetings regularly. I am getting, due to your help, up and down the stairs of my home. Thank you.'

The daughter of a Gentleman assisted with the purchase of an electric wheelchair:

'I am writing to thank you for the generous donation you made towards an EPV for my father. It has meant so much to him and given him a new lease of life. He can now go out and about daily as well as going in to town. He has regained his Dunkirk spirit, which is wonderful to see.'

In addition we were privileged to assist with the purchase of EPVs and stairlifts to maximise the independence and quality of life of the following:



Mrs Sandra Bean



Margaret and Peter Howells



Mr Brian Leaver



Mr Terence Jones



Mr Sydney Edge



Mr Donald Grindrod



Mr Horace Warrilow

You may well remember one of our Chairmen, Lt Col Ian Hamilton, who following 35 years service with the Royal Corps of Signals held the post of Assistant Regimental Secretary from 1995 until 2002. Unfortunately for us after an eye-watering 43 years supporting the Corps Col Ian has reluctantly decided to retire from our Board of Chairmen. On behalf of all our members and all here at RHQ I would like to take this opportunity to thank him and wish him the very best with much gratitude and sincere affection.

* * *

RSA AWARDS

The following well deserved awards were approved during 2010:

Honour Membership (For outstanding service to the RSA over many years)

Mr Fred Bridges (Aldershot Branch)
Mr Ron Simmons (Sheffield Branch)
Mr Richard Green (Norfolk Branch)
Mr Roy Gorringe (Bedford Branch)
Mr Fred Patman (Lincoln Branch)
Maj Ray Vasper (Newark Branch)

Mr Brian Carroll (East London Branch)
Mr Frank Mortlock (Norfolk Branch)
Mr Robert Major (Bedford Branch)
Mrs Jean Wenman (Bedford Branch)
Mr Peter Hardaker (Leeds Branch)

50 Year badge (In recognition of 50 years combined service: Regular, TA, NS and active support to a RSA branch).

Mr Bruce Graham (Harrogate Branch)
Mr Jim Meaney (Darlington Branch)
Mr Barry Robinson (Norfolk Branch)
Mr Bill Hickey (Berwick Branch)
The late Mr Roy Platten (Bath Branch)
Lt Col RG Vale (Bath Branch)

Mr Brian Jolley (Darlington Branch)
Maj Frank Partington (Aldershot Branch)
Mr David Bailey (Middlesborough Branch)
Maj Richard Offord MBE (Salisbury Branch)
Mr John McCann (Hull Branch)

Associate Life Membership (Awarded to those who did not serve in the Corps, but give outstanding support to a branch).

Mrs Betty Mellor (Huddersfield Branch)

Mrs Lesley Banyard (Loughborough Branch)

* * *

REPORT ON THE 2010 RSA REUNION

Just over 800 members and their guests attended the 2010 RSA reunion. This figure was up on 2009 and justified the bringing forward of the date by one week in order to avoid clashing with the 'Armed Forces Day' celebrations around the country.

The display of the current BOWMAN and FALCON equipment was on show by 0900 hrs, along with another splendid gathering of old civilian and military vehicles. Terry Inman had once again arranged for members of the Christchurch Cruiser Club to bring along their shining and colourful Harley-Davidsons, Kawasakis and various other big bikes. Tony Helm also brought along his collection of comms equipment used in the "Cold War". The indoor range was again opened for RSA members to have a shoot with the SA80 rifle. The Museum and shop opened early and did a brisk business throughout the day. The local Pimpernel Beagle Pack was also on show and gave a demonstration of scent trail following.

Members booked in at "Reception", which was this year manned by LCpl Dan Pearson (3 Sqn 11 Sig Regt) and 10 soldiers from Battleaxe Tp, who had only that very week arrived at Blandford following their basic trg. At Reception, members collected their meal tickets, programme and souvenir lapel badge. The RSA Admin Officer's database was on hand so that WO2 (FofS) Andy Soward (Corps Webmaster) could help members check out names of others who served in their units around the same time. Mrs Linda Sizeland (Welfare Secretary) was in Reception and enjoyed answering questions on how the RSA can provide assistance to those in need.

This year we were fortunate to have our Colonel in Chief to inspect those on Parade for the "Princess Royal Day Parade" on Hawke Square. All the hours of training under the guidance of WO1 (RSM) Mick Yendell proved worthwhile as the soldiers put on a great display.

HRH attended the Garrison church for its rededication as the Corps Chapel. Following the service, groups of various individuals were presented to our Colonel in Chief, including 30 RSA members.

Around 500 members/guests took lunch in the Soldiers Restaurant, where the opportunity was taken by the veterans to engage the young soldiers in conversation.

The Corps Band started the afternoon arena display, which should have been followed by a performance by the Corps Free Fall Parachute Team. However the strong wind prevented them from jumping. After their absence last year, it was good to welcome back the "White Helmets", who gave their usual highly skilled and thrilling display of jumping and tricks. With the Corps RSM involved in the SOinC(A)'s charity cycle ride, WO1 (RSM) Mick Yendell kindly stood in to run the traditional standard bearers' competition. Aably assisted by WO2 (SSM) Ash Doe and his wife Christine (a standard bearer herself), plus Barry Moody, the judges took the competitors through their drill movements. The Master of Signals presented John Mumford (Reading Branch) with the winner's cup. Runner up was Bill McNamara from our Glasgow Branch. The other finalists were; Norman Pearce (West London), Brian Calladine (East Kent), Daniel Millan (Sale) and Keith Bates (Rotherham).

Terry Inman produced an interesting drive past and commentary from the Christchurch Cruiser Club, followed by a drive past by a selection of the old vehicles. The Master presented Len Melling with an engraved silver salver to commemorate his retirement from arranging the old vehicle display after 15 years of service to the RSA.

The Corps Pipes and Drums joined the Corps Band to lead the sunset ceremony which concluded the afternoon events.

In the evening, RSM Yendell opened up the Sgts Mess to all retired members of the Corps. For many this was the highlight of the weekend and many old acquaintances were renewed and lots of new friendships made.

A Drumhead Service was held on Hawke Square at 1030 hrs on the Sunday, with the RSA Hon Chaplain the Rev Peter Clemett and Garrison Padre the Rev David Barrett conducting the service. The address was given by the Venerable Stephen Robbins, Chaplain-General Her Majesty's Land Forces. Col Terry Canham (General Secretary) and the Master of Signals read the lessons. During the first hymn, branch standards were 'laid up' and the standard of the "Despatch Riders Club" was dedicated. WO1 (RSM) Mick Yendell again stood in for the Corps RSM to lead the 'Act of Remembrance'. Mr David Walker BEM turned a page in the Korean War Book of Remembrance. The collection raised £581.00 for the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund.

The March Past, which ended the whole weekend's activities, was led by a group of our members who were veterans of the Korean War.

Our thanks to all who supported the reunion; members of 11 Sig Regt, Garrison staff and all RSA members, many of whom had travelled a fair distance to attend.

* * *



**A REPORT ON THE SERVING CORPS BY
WO1 (CORPS RSM) AP McBEAN
AS AT 10 JANUARY 2011**

2010 has been another extremely active year for the Corps, which saw our continued world wide support to operations, training, and development. Some outstanding results were achieved and we also maintained our sporting prowess at all levels.

The five Campaign Signal Regiments* are now fully established and have successfully started their operational cycle under the command of 11 Signal Brigade, which is working well.

We continue to maintain around 700 soldiers and officers on operations at any one time, with the majority of these continuing to support the defence effort in Afghanistan to stabilise and rebuild the area. At present providing support throughout theatre are 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron and elements of 3rd Divisional Headquarters and Signal Regiment who are presently carrying out relief in place with members of 2nd Signal Regiment. These continue to be permanently support by elements of 10th, 14th and 21st Signal Regiment (Air Support). The real time dangers facing all our serving Corps members have sadly recently been highlighted with LCpl Jason Jameson suffering serious injuries whilst providing close support to 11 EOD Regiment RLC resulting in the amputation of both legs at the knee and Cpl Steven Dunn who made the ultimate sacrifice when he was recently tragically killed whilst on patrol with the 2nd Battalion the Parachute Regiment.

Our specialist units continue to expand in strength and role. The past year has also seen the movement of both HQ 1 Signal Brigade and 252 Signal Squadron from JHQ in Germany to a new purpose built barracks in Innsworth. 102 Logistic Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron (262) has reduced in size to a troop and was renamed 102 Logistic Brigade Headquarters and Signal Troop (662). 11 Light Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron (261) completed an operational tour of Afghanistan and was then also reduced to a troop. A 200 plus contingent of 40th Signal Regiment (Volunteers) group carried out an extremely successful tour of the green line in Cyprus prior to the disbandment of the unit.

Our display teams were once again put through their paces prior to the Opening Show and then went on to have a demanding but very successful display season with the White Helmet's and Corps Band's being in particular demand. The Colonel in Chief continued to show her commitment to the Corps and was the reviewing officer for 11th (Royal School of Signals) Signal Regiment during the Princess Royal Day Parade, and also at the Army Foundation College Harrogate for the final Graduation Parade of Royal Signals soldiers at the college before their training was moved to

the Army Foundation College Winchester - breaking what has been over a 60 year link between the Corps and the College.

Corps Sports continues to go from strength to strength which has seen team and individual success at Inter Corps, Army, Combined Services and National levels. Sport and adventure training is still well supported at Regimental and Corps levels.

At Regimental level 11th Signal Regiment (Royal School of Signals), in particular, have done extremely well becoming Dorset League Champions for Football and being crowned Army Champions at netball, cross country, orienteering and hockey. Their highlight came following their Army Championship success at both male and female tug of war with a win at the prestigious Inter Service competition at the Braemaer Highland games which saw Cpl Proctor become the first ever female coach to receive the winning shield from Her Majesty the Queen. To complete the clean sweep 30th Signal Regiment also won the plate event.

At Corps level the Corps was crowned Inter Corps Champions at netball, squash, hockey, football, water polo and Tug of War. The previous SOinC(A) and Corps RSM along with the Regt Col and CO BGSU completed the gruelling John O Groats to Lands End bike ride incorporating farewell visits to many Corps units on the way.

At National level we have seen a successful Winter Olympic debut for Cpl Paula Walker, Maj Tim Woods for Veterans Hockey, Capt Marcus Speed, Lt Lucy Mason and Cpl Storey for Sports Parachuting.

Since moving into post in July 10 I have been constantly impressed by the staggering approach to training, development and operations by our soldiers and officers. I am extremely proud of the Corps present high standing within the Army, which continues to grow as the information revolution continues to fundamentally change military commander's approach of global conflict.

I look forward to seeing some of you at this year's AGM when the SOinC(A) and I will be able to give you a more in depth overview and field the many questions I am sure you will have.

Certa Cito.

Editor's Note:

* In 2009 Headquarters Land Forces gave the order to re-role 5 of our regiments as Campaign Signal Regiments (CSR): these are 1 Sig Regt, 2 Sig Regt, 3 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt and 21 Sig Regt. 11 Sig Bde is coordinating and controlling the preparation and deployment of all 5 regiments. The key idea is that each regiment will prepare for 2 years then deploy to Afghanistan, before returning to recuperate and start the cycle once again. 16 Sig Regt were the first of the Campaign Signal Regiments, deploying in February 2010. They were replaced by 2 Sig Regt who, in turn, are about to hand over to 3 Div Sig Regt.

* * *

FORECAST OF EVENTS FOR 2011

26 Mar	RSA AGM	London
10 May	Corps Dinner *	London
17-18 May	SOinC(A) Conference	Blandford
17 May	Corps Guest Night	Blandford
18 Jun	Col Comdts Dinner	Blandford
18-19 Jun	RSA Reunion	Blandford
19 Jun	Corps Luncheon*	Blandford
4 Sep	Corps Luncheon*	Catterick
14 Oct	Late Entry Conference & Dinner	Blandford

28 Oct	Scottish Dinner*	Glasgow
10 Nov	Opening of Field of Remembrance	Westminster Abbey
17 Nov	RSI Lecture & Dinner	London
7 Dec	RSA Area 2 Carol Service	Liverpool Cathedral
12 Dec	Corps Carol Service	London

* n.b. These events are for serving and retired officers.

* * *

THE WHITE HELMETS DISPLAY TEAM CALENDAR 2011

Confirmed shows to date are:

16 Apr	Opening show	Blandford Camp
1-3 Jun	Royal Bath Show	Bath
4-8 Jun	IOM Show	Isle of Man
10-12 Jun	South of England Show	Sussex
22-28 Jun	Netherlands Show	Netherlands
2-3 Jul	Cotswolds Show	Cotswolds
16 Jul	Thunderbird Show	Stafford
17 Jul	90 th RBL Show	Stafford
30 Jul	Roxborough Show	Roxborough
31 Jul-1 Aug	Turriff Show	Aberdeen
10 Aug	Glamorgan Show	Glamorgan
31 Aug-4 Sep	Great Dorset Steam Fair	Blandford

* * *

CORPS BAND ENGAGEMENTS FOR 2011

20 Mar	Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch	Concert
6-11 Jul	Rind Riding Fest, Denmark	Marching Band
11-13 Aug tbc	Shrewsbury Flower Show	Concert
16 Aug	Fowey Regatta	
17 Aug	Weymouth Carnival	Marching Band
18 Aug tbc	Chagford, Devon	Concert
25 Aug	Southampton	Concert
26 Aug	Swanage, Dorset	Concert
4 Sep	Liskeard, Cornwall	Marching Band
5 Sep	Plymouth	Concert
7 Dec	Liverpool Cathedral	Carol service
9 Dec	Shaftesbury, Dorset	Concert
10 Dec	Tank Museum, Bovington	Concert
16 Dec	Blandford	Concert

* * *

NOTICES

The **Royal Signals Museum** is planning to introduce two new displays depicting the role of the Corps during peace keeping operations in the Balkans and during the second Gulf War. They would like to hear from anyone who served during these campaigns with interesting personal stories and anecdotes of their experiences. In addition any material - photographs, artifacts or equipment which may be relevant would be gratefully received. They would particularly like to hear from anyone who was involved in these operations and who would be willing to help with the

project management or construction of these new displays. Contact Museum Director Mr Nick Kendall-Carpenter on: 01258-482267 or at: MuseumDirector@royalsignals.mod.uk

Tony Hull would like to hear from anyone who remembers or has any info on the ventriloquist Dick Calkin. Dick served in the Corps 1939 to 1945 and arranged an Army show known as "The Signal Lights of variety", which entertained thousands of troops and broadcast for the "Ack Ack Beer Beer" shows. Contact Tony on: 01202-770261.

The next **Beverley Ex-Boys** reunion will be held in Daventry, Northants on 16-17 September 2011. Full details from Tony Hull on: 01202-770 261.

The **260 Sig Sqn** reunion for 2011 will be held in Dortmund (Germany) over the weekend 6 – 9 May. Anyone wishing for more info, please contact Geoff Scott, 2 Waverley Rd, Elland, W Yorks HX5 0NL. Bandgscott233@blueyonder.co.uk

Anyone interested in joining the newly formed "**58 Sig Sqn (V) Assn**" should contact Mrs Gill Heesom, Memberssecretary@58signalsquadronassociation.co.uk, with their details, or they can send information to Andrew Elson, TA Centre, Liverpool Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs ST5 9ED or Propertymanager@58signalsquadronassociation.co.uk.

Army Sports. Army veterans are welcome into the 42 Army Sports Clubs. Full details at: www.army.mod.uk/events/sport/1048.aspx Or call the Chief Clerk for the Army Sports Control Board on: 01252-348569.

Accn in York. Any members planning a trip to the York area might like to know that our member Bob Cook owns a small hotel in the city. Bob would be pleased to offer a discount to any member showing his/her RSA LM card. His website is at: www.adamshouseyork.co.uk Tel: 01904-655413.

Forgotten Pensions. Veterans who served since 1975 and did not qualify for an immediate pension, may be entitled to a Preserved Pension. Prior to 6 April 1975 there was no provision for a preservation of pension benefits and service personnel who left had to have completed 16 years from age 21 (Ofprs) or 22 years from age 18 (ORs) to be eligible for a pension. Those who left before that date, without completing the above criteria, had no pension entitlement unless they were medically retired. The rules changed on 6 April 1975 for pensions to be preserved for payment at age 60 for all those discharged over the age of 26 with a minimum of 5 years service. On 6 April 1988, the qualifying period was reduced from 5 to 2 years and the age criterion was dropped in 1978. Preserved pensions have to be claimed at age 60 or at age 65 if service began after 5 April 2006. Preserved Pensions may be paid early, subject to consideration by the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA), if a veteran has become permanently unable to work full-time, in any capacity, through ill-health, and this condition will continue until preserved pension age. For more info on preserved pensions visit; www.veterans-uk.info To find out if you are entitled to a pension call the JAPC on 0141 224 3600 or e-mail: JPAC@spva.mod.uk

Although the **Air Formation Signals Assn** is recognized as 21 Sig Regt's Old Comrades Assn (OCA), membership is open to all who served in any Air Fmn or Air Support Signal Unit at any time. POC is Dennis Egan on: 02920-512959.

RSA car stickers. The RSA car sticker can be obtained by sending a SAE with a 50p coin (for UK addresses) to Assn HQ. It is in colour, with 'Jimmy' in the centre.

229 Signal Squadron.

Mervyn Finch (RSA member) was commissioned by the last OC of the sqn to paint a collage (oil on canvas) depicting the sqn's activities and key sites within Berlin during their tenure in the city. He also ordered a limited edition print run which were signed and numbered by the artist. Part of the print process was for the artist to vet the quality of the prints with the printer. As a result, a number (20) of these artists proofs are still in the possession of the artist and have been for some

considerable time. It is felt that it is about time someone else benefited from these rather than being left lying on a shelf. The paintings will be signed and annotated "Artists proof copy # of twenty - Not the limited edition version" to differentiate them from the original batch.

See an image, of the original painting at <http://www.mervynfinch.com/Military-Gallery.htm>

The prints are 20" x 28" and will be despatched in a cardboard tube. Cost per print is C\$82.0 or equivalent to £50.00 which includes postage. To speed up the process and guarantee your copy it is recommended that you order and pay via PayPal: <http://www.mervynfinch.com/FORMgallery1.htm> Go to the bottom of the page to see the print thumbnail. Ensure you enter your postal address when paying. An indication that the prints have all been sold will be when the ordering/paying ability on this page is removed. Alternatively, you can contact Mervyn to reserve a print via email at: merv@mervynfinch.com, but this will be slower and not guarantee a purchase until a cheque is received or a cash transfer has occurred.

* * *

LAST POST

Our respects are paid to the following RSA Members who passed away in 2010:

Rank and name	Service	Rank and name	Service
Maj P C Akass	1938-48	Sgt K N Anderson	1972-89
Lt K G S Adams	1939-46	Cpl J P C Arundel	1983-94
Cpl R F Andrews	1951-76	Maj P Ashlin	1943-77
Sig D J Archer	1966-72	Maj J W Ankers	1952-87
Maj D M Allison-Green	1990-08	Capt D S Allen	1938-46
Sgt H A L Buxton	1948-69	Sig J R Broomfield	1945-48
Sig J D Bridge	1951-81	Maj J C Bradbury-Williams	1946-59
Cpl M G Biglin	1964-88	Lt Col T Bennett	1933-69
Lt Col P R Baron	1965-02	Cpl L G Barfoot	1939-46
LCpl E R Budd	1936-40	Cpl F J Burnett	1972-81
Col S W Brackenbury MBE	1937-74	Lt Col R C Boulter	1967-93
Maj Gen PEM Bradley CB CBE DSO	1934-70	Sgt J V Birchby	1949-58
Sig J Blake	1946-47	Sig G A Blake	1946-48
WO2 B G Banyard	1946-71	Sgt J G Butler	1961-85
Cpl R W Brown	1945-48	Sig J F Baxter	1942-46
Capt A J Bailey	1943-73	WO1 A L Coleman	1949-73
Sig R E Cains	1945-48	Capt E J Clover	1985-95
Sig H A Carter	1959-61	Cpl C E Chambers	1941-46
WO1 N J Cawthra	1970-92	Sig T J Corbett	1954-57
SSgt W Cameron	1937-60	Sig J A Cooper	1953-60
Maj S I Cassanet	1967-86	Maj J P Durrant	1949-68
LCpl J B Davis	1951-55	SSgt C W Deadman	1970-90
Sgt W G Doyle	1949-61	LCpl J B Davies	1953-56
Cpl M G Devin	1958-79	Maj J Daw BEM	1938-74
Capt V L R Dugdale	1939-49	Sig L Earl	1957-59
Cpl M Evans	1943-47	Sig T G Edgley	1943-47
LCpl J Foley	1950-52	Cpl W L Fleming	1954-57
Sig R Fryer	1943-47	Sig D F Furnell	1944-47
Lt Col P H Flear OBE	1943-73	WO2 D Freeman	1947-71
Maj J Gatehouse	1941-47	WO2 J A Green	1945-71
Lt Col P F W Gahan MBE	1942-73	Cpl J A Glendinning	1941-46
Sig F G Hare	1939-46	Col R T Hone	1942-74
Sgt A J Howe	1969-74	Sig F Harvey	1940-46
Sgt A M Hamilton	1947-74	Sgt R J L Harries	1950-68

Rank and name	Service	Rank and name	Service
Sgt C O Hitchcock	1955-77	Capt K Headleand	1959-82
Maj M Ham	1939-79	Sig E D Harris	1939-46
Maj R D Hughes	1949-90	Sig J Hoffman	1943-47
Sig A Henshall	1939-46	Brig T G H Jackson OBE	1941-76
Col P T Innocent	1964-02	Cpl J P Kennelly	1970-79
Sgt J W Kerr	1938-46	SSgt R J Kelly	1961-84
Sgt K Kay	1950-60	Sig J T Lloyd	1940-46
Capt B T Lord	1939-70	Cpl R Larby	1950-52
Sig E M Locke	1942-46	Sgt C F Lander	1938-52
Lt Col I R Lidstone	1951-89	Sig J E Lane	1939-45
SSgt A Lord	1939-46	Cpl L Lant	1962-84
Lt Col P McNaughton OBE	1943-83	Cpl L J Morris	1964-72
Sig R L Murkin	1949-51	WO2 C H Mercer	1943-75
Sgt A E McClean	1953-67	Sgt L Morris	1959-81
Sig D Mant	1960-66	SSgt B L McAndrew	1977-01
Sig R McCarthy	1951-56	LCpl F E Nairn	1948-53
Sig K Nuttall	1943-45	Sgt L O'Dell	1943-47
Cpl D Pickering	1938-47	Sgt E E Powell	1937-46
Lt E W Packham	1940-65	Maj R V Purkis	1945-87
Sgt E H Price	1949-57	Lt E Phillips	1949-68
Cpl V B Parker	1943-47	Sgt T A Poingdestre	1953-73
Cpl R J R Platten	1958-77	Sgt G J Rapley	1951-75
Capt A E Ranger	1939-46	LCpl E A Rowe	1938-46
Capt D E Roberts	1938-46	WO2 D W Richardson	1967-87
SSgt M S Ray	1962-79	WO2 F T Rawlings	1945-73
Sgt F J Rose	1945-49	Sig L Ross	1947-49
Cpl N Smedley	1950-55	Sig D Spark	1962-69
Sgt R J Sinnott	1961-76	Maj M Stears	1941-78
Sgt J W Salter	1971-93	Sig C Skingle	1942-46
Sig A G Shore	1932-47	Sgt D H Sloan	1963-77
Sig H Seddon	1971-74	Cpl A S Shevill	1939-46
SSgt R P Stokes	1956-83	Maj J W Sinclair	1938-77
WO2 F A Thomas	1940-67	Cpl D J Tyre	1946-48
Col K G Taylor	1938-67	LCpl B W Tomkinson	1951-55
Cpl W Unsworth	1950-74	Cpl S A Upsall	1988-95
Sig N D Warner	1955-57	Sgt F J White	1939-45
Sgt A M Wilcox	1961-75	Sig D Walker	1941-46
Sgt J J Wilkins	1940-46	WO1 K Webb	1953-78
Sig D J Warner	1945-48	Cpl B K Ward	1959-61
Maj A H Windrum	1940-48	Sig P M Wareing	1970-92
Capt H L Wardell	1940-46	Lt Col F P Walker	1935-71
LCpl S J Wallace	2000-09	Sig K B Woodford	1951-53
Sgt G S Wilkinson	1947-55	Sgt E W Whiffen	1951-76
Sgt L G Young	1981-?		

POSTAL ADDRESS

Every year many copies of our newsletter are "Return to sender - person moved away". If the postal address for you on the envelope containing this newsletter is incorrect in any detail, would you kindly inform us in order that we might amend our records. Likewise, if you are moving, we would appreciate your new address so that we can remain in touch with you. Please be assured that members' personal details are never divulged to unauthorized persons. If you received this by post and have an e-mail address, you might like to provide us with it in order that we can send you the newsletter and other items of interest by this means. Send the details to:

rsa@royalsignals.mod.uk

ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION CONTACTS

President:	Lieutenant General R Baxter CBE	
Chairman:	Brig N F Wood DL	c/o Assn HQ
General Secretary:	Col T W (Terry) Canham 01258-482081	E-mail: rhq@royalsignals.mod.uk
Assistant General Secretary:	Maj (Retd) I N (Ian) Greig 01258-482082	E-mail: rhq@royalsignals.mod.uk
Welfare Secretary:	Mrs Linda Sizeland 01258-482089	E-mail: welfare@royalsignals.mod.uk
Admin Officer: (Membership & Records)	Mr Peter Cuckow 01258-482090	E-mail: rsa@royalsignals.mod.uk
 <u>Other useful numbers:</u>		
Regimental Colonel:	Col D G Halstead 01258-485240	E-mail: rhq@royalsignals.mod.uk
Chief Clerk RHQ R SIGNALS: Clerks:	01258-482161 01258-482083	E-mail: rhq@royalsignals.mod.uk
Wire Editor:	01258-485248	E-mail: thewire@royalsignals.mod.uk
Asst Editor:	01258-485249	
Accounts:	01258-482087	E-mail: accounts@royalsignals.mod.uk
Royal Signals Institution (RSI):	01258-482647	E-mail: rsi@royalsignals.mod.uk
Museum Shop:	01258-482248	E-mail: info@royalsignalsmuseum.com
Museum Archives:	01258-482413	E-mail: info@royalsignalsmuseum.com
Corps Webmaster	WO2 Dave Sawyers 01258-482132	E-mail: webmaster@royalsignals.mod.uk