



MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY ASSOCIATION

President: Lt Col D J Grocott TD

Spring 2024 Newsletter

A Message from the Chairman

When the editor approaches me to write the introductory piece for the Newsletter, I am always surprised how quickly the past few months have passed by since the last edition was published.

The spring edition of the Newsletter traditionally sets out the calendar and events for the coming year, and this is no exception. But first, on behalf of the wider Committee may I send my regards to everyone and hope that this finds you and your families well.

The main event since the last Newsletter was Lafone Day in October and a report features later. More recently the Squadron exercised their Freedom of the Royal Borough of Chelsea and Kensington in March supported by the Band of the Coldstream Guards and there is a YouTube video of the event at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRg9mL_wLwA

Our President marked Watson Day, on 28th March 2024 and visited the memorial stone in Victoria Embankment Gardens, on the Association's behalf. I also visited the stone the week earlier and de-weeded the area around the stone. If you happen to be in the Westminster area and transiting to/from Parliament and Trafalgar Square, then it is a short detour to take in the memorial which lies between the MOD Main Building and the River.

Having mentioned Lafone Day please note that the event this year will take place on Saturday 19th October (and not the 26th as previously published). More details will appear later.

Our next two events are the AGM on Tuesday 7th May (1900 for 1930 Hrs) and The Cavalry Memorial Parade on Sunday 12th May and again details are set out later and have been sent directly by the Membership Secretary to everyone who has registered their email with the Association.

I hope to see you at the AGM, either in person or virtually, as we will be trying to stream the meeting as we did last year. If you cannot make it then I wish you and your families the very best and stay safe.

Colonel Paul Willmott OBE TD

Event Reports

Lafone Day

On Saturday 28th October 2023 we held our principal Regimental Act of Remembrance, known as Lafone Day after Maj Alexander Lafone VC, who was killed leading B Squadron, 1st County of London Yeomanry (Middlesex, Duke of Cambridge's Hussars) at Beersheba in 1917 together with 18 other Middlesex Yeomen, and who was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

A wreath was laid at the Regimental Memorial in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral, where the Last Post and Reveille were sounded by Alison Jackson from the Middlesex Yeomanry Concert Band.

Afterwards, members of the Association had an enjoyable lunch at a local restaurant. The cost was kept to an affordable level by an appropriate subsidy from Association funds.

31 (Middlesex Yeomanry and Princess Louise's Kensington) Signal Squadron Freedom Parade

On Saturday 9th March 31 (Middlesex Yeomanry & Princess Louise's Kensington) Signal Squadron exercised their Freedom of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. This was to commemorate the antecedent Regiments of the Squadron being given the Freedom of the Borough many years ago.

A Service of Thanksgiving was held in the Chapel of the Royal Hospital Chelsea followed by a parade through the streets of the Borough behind the Band of the Coldstream Guards. The Squadron was inspected by the Mayor, following which a reception was held in the Town Hall, with musical accompaniment by the Middlesex Yeomanry Concert Band.

The Association was represented by our President.



The Mayor inspects the Squadron

Middlesex Yeomanry Concert Band

John Morrison, a member of the Band, has produced a new arrangement of our Regimental March, Lass of Richmond Hill. It was given a first performance at the December concert and received great acclaim.

Michael Robinson, the long serving Musical Director of the Band, is retiring and the process of identifying a suitable successor is underway. Mike has been an inspiration and a great if sometimes tough director who has brought the band to a very high standard. He will be a very hard act to follow.

Please put in your diaries for the date of future concerts, which are: 13 October and 8 December at St James's Church, Hampton Hill TW12 1DQ. Tickets are £15 and include tea, coffee and extraordinary quantities of homemade cakes. Details can be found at <http://mycb.website/>

Forthcoming Events

105th Annual General Meeting, 7th May 2024

The 105th Annual General Meeting of the Association will take place face to face at the Army Reserves Centre, Honeycroft Hill, Uxbridge, UB10 9HN by kind permission of the Officer Commanding 31st (Middlesex Yeomanry and Princess Louise's Kensington) Signal Squadron, and online on 7th May 2024 with proceedings commencing promptly at 1930hrs. It would be helpful if members could indicate to the Membership Secretary whether they plan to attend, either in person or online.

The following are proposed for re-election to the committee.

Chairman:	Col P Willmott
Vice-Chairman:	Lt Col M Lansdown
Hon Secretary:	Capt D Gibson
Hon Treasurer:	Mr D Valentine
Hon Membership Secretary:	Mr D Lambert
Hon Newsletter Editor:	Lt Col M Lansdown
Combined Cavalry OCA Rep:	Vacant
Data Processor:	Mr D Lambert
Dining Secretary:	Capt C Gillespie

An AGM agenda will be circulated in advance to ensure members have proper notice of all matters to be discussed.

Cavalry Memorial Parade, 12th May 2024

As is now the established pattern, the Middlesex Yeomanry Association will form part of a combined Yeomanry contingent. Members should gather on the Broad Walk, Hyde Park, at 1030hrs. Dress is suit, Regimental tie and original medals.

Royal Signals Association – Service Awards

For those Members of the Association who are joint Members of the Royal Signals Association (RSA), in addition to the Middlesex Association, you are eligible for consideration of the Royal Signals Association's long service award which is given after each of the following periods of combined service – 40, 50, 60 and 70 years.

Qualifying service comprises a combination of Regular, Reserve (including TA), mobilised or National Service AND active membership of The Association of not less than 40, 50, 60 or 70 years (as applicable).

Service in both the Regular or Reserve components of the Corps and The Association need not be continuous, but periods of inactivity can NOT be counted to the award. Additionally, time

cannot be counted twice, so if you joined the Association in 2000 but did not retire/complete service until 2005, the 5-years can only be counted once.

Active Membership of the Middlesex Yeomanry Association (MYA), as an affiliate branch of the RSA, counts towards an RSA award/recognition, with active membership being defined as being a paid-up member of a branch (or the MYA) and participating in Association/Branch affairs or activities. The MYA Committee will assist members in completing the narrative section of the application form, if required.

Applications are considered twice a year and should be made through the Membership Secretary who will forward these to the Royal Signals Association. Applications should be submitted by 31 December (for consideration in the spring of the following year) and 30 August (for consideration that autumn).

Application forms for each award can be found in the Documents section of the RSA Website at <https://royalsignals.org/royal-signals-association/documents>

Birthday Congratulations

The Association is very proud to report that Ron Nabarro recently celebrated his 103rd birthday. Ron is our most senior veteran, seeing operations in France in 1940 with the signal section supporting 52nd Anti-Tank Regiment TA before serving with 5th Infantry Divisional Signals in various theatres of operations, notably including Sicily and Italy. Ron is one of a very small number of veterans of the Dunkirk evacuation and we are delighted to send him our very best wishes on his birthday.

Last Post

The Association is sad to report the death of Andrew Bridges in January following a long battle with cancer.



Andrew joined the TA in 1964 firstly serving with 47 Signal Regiment, then 47 Signal Squadron following the re-organisation. Subsequently he served in 83 Signal Squadron and finally HQ Squadron of 31 Signal Regiment. He was awarded the TEM for his long service and retired in June 1982 as a Staff Sergeant.

He was the long-serving Hon Secretary of this Association from 1991 to 2007, his period of office coinciding almost exactly with that of George Key (see also history section) as Chairman. As Ceremonial Events Secretary Andrew from 2008 onwards he was the Association's representative in the Combined Cavalry Old Comrades Association, helping to organise the annual Cavalry Memorial Parade. And right up to last year, despite being seriously ill, Andrew was responsible for liaising with St Paul's Cathedral in connection with Lafone Day.

His funeral was held in Aldershot on 27th March and was very well attended. The coffin was draped with a Union Flag and a standard bearer from the Royal British Legion lent a suitable military dimension to a service that drew much on Andrew's Masonic affiliations. The Association was well represented by many members, including our President.

The Association sends its sincere condolences to Andrew's wife Mary.

History Section

The Vice-Chairman writes:

In the Spring 2023 edition of the Newsletter we looked at the activities of 9th Armoured Brigade Signal Squadron (Middlesex Yeomanry) through to the end of the Italian campaign, and in the Autumn 2023 edition we described the process of seeking to persuade the CWGC to correct their record of the date of death of Cpl D R Norris, a process which is yet to reach a conclusion.

NOTE

As it is intended to publish the history of the Regiment in due course, we have omitted the history section from this on-line copy of the Newsletter. However, it is included in the version sent to Association Members direct.

If you are a member of the Association and do not receive notifications etc via email, please let the Membership Secretary know at:

membership.MYA@outlook.com

The Newsletter continues on the next page.

Chairman. Col P Willmott OBE TD chairman.MYA@outlook.com	Hon. Secretary. Capt D Gibson 11 Wilderness Road, Frimley, Surrey GU16 8TF 01276 517414 secretary.MYA@outlook.com	Hon. Treasurer. Mr D Valentine 90 Durley Avenue, Pinner Middx HA5 1JH 07943 161099 treasurer.MYA@outlook.com
Vice-Chairman and Newsletter Editor Lt Col M Lansdown TD Holmview Furze Platt Road Maidenhead SL6 6PR 07936 332573 vicechair.MYA@outlook.com	Hon. Membership Secretary. Mr D Lambert 29 The Leys, Jersey Farm, St Albans Herts AL4 9HD 01727 841620 membership.MYA@outlook.com	

WEB PRESENCE

One would hope that as an Association full of communicators that we would have an active web presence and, in our case, we now have two. The first is our main community site on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064817523317>

We would very much welcome everyone to upload any historic photos, items of interests, news and anecdotes from the past so that we can preserve as much information as possible for the enjoyment of all Members. If you are not a Member of the Group currently, do please sign up.

The second is our Branch web page at the Royal Signals Association website. You can find this at: <https://royalsignals.org/royal-signals-association/branches/middlesex-yeomanry>

This is a more formal site, and it will be updated periodically with News from the Association, including information such as forthcoming events and a copy of our latest Newsletter amongst other things. There is also a large banner that you can hit on the front page to communicate with the Association, if you are struggling to find our contact details.