



ROYAL MILITARY POLICE OLD COMRADES LINK UP NEWSLETTER #122 AUGUST 2017



NEW CONTACTS



GRAY

Former 23797430 Lance-Corporal Keith Gray, Squad 795. Keith initially was sent to the Royal Artillery to commence his National Service in June 1960. In a matter of weeks he was at Inkerman Barracks from where he was posted to 158 Provost Company, Aldershot. He completed a Para Course and was posted to 16 Independent Parachute Brigade Provost Company at Farnborough where he served until his demob in 1963. Keith would like any information on Lance-Corporal Jack Wood from his days in 16 Para and also of Lance-Corporal Johnny Rowney who was on the P Company Course with him.

YOUR CORRESPONDENCE

From Oz I received the following message from Alan Hancox, 'Enjoyed reading the story of John Baldwin's service in Egypt and note that he said his SI in Squad 86 was Sgt Vic Hancock. The squad photo names him as V.Hancox, but he's still not a relation of mine to my knowledge. Also, re enquiries about Jack Wood, I served with a L/Cpl Jack Wood at SHAPE in 1955/56 and attach two photos of him. In the Paris signpost one he's in the middle and in the other photograph he is third from



the right (soon to be inspected by Cpl Max Vernon - with whom I was in touch last year). Keep up the good work – I always enjoy reading about old RMP comrades.'



A few weeks ago Joy and I attended a most enjoyable lunch hosted by the Taunton Branch where I caught up with a former "Rockape" namely Pete Hares. In a message Pete said, 'It was a pleasure for Sue and I to attend the RMP Memorial day at Alrewas earlier in June. We had both been wanting to visit the NMA for some time and things finally fell into place this year. As well as enjoying a chat with Marc Thompson (Provost Sergeant Major), and an added bonus was to spend time with Trevor and Sue Slinger (Trev is also a former Rockape) who were both in good form.' Pete included the

photograph which shows him standing next to a memorial to Gibraltar which was carved out of a 3 ton block of Gibraltar limestone and commemorates the capture of the "The Rock" in 1704 by an Anglo-Dutch force under command of Admiral Sir George Rooke. The second photograph shows the sculpture from a different and somewhat better angle.



John Baldwin's article relating to his service drew favourable comments and they were all passed onto him. He has asked that if anyone wishes to contact him he can be found at The Old Stores, Ebrington Chipping Campden Glos GL55 6NQ. Tel 01386593281 I hope that John's story will encourage other readers to put pen to paper and let others know what it was like in their time and what they go up to.

Now to clarify a slight error which occurred in Issue 120 reference 1 Dog Company RMP. Graham Gibbons who just wanted to clarify that the book, "Whites, Brown Knees was written by Douglas J Findlay with introductions by Jock Kennedy and Acker Bilk. I think that any error was on my part as I feel I omitted a few words which may have given a false impression.



It was not long before another former Rockape contacted me from his home in York. Jim McIntosh sent in a photograph which was taken during a recent gathering of former members of the Special Investigation Branch residing in the north. Now for some names. Front left to right: Stuart Hitchinson, John Haslem, Mark Richardson, Jim Buglass, Jean Butler, Jenny McIntosh, Kevin Morson and Liz Usher. In the rear: Eric Davis, Terry Burrough, Bill Ford, Peter Worrol, Paul Coleman, Mick Poolman, Jim McIntosh, Taff Pickering and Ian Stenning. Missing from photograph is Kevin Corrigan who arrived just after shutter clicked.

Surprise, surprise, I actually received a real hand written letter. Alan Dart wrote to me and said, "In a recent RMP Old Comrades Link Up you mentioned the two Triumph TRW motor cycles at the Depot under evaluation. Well they were issued to at least one company in the 1960s, 156 (EC) Provost Company which had its Headquarters at Colchester and a detachment at Shorncliffe. I enclose a copy of an article that appeared in 'Classic Motor Cycle' in March 1994 and it explains why they were issued. Many years later I was at a motor cycle show in Stoneleigh (about 2001) when I came across 79 BP 21. By then it had been sold off but it still had MP on the front mudguard and the dent in the silencer which I managed to put there during a little trials riding"

Alan sent me a photograph of the article but it is a bit small to reproduce so here is where my typing prowess comes into being.

Bulled-up TRW

The article by Ian Johnson in the January edition brought memories flooding back, as I was a member of one of the few British Army units that were issued with the Triumph 500cc TRW.

"It was whilst serving with Shorncliffe detachment of 156 (EC) Provost Company, Royal Military Police in the early Sixties that we escorted guided missiles on their transporters to and from Dover docks to a depot for modification before being returned to their stations to BAOR.

A couple of trips a week was the initial order of the day, so out of mothballs came the TRWs. These were a lot more comfortable to ride, and with better reliability and acceleration than the BSA M20s that were on general issue.

I well remember travelling up to a depot in Hounslow to collect the Triumph, not knowing what to expect, as it wasn't generally known that such hardware existed. First I went to one shed to sign for the bike, and then to another for the tool kit and handbook.

A quick ride around the complex to familiarise myself, and it then it was out onto the open road for the trip back to Folkestone. The bike had just delivery mileage on the clock and was one of about six that had been issued to my unit.

They performed well and I cannot remember us having a break down. Although the top speed wasn't a lot to write home about, the acceleration was just right for leapfrogging ahead of slow moving convoys.

The saddle was a bit low, and if one had long legs, journeys could be rather uncomfortable but this



was remedied by sliding back onto the pillion seat. Although this did not look very military it was more comfortable. On short quick trips they could really earoled (sic) round bends and in time the outside edges of my DR boots were chamfered.

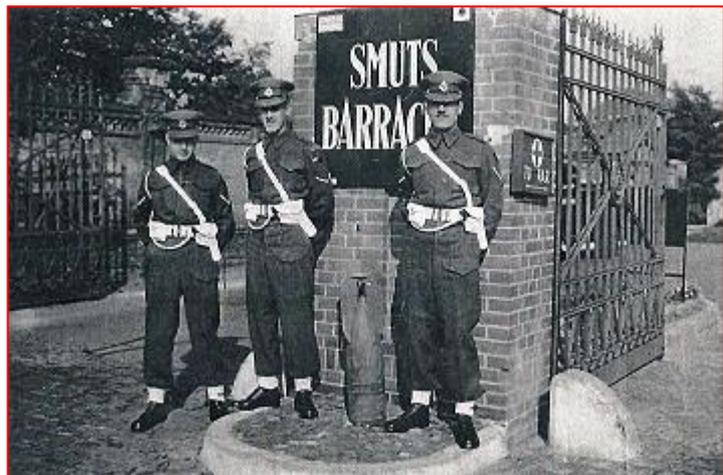
When the Dover escort finally finished, we somehow managed to hand on to the TRWs until the BSA B40s came along. The finish of both the chrome and paintwork was excellent, and being RMP we used plenty of bull-shine to keep them looking great, *Alan C Dart, Shrewsbury, Shropshire*

So, after all that let me show you Alan, 79 BP 21 complete with a dent in the silencer.

-ooOoo-



During a recent social event I met up with Jim Tracey and he later sent some photographs relating to his time in Berlin. The first is of Jim Tracey, Eric Hanson and Bill Carey perching upon a cannon and it was taken in December 1951. The second photograph I guess was taken a few years previous if the style of uniform is anything to go by. Jim has no idea about the photo but I think it is of interest.



There is little doubt where it was taken but when and the names of the NCOs at the moment remain a mystery, unless you know otherwise.

-ooOoo-

I was chatting to an old mate of mine when the name Tom Gardiner entered the conversation during a period of reminiscing. I immediately was able to put a face to the name but could not remember when or where I have served with him although I have a feeling it may have been Hong Kong. Just out of idle curiosity have any of you heard of Tom of late?

121 PROVOST COMPANY

Now and again I do not get things right and I tend to do what most large organisations do, blame it on the computer. No excuse this time as the computer was right and I was wrong. In the last edition I said that I was unable to find anything about 121 Provost Company. The Regimental Secretary was soon on my case and pointed out that in fact 121 (Western) Corp Provost Company, RMP (TA) - Wolverhampton. Renumbered as 22 (Western) Corps Pro Coy, RMP (TA) in 1951, then re-roled as 1 Corps Provost Signal Company, RMP (TA) in 1955. Upon checking once again on my data base I found that 121 L of C Provost Company CMP was operating in Eastern Command, India in 1945. So all in all I think I can safely say that 121 was alive and kicking during the Second World War and later became a Territorial company ending up as 1 Corps Provost Signal Company RMP (TA); the first notes for this Company appeared in Corps Journal 1955 Second Quarter.

122 PROVOST COMPANY

From the very brief records available to me at the time of writing I do know that 122 L of C Provost Company CMP was in the Madras, India in 1945.

ROYAL MILITARY POLICE ASSOCIATION

As most of you are aware the Association is reforming itself but this will take time as there are a number of procedures and formalities to overcome although most have been completed. Just a reminder that Stewart Leach is now the Secretary of the Association having taken over from Colonel JT Green OBE.



Annual reunions are programmed as follows; 2018 11th to 13th May in Rotherham, South Yorkshire. The Annual General Meeting will be held on the 12th May 2018. The following year, 2019 the reunion is being hosted by Cheshire and North Wales Branch, 10th to 12th May and 2020 you can all come down to the seaside once again and enjoy a weekend in Southsea, 15th to 17th May. Like all events organised or involving the Association details are published by branches but are also available on relevant websites.

Please let me have details of your branch activities and with photographs if possible. As much as I appreciate the valuable work done by Western Australia Branch we could do with a few different faces.



On Saturday the 26th August four members of the Depot Branch supported the Close Protection Unit, during a charity event held at Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth. The younger (much younger as all those taking part were not even born when I joined up) members of the CPU were out to break a record by "climbing Mount Everest" on a piece of gym equipment. The older members were responsible for collecting the donations from the passing public. During the afternoon Alan Murray turned up as he was in the area on a separate event. You can see his rear-view in the photograph. Did he put any cash in my bucket or did he distract me by talking? Must check for any Bank of Scotland notes when the counting takes place.

I have previously mentioned the subject of branches and the fact that we could certainly do with more being established. There are swathes of countryside within the UK with no branch in striking distance, so if you think you have what it takes then please contact

me and I will give you any advice necessary.

The Republic of Ireland Branch is holding a weekend in Killarney between the 27th and 29th October 2017. I have full details which I can send on to you or you can contact Les McClarence on 00353 89 422 8798 or Email him at chairman@roirmpa.ie

The Hull and East Riding Branch is holding its Annual Dinner at the Masonic Hall, Beverley Road, Hull on Friday the 29th September 2017. Tickets are £20 per head and can be obtained by contacting secretary@rmpa-hull.org

The 248 GSU Guard Report for August can be found at the following link:
http://248gsu.de/index.php/der-guard-report/gp_download/send/3-guard-report/282-guard-report-august-2017

NOTICES AND INFORMATION

David Littlemore sent the following message and information. "On Monday the 21st August we held the first Memorial Service at the NMA since the unveiling in 2016, and I am delighted to report that it was a resounding success with about 150 veterans and their families attending. We had a number of families of men who had lost their lives in the Cyprus Emergency attending for the first time having been informed about the service by the "Cyprus Veterans". One of these families had travelled from New Zealand to attend the service and, with the support of the Cyprus Veterans, are to be presented with the Elizabeth Cross in London. It was agreed by those present that the service would be a regular event at the NMA and would be held on the 21st of August as the Cyprus Emergency Memorial Day. *Ed: I must point out that this organisation must not be confused with the Royal Military Police Cyprus Veterans organisation.*

DEATHS

BAKER

I received Information from Adrienne Cox concerning the death of one Arthur William Baker, commonly known as Bill. The only information that could be ascertained was from Bill's neighbour who said that he had died in the spring. It is known that he served in Rheindahlen from 1959 to 1963 and it also believed that he may have been an Instructor at the Royal Military Police Depot, either Woking or Chichester. A friend of his, June Shell has written a few words.

It was with a feeling of deep sorrow that we the veterans of 101 and 145 Provost Company B.F.P.O. 40 [1959 – 1962] have learned of the passing of a friend and colleague Cpl Bill Baker; who served with us in Rheindahlen during the division of East and West Germany.

Those of us mentioned below would like to pay tribute to a fine soldier and affable human being, who could with a smile on his face and a twinkle in his eye, dispel the mood of any who were disheartened. Bill was an aficionado of the radio serial "The Goon Show" and could make us laugh with his hilarious antics.

As a regular soldier he was posted to many policing theatres over his career. He shared his time with the last of the National Servicemen. He was also a keen mechanic and motorcyclist. You are remembered in our hearts and minds, where-ever you are make them laugh. June Shell – Wendy Forsyth – Marjorie Kay – Adrienne Lewis – Crystobel Grant [145], Peter Williams [ACC] - Graham Burley - Peter Grimes – Nigel Laws – Nick Cox [101].

BRIDGEMAN

Former Warrant Office Class 1 Keith Bridgeman MM. At the time of writing I have little information other than the fact that Keith's death was being circulated on a social media site.

DRURY

On the 29th August the following message was received at RHQ from Steve Drury. 'Following my father's wishes, I am informing the RMP Association of his passing. My Dad, Sgt Peter John Drury 22843467 passed away on the 28th of July after a long battle with cancer, he was true army man and loyal to the Queen right up to the end. His third wish after his family concerns was for me to inform his beloved RMP who he served between 1953 and 1966. He never missed a remembrances service or over here in New Zealand we have ANZAC Day. My Dad came to New Zealand straight from

discharge in 1966 and although he only returned in England once he remained English through and through stating on many occasions that the only woman he would die for was Queen Elizabeth.'

HILL

The following message was received by the Regimental Secretary on the 30th August. 'I'm not sure if you are already aware of the passing of ex Sgt Graham Hill who sadly passed away last night? Graham was in Squad 9402A joining RMP in Sep 94 and amongst other units served at 111 Pro Coy, 101 Pro Coy and 160 Pro Coy. A former gunner at 7 RHA. I have been in touch with his son Declan who is a serving soldier in Para Regt and will ask for further details to be passed on as and when they come in.' *Ed: At the time of writing no other details had been made known to me.*

HYNDS

Former 22046307 Corporal Len Hynds. His death was reported by Kent Branch of the Royal Military Police Association. I reported contact with Len in 2016, March's Newsletter where I said, "*I shall let him introduce himself. Could you please include me in your circulation of "The Old Comrades Link-Up newsletter"? I am 22046307 Len A Hynds, and served with 203 Pro Coy, Canal South District, Fayed, Egypt in 1948 for two years. I was demobbed as an active reservist and was nearly called up a few years later for the Korean War. Luckily as a police officer I was considered exempt. I reach my 86th birthday on March 9th, am disabled (Bionic would be a better word) metallic heart valves and pacemaker, and a by-pass 22 years ago. Various other bits replaced over the years and twelve years ago, vocal cords cut away through throat cancer, although I now speak again, rather robotically. Since losing my voice, and learning to speak again, I went to university at 75 and graduated in Creative Writing, Poetry and Writing for Stage and Screen, at 78. I now write for nine editors around the world, mostly poetry and short stories, with monthly columns in America, Australia and the UK of course.*" I remarked at the time that Len still had a good sense of humour as his e-mail address was "thespeechlesspoet".

ROBBINS

Former Staff Sergeant Alan (Al) Robbins, died at his home in Attenborough, Nottingham, during the night of Sunday the 13th and Monday the 14th August 2017, aged 75. Alan who served with the Corps between 1960 and 1982, had been plagued with illness over the past few years. He began his Army career with 101 Pro Coy in Düsseldorf and moved up to the Advance Base Det at Grobbendonk, Belgium, after which he was posted to SHAPE in Paris. He served with several units in BAOR, including 1 (Br) Corps, Bielefeld and Munster, where for a number of years he was a member of the RMP team at the Liege International Police Rally. In the 1970s he served in Northern Ireland and finally at Aldershot. After leaving the forces he joined the MOD Police and was posted to Nottingham where chose to settle down. He often remarked that, thanks to the Greenham Common demonstrations, MOD Plod paid off his mortgage. Alan is survived by his wife, Maureen and children, Gail, Haley, Mark, Tanya and Gareth.

THOMPSON

Spence McLeod alerted me to the death of Bill Thompson, who died at the age of 83 on the 17th August 2017 at a Nursing Home in Shrewsbury. He said, 'Trawling through obituary columns of local paper yesterday I noted the name Bill Thompson who I know was ex RMP. Do not know much about his career but I know he was Chief Clerk (SSgt) at PM FARELF in FARELF HQ in Tanglin Barracks, Singapore in 1964/65 when I was in SIB out there. His wife Pam and my wife Pam were friends during that tour of duty. Afterwards we lost touch but I think he eventually became Chief Clerk at HQ PM(ARMY) in MOD around 1974 and therefore must have been WO1 on retirement about 1975. I have no idea what he did after army life but I know he and Pam were keen members of 200(Singapore) Pro Coy RMP reunion group which used to meet near Walsall every year. Pam predeceased him about 8 years ago.'

-ooOoo-

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STOP PRESS

Military Policeman eaten alive by ravenous Volkswagen. Further details to follow in next edition.

