

**5<sup>th</sup> Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards Old Comrades**

# **Silver Horse Newsletter**

**February 2013**

**Issue No 34**



Welcome to the February 2013 issue of The Silver Horse Newsletter. I know you will receive this newsletter in March but please understand that personal, work and other reasons sometimes mean that I cannot get the newsletter out in the specific month. I did mention in the previous newsletter that I was changing the dates of production but as production cannot always be guaranteed I will keep it as February and August. Enjoy the newsletter and don't forget that I always need articles and photographs.

**Gary Smith**

## **Lapsed members**

When we voted to introduce a £5.00 per year subscription for hard copy newsletters we 'lost' just under 500 members i.e. we are now out of communication with them. Phil Jackson and I have discussed this and I have written to all lapsed members to encourage them to take a hard or email copy of the newsletter and/or to remain in contact by just receiving the reunion booking form. This exercise will also enable us to update our members list as many have moved, changed email address, passed away, etc. This will cost a bit of cash in postage but we feel it is money well spent to get more back onboard and update the members list.

## **Members List**

For those that took the offer of the Members List I did say that I would send out amendments as they happened. Having explained the lapsed members exercise above I will now wait until I get all the returns and then send out new free fully updated copies to all in hard copy and by email.

## **Lost and Found**

It has been suggested to have a 'Lost and Found' section in the newsletter. So if you want to try to trace someone or have found a long lost friend, just get in touch and we will print it. This has sort of been happening on The Skins facebook page as a comment like "Does anyone know where XYZ is nowadays" normally ends up with a positive response. Facebook might not be some people's 'thing' but it has certainly benefitted this group and the banter, photographs and help in finding people has been superb.

## **Reunion 2013**

19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2013, The Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool.

Everything is coming along nicely and Phil Jackson is reminding the hotel about their obligations and promises after last year.

Please contact Phil about seating requests either from his contact details on the back page or via The Skins facebook page.

**Items for AGM 2013 - Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2013, 10.00am to 11.00am**  
The Ballroom, The Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool.

- Welcome and Introduction.
- Exhortation proposal by Gary Smith. See footnote below.
- Short silence for departed comrades.
- Administrators report. (Funds, Newsletter, Members, etc).
- Organisers report. (Reunion weekend, Gala Dinner, Seating, etc)
- 2014 reunion vote.
- Any other business.

Footnote: I mentioned in Newsletter No33 about someone saying something prior to the short silence and whether it is appropriate. I have had no negative responses to this, but I did get some suggestions as below. I would like to propose that the first exhortation is adopted as 'The Departed Comrades Exhortation'. At this moment in time I do not know if Harry Starkey will be at the reunion but if he is I do hope that he will read the exhortation himself. If not, then we will seek a volunteer! Thank you to Harry and Hammy for your contributions.

On a cavalry mount they ride into the night  
With sabre in hand they carry the fight.  
Advance my comrade, never to retreat  
Hold the line until next we meet  
Our thoughts are ever with those who fell  
And in honour of them we call 'Fare Thee Well'  
*And then everyone says: 'Fare Thee Well'*  
**From Harry Starkey**

On cavalry mounts, they rode into the night,  
Sabres in hand, they were up for the fight.  
Onwards dragoons! no step to the rear,  
Holding the line, never showing fear.  
Our thoughts are ever with those who fell  
And in honour of them, we say..... 'Fare Thee Well'  
*And then everyone says: 'Fare Thee Well'*  
**From Harry Starkey**

**This one has been suggested to be done after the Gala Dinner**

Watered, fed and feeling merry  
Not like some, indeed too many  
Now raise a glass, before night ends  
to give a toast "To Absent Friends"  
*And then everyone raises a glass and says: 'To absent friends'*  
**From Bruce 'Hammy' Hamilton**

**Toast presentation to the pipers.**

At the annual reunion it is our tradition to present a glass of Irish Whiskey to the pipers before they finally march out. We now have our engraved whiskey shot glasses to do this and all that is required is to hold a tray with up to 8 glasses on it and present a glass to each piper. You do not need to make a speech or anything else as the pipe major does the words. If you would like the opportunity to present the toast, please contact Phil Jackson or myself or speak to either of us at the reunion.

## Funds

At the AGM 2012 that I said I felt that the large donations to funds totalling £529.85 should be 'set aside' until we decided what to do with it.

I have had some suggestions what to do with it and these are set out below. If I do not get any other suggestions I will propose each one below and by a show of hands that will be the binding decision of what to do with the funds.

- Just keep it in the general fund as working capital.
- Start to purchase property.
- Use it only to support and/or benefit members or a member of The Skins Old Comrades.
- Pick a different charity each year and donate some money towards it.
- Adopt one charity and donate money every year.
- Don't give money to a charity, but purchase items for that charity.
- Subscribe to the lottery. All winnings ploughed back into general fund.

**Gary Smith**

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## The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The 5<sup>th</sup> Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards in Egypt 1953 / 4 - by Cpl Peter 'Ben' Brown

Before I joined as a regular in 1952 an article in the News of World described the worst posting in the British Army as Shandur Camp, Egypt. Little did I know that six months later I would there after training at Catterick with the RAC.

I was posted to Shandur in January to join the Regiment who had just returned from Korea. I was posted to 1<sup>st</sup> Troop B Sqn. Conditions were a little rough: two taps per Sqn for all water, dry toilet's which when full the Arab workforce dug another hole and filled the full one in. The living space was a Nissan hut but as there were not enough Nissan huts to go round the rest of the Sqn had to live in tents with a sand floor! Can you imagine the temperature in a tinned roof Nissan at the height of the Egyptian summer at 110 degrees plus!



Life consisted of work and endless 12-hour armed guards every day and night at POL point, ammo dump, filtration plant, and miles of perimeter wire. Having a night's sleep was above anything and, I mean anything!

Our frequent trip's out on patrol and schemes in the tanks was an experience!

The temperatures in the tanks were a 120 degrees plus anything metal left out you could not pick up or hold.

One good thing was no bull as you did not have to worry

about clean boot's etc. The dress code on patrol and schemes was coloured scarves and Africa Corps caps. Some Troop leaders wore Arab headdress Lawrence of Arabia style. On one occasion our single tank broke down two miles from camp with no Radio contact so I volunteered to walk back the two miles to camp under a June sun, (what do they say? Don't volunteer). After a short while I thought of all the films I had seen with people staggering through the desert but in this case there was no camera crew in sight. All I got was well done from the ARV Crew.

The Egyptian's said that for the British to remain in Egypt they would have to walk over Ten Thousand dead Egyptian hero's. We were ready to face them at Kilo 99 for two day's, but they never turned up, (Pity).

January 1954 we were on our way home to Catterick as a training regiment. A very interesting 12-months and what a difference a year makes.

Sadly many who served at this time are no longer with us and those that are will be nearly Eighty plus. If you were there give me a ring on Leeds: 0113 2485191.

As a footnote, we didn't receive our medals until 50 years later

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## **Oral History Project**

The Regimental Association has very generously been granted funds by the Heritage Lottery Fund to enable it to carry out a project focussing on oral history. The aim of the project will be to develop an audio archive of the testimony and experiences of serving and retired soldiers and their families of 4/7DG, 5 Innis DG, RDG and attached arms and services, both on operations and in normal barracks life. It is intended that copies of the archive, which will cover the period from WW2 to be present day, will be deposited in the following museums:

RDG Museum, York

Cheshire Military Museum, Chester

Inniskillings Museum, Enniskillen

The National Army Museum

The imperial War Museum

The Tank Museum, Bovington

The archive copies will be available in the future to academic historians and members of the public, including those researching family history.

## **The Team**

The project manager is Lt Col (Retd) Noel McCleery. It is intended to have interviewers in different parts of Britain and Ireland who will be able to interview those in their area with a story to tell. All that is needed is a willingness to give some time, the ability to communicate sympathetically and enthusiasm for the project. It will be necessary to attend a one day training course, run by the Oral History Society, in York next spring. It is a volunteer role, but expenses will be reimbursed and all recording equipment will be provided. Anyone interested in being an interviewer in this important project is invited to forward his/her contact details to Noel McCleery. The project will be complete by late 2014.

## **Interviewees**

Interviewees will come from a wide cross section of ranks – Tpr to Maj Gen and from wives and families of the three regiments and will include surviving Commanding Officers and Regimental Sergeant Majors. Association members with a story to tell are invited to inform HHQ. Some may be too modest to register themselves, so if you know of someone who is in this category please let Noel McCleery know. All information will be handled in strict confidence.

## **Contact**

Anyone interested in being an interviewer or interviewee for this very important historical project is invited to forward their details to Noel McCleery Email: [ohprdg@gmail.com](mailto:ohprdg@gmail.com) or to HHQ RDG Tel: 01904 642036

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## **Memories from John Brewer**

My proper first name is Thorley but I was only known by my second name John for all the time I was in the Regiment. My rank for most of the time was lance corporal.

I would like to share some memories of my days in The Skins.

I joined up in 1954 on a three year service contract, and four years on the reserve, this was at the time when National Service was in force, but I enlisted for the extra year, because the pay was double of National Service. National Service was £1 per week, where as regulars which is what we were classed as was £2 pound per week. Big money stakes in those days, but everyone seemed to survive.

For those that remember, when you did your initial training, you were divided into three squads where one recruit was selected by the Sgt Instructor, as leading Trooper. Our leading Trooper was a lad by the name of Nigel Moores, whose father was from the family of Moores of Littlewood pools! Nigel was very dedicated in his role and I was sad to read some years ago that Nigel was killed in a car accident.

I was very proud to have been selected to carry out the duty on the saluting base, and I was also on the commanding officers guard together with a mixture of troopers and lance corporals, our lead sergeant was Sgt D'Arcy.

A few photographs follow and I hope they bring back some memories for others who served at that time.



Me at Catterick in full dress uniform.



Me on the left and my mate 'Scouse' Skinner



My tank on tank park at Catterick. Driver is 'Scouse' Skinner.



Group of Sergeants and Sergeant Majors outside Sergeant's Mess at Athlone Barracks. Sgt Ramsey first on left and Sgt Howells standing next to him.

Can't remember any other names

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### **Remembrance Parade 2012 and 2013 by Ian 'Spike' Smith**

It was a fantastic honour and privilege to be a part of the Remembrance Parade at London's Cenotaph last year, especially wearing my beret and Skins cap-badge again. 2012 saw the Regiment march as a single contingent in the Parade for the first time. As we all know, the Skins and 4<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> are antecedent Regiments of the RDG and as such the current RBL rules require us to march under the RDG banner. I appreciate that some ex 'Skins' would prefer to march alone however as an amalgamated Regiment the 'Skins' and the '4<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>' contribute significantly to the RDG's history. The Army is littered with regiments and organisations that has been disbanded over the years and that now leaves them confined to the annals of history. Some of them may march today, but who will lay their wreaths and remember their dead in the future? The RDG now has a proud history going back over 327 years and we have contributed extensively to that legacy, it is therefore right and proper that the 5<sup>th</sup> Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards identify with and embrace our future.

Nearly all Skins that participated met up on the Saturday and we were based at the Travelodge Royal Scot in Kings Cross, which despite poor Tripadvisor reviews, actually proved to be quite good. Unfortunately the UJC and VSC are always fully booked at this time of year, but the Travelodge was cheap, clean and perfect for our needs – a good find by Phil Jackson and Phil Rule. We found a couple of good watering holes nearby and certainly boosted the profits of the Lucas Arms and the Carpenters Arms over the weekend!!

I had managed to arrange for a fleet of black taxis to meet us outside our hotel on the day. This service is offered by the London black taxi organisation as an act of respect and thanks, but they usually only pick up at specific hubs. However, they done us proud and provided at least 8 taxis for us at the hotel – free of charge! Our contingent comprised upwards of 40 marchers made up of the three Regiments and it was an immensely satisfying moment for so many of us to be able to proudly wear our Skins cap-badges again. I know that the 4<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> lads felt the same, although some of the berets on display brought great hilarity amongst us. (No names, but you know who you are). Beret shaping aside, our foot drill was spot on despite a little banter with the RSDG who were the



contingent directly in front of us. Television footage proves the case – watch the BBC footage as the RSDG passes the Cenotaph!

It is surprising how physically challenging the parade is. There is much waiting around on Horse Guards Parade and even after assembling and marching out onto Whitehall, we were standing around in column for over an hour. But the time passes quite quickly and there is much mutual respect, admiration and friendliness between other Regiments, Corps and Arms. However, when the time, we stepped out with deference but with a swagger in our step and Mickey Campbell following up at the rear on his ever faithful motorised steed. As we passed the Cenotaph, Parade Marshalls took the Regimental wreaths that HHQ had kindly provided us with and laid them at the foot of the memorial. The wreaths were carried by Les Roberts (Skins), Nige McKeown (RDG) and John Torley (on behalf of the 4<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>). The crowds were magnificent along the way and it is wonderful to have earned the right to be a part of such a magnificent gesture for the fallen. 'We will remember them'.

After the parade, we RV'd at The Sherlock Holmes pub and as usual set about out drinking with the other badges that had obviously had the same urge for liquid refreshment. Afterwards returning to the hotel to change and then watch a re-run of the parade on TV in The Lucas Arms. Disappointingly, it would seem that despite not being able to keep to the beat, the RSDG seemed to have the monopoly on TV coverage, but we did appear for about 10 seconds or so, to much cheering in the pub. But the biggest cheer of all was when Sam Cameron 'our' Chelsea Pensioner appeared on TV several times – The roof nearly caved in at that point!! Much drinking, hilarity and sing-song followed and all very ably assisted by the wives and partners who braved the elements and supported us throughout the weekend – Thank you ladies'. A great weekend, a great honour and made very special by all concerned. Well done all.

I have received authorisation from HHQ to set up and coordinate this year's Remembrance Service and Parade on behalf of The Skins, 4<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> and RDG's. **If you are interested in participating at this year's Parade, would you please contact me before the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2013.** HHQ needs to apply to the RBL for tickets in good time. I do know that we did not receive the amount that we applied for last year, so registering an interest will not guarantee a place. Wives, partners and family members do not need tickets; only those intending to march will need tickets to enter the security zone, (Horse Guards Parade). Wives, partners and family members are able to view the Parade from Whitehall where access is not restricted.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE RBL WILL PROVIDE US WITH ENOUGH TICKETS TO GO AROUND. Attendance at last year's Parade is NOT a bar to applying to attend this year.

Anyone that has already confirmed that they would like to attend via Facebook need not do so again as I have already recorded your interest.

Please e-mail me at; [ismith247@live.com](mailto:ismith247@live.com) if you wish to have your name included or write to me with your contact details, including telephone number at; I Smith, 7 Flint Close, Andover, Hampshire, SP10 2UE.

Please find a selection of photographs from the 2012 Parade on the next few pages.



Great to meet up with Sam Cameron from The Royal Hospital



No, Les Roberts didn't leave his torch on. He just had the shiniest medals.





John Fletcher, Andy Cottrell, John Torley, Red Griffiths, Rab Armstrong, Harry Axtell, Phil Rule, and Phil Jackson taking a breather.



Gary Robinson, Kev Isherwood, Taff Morris, Owen Pettitt and Phil Jackson. Either Gary is the only thirsty one or the others are waiting for him to catch up!



Sam Cameron and some Mojo disguised as Ted Ferguson



The Skins on TV. Literally!





Harry Axtell and Dave 'Red' Griffiths spot the parade RSM just before he gave John Robbie 3 extra duties



At least they have the cap badge over the left eye!



Kev Isherwood feeling a bit awkward as he forgot to visit the website [www.skinsberet.com](http://www.skinsberet.com)



Lets not forget the real reason everyone went there.



And finally ..... It just wouldn't be The Skins if you didn't have the social side of life.



Phil Rule and Ian 'Spike' Smith. Spike actually went all 'oop North' for the weekend by drinking pints of bitter and wearing a Dalesman Farmer's shirt.



That unhappy bouncer looks like Robbie Hughes. Dancing on the tables was ok but Gary Robinson doing air guitar was bang out of order.



**Words and Phrases we used all the time in the Regiment, and still occasionally use in civvy street, but they absolutely baffle anyone who hasn't served!**

Too many contributors to mention as this was done on The Skins Facebook page.

Don't kick the basketball	Stick man
Left a gnat's knacker .... on	Gunfire
Shovel Recce	Tallest on the right, shortest on the left
Down an give me 50	Warmer into the bank
NATO Standard (When asked how you like your cup of tea)	First round down range
Stick Man	Stand by your beds
Yellow handbag	Dhobi.
NAAFI Break	O group
Nig	Double in
Rupert	As you were
Old Sweat	Replen
All in stew	Biscuits Dead Fly
REMF	Corned dog
Squadron Smoker	Doss Bag
Range Stew	Schlaf sack
Slack to the back, same track	Wait out
Flash to bang	Egg banjo
Bedblocks	Cheese possessed
Block jobs	Biff Chit
Cake and Arse	Roger so far over
Hatch rash	Lies like a cheap NAAFI watch
Shreddies	Yellow handbag
Army left	Keep the weapon pointing down the range
Army right	Two three up, two three down
One two three one.	Stand to
Sports afternoon	Rammer out
Watch and shoot	Area Cleaning
I have no live rounds or empty cases in my possession...	Behind the gun, sticky bun
Pan Bash	Ease Springs
Endex	Bore Clear
Stand to	Shiny arse
Bullshit Baffles Brains	Roger
Regimental bath	Bore clear
Buckshee	From the right, number
Blanket stacker	Choggi Shop / Choggi Walla



**Salisbury Plain – 50 years ago**

Thank you to Dave Givens yet again for providing the photographs.



3<sup>rd</sup> Troop A Sqn having a break. L to R: Sgt Les Du Val, Cpl Jimmy O'Rourke, Tpr Dave Givens, Tpr Sam Alexander



Sgt Pete Dye, 1<sup>st</sup> Troop A Sqn trying to keep warm



**A poem by Harold 'Danny' Kaye**

Fittingly for this issue as we have an article about our participation in the Remembrance Day parade, Danny has written the following poem:

Two minutes silence to remember  
For all those lost at war  
Have they gone to a better life  
Shall we see our loved ones once more

Two minutes silence to remember  
Was their fighting all in vain  
No goodbyes to those they loved  
Left behind to bear the pain

Two minutes silence to remember  
And all the tears you have cried  
The inner numbness you must have felt  
When you knew that they had died

Two minutes silence to remember  
Is that all we have time to spare  
Theirs was the fame and glory  
Ours, Christ's Cross to bear

Two minutes silence to remember  
Forever wasting peace of mind  
To live our lives in harmony  
And goodwill for all mankind

Two minutes silence to remember  
We will bend our heads and pray  
Hearts and minds filled with pride  
Young and old we will remember this day



**Obituary**  
**Derek Coltman**  
Kindly written by Stan Gawley



Derek Coltman, who was the well known and popular driver of Ron 'Doc' Barlow's medical Half-Track in 'C' Sqn in Korea, died on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

Derek served with the 'Skins' from 1947 to 1953 and at the beginning of his service in Germany he was a member of MT Troop. He also showed he was an asset when playing Outside Right on the Regimental Football Team (Finalist's) in the Cavalry Cup of 1949.

Derek initially signed on for 5 years but as this would have expired in 1952 he signed on for an extra 6-months to qualify for deployment to Korea.

After Korea he served his remaining months in Shandur before leaving service.

After the army he spent his whole life as a HGV driver driving all over the Middle East and Eastern Europe. He enjoyed nothing better than being on the open road.

After he retired he still drove on holidays abroad and recalls driving up to the gate of his old barracks in Paderborn and saying he used to be in the "Skins". He mentions with pride that his party were given splendid meals and accommodation for two weeks and made to feel very welcome.

Betty, his wife of 57 years, died in 2011. They are survived by 5 Children, 13 grand children and 16 great grand children.

Fare The Well

**Obituaries**

It is with deep regret to inform members of the following deaths  
and we offer sincere condolences to all relatives and friends

Mr Bernard (Bubby) Kerry, 5 Innis DG circa 1946 to 1953  
Who died 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2012

Mr Alan James Lee, 5 Innis DG, 1941 to 1945  
Who died 24<sup>th</sup> August 2012

Major Alasdair Campbell, 5 Innis DG, 1954 to 1973  
Who died 27<sup>th</sup> August 2012

Mr Tom Smith, 5 Innis DG, 1945 to 1964  
Who died September 2012

Mr D A (Jock) Ramsay, 5 Innis DG, 1941 to 1946  
Who died 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012

Mr Ronald Daley, 5 Innis DG, 1948 to 1949  
Who died 24<sup>th</sup> September 2012

Mr Joe Hussey, 5 Innis DG, 1942 to 1946  
Who died 9<sup>th</sup> October 2012

Mr Derek Utton, 5 Innis DG, 1958 to 1981  
Who died 12<sup>th</sup> October 2012

Mr Louis Arthur Windeatt, 5 Innis DG, 1942 to 1946  
Who died 26<sup>th</sup> October 2012

Mr Fergie Sutherland, 5 Innis DG (Korea)  
Who died 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012

Mr Derek 'Topper' Brown, 5 Innis DG, 1950 to 1955  
Who died 4<sup>th</sup> December 2012

Mr Jack Robson, 5 Innis DG, 1952 to 1955 and RAF Regt 1956 to 1962  
Who died on date unknown

Major (Retd) Peter Duckworth, 5 Innis DG  
Who died 26<sup>th</sup> December 2012

Mr Peter Halladey, 5 Innis DG  
Who died 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012

Mr Derek Coltman, 5 Innis DG, 1947 to 1953  
Who died 4<sup>th</sup> January 2013

Mr Michael Webber, 5 Innis DG, 1948 to 1953  
Who died 11<sup>th</sup> January 2013

Mr William 'Billy' Brown, 5 Innis DG, 1953 to 1976  
Who died February 2013



For the time being  
'FARE THEE WELL'

### **The Team**

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