



## THE SHERWOOD RANGERS YEOMANRY REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION

From: Capt MA Elliott  
Hon Secretary

10<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Dear Member,

### AGM and ANNUAL DINNER - Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2015

This year's Annual Reunion Dinner will be held at 6.30 for 7.00pm on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April at the TA Centre, Carlton, by kind permission of the Squadron Leader, Major Angus Jenkins.

The cost of the Dinner will be £16-50 per person and I hope that as many members as possible will attend. Please apply to me in good time. We will always try to accommodate latecomers but if a large number of people turn up at the last minute it makes life very difficult for the organisers.

Guests are welcome at the dinner but must be connected with the SRY or other regiments.

Free Tickets. Free tickets are available to those members over 65 who are in genuinely reduced circumstances and who would not otherwise be able to attend. If you are in this situation and cannot afford a ticket I still hope that you will come - please sign the declaration on the application form and I will send you a free one.

Serving members of S Sqn should, as usual, obtain their dinner tickets from the Squadron. However, if you put your name on the Squadron list, please don't order a ticket from me as well or you will have to pay twice.

At the Dinner, we shall again be holding a raffle and any donations of prizes will be gratefully received. Last year's raffle collected £100 and I am most grateful to all who contributed.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM will be held immediately before the dinner at 6.00pm. The Agenda and a copy of the Minutes of the last meeting are enclosed. The Accounts will be presented at the meeting.

## OBITUARIES

I am sorry to have to report the deaths since my last circular of a number of members as follows:

Mr RB Barton	- Nottingham	Mr G Mayfield	- Nottingham
RW Harrison Esq	- Ashtead	Mr DD Smith MBE	- Rutland
Mr AHT Jenkins	- Bournemouth	Sgt R Vennant	- S(SRY) Sqn RY
Mr GG Jones	- Penmaenmaur		

I am particularly sad to report the death of a serving member, Sgt Bob Vennant, who died in November following a short illness. A long-serving and popular member of the Sqn, his loss is keenly felt by all.

Sadly, last autumn also saw the deaths of two former commanding officers of the Royal Yeomanry – Lt Col The Hon Michael Allenby (3<sup>rd</sup> Viscount Allenby) (Royal Hussars) who commanded from 1974-77 and Lt Col Iain Brooking-Thomas TD (WDGN) who was CO from 1989-91. Both were successful and much respected COs who did much to make the RY what it is today.

## REPORT FROM THE MIDLANDS BRANCH

I attach a report from the Midlands Branch. I am extremely grateful to all members of the Branch Committee for all their hard work and support, particularly to Mike Freeman who has in recent years served as both Chairman and Secretary. Since the report was written, Mr Tony Higton has agreed to take on the job of Secretary and I look forward to working with him in the future.

The Branch is keen to establish contact with members living in the area who served in more recent years (1980s/90s) and who may have lost touch in the meantime. Please contact one of the Committee members on the telephone numbers shown.

## S (SRY) Sqn THE ROYAL YEOMANRY

The recent decision to increase the size of the reserves has presented a major challenge, not least because it coincided with the introduction of a new outsourced recruiting system which was designed for the regular army with little, if any, attention to the special needs of the TA. Some improvements have been made but a major challenge remains and recruiting for the reserves overall is behind schedule.

Not for the SRY, though, which has done what it has always done, which is to get on and do the job, if necessary despite the system, and using the tried and tested methods of local effort and capitalising on its local brand. As a result, the Sqn went to Camp in the autumn well up to strength, with its full complement of vehicles and with a trained soldier in very seat. This was a remarkable achievement in the circumstances and all concerned must be congratulated.

However, more remains to be done as, given the overall situation, the authorities have said that successful units can continue to recruit as many new members as can qualify, so the Sqn Leader has set his sights on even higher numbers...

The Association has supported recruiting with financial and other assistance including taking part in local activities which help to reinforce our local image.

The recent reorganisation has meant the departure from the Royal Yeomanry of one of its founder members, the Wiltshire Yeomanry (formerly A Sqn), to be replaced by the Warwickshire and Worcester Yeomanry in Dudley and the Shropshire Yeomanry in Telford. This means that the SRY is now the senior sqn, so due course it may be expected to become A (SRY) Sqn RY.



The Sqn on exercise

### CAVALRY MEMORIAL PARADE - Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2015

This year the Cavalry Memorial Parade will be held on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May in Hyde Park and I hope that the Regiment will be well represented. Detailed arrangements will be co-ordinated through the Midlands Branch so, if you would like to attend, please contact the Branch Secretary. I assume that the RY will, as usual, be organising a lunch after the parade. If you would like to attend the RY lunch, please let me know as soon as possible.



The Cavalry Memorial, Hyde Park

### NORMANDY JUNE 2014

Last year was the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D Day and our tour included the main ceremony at Bayeux cemetery on the morning of 6<sup>th</sup> June as well as the usual SRY commemorations on the 7<sup>th</sup>. The forecast was bad and the weather the previous week had been awful but, except for an overnight storm, and unlike in 1944, it was warm and sunny throughout our trip.

On our first day, 5<sup>th</sup> June, we followed part of the SRY route south via Mont Pinçon to Berjou where the Regiment fought its last major battle in Normandy on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1944. At Berjou, we dedicated a memorial to those killed nearby which had been erected on our behalf by the local community organised by M Jean-François Brisset, a local schoolmaster, and M Romain Bon the founder and curator of the local war museum. On the way, we stopped at the calvary outside Berjou near which the worst of the battle took place.



The Calvary



Berjou - waiting for the start



Maj Marsh, the Padre & Hon Col

The ceremony, which was attended by the Mayor and Regional Councillor and a large number of local people, was conducted by Padre Mark Chester of the RY who was travelling with us and who also conducted the SRY service at Bayeux on 7<sup>th</sup> June. Wreaths were laid by local schoolchildren, by the Mayor and on behalf of the Regiment. Afterwards, we were entertained to drinks at M Bon's museum and we were then welcomed to M Brisset's school which kindly arranged lunch served to us by the children. We are most grateful to M Brisset, his headmaster M Mary and the Mayor and citizens of Berjou for their kind welcome and their help in commemorating our comrades who died there 70 years ago. The visit was well covered by the local press and even the BBC was represented – see: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-27769288>.



The children with their wreaths



The Ceremony at the memorial



Messrs Maltby, Woodward & Barrow



The new SRY Memorial at Berjou Church



The Secretary thanking Romain Bon at his Museum

## 6<sup>th</sup> June

Following the congestion experienced around the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2004, elaborate traffic controls were introduced and these, together with the need for all personnel and vehicles to have special passes caused the organisers considerable headaches in the lead up to departure. After a long wait, most, but not all, of the necessary passes, arrived about four days before we were due to leave. However, once there, the threatened controls were flexibly enforced so that, in the event, 6<sup>th</sup> June passed smoothly and we achieved all that we set out to do.

We deliberately avoided the big international ceremony at Ouistreham as we knew that it would be too much to try to get there after the Bayeux ceremony. Disregarding the instructions to move from one side of Bayeux to the other via a forming up point 30 km away in the middle of Caen, our coach proceeded direct to Bayeux cemetery unhindered. The ceremony, attended by the Queen, went off without a hitch and it was good to see the RY Band leading the service with their usual excellent playing.

A highlight of the day was the fact that the SRY Guidon had the honour of being the representative colour selected to parade at Bayeux cathedral and at the cemetery. Despite very short notice, the guidon party under the leadership of SSM Stone put on a first-class performance and were a credit to the Regiment. We were glad, too, that they were able to join us at the SRY ceremony at our memorial at Bayeux museum on the 7<sup>th</sup>. It would have been good if the serving members could have taken part in more of the tour, but their participation was put together in great haste and, in the event, this proved impossible to include in their programme.



The SRY Guidon on parade



The RY Band Marching on



Prince Charles reading the Lesson



Historic aircraft fly past

Another lesson that had been learned in 2004 was the time taken to get everyone away afterwards and this time the organisers provided a lunch tent with big TV screens next to the cemetery. There, we sat in comfort and had our lunch watching James Holland telling the world's TV audience how the Sherwood Rangers won the war followed by the French President marching interminably up and down the red carpet as he welcomed the world's leaders to Ouistreham. Our coach arrived just as he began his speech, so that seemed a good time to leave. We learned later that the tent was supposed to be "dry" but somehow the SRY tables were well provided with wine...



The Guidon Party with the Padre in the lunch tent



Cols Astbury and Hunt with SSM Stone

### 7<sup>th</sup> June

On 7<sup>th</sup> June we had the usual warm welcome at Bayeux and Tilly. The service at Bayeux in the presence of the Mayor and local dignitaries was conducted by Padre Mark Chester assisted by the Dean of Bayeux, Father Laurent Berthout, and was made especially memorable by the presence of the Guidon. We were also pleased to be joined by the CO RY and other members of RHQ as well as the head of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in France.

The only let-down of the whole trip was that our planned visit to Gold Beach that afternoon had to be abandoned due to traffic congestion. Fortunately, we were able to turn around before we got completely stuck (not always easy in a coach on Normandy's narrow lanes) and Col Hunt briefed us on what really happened on the Jig Green sector of Gold Beach while we were parked outside the potato factory between Creully and Coulombs.

We continued to point 103, Tilly cemetery and Fontenay, and then back to St Pierre for the ceremony at Hélie Farm, where RHQ was hit. We laid our final wreath at the civilian memorial at Tilly museum where we finished with the usual cider with our local friends who, as always had turned out in force to welcome us. Our thanks once again to Jean-Pierre Benamou, Stéphane Jacquet, the Regional Councillor Olivier Quesnot and the Mayor and people of Tilly for making us so welcome.



The SRY memorial at Bayeux on 7<sup>th</sup> June



The officers on parade



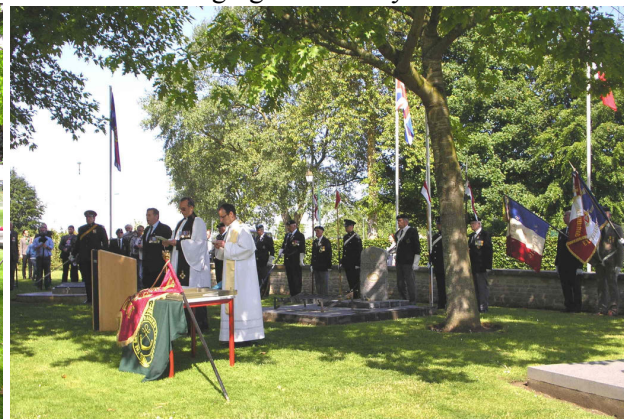
Joan & Stan Cox with Graham Stevenson



The congregation at Bayeux



Before the service



Padre Mark Chester and Father Laurent Berthout



Joan & Stan Cox with the Mayor of Bayeux



Lunch at Bayeux Museum  
(Padre Skinner's daughter Annette Conway seated in the background)



At Tilly Cemetery



Ceremony at SRY Memorial at St Pierre



Capt David Render at St Pierre



Jean-Pierre Benamou  
at Tilly

During the trip we were pleased to see Padre Skinner's daughter, Annette Conway, who joined us at Berjou and at Bayeux on 7<sup>th</sup> June. Those who have not read her father's book *The Man who Worked on Sundays* should surely do so. It can be ordered from the Association.

### NORMANDY 7<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2015

After the major events of 2014, we shall not be organising a coach party this year. However, the SRY ceremonies at Bayeux and Tilly will go ahead on 7<sup>th</sup> June as usual and a number of members will be making their own way to participate. If you would like to attend, please let me know as soon as possible.

### GALLIPOLI AUGUST 2015

A tour is being organised, run by a specialist guide and including visits to key SRY and SNH sites, to coincide with the centenary of the Gallipoli campaign. If you are interested, please contact Martin Kerry as soon as possible.



WESTMINSTER ABBEY 6<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2014

The Regiment was represented at the Annual Field of Remembrance organised by the Royal British Legion at Westminster Abbey. It was a fine ceremony and Prince Harry officiated, following the tradition originally set by his great-grandmother. My thanks to all who came and to Capt Nick Robinson for placing the 264 crosses representing our dead in WW2.



Mr & Mrs Dan Powell  
with John & Graham Stevenson



Bernard & Jan Andrews, Philippa D'Eath, Christopher Pike  
and Capt Nick Robinson



Prince Harry inspecting the plots



SRY Remembrance crosses

This year the ceremony will be held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November. Security is heightened these days and, if you would like to come, you will need a ticket. However, I hope that anyone who would like to attend will not be deterred. Please give me at least eight weeks notice so that I can make the necessary arrangements on your behalf.

REMEMBRANCE DAY 9<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2014

As usual, the Sqn paraded in Newark on Remembrance Day and, for the first time, a detachment paraded in Nottingham as well. Afterwards, all gathered for a curry lunch at Carlton which was also attended by members of the SNH Association.



The Sqn on parade at Newark



The Guidon Party marching on



Brig Browne taking the salute



The Secretary, the Sqn Leader and Maj Marsh with a future recruit

The people of Newark always turn out in force to see “their” regiment. In recent years, however, the number of Old Comrades attending has dwindled and I hope that, in future, more retired members will join the parade to support the Sqn.

### REGIMENTAL MUSEUM AT THORESBY

The Thoresby museum has had another good year with record attendance and several successful events both for Friends and the public. If you are near and have not seen it, you should definitely go.

See also the website at: <http://www.qrlnymuseum.co.uk/>

It would be impossible to run such a museum without the assistance of our loyal and hard-working volunteers and we are grateful to all who have stepped forward to assist in this way.

If you would like to help as a volunteer, please let me know. I would also urge those who have not already done so to join as a Friend and support the Museum while taking advantage of the benefits and activities arranged for Friends. To join, please contact:

QRLNY Museum  
Thoresby Courtyard  
Thoresby Park  
Nr Perlethorpe,  
Nottinghamshire NG22 9EP

email: [curator@qrlnymuseum.co.uk](mailto:curator@qrlnymuseum.co.uk)

### CHRISTOPHERSON DIARY

The wartime diary of Lt Col Stanley Christopherson entitled *An Englishman at War* and edited by James Holland has now been published by Random House and is available from bookshops and the Association using the attached form. It has been well received and is thoroughly recommended.

### HARD FIGHTING

The second volume of Col Jonathan Hunt's Regimental history entitled *Hard Fighting* and covering the period from 1900 to 1946 will be published later in the year. This, too, is well worth reading and the author has uncovered much new material about the part played by the SRY in the Boer War and the First World War, as well as the true story of what happened on Jig Green sector of Gold Beach on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1944.

### ITEMS FOR SALE

I enclose a list of books, ties, buttons and other items for sale together with details of how to order by post. Please send your order to Chris Woodward as shown on the form and not to me. As usual, these items will also be available at the Dinner.

We have also had some large (5ft x 3ft) SRY flags made and have a few available for sale at a price of £80 each. More details are given on the attached Items for Sale list.

### UNIFORMS

If you have any items of uniform such as Greens or Mess Kit which either belong to the Regiment or which you would be prepared to donate, they would be much appreciated - please contact Capt Steve Goodwin (PSAO) at Carlton (0115 961 8722).

### WELFARE

I should like to remind you that I rely entirely on members to keep me informed about other members, particularly those in need, so, if you know of someone who needs help or a visit, please inform me or one of the Branch representatives and we will do what we can to assist them, either practically or financially. I am sure that I speak for all members in saying that we continue to be most grateful for all the work done by Don Brown and others in visiting and supporting our less fortunate comrades.

## WIDOWS' FUND

Thanks to the generosity of members, the Widows' Fund had another successful year. We again raised over £2,500 and were able to send out gift vouchers worth £40 to each of 52 widows at Christmas. I received numerous letters of sincere thanks and there is no doubt that this effort is appreciated. What is most important is that the recipients know that they are not forgotten.

As in previous years, I am extremely grateful to Capt David Render, who raised more than half the total through the proceeds of his popular lecture series; and to his friend Vic Benson (ex-RMP and City of London Police) who helps on these occasions. I would also like to thank the members of the Midlands Branch its contributions and all those who made personal donations, large or small.

## TAX RELIEF ON DONATIONS

As a registered charity, the Association can claim tax relief on the amount of any donation, however small, provided the donor signs a declaration that tax has been paid on the amount given. This also applies to donations to the Widows' Fund (see above). Hence, if you are a taxpayer and have not already signed such a declaration, please complete and sign the declaration on the proforma which will allow us to reclaim tax on any donation that you may make now or in the future.

## FINALLY

Please also let me know when you move so that I can keep my address list up-to-date. It is difficult to keep track of everybody. Last year the circulars addressed to the following were returned:

Mr Bower	- Nottingham	Mr H Langsdale	- Nottingham
Mr R Bradder	- Nottingham	Mr P Leversuch	- London
Mr R Brocklehurst	- High Peak	Maj TSD Lyle	- QRL
Mr M Chapman	- Nottingham	Capt RLW Marsh	- Hurley
Mr DN Clarke	- Newark	Mr P McGary	- Nottingham
Mr ES Corthorn	- Nottingham	SA Nelson Lucas Esq	- Milton Keynes
Mr GW Croxton	- Launceston	Mr S Pezaro	- Nottingham
Mr RJ Dickson	- Nottingham	Mr JS Tarling	- Bristol
Mr D Falkner	- Nottingham	Mr P Torrington	- Nottingham
Mr AF Gibbons	- Mansfield	Mr CS Watts	- Nottingham
Mr Grice	- Nottingham	WO2 D West	- Leicester
Mr WD Harris	- Edgeware		

If you have any news of them or of anyone who did not receive this circular, please let me know.

My thanks to all who have contributed to this newsletter, particularly to Mrs Sue Hunt, Mrs Ann Barrow and others who have supplied me with photographs. Also to Capt David Render, Mike Freeman and the Midlands Branch Committee, Chris Woodward for his organisation of the Dinner, Martin Kerry for his energetic support, not least his excellent organisation of our trips, as well as to Capt Steve Goodwin and SSM Karl Stone at Carlton for all their help throughout the year.

I look forward to seeing as many of possible of you at the Dinner and at other events during the year.

Yours sincerely,

*Mike Elliott*

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held at Carlton at 6.00pm on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2015. The Agenda will be as follows:

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Apologies                       | 5. Officers and Trustees               |
| 2. Minutes of last AGM             | 6. Midlands Branch Report and Accounts |
| 3. Matters Arising                 | 7. Welfare Matters                     |
| 4. Treasurer's Report and Accounts | 8. Any Other Business                  |

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SHERWOOD RANGERS YEOMANRY REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION HELD AT CARLTON ON 26<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2014

Present: Col Hunt (Chairman), Maj Cornish (Treasurer), Capt Elliott (Secretary) and 16 other members

1. Apologies for Absence - Received from 11 members
2. Minutes of last AGM - The minutes of the last meeting were approved.
3. Matters Arising - None
4. Treasurer's Report

Maj Cornish presented the accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2013 which had been approved by the Trustees in their meeting just finished. These showed net outgoing resources of £4,162.

The accounts were approved, proposed by Mr Freeman and seconded by Mr DHF Brown.

5. Officers and Trustees

Capt Elliott reported that there had been no changes in the officers and Trustees since the last AGM.

6. Midlands Branch Report and Accounts

Mr Freeman presented the report of the Midlands Branch which had had another successful year. Mr Woodward presented the Branch accounts which showed a surplus of £224 for the year and net assets of £16,963 and confirmed that they had been approved by the Branch.

7. Welfare

Capt Elliott said that, over the past year, the Association had continued to make grants to members in need and to fund the sending of welfare parcels to those on operations. These appeared to have been well received and he thanked all those involved in this important effort.

Mr DHF Brown reported on his work in visiting and supporting our less fortunate members. Mr Perry proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Brown for his work and this was carried unanimously.

## 9. Any Other Business

Col Hunt thanked the Treasurer and Secretary for their work on behalf of the Association over the last 20 years.

Col Hunt reported on the moves by the RY to strengthen the RY Regimental Association and said that, whatever the future may hold, the SRY Association would continue its strong commitment to and support for the Sqn. He also thanked Col Colville for his efforts in strengthening the links between the Sqn and the Association.

Capt Elliott thanked all those that had helped in organising the Dinner.

MAE

2 Sep 2014

## **MIDLANDS BRANCH ANNUAL REPORT 2014**

Once again I am pleased to report that the Branch has had a very good year. I am also pleased to report that the Branch is in a goods financial position due to the concerted efforts by the Branch committee and the continued support from the Branch membership.

New members are always welcome. All ex-members of the SRY, serving members or ex-members of the RY, or if you were or are attached to either, you are automatically a member of the Midlands Branch by right. We will always be pleased to see you at our monthly meetings which are held on the fourth Wednesday each month at the TA Centre Carlton, by kind permission of the Squadron Leader Major A D Jenkins. Please remember to let us know your full address and telephone number.

### Visits and Events during 2014

We had a very busy 2014 starting with the Regimental OCA Annual dinner in April and in May, the OCA Cavalry Memorial Parade in Hyde Park. In June we took a coach party to Normandy where we made our usual pilgrimages to Bayeux and several other places of interest. Our Remembrance parade took place as usual in Newark on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November. The only negative point was that the number of ex SRY comrades attending, seems to diminish every year and I would ask for those who are able, to make a concerted effort to boost the numbers. If you have a problem with transport please would you make any of the Branch committee aware? We will always try to assist whenever possible.

This year the Branch paid for two children from the Carlton Central School to visit Ypres in Belgium in October. This is part of our continuing commitment to support this school with their projects about WW1 and WW2 which the children are involved in. We also arranged a trip to Bournemouth in October stopping in the Tower House Hotel. My personal thanks must go out to everyone who helped out in the organisation of all our events throughout 2014.

### Events in 2015

In April 2015 Martin Kerry has organised a trip to the Somme. In June, some members will be visiting Normandy and the Branch has organised a return trip in October to Bournemouth. If you are interested in any of our future trips please contact one of the committee members below.

Welfare

On the Welfare side, if you are aware of anyone who has passed away, is suffering or in need, please contact Donald Brown or any committee member. The Midlands Branch has always had special interest in the welfare of the Association members and widows, and we actively support the Widows' Fund by way of a share from profits that we make from our Branch functions, plus an annual donation of £100. Any donations to the Widows' Fund will, as always, be greatly appreciated.

Midlands Branch Committee for 2015

John Maltby	Vice Chairman
Tony Higton	Secretary
Chris Woodward	Treasurer
Donald Brown	Welfare Visitor

*Mike Freeman (Branch Chairman 2014)*