

Bradbury Mercury
1960s 16 Signal Regiment Reunion Club



Issue Number 35

Edited by Iain Haldane
www.the-60s-16ers.com

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On Front Page:

About 20 years ago Rita's sister gave her a Yucca plant from her garden in Somerset. She was planted in a sheltered area facing due east. They only flower once after seven years and this is the third Yucca to flower since then.

Editors Ramble.

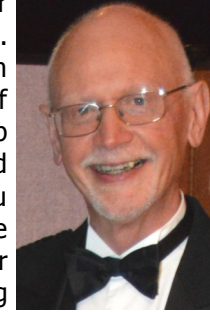
I volunteered seven issues ago (Issue 29 February 2012) to edit the Bradbury Mercury and with the help of many of you I have again managed to put together a magazine. It has been getting harder. I got two poems from Moira Graham (She told me about them at the reunion) and I did not get anything else until the 2nd of December 2014. That was the letter from Lt Col Whitley (Pages 4/5). I made a few requests via the ComCen for pieces for the Mercury and Peter Crane and Paddy Conroy sent in an article each. So again I am asking for articles, pictures, stories for the August 2015 Issue. Anything you can think of. Remember it should be in your own words, not a link to a web page showing an interesting story. What I would like from you is your slant on that story in your own words on how it affected you. Do not send me the link and say that would make a good story. I am not the reporter but the Editor. If you have been somewhere or seen an article in a newspaper/magazine that you think should go in the Mercury, it is up to you to write something and submit it to me for putting into the magazine. Sorry about the rant but needs must. We will be away for three weeks from the 9th February so any articles for the August edition will be looked at when we come back from Vegas/New York.

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Our Chairperson's Letter

At the AGM I did not get the opportunity to thank you for electing me as your chairman – thank you all very much indeed. It is a great honour to lead such a vibrant group, and we seem to be going from strength to strength. Much of this is due, of course, to the great venues for our reunions that you keep coming up with. I know this entails a lot of work, and at the end of the day only one venue is selected, but this does not stop you from searching out these great venues. In October, all the choices were of excellent venues, so that is great for next year and beyond. In the meantime, I am looking forward to having the shortest journey I have had to any of the reunions – just to my neighbouring county of Devon, with a chance to explore Exmoor for some walks. This is the cheapest venue for some years, and Bill knows it well from his Royal Navy reunions, so well done Bill and Anne.



Thank you Liz for persisting with Hereford as a proposed venue and thank you Reme for your superb organisation – the numbers attending says it all.

I have to say how good it is to see the Recce weekend developing from a small meeting of committee members to a good sized mini reunion – we just can't keep away from each other!

As you will see further on in this issue, I have had a very warm and complimentary letter from Colonel Whittle, the current commanding officer of 16 Signals Regiment. It shows the value that MoD places on the support and welfare benefits of vibrant organisations like ours. As we know, so many long-service personnel are lost when they finish their military careers. Hopefully other decades of the regiment will see the benefits and take up my offer of assistance in setting up like organisations.

They arrive back in June this year, and perhaps once they have had time to settle in, we can arrange a visit for those interested. I certainly intend to invite Colonel Whittle and his wife to the October reunion (with Noreen's approval, hopefully!)

Caroline Addison from the RSA emailed Rosemary as Secretary to inform us that the present Warden of the Tower of London is an ex-Corps member, and would be pleased to organise an evening at the Tower of London for a group of us including a private tour of the Tower. The only cost would be the food, and of course overnight accommodation for those having to travel (which is most of us). I would certainly be interested and if anyone else would, please let me know.

I am looking forward to serving you for the next 21 months – please let me have your ideas for how we can make this an even better organisation, or if there is anything that you don't agree with, I will always be prepared to listen with an open mind.

Best wishes to you all for 2015.

Peter Crane

From: Lieutenant Colonel S W Whittleby R SIGNALS



Commanding Officer
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Quay Cottage
North Quay Hill
NEWQUAY
Cornwall
TR7 1HE

29th November 2014

Dear Peter,

It is with great pleasure that I write to you as Chairman of The 60s 16ers. Colonel Graham Norton passed on your details and I thought it was only appropriate that I drop you a line.

The Regiment is in fine form and fettle, poised to move back to Stafford in summer 2015. To ensure we are kept on our toes, we are also preparing one of The Squadrons to support The Army's lead Armoured Task Force as of January. I would hazard a guess that not that much has really changed since you were here!

If you or any of The 60s 16ers would like anymore details or a chance to visit us before we leave Germany then please get in touch. My personal email stuart.whittleby636@mod.uk is probably the easiest way.

P.T.O.

The Regiment and I are suitably impressed there are a stalwart bunch like yourselves back in the UK. We are very much looking forward to strengthening the bonds of comradeship when we return next summer.

If there is anything we can do in the meantime then please do get in touch!

Yours Aye,



14 FACTS ABOUT THE NEW REGULAR ARMY

EARN GOOD MONEY

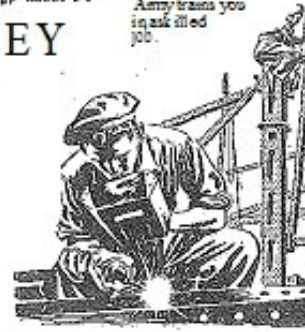
while training for later life

- 1 Good pay and generous leave on full pay.
- 2 No fares to work, no food or clothes to buy.
- 3 A steady job. No standing off. Good training for later life.
- 4 Opportunity to specialize. The right job for the right man.
- 5 Ample leisure and relaxation. 'Civies' may be worn off duty.
- 6 Plenty of sport and games to keep you gloriously fit.
- 7 Promotion on merit. Every man gets his chance.
- 8 Better conditions and allowances for married men.
- 9 Generous increased pensions for long service.
- 10 Free education in a wide range of subjects.
- 11 Minimum colour service now - only 5 years.
- 12 Trained to lead to be cool, quick, self-confident.
- 13 World travel. (Maximum overseas service 3 1/2 years.)
- 14 Adventure, comradeship & a promising future.

£125 BOUNTY for the under 40's.

Men under 40 with not less than 2 Years' previous service who rejoin for 3 or 4 years get big TAX FREE Bounties - £25 cash on re-enlistment, £75-£100 on discharge. Ask any Army Recruiting Centre or write to Dept K1115 War Office, A.G.10, London, S.W.1, for 'Short service' leaflet.

Good money while you learn. The Army trains you in a skilled job.



Join the modern
**REGULAR
ARMY**

An Army recruiting advert from December 1946 – about the time many of our members were born.

Peter Crane



This was Bill and I just after getting married 15th February 2014, at St Phillips Church, Cliftonville, Margate, Kent. 15th February 2015 will be our first anniversary. The wedding, the wedding breakfast and the dancing to live brass and rock band all took place in the church.

Bill paid for the all the drink and never drank during the wedding ceremony etc. He decided to get a pint just before the last waltz and lo and behold was told the bar was closed not a happy chappy.

Bill brought me to Devon for a honeymoon and we've been here ever since.

Anne Sheppard



A Scottish delicacy, farmed Salmon.
Guess what it contains? Fish! Labelling
gone Mad!

Note it Contains Fish



Skin-On Boneless Salmon Fillets

Allergy Advice
Contains Fish.

Nutrition Information

Typical values per 100g:
Energy 758kJ/182kcal; Fat 11g,
of which saturates 1.9g; Carbohydrate
0.8g, of which sugars 0.8g; Fibre 0.5g;
Protein 20g; Salt 1.3g.
Omega 3 3.8g.

*For more information visit www.lidl.co.uk
This pack contains 2 servings

Storage Instructions

Keep refrigerated. Once opened, use
within 24 hours and by the use by date.
Suitable for home freezing. Freeze on day
of purchase and use within one month.
Defrost thoroughly in refrigerator before
use. Do not defrost in microwave. Use
within 24 hours of defrosting. Once
defrosted, do not refreeze.
Use by: see front of pack.

Additional Information

High in Protein and Omega 3.
Produced in the UK using Scottish salmon.
This product may have been previously
frozen while in optimum condition.
Although every care has been taken to
remove bones, some may remain.

Krefeld Kapers

I shouldn't be asking this question, but I think I'll give it a try,
To ask all the Signals girls present, to wonder and ask themselves why,
We didn't stay on in the Army, could have done a really good job,
Or was it the fact that the boys were, the reason we all got demobbed?
We had a good time in the barracks, not on duty we'd go to the club
Or maybe on the odd occasion, we'd end up in the old German pub.
We'd eat Bratwurst and Bochwurst and Schnitzels and drink the odd glass of wine,
How lucky we were that the Army allowed us to have a good time.
The nights we had to spend sitting, on shift work down in the "Hole"
It felt like the clock would go backwards, and I wished I was still on the "Dole"
But morning would break after spending what would seem like 48 hours
We'd get into bed real exhausted, the lads called our block "Tampax Towers"
Looking back, I think I was lucky to have seen the things I have seen,
To have donned that smart green uniform, and vowed to serve Country and Queen.
Still, now that I think of the friendships we made so long ago,
If we hadn't seen Bradbury Barracks how would we possibly know,
That tonight as we gather together, for the good times we had back then,
A life in the Signals was awesome, and I wish I could do it again.

North West

I alluded to the North West in my article **After the Army** in the last edition of the Mercury. In my own defence I must say I am fully aware that most areas of Britain have their own particular plus points and beauty. My enthusiasm for the North West is simply an accumulation of lots of local Holidays over the years plus living here.

Irene has lived in this part of the world all of her life and I for 46 years. In this day and age of Motorways and Dual Carriageways we are on the doorstep of its wider footprint. It is about an hour from our front door to such places as Snowdon, the Peaks and Dales. The Lake's are about two hours away and I'm sure most, if not all of us, are familiar with these jewels. Also like many of us; hill walking has been a lifelong hobby. Although regrettably at 70 plus the hips and lumber regions have put paid to that. However there are lots of flat places plus lots of National Trust properties within 40 miles with the magnificent Ness Gardens on our doorstep. Also we are no more than an hour from Manchester, much less from Chester and the hugely regenerated Liverpool City with its new Liverpool One shopping complex. This, I have been told, is a dream come true for women (with lots and lots of man crèche's). However there is much, much more than shops which make for at the very least a long weekend.

The City has lots of Georgian Buildings, and two Cathedrals. The Catholic one is known locally as the Tepee for obvious reasons. You can view it on Google. The Anglican is the largest in the UK, it has I believe! the 5th largest bell in the world. To visit Liverpool and not visit this magnificent building would be daft. The Georgian buildings, Museums, Libraries and much more were built by the Trade Barons of the 18th/19th Century. Many of their edifice's are now part of the Tourist and Museum circuit.

A section in the Albert dock is dedicated to the slave trade. Not just African slaves however dreadful that was, but also the price exacted on the general populace. However this was the case in most European Cities' and Liverpool was probably no better or worse than any other conurbation, saving for the fact it was part of the trade triangle. European goods to Africa, Slaves to America, Sugar-Rice-Tobacco and later Cotton back to Europe. One weekend would be nowhere near enough to take in this city especially if West Kirby and



A View of Chester

Southport were on the itinerary. Both of which are a mere 20 minutes from Liverpool by tube train and free with a National Bus pass. Not to forget a visit to Formby to see the large gathering of Gormley Statues. We have on our doorstep The Royal Liverpool Golf Course of Hoylake which is located on the Wirral peninsula. It was last year's Open venue so the Yanks will soon be over in droves to play there. I know the starter and a number of members so may be able to arrange a game or two next season! There are several Travel Lodge's/ Premier Inn's approx £35 night and for the well heeled such as Reme Harper and Dave Aldous. There are also several top notch Hotels such as the Grosvenor Chester owned by Gerald Duke of Westminster. If those two gents wish to swank I can organise a special offer for two nights bunk beds at £200.25ppn, not sure if that includes breakies or even if his Duckliness (Gerry) would make chip butties.

Paddy Conroy

Cyprus Rugby Dinner.

We have a few pictures dotted around the house, many of them in the living room. The one that got me in the mood to write this article is well very, very memorable!

We were in Cyprus, posted to 9 Signal Regiment. I of course got involved with the 9 Signal Regiment Rugby Club. This was normally written as IX RUFC. We had our own bar which was about 50 yards from the pitch. In fact the only club on Cyprus who had their clubhouse adjacent to the pitch. Rita, as some of you may know, is a very good knitter. Her idea to make some money for the club funds was to knit some Bobble Hats. These were in the 9 Sig colours of yellow and black with the letters IX RUFC at the front. She charged a £1.50 Cypriot for each hat, some were made some for the IX RUFC junior members. We are not exactly sure but we think she knitted over 160 hats during our tour. They were prized by the players and supporters alike. So much so that one appeared on the head of a member of another island team it was immediately rescued and returned home.

We had a great time there and had many fantastic Rugby nights in the club and a good few dinners for players and supporters. These were usually held in the UKBC, this was and might still be the club for all the Civvy's who worked at 9 Sigs.

Usually at the dinner we would serve up a Biggle's Punch as the guests entered the hall. This consisted of a humongous amount of fruit all peeled and chopped up and put in the beautiful Crystal Bowl borrowed from the Officer's Mess. The fruit was then covered with the contents of a bottle of Gin plus a bottle each of Martini white and red. Left to marinade for at least an hour before the meal began. Before serving ice was added and the bowl was topped up with 24 bottles of Schweppes Soda Water. This was then served to the guests as they arrived. Of course as befitting the occasion and having being prepared in a Crystal Bowl it was served in polystyrene coffee cups.

Well one day Rita said to me that she had an idea for an entertainment for the next Rugby Club dinner. She told me that her Vicar had done it back home in Taunton and thought that all attending would love to see this act.

I got four of the players together and told them of Rita's idea, surprisingly all were in favour.

Rita then came up with the costume that we were to wear.

She collected four of the guys older swim costumes, to these she sewed on strips of crepe paper. She also made crepe paper Tutu's for all of us. We all wore wigs, had on our Army boots with on a piece of lace through the middle holes. At the last minute she attached a piece of tinsel to our bodies. See from the photograph were she stuck them. The fifth guy, young Ian McNelly borrowed his WRAC Girlfriend's Leotard. We practised a few times before the big night around at our house but all of us were wee bit, just a wee bit nervous about how it would go down. We need not have worried.

Because Rita had suggested what we were about to attempt, we encouraged her and her cohort in fun that they introduce us. It went something like this.

"Ladies and Gentlemen. We now humbly present, at Great Cost, from their current Tour of Cyprus, The Ay Nik Corps De Ballet."

Well it was now time for us to get on stage and perform.

The other four lads had decided that as they were big roughly, toughy rugby players and that because Rita had started all this and that I was married to her, that it was my place to go out first.

So, after topping up with more Biggle's Punch I got ready. To the strains of the "Sugar Plum Fairy" I danced out on the stage. I paused bent over and looked back at the four faces looking out vertically from the door, they then danced out. We did about three minutes finishing with the Can-Can just managing to catch Ian McNelly just before he hit the floor. We took our bow to rapturous applause. At least that is my story and I am sticking to it.

Sain Kaldane





It took a while to get all the usual suspects down and in position for this photo. You may note that that all did not get in the frame but we might have a solution to that for Bideford. Below you can see all the Ladies present at the reunion who served in 16 Signal Regiment.



When I was touting for articles for the Mercury I asked if any of the 60s-16ers had tried for and got a Tower of London Poppy. Only Hazel and Ted Hebden replied in the affirmative. Last Friday we were out for a Groupon Meal. Whilst waiting for our friends to arrive at the restaurant I was checking my email and Facebook. Saw a link from Ted Hebden. It showed a photo of their friend on his yacht in Long Island Sound. I asked where he lived, it happened to be Port Washington where he and his wife have been for over 40 years. This is also where our Daughter-in-law grew up before she came too Glasgow to meet and wed our youngest son. They now live in Mineola which is about 8 miles away by road. As Hazel said "Small world".

Anyway back to the Poppies. We also applied for a got a poppy. I was watching BBC Breakfast and they had a piece about the Poppies were being made and where they were going, so I got on the computer found the site and ordered a Poppy. Our order number was 127137, I told as many of our friends as possible but none of them got in on time to order a Poppy.

Fain Haldane

Hazel & Ted Hebden's Poppy



Our poppy arrived at the end of November, lot quicker than we were expecting. It has pride of place in our sitting room. We also visited the Tower of London to see the poppies in situ. Well worth the visit. On the same visit we also went to the Flanders Field Memorial Garden next to the Guards Museum.

Hazel Hebden

Tower of London
Poppies



Flanders Fields 1914-2014'
Memorial Garden

Wellington Barracks



Rita & Iain Haldane's Poppy

When we ordered the Poppy we were informed that delivery would be around February/March 2015. Rita and I came back from the Gym around 12:30 one day and found the usual note saying that when you were out etc. Luckily our neighbour had been in when the van came. So I went down stairs and knocked on his door. "Yes", he said, "this box came for you." I had a inkling what this was even though at that time I did not know that Yodel had the contract to deliver all the Poppies. I then opened the box in front of our neighbour. He was very surprised when I told him what it was. It seemed he had not taken in the information about the Tower of London Poppies.



We have kept in it the box since then. This is not the final location as we are waiting till our roof is repaired and the living room has been redecorated before choosing a display location. The pictures show the box the Poppy came in. You can also see the Booklet "Your piece of history" and the Certificate.



The Certificate has been reproduced below.



Karakoram Hike

Every 3 months in Saudi we used to get 3 weeks leave with air fares paid to UK or equivalent – so I decided that this was a good opportunity to go to the Himalayas. After all I was halfway there, and therefore my airfare would be paid (it was the same price as flying to the UK).

I reckoned the best bet for a first trip would be the Western end, in the part called the Karakoram. This range forms the backbone of Kashmir.

Kashmir was under the "joint protection" of India and Pakistan. The locals we met were very cynical about this protection. They felt the reasons for the presence of the two local large countries was purely selfish - to ensure the natural defences of the mountains were maintained in friendly hands (with Russia and China beyond the mountains), and perhaps to exploit the mineral wealth of the mountains. To be fair, the first reason was perfectly natural and I saw no grounds for the second.

In the Eastern end of the range stands K2 and Annapurna, but this part of the range was a long trek from the main towns. The Western end, in Pakistan's protection, is overseen by Nanga Parbat (26,660 feet) and Rakaposhi (25,551 feet). Rakaposhi overlooks the main town, Gilgit. My objective was much less ambitious than climbing



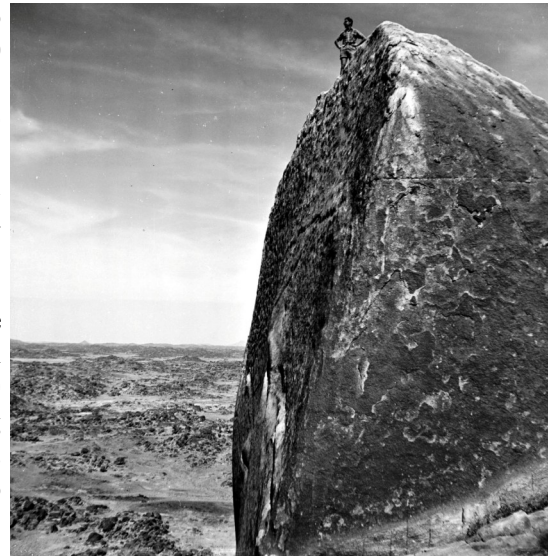
either of these. I wanted to go North from Gilgit to the Hunza area and reach the Balta Glacier and a mountain of 20,000 feet beside a pass beside the glacier.

Once I had established, by letter, from the Pakistan High Commission in London, that the trip was acceptable in principle, I had to start getting fit.

Living at 6,000 feet was an advantage, the normal



summer daytime temperature of 100 to 140 degrees Fahrenheit (38 to 60 degrees Celsius), was definitely not. I persuaded Bob Spooner, a gentle 6 foot 2 giant, to join me. He serviced the missiles, and came from a very rural Sussex family. He had never climbed before, but was game for anything.



I felt our biggest problem would be carrying large, heavy loads at high altitude. I started training with 30 pounds in my rucksack, and walking across the desert from the camp. It was rocky and there were outcrops to clamber over. The heat and altitude combined to be very dehydrating and enervating. Bob couldn't be bothered to train in the beginning, but as he was fit and very strong, initially I was not worried. After a few weeks I had got the weight of my rucksack up to 50 pounds, and Bob then agreed to accompany me, if only to stop me nagging him. I looked on, mouth agape, as he casually swung his 50 pound rucksack onto his back and strolled off.

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We not only needed fitness training, but some climbing training for Bob. There was a nice cliff not far from the camp with an eagle eyrie halfway up. The cliff was about 100 to 200 feet high and about half a mile long. A lot of the rock in the area was quite friable and care was required. On one occasion I stepped onto a hold on an exposed



face. Once I had stood up on the hold I reached good handholds, but I was wary of the foothold so put as little pressure on it as possible. Bob was following, took one look at this hold and gave it a push with his boot and a large lump of rock fell into the depths. He looked at me with a grin and said "You're fucking nuts, I'm going to find another way up!"

On my next leave, I went to the Pakistan High Commission in London and obtained all the necessary visas and permits for our proposed route. This was in December 1968. On the way to England, I stopped off in Switzerland to see a pen friend and did some skiing, showing myself up in the process!

I also went to the unique Robert Lawrie's - a marvellous mountain equipment shop by Marble Arch, which unfortunately is no longer there. This shop had equipped most of the major British mountaineering and Arctic and Antarctic expeditions over the previous one hundred years. They made beautiful handmade climbing boots, and kept card records of every pair of boots made - they could then make up a pair and send them to their customer wherever he may have been in the world. They had a stone open fireplace which was used to test the grip of a new pair of boots, as was well evidenced by the well-polished nature of the stones.

I cannot remember exactly what I bought at the time, but it would have been camping equipment (such as a folding canvas bucket, an oiled cloth folding washbasin, an anorak, etc.) and snacks such as Kendal Mint Cake.

We packed our rucksacks and left Khamis Mushayt at the end of March. We flew to Dhahran and then to Karachi. We flew onto Rawalpindi on the same day, and then stayed at the Hilton Hotel whilst we tried to arrange our onward flight to Gilgit.

Weather had been bad, and the air route to Gilgit was over Nanga Parbat, one of the world's highest mountains and with its own mini weather system (mostly bad). Consequently there was a backlog of passengers and freight. As tourists we would be given priority over most local passengers, but much of the backlog of freight would be vital supplies for the area, which would take priority over all passengers.

The aircraft used were the Fokker Friendships, which were turbo-prop high wing monoplanes with the ability to land and take off from very short runways.

Whilst we waited, we enjoyed the pool and bar at the hotel. We also visited Islamabad, the new governmental capital of Pakistan, and visited the hill stations popularised in colonial days by the British Army. These were the places that families moved to when the summer became too hot. We spent some time in Murray, with a stone church just like an English village church.

After much cajoling we were eventually told we would be on the flight the next day to Gilgit. When we checked in, our rucksacks were weighed individually, at 851b each.

Pakistan International Airways ran a very good airline in those days - every flight throughout the trip took off and landed within 5 minutes of the scheduled time. On this trip we were the only tourists and we were served with a roast beef dinner whilst the locals had a very black curry; again a sign of good organisation and a sign of hospitality to tourists.

The flight was an experience. Once clear of the foothills, we flew over barren mountains with deep gorges and a winding track cut into the side of the mountain. This gave way to snow covered terrain, looking like a lumpy iced cake. Dramatically this changed to real mountains - jagged peaks and increasing in height until we were flying alongside the peak of Nanga Parbat. The Germans had made

this their own domain, but unfortunately it had a macabre reputation for the high number of climbers and Sherpas who had died on its slopes.

Gilgit is overlooked to the North by another eight-thousand metre peak, Rakaposhi. We flew along a valley with mountains towering either side, and the lower slopes of Rakaposhi dead ahead. From our seats we could see through the pilot's cabin and through the windscreen. The mountain ahead loomed larger and larger until, just when we thought we would crash into it, the pilot banked sharply left and we dropped into a flat short runway on the outskirts of Gilgit.

As we alighted from the aircraft the local military band was playing - it was not for us but for a local dignitary who was outbound.

At the Tourist Office we were told that despite our visas we would not be allowed to go into the Baltit region as it was a restricted military area. We were advised to go west, up the main Indus tributary towards Afghanistan and the Khyber Pass. Each village had a bungalow available for tourists and we could climb the mountains either side of this valley.

As there was no choice, we agreed and set about arranging the hire of a Jeep to take us the first part of the way. This had to be with a driver and was quite expensive, but there was no other way. The drive was, again, quite spectacular, as the track clung to the side of the valley with dramatic drops of several hundred feet to the river below. every so often we would pass a gang of men working on the road - clearing landslides or building up the road where it crossed small streams (which had washed away the road's foundations). The road made today's TV series of the world's most dangerous roads look a doddle. The dry-stonework was of a very high standard and quite beautiful.

Eventually we came to the chosen village and were shown to a very spacious bungalow. These bungalows were left over from the days when the British resident would tour the area and would stay overnight in each village discussing matters with the village headman. The village headman (or "Choki-dar") was still responsible for the upkeep of the bungalow and for looking after visitors.

The village was at about eleven thousand feet altitude, with the ridges of the valley rising to about fifteen to eighteen thousand feet. After we had settled in, we asked the Choki-dar about trout fishing. "Yes" he said there was very good trout-fishing nearby and sold us a permit for the day. The trout-stream was in a side valley about one thousand to two thousand feet above the village. We had bought collapsible telescopic rods with us. As we were fishing for food and not sport we used bubble floats, not flies. We caught three or four half-pound trout that morning. Feeling very proud of ourselves, we prepared to go back to the village to cook and enjoy our catch. As we walked along the bank, a village boy of about ten years old came up to us and opening his coat displayed four three or four pound trout. He was using a tree branch with some twine and a bent pin for fishing gear. He obviously wanted to sell

the fish to us, but our pride was now thoroughly dented so we refused his offer and went back to the village in less celebratory mood.

We met most of the village, toured the village school and planned our move into the mountains. I suddenly went down with a throat infection - it felt as though my throat had been cut, I couldn't speak, couldn't eat or drink, and so we decided the only action was to go back to Gilgit for medical treatment.

In Gilgit there was a Pakistan Airforce Hospital who very kindly took me in and kept me in bed for three days while they pumped me full of penicillin. The doctor wanted to keep me in longer, but reluctantly agreed I could leave if I kept up the penicillin dosage he prescribed. I was able to buy the penicillin tablets in the local market!

Whilst in hospital I chatted with the doctor about our trip and the problems we were facing over visas. He introduced me to a Pakistan Air Force officer who was on the staff of their Mountain Training School which was on the way to the Baltit Region. He gave us permits to visit the School and stay there. Whilst this was not as far as we wanted to go, it was in the right direction and was very helpful of him.

On the way there, we crossed a gravel plain/desert and passed a jeep-type vehicle going in the opposite direction driven by a soldier in khaki with a red star on his peaked cloth cap. For the past few days we had heard explosions in the distance. We had also heard rumours about a road being built from China (really Tibet) through the mountains. China was now wooing Pakistan, its relations with India having cooled. We felt the sight of this Chinese soldier was final proof of this road and it explained why our visas to Baltit were no longer valid.

Now Bob went down with a stomach virus, probably the food in the eating houses of Gilgit whilst waiting for me in hospital. So when we arrived at the Training School he just wanted to lie down. He did come for a short walk with me but was obviously in pain and feeling very weak. I carried on alone and climbed to about fourteen thousand feet. I was passing the debris from snow slides more frequently and was obviously moving into an avalanche area. The snow was soft and the sun was hot - dangerous conditions. Also I was alone, and therefore decided that it was about time I showed the mountain some respect and sadly made my way back down the mountain. In hindsight, I was right to come back - in fact, I was almost certainly wrong in starting up the mountain on my own.

As this was now the end of our break, we headed back to Gilgit and the flight to Rawalpindi. We had a relaxing couple of days by the pool drinking lager at the Hilton Hotel, before flying to Karachi. At Karachi Airport, they confiscated most of our film. Some I had already posted back (but only some of that got through), and we were able to hide some, but all the movie film (Super-8) went. They thought we were a BBC film crew, and the BBC had very recently shown an uncomplimentary documentary on Pakistan, and the Kashmir issue was very sensitive.

THE UNLIT STAIRS

By Moira Graham

Is it right that I should panic
As I mount **these unlit stairs?**
Not sure of where they'll lead me to,
The dark could catch me unawares
I should've caught the last bus home,
But was having too much fun,
I rue the choice I made back then
And I curb the urge to run.

My mother and my father
Will be glancing at the clock,
I know they will be anxious
And will want to hear my knock
Upon the friendly strong front door
I'll be grateful soon to see,
I'll not be doing this again
This silly stupid me.

My mother tried to teach me
To be wary of the dark,
At sixteen years, I know it all,
But how stupid to embark
Upon this risky journey
I should have hailed a cab,
I see a light and hurry on
This street looks really drab.

But never mind, I'll soon be home
And safe, tucked up in bed,
I'll pull my duvet to my chin,
And on my pillow lay my head.
I'm running up to our front door
So grateful to be home,
This fear I've felt has taught me now
When dark to never walk alone.

You know you're past it when...

- Your worst enemy is gravity.
- You talk about good grass and you're discussing someone's lawn.
- You have a party and your neighbours don't even realize.
- You receive more get well cards than bills.
- You chase women, but can't remember why.
- People call at 21:00 (09:00p.m.) and ask, "Did I wake you?"
- Dialling long distance tires you out.
- You know what the word "equity" means.
- You sink your teeth into a steak — and they stay there.

Royal Signals Association.

RHQ Report:

Each year, I try to give RSA members an update on the Corps Charity's welfare work for the previous year. I am sure that you will wish to know that, in 2014, we spent just over £330,000 on 565 cases as well as a further £11,825 to support those in nursing homes, hospitals or similar institutions and a grant of £36,000 to help the work of the ABF (our people get over three times that sum in support grants from that charity). Amongst other things, this money has helped in the provision of 38 x Electric Scooters, 3 x Stair lifts, 32 x Mobility Aids, 10 x Level Access Showers whilst also funding 54 essential Property Repairs, delivering 133 White Good solutions and funding 23

Re-training Courses. The Royal Signals Benevolent Fund continues to work closely with the RBL, SSAFA (who provide the caseworkers) as well as a host of other service charities depending on the needs of the individuals concerned. On behalf of the staff of RHQ I simply want to say "thank you" to the Regular, Reserve and Retired members of the Corps who have supported our work over the last 12 months.

Certa Cito!

Terry Canham, Regimental Secretary.

The words, comments and articles contained in this magazine are written by club members and are for the sole entertainment of club members and in no way reflects, the views or opinions, of the club generally or its officers.

Any items for the August 2015 edition please submit by 30th June 2015



The 1960s 16 Signal Regiment

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