

The Listening Post

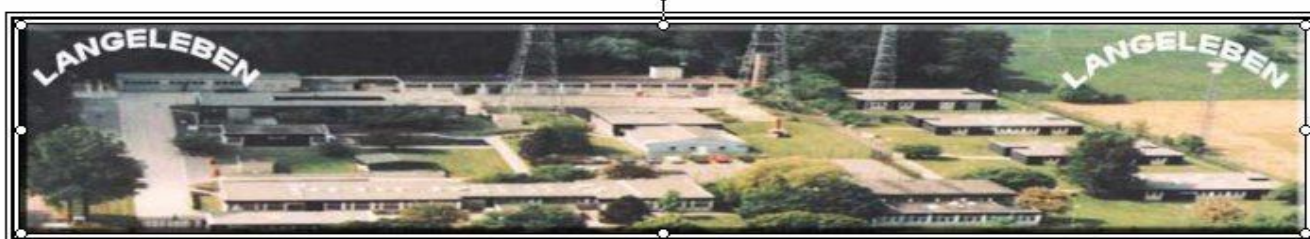


The Newsletter of the Langeleben Reunion Branch, Royal Signals Association

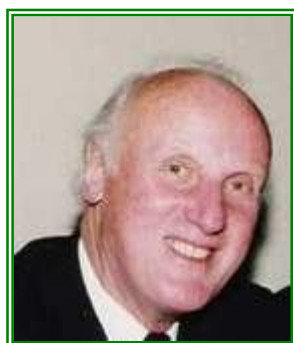


Issue No: 3

December 2009



Message from the President



Peter Baldwin

What a splendid year 2009 was. Thanks largely to our Committee who worked so hard to make the presentation of the Memorial such a success. As the DVD shows, the bearing and turnout of the veterans was exemplary.

As we approach Christmas and the New Year, Gail joins me in wishing you all a healthy and happy time. It might also be a time, when you could send a Christmas card and give a nudge to your former colleagues about joining the Association.

I look forward to seeing you all at Loughborough in 2010.



**Cartoon by Clive Inman reproduced
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Inside: Stories and memories, photos and news – plus an opportunity to order our new DVD 'Three Days in June' for a bargain price, an opportunity not to be missed...

STEVE ANTHONY AND



TED TEDSTONE

Steve Anthony and Brian (Ted) Tedstone first met at Langeleben in late November, early December 1965. Steve was a Lineman and Ted was a Radio Tech so naturally were both members of TM Troop. Other members of the troop included Dave (Taff) Scott and Fos.D.B. (Rastus) Collins, now sadly deceased.

They became very good friends almost immediately, sharing the same room, working together, eating together and most importantly, drinking together. They had many a drunken adventure, some of which were shared by another Langy inmate, Tich (Scouse) Parry (above right,) who they are now trying to trace. ***(If anyone knows of Tich's whereabouts please contact Marlene or Ernie.)*** Between them they consumed enough beer to float a small battleship and were particularly fond of the Middle Gezzy in Lelm and Kleiner Schumanns in Slutter, though for food they were fond of the Half Chickens served in the far Gezzy. When Skint they played the pinball machine in the NAAFI or snooker, Steve usually won.



Steve adds: "Through the efforts of the Langeleben website I have been re-united with my 1960's era buddy Brian Tedstone and although I live in the Canadian rockies and Ted in Harrogate U.K. we are able to communicate via Skype and e-mail. Between us we have started a Langeleben page on my Canadian website and we invite you to visit at <http://www.oksteve.com> and check it out for yourself. For us this is a fun project and we hope to attract a few more to join in as regular Skype contacts".

Steve Anthony 1965-1968 and Ted Tedstone 1965 -1967

KEN MURRAY

I lived in Langeleben from August 1967 until July 1970. I arrived in Germany as a callow youth just out of school and was picked up from Hannover Airport by a very insistent driver and taken to Hildesheim only to be asked on arrival by the orderly



officer of the day " Who are you, what are you doing here?" I was introduced to the RSM who showed no signs of sympathy for my predicament and expressed his distaste in no uncertain terms. I was however given a bed and the next day was sent on my way to my original destination.

On arrival at Langeleben I was introduced to my room mates, Robbo Robinson and Graham (Mitch) Mitchell and entered into a world that was totally different from anything I had until then experienced. The next day I was collected from the squadron office by SSgt Fos Phillips and taken to my workplace, the small workshop in the comcen at the end of the ops block. My new colleagues in the comcen, Dave Alvey, Mick Fill, Al Jewkes, Plum Pomeroy, John Sydney and of course SSgt Gordon Penman made me feel instantly at home. The various I Corps members and spec ops I met during that first day were equally friendly (what a difference from Hildesheim.).

Then of course there was my introduction to the Langeleben nightlife which was initially the NAAFI and then Königslutter. What an eye opener! As time went on, being a rather retiring sort of person I just melted into the



background of the daily life of Langeleben. At first, there was "only" the NAAFI and Königslutter. Then I was lead to Rábke. Once again a new world was opened to me. The interaction between the local and the military communities was like nothing I could ever have expected. The hard core of regular visitors to Rábke were, as far as I can remember, Bill Fry, John Doyle, Scouse Holmes, Taff Kavanagh, Jim Burke and of course yours truly. We were welcomed into their homes and to all their social events. One summer I was even picked up from Langeleben on a horse and cart and brought home on a tractor. One extremely cold winter, when the snow was so high there was no transport from the married quarters, there was a holiday atmosphere in the camp we drew skis from the PRI stores and made our way to Rábke with sleeping bags strapped to our backs. After a very convivial evening we rolled out our sleeping bags in the main room of the hostelry and went to sleep. The next morning we were woken by the landlady and marched into the kitchen and made to wash while she watched on and then were given breakfast before continuing in the bar where we had left off the night before. Later on that afternoon we were brought back to Langeleben on the back of a very large tractor with a snow plough blade attached to the front. Life, although pretty good was not all play. There was also some work to be done and this I did, my time shared between the comcen, the "A" troop exercises and the exercises with the Canadian squadron who were

regular visitors to our quiet backwater location(from a tech perspective).

Although I would have happily lived the rest of my life in Langeleben the powers that be decided that I must move on. At the Reunion in Königslutter this year I once again met up with some of my old friends and colleagues and although in my mind they had remained just as young as they were in the late 60's, the reality was grey hair and wrinkles. This was of course only on the outside. After the initial getting to know you again through chats, it was as though we had never been away. Due to the magic of modern technology I can now keep in touch with these friends and I hope, God willing, to meet them and others at the next reunion in Königslutter.
Ken Murray
1967-1970

BILL COYNE

I arrived in Catterick on 7th December 1950. Due to illness I ended up in Catterick Hospital and my induction read



'weight 106 pounds, not very robust and has led a sheltered life.' After training I was shipped over to Germany (does anyone remember those ships in those days? Sick bowls at the ready!) It was 1951 and I was sent to 101 Wireless Munster. I am not sure when I arrived in Langeleben exactly but I was in the second batch, I think it was just after Christmas in 1951 and it was damp and cold at first. The tents were up with concrete floors a tin hut and the Cook House/Naafi (we should be so lucky...and no girls.) I was a Spec. Op.
Bill Coyne 1951 - 52

KEITH KERBY

I arrived at Langeleben in January, 1955, having been posted from Munster. What a 'shock' I got upon seeing my living accommodation was a tent, this in the middle of winter with a pile of snow on the ground. Toilets were planks of wood over holes in the ground separated by pieces of sacking. Hot water was obtained from the cookhouse open fire; this was not much use as by the time one got back your tent, the water in the 'billy' was stone cold. The 'set' room was two wireless wagons back to back. This was my introduction to Langeleben, which was quite hard for a National Serviceman, such as me, to take in. However, this was the beginning of a very rewarding 12 months where I met numerous comrades



and learnt a lot, which helped me during the following years.

Keith Kerby (Op.Spec.) 1955-56

HARRY BENNETT

I received my copy of the 'Listening Post' via my buddy Dave Liddell of Crieff, Perthshire. I was particularly interested in copy of the item from 'Shutter Telegraph (whatever that is) and title of Langeleben unit. ie. 101 Wireless Troop and of Lieut Baldwin.

I spent most of my time at a place called Detachment 1 Wireless Regt with Lieut Baldwin and accompanied him on a recce to a site near Dannenberg. A



site we later used two or three times with a mobile unit from Hildesheim. We also ranged as far as Göttingen. I believe the initial visit to Langeleben was by this Hildesheim mobile. I did not make this first visit in 1951 but was there later for a couple of weeks and



returned to Hildesheim. In 1952

I again visited Langeleben and found work under way constructing concrete bases for our ridge tents. I did send some photos to our late

secretary Frank Mitchell, when I first made contact, of tents being erected. (That's what should have been happening.) at this time, the Camp consisted of personnel from Hildesheim and Munster (1 Wireless Regt). My main recollection of Langeleben is of "mud, tea and food tasting of wood smoke, trips to the NAAFI in Helmstedt for a bath and to see a film and spending lonely nights in a trailer a few miles from Camp in a very isolated spot. Really creepy.

Harry Bennett (Op Spec 49-53)
1951-1952



OUR LANGELEBEN TOAST THIS YEAR GIVEN BY PAUL CROXSON



We have nearly come to the end of 2009. It has been a momentous year! When Frank Mitchell first got us together, one thing is certain; he would have had no idea what he was creating. It is sad that he, together

with so many others were not there with us at Langeleben in June. No one who marched behind the band or joined us in the car park will forget for many a year – if ever – the sense of pride we all felt. Tears were never far away. In years to come tourists visiting the Elm will see the stone, read it and wonder ‘who on earth were they?’ For us it will be a place of pilgrimage.

It is invidious to select individual names but now is a time to remember our committee and the sub-committee that made it all possible. I recall sitting at meetings, when trying to arrange funding, thinking ‘they’ll never believe we can do this’. On occasions, I didn’t. Some of our own members were more than dubious. How little did the doubters understand the Langeleben spirit! We are an odd mixture; ‘Signals’ the ‘I Corps’ and all those who supported our efforts to do a good job – and it was a good job – who gather every year. There are National Servicemen, whose numbers are diminishing each year as we get older first and Regulars who have chosen the Army as a way of life and never knew the joys of conscription; all, many with families, coming together in harmony. We span a period of forty years; forty momentous years in World History.

Somehow, when we should be seeing our numbers decline and attendance lessening, the reverse is happening. The word will spread and I have no doubts that when word of our ‘deeds’ spreads there will be more new members. We now have this newsletter and a ‘Buddy’ system to help those who have no internet access to keep in touch.

There will sadly be those whom we saw for the last time at Königslutter not thinking for one moment that we would never see them again. We will remember them at Loughborough as their names join the ever-lengthening list. Among them will be Tom Carney who served in Langeleben 1952-53 and sadly passed away on 24th September 2009.



As we sit quietly this Christmas with the celebrations nearly over, it is a time for reminiscence; for thanking and remembering those who are friends, mates, Now, for a few moments, we can put them first and recall the happy, the good, the sad and the bad moments that we have shared over the years and raise a glass – or two – to:

“COMRADES”

AVAILABLE NOW A SOUVENIR DVD OF THE COMMEMORATIVE STONE REUNION.



We now have this excellent DVD available. It is a must have record of all three days of the reunion celebrations for those of you that were there and those of you that missed out. We have kept the cost down to £5 per copy including postage and packaging. Assuming that we sell all 250 copies a small profit will be retained to bolster branch funds.

If you require a copy (or more) please write to:
**Mr. E. Callaghan, 12 Carisbrooke Avenue,
Bexley, Kent. DA5 3HS.**
**And remember to include a cheque made out to
‘Langeleben Reunion Branch RSA’**

And lastly, congratulations to Jim Jarman who says “recently received from GCHQ my Gold Badge and Certificate signed by Gordon Brown the Prime Minister thanking me for my part in the very outstanding operations at Bletchley Park and its Out-stations during the 1939/45 War.”

Jim Jarman

Our next copy of The Listening Post will be in March 2010 and your short stories are welcomed.
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IMPORTANT - If you have received your copy from one of our volunteer ‘buddies’ please do let them know you have received your copy and that you are safe and well. We don’t want to cause distress in families where a member has moved on for some reason or even sadly passed, nor send you anything you would prefer not to receive.
Happy Christmas from Clive and myself. We look forward to seeing many of you at the reunion in 2010.

17th AGM & Reunion

Loughborough, 18th - 20th June, 2010

Dear Members,

The 17th reunion and AGM will be held at Burleigh Court over the three days Friday 18th June – Sunday 20th June 2010.

Burleigh Court offers over 200 bedrooms and all are equipped with bath/shower, WC, cable TV, telephone and tea making equipment. With a large restaurant, dance bar, swimming pool, spa, sauna, steam room and beauty salon the hotel has proved to be a popular choice over the last five reunions held in Loughborough and members have been full of praise for the hotel arrangements, the food, and the friendliness of the staff. The Prices are unchanged from two years ago and remain very good value. The hotel is situated within the beautiful landscaped grounds of Loughborough University and a shuttle bus takes you into the town centre which is twenty minutes walk away.

Double & Twin Executive Bedrooms including Breakfast £85 per room per night. (That's £42.50 per person)
Single Executive Bedrooms including Breakfast £65 per room per night.

Charge for the hot/cold buffet social on the Saturday evening will be £20 per head, this includes payment for the band, yes the same band that has entertained us in past years. To receive these preferential rates all bookings for the Hotel must be made through me. *(Some of you may want to make your own accommodation arrangements elsewhere in the area, if so could you please indicate by ticking the form below.)*

Please do not send any money with the booking; you will be responsible for your own room account on checkout. The hotel will accept all major credit and debit cards, (MasterCard, Visa, etc.) or of course you can pay in cash. A full program Itinerary for the weekend will follow with confirmation of your booking. For those of you that may want to stay for a longer period the same price per room conditions will apply for the two days either side. You can of course book with me by e-mail or over the phone.

As in the past we will be holding a raffle during the Saturday evening function to augment branch funds, we ask that members who wish to donate prizes indicate on the form below.*

Booking forms must be returned to E. Callaghan. 12 Carisbrooke Avenue, Bexley, Kent. DA5 3HS. by the end of May.

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I WILL BE ATTENDING THE 2010 AGM & REUNION IN LOUGHBOROUGH 18th – 20th JUNE.

NAMENO. IN PARTY.....Please write their names on reverse of form

ROOM REQUIREMENTS: DOUBLE BEDROOM.....

SINGLE BEDROOM

TWIN ROOM.....

DURATION OF STAY FROM.....TO

NUMBER OF NIGHTS.....

I REQUIRE.....BUFFET TICKETS (Saturday night)

I SHALL BE DONATING A RAFFLE PRIZE

I SHALL BE MAKING MY OWN ACOMMODATION ARRANGEMENTS * PLEASE TICK