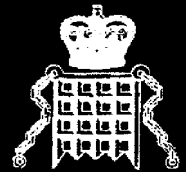


# The Bond



NEWSLETTER OF THE  
FEDERATION OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATIONS  
AND THE  
RETIRED MEMBERS BRANCH OF THE SPORTS CLUB

August 2003

Volume 8 Issue 8

## A C&E RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATION ?

**T**he Federation consists of 13 Associations and Branches with an approximate membership of 1000 retirees. In addition to the Federation, there are many formal and informal groups of retirees. The Federation does not cover all the UK, and there are many retirees who live in areas where there are no opportunities to socialise with previous colleagues.

Paul Houghton has created a website of Federation Associations and the RMB, and has persuaded the Department to provide positive information about us through the pre-retirement courses. The Annual Reunion and The Bond are now enjoyed by retirees outside the Federation, and some of those have asked how they could "belong". I have also been contacted by people about to retire who would also like to "belong", but live away from formal groups.

There are also some who, looking for an activity packed retirement, chose not to join their local association/group on retirement, and now, some years on, are looking for an opportunity to "belong"

A C&E Retired Staff Association could result in:-

- *An end to the "them (Federation including the RMB) and us" feeling;*
- *Better communications between all retirees;*
- *improved financial stability for groups;*
- *ease of joining - particularly for new retirees;*
- *increased activities;*
- *Publicity for the location and activities of formal groups, pub groups, golf groups etc.;*
- *A network of formal and informal groups and individuals throughout the U.K and abroad;*
- *enhanced "purchasing power" for beneficial holidays, reunions, sport, and services.*

I believe that the Retired Staff Association would attract both those who are newly retiring and those who are already retired. There are obviously many problems but I believe that the Federation has the ability to create that Association

Please let us know what you think- either through the Bond or myself, or at the next AGM of the Federation.

**Ron Sanders.** *Chair, FoCERSA*

## *THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE SPORTS CLUB: FIFTY YEARS AGO*

### **Sports Club History:**

*Following my appeals in The Bond for information about the Sports Club, the Green Mags, reminiscences, etc. I have received several offers of assistance and some information about Green Mags (the annually bound copies cannot be traced) and I am very grateful to those who have contacted me.*

*The item below, which I received from Dennis Dangerfield, is extremely helpful. In the closing paragraphs he tells of the way in which the Sports Club expanded beyond London, following the request, and success of Scottish footballers. That they travelled and competed at their own expense is a reminder of how things were done in times past. These days, I understand that some potential competitors feel unable to join in events due to the level of expenses paid by the Club and its Branches. A reflection, maybe, of changed, and changing, times.*

*I would be pleased to hear from anyone who holds any issues of the Green Mag and to receive any other reminiscences which could contribute to the history of the Club.*

*All good wishes*

## **Gordon Hodson**, *Chairman*

**R**eaders of "The Bond" will scarcely need reminding that prior to Reorganisation in 1971 the Department was compartmentalised into three separate and distinct specialisms, each of which was recruited independently, viz: the Outdoor Service, the Waterguard and Headquarters. In the early days the C&E Sports Club was in reality, organised for and by HQ staff, although the London Collections (at one time no less than six believe it or not) participated in events and teams. The Waterguard had its own sporting arrangements.

During the Second World War organised sporting activities were suspended but in 1946 fit young ex-servicemen were returning to, or joining the Department ready to participate in the camaraderie of sport and, more importantly, prepared to organise it. H. D. Davis, DSO, (a former naval commander) set about resuscitating the C&E Sports Club with the approval of the Hon. Commissioners (in the form of Sir Douglas Owen, Deputy Chairman). Soon there were active Sections in the traditional sports of football, rugby and cricket, but, in addition there flourished the Operatic Society, the Dramatic Society, the Photographic Society, the Philatelic Society, and Swimming, Athletics, Netball, Table Tennis Sections. The Sports Club also produced its own magazine, "The Green Mag", originally on a monthly basis but later quarterly.

Each Section of the Sports Club was autonomous but the Executive Committee was responsible for organising Departmental events such as the annual Sports Day (held at the Civil Service Sports Ground at Chiswick), the annual Swimming Gala (held at Ironmonger Row Baths) and the Sports Club Dances (held at the Liverpool Victoria building in Bloomsbury). These were highly popular and successful events M.C'd by the indefatigable Bill Lettin.

Although organised from HQ, teams entered for the Civil Service national competitions were recruited from players throughout the Department, and there were a number who were amateur internationals. We were successful in winning the Lewis Cup (football) and the Curtis Bennet cup (cricket) on several occasions. (A certain Geoffrey Boycott, playing for Durham Civil Service caused us some headaches) For players living in London (or passing through on training courses) there were regular teams playing in the Civil Service leagues. Vic Starling organised football with great efficiency (at one time five XI's were put into the field). In those days one had to work on Saturday mornings in HQ which, perhaps, helped. Rugby flourished under Tom Toomey, Ted Corps and Bob Franklin (whose "Rugby Notes" were eagerly read each month) and, in the summer, who could forget the ball by ball replays of a certain cricketer who shall be nameless.

Inter-office rivalry was quite intense. In addition to Sports Day and the Swimming Gala, inter-office competition took place in football, cricket and table tennis. The last two presented no problems being played after work, but football caused the Board some concern for a successful team competing for the Customs Fund Trophy would require time off for several matches. The problem was resolved by introducing a six-a-side football competition which could be completed in one afternoon. The Customs Fund generously supported the idea and the competition flourished year by year as more and more

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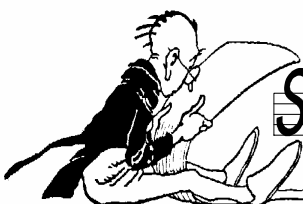
London based teams joined in. We did not realise it at the time but this was the beginning of the spread of the C&E Sports Club from a London basis to a National basis.

It started with Glasgow/Edinburgh. Having played whilst in London, certain players asked if they could enter a team, paying their own expenses. They came (bringing with them the Collector, Bernard Field) and won the trophy. It was to become an annual trip, and soon other Collections from all parts of the U.K. were entering teams. This had become a National event.

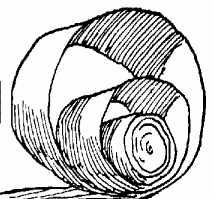
A campaign to recruit members nationally followed and so was born the national C&E Sports Club which fitted in with the post Reorganisation Department.

Many changes, both in the Department and the Sports Club have since taken place but those who served in HQ and the London Collections in the post-war period will no doubt look back fondly to the sporting, cultural and social activity provided within the framework of the Sports Club.

### *Dennis Dangerfield*



*Secretaries Keep It All* **TOGETHER**





## LIVERPOOL CERSA'S AUTUMN BREAK LAKE DISTRICT

Liverpool CERSA invites members **nationally** to join them in the Lakes on 24 -  
28 November

at the **Windermere Hydro in Bowness.**

The cost is 32.00 pounds per person per night  
for bed & breakfast.

Interested members should contact Pat Currie on  
0151-526-8973

or you can contact me by email at  
**margaret@Southport.gb.com**  
or telephone 01704-874424.

Rooms will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Support MAY be forthcoming for  
Retired Members of the Sports Club  
if the Event is approved.

\*\*\*\*\*

Margaret Clark

### NEWS

1. A letter of appreciation has been received from Norman Hull, ex member of the Dept and a marine aviation historian, for the support for his recent book which was announced in an edition of The Bond and is a "sell-out".
2. There is a shortage of home visitors to help applicants to the Customs & Excise Family Fund complete the paperwork and corroborate the help being sought. There are large areas in the UK not covered for home visits. Subsistence and travel expenses are available. If interested please contact the Secretary, C&E Family Fund, Room 2.06 New Kings Beam House 22 Upper Ground London SE1 9PJ Tel 020 7865 4951. E mail: **FamilyFund@hmce.gsi.gov.uk**. Please contact me if you require further information.
3. The 2004 reunion will be hosted by Leeds CERSA at the Crown Hotel Scarborough From Monday 26th April 2004 for 3 nights. Details in next month's Bond.

**Ron Sanders** *Chair, FoCERSA*

## *LIFE AFTER RETIREMENT*

**Benny Khaw** had served in the Department for nearly 32 years. He was in the Secretaries Office, Out-field Division Directorate, Purchase Tax, Customs Duties, Investigation Division, Customs Tariff, and Customs Directorate Policy Division.

In the early 80s, the Sports Club Badminton Section came to a halt; no one was running the Annual Tournament. To revive badminton in the Sports Club, he started the London Badminton Tournament for members of the Sports Club in London only and after running it successfully for a few years, Dennis Walton, Chairman of the Sports Club, co-opted Benny into the Executive Sports Club Committee and he was asked to run the C & E annual Badminton Tournament. Although retired in 1996, he is still spending his time running the annual Badminton Tournament for the Individual and Team Events. When he retired, the Sports Club honoured him by making him the Hon. Life Vice President.

Benny was an ex-Malaysian badminton player and he had the pleasure of training Ray Stevens who became England No. 1 five times. In 1995, Benny was one of the chief organisers of the Sports Club in the World Police & Fire Games held in Melbourne, Australia. It was the first experience for our participants in the Sports Club to take part. Surprisingly, we won 23 Medals in the Badminton Event alone. Benny won a Gold Medal in the Veterans' Men's Singles and a Bronze Medal in the Men's Doubles in the Open Event - he had to drop 30 years to play in the Open Event. Not a bad effort for an old croc!

In 1990, Benny with the approval of the Sports Club Executive Committee organised a badminton match against the Malaysian Customs in Kuala Lumpur and Penang. Our Team beat the Malaysian Customs on both occasions to the delight of Dennis Walton. Benny said, "I was lucky to leave Malaysia alive. Badminton is their national pride and to be humiliated by the UK Customs in their home ground was very difficult for them to accept."

Benny said, "There is definitely life after retirement. I keep myself busy coaching badminton. This keeps my mind and body active and it helps me to maintain my fitness."

Before retiring, he discovered a very talented young girl age 10 at the Wimbledon Badminton Club where he was the chief coach. Her name is Eleanor Cox. After coaching her for a while, Benny thought it was time to test her potential. At the age of 11, she won the Surrey County Under 13 Tournament in the Girls' Singles and Doubles. Because of her win, she was qualified to play in the Under 15 Tournament the following day. To the surprise of everyone, she won the Girls' Singles and Doubles as well.

Her progress has been tremendous and at the age of 13, she represented England in the Home Countries (against Ireland, Scotland and Wales) Under 15 International at Ayr, Scotland. She won 4 Gold Medals viz., Team Event, Girls' Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles.

A week later, Eleanor played in the English Under 15 National Tournament and she won a further 3 Gold Medals - Girls' Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles. Experts said the tally of 7 Gold Medals in 2 weeks will be very difficult to beat.

At the age of 15, she reached the quarter final of the British Badminton Grand Slam losing only to the No. 2 seeded player who won the Silver Medal in the Commonwealth Games at Bolton last August.

She helped England to win a Gold Medal in the European International Under 13 Championship in Holland when she was 12 years old. She also helped England to win a Gold Medal in the Under 19 Six Nations when she was only 16. Not satisfied with that, she went on to win the Wimbledon Under 19 Girls' Singles in September 2002 Three weeks later, she beat all the top European Under 17 girls in Denmark and she is now ranked No. 1 Under Girls' Singles player in Europe.

Still at the age of 16, in November 2002, she won the Hampshire County Open Championship in the Ladies' Singles 11-4; 11-5. She is the youngest player to win the title since it started after the Second World War.

Eleanor wakes Benny up at 6.00am every morning before she goes to College, for her 2 hours badminton training, and after College Benny trains her for a further 2 hours. She was put through her severe training programme like the top badminton nations' children, e.g. China, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Benny said, "Eleanor is extremely dedicated, totally focused when she trains or plays in any Tournament and she has the killer instinct. She is now playing like an Asian player and I am convinced she will do very well in the next 2 or 3 years. Her prime target is to win a Medal for England in the Commonwealth Games and the Olympics."

Eleanor trained alongside the 20 year old boy, Hafiz Hasim who won the Commonwealth Games Gold Medal as well as the All England title in March 2003.

Besides training Eleanor, Benny is also involved in coaching the England Juniors World Class Potential and the Hampshire Junior's Squad. His message to the retired officers: "You must



*(Continued on page 11)*

01267-234773  
**dondrew@tesco.net**

D R Drew  
Rhoslan  
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CARMARTHEN  
SA31 2LW

Dear David

I heard the name of Hugh Dalton mentioned the other day, and it reminded me that he had unwittingly launched me into my C&E career. He was the Chancellor who shared his 1947 Budget ideas with a lobby correspondent and had to resign. After the hairy stories from the Waterguard and Outdoor Service you've published, this is a gentle tale of life in a bygone HQ.

I was with the RAF in Germany when Dalton dropped his clanger, but demob shortly after deposited me upon an unprepared labour market, whereupon I did the natural British thing and "signed-on". Then, every Tuesday I would line up and be handed £1.6.0.

That happy state of affairs stopped abruptly when one day my card was pulled out with an ominous "See Manager" note clipped to it. The great man himself was clearly unhappy with my continuing stay but smiled encouragingly and told me the Civil Service was seeking temporary staff. The pay would be £4 a week. A momentary hesitation on my part brought "that's better than twenty-six bob", spoken as if he was dealing with a dimwit! To clinch the deal he threw in "and you don't have to stay", which turned out to be the joke neither of us could have imagined. I must have blinked first, for suddenly the great wheels of government turned and I was lost!

I presented myself for interview at City Gate House in Finsbury Square and in no time at all I was accredited as a Temporary Male Clerk Grade III (usually "TeeCeeThree"). It was the Wedding Day of the then Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip, so it was a momentous time for all three of us! I duly reported the following Monday, to be assigned to Branch 21 of the A&CG's, and that's when I realised Mr Dalton had altered my life.

You see, someone had dreamed-up "The Old Age Pensioners' Tobacco Duty Relief Scheme". Otherwise, the Budget increase would have reduced the scope for the elderly to smoke themselves into further ill-health - none of this modern "Aunty" nonsense of putting up the price as a discouragement. Oh! - I suppose there was also the worry that votes might otherwise be lost!

So, OAPs who could persuade "a Minister of Religion, a Police Officer, or a Doctor" (I think it was) to support the claim they were "habitual smokers", were issued with books of gummed, dated coupons which were accepted by tobacconists as part-payment for that week's "fix".

Branch 21 had been tasked with the accounting practicalities of the Scheme and still bore signs of its hurried creation at the behest of politicians, so that sort of thing is nothing new. We were under the command of Stan Osman, HCO (Higher Clerical Officer), who really was a nice man, and someone who deserved much better in life than having charge of such a disparate group of "temps". A number of us were demob-ees and not too seriously inclined, and among the assorted rest were one or two who often nodded-off on those so-tiring afternoons. There we sat checking through batches of claims from tobacconists, striking through the coupons in blue pencil after making sure that the correct number were there. Coupons were not supposed to have been used before the due date, but this was relaxed after a while. We also counted the claims, and there was a piece of equipment to help us. For some odd reason, it was housed in the basement, so perhaps it was secret. Ever heard of a ten-to-one balance? It looked pretty normal, but had the pivot offset. We would put ten claims on one side and then load the other side until equilibrium had been reached, and so we had "counted" a hundred claims.

Requests for replacement books were sometimes accompanied a lump of stuck-together coupons. A surprising number of those came from ladies who said they had put their aprons into the wash with

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## *CUSTOMARY EXCISIONS(...BUT NOW THEY CAN BE TOLD)*

### *BARKER-SMITH AND JENNY BY WENLOCK*

I first met Lieut. Comdr Rupert Barker-Smith, RN (Retd.) in 1956, 7 years after the Yangtze incident, when he joined the district as Surveyor's Clerk. The job taxed neither his intellect nor his capability but the modest salary supplemented his naval pension and kept him in booze and cigarettes.

His new disrespectful colleagues promptly shortened his name to B-S. He didn't appear to mind. B-S usually referred to his naval career as his wasted years but he admitted to a 'few bits of ribbon knocking about in a drawer somewhere'. A pint or two after work sometimes provoked reminiscence.

"Do you know where I finished my undistinguished career? In command of a clapped out frigate patrolling the bloody River Yangtze (bloody was his favoured adjective). Yes, that Yangtze, the one in China. We called ourselves the forgotten navy and that's what we were. We'd been doing it so long, no-one, not even the omniscient bloody Admiralty, could remember why we were there or what we were supposed to be doing. We were based at Shanghai, then still under the control of the nationalists. We'd spend a week patrolling up river to Wuhan, lie up for a few days, then take another week for the return trip. Utterly bloody futile. Kept it up for years. We couldn't have been more regular if we'd mixed senna pods in the tea."

"What was your ship, B-S?" A vague recollection of a film I had once seen prompted the question.

"HMS Topaz. Turned into baked bean tins by now, of course. Still, I know what you are thinking. You're wondering where the Amethyst fits in. I'll tell you. The Amethyst and the Topaz were sister ships. Took turn and turn about to do the Wuhan run. Peter Kerens skippered the Amethyst and it was my lot to command the Topaz. Kerens was the one who found himself without a chair when the music stopped. Could have been me. One week later and it would have been although if it had I hardly think they have made a film out of it."

My dog-eared copy of Maltin's Movie and Video Guide lists over 16,000 films but Yangtze Incident is not one of them. It didn't even make Maltin's 'bomb' category, which prompts the thought that it was not particularly memorable. It was based on a real-life incident and starred Richard Todd as the stiff-upper-lipped Lieut. Commander Peter Kerens. In the film, HMS Amethyst, on routine patrol up the River Yangtze, was seized by a superior armed force. The Chinese People's Army claimed that the ship had entered Chinese territorial waters without authority and that its officers and men would be charged with spying. If convicted, they faced a long term of imprisonment in the People's Republic. The British government at that time still recognised and supported the corrupt nationalist regime of Chiang Kai-Shek having backed, as so often, the wrong horse.

One night the Amethyst slipped anchor under cover of darkness and, under heavy fire from shore batteries, made it back, badly damaged and with many casualties, to the Royal Navy's base at Shanghai. Commander Kerens was awarded the Victoria Cross for his part in this exploit.

"So I take it you wouldn't have done what Commander Kerens did?"

"No, I would not. He came close to triggering World War III. VC? They should have given him the order of the boot. He disobeyed orders. All he had to do was sit tight until the Communists had made their point. Once the British government had made a grovelling apology they'd have let him go — but no, he had to be a bloody hero, causing half his crew to be killed or injured."

B-S's bachelor status was an affront to Jenny our 50+ clerk, a divorcee. Jenny was the proud possessor of a sexy telephone voice and had a fondness for gin, with or without tonic. Young and impressionable shipping agents who encountered her telephone voice sometimes allowed their imagination to outrun their prudence. "That girl in your office. What's she really like?" they would ask a visiting officer. "Is she married — or anything?"

Deadpan, the officer would paint a picture of a young, single, lonely girl bearing a marked semblance to Marilyn Monroe but would add a friendly hint about the lady's predilection for large gin and tonics and the gratitude she would show to any young gentleman who indulged it. An invitation would inevitably follow the next telephone conversation. Jenny was always grateful for these interventions, not so the unfortunate agents who would retire sadder, wiser and considerably lighter of pocket. As the sole female in the otherwise all-male establishment, Jenny liked to be one of the boys. She was popular, good company and stood her corner. She welcomed the arrival of B-S like a becalmed yachtsman feeling a stirring breeze. B-S, loquacious in male company, became tongue-tied in the presence of ladies. He confessed that he had only ever felt comfortable with his mother and a few non-English speaking girls in foreign ports whose professional services he had employed. If I had not

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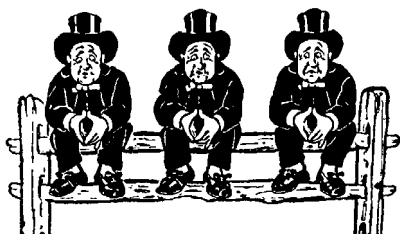
known him to be a naval hero I'd have said he was terrified of women. This did not discourage Jenny — she appeared not to notice his shyness. She tried to convince him that they had shared interests apart from alcohol. She scoured her local library for books on naval history. Once she discovered he had served in the Battle of the Atlantic she overwhelmed him with questions about U-boat detection and amazed him with her knowledge of naval gunnery. B-S, we felt, didn't stand an earthly.

"Well you could do a lot worse, B-S," I said, over a pint. "She's a good cook, she's not bad looking, has her own flat and no children to worry

about. Why don't you make an honest woman of her? Just think how grateful she'd be." B-S looked pensive. "Credit where it's due — she can certainly hold her liquor, but have you ever noticed that facial hair? If I wanted to bed down with someone with a cavalry moustache I'd find myself a bloody hussar!"

We never knew whether or not he gave serious consideration to Jenny's overtures. Next morning, arriving unusually early, the Surveyor found B-S dead at his desk. Sclerosis of the liver, the coroner's inquest concluded. I did not share the views of those of my more cynical colleagues who preferred to believe that the hero had died of fright.

(Leeds CERSA Newsletter)

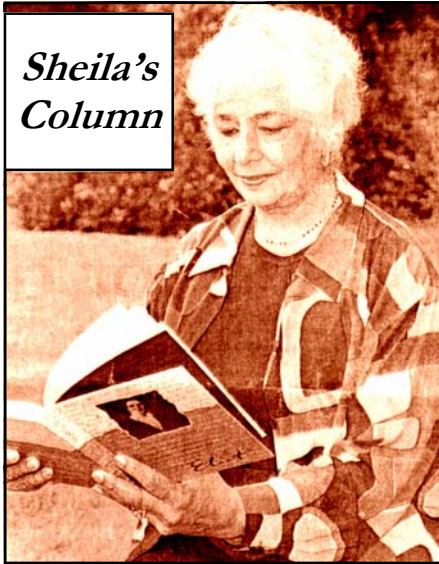


"Retiring in October 1984 I recognised that I was fading into history, and now I learn that as from 1st April this year (an appropriate date?) I have become obsolete. Perhaps now we should seek a design for a tie for we obsolescents - incorporating inverted diprods? Possibly also we should form a society set up on the lines of a tontine."

The above is an extract from a letter from Terry Riccalton in the December 2001 issue of *The Bond*. His reference to a tontine is particularly apt with regard to our organisations. Is the average age of the membership increasing or decreasing, I wonder? The former is more likely to be the case. Many staff are retiring well before pensionable age and taking up other employment, and do not feel the need to join retirement groups. This might lead to an ever decreasing membership, and eventually the demise of this newsletter.

Do you have any thoughts on the matter? Please write in.

*Sheila's  
Column*



I won a competition in 1999 to be appointed first poet Laureate of Mole Valley with the poem opposite. if you would like to contact me, please write to

**Sheila Nehra-Black, Stepping Stones, Ashurst Drive, Tadworth, KT20 7LW**

***Survival:***

*An ant struggling  
blackly with life atop a cube  
of golden sugared rice.*

*Sheila*

***Making a Point***



*Is this the place to make a plea  
for me, the poor apostrophe?*

*You see me used on grocers' stall's  
(potato's, pea's) and bingo hall's.*

*It's bad to put me in such place's  
- wrongly used in plural case's.*

*Please point out my proper use's  
and spare me from these dread abuse's!*

JDT

**RECOLLECTIONS OF CHILDHOOD  
FROM BOX HILL**

Come travel with me as I remember  
distant Summers in December  
when Summer wine in Summer Lands  
blistered lips, and burnt my hands.  
And summers got hotter on already hot,  
as pounding, bulky waves in froth,  
splintered, dying, against the frame  
of jagged shores standing in solemn requiem.

While atop the lacey gaps of ancient, worn-out  
rocks,  
a pillar stood to Vasco da-Gama, who sailed to  
unlock

from heathen, Eastern lands gold, spices,  
myrrh and silk.

And Arabs traded Nubian slaves plucked from  
their mother's milk,  
in carved-out dhows, bearing handsome, wooden  
prows.

Crocodiles climbed Everests of sandy banks,  
leaving gruesome imprints from which I shrank  
Coiling serpents and scorpions choked me with  
fear,  
falling from verdant growths as I passed near.

Underfoot, crunching columns of Safari ants,  
regimentally marched on baking terrain,  
devouring to white bones any who they met along  
their path.

Lizards running marathons on cool stone floors,  
into roofs thatched with dried palm fronds,  
shading from the blanching sun.  
Echoes from a lightsome well,  
where typhoid lurked, within  
blue-green swirls, though I could not tell,

And I waited for rain to slake my thirst,  
impatient for rainbows to follow cloudbursts.  
That was when I'd sit high up in my mango tree,  
imagination soaring, unbound, carefree,  
drifting in dreams of worlds beyond Africa.

Now at my age, memories have come to stay,  
newly raked over, flooding today's thought  
with memories of the Summers of yesterday.

## IN THEIR CUPS

**The Chairman's Cup** is awarded to the member who, in the opinion of the Chairman, has significantly promoted the sporting activities of retired people.

This year it went to **Stewart Archer** who, for several years, has been skipper of the RMB boat in the department's sailing regatta.

The enthusiasm he brings to the venture is complemented by his encouragement and persuasiveness when recruiting his crew, whether they are experienced yachtsman or novices.

Together, they have made the department's sailing fraternity well aware of the existence of the RMB.



**The London CERSA Millennium Cup** is presented annually to the person who, in the opinion of the committee, has contributed significantly to the development of the Branch. The award this year went to Dave Taylor, editor of The Bond, for his continuing development of the newsletter, the principal means of communication between retired staff. Dave is seen here receiving the trophy from Don Walker, retiring Chairman of North East Retired Officers, at the NERO AGM in June.

*Gordon Hodson*

Chair, RMB



**SPORTS CLUB DIARY**  
 PROVIDED BY **ANDREA SCOTT-LEWIS**  
 SPORTS CLUB CO-ORDINATOR

email

*andrea.scott-lewis@hmce.gsi.gov.uk*



August 2003	20 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup>	Outdoor Bowls	Leamington Spa	Brenda Bird Tel: 0117 372 2149 e-mail: <a href="mailto:brenda.bird@hmce.gsi.gov.uk">brenda.bird@hmce.gsi.gov.uk</a>
September 2003	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> (revised dates)	Team Tennis	Nottingham	Susie Ramsay Tel: 023 8079 7573 e-mail: <a href="mailto:sue.ramsay@hmce.gsi.gov.uk">sue.ramsay@hmce.gsi.gov.uk</a>
September 2003	8 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup>	Sailing Regatta	Largs	Mary Fasham Tel: 01702 367927 e-mail: <a href="mailto:mary.fasham@hmce.gsi.gov.uk">mary.fasham@hmce.gsi.gov.uk</a>
September 2003	11 <sup>th</sup>	Sea Angling	Plymouth	Mitch Johnson Tel: 07789 033264 e-mail: <a href="mailto:mitchell.johnson@hmce.gsi.gov.uk">mitchell.johnson@hmce.gsi.gov.uk</a>



*(Continued from page 5)*

be good at something - get the youths involve in sports, teach them the skills you have acquired over the years, to prevent them from getting into drugs and crime. At the same time you can keep yourself fit physically and mentally. These are the ingredients for longer life. Best wishes to each and everyone."



Benny  
and  
Eleanor



### WHO'S WHO?



This photograph of the **North Shields Waterguard Football Team** of 1954/55 was sent to Ron Sanders by **Brian Crawley** (3rd left). Do you know the names of the others? Are **you** here?

**REPORT OF THE FIRST RMB RALLY; HELD AT MARLOW SPORTS GROUND 18<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2003**

**T**he day dawned bright, clear and sunny: excellent weather for a Rally, and I arrived at the Sports Ground at 0930 to be met with the smell of new mown grass as the groundsman tended the cricket square ready for the next match. The clubhouse with its extensive balcony overlooking the extent of the grounds and taking in the tennis courts, cricket and hockey pitches and petanque square looked ideal and ready to welcome its newest guests. From within came the chatter of children as the morning playgroup got into full swing.

I checked the bar area and the cellar to be certain supplies were adequate for the demands of the day ahead and opened the door from the bar onto the balcony from where I would be able to see any new arrivals. Shortly after 10 a.m. a car drove through the gate, closely followed by nine or ten more. I was impressed and pleased: a great start; these were indeed early arrivals and gave promise of a successful event.

Out of the cars stepped some very well-dressed ladies; possibly too well-dressed even for RMB members? Then, they began to put on some quite remarkable hats and to produce picnic hampers from the car boots. Photos were taken and, as a minibus drove in, the penny dropped (a pre-decimal penny I think as it fell quite heavily) and I realised these were some ladies from Marlow assembling to set off for a day at Royal Ascot.



Silence descended once more over the ground, broken only by children's voices, the twittering of birds and the distant sound of the occasional aircraft from Heathrow. I settle down to read my book and await the first true arrival to this the venue for the RMB's first-ever Rally.

Several chapters later at 11.30 two old friends, **Lyndon and Margaret Hellier**, arrive having driven down from Stratford on Avon. A little later we are joined by my wife, Marjorie and , for a while, we catch up on our respective lives and do our best to put the world to rights.....as one tends to do on these occasions. Later, Lyn and Margaret leave to visit other friends in the area and Marjorie returns home.

By 1430 the barbeque is still unlit; the tennis players, willing to let us have use of a court, lock up and go home; the afternoon playgroup is in full swing; and the petanque square still stands idle. I start to put away the maps and instructions for local walks, lock the balcony and bar doors, and set off for home.

Although the Rally was not well attended (!) every cloud has its silver lining. First and most importantly it provided an opportunity for Marjorie and me to meet up with some good friends; then, it was a nice day on which to read a book outdoors in pleasant surroundings; and finally it was economical. As I did not have a large number of phone calls from members intending to attend, I did not order, pay for, or erect any marquees; the person who had been going to run the bar was unable to do so at the last minute, so no costs were incurred there; and the hire of the facilities I had, as a member of the club, been able to arrange for £50.

So: it was an economical learning experience. Paul Houghton and I thought it was a good idea and so, it seemed, did others, including those who were kind enough to ring up to say so even though they could not come this year.

**Now, what about next year ?** I would be pleased to have your views and recommendations. I recall that when trying to call a meeting of retired Heathrow staff in 1992 to attempt to form a CERSA only *one* person turned up. A second invitation, to exactly the same group, produced many more, and the CERSA was up and running. I wonder if the idea of an RMB Rally will follow a similar pattern?

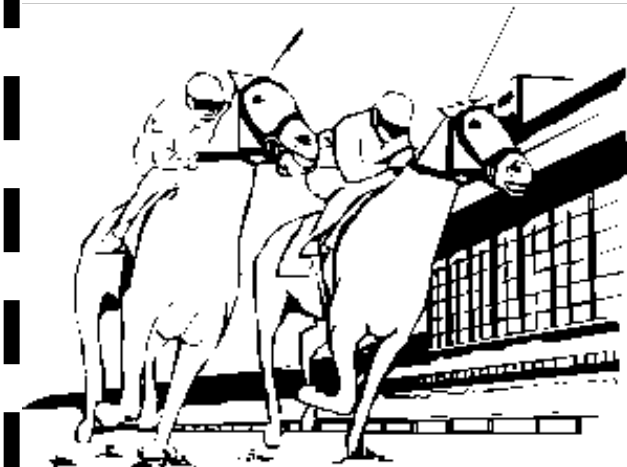
**Gordon Hodson**

# THANKS, *Pete*

***"Best wishes Ron - Pete".***

That is on an original cartoon by Pete Shea which was given to me on my retirement. It is much valued. Pete is a brilliant cartoonist with a great sense of Liverpudlian humour. In the dark days of the early Sixties he helped keep the Waterguard at Heathrow relatively sane by capturing happenings and individuals and creating miniature cartoon masterpieces. His talent is widely recognised and he contributes to many publications. It is great that he has contributed to The Bond, and this ex-Heathrow colleague of his hopes that he will continue to help us laugh at events. Laughter is, I am told, very good medicine!

***"Best wishes Pete- Ron Sanders".***



*Been racing lately?*

*Did you beat "The Bookie"??...*

*Got any tips?...*

*Let's hear about it!*

*In the May "Bond" my invitation for contacts in non-affiliated groups to identify themselves for news on deaths, illnesses etc was published under "Waterguard News". Contacts have been made with a previously unknown Waterguard group and I have also received information about illness and death of ex-Waterguard retirees. Please note that the invitation applies to **all** retirees and groups.*

***Ron Sanders***

**"Richard Broadbent, Customs & Excise Chairman, has resigned to return to the private sector" *Times*, 3 June.**

11 Culgarth Avenue,  
Cockermouth,  
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CA13 9PL  
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Dear Dave,

I read the June issue of the Bond from cover to cover, and it seems to me to be going from strength to strength; long may it continue.

Regarding the proposed creation of a National C&E Retired Association: I am very much in favour. I am heavily involved with the C.S.P.F. (not many C&E members, I'm afraid), and with other commitments, I haven't time to devote to anything else; and in this neck of the woods we are very far from everybody else. Newcastle is too far to be going to meetings, etc., or Liverpool for that matter, but it would be nice to be a member of a National Association, and I would be prepared to support as much as I could.

I enjoy reading 'Portcullis', although the changes do frighten me!

Yours,



**Ian Bass.**

(Continued from page 6)

coupon books in the pockets, so clearly the inevitable grapevine was developing! That was my first experience with the national sport of "The Rest v The Customs".

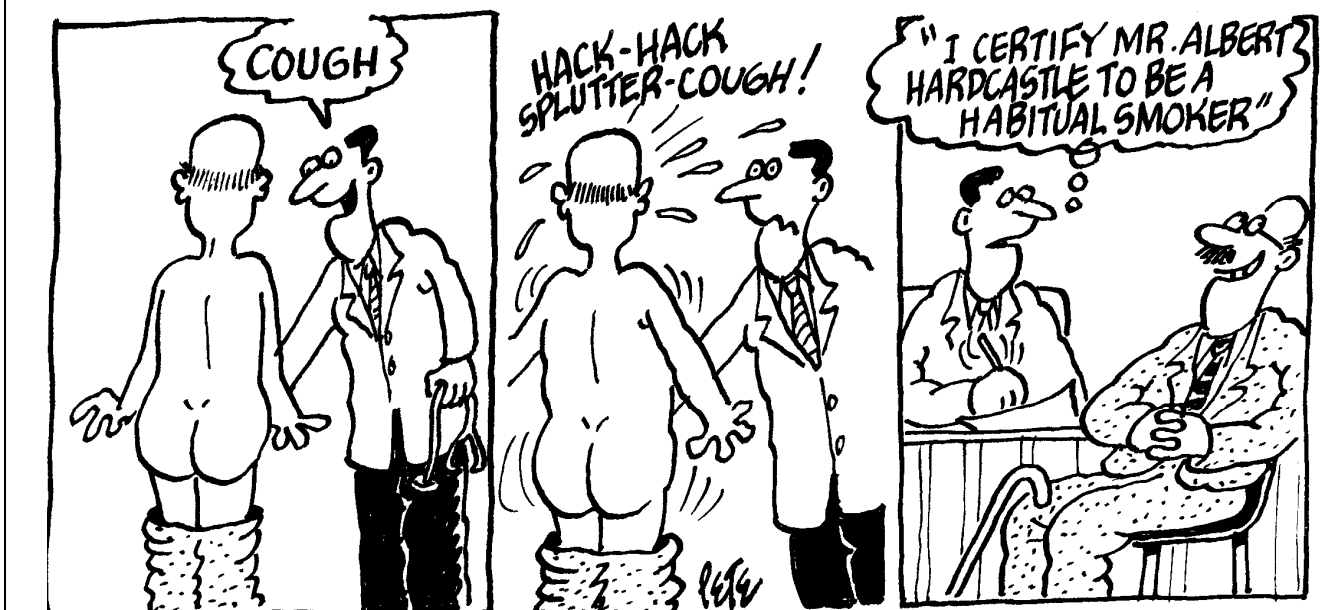
That's the broad picture of the daily life of this "temp" in late 1947. There must have been more to it than that, but as they say "time is a great healer". Can anyone wonder that I look with awe at the Portcullis pictures of how the department ticks today? Can't imagine anyone nodding-off there!!!

I'm still in touch with Andy Smith who shared those delights of Branch 21, and I also remember Dennis Harding, who went for a Waterguard career at Bristol. I hope this won't affect their sleeping patterns. Oh! .... I *did* stay ..... for 37 years!

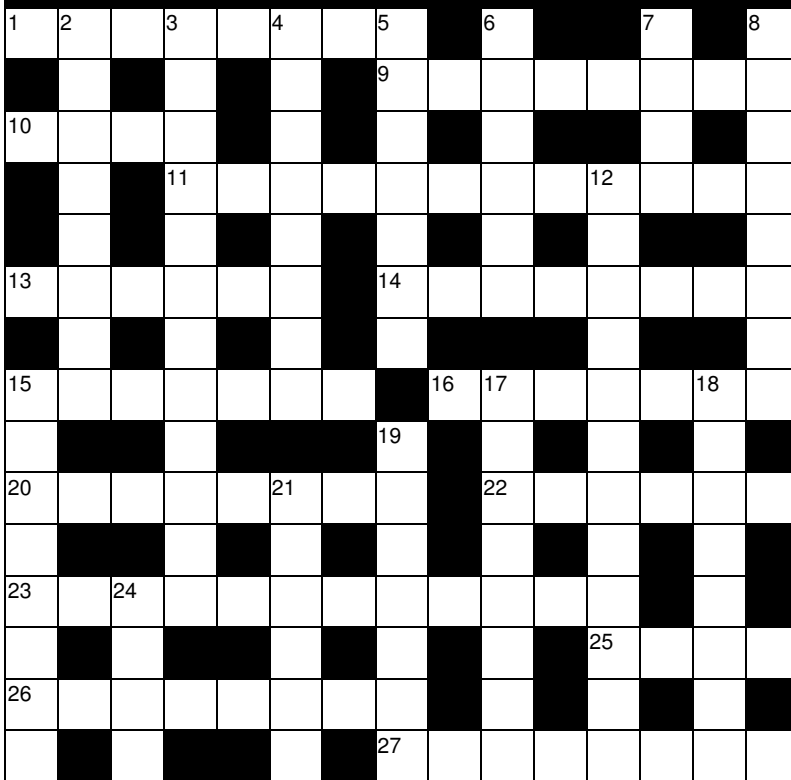
Regards

**Don Drew** (Retired 1984 from VCA)

PS: Incidentally, I wonder if any pre-war or wartime pupils of **The Beal Modern School, Ilford**, are reading this? I am writing the **School (1939-1945) Roll of Remembrance**, but the old records are incomplete and I need help with the names to be commemorated. Please get in touch, anyone.



## CROSSWORD NO. 25



### ACROSS

- 1 Took tools inexpertly, it seems (8)  
 9 Snake-carrier the Spanish bloomer! (8)  
 10 One of apartheid's famous martyrs (4)  
 11 Shew our name – a confused storehand needs it (12)  
 13 Irritates unstarted sheepshanks (6)  
 14 *Ode To Punishment* perhaps? (4,4)  
 15 Hog-fibre needs change of heart to become rigid (7)  
 16 Call to war with ET less shrill (7)  
 20 As usual Ben can be for the sack! (8)  
 22 Said to be off familiarly (3,3)  
 23 The car goes (so to speak) in two vessels (12)  
 25 She blooms, and flags....(4)  
 26 ....while these bloom vainly? (8)  
 27 Fenland Abbey in area for blackbirds, it seems (8)

### DOWN

- 2 List tiny character I upset

- when a copier (8)  
 3 Be aware of e.g. Bank Holiday treats (4,4,2,2)  
 4 Get back your own pearl, Sir? (8)  
 5 Fly taking few pains (4,3)  
 6 Frank takes boxer for key dispute (6)  
 7 Redskin at table – my old Dutch! (4)  
 8 He belongs by name at least (8)  
 12 It is determined after long trial (12)  
 15 Flags take a side for spoiling the sharp edge of things (8)  
 17 Gilbert's creation, and nearly all his letters need to to create it!(8)  
 18 Greatly elevated, sporting and detached: Greek to me! (8)  
 19 ....but this was a bit obscure, though of the same culture (7)  
 21 British sheet rumped to order! (6)  
 24 Old port has a defined area (4)

*Compiled by "Octo"*

# Probate

\*\*\*\*\*

**Mrs Maria Redding, whose will was probated in 1870, was obviously one of those people who like to cater for every eventuality and also like to organise everything themselves. In her will she set out exactly what her executors should do if, by chance, she should die away from her home, Branksome Tower, in Dorset.**

### XWORD NO. 24 SOLUTION

S	Y	R	U	P	Y	H	E	A	D	S	H	I	P								
U	O	O	L	X	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I								
P	H	A	R	I	S	A	I	C	F	O	C	A	L								
P	D	L	N	I	F	K	E	T	E	T	E	T	E								
L	A	W	U	N	D	I	S	G	U	I	S	E	D								
Y	H	I	E	S	O	P	E	R	R	I	N	L	A	I	D	L	O	W			
L	E	I	G	I	O	I	N	A	L	L	E	G	R	O	C	A	N	U	T	E	
M	I	F	E	I	S	B	E	S	T	D	E	F	E	N	C	E	G	N	U		
H	O	D	G	E	C	H	E	S	S	B	O	O	K	O	G	S	E	S	A	U	U
P	R	E	S	S	U	R	E	H	Y	S	S	O	P								

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