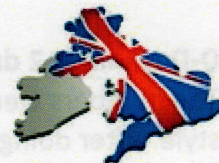


Operation "Spot the Difference" - PXR
211 Old Comrades Club Reunion - Bournemouth 10/12th May 2014



Well this is how it all started

Good Morning Chaps,

Well -- here we go again !!!!!

D-Day minus 1 week -- and I'm personally looking forward to our get together again, though still somewhat shattered by the three losses we have sustained this year.

Where oh where has the flipping year gone?

Please all have safe journey's ----"See You On The Beach" !!!!

Take Care, *Brian* (2nd May 2014)



211 Old Comrades Club

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DEAR , *DAVE*

THIS IS JUST A SHORT LETTER TO SAY THAT

EVERYTHING NOW HAS BEEN FINALISED FOR BOURNEMOUTH.IT IS AT

"DURLEY GRANGE HOTEL" 6,DURLEY ROAD,BOURNEMOUTH. BH2 5JL

TEL:01202 554473 ON THE 9TH / 10TH /11TH MAY 2014

WE HAVE A COLLECTION FOR JOHN DUNNE,BRIAN LARCOMBE AND KEN VALE

WHICH DAVE PERRY HAS KINDLY VOLUNTEERED TO HANDLE.

FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT COMING BUT WILL YOU RAISE A GLASS OR TWO

ON SATURDAY NIGHT TRUE TO TRADITION WE WILL BE TOASTING TO

ABSENT FRIENDS.

I HAVE SPOKEN TO KEN PEPPER WHO IN TURN SPOKE TO THE HOTEL AND

HAVE SAID,"ANYONE WHO IS ARRIVING AFTER TEA IF THEY RING THE HOTEL

PRIOR THEY WILL PUT ASIDE A COLD MEAL.

TEA IS BETWEEN 6PM AND 7-30 PM.

BRIAN FINLAND WILL BE TAKING NOMINATIONS FOR THE COMRADE OF THE
YEAR TROPHY.

THOSE COMRADES WHO ARE NOT GOING WHO WISH TO PUT IN THE
COLLECTION IF THEY WOULD SEND ME THERE DONATION I WILL PASS
IT ON TO DAVE PERRY.

IF ANYONE WHO IS GOING TO THIS YEARS REUNION WISHES TO DO THE PXR
PLEASE INFORM ME.

J.S.HUGHES (211 O.C.C. SECRETARY)

We should also thank our Secretary John Hughes
for the final reminder letter

"just a short letter to say they everything has now
been finalised for Bournemouth"

All accept one thing!

The final reminder letter which didn't reach us until
after the weekend had taken place.

Oh and for those who tried booking the late dinner,
it was last Friday and you missed it.

Strategic Challenges

Army 2020 is the transformation of the British Army for the 2020s and beyond, in response to the strategic challenges it is likely to face in the future. This would mean that 211 Old Comrades Club would spend more time training at locations such as Bournemouth where they can blend in with the local community without being under suspicion. Later we will find out about another new training location where we can expect further adventures.

D-Day minus 2 days (Wednesday) the advanced, advance party arrive.

The numbers were lower than expected but Perry & Stewart made the effort to represent all of 211 in style. After doing the reconnaissance mission around the hills of town, the mess hall in the town square was visited for liquid refreshments and then on to spoons to try them out. After a freshly cooked dinner in the hotel the "young men" visited the local hostelrys, where they all appeared to only cater for the type of people who like mirror balls, crystal chandeliers and leopard skin seats. DYMK turns out to be a bar called "Does Your Mother Know" – what you may ask yourself; well she wouldn't want to know.

As they got to know the regulars including a drag queen and his assistant, Raymundo & Raquel for a night of flamboyancy.

D-Day minus 1 day (Thursday) advance party arrive.

Dibble and Pepper arrived to continue with the preparations for the weekend. There was great concern regarding the suitability of Saturdays program due to the extreme weather forecast and whilst the men should be prepared for anything the joining instructions had not included waterproofs and umbrellas. Without his comrades knowing Pepper was rewriting his training program and making the necessary arrangements.

After the evening meal the guys went for a second look at DYMK, introducing the advance party to the local area. Ken was heard to say "I've never seen your buttocks so tight Sgt Perry", should he have been so surprised.

D-Day arrived

On the morning of D-Day the advance party had been to do further reconnaissance of the town and to cleans their souls in the sea air. Their PFA (personal fitness assessment) took them to the sea front, onto the pier and through the gardens to the town square. On their way back to the accommodation they decided to use a local taxi to go up the steep hill to the hotel, there had been enough fitness for one day. On arriving at the hotel the taxi driver was asked how much, he replied I don't charge for short trips. Mr Dibble left him £5 in his tray but the driver tossed it out the window as he drove off. Bazar but true and thank you for the ride.

The first bit of entertainment was about to take place, a car with the registration plate N2 BMF completed a 53 point parking manoeuvre, observed by his co-pilot, a specialist in driving. On entering the hotel the driver was instructed by Mr Pepper that had parked over the fire hydrant and it would have to be moved. The reception Manager Emma went along with the instruction, until the advance party cracked and gave it away.

As the troops arrived they renewed old acquaintances and caught up with the events of the last year, the aches and pains, the bits that don't work any longer, holidays and families. Oh how times have changed, no beer on tables just coffee cups and water, who would ever believe it.

Copies of the craftsman's magazine were passed around and the guys reminisced of their own experiences and the places they had visited.

As always the close friend always have genuine interest in each other's tales but there are 2 stories worthy of mention that showed the commitment, mind-set and capabilities of the recently retired guys from the UK's reserve forces.

Cpl Garry Stewart achieves his first
"centre page spread"
in a glossy magazine
"The Albion Magazine" April 2014

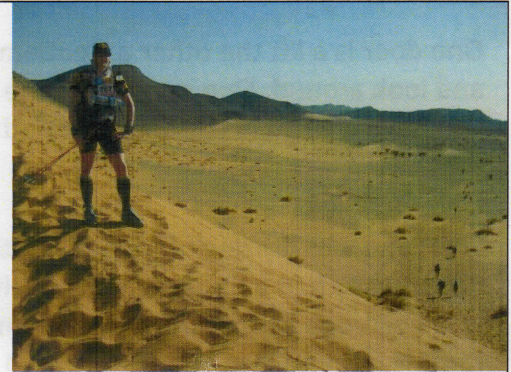
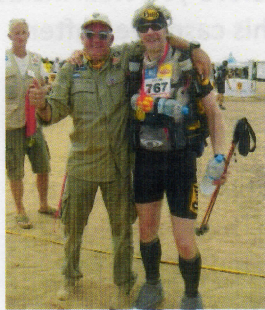


Albion magazine featured his major rebuild of his
WD. Cx225 Gun Tractor.

After 2 years of intense training Alan Pepper
son of Ken took part in the Toughest
Footrace on Earth in April 2014
Marathon des Sables

An incredible six-day 150 mile run across
some of the most hostile and hottest terrain in
the world. Running in Morocco's Sahara
Desert, temperatures can reach 40 degrees
Celsius.

Al was with 103 bat REME



A special congratulation goes to Alan & Gary from all those in 211 OCC

At 19:45 hrs there was a call to order by the secretary, - The following morning we were to be up in good time to have a hearty breakfast and to march down to the Bournemouth Square where we were to parade at @ 09:30 hrs. I am not sure this year if the training was as top secret as it had been in previous years, we were not sure if this was false information and a decoy to the real activity – only that we needed to be prepared. There was transport laid on for the medically downgraded.

Friday night saw the introduction of a Country & Weston singer. Is everyone happy in here he shouted. He must be Hank Marvin! The reply came back "Sea-Side Sea-Side Danny Wilde" referring to the legendary Danny Wilde - the Scarborough Institution.

The guys did try.

As the guys started to retire to prepare for what was ahead, the first noticeable sport the difference took place!

Before retiring Andy Porat decided he needed the rest room before he climbs the stairs to his room. He went down the corridor and entered the second door on the left, a few seconds later he came back out, looking back at that door in surprise and then went back to the first door he passed.

THE FIRST "SPOT THE DIFFERENCE" pt 1



One door is a lift the other a Gentleman's room, you can normally tell the difference before you walk inside and look around. One says "LIFT" the other "GENTS", obviously it is not so obvious in this case even after you have walked in the door and had a browse around.

Everyone was drifting off to bed, quite early as it happened, as the Tom's; Start & Frompson prepared to depart they had a disagreement, "Who had the key to the room?" like only they could. They decided to lace everyone's drink with a free mint imperial off the bar as retribution for people laughing at the key routine. Jacko & Pete Dibble ensured all were safe to bed and brought up the rear party.

D-Day +1

At breakfast John Cole & Andy Porat (2nd mention) decided they had not practised drill for some considerable time and decided to rectify this by eating their cereals in step. Arms went up in perfect time as the first spoon of cereal was lifted with Military precision to their mouths (up 2 - 3), they didn't even manage down 2 - 3 before they were completely out of step. Out of step already - but which one was it, each blamed the other before they decided to leave the drill practise.

After breakfast the troops met in the reception to start the route march to the square, they needed to be ready to departing the square at 09:30 hrs. The troops were all there on time to meet Ken Pepper and they set off on the next stage of movement to the activity, that is all except two; - Johnson & Kniverton who were running in to join the group after they left off. Good drills gents; always be there at least 5 minutes before! Your names have been taken – after all this time will you never learn.

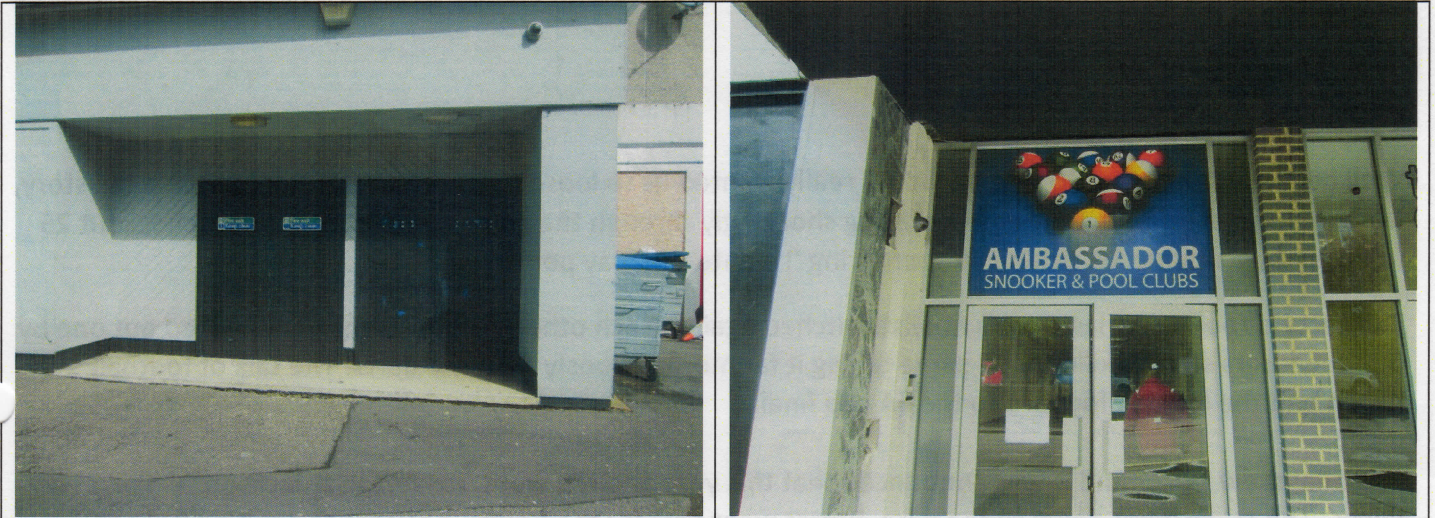
After arriving outside the secret location we were to wait (hurry up to wait). The OLDER and some may say wiser decided to go into the local café, have a warm cup of tea and wait, others thought this was not necessary, but some time later ended up in there too.

After waiting for 40 minutes the curtains in local residences started to twitch wondering why a group of old men were standing outside their houses. Concerns grew that the police may be called, the last thing that we wanted; loitering with intent. Then suddenly Ken called and the guys were off again.

When the guys did move, Tom who was in the café got up and said we're off and walked out, but nobody believed him and just sat there drinking their tea.

Unusually he was not kidding us on and the guys moved off down the road. After waiting for 40 minutes outside the back of a night club fire escape door to find we were at the wrong location.

"SPOT THE DIFFERENCE" pt 2



Can you spot the difference???? – the answer is on the following page

We were later than planned, cold after standing outside but this didn't dampen the spirits, the guys one by one signed into the private darts and billiards club. Darts were issued to the teams and the zeroing in began in earnest. For sure, these guys couldn't have played darts for years they were flying everywhere that is all except in the boards.

The question to one group, "who are the dart players here", someone replied "none of us, I'm not sure the score boards are going to be long enough then"

Once everyone had signed in the teams were called and the games began. As quick as the games started the fiddling also started - Double 20, 6, and bull equal 132, was one of the first shots off. Who would that have been who made the shout, who was that who believed the score, well they did. Was it you??

Well next time Tom Start chunters a few numbers people may not want to trust his maths so much!

Whilst the majority played there rounds Porrat and Perry got a bye due to no opponents.

(3rd mention for Andy)

- Officer questions - Can't you count up to 501
- Officer question - If you have to finish on a double which double is it?
- Officer Comment - That's not going to work anyway, if you need an odd number you won't be able to get a double?
- Officer Comment - I'll never be able to get a 20 it's too far up – I'll go for the middle instead

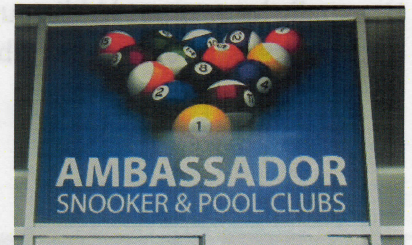
“SPOT THE DIFFERENCE” pt 2 - Answer

Well to put you all out of your misery the answer is **“BALLS”**

That's right Ken, they look like this.



Well who got that right then?



Back to the sports

Well here's another first "Garry we won, I really wanted us to loose". Have you ever heard such a tall story, Mr competitive Finland. Garry after playing shockingly through the game completed a 2 dart checkout 25 followed by a double 10. Brian still chuntering 'I wanted to play pool'.

The second round saw last year's finalists pitched against each other. As the teams got knocked out one by one the losers started killer pool, some taking it far more seriously than the darts. The talk of football began and the looking forward to the FA cup final.

The final drew closer and it was announced that this year finalists were 'Kniverton & Jackson' V 'Porrat & Perry'. The game went down to the wire, Porrat went first for the finish - 3 misses at double 19. Then Kniverton 29 to get out, straight in 5 double 14 an outstanding finish. Len had played poorly in all games but in every round played a blinding finish.

On completion of the formal competition the guys now had time to relax Peter took some of the guys to the Walkabout bar for a bite to eat and a few beers whilst watching the rugby and football. Others took the other option, a first for the 211 reunion - swimming in the hotel pool, the water babes (Brian, Ken & Bill) enjoyed a break from some of the normal activities.



D-Day +1 Formal Dinner

The evening drew near and the gents retired to dress for the evening's dinner, presentation and mess meeting.

The troops entered the reception one by one, each one admired by the waitresses Sue and Suzan, Sue said "Young man you do look nice!" to every single one.

Ken and Bob arrive in the snug lift, the question is who backed up on who! As those present were aware one false move in that lift and it would trigger the stop button between floors. Strange how those inside thought it was someone messing outside, as it kept jerking to a halt.

On the hour Mr Johnson announced the annual photo, elderly and infirm to the front. With exception everyone tried to squeeze in the back.



Dinner was served, followed by the toasts as always our very special thoughts are for all our "Absent friends".

After the dinner the presentations were made, (and still Brian was wittering on how 'he didn't want to win').

Presentation

Our "Oscar" -- The George Kyle Soldier to our Comrade of the Year.

This year's winner's - dedicated to John Dunne, Brian Larcomb and Ken Vale. All these guys had a major influence on all out TA careers. The award was presented out of love & respect for the guys.

Competition Results

Worst score - Ken O'Gara & John Cole.

Runners Up – Perry & Porrat

Winners 2014 - Kniverton & Jackson

Secretary's report was given by John Hughes

Thanks to all those who attended funerals of old comrades during the last 12 months. Especially Dixie Dean for providing wreathes.

Requests for early deposits for next year they are required by November. The membership fee will remain at £5 to cover postage costs.

John was expecting Timmy to ring in a couple of weeks asking when the reunion for this year is. Come on Tim make sure you plan a little better next year.

A discussion took place for the location for the 2015 reunion. Liverpool, Blackpool, Chester, were considered and the winning vote went to Felixstowe. The aim was to keep the weekend within £100.

AOB

Bar bills are becoming expensive - Consider others when accepting drinks.

A Big thank you from Dave Clarke for the organisers of the weekend.

The collection in memory of Ken, John and Brian was £217 plus £60 already collected.

Later on

After the meeting closed we all retired to the bar where Albert once again entertained us with his magic tricks. There has been a request made that next year Albert performs the sawing a person in half trick, now there's a challenge! Any volunteers? Names directly to Albert.

The comrades continued socialising and tell a few yarns in the lounge bar. The whole weekend was great success the location, food and most of all the company was brilliant.

D Day + 1

With all the training and exercising was now over the comrades were dismissed for another year. After a hearty breakfast the troops started to depart throughout the morning and into the early afternoon, as always heart felt goodbyes and already looking forward to the adventures in Felixstowe next year, for some more adventures – we just can't wait.

This left 2 Stewart & Perry to relive the weekend. Sunday afternoon was a stroll around Bournemouth, followed by the closing stages of the premier league on TV, followed by a meal and then shock horror an early night.

D-Day +2

Well as another superb weekend drew to a close the rear party set about the long trip home. After lots of reminiscing the decision was made to head to the Midlands via Bordon. As we drove up the A3 we saw signs for Longmoor Camp, Cpl Stewart commented he had not been there for 25 years so we pulled off and drove to the camp gate. After booking in with Sgt Perry's mod 90 we did a short whistle stop tour of the camp. Due to this camp still being in use we didn't take photos, but we can assure you it hasn't changed one bit. The village is still at the back of the camp, the accommodation is the same as is the bar. Obviously more reminiscing of the good old times, BFT on a Sunday Morning followed by pay parade, paid in cash. Those were the days my friends.


From there we set off down the road and headed to Bordon, we drove around the town and towards the camp we knew so well. Houses have been built on the opposite corner to the old fire station, then we turned left into GU35 ONE. Well the Louisburg Barracks is still there, only just but it's there. We drove up to the gate just like old times, what a fantastic feeling this was. We were met by private security guards at the gate who informed us this was now owned by a property developer and we wouldn't be allowed in but we could take photos from outside the fence – hope


you enjoy them.

The one thing we did learn was that they will demolish the camp but Broxhead House is to be turned into a hotel. So there's one for a future training weekend in years to come, depending on cost.



There is one more little story to tell of the journey home. As we know we have all driven big trucks, we were in the REME so we will know the answer to this question

	<p>What does this sign mean?</p>
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<p>On the way home just off M40</p> <p>Risk of lorries overturning on adverse camber!</p> <p>Just maybe this driver should pay more attention to the highway code</p> <p>I bet he felt a right berk</p>	
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Well that's all for this year's PXR, hope it make you smile even if you can't remember the weekend, well we are getting a bit forgetful these days. Can't wait for the next adventure in 2015

Best wishes

Sponsored by W.S.Cole & Son (special Rates for Mates, sizing not required)