

# The Listening Post

*The Newsletter of the Langeleben Reunion Branch, Royal Signals Association*



Issue No: 8

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## **Langeleben**



### **Reunion Special 2011**



### **Rod Goddard becomes our new Vice-President**

I want to say what an honour and a privilege it is for me to have been elected to the post of Vice-President for our Langeleben Reunion Branch. An organisation that is greatly valued by many of us. I shall do my best to serve General Peter Baldwin, the Committee and all members of our Branch. A year between our meetings is a long time so if you have any ideas or concerns please contact one of the committee at the earliest opportunity, don't leave it for a year, then your ideas can be acted upon and your concerns dealt with before they become a crisis. Please don't forget that our committee are asking for younger members to come forward and shadow/assist our current committee. These words remind me of a rather one-sided conversation I had with an RSM, nothing new there but he did have a good sense of humour:

RSM: "Do you believe in the saying that a problem shared is a problem halved?" "yes Sir" I replied RSM: "well, I have a problem for you so go and find someone to share it with, oh and don't forget, a problem is only a solution in disguise."

There are going to be challenges for us ahead, so it will be a real asset to have different people looking at 'old problems' and coming up with new solutions.

It was wonderful to meet everyone at our Königslutter meeting and we look forward to seeing you again next year at Burleigh Court.

**"To foster and keep alive the comrade spirit of all those who served at Langeleben."**

## Langeleben Old Boys linger around Königsutter for a couple of days

Well now, what a weekend that was. Boiling hot sunshine, Feldschlossen by the gallon, and Currywursts longer than 14 inches as I live and breathe.

It was great to arrive at Königshof Avalon Hotel in Königsutter on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May. Not only because it is a really great place, but it meant that the 750 mile drive was now behind me !! My passenger Dave Garner, did a great job navigating and supplying me with food and drink, and balancing up the car as its only little. We stopped over at Rheindahlen, with the lovely Carola and Kevin Bamforth for a night just to rest, (thank God). Then Kev went by train as there was no room in me Ford Fiesta for him AND his luggage and we met him at the hotel. First evening was cool, meeting up with everyone in the snug bar, and then it got mad as we were kidnapped by Heini Feddeck, and taken away to the Zum Elmblick, where we were squeezed in between a birthday party and a hen night of some description. Thoroughly good time and special mention to Zuza, Heini's lovely daughter who ferried us around.

The AGM was a bit of a shocker, the list of those no longer with us is getting longer and longer, poor Jim just seemed to never stop. However the main matters were all voted on and approved, and after being mugged by Jerry for our hard earned cash, we made a getaway up to the Tetzstein, via the camp and the car park. Kev hadn't seen the stone, and wanted to visit it and the camp. I did a couple of trips as my car is small, and this led to an important lesson later that day. When I returned to the Tetz for my second pick up I phoned Dave Garner on my mobile to call him to the car park, there was no answer. So I stomped into the patio there and he said he hadn't heard his phone go off. Great I thought. Then after getting back to the hotel I lay my aged bones down for a rest and my phone went off.

Some elderly lady wanted to know who was there, Me. I said. Stephan. Then she hung up. I thought this strange as her number was Dave Garner's. Crumbs. She's nicked it !!! I rang back but there was no answer. I waited but thought well I must find out what I can to help Dave. When she finally



answered she went on about motor bikes, so realizing this was well above my German level, I went to reception and asked the receptionist to call this number and ask what's going on. At this point, Frank Pye came up and asked me if I had used 0044 in front of the number, just as the receptionist told me this lady was about 500 miles away in Bavaria. Truth dawned. She couldn't answer her phone because she had been on her motorbike. (That was when I called Dave at the Tetz). AHA !

Always use 0044 even on the mobile to mobile calls lesson learnt.



Saturday evening we dressed in best bib and tucker, and went to the hotels Saal for our posh do of the weekend. Everyone looked smart, but Dicky Pickups partner Martina stole the show in a black and red number, that would have looked good on Frank Bruno. We sang along with the group which I think they appreciated, and fed on the glorious buffet, if you used small plates it looked like you were behaving, just didn't tell anyone how often you went up.....don't even pretend that I was the only one.

Steve Clifford sat at our table, and told us how he was coming back to the hotel on Friday to manage the reception for his niece who was getting married on the Saturday, or was that the other way around ?. Steve, I hope you got your cash card back mate, no one knew how to contact you but the hotel said they'd hold onto it, so you should have got it on the Friday. It was also good to see Steve Jarvis and John (Stan) Ralphs, lately very poorly but healthy enough to sink a Feldschlossy, good one Stan.

Sunday saw us all learning a good bit about the border which we had so diligently watched for all those years. I can honestly say I really had no idea about just how much was going on, I mean you have a rough idea but it's different when you hear the details from someone who experienced it. Jim and his missus organised it, and it was a heck of a success, we were learning so much that we nearly missed the barbeque because Mr. Arpool (sic) was an accomplished and passionate educator, whose English was amazing. It was a great pleasure it really was, with fantastic pictures of the reassembled border strip by that funny spelt German village.

Thinking ahead, I drove to Ochsendorf to fill up the Fiesta, because the Shell garage opposite didn't have any Benzin Bleifrei, I asked the cash bloke at the bft garage, (yes that's fate laughing at me!) in Ochsendorf why he no Bleifrei either, so he told about it not being made anymore but the Super would be fine. Thanking him I filled up, paid and as I pulled away from the pumps I got reversed into by German chappy turning around to position his car for the pumps, Getting out I sharpened my horns and prepared to shout, and he said so sorry, it was all my fault. Well I never, Germany has really changed.



At the barbeque, despite an early scare of rain, it stayed nice, and the cooks turned out some great meats and we ate like the ex squaddies we are, and a lot of us went to bed sensibly because of much travel the following day, but we were

well stuffed, and felt brilliant because of the most excellent weekend behind us. The committee and Team Avalon deserve a huge vote of thanks, I know we all look forward very much to this weekend in the year, this one was most certainly no disappointment. Well done.

P.S. Ten out of Ten for the waitresses. Sigh.



**Steve Vaughan (Farmer)**



## Our 18th AGM

*The meeting was attended by 54 members and proceedings opened by our Chairman Jim Husband who then introduced the members of the committee. The chairman read out the roll of honour this was followed by a minute's silence, then our President, Major General Peter Baldwin recited the Act of remembrance as the Langeleben standard was lowered by bearer Tom Neal. The minutes of the 17th AGM last year were accepted after a proposal by Steve Vaughan and seconded by Dave Whittaker.*

Major General Peter Baldwin, in his usual good form, welcomed all and marvelled at the uniqueness of our close knit association and that of our cousin the BVA. He knows of no other military group or association that can match our achievements. Most of his news in reference to the Royal Signals was about withdrawals and expected cuts in numbers and equipment.

Our Treasurer Gerry Kane issued a detailed report on the

branch's current financial situation which showed a healthy balance, mainly due to the committee's prudence and generous donations from our members. Acceptance of the financial report was proposed by Ray Armstrong, seconded by John Rosson and accepted by the floor. Gerry asked that attending members paid him the monies for the ordered events at the end of the AGM. The Secretary Ernie Callaghan gave a report which is shown as a separate item below.

Our President Major General Peter Baldwin had previously indicated to the committee that it would be prudent if we were to elect a Vice President to cover for him in the event of his future non attendance for age and health reasons, after discussion member Rod Goddard was proposed as Vice President by Stuart McLeod and seconded by Ken Vipond, unopposed Rod was accepted by the members and we welcome his appointment as a member of the committee. The Secretary then advised members that the current committee were prepared to continue for the next year but as the average age of the of the present incumbents was approx. 77 years perhaps it would be a good idea to select a shadow committee to cover the remaining incumbents so as to ensure uninterrupted continuance of the Langeleben reunion branch.

### ERNIE'S SECRETARY'S REPORT.

We have some 74 members and guests attending this reunion weekend, obviously down on two years ago, all of you who attended in 2009 know what a special reunion that was and what a hard act it is to follow. Considering the economic situation and our ageing membership we still had a remarkable turnout this year.

I have to announce the resignation of our assistant secretary John Richardson who felt that he was under- employed and that his position was intended for the 2009 memorial reunion only. John did an excellent job on that occasion; the success of that memorable weekend was mainly due to the planning and effort that John put in on our behalf and we, the committee, are eternally grateful. John thankfully will continue to be our representative and liaison at the German end.

I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank our talented editor Marlene Brooks for the great work that she does for us in producing a readable and entertaining newsletter, we do need more input from you our members, more articles please, just small pieces, photos, reminiscences of your times at Langeleben or looking for long lost army pals: just 200-250 words would be great. (Send to: Marlene Brooks (Editor) 167 Fold Croft Harlow CM20 1SL Tel: 01279 862960 E-mail: [langelebennews@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:langelebennews@yahoo.co.uk))

I would also like to thank our webmaster Tom Perkin for the time and effort he puts in to produce and maintain our excellent Langeleben website, we are grateful to them both. Since the last AGM in 2010 held at Loughborough we have enlisted seventeen new members, the last one being member number 502. We now have 436 live members and the membership is still growing, again mainly thanks to our website.

# Loughborough reunion Burleigh Court 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> May 2012 Put it in your diary folks!



I know that it seems early to book, being a year ahead, but I thought that we would have trouble in 2012

because the Queens Golden jubilee double bank holiday celebrations fall in the first week of June and we know that many of the British and Japanese Olympic athletes are training at the Loughborough University sports complex from the middle of June until the middle of July, many of them staying at the Burleigh Court during this period.

I was surprised that the last weekend in May was still available and snapped their offer up before it had gone. The prices at Burleigh Court are unchanged from four years ago, all room and catering costs being the same as in 2008 and 2010.

Giving this amount of notice will allow you to plan your many activities around this weekend and to avoid the disappointment of not being able to attend our 19<sup>th</sup> reunion. More reunion news and booking form to be included in our winter issue.

**Ernie Callaghan. (Secretary)**



Cartoon courtesy of Clive Inman

## Messages from our website



Hats off to the committee! A great reunion was had by all. I had to keep control of Bob Kay and Ron Mason, thanks to all for a great time in Germany. **Robbie McCallum**

Just arrived home from Langy which was brilliant as usual. Big thanks to Ernie and the boys. Hope to see everyone next year in Loughborough and hopefully a few new faces. **Dave Garner**

Thanks to the committee for another great reunion and we enjoyed the bus trip very much. **Tom Neal**

**“Another successful reunion”**

Another successful reunion. There were 74 attendees, and all seemed to enjoy it. Weather was kind, only rain we had was on Sunday evening just as we settled down for the BBQ! Nothing daunted, up went the patio sun shades, but it was only a shower. The bus trip along the old border went very well. Very informative, we learned quite a lot from the two Tour Guides. **Gerry Kane**

Hi to all, just to say many thanks to the committee for once again doing a fantastic job in organising our 2011 reunion in Königslutter, I never heard a wrong word and all I saw was people enjoying themselves. **Ken Vipond**