

The Newsletter of the Patrons,
Society of Friends and Volunteers
of The Rifles, Berkshire and
Wiltshire Museum



March 2024
Volume 1. Issue 1

Redcoats Review

The Tofrek Issue

Celebrating the 1939th Anniversary

And

The 200th final raising of the 99th Regiment of Foot

Editorial Team Comments:

2024 heralds a major project that will require massive support from Patrons, Friends Volunteers to support the staff and trustees. A letter on the project, known as Update 25, from Andy Fontana, the Managing Trustee responsible overseeing the daily running of the Rifles Wardrobe and Museum Trust provides an insight to what is involved can be found on pages 12 to 16. Please if anyone has any questions on “Update 25”, then email to the hyperlink email address given on page 12.

May I also draw readers attention to the Society of Friends AGM being held at The Wardrobe on Friday 21 June 2024.

The aim of the newsletter is to include articles from Patrons, Friends and volunteers. Due to “Update 25” and the final element of the article covering Alistair’s cycle pilgrimage from Truro to Lacock, we have had to curtail the length of this edition. But may we take this opportunity to seek readers for their input, either in the form of articles or ideas of what you wish to read about. Presently most of the articles are driven by Martin McIntyre and his extensive research.

Whilst “Update 25” is under way the staff will be devoting their energies to the refurbishment of the museum, so from now until March 2025 we need some more Front of House volunteers. In the past the Museum staff have filled shortfalls, but with their attention being focused on the project we need volunteers on the front desk. Please encourage any of your friends to volunteer.



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FUTURE EVENTS

Friends AGM.....21 Jun 2024

At 1500 hrs

BATTLE OF TOFREK - 22ND MARCH 1885

Granting of the "Royal" Title or how The Berkshire Regiment nearly became the Royal Berkshire Light Infantry 122 years before becoming part of The Rifles

By Michael Cornwell

January 1885 found the 1st Battalion of the Princess Charlotte of Wales's (Berkshire) Regiment, (the old 49th) in the Suakin area of the Sudan. It was part of the British force sent to assist in protecting British authority which was being threatened by a fanatical Moslem leader, the Mahdi, and in particular a local chief, Osman Digna, who was supporting the revolt.

In March 1885 Osman Digna and his army were reported as being some 12 miles south-west of Suakin and on 22nd March it was decided to establish forward depots and a force moved off from Suakin for that purpose. The force, commanded by Major General Sir John McNeill, VC, consisted of the 1st Berkshires, a battalion of Royal Marine Light Infantry and three Indian Regiments together with a little over a squadron of cavalry and a vast unwieldy convoy of pack animals and light carts. The country was covered in dense scrub which made movement so slow that after several hours of tiring march the force had only reached the small staging post of Tofrek, about eight miles from Suakin.



The Berkshire Engage the enemy

General McNeill decided to halt there as a small clearing in the scrub offered a suitable camp site. Working parties were out constructing zaribas (rectangular defensive works of cut scrub and thorn bush) when without warning thousands of yelling Arabs erupted from the dense scrub through which they had crawled unobserved. Some managed to penetrate the as yet unfinished zaribas and the Berkshires were able to grab their rifles only

moments before the main body of the enemy attacked. The Arabs had few firearms but the range was so close that a number of the Regiment were struck down by thrown spears. Once an organized line was established the immediate danger was over but the Arabs continued to attack with fanatical bravery. The disciplined fire of the soldiers inflicted over a thousand

casualties although the Arabs' determination brought them at times to close quarters and there followed fierce hand to hand fighting. Casualties were fairly heavy. The British force as a whole lost about 300. The Arab casualties, from the nature of things, were not known accurately but probably reached 2,000 and Osman Digna's power was broken.

Tofrek was another "soldiers' battle" in which the discipline of individual soldiers averted a terrible disaster and turned it into victory. To mark its conduct at Tofrek (which was sometimes referred to as "McNeil's Zariba") the Regiment received what was then a unique honour when on 1 October 1885 it was notified that:

"Her Majesty has been graciously pleased, in recognition of the gallant conduct of Princess Charlotte of Wales's (Berkshire Regiment) in the action at Tofrek, to approve of the Regiment being in future designated Princess of Charlotte of Wales's Royal Berkshire Regiment. Her Majesty has been further pleased to approve of the facings of the Regiment being changed from white to blue, the Royal facings."

All of the above seems straight forward until a trawl at the Public Record Office through the correspondence between Representative of Queen Victoria, the Secretary of State for War, the GOC Egypt and the CO the battalion, held in the National Archives at Kew, revealed a discussion as to how to honour the Regiment and how the Regiment nearly became a Light Infantry Regiment 122 years before becoming part of The Rifles family.

Although the documents were photographed the reproduction is so poor that only extracts can be used. They provide a fascinating view of the debate that took place all those years ago after the battle.

Initially there was concerns as to what the action would be called. Would it be known as McNeil's' Zariba, as the oil painting shown above painted by Charles Edward Fripps is officially known or by the name of the nearest place of inhabitation? The following four pages show that it was decided to use the nearest place, "Tofrek".

Colonel HUYSHE

Wrote on the 28th April 1885

Major General Hamilton (Adjutant General - War Office

It was a very great.....have to receive your letter of 17th last, - I and my officers are very much pleased at the very complimentary manner in which you speak of the Regiment - The old 49th.

Since I have had the command I have done my best to bring the battalion up to a high pitch of excellence, and I have been most cordially assisted by all the officers.



Therefore General I can speak of their gallant behaviour on Sunday 22nd. No words are so strong to describe the conduct of the battalion on that morning - They simply behaved magnificently, and none but a regiment under strict discipline could have done what we did that day - I do not say this to up my own Battalion - There are plenty of people there who can testify to the steady behaviour of the Berkshire Regt - It is indeed that the steadiness of the 15th Sikhs and my battalion behaved magnificently, saved a great disaster.

I cannot help thinking that now in the day of short service and comparatively young soldiers it would do a great deal ofif the conduct of my battalion on the 22nd March was in some way marked and recognised by the authorities - I have for a long time (since I assumed command) been thinking that we should be a Royal Regiment - We are 'The Princess Charlotte of Wales's' and our 3rd Batt is the 'Royal Berkshire Militia'.

Why should we not be made a Royal Regt and also Light Infantry - and be called 'The Royal Berkshire Light Infantry' in acknowledgement of our services on the 22nd. It would please the men enormously and promote great 'esprit de corps'. and of course 'esprit de County'. Of course all this is private and I trust you will not mind me writing what I have done, as I feel very strongly that something should be done - Why - At present the big battle is un-named and is called indiscriminately 'The Action' or 'The Affair' of McNeil's ZARIBA, or 'No 1 Zariba' or 'Bakers Zariba'..... this should not be I think - for it was one of the more gallant battles that has been fought in the Sudan.

Col HUYSHE.

With the name of the battlefield being decided, the next debate which had to be decided is how to honour the sterling efforts of the battalion. Once the debate had been opened the CO's correspondence clearly shows a wish for the Regiment to be given a title that would align the regular battalion with the Militia battalion back in Berkshire, known in those days as the Berkshire Militia (formerly Royal Berkshire Militia). The CO also expressed a line of reasoning that many regiments would be familiar in recent times, that the closer alignment of the Royal County of Berkshire's regular and militia regiments would have an advantageous effect on regular recruiting within the county. The Commanding Officer's proposal was for the title of "The Royal Berkshire Light Infantry"

Within the Secretary of State for War's Office a table was drawn up showing the number of Royal Regiments versus the number of Light Infantry Regiments within the Army's ORBAT and it in spite of the fact that there were 18 Royal Regiments and only 7 Light Infantry Regiments as the table used at the time showed.

After all the recommendations had been considered Her Majesty Queen Victoria replied about the name of the battle

Osborne

July 31 1885

My dear Whitmore

in the submission/....., the change/of name of the Berkshire The Queen thinks that/the correct name of/the place where the action was fought/On my asking McNeil/who was there he told me it was/ fought at a place/called 'Tofrik' and that it was known/ as the Battle of /'Tofrik'.....Therefore On the Queens command/I invite you about/inserting 'Tofrik' in the submission/It would certainly/be more convenient to call it 'Tofrik' than/'The Fight of McNeils/Zariba' but in the absence of the name/in any public document/I confess I see a difficulty insuch a/ name as 'Tofrik'/ it might be right to ask Grahams opinion.

Yours very truly. Ponsenby

[Note the misspelling of the name Tofrik (Tofrek). Graham was Major General Graham who commanded the column on the day]

So but for a twist of fate The Biscuit Boys could have been marching at 160 paces to the minute far earlier than their present successors.

GRENADIER COMPANY OF HIS MAJESTY'S 49TH OF FOOT

1775—1777

Back in February 2021 the Museum received an email request that had originated in America and come to us via the Rifles offices in York and Taunton. The enquirer was Xavier Allen, a member of a group of military re-enactors. Xavier's enquiry was rightly forwarded to the Museum because the small but dedicated group are specifically re-enacting the Grenadier Company of the 49th Regiment of Foot from the American War of Independence.

At the time of his initial email the group, who are established in Detroit, were trying to establish the details of who served in the 49th Regiment of Foot during the time span 1775 to 1777.

Whilst we have not been able to provide the Muster Rolls of 1775-1777 as yet, we have provided images of the uniform of the 49th Regiment of Foot and archival details of that period. Having said that it is often our experience that there are better archival records of what happened on both sides of the American War of Independence on their side of the pond.

Records of that period would be held at The National Archives in Kew, but have not yet been digitized. If those Muster Rolls are held at Kew it will mean a visit to the National Archives so that we can photograph the Muster Rolls.

One area we were able to assist on was to establish the Regimental March of the 49th Regiment of Foot. By liaising with the UK re-enactors, "His Majesty's 1st Foot Guard 1815" it was firmly established that Regiments of Foot did not officially have regimental marches, however we were able to send them the musical scores of Fife music likely to be played in that era.



Members of His Majesty's 49th Regiment of Foot Grenadier Company. From Left to Right: Corporal Dalton Lee (Battalion Coy): Brevet Corporal Xavier Allen (Battalion Coy): Private Michael O'Hara (Grenadier Coy): Sergeant Douglas Less (Grenadier Coy): Soldat Daniel Ervin (Army of German States) Recruit Ashton Doctor: Recruit Cody Campbell: Recruit Luke Zuker. The photograph was taken by Pte O'Hara of the 49th Grenadier Coy at one of the Battlefield shows they attend.

It seems as if fate has played its part in the linking between the 49th Grenadier re-enactors and ourselves not only because we are the museum dedicated to that Regiment's history, but additionally before the Battle of Queenston Height in October 1812, Major General Sir Isaac Brock, in August 1812 had captured Detroit and the surrounding area of state of Michigan

The information we were later able to send to Xavier, induce the following reaction from him:

'I am literally a "kid in a candy store" with all this information. Thank you. One thing for sure, if The Rifles Regiment Band tours North America again, we plan to wear our uniforms.'

Xavier had even planned his honeymoon in Jamaica so as to visit the seat of Governor Trelawny, the first Commanding Officer of Trelawny's Regiment (49th of Foot). Sadly the hurricane season paid put those excellent plans.

Here are some more images that Xavier has forwarded to keep us up to date with the 49th Grenadier Company's activities.



Colours of the 49th Regiment of Foot with a close up of the Kings Colour on the right



49th Regiment of Foot Grenadier Company Advancing to contact and preparing to attack



49th Regiment of Foot Grenadier Company forming up for one of their reenactor displays.

If you wish to see a short YouTube film of the type of battlefield reenactment the 49th Regiment of Foot get up to follow this hyperlink :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dHGZoLTCTSo>

WHAT A SMALL WORLD

Under the present stewardship of Captain Ian Knight of the Wiltshire Regiment, the touching tradition of sending out birthday cards to the surviving Wiltshire Regiment Old Comrades is faithfully maintained. Since the demise of a Regimental Headquarters at the Wardrobe, trying to maintain accurate records of who still alive has become a challenge, mainly I suspect because those Old Comrades have difficulty in working out who they should be writing to when they move from their own home into a residential or care home the recent letter received . Norman Minty, our Society of Friends Membership Secretary and himself the son of a Wiltshire Senior NCO recently received a letter which is an example of how we lose contact with the old and bold. It also shows how much the simple act of as ending birthday card is appreciated by those veterans but is an indication of what a small world our military circle revolves around.

25th February, 2024.

Dear Sir,

I am writing to inform you that my father, Mr. Richard Silsby, of 36 Bidport Road, Dorset, BH12 4BY, passed away in May, 2019.

As I let the property he owned, I was unaware that he was receiving a card from you at The Wiltshire Regiment each year, until now. I do apologise for this.

My father was very proud to have served in the Wiltshire Regiment, that became the DERR, as a bandsman. In recent years, I have discovered that his Commanding

Officer, Col. Frankie Boshell, was a relative of my late husband, while my father was serving in Malta, where I was born. I am amazed at the coincidence of all this.

I apologise once again for the delay in informing you of my father's passing, but I had no idea that the cards were arriving.

Yours faithfully,

J. Boshell

(MRS. JULIE BOSHELL)

TWO HUNDRED ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIXTH AND FINAL RAISING OF THE 99TH REGIMENT OF FOOT



Glengarry badge of The 99th Duke of Edinburgh's
Regiment

The 99th (the sixth Regiment of Foot to bear that number) was formed for general service in Glasgow in 1824 following the request of the Governor of Mauritius for reinforcements. It became the 99th (Lanarkshire) Regiment in 1832.

Ironically the 99th were raised for the first time in 1760 in Salisbury, during the period of the Seven Years War but disbanded three years later as the threat to Britain receded. I say ironically because in 1880 with the Cardwell Reforms the 662nd Regiment of Foot had to amalgamate with the 99th Duke of Edinburgh's Regiment of Foot.

A quick and simple history of the regiment is outlined here for the readers. Having been raised in Glasgow for service in Mauritius in 1824 they remained on that island for 13 years, becoming in 1832 The 99th (Lanarkshire) Regiment. 1837 to 1841 saw the 99th stationed in Ireland. From 1841 to 1843 it moved in several detachments to Australia, with the troops acting as guards on convict ships. In 1845 the Regiment was part of a force sent from Australia to New Zealand to take part in the First Maori War. Early in 1845 the trading centre of Kororarika in the northern part of the North Island, was sacked and the flagstaff cut down by Honi Heke Pokai of the Ngapuhi, this was later referred to as 'The Flagstaff War'. The flank companies of the Regiment were dispatched from Australia under the command of the Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Despard. This was a hard campaign against a resourceful and brave enemy; the main actions fought by the 99th took place at Ohaeawai 'Pa', the expedition to Ruapekapeka, and operations in the valley of the Hutt. The campaign lasted for more than two years before the Regiment returned to Tasmania. The 99th sailed for Ireland in 1856, leaving behind in Tasmania over 400 men who transferred to other regiments. Many of these eventually settled for good in Australia and New Zealand.

In 1860 they fought in China, and those of you who watched the Antique Roadshow on Sunday 24 March 2024 may have seen the drawing of a small Chinese Lap dog, known as “Lootie”, belonging to Queen Victoria. What the Research Team fail to brief Fiona Bruce on was the history of how Captain J H Dunne of the 99th brought the dog back to the UK and presented it to the Queen. Though Fiona Bruce did mention the originality of “Lootie’s” name.

1864 saw the regiment serving in South Africa and form a close association with HRH Prince Albert which led to the Regiment changing its title to 99th Duke of Edinburgh’s Regiment. After a short sojourn of two years in Ireland 1879 saw the regiment back out in Africa taking part in the Zulu Wars.

1880 and the Cardwell Reforms see them merged with the 62nd (Wiltshire) Regiment, becoming the 2nd Battalion Wiltshire Regiment. In 1924 the 2nd Battalion held a big 100 years celebration event in Bangalore, India.



100th Anniversary in Bangalore, India 1924

PROJECT UPDATE 25

I apologise if readers have been inundated with the following literature but for the benefit of those who are not aware please bear with me. The Museum, apart from a few changes to individual display cases has virtually remained unaltered since opening in 1982. Under Major Nigel Walkers chairmanship the Trustees are undertaking a major refurbishment of the museum and it is right and proper that as supporters of the Museum, Patrons, Friends and Volunteers should be aware of what is planned.

Andy Fontana, our Managing Trustee and your fellow Wardrobe Patron, has asked me to forward on the message below highlighting a fantastic opportunity to support our Project Update 25 redevelopment and to have your picture and history featured in our revamped Museum. If you know anyone else who may be interested please help us spread the word of Update 25 and the opportunity to get involved. If you have any further questions please email: Update25@thewardrobe.org.uk

Museum Redevelopment - Project Update25

We are contacting you to let you know that we are planning a major redevelopment of our regimental museum housed in the Wardrobe. It will take place from Nov 24 to Feb/Mar 25. As part of the project we want to bring the stories and histories of those that have served in our regiments to life. We have created an opportunity for people to have their picture and a brief service history on display on the "Supporters Wall".

This prominent display will feature real life profiles sealed on wooden tiles which rotate to reveal a summary of service. Visitors can interact with the wall and look through a manuscript/touch screen which has a full page for each person, with more pictures and life and service details

The attached pdf brochure explains more about the project, the Supporters Wall and the package on offer. To secure one of the 99 spaces individuals have to make a fixed price donation to the museum, every penny of which will go into the redevelopment project - so you can see it is a valuable way of raising funding to complete the project to a very high standard.

This is a unique and enduring opportunity to be a visible part of our history and support us in bringing it to life.

Please open up the brochure and read about the scheme. Places are limited so, to avoid disappointment, please apply early and make your reservation. When applying please read and follow the attached "Completing your Application Form for the Supporters Wall - Guidance Notes" carefully before completing the attached Application Form and Gift Aid form (if a UK Taxpayer).

The scheme is live for Applications - so act now

The opportunity is available to all who have served with, or on attachment to, our antecedent regular or reserve regiments, up to and including The Rifles.

You can, if you prefer, apply on line - using the details and form supplied at the following links:

<https://www.rgbw-association.org.uk/update25-help-us-to-bring-our-history-to-life/>

<https://www.rgbw-association.org.uk/supporters-wall-application-form-donation-for-reservation/>

Alternatively, if you would just like to make a donation to the redevelopment project, please make a BACS payment to:

Account Name: Rifles Wardrobe and Museum Trust

Sort Code: 30-96-26

Account Number: 85891460

Payment Reference: U25DONATION

Also attached is a flyer with the Wardrobe summer schedule of events, should you be able to attend any. We have some great "Living History" weekends coming up this summer.

The museum is always seeking new volunteers, so if you can support please contact the Curator, Bethany Joyce

email: Curator@thewardrobe.org.uk

If you are interested in becoming a Trustee then please read the relevant attachment and contact us.

Many thanks for your support.

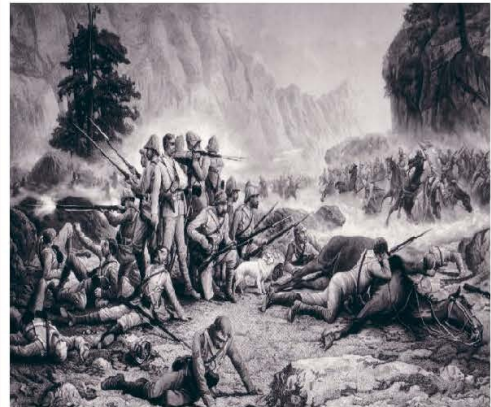
Andy Fontana

The pdf brochure appears on page 14 and the flyer of Wardrobe summer schedule of events is on page 15 & 16

Update25 – Help us to bring our history to life

The Rifles Berkshire & Wiltshire Museum redevelopment project

The Rifles Berkshire & Wiltshire Museum is home to over 250 years of military heritage, service and stories, from the Regiments of Foot to The Royal Berkshire and The Wiltshire Regiments, The Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment (Berkshire and Wiltshire) The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment and on to the modern-day Rifles. We preserve the memories of the people who have served in, and with, our regular and reserve battalions, through operations and conflicts across the globe. For over 40 years we have kept our stories alive in the minds of visitors from all over the world. To secure our future into the 21st century, we need to keep up with the changing expectations of museums. So, between November 2024 and March 2025, the museum will undergo an exciting major redevelopment to enable us to continue to capture the public imagination with our stories of **'Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage.'**



Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage.

This is your story. Update25 will bring our history, to life, redeveloping all our display areas and using the best modern and interactive technology. Our new displays will be themed, educational, full of light, sounds and movement, engaging and immersive. We will showcase our history, interwoven with personal stories of service, battles, courage, military equipment, and the changing nature of conflict. In this way we will put the visitor into our old boots!

The Supporters Wall will bring our history to life by connecting visitors to your story of service.

This prominent display will feature real life profiles sealed on wooden tiles which rotate to reveal a summary of service. Visitors can interact with the wall and look through a manuscript which has a full page for each person, with more pictures and life and service details. Your photographs and history can also be recorded in our on-line archives.

As well as being featured in the manuscript and the wall, you'll receive two VIP tickets to the re-opening event, planned for Spring 2025, and a personal copy of the full manuscript. **This is a unique and enduring opportunity to be a visible part of our history and support us in bringing it to life.**

All who have served or been attached to our regular and reserve regiments (including 'in memoriam') have the opportunity to be featured on the wall, in return for a donation of £499.

Due to space limitations, there are only 99 tiles available. To secure your place, complete the attached application form and send your deposit. If you have questions, then email Update25@thewardrobe.org.uk



Nigel Walker was commissioned from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst into the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment in August 1972, stationed in Berlin. He served in mainland UK and Northern Ireland, including a tour with the Airborne Forces, and overseas in Germany, Cyprus, Hong Kong, and the USA.
Enlisted: September 1970
Retired: May 2012 in the rank of Major

Completing your Application Form for the Supporters Wall

Guidance and FAQs

What do you need to do right now?

- Complete the Application Form
- If you are a UK taxpayer, please also complete the attached Gift Aid Form. Please ensure you do so as it allows us to claim a further amount from HMRC
- All forms (Application Form and Gift Aid) have been created and sent in MSWord so you can complete them on your PC. Please save them under their current file title and add your surname and initial(s) to the file name
- Email the forms to: **Update25@thewardrobe.org.uk**
- Title your email with "Supporters Wall" followed by your Surname and initial(s)
- Pay your deposit donation of **£49** by BACS (ideal) or by cheque. See the section on Payment Details in the Application Form for exactly how to do this, so we can track all of your donation payments
- Alternatively send the completed forms and/or payment to:

Supporters Wall
Trust Manager RWMT
The Wardrobe
58 The Close
Salisbury
SP1 2EX

How does the process work?

- You complete the forms, send them to us and pay your deposit donation. **Your place on the wall and all the other associated benefits are now secure!**
- We send you a full instruction pack with details on what information and photographs we need for the wall and the manuscript
- You supply the required information
- We edit it appropriately, format and lay it out, and return it to you for proofing
- You approve the content and pay your donation balance of **£450**
- We produce your Supporters Wall tile and entry for the manuscript
- We send your VIP tickets and details of the opening event, planned for Spring 2025
- You come to the opening event, see the redeveloped museum and the Supporters Wall, collect your manuscript and enjoy the day and the hospitality
- We record all your information in our digital archives for future generations

Frequently Asked Questions

When should I apply?

As soon as possible. We have a limited space and can only fit 99 tiles on the wall, on a first come first served basis.

Who is eligible to apply for a place on the Supporters Wall?

Applications are open to anyone who has served in our antecedent regular or reserve regiments, up to and including the Rifles, or who has been attached to any of those regiments.

How will you decide where my information goes on the wall?

Once we are ready for production there will be a draw to place people in positions. It is not done alphabetically or by rank. All positions on the wall are just as good as each other – at a good height and clearly visible.

Can I be put on the wall next to my brother?

If you are part of a family or friendship group, then when the first member is drawn the rest will be allocated adjacent positions, if you so wish. Simply make your request in the relevant part of the required information, which will be contained in the full instruction pack.

What happens if I change my mind and want to cancel my place?

This depends on where we are in the preparation, design and production process. We will, of course, try to refund donations where we can.

How do I apply for someone else or “in memoriam”?

Complete an Application Form with your details (so we can liaise with you) and make the reservation donation payment using their name as the payment reference (see payment instructions on the Application Form for how to create this reference). Complete the second table in the Application Form “for someone else” with the details of the person you wish to apply for/commemorate.

We appreciate comrades may wish to join together for funding, but we ask that there is a lead applicant who coordinates you all and pays the deposit and later the balance of the donation. If you are joining together to fund a place for someone else, please DO NOT submit a Gift Aid form for that application, as you may collect donations from a number of people.

If you are also applying for yourself, please submit your own (separate) form, with a Gift Aid form if you are currently a UK taxpayer.

What if I don't want my details to be available online?

That is no problem. Just let us know when you complete your instruction pack and we will not upload the service details you have supplied, we will just use them for this discreet project.

Can I pay by instalments?

This payment method creates additional administration for you and us. Please pay the deposit to secure your place and then you will have time to make provision for the remaining payment.

When will the final donation of £450 be required?

We need to receive your final donation payment within 30 days of making the request to you. This will fund the production of your tile, construction of the wall and printing of the manuscript. We expect to request the final amount of your donation towards the end of 2024.

CONTINUATION OF ALISTAIR'S PILGRIMAGE

In the last Newsletter Alistair's Pilgrimage from Truro Cathedral to Canterbury Cathedral had reached just North of Tiverton, in Devon. So in his own inimical style his account continues.

Day 6

Up, joy of joy I can enjoy a mug of tea and a hot bowl of porridge with dried fruit and nuts topped with honey all made with my new stove cleaned the pots with docks leaves and water and packed it all away and slipped out of my stealth camp with no one any the wiser.

I started climbing straight away, kind of getting used to this. Climbing up to 378 ft in the first three miles descending then climbing in Oakford Bridge before starting a gradual climb till I had climbed 733 ft in just over 16.5 miles. The villages I passed through were Bampton then as I said Oakford Bridge then Exebridge, Bridgetown, Exton, Wheddon Cross, Timbersombe, and Cowbridge and then Finally Dunster. Wheddon Cross was at the highest point of the ride. It was a quite a quick descent to Timbercombe and Cowbridge. I climbed up through the narrow streets of Dunster and found the Priory, pedalling up the path to the door. It was safer to pack Stormfly on the path by the porch than on the narrow road. You had a primary school next door So once more leaving Stormfly outside and went into the cool of the church which is a priory and not an Abbey.

History Lesson:

The first church was built as another Benedictine Monastery attached to Bath Abbey in 1100 AD it had tithes of several manors and fisheries. The Rood screen is rather grand, put in because of the arguments between the parish and the monks. The screen dates from the 1500's and is the longest of such in England. It became unattached from Bath abbey in 1332 to become a priory in its own right. In 1346 Cleeve Abbey, just along the coast, built a nunnery which was never used and is now a hotel. It has a dug out chest for the priory made during the reign of King Steven and it has a list of vicars dating from 1213. The The priory was dissolved as part of the Dissolution of the monasteries. The walls on the North and West sides, as well as the base of the tower, are Norman

Stats of the day's stage:

Mileage 22.95, Up hill distance 13.91 miles, speed average 5.62 mph, feet climbed 1240, average Gradient 5% nice and gentle. Minium temperature 60 F, Average 75 F, And Max 91 F.

I left Dunster and winding my way through the narrow lanes headed for the coast. I saw the large Canvas of Minehead it seems such a long time a go that I was on holiday there with the family, it was only last month. I dropped and climbed before finally dropping into Blue Anchor where I opted to have a dinner in a cafe right by the sea; leaving Stormfly parked in a car park bay my entrenching Took stopping her from rolling away.

I had very nice curry with a pot of tea, before cycling along the front watching the sea roll in and getting to the end joining the B 3191 and climbing from sea level to 207 ft ,the first bit very steep but once it was, on top I rattled along passing various holiday homes and camps till I came across a road closed and meeting the barriers with police video live feed stations what had what look like loud speakers built in. apparently there was a land, cliff face landslide that had taken the road with it, so turning around and retracing my steps till I just found a nice looking camp site I rolled in and booked a pitch when I asked How much the Old Lady said seven pounds, I looked at and said 'How much?' Not quite believing the price, she did not bat an eye and said, 'oh all right five.' I was not going to argue. I had a shower the only thing was not to charge phone or anything in the toilet block. So tablet was put on charge then the phone and finally the two battery packs. The tent went up I had a long hot shower then kept an eye out and if I saw the old lady going up to the toilet blocks, dashed to the block and removed the said items to put them back after she had cleaned them.

The next morning everything was charged fully .

Stats for this ride:

Distance 7.45, up hill distance 3.38, total for day 30.40 speed 5.24 mph
feet climbed 208, gradient 21%, temperature min 77 F, Average 82 F and Max 77 F
so a little cooler than yesterday.

From where I was camped I could see a pile ship all lit up looking like a super yacht building the Hinkley point Nuclear power station. I did sleep this night with just the fly screen up.

Day 7

Not quite up with the sun but another sunny day was on the cards I had my usual breakfast of porridge nuts and dried fruit along with a mug of tea it was a lovely morning. Walked to the farmhouse and paid my dues. The helper asked me what I was doing and when I explained she told me about Cleeve Abbey and that I should include it on my list. It was not on my list, not sure why, its an abbey so why not. I have heard of it, but due to its position of either English Heritage or national trust I thought I would give it a miss. But if its just down the road then why not.

Loaded up I pedalled up the long drive and turned onto the road. I was soon turning on to even more narrower lanes and was soon the village of old Cleeve and onto an old railway track bed, which pretty much took me to the old abbey. The grounds were well kept, as was expected the gate house was rather grand, and then the abbey grounds itself. The lady in the shop was helpful but would not let me walk around. But by all accounts it is still very much intact and saved from the same fate as most monastery as it was taken as a private house. It was established in 1198 dis-established in 1537. It was kind of run, not very well by the Cistercian monks, its mother abbey was Revesby Abbey. It became the private house of Robert Radcliffe 1st Earl of Sussex. The rest of the buildings were used as farm building, rather grand ones at that. Today Cleeve Abbey has the finest and best persevered medieval Monks living quarters still surviving in Southern England. It has been used in various films specially the curved stone staircase. It is worth a visit.

I headed to Watchet mainly because I was concerned with the news I have heard; the local news had reported that a cyclist had been killed on the A 39. The few people I chatted to, some say he was killed, some say he was seriously injured either way it was not good news, the A 39 is a narrow twisting fast road and one I did not want to go on. I need time to plan a new route and Watchet by the sea was as good a place as any.

I spent time on studying my maps and I found a route, not a very good one, as I had to go on the dreaded A 39 with a steep climb of 422 ft. I was on the A 39 for just over nine miles, just after Kilve I was off it, but not before another steep climb of 361 ft, before I was heading for the M 5 motorway which I needed to cross. The villages of Stringston, then Stogursey, then up along Priory Hill then Monkton Lane before turning on Hinkley Point Road. The one thing I had not taken into account, because I did not even know about it, was the bus traffic from and to Hinkley Point power station that they were building. They were white buses and were a continuous stream in both directions. The hills were getting softer letting me know that the nasty hills of Cornwall and Devon were behind me. I was heading for the Somerset levels. I was on Withycombe Hill Lane which changed into the Rodway, on that I passed by through Canington. I kept off the A 39 then I was on a cycle path running along it before I turned off having just done 18 miles.

It was flat and I was enjoying the flatness, I turned onto Skimmerton Lane then on to B 3339 through Wemdon till finally I was on the Bridgewater and Taunton Canal crossing over to the cycle path on the Parrett river. This part of the river I was enjoying it was flat, it was evening the heat was gone. But I was running out of light 25 miles in, I passed under the M 5. I turned on River Lane, a car width wide and I was cruising crossed over the A 372 on to Folwers plot and on a bend in the half light decided to call it a day. Pulling to the field and setting up camp. A dog walker saw me and said the farmer never uses the field just dog walkers. I was happy with that.

Stats for the day:

First stage to Watchet Distance 5.75 miles, speed 5.75 mph, climbed 259 ft, gradient 14%,. Temperature min 69 F Average 77 F Max 86 F.

Second Stage Distance 27.06 mile Total Day Mileage 32.81 miles, speed 6.18 mph, Climbed 1125 ft, Gradient 12%, Temperature Min 69 F Average 78 F and Max 87 F.

Day 8

Up breakfast was my normal of porridge with honey and nuts along with a mug of tea. it was misty the mist hanging low so the end of field was hidden and the pylons like like giants with no legs the closer ones looming up grey and ugly. After one last check just to make sure I had everything. I packed everything up, loaded on Stormfly, slipped into the cockpit, clipped in feet onto pedals. I am just about on the Somerset levels heading toward one of the most well know Abbey in Somerset. Just down the road I past a farm and see a milk selling machine so pull in and by a large mug and drink it there and then then fill up two of my spare smaller water bottles with fresh milk. This part is not level, well not this part it was flat for two mile then started climbing with a 215 ft climb just five miles in and I had a couple of steep climbs.

I had three climbs the last one at nine miles in was 219 ft then and only then did I drop onto the Somerset levels. I head through Chedzoy over King Sedgemoor Drain. I stop here for a second breakfast of porridge made with fresh milk and have a mug of tea with milk. BLISS before heading towards Stawell on Stawell Road over the A 39 yet again turning onto Holy Well road.

The lanes are narrow and fairy straight. Lippets way is in the middle of my first section of climbs, Shapwick is in a dip with a steep climb out of it, Ascott is on top of another 209 ft climb, Whitley Road, Sharpham Lane; all under my wheels: names that somewhere in history have a meaning like Stagman Lane, Sharpham Lane over the South Drain, Sharpham is the lowest point point of the ride. I get onto an old railway track that had been turn into a pleasant cycle walkway, its all pretty new, the surface was new with no potholes; at one point I stop at a spot were I can see the Torr from a little garden, laid in memory of a fourteen year old girl who died of asthma attack. It has a couple of seats and a picnic bench. With views of the torr .



Break Stop at the garden in memory of a 14 year old girl who died of an asthma attack.
In the fat distance Glastonbury Torr

I got into Glastonbury to find half of it closed off due a fire in a hotel or pub so I got to the Abbey and asked the lady for a quirky fact which most people would not know. I got "well how's this My Grandfather has been the groundsman there for the last twenty five years." Not quite what I meant but never mind "Okay how this his father used to work in Wells Cathedral and had to replace the flags on top of the towers." Okay but again not quite what I meant .

So Folks History lesson:

This site has been a religious site since the Celtic times. There have been three churches on this site. The Abbey was founded in the 8th century enlarged in the 10th Century it had a lady's chapel but was destroyed by a major fire in 1184. It became one of the richest and powerful monasteries in England. It controlled large amounts of the surrounding lands and was instrumental in major drainage projects on the Somerset levels The last Abbot was Hung Drawn and Quartered as a traitor on Glastonbury Torr in 1539. Naturally, we have the legends of King After, who they think is buried here; as well being visited by King Alfred as he fought various battles and was being hunted, he sheltered in a local's hut, told to watch over the cooking cakes which he burnt. Then even further back Joseph of Arimathea, who liked the place so much he plated his staff and it grew into a tree.

I stopped at the local cafe to watch the action or lack of it, most of the fire men were just standing around in shirt sleeves and who did I bump into, Neil the Chef, who used to work at the Rifleman's Table. Shortly after that I set off again this time towards Wells Cathedral.

Leaving Glastonbury I was on the narrow roads that run along the drainage ditches, so it was flat and interesting riding as they were not particularly smooth with tarred up gaps and ruts. Now it made sense why the fire engine I saw in town centre was so small, they needed to be to get down these lanes. It made a change than climbing all the time, I speed along happy I had plenty of water as well as having a very nice lunch and a good mug of tea.

I did take a wrong turn and ended up with a short climb to Upper Coxley then turned around and was soon back on the right lane then I was through Launchely and onto the A 371 straight into Wells and well, what a cathedral. It is the smallest city with a magnificent cathedral.

Wells is known for the setting of the Film Hot Fuzz as well as most recently the top of the steeple of one of the local churches fell off in a storm. The wide cobbled street leads to the arched entrance into the Bishops garden and Palace. You can walk around the moat and see Glastonbury's torr from one spot. I left Stormfly in front of the west front of the Cathedral.

I decided that as I had some time here as I had arranged for a friend to meet me here to ride to Bath with me and he could not get here till tomorrow thankfully the ride to Bath is fairly short. Any way Folks I digress. I thought I would try and get a place to stay but all the places I was recommended was so full so ended camping in a field just out of Wells once I was settled I was asleep.



Stormfly dwarfed by the magnificent Wells cathedral

Day Stats

Distance 28.76 Miles, up hill distance 14.73 miles, Average speed 5.85 mph, feet climbed 889 with an average gradient 13%, min Temperature 60 F, Average Temperature 83 F Max 98 F,

Rest Day Day- Day 9

So the next day up early broke camp had my normal breakfast then packed everything up, loaded Stormfly and was soon back in Wells.

The Cathedral was open and I just walked in pass the reception desk and into the Cathedral it was so peaceful and I just walked around bare foot having took my cycling shoes due to the cleats. I stood and admired the scissor arches and then the clock. The only people I saw was a pastor and an old lady. I was told by the pastor to avoid some spilt wine, they had had a silent disco, a first for them, and when I asked if it was silent he just laughed and shook his head. All to soon I was waiting for a cafe to open and have another breakfast and a mug of tea. Stormfly was parked up in view under some trees.

History Lesson Folks:

There has been a church on this site since 705 AD, it was at first Roman catholic becoming Anglican when you know who (King Henry VII) split from Rome. The first Bishop of Wells crowned King Aethelstan. It has an Anglo Saxon font that predates the present church and it has the second oldest clock but the oldest working clock face in the UK and the three elegant scissor arches were built in 1338 to stop the tower from sinking.

Day 10

He turned up at midday and instead of getting on the road he wanted a coffee and something to eat, well he is paying, so we did, then we were on the road. He had planned the route which I was not used to. He was on an electric bike, no wonder he left me behind on the hills and his route was all on the main road and when he stopped at a junction to wait, having just passed a blue cycle sign to Bath. He pointed up a hill with a thundering traffic and I pointed to the sign and told him he could choose his route but I was going that way. It was off the main road along another old disused railway track. We stopped on a quiet road to buy ice-cream and he admitted this was a fantastic route and how did I find it. I shook my head. We went on through the two long cycle tunnels which you need lights for and a fleece it got quite cold as the first one was over a mile long and dropped into Bath. I left him at the station and went and found the Abbey leaving Stormfly in the care of a late opening cafe, found a hostel where I had to produce some photo ID. "Hang on I am in my own country on a cycle tour and I have to produce Photo ID?"

The young man at the desk just nodded. "I am on a cycle tour, I started in Truro I do not carry any Photo ID, I do not need My Passport in My Own Country" A blank look shrugged of shoulders "then sorry dude company policy" so I left and found the YMCA who let me in once I gave my address so went back to the Cafe unlocked Stormfly and cycled up to the Hostel. There I was able to wash all my clothes have a hot shower kind of and sleep in a bed. Boy was it hot.

Okay Folks here's the History lesson.

675 AD King Osric of the Hwicce granted Abbes Berta 100 hides (hides are an ancient land measurement the land enclosed or hide was enough for a family to be self sufficient about 120 acres) near Bath for the establishment of a convent. This house become a monastery. King Offia of the Merica was successful in wrestling the monastery at Bath from the Bishop in 781. He then rebuilt the church. It also become a Benedictine Monastery until the Dissolution of the Monasteries.

Bath Abbey is where the the first king of England King Edgar was crowned Bath was in the thick of the power struggle between the sons of William the conqueror following his death in 1087. William the second known as Rufus granted the city to John of Tours a royal physician he was also granted Bath itself so got control of the mints in Bath. Once he become Bishop he brought the Abbey and grounds from the king. John of Tours planed a new cathedral but died in 1122. The half built Cathedral was destroyed by fire in 1137 but they continued to build it till about 1156; it was three hundred feet long. It was granted cathedral status in 1245 along with Wells. Bath Cathedral was surrendered to the crown in 1539 it was stripped of lead and glass and lost its cathedral status. It has two organs and a peel of ten bells and a cellar.

The space around the abbey is used by street performers and as I arrived in the evening there was a violin player playing the four seasons. And it started to rain which was nice but it did not last for long. Did not even break out my waterproof jacket.



Bath abbey with Stormfly, it shows the Jacobs ladder on either side of the window thought to be because Bishop King when visiting Bath had a dream in which he saw the heavenly hosts ascending and descending by ladder. The carvings on the doors are rather grand as well.

Sats for the day:

Distance 22.61 miles, uphill distance 10.89 miles, speed 6.56 mph feet climbed 1181 gradient 6% temperature min 64 F, average 75 F Max 80 F.

Day 11

Up, cook breakfast on a proper stove not that it makes a difference, along with a nice mug of tea with milk for once collect clean clothes from Laundry, collect the various battery packs hidden on charge, then repack the panniers gained an extra USB plug not sure how.

Then got the maps out checked my route over another mug of tea and wheel. Stormfly who had been locked alarmed and covered right by the door so the Night warden could keep an eye on her.

Before I made my way out of Bath I had one mission and that was to find New King Street, this is where William Herschel set his telescope up in the middle of the street and in March 1781 discovered Uranus. There is a museum to him and his work as well as a bronze plaque not a blue one as this predates the blue plaques because of his discovery he became astronomer Royal.

So I left a very busy and confusing Bath, it took me some back and forth, missing streets and roads to get into Sydney gardens and then find a way onto the Kennet and Avon canal and then going over a couple of bridges swapping sides before I realised I was going in the wrong direction. So turned around and retraced my steps I stayed on the canal for just over three miles stopping at the cafe on a barge and having a mug of tea a slice of millionaire shortbread. (Naughty I know) From there I crossed the A4 and then found the River Avon and followed that to Batheaston getting on to Brown hill and Northend onto a long Oakford Lane all the way to Pixtongreen with a steep climb of 562 ft joining the Fosse Way at the 7.47 mile mark and kept on that till just after nine miles.

Well it changed to Doncombe Hill when when I crossed over the A 429 it became the Fosse Way again it being an old Roman road it was straight. I stayed on that right up to I crossed the B 4039 stopped for lunch with a lunch of fish before pressing on. Before lunch I had passed a lone young man walking and as I came out he appeared and that is his daily walk to and from work. I also passed an old airfield with something going on that involved cars and a few vans, could not see what but it was there people in bright orange vests. Shortly after lunch I crossed over the M 4 and I veered off the Fosse Way. I was on a narrow open lane with what looked like Pheasant murder alley they were everywhere splatted across the lane. I joined Sherston road that brought me into Norton and got on to Honey Lane that took me into Foxley where I joined Foxley road that took me all the way into Malmesbury. I went up to the Entrance of the Abbey to find it closed the First church to be so.

I was stopped by a group of ladies having a rather good time in the near by hotel and they gave me the clues for the quiz.

Okay folks History Lesson:

The site where the present Abbey is was chosen by Mael Duban an Irish monk. He in the late 7th century established a hermitage teaching local children. This area was conquered by the Saxons. The Present day Abbey was founded as a Benedictine Monastery around 676 AD by the scholar Poet Aldelm a nephew of King Ine of Wessex.

In October 939 Aethelstan King of Wessex and the English died, his remains in the year 941 AD were buried at the Abbey. The Abbey had a mint and it built up an illustrious reputation for academic learning. The Abbey was where an early attempt of human flight was made during the 11th century, the Monk Eilmer of Malmesbury attached wings to his arms and body and flew from a tower. He flew over 200 yards before landing and only broke his legs.

The Abbey is mentioned in the Domesday book.

The abbey was nearly completed by 1180 AD, it had the tallest spire in England at 431 feet the spire and tower collapsed in a storm around the 1500 destroying much of the Abbey including two thirds of the nave and the transept. Today's church is the third to stand on this site. Also Malmesbury was the first capital of England.

I did look a little round the town but with some school kids in the centre one with a motorbike having an argument did little to impress me and with no cafes apart from one, I decided not to stay, to get some miles under my wheels towards my next target. I really did not realise how late it was as I set of and retraced my steps looking for a place to camp. There really were not any places, the fields all had gates across and crops in the field. In the end I gave up and pulled in onto a wide verge and set up camp. I had dinner of rice tuna and sweet corn a mug of tea and then bed. The traffic was light. I did half expected to be disturbed in the night by a lone police following a report of a camper on the side of the road. But no ,I camped under an oak giving me protection at least in one direction.

Stats for the day:

Distant 29.69 miles up hill mileage 13.60. average speed 6.34 mph, feet climbed 1528, average gradient 14%, temp min 64 F Average 68 F max 75 F.

Day 12

Malmesbury was furthest North north Place I was visiting now I am heading back south, towards home. I was up and in the quiet I packed the sleeping bag and stuff up made breakfast and sat eating my normal breakfast and drinking my tea. Traffic was light people going to work, an old horsebox trundled pass gave me a toot. A few cars I could see the drivers looking at me. who cares I thought. I finished breakfast washed up packed it way and dropped camp packed all that up and as I was doing that a female gamekeeper drove up and went and checked on her pheasants she even asked me to scarce them back into the field. But I was on the road just after she left. I was on the same route as yesterday so the road was familiar to me. I passed through Grittleton again under the M 4 again onto Rat Hill. The road changed from Rat Hill to The Street and then I joined the B 4039 through Yatton Keynell. I stopped here because I saw a cafe and had a good breakfast two cyclist popped in for their coffee dressed in outfits that matched their bikes and their bikes were top of the range. After the wonderful, cooked breakfast minus the toast I brought a bottle of fresh milk and down it there and then. Then wondered across to the church and spotted a colony of burrow or miner bees.



If you look closely to the left of the stone you can just see a miner bee about to enter its burrow

I sat and watched them for a bit before walking back to Stormfly mounting up and pedalling off down the road. I was now on Biddestone lane. It was still the same road but the names just changed Yatton road and after a bend turns in Cuttle Road. It fairly level but here at six miles in I start a gentle descent and it just keeps on descending a gentle fall. The name changes name again its now Cross Keys Road. It just one single road lane going straight over all the junctions over the A4 Bath road and just keep on going on and on the same old road till I reach the A 350. I turn onto a service to keep off the A 350 for as long as possible but I do know I will have to go on it sooner than later. I slipped onto Corsham Road then onto the dreaded A 350. I was on it for a mile then I turned off into Lacock and its grounds.



Okay Folks Here's the History Lesson:

Ela Countess of Salisbury, widow of William Longespee who is buried in Salisbury Cathedral and who was an illegitimate son of King Henry II who did recognise him. She laid the first stone of the abbey in Snails meadow on the 16th of April 1232. It was to be a nunnery of the Augustinian order. That same day she then rode sixteen miles to found another monastery for monks of the same order. She joined the order in 1228. It got its money from the wool trade. One noticeable visitor was Anne of Denmark when she was suffering from gout. During the Civil war it was manned by Royalists and they only surrendered on agreed terms after Cromwell captured Devizes in late September 1645.

Naturally, we know of Fox Talbot and his work to develop the development of negatives as we know today, also like most grand houses nowadays to keep the coffers full they have been used as various locations in several noticeable films

Stats for the day, Distance 12.44 miles, up hill 4.01 miles, speed 7.16 mph, feet climbed 272

gradient 4%, Temp min 55 F, Average 62 F, Max 68 F

I had to end the tour here due to family reasons but plan to continue it next year so watch this space, until then Alistair Riggs

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

BY MAC MCINTYRE

The following research and resulting article was done by Martin (Mac) McIntyre. Due to the size of his article we have reduced it to a third and the other two thirds will appear in July and Decembers editions of the Newsletter.

Most soldiers of any rank or length of service disappear into civilian life with fond (or otherwise) memories of their time in 'The Mob'. A number who served within our ranks went onto greater things and would come to notice in a completely different field.

A trawl of the Regimental archive has identified a few:

Private 14743 Ernest York.
7th Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment

Ernest York was an English professional footballer who played as a full back in the Southern Football League for Crystal Palace. York served as a private in the 7th (Service) Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment during the First World War and was killed in action at Salonika on 28 April 1917. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Doiran Memorial.



Private Ernest Hanks
3rd (Militia) Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment.

Ernest Hanks was an English professional footballer who played in the Football League for Woolwich Arsenal as a centre forward. Between 1904 and 1906, Hanks served in a militia battalion of the Princess Charlotte of Wales's (Royal Berkshire Regiment). He served as a corporal in the Army Service Corps during the First World War.



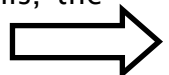
2nd Lieutenant Anthony Rampton
Royal Berkshire Regiment

Anthony Rampton OBE was a British businessman and philanthropist, and chairman of the clothing retailer Freemans from 1965 to 1984. In 1938 he joined the Freemans catalogue and online retail company which his grandfather had co-founded in 1906. He served in the Regiment from 1940 to 1946 in the Royal Berkshire Regiment in World War II, notably in India, he rejoined the company and served as its Managing Director (1964–1965).



Private William Stratford Dugdale.
Royal Berkshire Regiment

Sir William Stratford Dugdale, 2nd Baronet, CBE, MC, DL, JP (29 March 1922 – 13 November 2014) was the chairman of Aston Villa from 1975 to 1978. Dugdale arrived at Aston Villa as a director when they were in the third division, having been relegated due to poor performances on and off the pitch. He left the club in 1982, the year they won the European Cup. Following several successful years as a director in the early-1970s, he was elected chairman in 1975, taking over the position from Doug Ellis, the package holiday businessman, before being replaced by Harry Kartz.



He fought in the Second World War, where he was mentioned in despatches, gaining the rank of captain in the service of the Grenadier Guards, having been commissioned into that regiment on 27 September 1941 and after serving in the ranks in the Royal Berkshire Regiment. His service number was 207638. He was decorated with the award of the Military Cross (M.C.) in 1943 for outstanding bravery whilst under fire. He fought at Anzio, and ended the war guarding the German generals at Nuremberg.

Sergeant James Lofthouse
Royal Berkshire Regiment

James Lofthouse was an English professional footballer who played as an outside left in the Football League for The Wednesday, Rotherham County, Bristol Rovers and In early life, Lofthouse worked as a sand wheeler. He served as a sergeant in the Royal Berkshire Regiment and the Labour Corps during the First World War. Lofthouse later worked as a steward at the Tilehurst Constitutional Club, as a postman and as a pub landlord in Aldershot.

Private John William Warsap
Royal Berkshire Regiment

John "Johnny" William Benjamin Warsap, born in Leytonstone, served with the Royal Berkshire Regiment during World War II. In 1945 his regimental team played a friendly against the Gills (Gillingham) and the outside-right came to the attention of Gillingham manager Archie Clark - later that year he signed professional terms with the club. It was the start of 13-year association with the club.

Captain John Lloyd Ackill
Royal Berkshire Regiment

John Lloyd Ackrill, FBA was an English philosopher and classicist who specialised in Ancient Greek philosophy, especially the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. Ackrill has been said to be, along with Gregory Vlastos and G. E. L. Owen, "one of the most important figures responsible for the upsurge of interest in ancient Greek philosophy among Anglo-American philosophers of the second half of this century". In 1940 he entered St. John's College, Oxford as a scholar in Classics^[3] where his philosophy tutors were Paul Grice and John Mabbott. The next year he left for war service in the Royal Berkshire Regiment from 1942 to 1946 and General Staff, reaching the rank of captain. He returned to Oxford in 1945 to read Literae Humaniores (or 'Greats', a combination of philosophy and ancient history), graduating in 1948.



Private Joseph Barratt
Royal Berkshire Regiment

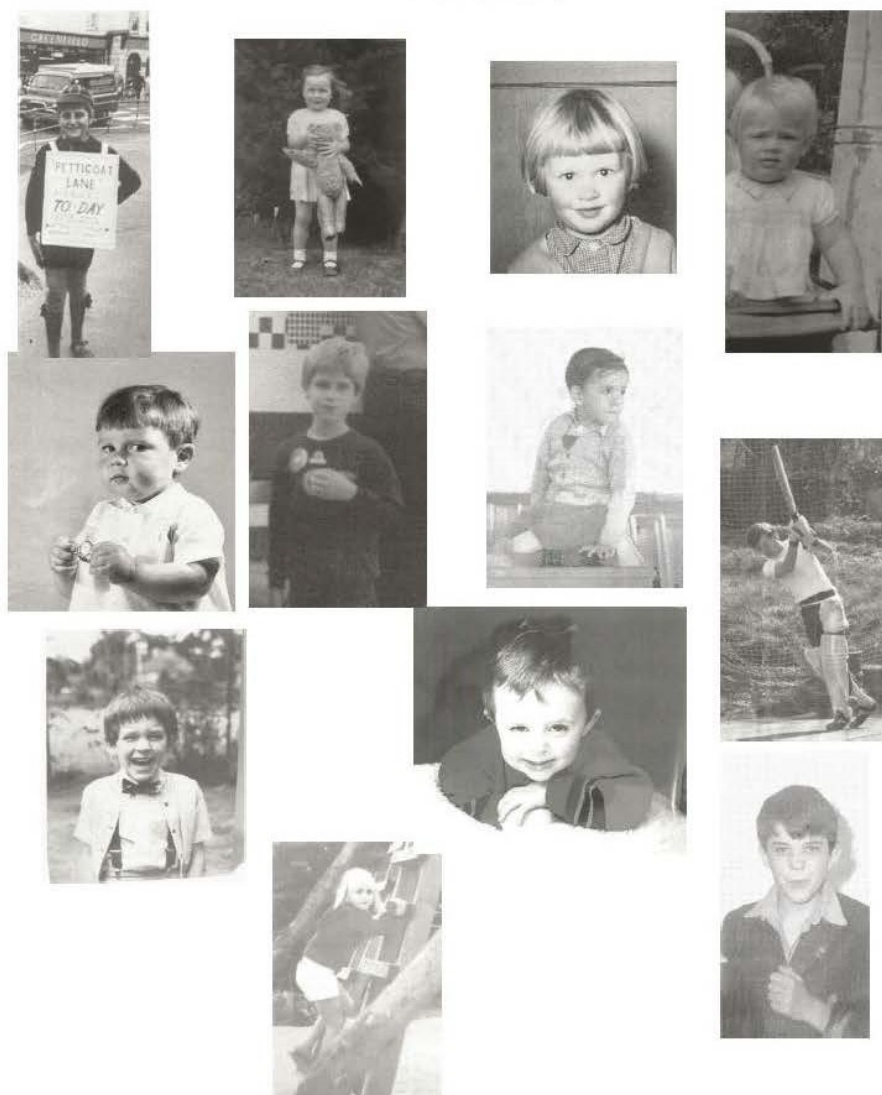
Josiah Barratt was an English professional footballer who played as a winger for various clubs in the 1920s. Barratt was born in Bulkington, Warwickshire and played his early football with local side Nuneaton Town. During the First World War he served with the Royal Berkshire Regiment and was a guest player for Leicester Fosse, Birmingham and Southampton.

Corporal Michael Neville
1st Battalion Wiltshire Regiment

Michael Neville, MBE was a British broadcaster, best known as a presenter on regional TV news in north-east England in a 43-year career with the BBC and ITV franchisee Tyne Tees Television. In 1990, Neville was awarded the MBE for services to broadcasting. His first job at the age of 15 was at the Northern Guild of Commerce and Chamber of Trade. He was subsequently a junior editorial assistant at the *Daily Mail's* Newcastle offices. In 1955, he began two years of National Service in Cyprus, where he rose to the rank of Corporal in the Wiltshire Regiment. After a short time as an insurance agent, he joined the repertory company of Newcastle Playhouse full-time in 1957 and changed his name to Michael Neville.

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER NEWSLETTER QUIZ

Who Are They?



Tom Sharpe

Robert McKellar

Chris Gale

Anita Taylor

David S

Bethany Joyce

Ross Keel

Sian Bacon

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