



The Journal of the Bancroft's School CCF

Honour & Glory

www.bancrofts.org

2020 - 2023



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Front Cover

CCF Group photo from 1919 and photo from 2023.

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From the Contingent Commander

1st April 2023 marked the 75th anniversary of the modern Combined Cadet Force (CCF) nationally. It seems only right therefore to focus this issue on the current generation of cadets at Bancroft's, and to look back into the archive and hear from some of their forebears. I am very grateful for all the contributions, prose, bullet points, and the many photos. I hope the articles that span the years will spark a few fond memories for OBs and will help inspire cadets from the current generation to make the most of their current CCF career.

Reading the accounts of the cadets over the last 75 years, the earliest from 1953 and the most recent from this year, I am struck by three things in particular. The first, not a lot has changed in 75 years! Whether that is a good thing I am not sure, but it does suggest the core business of the CCF has stood the test of time. I suspect the paperwork and health and safety considerations required now to run a range or blank exercise are a little more stringent and time consuming than they were for my predecessors back in the 1950s, but whether the fun and enjoyment is any the greater for it I doubt very much.

The second, is that the kids still enjoy it. Not everything is glitzy and instant, and the best things do require work – be it polishing your boots, sorting your kit, finessing your drill, leading a section or instructing in a classroom. However, as anyone who has been in the CCF knows, it is worth the effort so that you can fly, shoot, take part in adventurous training or just have that sense of pride and enjoyment of being part of something larger than the individual's endeavour.

Thirdly, the people themselves are quite evidently the key to the success of the CCF. Cadets teaching and learning from each other is really the essence of what it is all about. For the generations prior to Covid this just happened, with long established routines

and mentoring ensuring that year after year the younger cadets learnt from the old hands and in turn led the new recruits to ensure the cadet experience continued. Covid however broke this chain, the CCF was mothballed for a time and then initially returning only within year group bubbles – the very antithesis of what the CCF is about. Instead of senior cadets teaching the youngsters, the staff stepped in and as any cadet knows, that is very definitely second best. The staff did their best, and I am pleased to say that in spite of us the cadets are now thriving again.

On behalf of the many generations of cadets, I would like to thank the SSIs who have run the show and the officers who have given the impression they have! The current SSI, Damien Pascal, is dedicated and outstanding. Having served for twenty-two years in the Royal Anglian Regiment, WO2 Pascal joined as SSI in January 2006 and has since become an institution – developing and nurturing generations of cadets, keeping the officers on their toes and reigning in the Contingent Commander when a voice of reason is required. Damien is the embodiment of an excellent SSI and is vital to delivering the cadet experience at Bancroft's. His uncompromising professionalism, unwavering attention to detail and very good humour mark him out as a model SSI. It is clear from the OB articles, that successive SSIs have played a pivotal role and on behalf of all cadets I would like to thank them for their service over the last 75 years.

Similarly, the volunteer officer corps that has staffed the Contingent over the years has provided many opportunities and happy memories for cadets. I am hugely grateful to the present staff who continue to volunteer and give their time to support our cadets. All of them have busy teaching jobs, which makes their commitment all the more impressive. It is evident from reading the accounts of former and present staff that the CCF has certainly made an



RSM West, SSI 1950 to 1953



SSI Martyn Spiers



SSI Damien Pascal



impression on them and I am grateful to all the staff and OBs over the years that have supported the CCF.

Two contrasting examples, that possibly sum up the cadets and staff of the CCF best. Firstly, the way the cadets compete fiercely every year for the Dan Clack Trophy at Army Camp. The format is a traditional march and shoot competition, with tasks varying from shooting, the obstacle course (assault course for OBs over a certain age), command tasks, first aid, drill, observation stands and much more. It is a fantastic way of generating a competitive edge at the end of the camp and a way of bringing cadets together across the ages. It is also an excellent way to keep the spirit of Dan Clack OB with the CCF.

The second is the unfailingly positive (at least in public) way in which the staff respond to various obstacles to training that have been put in their path over the years. These have ranged from forgetting to pack ear defence for the range, losing the keys to various vehicles, forgetting to transport tents between campsites from one side of the Lake District to another, and to 'losing training areas'. Perhaps the 'best' or at least the most challenging moment came in 2010 when the advance party for Army Camp travelled to Gibraltar only to find that another school had erroneously been allocated our accommodation, stores, weapons, ammunition and training areas with less than 24 hours to go before the main body of 50 cadets were due to arrive. The local booking cell seemed surprised to hear there was more than one CCF in London. To say the colour of the language at Devil's Tower camp that afternoon matched the azure skies off Europa Point would be accurate and it certainly startled one or two unsuspecting monkeys on the Rock. In the good tradition of the CCF, we ditched the mountain of paperwork already submitted to higher command over the preceding months, that had apparently been necessary to gain clearance to train, and instead reverted to the tried and tested back of an envelope and went on

the scrounge for some kit. Thankfully the Gibraltar Regiment came up trumps and the longstanding connection with the Royal Anglian Regiment certainly opened doors. In adversity it brought the staff much closer together, and the week, whilst exhausting, proved a great success and lives long in the memory still. So much so, that I still reach for my glasses whenever I see a short Geordie NCO, or was he Welsh?

The CCF is just one of many activities in school that helps to develop skills, friendships and character, but it is idiosyncratically very different in the opportunities it provides. Some of my happiest memories with the CCF have included tunnel fighting in the Rock of Gibraltar, battlefield tours to Normandy and Arnhem, 'Raves in the Woods' aka a recruit overnight exercise, OBUA exercises at Hythe and Lydd, advancing to contact through the rolling pastures of Kentawe, ambushes going wrong, white outs in the Lake District, and of course JGB's cooking at Adventurous Training and the longest apprenticeship ever served by his successor - the Michelin starred Lt John Barnard.

What began as an idea to draw together the usual articles for the annual newsletter quickly mushroomed into three years' worth of cadet articles due to a Covid backlog, and the inclusion of some interesting OB reflections has made it into something of a bumper edition. To successive Heads and the wider school staff, present cadets and OBs, present and former officers, parents, friends of the CCF in London District, The Royal Anglian Regiment, the RAF, outdoor instructors (Rollo, Ian and Lyn in particular), and the largely supportive range wardens up and down the country – the CCF thanks you for your support. I do hope you enjoy reading this edition of the CCF newsletter and if you would like to contribute to the next publication please contact the CCF via schooloffice@bancrofts.org.

CCF Articles 2020/21

October Field Weekend

The October Field Weekend was my first real taste as to what the CCF truly is all about. Due to the current strange times we are living in, my fellow cadets and I had had no other training experiences; so, we were eager to begin our CCF adventure. I headed to school on a bright and early Saturday morning, feeling exhilarated for the first day of my Field Weekend. We headed to the pavilion to be sorted into 4 groups, ready for the activities that awaited us.

On the first day, I took part in marching, shelter building in the forest, learning about ration packs and military supplies that would be used in trips later on in the years to come and basic rifle training. Although this surprised me, my favourite task that day was learning about supplies. It excited me to think about the great trips that lay ahead of me and new experiences I would face.

The second day of the Field Weekend brought a more fun and problem-solving day. There were many team games that involved crossing "rivers", making shapes while blindfolded out of rope and trying to deliver parcels across a minefield. I loved all of the tasks that day, however, the best activity over the whole field weekend had to be laser tag. During our 40 minutes of fun, we played a range of different game modes

including a team death match (which we lost both times) and a free for all. Laser tag allowed the teams to be creative and to come up with different tactics in order to ensure victory. It was for sure the highlight of my weekend!

The October Field Weekend was, overall, a great introduction to the CCF. The days were informative and enjoyable; I learned a lot and had an excellent time while doing so. The trip gave me an opportunity to work as part of a team, to have a brilliant experience and to understand what I would be pursuing throughout the rest of the year.

Cdt Harry O





Remembrance Day

The Coronavirus pandemic has caused life to become anything but normal with many of our annual events being cancelled or postponed. Yet, despite being in the midst of a second lockdown, at Bancroft's, we were fortunate enough to be able to adapt to the situation and broadcast our revised Remembrance service virtually allowing everyone to attend from home or in the classroom. Although we were unable to have a parade with the whole CCF contingent, due to school year bubbles, the U6th NCOs still allowed for a successful event to take place. The prayers by the Heads of House and the service led by Rev. Moore allowed us to have a degree of normality and continue the important Act of Remembrance which is always a highlight in the CCF calendar.

This year's Remembrance Day also marked the centenary of the Cenotaph being built in Whitehall with a closed ceremony taking place. The Cenotaph displays how structures have performed the useful function of acting as a focal point for remembrance and I look forward to next year's event where the Bancroft's community will be able to mark our own centenary of the memorial which was placed in the quad during 1921. The memorial acts as a reminder

to us of the heavy casualties felt by the Bancroft's community during the great war with 147 of 850 serving members of the school, both pupils and staff, being killed. Another less widely known structure, amongst current Bancroftians who walk under the tower every day or the parents who park on the gravel, are the memorial gates which also act as a structure for remembrance, to pay tribute to those who lost their lives in the Second World War, embodied by their names written on bronze plaques.

I am grateful to the U6th NCOs for representing the contingent so well with lockdown not hindering their drill at all. I would like to give special thanks to Sarika P as a fellow wreath bearer, Lewis W and Eleanor C for playing the last post, Arisht B for playing the drum, Emily C and Olivia P as flagbearers and the members of staff who made the day possible including the tech team who allowed us to share the occasion online. I hope to see the contingent continue CCF this year with the can-do spirit and making the best out of our current situation.

Cpl Manav A



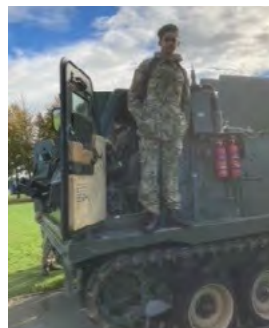


CCF Articles 2021/22

CCF STEM

On the 25th October, I and twelve other cadets went to the STEM Day at the Prince William of Gloucester Barracks, near Grantham. The bus left school at 5am, so it was a very early start. When we arrived, there were many stands showcasing different branches of the Army including logistics, artillery and engineering. My favourite was the engineering stand because it was very interesting to learn about all the different roles the engineers play, like building bridges and blowing up stuff. We also saw a missile launching system brought by the royal artillery. Thanks to Mr Hitching and Ms Hampson for a super day out.

Cdt Kaitlin L



The RSM's Autumn Review

This has been quite an eventful term for the CCF at Bancroft's. We kicked off the year by developing the new Recruits' rifle handling and fieldcraft skills. A few weeks later, the Upper 6th and Lower 4ths headed



down to the Copped Hall Estate, Epping Forest, for our Field Weekend. The weekend started off with the recruits being split into 4 groups lead by NCOs in the U6. The

groups then took part in exciting activities such as a section attack and the sniper stalk. The firm favourite among the recruits was the laser tag, which gave them the opportunities to put the skills they had been developing into practice. On the Monday, the rest of the Army Section headed to Harlow Outdoors, where they enjoyed a day stocked with fun outdoor activities such as climbing, mountain biking and canoeing; whilst the RAF Section travelled to London and participated in a walking tour of important RAF sites in the city. They toured Parliament Square, and sites relevant to the Battle of Britain such as the St Clement Danes Church.



More recently, we were honoured to commemorate the end of the First World War during our annual Remembrance Day parade. This year, due to Covid, the service was held entirely in the Quad and was no less moving for it. The service started with a few words from Reverend Moore, then the laying of the wreaths - which I found particularly moving as we celebrated the lives of the soldiers who passed away in war, especially the ones who attended this school. This was then followed by some touching readings by the Scouts, CSM Charlie H, and Reverend Moore. The Last Post and Reveille were then played beautifully by Tom J as all on parade stood silently for two minutes. The parade concluded with the CCF and Scouts marching out of the Quad.



It is my hope that in our own small way, Bancroft's was able to give proper testament to the millions who gave their lives in the First World War and in conflicts since.

RSM Manon S



CCF Biennial Review

This year's Biennial Review took place on a dry, unseasonably warm March day. The new location of the Copped Hall Estate meant that the members of the CCF could spread out and enjoy different types of terrain without worrying too much about their exercises disturbing dog walkers or cyclists.

The format was a little different this year with the focus very much on the cadets in action; the more formal elements of previous inspections, namely a Guard of Honour and Inspection in the Quad, followed by the Inspecting Officer addressing all the Cadets in the Great Hall, gave way to a more relaxed and intimate inspection as well as allowing more time in the field.

During the day the cadets – RAF and Army – were divided into sections led by Fifth Form Junior NCOs and took part in several activities, displaying a variety of skills. These activities were led by Sixth Form Senior NCOs, while members of staff watched on and awarded points for performance. The activities included: first aid and field emergencies; observation;

sniper stalk (in which the cadets were transformed into green slug like creatures wriggling through the undergrowth); weapons handling; a command task and laser quest, the latter is always one of the highlights of the day as two sections literally battled it out! The stakes were high as the Cadets were competing not just in the Biennial Review Tournament but also for the Dan Clack Trophy, which has traditionally been awarded at summer Army Camp.

Section 8, led by Kailen P and Raoul S, were the winning section, with sections 3 and 1 coming in second and third place. Kailen was presented with the awards by Mrs Sue Clack and the Reviewing Officer Group Captain Mark Manwaring. The Dan Clack Trophy is named in honour of Dan Clack OB who was killed in action in Afghanistan.

Group Captain Mark Manwaring, who was joined by the RAF Test NCO, Trev Sanderson, our termly link with the RAF, was fulsome in his praise for the Bancroft's Cadets. He outlined the many valuable life





skills which the CCF facilitates: leadership, teamwork, self-discipline and communication. He went on to say that the CCF presents a brilliant opportunity to gain a real head start for future careers because of such skills. Group Captain Manwaring further encouraged the Cadets to enjoy the moment, seize the opportunities offered and enjoy the camaraderie. He also thanked the members of school staff who give up so much time to enable pupils to participate. Major Hitching gave his thanks: the senior NCOs for supporting the staff and Mr Pascal for organising the day and making sure everything went smoothly.

Karen Rogers



Biennial Tournament & Dan Clack Trophy Report

On Tuesday 22nd of March, the CCF held its Biennial Review. The day started early with a 07:30 meet at school where everyone was prepped for the day ahead. With a quick bus ride and walk we were ready to start. Everyone separated into their separate groups and headed off to their first activity, with ours being sniper stalk: essentially where our group must make it as close as possible to the enemy, without being spotted by the enemy, using whatever natural cover possible. Crawling and crouching, the group did pretty well, with Jafer making it only 15 ft away. Despite the stinging nettles we had high spirits from the start. Onto the next stall now and possibly one of the best of the day. Laser tag, two teams, most number of kills wins. I led one group and Raoul (my 2IC) captained the other. Raoul seemed to have better tactics and it definitely showed on the battlefield, with Bravo team taking a comfortable win by 20 kills. Alpha team had to up their game in the second round, with tactics reviewed we headed out once again. Determined to pull it back Alpha team gave it their all. But still lost by 15 kills. Regardless this activity was definitely one of the best and helped the group gel together for the rest of the day. Other activities included bearing/compass practice, medical evacuation, skill at arms, team building exercises and emergency First Aid. At the end of the activities, all groups met back at the starting point for the final debrief and for the winning group to be announced. I think it's safe to say when Mr Hitching announced we were the winning group, we were very surprised. Without the teachers this day wouldn't have been possible, so from everyone in the CCF we would like to say a massive thank you for providing us with a great day that we won't forget.

LCpls Kailen P and Raoul S



Adventurous Training

One of the highlights of the CCF calendar each year is Adventurous Training in the Lake District, and this Easter the trip was able to take place again after a two-year gap due to covid. This did, therefore, mean that there were no cadets on the trip who had been before, meaning that the experiences shared that week were new to all. Based in Thurston Outdoor Education Centre, our accommodation sat right by Coniston Water and was surrounded by the picturesque view of the Lake District. For the first three days of the trip, we were given the opportunity to take part in three of the activities, which included: rock climbing, caving, mountain biking and gorge walking and canoeing. All of these activities offered amazing opportunities to try something new but also to overcome personal challenges and fears. Whether it was climbing to a new height on the rock face (or even doing it blindfolded!) or crawling through the infamous 'cheese press' at caving, the supportive nature of the CCF and the encouragement from cadets younger or older meant that everyone was able to achieve something new with these activities. Despite these activities being tiring for us all, our energy levels remained high, to the credit of Chef Lt Barnard who prepared delicious hot breakfasts and dinner including fish and chips as well as a roast, which seemed very popular. Even though the weather conditions were not as we had hoped we still managed to complete a three-day expedition at the end of the week. This certainly helped the Sixth Form cadets to develop more leadership skills and also encouraged the U4s and 5ths to gain more navigation experience but most importantly created a greater sense of collaboration and friendship within the CCF and between all three year groups. The opportunities to not only take part in the exciting activities and expedition and develop friendship but also to appreciate the beautiful scenery of the Lake District would not have been possible without all of the teachers involved, most notably Mr Hitching who led the way in organising such a brilliant trip.

Cpls Ellie J & Sarah D







From the CSM

Being a member of the CCF has definitely been a highlight of my time at Bancroft's School. Having joined in the Lower Fourth because it seemed like the thing to do and most of my friends were also joining, that is undoubtedly not the reason I stayed.

The highlights of my time in CCF have been the regular army camps and field days. Whilst Covid has disrupted my CCF camp experiences, the ones that I have been lucky enough to attend have been highly enjoyable. Army camps especially gave me the opportunity to mix with other people from school



outside of my typical groups, as it involved being in sections with other year groups. Having a chance to interact with the older year groups was beneficial as they became someone to look up to and guided younger years through activities as we became more confident and knowledgeable with what we were doing. Another part of army camps that I always enjoyed was the inter-section competition on one of the final days, where we competed in the activities we had done earlier in the week, from the obstacle course to Six Section Battle Drills. Army Camp was an experience very different from any other school trip I had been on before, unique to the CCF, and one that I would highly recommend to anyone considering attending.

I also enjoyed the weekly Tuesday meetings, where we were taught by NCOs skills such as patrolling and weapons handling drills, which would later come in useful on field days. One of my favourite field days was in the Lower Fourth when we went to Hythe Ranges in Kent and put our weapons handling drills into practice. Despite having awful aim, it was still a very enjoyable day! We also did some non-military field days, in the Upper Fourth we went to Harlow Outdoors Activity Centre. This type of activity was continued in Adventurous Training which I think was one of my favourite CCF trips I went on; my favourite activity was probably the gorge walking as it was something I had never done before.

Our final year of CCF in the Upper Sixth was one of the best as our year taught the younger years and helped to run activities on field days. Manon and I were lucky enough to be promoted to RSM and CSM, so we helped to lead the rest of the Sixth Form in delivering lessons and helping teachers on field days.

Finally, I think that CCF, although being thoroughly enjoyable, has also helped me to develop as a person, by helping me gain confidence in speaking to new people and working together in groups, as well as growing in confidence in my leadership abilities. I want to thank all of the teachers for all of their hard work in running the CCF, particularly Mr Hitching, Mr Pascal and Mrs Coyne, as without them we wouldn't have been able to have half of the CCF experience that we did and so from all of the Upper Sixth we are very grateful for all of the effort that you have put in over the past five years.

CSM Charlie H



RAF Camp 2022

In a thrilling week at RAF Coningsby, I dived into diverse experiences. Mornings were dedicated to museums about aviation history. Midday was for an adrenaline-pumping Aqua splash assault course, the roar of jet engines and the sight of Typhoons soaring through the sky, creating an exhilarating atmosphere. Evenings brought a dynamic shift with laughter-filled bowling, rifle shooting, and the added excitement of a movie night in the base's own cinema room! It was a week packed with adventure and memorable moments. Exploring RAF Coningsby was incredible, with its rich history and impressive aircraft. I highly recommend visiting an RAF base; the combination of fascinating history, cutting-edge technology protecting our skies and genuine warmth from the personnel is an experience you won't want to miss!

Cdt Mark H





CCF Articles 2022/23

October Field Weekend

From the 15-17th of October the CCF went on a Field Weekend. The Saturday, Sunday and Monday were made up of many fun activities, including Patrolling, Drill, First Aid, Laser Tag, Sniper Stalk and many others.

On the Saturday, we were at school, this is where we continued practicing drill, working with rifles, and also setting up shelters for a harbour. With this, we had the basics and were ready for the next two days, which we spent at Copped Hall.

Once we had arrived at Copped Hall, we were split up into four squads. For the rest of the day, we moved around in our groups to the different activities. Sniper Stalk was definitely the best, as we were able to wear ghillie suits and try and sneak up on a target. However, it was surprisingly hard to stay under cover and not be seen even with it on. For the final day, we were back at Copped Hall, and we had what was a slightly more educational day. This helped us learn the more important factors of CCF such as Ambushes, Reconnaissance Patrols, and different types of Attacks.

Overall, we really enjoyed our first CCF Field Weekend, and all of the activities that came with it, and we are definitely looking forward to the next one.

Cdts Martin D & Shaan B



RAF October Field Day

Recently Bancroft's RAF had the opportunity to visit RAF Honington where cadets were shown how a working base operates. The tour was given by Sgt Sanderson, our TEST SNCO. The RAF Regiment allowed cadets to view the armoury and the weapons inside. The cadets were able to handle guns used by the RAF Regiment such as: the L86 LSW Rifle, L129A1 Sharpshooter Rifle and Glock 17 as well as other weapons, the most recognisable of which was the AK-47. The RAF armoury was also in charge of vehicles and cadets were able to climb inside a foxhound and look around.

With the permission from the sergeant, the cadets visited the Officer's Mess, which is reserved for only Officers and Senior NCOs. It was a privilege to enter the Mess as Privates and Junior NCOs are generally not allowed to enter. Here the cadets could see the more social side of the RAF Regiment and how Officers relax in their spare time. Cadets were also told of the traditions held inside the Officer's Mess such as: the Christmas Ball and Battle of Britain memorial.

Cpl Stephen L

In Remembrance

On Sunday 13th November, members of the CCF, staff, pupils and parents gathered to commemorate the lives and sacrifices of those who have served in an act of remembrance.

The morning started with a brief rehearsal, where last minute adjustments to kit were made and drill was perfected. The L4 in particular worked admirably, aided by 6th Form NCOs, to raise their standards of drill just weeks after joining the contingent. Soon after, the contingent paraded along Whitehall Road and through the Quad to the Great Hall, where the service then took place. Readings by members of the CCF and Cubs, led by Cpl Aleesha R (RAF), alongside hymns headed by the Bancrofts Singers, paid tribute to both the fallen and to those who have lived through the aftermath of conflict.

The congregation then moved to the Quad, where the remainder of the service and 2-minute silence was led by Flt Lt. Hunn. This moment of reflection felt particularly profound this year, as this had been the first Remembrance Parade able to take place in its full capacity since before the pandemic. To mark the end of the parade, the contingent then marched off, following the colour party and CSM Max P.

The morning could not have run as smoothly as it did without the combined efforts of all of the CCF staff, including Lt Col Hitching and WOII Pascal, without whom this would not be possible. I hope that in this act of remembrance, we were able to pay our respects to all those affected by conflict, past and present.

RSM Maanvii A





Army Section March Field Day

On Tuesday the 21st March the Army Section went to 664 Sqn Army Air Corps at Wattisham to an event organised by Major Laurence Baum OB. There many different stands were hosted by REME, Army Air Corps, the medics and more.

At the medics stand, we got to experience what it was like in an Army Field Hospital and we got to play with all the cool gadgets that they have, including an ECG. After that, they talked us through their Bergen which contained a lot of cool stuff like powdered penicillin, a fake airway and a turkey baster to remove blood and teeth from your mouth. Finally, we walked through the onsite clinic, which smelt of bleach and sterile, and then peered inside the ambulance.

At the stand hosted by REME, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, we learnt how to attach rivets. It was quite literallyriveting. They showed us how to find a faulty wire in a tube and how to attach

many wires together with knots and floss. There was a mini competition over who could tie the best and tightest knots - which I won.

At the indoor range, there were 2 challenges – to shoot a moving target at 100m and a target at 300m that only appeared for 4 seconds. It was challenging as the targets were really small, but everyone did really well and the best score was 17/25 for the targets at 100m and 13/25 for the targets at 300m.

The best stand was the one hosted by the Army Air Corps where they showed us around the Apache helicopters and we got to look inside. We learnt many cool things about the helicopters – such as that all the wiring is doubled so that if they get hit, the helicopter can still fly.

The day was good fun and we all enjoyed every minute of it. Major thanks to Major Baum OB.

Cpl Caitlin L





Adventurous Training

Over the Easter holiday, I went on the annual CCF trip to the Lake District - Adventurous Training. We stayed at Thurston Centre, which is on the lakeside of Coniston Water.

For the first two days of the trip, we undertook various adventurous activities including caving, abseiling and canoeing. Abseiling involved a thirty-metre descent off a cliff face down into Cathedral Cave, which provided us with a fun experience and allowed us to get to know each other a bit better at the start of the trip. The caving was based in Yorkshire and despite the majority of Cadets never undertaking caving before they were all able to get around the caves and all thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Lastly, we took to Coniston Water, where we canoed the length of the lake. During this journey we played a variety of games to test our paddle skills, with Mr Pascal and Mrs Coyne coming a close second behind myself and Kaitlin. The destination for the journey was Peel Island, which inspired Wild Cat Island that features in Swallows and Amazons. Canoeing was a great activity, as we all enjoyed getting thoroughly soaked in the lake.

For the final three days we went hiking. For me this was my favourite activity, as we were allowed to navigate ourselves over difficult terrain independently of the staff, who were never far behind. We then arrived at Langdale campsite, where we camped after cooking some delicious MOD ration pack meals. During the three days of walking, each member of the group would take care to correctly navigate the group from different points on our route. This allowed them all to develop their navigational ability whilst the NCOs in the group aided them if they required help. Luckily, the weather held out during this time, and we only had one truly wet day in the Lake District which was not too bad anyway.

When we were not doing activities, we would regularly play cards, pool, table tennis or, on one occasion, we lit a campfire which we all enjoyed sitting around toasting marshmallows looking out over Coniston Water. I would like to thank Lt Col Hitching, Capt Coyne, WO2 Pascal and Lt Hampson who helped make this great week occur by willingly giving up their Easter Holiday to run this trip.

Cpl James H





Army Section June Field Day

On the 19th June, the Army section of the CCF went to St Martin's Plain camp for a field day. We took part in three activities, an orienteering scavenger hunt, the obstacle course and the DCCT. In the orienteering hunt, we were put into small groups and given a map of the hilly fields, marked with multiple checkpoints with objects at each one that we needed to find and identify. It was great fun, especially digging around in nearby foliage looking for the well-hidden items with the team. The obstacle course was also extremely fun, a tough but exciting physical challenge. One of the most challenging ones was the frame with a plank walk with a descent down a rope at the end. It was very high up, however with good motivation and perseverance we were able to get everyone across. The DCCT is always a highlight of field days, a facility that is great for honing firing skills indoors, not on a live range. It was a first time for some of the younger recruits, who did very well on their first tries. It's always great as a returning shooter to try to beat old high scores or settle rivalries as well. Thanks to all the staff that made this possible, for giving up their time to come and supervise and lead the activities, and thanks to Mr Hitching for organising.

Cdt Tristan L





RAF Summer Camp

In late July, I, and two other boys from the school's RAF Cadets, were lucky enough to spend a week at RAF Boulmer in Northumbria. We were able to experience life on a live RAF base and learn about defence technologies both ancient and modern.

The first came in the form of an all-day visit to Vindolanda- one of the largest discovered Roman forts outside Italy- on which we were able to explore the whole site with a tour guide and gain an insight into the lives of Roman soldiers guarding the 'Final Frontier' of the Roman Empire along Hadrian's Wall, often for months at a time.

We were able to get an even closer look on a following day at some modern defence techniques in action as we were guided through the bunker under RAF Boulmer, which houses one of the UK's Air Surveillance and Control Systems. A number of radar dishes in the Northumbria area feed into the centre at Boulmer and we were able to learn from some of the on-site personnel how the data these dishes provide is used to track every single aircraft in UK airspace, and where they are going to and coming from, as well as what would happen if an aircraft stopped providing this information!

In all, getting to stay on RAF Boulmer (and eat in the Officers' Mess all week!), as well as visit some fantastic sites in the surrounding area was an excellent experience and being able to watch

personnel monitor the UK Airspace in front of us was a true privilege and definitely showed us how far defence and surveillance tactics have advanced since the days of the Roman Empire!

Cdt Ted H





From the RSM

This last year in the CCF has been a memorable one to say the least, with highlights including Remembrance Day, the October, March and June Field Days, Adventurous Training, and to wrap the year up, a final overnight exercise on Army Camp. I will admit, I was a little intimidated to learn I was the first female RSM for some years, but with the sheer volume and support the CCF provides, I needn't have worried. We are incredibly lucky to have such an



organisation within school, and it's fair to say that myself, alongside the other U6th NCOs, have made the most of our last 5 years within the contingent and will miss the opportunities it has afforded us.

The year started with a new intake of L4, one of the larger cohorts in recent years. After an initial introduction to weapons handling over the October Field Weekend, preparations and drill for Remembrance Day began, starting with individual and squad drills and quickly building up to a Contingent level. The exemplary drill and turnout by the entire contingent on Remembrance Day was a credit to the hard work put in by the recruits, cadets and NCOs alike, and I was incredibly fortunate to have been a part of it.







Shortly after February half term, we had the opportunity to visit 664 Sqn Army Air Corps at Wattisham, where the regular enlisted soldiers and officers on base gave us an insight into their working days. Highlights included the DCCT, experiencing an Army Field Hospital, and even getting to use some of the equipment, as well as being able to learn about (and sit in!) the Apache helicopters flown by members of the Corp.

As always, Adventurous Training in the Lake District over Easter was one of the highlights of the year. The week was jam-packed with activities, including canoeing, climbing and caving. The week ended with three days and two nights of navigation and camping and was a thoroughly enjoyable experience. Getting to try new activities in a civilian setting, especially in such a picturesque environment, is a fantastic opportunity and I would definitely recommend it to the younger years!

Following a successful June Field Day, preparations for Army Camp began. Despite taking a different format to previous years, it was a memorable and certainly eventful week. After an initial day of refreshing their infantry and fieldcraft skills, the cadets set off on the first day of a two-day blank firing exercise. On the lookout for their "enemy," convincingly played by Capt. Pollard and the U6th SNCOs, the cadets patrolled in sections through Kent military training





ground. This was a fantastic opportunity for the cadets to put their fire and manoeuvre skills to the test, both within fire teams and as part of a larger contingent. After setting up a harbour to camp in and experiencing the delights of army ration packs, the cadets went on to set up a night ambush for the enemy. This was truly the highlight of the year, as led by the staff and NCOs, the contingent came together to combine all of the skills they'd worked on during Tuesday evening training, and the exercise was incredibly successful. The week rounded off with a fun day of laser tag and sports at school, followed by paddle boarding, climbing and rafting at Harlow Outdoors. A final day at Hythe Ranges ended the year with a (very sodden) bang.

Without the hard work and dedication of all of the CCF staff, I would not have had such an incredible experience in the CCF. The commitment of Lt. Col. Hitching, WOII Pascal, Capt. Coyne and the rest of the CCF officers opens up the opportunities we have to undergo WHT, go on field days, and go on residential camps, as well as providing the much-needed instruction for Tuesday evening sessions. Particular



thanks must be given to those staff who organised Army Camp on such short notice, after our intended facilities were taken over by Operation Interflex. The last 5 years in the CCF have been unforgettable, and this past year as RSM has taught me much. The year would not have run so smoothly without the support of my fellow U6th, in particular CSM Max P, and I wish the new RSM James H and CSM Kaitlin L the best of luck – I have the utmost confidence in them!

RSM Maanvii A



OBA CCF Memories

1st April 2023 marked the 75th anniversary of the modern Combined Cadet Force (CCF).

However, as early as 1859, uniformed youth movements appeared in schools as Army Cadet Companies, as part of the UK's Defence Force. Thereafter they became the Junior Officer Training Corps, preparing young men for future Territorial Army Commissions. Over time, the RAF and the RN introduced cadets into schools. In 1948 it was decided to combine all cadet organisations in schools

into one combined cadet organisation and the modern CCF was born. At that time, 247 schools, including Bancroft's, accepted the invitation to adopt the scheme with the new CCF having King George VI as Captain General. Since then the CCF has largely remained the same size and shape nationally.

I do hope you enjoy reading these recollections from some of our former cadets and seeing some of them in action in the old snaps.

1910s & 1920s



Bancroft's School Junior Officer Training Corps 1919.



Duke of York inspecting the Bancroft's School Junior Officer Training Corps 1921 at the unveiling of the War Memorial.



1950s & 1960s

My thanks to Peter West, an Old Brentwood, who has kindly supplied the photos below. Peter's father, RSM West, was the Bancroft's School SSI from 1950 to 1953. RSM West had started in the Essex Regiment but during the war his Battalion of the Essex Regiment were rebadged as Royal Artillery.

It was fantastic to meet Peter in October 2012 when he visited the school as he visited his father's old place of work and the cottage where he himself grew up. Peter had a distinguished career in the Army and the City and has for many years been a member of the HAC.



The march past of local organisations at the Coronation Civic Procession at which Former Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill, MP for Woodford, took the salute outside the Council Offices on Sunday 31st May 1953. SSI West to the right of the CCF salutes the local MP who is doffing his hat whilst stood next to his wife Clementine Churchill.



RSM West, SSI 1950 to 1953.



The Dedication of the War Memorial Gates, March 1951. The gates at the front entrance of the school known as the WW II Memorial Gates were originally paid for from public subscription by OB's in memory of the Fallen of the Second World War. The Gates were rededicated in September 2008 with the support of the OBA.



The Corps of Drums parading c1950s in the Quad in front of the Dining Hall.



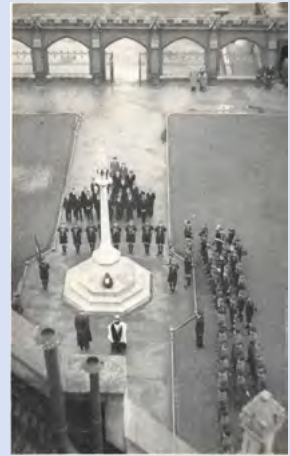
Range Day c1950



1950 Summer Camp at Cranwell



1950 Summer Camp at Cranwell



Remembrance Day c1948-52

Peter Duffell OB 1951-1957

Motivation for joining CCF

In 1953 at the age of 13 I expected, on leaving school, to be called up to do a two year stint for National Service. Since I didn't want to waste that time peeling potatoes in Catterick Garrison, there would be a greater chance of obtaining a commission if I had received relevant training in a CCF. Accordingly, I switched from Scouts to join Bancroft's cadets. In the event however, my birth quarter (final quarter of 1939) was the first not to be called for National Service.

Masters' Support

The Contingent couldn't function without the significant support of the masters, (no females of course) including:

Major "Elk" Kentfield, Languages master and

Contingent Commander, he had seen active service in the War, including commanding a troop of Polish soldiers.

Captain Kershaw, History master, he used to say "adjectively large" to avoid saying "bloody".

Captain John Lord, English master, he had appeared in a TV educational programme.

Flying Officer "Dickie" Bird, Geography master.

Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers

I attended and passed a technical course at the REME barracks in Ashford. A week's Armourer's course included dismantling (and re-assembling) pistols, Bren guns and both .22 and .303rifles. The parallel course was on 'B' Vehicle (trucks) maintenance. I was subsequently promoted to be the Contingent's Assistant Armourer, one of the perks of which was not to have to attend parade. Security of



the armoury had been increased as a result of an (unsuccessful) raid by presumed members of the IRA.

Camp

Summer camp alternated yearly between Norfolk (Thetford) and Kent (Shorncliffe). The camps were set up and staffed by National Service "squaddies". Surprised by their limited vocabulary, as almost every second word was the same. In 1956 there was a change-over of staff each couple of days, as each regiment was called for potential action in Suez.

Camp was an opportunity to participate in a wider range of activities, such as: live firing on ranges, night operations with rifle blanks, simulated platoon attacks and viewing tanks in operation. In WWII the MoD had compulsorily purchased an entire village, giving an opportunity of training in "house clearance". In wet weather a session of Housey-Housey was organized in the mess tent.

Damage

In 1955 at camp I cut my finger on the sharp edge of an armoured personnel carrier. I was efficiently whisked off to be stitched up in East Suffolk (civilian) General Hospital after the Military hospital, having received immediate attention in the site's MO tent. The scar remains with me to this day and is noted on my passport. (The injury didn't put me off returning to camp in later years.) I put my partial deafness down to shooting in the CCF. The .22 range was in the tin Nissan hut at the bottom of the school field. The .303 live fire was at army ranges.

Robin Hicks OB 1954 - 1961

What a learning experience it was! My first camp was in Thetford and we had to take our palliases to a straw store and stuff it to make a mattress - "don't overstuff it" we were told. That should have been enough but not for me! For the first few nights I had my bed the wrong way around so my head was at the narrow end and I didn't manage a good night's sleep until I realised! The other issue was sitting on a hill and hearing 25 pounders whistle over our heads and blow up stuff in front of us. Scary - almost as worrying as RSM Norfolk!

In the end I joined the RAF section because I hated the hairy shirts the Army folk were issued with. And it meant camps were in barrack blocks with ready made mattresses! But I did learn to shoot in the 25 yard nissan hut at the bottom of the school field. I learned

a fine phrase from the RSM. If one was just outside the centre and said "if only....." The RSM would say "and if only my brother was a bit different - he would be my sister"!

One experience I will never forget was going to a drill camp at the Guards Depot in Caterham. Not so much for the drill but because my home was nearby. So there I was the only guy in RAF blue in a forest of khaki. So when we were being screamed at by the drill sergeants I was often picked out as "Oi, you little boy blue, did you not hear me?" Terrifying but I did manage to slip home for a decent supper!

Roy Jones OB 1955-1962

My time in Bancroft's CCF was one of the happiest memories of my life at school. I joined the Basic Section in 1957 and remained in the CCF until leaving in 1962. One somehow felt a sense of 'belonging' when wearing the uniform on a Friday afternoon; dare I say one of almost superiority over the unbelievers and even the Sea Scouts! Basic section field days were days to remember: hours of crawling on all fours to defend Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge from all-comers, especially surprised passengers on an arriving 145 bus.

I was an erstwhile bugler with the Corps of Drums, proudly marching to chapel on Remembrance Day. However the sound emanating from the mouth of my bugle was usually in inverse proportion to the breath and spittle being forced into it from my mouth.

When able I joined the RAF section: my dad had been in the RAF in the war. Unfortunately my parents divorced after the war and I never really knew my father but always felt RAF blood in my veins. It was only fifty years later that I discovered my dad had been a pilot officer in the RAFVR leading an ATC squadron in Edinburgh when I was in Bancroft's CCF.

We had many enjoyable RAF field days at airfields up and down the country, as well as the opportunity of specialist courses. I recall 'hide and seek' near Haverhill in Suffolk when we cadets were dropped in an unknown location and had to get back to base without being spotted by marauding helicopters. I also recall a course at RNAS Culdrose where we were given helicopter experience which mainly consisted of flying low to create big waves round the tourist boats on the River Fal!

I applied for Aircrew Selection and went through the three day assessment at RAF Hornchurch. I passed



everything except the medical (too short) and was offered a commission in the Admin Branch. I turned it down.....and then ended up as an education administrator for most of my life! Per ardua ad astra!

Andrew Pursey OB 1958-66

I joined the CCF as soon as I could, starting in the Basic Section and then transferring into the Air Force Section (AFS) where I finished as Under Officer.

Officers in my time were Messrs Leeming, Giles and Murray. RSMs in my time were Messrs Norfolk (ex Essex Regiment) and Reid (ex Royal Artillery).

The attached photo shows the contingent in 1960.

One of the pleasures of the AFS were the regular visits to Cambridge to partake in Air Experience Flights (AEF) with the Cambridge University Air Squadron flying Chipmunks; such activities also took place at AFS annual camps. AFS camps that I attended included RAF Coltishall and RAF Linton-on-Ouse. Coltishall was an Operational Conversion Unit for pilots transferring to the Lightning and I never ceased to be impressed when a Lightning took off then stood

on the tail and went straight up in a vertical climb at a rate of knots that is comparable to any modern interceptor. The various pilots were also assigned to conduct AEF for cadets in Chipmunks - and I remember lowish level flights over Cambridge and a mock dogfight over the Norfolk Broads with another Chipmunk containing Roger Owen (1958-65). Linton-on-Ouse was a training base for pilots learning on the Jet Provost. Instructors were also assigned to take cadets on AEF trips in Chipmunks - and I remember lowish level flights over York but the best memory was flying alongside the trains on the huge length of straight railway track outside York where the trick was to invert the Chipmunk and fly upside down beside the train to amuse/bemuse the passengers.

I also attended Army camps that included Thetford and Otterburn. Thetford was the first camp that I attended in the CCF and was notable for the sinks of tepid scummy water in which we were forced to wash our cutlery, plates and mugs – yuck! Otterburn was an All Arms Training Area in the wilds of Northumberland and noted for the variety of weather (invariably wet and cold) over the Cheviots. During one camp a regiment of Belgian Paras came to Otterburn after having served on active duty in the



CCF Contingent Photo 1960



Bancroft's School CCF c1965



Belgian Congo. Those guys were some of the hardest men I have ever encountered as they ran everywhere at the double with their officers in the lead and those same officers supervised those men in the Mess Hall and then ate with their men. There was a fight in the NAAFI one night and the Paras threw one poor soul through a closed window and hit another guy who's face crumpled like in a cartoon. I visited Otterburn on a couple of subsequent occasions; once with my TA unit (HAC) and once on a Battle Camp with 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards – needless to say, the weather was as uncomfortable as ever.

There was also the opportunity to attend some special courses. I did a weekend Drill Course at the Brigade of Guards Depot at Caterham, where the RSM stopped what he was shouting at us and instead shouted at a squaddie passing by on the other side of the square and sent him to the guardhouse just to show us that an RSM is in absolute command.

In August 1963 I and Rick Male (1958-65) attended a one week course at RNAS Yeovilton to learn about the Fleet Air Arm – and this coincided with a couple of interesting events. The first event was

The Great Train Robbery, which was all over the news. The second event occurred whilst I was in the Control Tower when suddenly all non-essential personnel were booted out because there was a real emergency; a Sea Vixen was returning from a strafing exercise with a pod full of live 2-inch rockets that had failed to fire. The local Police cleared all the houses in line with the runway and then the pilot brought the Sea Vixen in for what is one of the most gentle landings I have ever seen. Then the armourers delicately disarmed the live rockets without incident.

My final memory is that of participating in the five minute lecturette sessions, where a random subject is thrown at you for you to talk about. This was useful in later life in a variety of roles – and I can probably still talk on the subject of the aerodynamic structure/performance of a house brick!

I really enjoyed my time in the CCF and I appreciate the useful lessons it gave me for later life.

David Hubbard OB 1960-1967

I enjoyed my time in the CCF. Clothing was very much Second World War with a short blouse of wool serge that buttoned to the outside of high-waisted wool serge trousers. We had to wear anklets between the trousers and the boots (which were heavy hob-nailed things that had to be spooned when new to smooth out the bobbly surface and thereafter loads of spit and polish had to be applied.) The ensemble was topped off with the beret (navy blue) with a brass cap badge with Bancroft's symbol. The anklets and belt were made of webbing and had to be brushed on with blanco, a disgusting green substance like polish. Everywhere that there was a brass buckle (and there were lots) had to be cleaned with brasso. A special brass plate had to be put behind the buckle to stop the brasso getting on the webbing or whatever. To complete the uniform we were issued with a Great Coat. A magnificently huge and heavy overcoat that was excellent for the winter. CCF was always on a Friday afternoon and this meant travelling to school on the No. 20 bus (an RT, also second world war) in full uniform. The main memory was spending every Thursday evening cleaning my kit until my parents said it was time for bed. I am not sure that today's generation would be very happy with that.

When I advanced a bit I got into the Signals section where we had No. 88 sets. Also second world war, of course. These were VHF radio sets with a range of a mile or two. They were worn in two ammo pouches.



The radio itself in the left pouch and the battery in the right pouch. There was a rubber squeezey thing that you pressed to transmit and released to listen. This was strapped to your wrist. Here I learnt voice procedure which has stayed with me ever since. I still can't stand it when on TV productions they say "over and out".

At the bottom of the school field there was a Nissen hut that served as a 0.22 range for live firing. On days out we had 0.303 Lee Enfield rifles with which we fired blanks (still make a bang). All our marching was done carrying the Lee Enfields. Initially shoulder and easy. Then they changed the drill because of the introduction of a new weapon to the regular army and so we had to learn "Shoulder" instead of "Slope".

Other highlights were that we had a Field Day once a term in Epping Forest and then once a year we had a week-long camp at some far flung place. I remember

going to Fingringhoe in Essex. Then there was the corps of drums in which I was a very bad bugler.

Richard Watson OB 1961-1967

I have a few memories of the CCF. I was at school from 1961 to 1967 and joined the CCF in 1963. At the time PJC Murray was the captain I believe. One event I remember was marching up the Epping New Road from School in our uniforms with our .303 rifles at the slope on our shoulders. We were stopped by a Forest Ranger who was horrified that a platoon of probably 15 year olds were off to manoeuvres on Chingford Plain with rifles. We were not given any bullets to go with the Lee Enfield's of course. Anyway despite the Forest Ranger we went onto the plain and got on with our assigned tasks as either defenders or attackers of a close on the plain.

1970s

Matt Porter OB (School House) 1976 - 83

I was in the CCF from LIVth to Upper VIth inc.

1. My first Army Camp was at Catterick summer '79 where the day of drill on the square took us into the Zen Zone of unity rarely experienced even in sports teams.
2. In my first (LIVth) year, the inspirational Moss and McCarthy were our Sargeants and one afternoon Chingford Plain rang to their feral yells as they goaded us into the charge with our 303s through smoke flares to the sound track of Apocalypse Now from a small tape recorder rigged up in a tree.
3. Adventurous Training was such a highlight, usually walking round Fairfield in the snow on the first day. As I moved through the ranks, my section grew bored of the enforced geography lessons I insisted upon (U-shaped valleys, hanging valleys, cwms, and my fave basket-of-eggs topography)
4. The contingent went to West Berlin in Summer '82 for ten days, joining the British 2RRF who really welcomed us when we like Manuel in Fawley Towers, knew nothing. On the train journey there, WOII Martin Spiers (RIP) waxed lyrical about the astonishing feat that was the twin towers of Cologne Cathedral. This was not his normal metier, to say the least, and showed a totally different side to the man. E German guards with dogs under the carriages,



Army Section Field Day 1976



changing trains when the gauges differed, and seeing the fake shops on the platforms were all eye-openers. Most cadets were woken one night by sporadic gunfire from bored Russians guarding Rudolf Hess who were taking pot shots at rabbits in the mine fields of Spandau Prison next door. I slept through it all! [I have a few pics from that visit.]

Key muckers were Malcolm Hague. Dave Thurston. Andy White. John Follows (RIP).

5. In my last year I became Drum Major - and practicing a throw managed to break the mace the night before the Annual Inspection. [Mea culpa - now off my chest!]. Hurray for Master Eric Richardson (DT) who made it good in days following.

Impact of the CCF upon me? Too many but I really got so much from my time, and I still clean my shoes with little circles of Kiwi or Black Cherry.



Nick Heywood OB 1970s

I remember fondly my time in the CCF when Major Murray and Captain Bromfield were in charge. Command HQ was in a building in the car park near the science and woodwork. I recall the sense of pride as new recruits when we were given our musty, hairy shirted uniforms from the stores with orders to pick out 2 pairs of boots one for work and the other for parade. The orders being to bull the parade boots spoon steam and polish in circles to make a mirror shine and set our beret so we did not look like Frank Spenser (Kept with me always, have pretty clean shoes).

I recall our shooting at Purfleet with the 303 from the armoury with a kick back that could bruise a teenage shoulder. We also went to





Contingent Photo 1978



RAF 1970s

Berlin and saw Rudolph Hess at the barracks where we drove in tanks - that was great and I recalled this when I was recently in Berlin.

I was polished enough to win recruit of the year which made me burst with pride as I was featured on the front page of an Issue of the Bancroftian shooting a gun. I was also Drum major for Remembrance Sunday and I recall embarrassingly sniggering as my pal spluttered his way through the last post on the WW1 bugle- I was in charge of the staff probably because I could not bang the drum in beat with the March (which I also polished profusely).

Sea Scouts? No way, I was in the Advanced Infantry – yikes. Any way good times and happy memories and I wish the CCF a happy 75th Anniversary with many more to come.

1980s & 1990s

Fred Gray OB 1983-1990

Being part of Bancroft's School CCF was a totally different developmental experience from all the other extra-curricular activities offered at the school. It exposed you to new environments, new opportunities and enabled new relationships to flourish between pupils and staff alike. Some took it very seriously (yep, I was beyond keen!) whilst others just saw it as an opportunity to try out something else and see how it went. I think that was one of the really strong benefits of the CCF, it did not matter who you were it helped you grow in a different (but complementary) way within the school's broader ecosystem. Enhanced self-reliance, leadership opportunities aplenty plus fun was a great combination!

Summer camps were the ideal environment to pull together all the things that had been learned and practised throughout the year - too many hilarious stories to tell and most would benefit from not being written down to protect the guilty and innocent alike!

Annual adventurous training trips to the Lake District were also a real highlight. Looking back you see how progressive the staff were in letting us plan and execute our walking expeditions. Some of these adventures felt really remote and it was a brilliant way of making us self-reliant in a relatively wild environment (usually in rubbish weather). The staff kept their distance and allowed us to spread our wings in small teams all over the fells - it was fantastic!

The overwhelming memory of my time in the CCF is one of just enormous fun, being given a ton of responsibility and then being allowed to get on with it! That said, the whole set up would simply not have worked without the dedication of all the school's staff who were part of the CCF set-up. Whilst there are way too many to mention all, both Jeremy Bromfield and Martyn Spiers definitely need a specific call out!

There are a lot of Old Bancroftians who benefitted from their time in the CCF - I hope that continues for the next 75 years!

Julian King OB 1983-1990



Munden Trophy winning team from St Martin's Plain in July 1989.

Back row, left to right: Ian Dowsett, Fred Gray, Julian King

Front row, left to right: Tom Clarke, Ryan White, Justin Phipps, Jonty Pollard.

Jonty Pollard OB 1988 – 1991 & Staff 1996 to present

My first army camp (July 1989)

Having arrived at Bancroft's in 1988 from a local comprehensive, where the concept of training pupils with firearms would have raised a few eyebrows (as enough damage was done with fists and fireworks!), I was ushered into the ranks by my House master and OC of the Army Section Jeremy Bromfield. Arriving in the 5th year meant that whilst I was a recruit, I was perhaps nurtured more caringly by the NCOs (my teammates on the sports fields) than your average L4th recruit, although I still failed my first WHT!

It was a strong, but small, contingent that left for SMP camp near Folkestone, led by RSM Fred Gray (later Major Gray of 1 Para). The green training went well, with the overnight exercises being a highlight, that I felt would have made an excellent film, but for some of us, it was the Munden Trophy, described as a march and shoot competition (only the march was actually a gruelling obstacle course) that ran amongst all contingents who attended camp that summer. We felt we were in with a good shout. Extra training took place every evening for the select few, with Captain MacLeod refining techniques and strategy.



The under over bars passed without event but the 12-foot wall (the make or break obstacle – or so we thought) loomed large at the top of a small incline. We smashed it, I can remember pulling Fred (tail end Charlie) up before he literally punched me off the top of the wall. Down a steep, slippery incline and across the balance beams over water, with no mishaps. The zig zag wall run followed and then the cargo net...I remember those obstacles in detail but after that I cannot picture any. I assume there was a rope swing, a 6' wall, tunnel crawls, monkey bars, but all I remember is collapsing on the floor at the end, before being roughly hoisted to my feet by someone and told to walk and breath with my hands on my head. Fred arrived moments later clutching his nose, copious amounts of claret running down the front of his uniform. We later found out it had been the cargo net that had been the break obstacle. He had leaped from the top of the cargo net, as instructed, but failed to brace his arms in front of him. His nose took the full force of the landing, as his face collided with the oak handles. A trip to A&E followed but only after he completed the timed shoot...through tears and blood, which gave him an excuse!

We shot well, with most achieving a 2" grouping from 25m, despite heaving chests.

We shot straight to the top of the leader board but had to wait a further 3 weeks, whilst numerous other CCFs competed, before we were crowned champions. A bond was formed in that small, select group that has never been broken.

The rest of my 1st camp passed without event... apart from a very memorable trip to Boulogne, that saw Ryan White and myself, swim the harbour in our pants. We spent a pleasant couple of hours in the scorching sun, on a yacht in the harbour, having hoisted ourselves up the anchor chain. We were eventually spotted and evicted. After a short snooze we awoke, at the wrong end of Boulogne and 20 minutes late for our meet at the ferry terminal. It was only when I got to immigration that I realised my passport had not survived the afternoon. In those days a seven-day paper passport was sufficient. The OC was relieved to see me, the SSI less so!!

Authors note - Ryan spent the next day in the infirmary with heat stroke (and probably cholera)! We returned to SMP two years later, where we successfully defended our crown and I had risen from recruit to CSM (slim pickings!).

Capt Pollard (Best recruit 1989!)

Rebecca Smith OB 1986-1993



a. A very proud moment for me as the first female in charge of the CCF and to lead the Remembrance Parade in 1992 as Cadet Sergeant Major.



b. Along with Sergeant Eleanor Shelley (nee Meadway) and Lance Corporal Margot King (nee Meadway).

So, so, many happy memories of CCF, camps, adventurous training, signals competitions and of course Mr Spiers.

Tony Reynolds OB 1990-1995

I was a member of the CCF from 1990 to 1995 (the same period as the current Contingent Commander). I found the contingent to be broad church that opened up friendships across my own and other year groups, as well as with members of staff, that I would never have made otherwise. Many of these friendships endure to this day.

While we did our fair share of marching "up and down the square" (actually, between the Great Hall and the Chapel), stripping and assembling rifles, and learning the duties of a sentry, the development of military skills was by no means the primary



objective. Without really knowing it, we were given increasing levels of responsibility for planning and delivering the activities on training evenings, on Annual Camp and on Adventurous Training – probably a great deal more responsibility than might be tolerable within today's risk assessments. This enabled the development of leadership skills, character, and self-confidence, all of which were foundational for moving on to university and the world of work.



It was huge fun as well; scrambling up gills in the Lake District, building and racing rafts in the blazing sunshine in Lydd, enjoying the day trip to Boulogne, running over assault courses in Sennybridge, hanging out in the NAAFI in Longmoor, singing naughty songs in the back of the 4-tonner, lazy evenings in Coniston youth hostel. Of course, swapping Jeremy Bromfield's (then Head of North House and Army Section Commander) lovingly made sandwich in his packed lunch for a lovely broccoli and mustard version, which he discovered on the summit of Wetherlam, was a highlight - or his expletives were anyway.



While I did end up at Sandhurst, bar knowing how to clean a rifle (and the mnemonic for duties of a sentry – PAWPERSO) the military element of the CCF experience didn't provide any real advantage. However, I am sure that the personal development afforded to me through the CCF and the support of the members of staff (Bromfield, Baker, Spiers, Watkins, Stroud and Gust) were critical in getting me there.



Lt Colonel Graham Goodey OB 1996-2000



I had the joy of being in the CCF through 1996-2000 - the heyday of the Bromfield-Spiers era, and then subsequently on various return visits as an OB. It shaped me quite profoundly, which is perhaps a statement of the obvious having now been in the Army

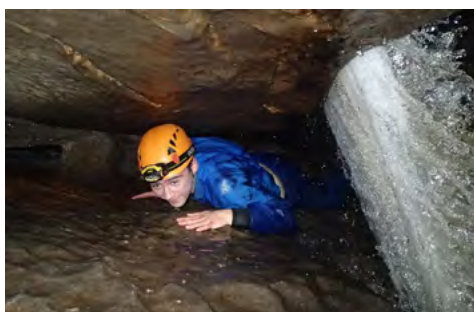
for just shy of 20 years. It wasn't so much the training - though we did, of course, take it terribly seriously, and none more so than me I confess - but it was more the challenge and enjoyment of the CCF that steered me towards a life in the military. Memories of those days may have aged a little in the bottle, but I'd still pick out: the excitement of a first Army Camp at St Martin's Plain, where even the meticulous room inspections were a source of eager competition; nights out at Brockman's Bushes on Self Reliance in the L4, where various people claimed to have gone 'cow tipping' - to this day I don't believe it!; the satisfaction of ambushing roving bands of staff when they played enemy on exercise, and the fear of being taken prisoner by the elite Messrs Macleod and Pollard, which happened to me a few times -

good character-building stuff; the final expeditions on Adventure Training - three days humping over the Lakes with everything (tents and all), and barely seeing the staff, though apparently being monitored from afar in the ODG; the white-outs on the Old Man of Coniston, still to this day some of the most challenging navigation I've faced; and the 'morning campers' tannoy system at Napier, or was it Proteus? - either way, it didn't last long before it suffered a mysterious malfunction.

These are, of course, but a few of the happy memories, and I'm sure they don't do justice to those halcyon days. As much as they were fun they were also hugely formative, thanks in no small part to the remarkable dedication of the staff. Looking back now, I don't think any of us cadets fully realised how much effort and energy went into running the CCF, and just how good it was as a result. And for me personally, I can attest that the traits required to lead soldiers on operations grew their first roots in the CCF. I'm sure the same goes for a host of my generation, whatever they went on to do, because for so many the CCF was a unique part of their upbringing - a brilliant example of the exceptional breadth and quality of a Bancroftian education. So to the cadets today, do please make the most of it, and remember occasionally to thank the staff - they are shaping you (for the better, needless to say!) more than you realise.

OB Photos 2000s & 2010s Adv Trg







OB Photos 2000s & 2010s Biennial Review



Biennial Review Guard of Honour 2013



Biennial Review Guard of Honour 2007



Biennial Review 2019



Biennial Review Guard of Honour 2017



Biennial Review 2017



Biennial Review Guard of Honour 2011



Biennial Review Guard of Honour 2011



Biennial Tournament Winners 2022



Biennial Review Guard of Honour 2019



CCF Biennial Review 2015 Insp Off & RSM



Biennial Review 2017



CCF Biennial Review Guard of Honour 2009



OB Photos 2000s & 2010s Field Days



2006 Field Day



2006 Field Day



Crowborough FD 2007



Crowborough Field Day 2007



Guthrie Cup Team 2015



October 2020 CCF Field Day



Army Field Day Mar 2018



RAF 2012 Queen's Jubilee Ilford

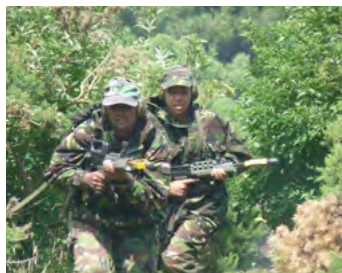
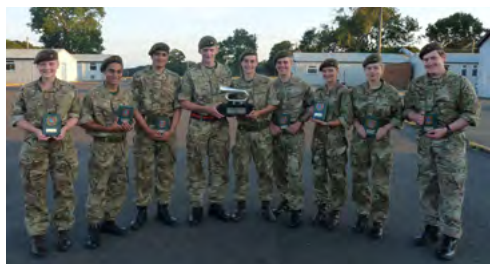


October 2020 CCF Field Day



OB Photos 2000s and 2010s Army Camp











OB RAF Camp





OB RAF Flying

RAF Whyteleafe, Kenley Gliding School 1959
Leading to Solo Flights and 'C' Licence





OB Remembrance Sunday







Parent Memories

Duncan Abbot – Parent & Governor

My recollections of CCF at the school I attended involved a lot of square bashing, shiny boots and blackened webbing. My school had a parade ground and when CCF meetings were held, it rang out to the sound of ammo boots crashing down.

There were compensations for the bull: the school armoury had some splendid mid-century weapons to play with: Bren guns, Sten guns, .303 Lee-Enfields and an endless supply of thunder flashes. Sadly, these were taken away when it was realised a Yale lock would be no match for the IRA looking for weapons. Thankfully they did not take away the old army motorbike that we rode around the playing fields.

Many years later my sons joined the CCF at Bancroft: it had changed a lot. There was still some marching, but the ammo boots had been replaced by what looked like big, black trainers called Magnums. Itchy battle dress was replaced by Soldier 95 kit which seemed altogether more comfortable.

My boys joined as recruits and left as NCOs. All four of my boys enjoyed their time in the CCF. They learned about kit and military matters. They learned leadership skills; how to take orders and how to give



orders. There was lots of training and opportunities for self-development with CCF where they learned about teamwork, responsibility and self-discipline. Adventurous Training in the Lakes was a highlight and each year there was Army camp with opportunities to put that training to the test on exercises and on the range. My boys went to the annual camps and were also lucky enough to attend specialist courses, all paid for by the MoD.

As a school Bancroft's has a proud heritage of service. Each year on Remembrance Day it is good to see that service commemorated and the Fallen remembered in a service led by our CCF. Those who fell were, in most cases, not a lot older than our cadets.

Now I am a school governor, I am proud to support our CCF contingent. It is an important part of the school's co-curricular offering. All our pupils have through CCF, the opportunity to enjoy the experiences that my boys enjoyed and to learn skills that they can take into the workplace and adult life...and hopefully they will have some fun and companionship whilst they are members of the Contingent.





Nick Bowman - OB and parent



If the truth be told, the Cadets was never for me – my natural tendency to push back against authority together with an innate indiscipline meant the two years I spent as an Air Cadet were not as successful as they could have been. It was, however, probably the regurgitated banana sandwich which made its second appearance after a loop-the-loop on a flying day that probably finished it off for me altogether. By contrast, my son, Fred Thomas-Bowman, ended up as Cadet Regimental Sergeant Major having gained a number of instructing and leadership qualifications along the way.

Without doubt as an extra-curricular activity, the CCF has much to recommend it, and I was never less than 100% certain the experience Fred gained would be beneficial at any number of levels – it helped bring

him to his full potential, and will serve him well as he progresses through life. It strengthens cadets both physically and mentally. It gave him an extended family – developing relationships with fellow cadets, and officers, that were markedly different to those formed within the school itself. That sense of community is hugely important to any organisation and is something he's taken with him in his work as a ski instructor (Austria), a teacher (Germany), a climbing wall supervisor (Scotland) and a boat skipper (Norway).

It has also served him well by giving him the skills to be comfortable taking charge and to being able to make decisions. Since leaving Bancroft's he has travelled and worked extensively on the continent and he has found that having a form of military record has been hugely advantageous when applying for jobs. No doubt it didn't do harm on his UCAS to Edinburgh University either. Fred saw first-hand how working hard and being diligent and self-disciplined led to "career progression" – that is a lesson that's best learnt young.

CCF gave Fred a taste of rock climbing, something that has been quite a passion for him, and has allowed him to get a job at the Edinburgh University rock-climbing centre as a way of combining a hobby with paying his way through higher education.

Generally extra-curricular activities are good at helping turn out more rounded individual, in the case of the CCF it helped him develop the knack for timetabling and juggling priorities. Practically it gave huge self-belief, self-knowledge and the ability to grit his teeth and suffer every once in a while (ski touring at 23 in Norway and or firefighting and sea rescue courses).

So, I regarded the CCF as a great experience for him emotionally, physically and from a skills perspective. It certainly brought a tear to my eye when he was selected to carry a flag at the Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance at the Albert Hall. From my perspective as a parent, it was rewarding to see how the Cadets added character and polish to a young lad...and from a very selfish point of view, there wasn't a week when he was in the Cadets that I went without highly polished shoes.



Staff Memories

Wing Commander RB Baker CCF 1968 to 2003

Arriving at Bancroft's in Sept 1967 I was alerted to the need for young officer recruits by our old friend DHG (David Giles, English and Housemaster West House)! And found myself encouraged to join the RAF section taking the Queen's shilling in 1968!



1970s DHG RBB & PJCM

RAF Section (Personal and General data)

1. 1st RAF camp – Gaydon (Warwicks) was the 50th Anniversary of the RAF and was an amazing experience on a regular station. The party happily included schoolmaster officers!
2. All RAF camps were located on serving stations which added to the reality check. Visits to Cranwell, Finnerley, Colerne, Wittering, Honington, Swanton Morley, Culdrose, Lossiemouth et al, gave the various flying experiences much more interest.
3. Cadets gained AEF trips at Marshall's airport, Cambridge with trips in training aircraft when hands-on, you have control was real.
4. I once flew on a Nimrod mission chasing Russian shipping in North Sea.
5. RAF St Mawgan, Cornwall allowed me a week's course in Air Sea Rescue procedures.
6. Eventually after senior staff such as David Giles and Carl Murray retired I was honoured to take over as the OC Contingent for 15 years and gained so much enjoyment in school life.
7. Going to Annual Army, RAF and Adv. Trg Camps allowed staff to gain valuable knowledge of many other schools and showed the



RBB & JGB 1977

Bancroft's approach to modern CCF to be highly commended by visiting officers and OB's.

*The contribution made by JGB you will be fully aware of. Amazing!

Adventurous Training

1. Combined outdoor RAF/Army Cadets annual camps was a great story in post-war cadets throughout the country.
2. Venues i) East Anglia Rout March
ii) Snowdonia
iii) Lake District
3. They were my personal favourite activities in the Corps and allowed me the luxury of practical geography lessons!
4. Boys and Girls attending and gaining mountain leadership skills gave remarkable confidence to young pupils to add to their education. Adults and Cadets enjoyed some serious but fun expeditions/walking experiences.



5. During my time, the sensible attachment of girls to the school and eventually the CCF gave the contingent a proper modern sense of purpose. When girls were rightly promoted to NCO positions the story of co-education in Bancroft's reaped fine examples.
6. Adventurous training, particularly in the Lake District, provided a fleeting hour in our lives in God's own country according to Wainwright! The scenery and exhilaration of summits, valleys, ridges and fells were an inspiration to our lives generally.

I sincerely hope that the school contingent, so ably led by you Rob and your colleagues is allowed to flourish with full support from the whole of the Bancroft's community, especially parents, staff and OB's

Need I say more.

Lt Colonel Jeremy Bromfield MBE CCF 1974 – 2016

If in the late 1970s had I been asked whether the CCF would survive, given the prevailing CND atmosphere and anti-establishment/military elements prevailing in society I would not have given it 10 years or more. As an example of this I remember the 1978 AGI when a member of the modern languages department, herself very anti-establishment, organised a demonstration outside school gates along the new road and down Whitehall Road against the CCF, the military and everything that stood for. Imagine how apoplectic was Head Master Ian Richardson, who had served in the Royal Navy in World War II.



1990s Staff at Swirl How

Contingent numbers in the late 1970s hovered around 50 - 60 and one year only one member of the L4th joined after the recruiting day. How did



1990s staff in the Lake District

we survive and thrive given the atmosphere of the 1970s? We took stock and ensured that the potential recruits recognised that what the contingent offered and indeed continues to offer, are skills and opportunities that are invaluable to them as life skills. Yes, we ensured that the military aspects were well and properly covered, but we focused in on what Bob Baker once described as "Serious fun". We promoted the importance of developing self-reliance, self-discipline and significant leadership skills giving cadets the opportunity of activities and opportunities that did just that!

An important development was the introduction of a co-educational contingent. It took a while and Bancroft's girls initially were a bit wary, seeing it as a boys' activity, but during the 1980s and into the 1990s increasingly girls joined and reached senior rank with Rebecca Smith being the first senior female NCO in 1993.

Another of Bancroft's strengths was that the CCF was always a voluntary organisation. There was nothing worse than attending a CCF camp watching a contingent where its members at camp were there on a compulsory basis. They had little interest, were generally ill disciplined and untidy, and caused their officers' considerable headaches. That is not to say that the Bancroft's cadets were always immaculate and well-behaved but they were there because they wanted to be. The success of the approach and the Contingent can be seen in the fact that numbers grew and continued to grow to the excellent numbers today.

Bancroft's has a good military tradition as witnessed by those who served in both world wars and in subsequent conflicts and sadly with those who paid the final sacrifice including particularly sadly for more recent generations the deaths of Dan Clack and Paul Watkins in Afghanistan in 2011. Over the past



40 years several Bancroftians both male and female have continued the tradition of joining the armed forces and that is a credit to the contingent and to the school.

Adventurous training which started in 1970 as an activity run for us by the cadet training team became our own activity in 1974 and since 1978 has been based in the Lake District. Numbers attending grew from single figures often to the 30s as Bancroftians recognised not only the fun that could be gained but also skills that could be learnt. For JGB it allowed him to play at MasterChef in the kitchens from 1974 to 2017. Originally meals were based around military rations but as kitchen facilities improved meals were based on a much more sophisticated menu!

Camp at Wathgill in 1998 – the Contingent Officers (not the Contingent Commander) determined that No2 Dress should be taken to camp for the final parade – no 2 dress was never worn at camp. So on the last night I irritatingly polished my Sam Browne and shoes and put on the uniform, and marched over to the hanger where the parade was to take place. Imagine my surprise when I entered the hangar to find an incredibly smart formal parade with a Contingent Band and the presence of Head Master Peter Scott and I was presented with a sword to mark 25 years of service to the Contingent! It had all been rehearsed when I had taken an evening off to go to Harrogate to meet the then Capt Fred Gray at that time ADC to General Farrar of the Para regiment in York! It was an incredibly well-kept secret and a humbling experience.

The formal dinner held by the contingent at the school on the occasion of my retirement as contingent commander in 2008 at which the tables were adorned with regimental silver of the Royal Anglian Regiment and a regimental music group provided music throughout the evening. It was an amazing gathering which many Old Bancroftian former and current serving officers as well as former Contingent Officers attended. It was also the first formal occasion attended by the new head of Bancroft's Mary Ireland who entertained the gathering with a very entertaining speech which told all the style of many Mary speeches to come and how much she had enjoyed herself!

Beneath follows a number of other random anecdotes and memories of many years in the CCF!

Carl Murray then OC army section left camp to take two cadets to a railhead for them to attend a course.

He drove them in a military Land Rover. He returned in a taxi with the gear stick of the said Land Rover in his hand which had sheared off as he had tried to change gear without engaging the clutch. A lot of grovelling was required at the MT depot in the camp by yours truly to get them to agree to go and recover the vehicle! At the same camp he had escorted a group of cadets on a visit. He counted them out and counted them back in again but managed to leave one cadet behind at Trentham Park in Stoke-on-Trent. A few hasty phone calls resulted in the return of said cadet.

Another Carl Murray story was on exercise demonstrating to cadets how to set off a thunder flash (those were the days!). He showed his expertise by holding the thunder flash the wrong way round, striking the striker, setting off the fuse which burnt sharply in his direction and badly burnt his hand!

At a camp at SMP in 1981 after an exercise behind the camp in a very muddy river area, the cadets returned minus one rifle. That created a major furore. After unsuccessfully pleading with the cadets for the guilty individual to own up, a search of the exercise area was undertaken with one senior NCO, Simon Gilbert, submerging himself in the muddy and murky waters of the river bed thankfully and amazingly finding the lost rifle. Four years later on a day excursion from the same camp to Boulogne, the mystery was solved. It was coincidentally on that day the 18th birthday of one of the senior NCOs, Andrew Ravenscroft, and at his birthday meal he finally owned up that as one of the youngest cadets in 1981 he had been too frightened to admit that he had been the guilty party!

Particular Army Camp memories include, being at Sennylager in Germany in 1984 on an exercise organised by hosts, 3rd Battalion Royal Anglian Regiment, crawling through thick undergrowth and being confronted by a large wild boar! Retreat was immediate and fast! On an exercise at Longmore I was approaching one of the team's bases to recon what they were doing but unbeknown to me I had been seen and was pounced on from behind by the not insignificant size of senior NCO Mike Tisi and was taken prisoner!

On adventurous training in 1974, the first adventurous training of a young 2/Lt Bromfield, the cadets were on two route marches in the Yorkshire Dales with a planned cross over to exchange Land Rover keys. For communication one of each party carried a dry cell military issue radio. The radios did not function until the cadet in JGB's group excitedly



Missing London climbers safe

by Keith Dovkants
and Donna Leigh

NINE London climbers missing for more than 24 hours on a rugged Lake District fell were found safe and well by rescuers this afternoon.

Concern for their safety grew during the day and seven mountain rescue teams, tracker dogs and a helicopter were called in.

With more than 100 men searching the climbers—boys

from Bancroft School in Woodford Green, East London—were found at Mardale near Penrith, Cumbria.

A police spokesman said: "They seem well, despite a night out in awful weather. We are bringing them down now."

The boys, led by Simon Dawson, 20, belong to the school's army cadet unit.

They are: Philip Howlett, 18, Andrew Rogers, 18; Brendan O'Sullivan, 17, Ian Anderson, 17, Simon Gilbert, 16; Richard Webb, 16; Nigel Young, 15 and Ernest Brown, 16.

Mountain rescue teams

from Furness, Penrith, Langdale, Ambleside, Sedbergh and Wharfedale had joined with Patterdale and Kendal teams to make it one of the biggest searches in the area for years.

Worried parents and relatives of the 18 children who went on the adventure holiday to the Lake District had been ringing Bancroft School throughout the day for news of the missing youngsters.

The party on the climb had planned to cross the fell by Kentmere reservoir and descend to the village of Trout-

beck, a popular walking and climbing centre.

But by 2 pm yesterday, as bad weather closed in on the fell, the party had not completed the four-mile hike.

Tracker

Rescuers were brought in to search the fells but by 4.20 a.m. today, snow and bitter cold winds forced them to call off the hunt.

They started again at first light, assisted by police tracker dogs, and they ranged as far as the Nan Bield fell which at 3397ft, is one of the highest in the area.

A spokesman for the school said earlier: "I feel as if I want to go up there and start looking for them myself. I know the area a little and I can't understand how they could get lost."

"They are all very capable boys and their leader is also very capable."

One theory originally being considered by rescuers was that the climbers took the wrong path when they tried to make their descent of the fell.

It was shrouded in cloud, and freezing drizzle hampered rescuers today.



TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 1972

BRITAIN

Missing boys found

A GROUP of London army cadets were rescued today after being missing for 26 hours in the Lake District.

Mountain rescue teams searched throughout the night but found no trace of the youths, aged between 15 and 20.

The search was continued today using dogs specially trained to search crevices.

The cadets are from £2,000-a-year Bancroft's School in Woodford Green.

The group of youths and their leader left the Venture Porth scout base near Newby Bridge yesterday morning to hike from Kentmere towards Troutbeck via the Kentmere Reservoir.

The boys are: Ian Hawtrel, 18; Andrew Rogers, 18; Ernest Brown, 16; Simon Gilbert, 16; Ian Anderson, 17; Nigel Young, 15; Richard Webb, 16; Brendan O'Sullivan, 19, and the leader Simon Dawson, 20.

A police spokesman said: "There is no call for medical aid but they must be starving hungry and very cold and wet."

Rescue teams from all over the Lake District were called in after a party of cadets — all aged between 15 and 20 — was reported missing on Monday night.

The party of cadets, from Bancroft's School, Woodford Green, Essex, had set off on a walk from Kentmere village on Monday morning.

They should have arrived at Troutbeck Park at 2 p.m. but when they had not appeared by the early evening rescue services were alerted.

Severe

Kendal Mountain Rescue Team was called out and they were later joined by members of the Patterdale and Penrith teams and rescuers from the Ullswater Outward Bound School.

They went on searching in the Kentmere, Troutbeck and Nan Bield areas until about 4 a.m. on Tuesday when they had to give up because of the severe weather conditions.

The search was resumed with daylight and a panel of rescue team leaders met at Kendal police station to discuss the situation. Additional rescuers from Furness, Langdale and Ambleside, Sedburgh and Wharfedale were called in.

The boys were finally found in Mardale on Tuesday afternoon. They had spent the night in two tents and were all safe and well.

Their leader, 20-year-old student Simon Dawson, said they had decided to make camp when the weather closed in on Monday afternoon and they had to wait until it cleared.

He said: "We know where we were but in that sort of weather you don't push your luck."



The cadets back in Kentmere after their adventure in the fells.

Cadets safe after big fells search

NINE army cadets were found safe and well on Tuesday after a massive search operation in the fells of the head of Kentmere.



cried out, "Sir. I have made contact." JGB's response was, "Yes, so have I, I can see them in the distance a hundred yards away." So much for military hardware.

David Giles on adventurous training in the Lake District leading a party in the fog and not knowing exactly where they were, knowing that another group was in the vicinity and hoping to make contact with them, got his group to chant a phrase current in a TV series MASH about a mobile hospital full of fairly eccentric medics in the Korean War, "Frank Burns eats worms". It worked as a substitute map reading method as contact was remarkably made with the other group on top of the hill.

In the Lake District on adventurous training in 1980 cadets went on hikes in the hills. The weather was threatening with snow forecast. Instructions were not to go above the snow line. One group was led by an OB Simon Dawson who was on his way to a commission in the Army. His group was caught in a snowstorm and did not return and was missing overnight. The mountain rescue was called out but to no avail as they could not find missing cadets. Imagine the anxiety on the part of the contingent officers. The next morning they were headline news on the BBC radio four programme today as 12 cadets were missing overnight in the hills. Imagine the concern of Head Master Ian Richardson who was in Dorset at his second home on holiday and heard the news on the radio. The party in the Lake District did not have any contact details for Mr Richardson! By midday the mountain rescue was about to call out the RAF search and rescue helicopter when suddenly out of the gloom the party appeared marching downhill. When the snow had struck they had stopped, put up their tents, covered them with snow to insulate them (hence the mountain rescue established they must have walked within a few yards of them, but did not find them) and ate their rations and slept overnight. They had followed instructions in the case of emergency to the letter, were congratulated by the mountain rescue despite having caused them considerable hard work, and the following week were on the front page of the local newspaper the Westmorland Gazette as heroes!

AGI 1977 - The scene was set with the dais under the school tower for the march past and on it were the inspecting officer OB Col Stuart "Saggy" Green (Royal Anglian), the Head Master and the Mayor of Redbridge. The contingent set off from the CCF stores to march down the front drive only to be beaten into the front drive by the Unigate milk



AGI Milk Float 1978

float which paraded past the dais yards in front of the contingent!!

A good CCF windup- At Wathgill camp there had been problems with the overuse of training areas. JGB was told by the Camp authorities that his planned exercise would have to be cancelled. This he passed on to the contingent staff. Unbeknown to them he had negotiated the use of a totally different area and during the day had completely re-planned the exercise. One of the contingent staff at that camp, an OB later to have a distinguished career in the army including commanding his battalion, was very annoyed at the news that the exercise was cancelled. As a bit of fun the officers played along and kept quiet about the rearranged exercise whilst said OB got more and more annoyed telling the Contingent Commander that he ought to get this sorted out as he couldn't believe the Contingent Commander had allowed this to happen! Imagine his surprise and slight embarrassment let alone annoyance at his own gullibility (!) when the news that a completely new exercise was about to start was revealed to him!!

In 1984 the new tube range was built replacing an old Nissen hut range on the site where is now the prep school. This had been built for a year but not used as London district would not send someone to issue its safety certificate. This was an incredibly frustrating but nonetheless typical delay because of the inefficiency of the system. What to do? JGB remembered attending a conference at which Maj General Christopher Airey, General Officer commanding London District had perhaps as a throwaway line said if ever you have a problem just get directly in touch with me. So JGB took him at his word and wrote him a letter (no emails in those days) saying what could be done? Clearly the letter never got to him as the then Chief of Staff phoned JGB with a torrent of abuse about cheek and how dare he



write but having received a letter something had to be done! The next week a safety inspector turned up and was perplexed. He said he had been sent with instructions to fail the range but he said "how can I fail it, it is brand-new and unused and meets all the specifications?" The safety certificate was issued and the range has been in regular use ever since.

Captain Gareth Watkins 1995 to 2009

Most of the tales I could come up with tend to suggest incompetence, negligence, dubious and possibly actionable antics, together with some quite embarrassing moments for contingent staff past and present! All unprintable and possibly litigious.

However, given that he's no longer with us, I have some possible snippets regarding Martyn Spiers. As you know Martyn was a major part of the CCF for many years as the SSI. He was immensely proud of his army background and rank and could be cantankerous and had little regard for some of the junior officers (as no doubt is the custom for WOs), was very proud of his parachute wings – surprising as he didn't have a head for heights and wasn't comfortable on mountain peaks/ridges; but, was exceptionally helpful both to myself and the senior cadets who generally adored him.



to celebrate the last camp for JGB as CO (I do believe arranged by Andy) and had travelled there in a convoy of minibuses to drop them back off. Martyn, unbeknown to anybody else, decided to go off for a wander to find and chat to people he knew at the base. To cut a long story short he was left behind as each minibus driver thought he was with the other. The message came through from Catterick that they had a very disgruntled ex-Para in the camp who by this time we had to abandon as we were too far down the motorway to go back. Martyn had to make his own way back by train but did (eventually) see the funny side although Christine his wife didn't!

Martyn was our storeman/quartermaster as well as having a multitude of other roles. One of his jobs was to borrow equipment from MOD Bicester for adventurous training – tents, wetsuits, etc. However, this was a job Martyn hated as he had to return all the kit in good condition not long on our return. After a week's use in the Lake District much of the kit would be dirty and in a poor condition. Martyn came up with the ideal solution to this – he would only lend out the kit through gritted teeth to avoid having to clean it afterwards or not at all. I'm convinced that half the kit Martyn borrowed was squirreled



SSI Martyn Spiers

Martyn was one of these guys who always knew somebody somewhere from his army days and would always enjoy a good chin wag with them. However, this went a bit wrong when we were returning from an army camp (was it Warcop?) via Catterick. We had borrowed some musical instruments from Catterick

away never to see the light of day so he could return it in pristine condition. I do remember that he once acquired a GPS system (only 1) which he was keen to use in the Lakes. This was early days in technology when they weren't that accurate. I remember sitting on a hillside in the Lakes with Martyn whilst he waited for all the satellites to get in position (or something like that) for him to get a reading of where we were. Unfortunately, this was in the middle of a snowstorm with cadets on the verge of hyperthermia before we could get the go ahead to move off. Meanwhile everybody else had located their position on the bit of paper we call a map with the technology we call a compass to tell Martyn where we were. He wasn't having any of this but eventually the satellites got themselves together and Martyn was able to confirm that yes indeed we were at the location that we all knew we were at! We survived and Martyn didn't use it again.

On a personal note, I always got on with Martyn and generally was put in a room with him on camp if there was a need to share. He had a knack (no doubt honed to perfection as a soldier in his army days) of being able to tilt his head back and go straight off to sleep. After a long day out with cadets this was bliss as some of my colleagues wanted to prat around in the evenings whilst all I wanted to do was to have a good night's sleep (probably an age thing!). However, there was a downside as Martyn was an inveterate snorer but one who, apart from the noise, you had to listen to whether you wanted to or not as he was one of those "is he going to breathe again snorers." Just as I would be about to leap over to apply mouth to mouth to resuscitate him he would snort back to life. Just as well as I don't think he would have appreciated waking up to find me on top of him giving him the kiss of life. That would have been a difficult one for both of us.

My thanks to the cadets, staff and parents of Bancroft's School CCF, past and present, for their contributions to this edition of the CCF newsletter. If you would like to contribute to the next publication please contact the CCF via schooloffice@bancrofts.org.



