On Remembrance Sunday (9th November) the men of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry were remembered throughout the County. During the morning ceremony held at Belhaven Park at Wishaw, North Lanarkshire, where the Lanarkshire Yeomanry Memorial has recently been joined by the town’s own war memorial (which had previously been located on an out of the way spot near the Sports Centre – a constant bone of contention to the local townsfolk) a wreath was laid in memory of the LY by Kathleen Kane whose late father, Johnny Kane, was a POW at Kinkaseki on Taiwan.

Later in the week, on Remembrance Day itself, a Lanarkshire Yeomanry Wreath, donated by Derek Colman and his brother, was laid at the LY Memorial in the Armed Forces Memorial Garden, Belhaven Park in memory of their late father, Harold Colman of the 156th (Lanarkshire Yeomanry) Field Regiment RA, and all the men of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry. Derek lives in America and for the past few years he and his brother have donated a wreath for this purpose. This year, the wreath was laid by Anne Gilmour, whose late father, William Barrie, was initially with the 156th but later served with the 155th in the Far East and was a POW on Taiwan while at Motherwell the honours were done by Nancy Smith, whose late father, Andrew McKay, was a POW on the Death Railway.

At the same time in Carluke in South Lanarkshire, another wreath was laid at the LY Memorial in the garden at the Market Place by Elma Cunningham whose late father, Roy Russell, was a POW on the Death Railway. A guard of honour was provided by the young men of the 4th Carluke Company of the Boys Brigade.

Later in the day at Hamilton and Motherwell, at the principal ceremonies organised by South and North Lanarkshire Councils, respectively, tributes were made in respect of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry. At Hamilton, the LY Wreath was laid by Tom Gordon, whose late uncle and namesake, Tom Gordon, died as a POW on Taiwan while at Motherwell the honours were done by Nancy Smith, whose late father, Andrew McKay, was a POW on the Death Railway.

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The wording on the wreath read:

\[
\text{In loving memory of the men of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry.}
\]

\[
\text{There is no phrase to acknowledge the sacrifices you made for us,}
\]

\[
\text{No words that are adequate except two,}
\]

\[
\text{“Thank you!”}
\]
On the same day, on the opposite side of the world on Taiwan, our old friend Ken Pett laid a FEPOW wreath at the memorial at Kinkaseki in memory of his friends and former comrades who were held there. Ken, who is 95 years of age, has made frequent visits to Taiwan in recent years along with his daughter Lynn and son in law, Mike, for this specific purpose. Agnes Dougan and her sister, Rosemary, also hope to make the trip to Taiwan in the near future in memory of their late father, John McEwan.

Ken and Lynn approach the Kinkaseki Memorial

Ken salutes his former comrades

Ken was held at Kinkaseki from November 1942 till May 1945 when he was moved to Kukutsu, the 'Jungle Camp'. In accordance with the 'Final Disposition of the Prisoners', the Japanese intended to execute the POWs who were held there. Only the Japanese surrender saved the prisoners from their fate. At the end of the war, Ken weighed only four stones ten pounds and had to be carried, unconscious, from the camp.

During the past year, we have arranged for a total of nine wreaths to be laid in memory of the men of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry (two on the 15\textsuperscript{th} February - the Fall of Singapore and the beginning of the POWs time of Hell, two on VJ Day and a total of five in November at Remembrance) and we are always extremely grateful to all those who generously provide donations which are put to this purpose. In this respect, thanks are due to Audrey Douglas, widow of the late Jock Douglas, for her recent kind donation.

In Memory of a Grandfather.

Robert Cunningham, grandson of the late Robert Russell of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry is currently coming to the end of a long period of study for his LLB (Hons.) Degree. As part of his final studies for his joint Law/History degree, he has to submit a dissertation and has decided that his subject will relate to why some POWs of the Japanese survived while others did not. His thesis is complex and will be of considerable interest to families of former FEPOWs and we hope that he will allow us to make it available when completed.

And on the subject of study, we were pleased to learn from Robert that he had found the books \textit{Death Was Our Bedmate} and \textit{The Fireside Sojers} of some use in his research. The latter has now been provided to all Secondary Schools and Libraries in both South and North Lanarkshire courtesy of our friend, Tom Donaldson.

Can you help?

On occasions, we are contacted by the families of former members of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry seeking information about loved ones. From our own material we can sometimes be of assistance but often it is members of the extended yeomanry family who are of most help.

Recently we were contacted by Mark Douglas–Home about his late father, Edward, who had been a prisoner on the Death Railway. Like many of those men who had suffered so terribly at the hands of a bestial enemy, Edward Douglas–Home rarely spoke of his experience. In addition, Mark did not have a photo of his father in uniform. Thanks to Len Tadman who had kindly given us a photograph of ‘E’ Troop with the names of the men attached, we were able to provide a photograph and also to put Mark in touch with Janet Telfer, widow of FEPOW Doug Telfer.

Doug, from Douglas, had been working in Malaya when war broke out and had seen action with the Malayan Volunteers before being taken prisoner after the fall of Singapore in February 1942. He had also slaved on the Death Railway and had met Edward Douglas-Home while he was there.

A section of the Wampo viaduct constructed by POWs in Thailand.
Our 'outreach work' to tell the story of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry continues and in September we took part in an exhibition at the Heritage Centre in Motherwell and last month gave a talk to the Men's Group at St Marks Church, Wishaw. It is a privilege to take part in this way and it can sometimes be a two way experience where we learn from those in the audience!

Similarly, we were contacted by Neil Gill, who was searching for information about his Great Uncle, Andrew Vere. Andrew was one of the men from the 155th included in the contingent for Taiwan in October 1942. There, he slaved in the Kinkaseki copper mine until October 1944, when, due to extreme ill health, he was transferred to Shirakawa on a 'Thin Man Party'.

Since then, Audrey and Neil have spoken on the telephone and Audrey has forwarded to him a copy of a letter written home by Jock in which he mentions Andrew's death. Possibly the only 'positive' note in Andrew's story was that, in March 1945, Jock Douglas was himself transferred to Shirakawa so the two friends may have been reunited, if only for a short time.

Andrew Vere enlisted in the Territorial Lanarkshire Yeomanry in 1939 before the war began. He died in April 1945, having served for 5 years, 331 days. Officialdom decreed that he was not entitled to the Territorial Efficiency Medal as his death meant that he was 34 days short of the qualifying period to be awarded this Medal!

A drawing of Shirakawa camp

The photograph alongside shows Jock Douglas (L) with two friends, one of whom is Robert Birrell. If anyone can help identify which man is Robert Birrell or who the other man is, would you please get in touch.

Jon McNair has also been in touch with information and photographs of his grandfather, L/Bdr John McNair. One of the photographs is a Christmas card which shows John McNair and (probably) Robert Tough.

John McNair was Major John Wilson's driver when the Major was killed by a sniper at Batu Pahat in Malaya.

In a letter home after he was liberated, John McNair said that he was in 'excellent health'. He neglected to mention that he was suffering from malaria and ulcers and that he had had several toes amputated while a POW in Thailand!

L/Bdr John McNair and (probably) Rab Tough

 Talks

Our 'outreach work' to tell the story of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry continues and in September we took part in an exhibition at the Heritage Centre in Motherwell and last month gave a talk to the Men’s Group at St Marks Church, Wishaw. It is a privilege to take part in this way and it can sometimes be a two way experience where we learn from those in the audience!

This was particularly the case a year or so ago when on a wild winter's evening we gave a talk to the Gartcosh Historical Society on the experience of men of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry as FEPOWs. Owing to the awful weather, numbers were not great and we received apologies - but present on the evening was a lady of 'senior years' who had been a primary school head teacher and she mentioned that the former janitor at her school had been a FEPOW. During the ensuing discussion we were amazed to learn that the janitor had been George Mair, a gunner with the Lanarkshire Yeomanry who had distinguished himself in action at Slim River. He was a man whom we had been desperate to learn about and as a result of this meeting, we were eventually to meet Ann, George’s daughter. Although George had long passed on, Ann was able to give us a great deal of valuable information and photographs about her dad. As a result, when now asked to speak to groups, sometimes with the 'warning' that numbers might not be great, we impress that we are happy to speak to groups of 'two or a hundred and two' as we never know if we are about to find 'gold dust'!
Claiming medals

It is a sad fact that many of the men of the 155th (Lanarkshire Yeomanry) did not claim their service medals when they returned home after the war. For many they just wanted to forget the whole experience while others were simply disgusted by the way that their grateful nation had treated them on their return. In addition, unlike WW1 where medals were sent to those concerned, those entitled to WW2 medals had to actually claim them. As a result, today there are still families who are entitled to claim a loved one’s medals.

At the very least, those men who served in the Far East are entitled to the following medals:

**1939-45 Star, Pacific Star and 1939-45 War Medal**

In addition, some men (particularly those who were sent to France immediately after the outbreak of war) are additionally entitled to the **Defence Medal**.

A particular irritation is that there is a medal which has to be specifically requested. If you don’t ask, the Medal Office will not issue it. It is the **Territorial Efficiency Medal** which was awarded to those who were serving in the Territorial Lanarkshire Yeomanry on the outbreak of war. (The fact that it is solid silver might have something to do with it!) A request was recently made for John McEwan’s medal for although he had been issued with the three medals mentioned above, he had never been issued with the Territorial Medal. It was only when his family indicated that they would appeal, that it was issued!

So if your loved one never claimed his medals, you can still do it now.

If you need advice on how to do this, let us know.

Old Friends

As we near the end of the year, our thoughts inevitably turn to those old friends who are still with us - and those who have sadly passed on. Earlier this year we were greatly saddened by the death of Tom McKie. Only the night before the sudden stroke which took Tom from us, we had been speaking to him on the phone and he was so looking forward to taking part in the 70th Anniversary Commemoration of VJ Day which was to be held at the Church of St Martins in the Field, London, in August. We somehow feel that his presence would still have been there on the day.

However, four stalwarts of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry, all in their nineties, are still to the fore. Two of them were with the 155th: the irrepressible Andy Coogan, that amazing survivor of the Kinkaseki Copper Mine and Raymond Poland whose Christian faith saw him through the horrors of the Death Railway.

**Andy Coogan, Carluke, 2013**

From the 156th are Geoff Storey, who cheated death when he was seriously wounded on Sicily following an attack on his unit by the Luftwaffe and Derrick Mant, who, as a very young officer, experienced the terror of the killing beaches of Anzio.

Gentlemen, no doubt bones are getting stiffer but the spirit which saw you through the trials of WW2 remains an example to us all.

**Geoff Storey & Derrick Mant, Carluke 2013**

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