

# **BFES/SCEA Association Email Bulletin**

## **August 2023**



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**From:** Membership Secretary  
**Email:** [bfes.scememb@gmail.com](mailto:bfes.scememb@gmail.com)

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### **First thoughts:**

As usual, we hope that you are all well and enjoying the weather – whatever it brings!

### **AGM and Lunch at the RAF Club, Piccadilly: Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> August**

Along with this edition of the email Bulletin, there are two documents for you to read: the first gives details about the AGM that will be held prior to the Association's lunch at the **RAF Club on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September**. All the details, including the agenda and how to nominate a member to serve on the Committee are in the document. The second document has the minutes from the last AGM held in 2022.

If you have any questions or comments you should send these directly to Lynn Marshall, our Association Secretary. This applies whether you attend the AGM or not... The Committee welcomes the input from all members and would love to hear from you.

**Any questions or queries about the AGM should be sent to Lynn Marshall.**

**EMAIL: [lynnmarsh6@aol.com](mailto:lynnmarsh6@aol.com) or TELEPHONE: 0118 3274128**

**If you have not yet booked your place to attend the Lunch event at the RAF Club on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, there are still some places available. Check the details in the July Bulletin and contact Lynn Marshall to reserve a place (details above).**

### **Focus on Places: C is for Cyprus!**

In previous Bulletins we have begun a series focussing upon particular areas of the world or a particular town or place. These have been prompted by members writing down their memories and sending them to us. So far, we have had A for Aden, B for Bermuda, Mtarfa in Malta and Munster in Germany, plus quite a few other bits and pieces about Singapore and other places. Cyprus, is of course, one of the few service bases where MOD schools still operate, full of children building new memories from early years' settings and schools taking children right through their educational journey to age 18. In January 2023, a school was opened to accommodate the children of Dhekelia Primary School and Ayios Nikolaso Primary School into the new, purpose built Queen Berengaria School (QBS), showing that schools are not only thriving, but growing, too. This was completed under the Apollo scheme, which is also planning to build new homes on the island for service personnel. It seems good to know that young teachers and young people can live, learn and teach abroad and keep the tradition of service children staying with their families. We almost felt tempted to read the 'jobs vacant' adverts!

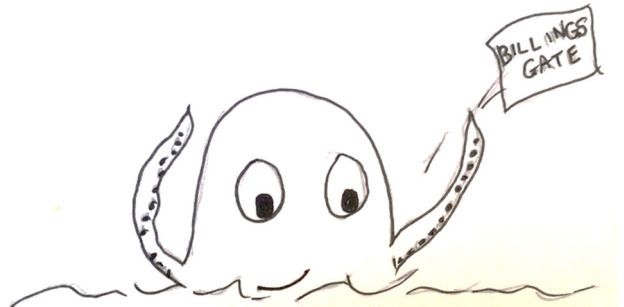
Anyway, to kick off this next part of the series "C is for Cyprus", here is a short story from Lorraine:

#### **"Summer Time and the living is easy...."**

It is with a sense of urgency that whilst living in Cyprus in the summer months one should always try to return perishable goods a.s.a.p. to a refrigeration unit, especially if they appear sleepy, plump and pink with suckers.

As it was mid-June, mother-in-law was spending her annual freebie break staying with us in Episkopi to see the grandchildren, top up a tan and gain Brownie points by babysitting. It was amazing how she managed to wheedle her way into the Mess Summer Ball, see the Shakespearian production at the Curiun amphitheatre (Brown Owl was hardly recognisable as Cleopatra) and to coax me to run to the NAAFI for the third time in a fortnight topping up the gin ration. Babysitting my foot!

I must just explain why I was spotted driving back home from Limassol fish market with an 8kilo octopus sliding around the boot.... It was for GCSE Art Still Life. Our eldest child popped it in and out of the fridge when he wanted to get the exact curvature of the eight tentacles. By day 5 it was beginning to pong, take on a strange flesh coloured sticky film but the best bit was no one told Grandma. When she was helping herself to another can of tonic without looking properly you could hear her squeals halfway to Paphos.... A fishy tale!"



**From the Archives:**

Jane Tull had in her collection this lovely example of the exercise books we used to hand out to children. Lots of great measures and information for the children to memorise.

**Don't you just love the weight for meat?** 14lb live: 8lb dead = 1 stone

**Or what about:** a noggin = 2 glasses and 4 noggins = 1 pint

**...and did you learn at school that:**

1 bushel of oats weighs 40lbs

**BUT**

1 bushel of barley weighs 50lbs  
 1 bushel of wheat weighs 60lbs and  
 1 sack of flour weighs 280lbs

And what about the weight of a truss of straw, or old hay? And how many trusses made a load?

Thank goodness this was all printed on the front cover – perhaps the children didn't have to learn it after all!

Code No. 28-31

**NARROW RULING**

E R

SUPPLIED FOR USE IN NAVAL & MILITARY SCHOOLS

## EXERCISE BOOK

School \_\_\_\_\_ Standard \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

MISCELLANEOUS	WEIGHT
1 dozen = 12	16 ounces (oz.) = 1 pound (lb.)
1 score = 20	14 lb. = 1 stone
1 gross = 144	28 lb. = 1 quarter (qr.)
A cubic foot of fresh water weighs 62½ lbs.	4 qrs. or 112 lb. = 1 hundred-weight (cwt.)
"    "    clay          "    125 lbs.	20 cwt. or } = 1 ton
"    "    loose earth  "    95 lbs.	2240 lb. or }
"    "    pine          "    41 lbs.	160 stone } = 1 ton
"    "    oak           "    59 lbs.	Meat
A gallon of water weighs approx. 10 lbs.	14 lb. live : 8 lb. dead = 1 stone
A cubic yard of compressed hay weighs about 225 lbs.	
"    "    "    straw      "    145 lbs.	INDIAN WEIGHT
"    "    coal (solid) weighs about 2,160 lbs.	5 Tolas = 1 Chittack (2 oz. approx.)
"    "    sand weighs about 1 ton (approx.)	16 Chittacks = 1 Seer (2 lb. approx.)
A truss of straw should be 36 lbs.	40 Seer = 1 Maund (80 lb. approx.)
"    "    old hay should be 56 lbs.	LIQUID MEASURE
"    "    new hay should be 60 lbs.	4 gills = 1 pint (pt.)
36 trusses = a load.	2 pts. = 1 quart (qt.) (it is a quarter of a gallon).
5% Interest or Profit = $\frac{1}{20}$ = 1/- in the £	4 qts. = 1 gallon (gall.)
Sound travels in air at approximately 1,100 ft. per second.	36 galls. (beer) = 1 barrel.
A halfpenny is 1 inch in diameter.	DRY MEASURE
A noggin = 2 glasses. [4 noggins = 1 pint.]	(Corn, etc.)
TROY WEIGHT	2 galls. = 1 peck (pk.)
(For Gold, Silver and Jewels)	4 pks. = 1 bushel (bush.)
12 pence = 1 shilling (1/-)	8 bush. = 1 quarter (2 sacks).
100 pence = 8/4	1 bush. (oats) weighs 40 lbs. (average)
240 pence = 1 pound (£1)	1 " (barley) " 50 lbs. "
1000 pence = £4.3.4.	1 " (wheat) " 60 lbs. "
10/- = 1/4 or .5 of £1.	1 sack flour weighs 280 lb. (approx.)
5/- (crown) = 1/4 or .25 of £1.	
4/- = 1/2 or .5 of £1.	
2/6 (half a crown) = 1/4 or .125 of £1.	
2/- (florin) = 1/5 or .2 of £1.	

## Spotlight on Members: Morris dancing in Germany!

Hugh Ritchie remembers with some fondness that during the time we spent in Gutersloh he was persuaded to take up Morris Dancing in the German streets. It was all for a good cause, a charity collection that was set up by one of Hugh's colleagues to raise money for research into leukaemia. Hugh had always enjoyed Scottish Country dancing engaging in the more lively dances such as "Strip the Willow" with gusto rather than finesse, so it didn't take too much persuasion to get into the swing of things. Another colleague had been in a Morris Dancing group before, someone else had a squeeze-box and other musical friends, so once everyone was kitted out with white shirt and trousers and wives and friends sewn bells onto leg straps and flowers onto straw hats training and practice could start in earnest. Sticks and hankies at the ready, the "Morris Men" bravely set out for the shopping areas of Germany ready to dance! No doubt the local people viewed the British dancers with a bit of wonder, but they appreciated the fun and the donations made the embarrassment of dancing in the street worthwhile. However, it was all thirsty\_work, and a half-pint before dancing made the steps a lot easier to remember! If you notice in one of the photographs that Hugh is flinching, it is because the group often got carried away and hit the sticks a bit too hard with the result of bruised knuckles or broken sticks. One of the favourite dances started with a raucous chorus of, "Oh! Dear mother what a fool I've been, Six young maidens come a-courting me, five were blind and the other couldn't see, Oh! Dear mother what a fool I've been!" Here is the photographic evidence of the dancing and the crowds that stopped to watch:



Hugh

Oh dear mother what I fool I've been  
Six young maidens came a-courting me  
Five were blind and the other couldn't see  
Oh dear mother what I fool I've been!



## Last month's very easy Quiz – the answers all started with the letter J:

1. **Julius** Caesar gave his name to the month of July.
2. The **jitterbug** was a popular dance in the 1940s (Jive was from 1950s!)
3. Edward **Jenner** introduced a vaccine for smallpox
4. Scouts/Guides gathering is a **jamboree**
5. Ignatius Loyola set up the **Jesuit** order
6. French chop of vegetables – **julienne**
7. **Jackfruit** is the Asian fruit
8. Capital of Indonesia (for this quiz) is **Jakarta**
9. The cat /car is a **jaguar**
10. And 'twas brillig and the slithy toves – i.e. **Jabberwocky**



## In Remembrance:



Philippa has reported that her mother, Pat Law (née Bower), died peacefully but unexpectedly at the age of 95 on 20th July. Pat was a member of staff at Tal Handaq, where she is remembered for teaching needlework. She married naval officer Captain Michael F Law, who became Head teacher of Tal Handaq and then Officer-in-Charge Schools, Malta and Naples.



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## And so, goodbye:

The summer edition of the Journal will have reached you by now, and we hope that you enjoyed reading the articles contained within the copy. We echo Tom's editorial, outlining the importance of the contents as an historical record of times gone by for the 'archives'. Each year there seems fewer number of us who remember the 'old' days, so collecting stories and memorabilia is not only interesting, but also important if we want the history to be recorded in any way. Of course, years ago, when we worked overseas, we didn't think we were making any sort of history, just enjoying ourselves and trying to do a good job. As we get older, our perspectives change; either we want to forget, or want to note some details for future generations! Or perhaps, a little of both! If you have any stories or memorabilia, do share. Thanks.

Best wishes

Hugh and Christine Ritchie  
Membership Secretaries

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