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N.F.S. FIREWOMEN'S MAGAZINE

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EDITORIAL AND NEWS

We are pleased (and relieved) to find that our "miniature Mag." is as popular as ever in its new and fashionable form. Here are two of the many comments reaching us: "Congratulations to the Editor and the printers on having included so much in so small a booklet." "A wonderful work of compressive art." And renewal orders for Annuals are coming in all the time, which speaks for itself.

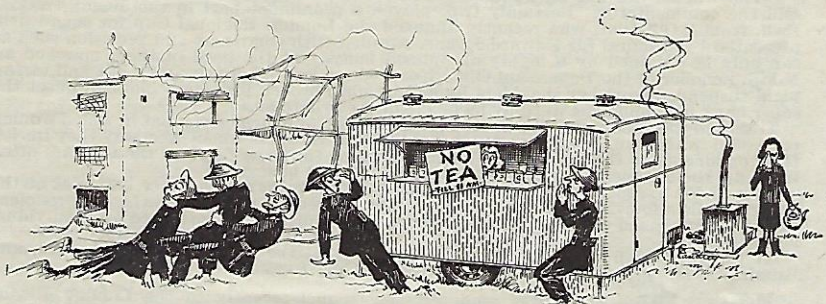
I/Northern Region.—On 16th July, by kind permission of the Flag Officer in Charge, Tyne, and at the invitation of the W.R.N.S., a party of firewomen and Women Officers made a trip down the river in company with members of the other Women's Services. Apart from the interest of the trip itself, it afforded an excellent opportunity for the women of all services to meet and it was both an instructive and enjoyable afternoon.

A.O. Rowell, F.F. 2, was transferred to F.F. 36 in June. Best wishes are extended to her from No. 1 Region in her new appointment.

From Sub-Div. 3 "C" Div., No. 1 F.F., comes the following account of a competition for the best women's billet, a silver cup given by the Divl. Sports Committee being the prize:—

The competition was open to full and part-time Stations in the Division and a specified time allowed for the fwn. to prepare their quarters for inspection. The A.O. was then invited to be the judge. Once the prize was in the air and the date of the inspection fixed there was a helter-skelter all round, brushing, polishing, decorating and, in one case, distemper by the fwn. themselves. Blankets became works of art, adorned with braid, wool, silk and appliqué flowers. Black-out curtains were embroidered, making them look like a housewife's dream come true. Gaily coloured woollen cushions appeared as from out of the blue, also handworked chair backs, rugs, etc. Stand-by periods found the fwn. busily engaged on all sorts of gadgets and improvements. At last the Great Day arrived and the final touches were made, with much speculation as to which Station would be the winners. The fwn. eagerly awaited the results and when it was announced that Sub-Div. 3 had won the cup we felt that all our hard work had been really worth while and the fwn. were proud to have the honour of being the first to hold the cup. The healthy spirit of competition did much to create enthusiasm and friendly rivalry throughout the Division.

B. G. C.



Fire at the Glue Works - - - - - Drawn by Fm. Caudrey, VI/15/H.Q.

III/Region.—OUR AMERICAN TOURNAMENT.—Last May this Region held its Third Fitness Training Course, 19 "Amazons" drawn from Areas 7, 8, 9 and 10 learning to help the women of the N.F.S. to be as mentally and physically fit as those of any other Service. The syllabus included games, organising, preparing and playing, etc. One day it was decided to hold an American Tournament, the game being Tenuquits. I should have told you that our training took place on Mapperley "Heights," Notts. I say "Heights," as I think it must be the highest spot in the Midlands; on the calmest of days there is a good breeze. This particular day was not calm and when we went out to the pitch there was a small hurricane blowing. So we started with the handicap of having to hold our shorts on with one hand and our hair on with the other. We were too tough to be put off by such a minor detail and soon got started in a pukka club fashion—score-keeper, umpire, etc., with 2 girls to hold up the posts (if they let go for a moment they were blown over).

Only 4 could play at a time, so the others, armed with footballs and bats, practised netball passing and paddy-tennis. Soon we found we were not alone—we had a spectator. A scruffy little rough-haired terrier stood on the side of the pitch watching with great interest, his head on one side. One could almost hear him saying: "What the deuce are they up to?" Finally, unable to bear it any longer, he decided to try his "paw," and started in at the lowest level—paddy-tennis. He probably thought it was much too tame, so with a very neat swoop he captured the ball, and amidst shrieks of laughter there was a great game of chase-me-Charlie. All this had no effect on the tournament players, who were still at it hammer and tongs. (They were on their 2nd round, 4 games to each round.) Then Mr. Terrier thought he would try netball and did his best to get his mouth round a football, but finding he had bitten off more than he could chew, went for the girls' feet instead. Just as we reached a very exciting point in our 4th round, he cast his eye over to the "centre" court, and before anyone realised his intentions, he had captured the quoit and made off. Immediately he stuck his head through the quoit, looping it over his ears, a sublime look of contentment spread over his impish face. At last he had found the perfect game! A superb exhibition of dodge took place. 19 to 1! With a series of spurts, swoops, swerves and side-steps he had us all guessing (at a rough estimate we covered about 5 miles apiece) until he had us all on our knees.

My last vision of the field as I came up for air, was 18 prostrate forms, and one little dog throwing the booty down and stumping away in disgust because no one would play. Curtain!

L/Fw. Payne. F.F.9. Div. A.H.Q.

V/Regional H.Q. King of Norway sees N.F.S. Display.—On Saturday, 3rd July, 1943, a luncheon was given by Admiral Sir Edward Evans, Regional Commissioner and Lady Evans in honour of King Haakon of Norway, Prince Olaf, and M. Maisky, the Russian Ambassador. The luncheon was held at the Roof Gardens Restaurant, Messrs. Derry and Toms, Kensington. Afterwards the party proceeded to Regional Fire H.Q., Lambeth, where a display was given by personnel of No. 36 Fire Force Area.

Among those present were Mme. Maisky, Fve Lie, General Pile, Major Gen. Trentlett, Sir Arthur and Lady Dixon, Commander Firebrace (C.F.S.), Mrs. Cuthbert (C.W.F.O.), Mr. J. H. Simpson, Mr. F. W. Dolve (C.R.F.O., London), and Mrs. Dolve, Miss Oddy (R.W.F.O., London), Sir Alan and Lady Powell, Sir Hamilton Benn, Lady Wright; also all F.F.Cs. and A.Os. of the London Fire Forces and many other senior officers. "The women are not an auxiliary unit, but an integral part of the Fire Service," said the commentator. Certainly fwn. played a prominent part in the demonstration. Fwn. from "C" Div., who recently annexed the London Regional Cup for squad drill presented by Admiral Sir Edward Evans, paraded with smartness and precision such as can only be attained by a highly disciplined body. At the head of them marched an N.F.S. member of the Dagenham Girl Pipers, whose lace jabots, swaying kilt and tartan plaid suspended from her shoulders by a Cairngorm brooch provided colour to offset the sober navy blue uniforms worn by members of the drill team.

This item was followed by an impressive exhibition of unarmed combat in which women competed with men. Nor was there any half-heartedness about the way they hurled their opponents to the ground. "When practising for these displays the men are often injured," the commentator remarked. "And one could believe it!" Fwn. D.Rs. executed breath-taking stunts on their motor cycles, three lying flat on the ground while a fourth, mounted on her machine, leaped over them. The highly proficient agility team of men and women gave an interesting display of combined and individual acrobatic feats.

At the conclusion of an excellent display many of the guests remained for tea, and Admiral Evans presented a number of them to King Haakon.

M.T.C. v. Fwn.—There was an interesting sequel recently to the London Region Women's Squad Drill Competition Finals held early this year at Lambeth.

Our very good friend, Admiral Sir Edward Evans, K.C.B., D.S.O., arranged for the winners of the above competition, the squad of fwn. from F.F. 36, to compete against

a squad of members of the Women's Mechanised Transport Corps in a squad drill competition which took place at London Regional Fire H.Q., on Friday afternoon, the 23rd July, 1943. The Admiral provided another Silver Cup for the competition, and once again attended personally to present it to the winners.

The competition was fitted into a Display and the whole of the proceedings was followed with the keenest interest by a large and enthusiastic audience. Three judges (from the Brigade of Guards) placed their services at our disposal for the afternoon, and declared the fwn. the winners with a total score of 300 points. The M.T.C. Squad, who looked extremely smart in their khaki uniforms, were drawn from an Officers Training Course, which had just completed two weeks training at their General H.Q. Barring on a strange pitch, so to speak, and having been together for such a short time, they put up an extraordinarily fine performance—they were only 29 points behind the fwn., with a score of 271 points.

In his speech after presenting his cup, Admiral Evans expressed on behalf of a large and distinguished gathering, congratulations to both teams and his keen interest in what proved to be one of the most fascinating competitions which it has ever been our good fortune to witness.



Firewomen of V/34/F.I.Z.

V/3/A, B & C Divs.—Congratulations to the winners of the "Norah Rice" Competition—1st place, B.3.X; 2nd, B.3.Y—an extremely good show.

In June the B Divl. H.Q. held a very successful Fete called "Big Top" in aid of 6 firemen's orphans, adopted by the Division. The forecourt was converted into a fairground with a Merry-go-round, a rather hair-raising Chamber of Horrors, and the usual stalls, fortune tellers, etc. A marquee and a large stage was erected on the lawn at the back of the station and the Agility Team, a Juvenile Troop and many artists gave their services in entertainment. There was a continuous cinema performance and dancing in the evening to the London Fire Force band. Everyone had worked very hard, as a show of this size meant weeks of preparation but the sum collected, £232, fully compensated for all their efforts.

L/Fw. Lowenthal.

VI/16/B.—A few more promotions have come through since our last issue, namely: A.G.O. Pearson to G.O.; L/Fw. Gautry to A.G.O.; and Fw. Briscoe to L/Fw. Owing to pressure of duty (!) time will not permit us telling of events of interest in recent days, but we hope to find time before the next number.

VII/Regional Training School.—The Fifth Women's Training Course was commenced on the 3rd May and from the 16th to the 19th there was a joint Course for Fire Guard Training Officers and N.F.S. Liaison Officers, when some 105 Fire Guard personnel were entertained by the National Fire Service.

During the period of this Special Course we were favoured by visits from the Regional Commissioner, one of his Deputies and the Principal Officer, the C.F.S., the C.R.F.O., F.F.Cs. of Nos. 18 and 19 Areas and the R.W.F.O. In addition, a Meeting of the Regional Fire Consultative Committee was held at that time so that the members of that Committee could see N.F.S. training and also watch the Exercise which had been arranged in conjunction with the Fire Guards. Mrs. Henderson, the Reg. Fire Guard Welfare Officer stayed, at the School and took an active part in the Course.

All the visitors viewed the drills performed by the Women Trainees with keen interest, particularly the March Past when the salute was taken by the Regional Commissioner. Other items of interest were Squad Drill, Physical Training, Stirrup Pump Drill and Hose Repair. At the combined Exercise, the Mobilising School was used and all Controls manned from Station to Regional Level. An entertainment was arranged on each of the two evenings, taking the form of a Concert and Dance, and it was considered that this

joint Course promoted a very happy relationship between the two Services which have a common identity of purpose.

The Fire Guards were particularly impressed by the standard of discipline now obtaining in the N.F.S. and with the co-operation between the men and women's sections, since it will be known that this is a joint Training School.

Another Course, concluded 25th June, saw our first visitors from another service, namely, Controller Farrow and Chief Commander Ackland, A.T.S., Southern Command, who were accompanied by the R.W.F.O. Students greatly appreciated Controller Farrow's talk on life and training in the A.T.S. On 18th June a survey of the progress of the War was given by the Deputy Regional Commissioner, Major-General Lindsay, who also carried out an inspection. On 24th June, the R.W.F.O. brought to the School Miss Foster, R.W.F.O. of Region VIII, who gave a most instructive talk on the Mobile Training Unit operating in Wales. We feel that this Course has done a great deal, not only to promote understanding between different parts of our own Service, but also between ourselves and members of other Women's Services.

VII/39 H.Q.—The staff of F.F. 39 are now firmly established in their new H.Q., "Stanton House," Stanton Fitzwarren, and no time has been lost in forming a Sports and Social Welfare Club in order that they may take full advantage of the splendid facilities that are available.

Through the kindness of Mr. W. Stephenson, the bailiff of that portion of the property which falls outside the requisition order, the staff enjoy the full use of the hard tennis court.

Social and sport activities are not confined to out of doors, though tennis and cricket matches have been arranged. Taking advantage of the spacious mess room the Club have recently held social evenings when they invited the Officers and men from a local Searchlight Unit. The programme of games and dancing, not to mention an impromptu sketch arranged by the Officers' Mess, was greatly enjoyed by the large company which included the F.F.C. Mr. C. J. Goad and Mrs. Goad, the Deputy F.F.C., Divl. Officer A. R. J. Leek and the A.O. Mrs. I. E. Atkinson.

IX/Region. N.F.S. Revue Broadcast.—The N.F.S. was the first of the Services to broadcast from the Queensbury Club, Birmingham, when the revue "Fireaway" was relayed in the Forces programme, on Sunday, July 11th, 1943. The show (a great success with a record attendance of Service members), was arranged between Fn. Vernon Adcock, Reg. H.Q., and the B.B.C. producer, Mr. Jacques Brown. Artists taking part were Robb Wilton, who appeared as the "Visiting Fireman," Ida Nicklin, who gave a splendid performance of Ivor Novello's "Waltz of My Heart," Philip Garston-Jones, who compered the show and also gave an excellent impression of Cyril Fletcher, and "Hank" Stevens, the interrupting comedian, who put over some good wisecracks. The Regionaires Dance Band, directed by Vernon Adcock, played throughout the show and also gave popular selections and introduced Harold Law, a baritone vocalist, who hails from Walsall. After the broadcast the whole company gave an extra show for the benefit of the visitors, after which dancing to the music of the popular Queensbury Club Band rounded off a most enjoyable afternoon.

V. A.

IX Regional H.Q.—We offer our good wishes to G.O. Haskins, Regional representative of the magazine, who has joined the instructional staff at Brighton. We wish her the best of luck in her new sphere, and hope that she will save a special welcome to old friends from Region IX who attend the college as students.

E. M. B.

IX/24.—At the time of going to press, we are feeling very proud of our efforts for Birmingham's Wings for Victory Week. The grand total collected by the N.F.S. was £121,013. 2s. 0d., and all ranks, whole-time and part-time, worked extremely hard to attain this magnificent result.

The new Women's Area Training School opened on July 5th, and a preliminary training course for fwn. is now in progress. Every effort has been made for the school to be as comfortable as possible for the students.

Twelve of our part-time officers are taking advantage of the chance to go to the N.F.S. College, Brighton, the majority of them spending their annual holiday in so doing. It is felt that they will gain both benefit and inspiration from their visit.

G. W.

X/26.—We are very happy to make our first contribution to the N.F.S. Magazine, and hope that in the near future we will have more news to give.

It was with regret that we bade farewell to Area Officer Hammond on May 14th. Mrs. Hammond has been with us since January, 1942, and naturally we felt it as a service loss. We take this opportunity of wishing her every success in her new position at the Home Office. We would also like to welcome into our midst Area Officer Garner, who has succeeded Mrs. Hammond.

Divisions worked hard for "Wings for Victory" and so far the totals are exceptionally good. Liverpool Divisions "A" to "D," including F.F.C., raised a total of £3,971. 11s. 0d. and the outside Divisions ran them very close.

X/28 H.Q.—All personnel in F.F. 28 are delighted at the return of A.O. Scott, who has been away from us for over three months. She was greatly missed, and for the first few days of her return was greeted wherever she went by the hail of: "How glad we are to see you back, Madam!"

Periods between these salutations were spent in receiving a series of major shocks, ranging from a completely new organisation during which Sub-Divisions had vanished, Stations had changed their names, and personnel had been generally switched round, for the advent of the new Fire Guard Plan; and minor ones consisting of fwn. who had left the Service, fwn. who had joined it and fwn. who were unaccountable until it was discovered that they had changed their name by marriage. ("You don't know Fw. Palmer, Madam? But she was here before you left—Oh, I forgot, she was Fw. Knott then . . ." etc.) However, we are glad to say that she has survived this confusing period, and is now well back into her stride.

"A" Divl. H.Q. recently moved from the town centre to new H.Q. away from the target area. We visited the comparatively countrified premises on the moving-in day, and were greeted by the sight of ten strong men struggling and moaning in the front entrance in true furniture-removal style, while inside the G.O. swept around with dusters and polish, the D.O. hurried fling cabinets into their rightful place, two fwn. cleaners wore expressions denoting the end of the world any time, and chaos reigned generally. After this inevitably harassing beginning, things have settled down, and the attractive new quarters are thoroughly appreciated by the personnel.

M. B.

XI/Eastern Area.—Our Area Training School was officially opened on Monday, 12th July. It is situated in a charming old mansion a few miles from H.Q., and it provides ideal atmosphere for studies, fitness, and recreation. Weekly dances are still being held and prove very popular in "A" Div., 250 being present last week.

M. H. M.

XI/Western No. 2 Area.—Western No. 2 Area's activities have been few and far between since the last issue, but we are glad to report that firewomen's courses have started at our Area Training School. The first one took the form of a Physical Training Course and according to reports has been a tremendous success.

Netball has played an important part in the recreation of our firewomen and keen interest has been shown in this popular sport.

On June 19th a Garden Fete in aid of the Red Cross and N.F.S. Benevolent Fund was held in the grounds of F.F. H.Q. and in spite of the downpour of rain £300 was gathered in.

F. F.

N.F.S. College Notes.—The greatest excitement here since we last wrote was the award of the M.B.E. to Mrs. Stoneham, Supervisor of Women's Studies. We offer her our heartiest congratulations and are proud that this now "makes recent medal awards at the College two," as Mr. Paramor, our Director of Studies, received the O.B.E. early this year.

Amongst our few changes is the temporary absence of G. O. Wade, who has flown to Northern Ireland to instruct them in Mobilising. Our best wishes go with her and we hope to have her back again soon.

The Women-Officers-in-Charge-of-Training-Schools Course was held in June and as the weather was exceptionally good a number of discussions took place out of doors, the result being that everyone went home looking very brown and fit.

We have not had a women's Part-time Course for some time and consequently are very glad to welcome three this month, each of one week's duration, the longest women's Part-time Courses we have ever held as all others have only been for a week-end. It says a great deal that not only have we found the part-timers as enthusiastic as ever but also so keen that some have taken their holidays to be able to come here.

Not least among the many interesting visitors to the College have been a delegation from the Allied Nations; and Miss Ellen Wilkinson, who gave a most enlivening talk, which was much appreciated.

G. H.

"OUR OTHER LIVES"

No. XXVI.

MRS. STONEHAM

*Supervisor of Women's Studies, N.F.S.
Staff College, Brighton.*

Although Mrs. Stoneham is a member of the Lindsay clan, being the daughter of the late Colonel Morgan Lindsay and a niece of General George Lindsay (at present Deputy Regional Commissioner for No. 7 Region) and consequently a kinswoman of the Earl of Crawford, she was born in Glamorgan, South Wales. Her interests remained there for many years, and she was closely associated with Social Service work in that coalfield, particularly during the depression years. She also played a considerable part in the political life of the district, standing for Parliament in 1935.

After her marriage in 1927 to Squadron Leader C. T. Stoneham, she lived in London and soon became connected with social work there, in addition to maintaining her interest in S. Wales. Her activities were varied. Thus, in 1936 she became interested in "The Hedingham Rover Scout Training and Employment Scheme" for the distressed areas of the country and in just over two years organised the raising of £26,000 for that excellent work. She was a member of the Welcome Committee of the Overseas League for a number of years until after the outbreak of war; and is a member of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, of which her father was for many years Treasurer of the Priory for Wales.

Mrs. Stoneham joined the Women's Auxiliary Fire Service in 1938 and was first attached to the West End district, where she undertook the conducting of driving tests for women driver recruits. In February, 1939, she transferred to the East End district, with an office in Shoreditch Fire Station. The outbreak of war found her in the position of Group Commander, in command of women in the Fire Service throughout the East End.

Here she served during the bitter days of the Blitz, in charge of all the women personnel, and her courage and indomitable spirit were an inspiration to all who served under her.

When the Service was nationalised the N.F.S. Staff College was opened for male officers, but it soon became apparent that this essential training must be extended to the women personnel. A co-educational Staff College, even in those days, was a revolutionary idea, and it needed a woman possessing great tact and courage to take charge of the Women's Wing. Mrs. Stoneham was chosen for this difficult task, and became Supervisor of Women's Studies in January, 1941. In those early days it was thought that ultimately a separate establishment should be opened for



Letter from Tunisia, 18th June, 1943

Dear Editor.

Madam, through a great friend of mine I have received N.F.S. MAGAZINE No. 23, 1942, which causes me great inspiration to write my thanks to you and the N.F.S. girls.

My impressions of our girls at home, until I read your magazine, have been most unequal in balance. It rested the thoughts in my mind and confirmed the beliefs and hopes in my heart. Your magazine brought me the first meritorious facts in the ideals of life at home.

By the poems alone I could see that old "Englishness," that sort of "decency" which is always associated with England.

My friends and I say challengingly to the rest of the world, that we are extremely proud of our womenfolk at home. I was very glad and heartened by the effect of your magazine.

I would like to take this opportunity to return the thanks that came to us in overwhelming numbers regarding our advance from El Alamein to Tunis. I can only explain our victory by the ever and most complete harmonising of every Allied person. Here I offer my thanks to both men and women of the N.F.S. for all the different parts they are taking in this war. Holding England together is a hard and difficult problem and I think N.F.S. take a wide share in this honour.

I left England in 1938 so perhaps it can be understood that my imagination will not conjure up a lot of girls in uniform doing fire drill. Their steel helmets must fall off a thousand times a day? And yet, with pride in heart, I cannot imagine them ever failing in times of action. All I can say is: "Hold on N.F.S., hold on to your winnings".

If, Madam, you see fit to publish this by part or by whole in your magazine, I should consider the appreciation which we feel for the N.F.S., fairly widespread.

Yours truly, C. H. M. Barham, Signaller, M.E.F.

P.S.—No favourites, but all success to Region III, Area 10, "C" Division H.Q.

And the Reply, 21st July, 1943

Dear Signaller Barham,

I cannot tell you how pleased I was to receive your letter, in fact, more than pleased—thrilled. Never did I expect to receive a "letter from the Front," and such an exciting "Front," in connection with our Magazine. It will most certainly appear in our next issue, and I will send you a copy in due course. I am indeed grateful to the "great friend" who sent out to you the November-December number, and I am sure that all our readers, scattered as they are over England, Scotland and Wales, will be delighted to know that we have this link with the M.E.F.

Your letter tempts me to tell you something more about the women of the N.F.S., especially as you went abroad before this National Service developed. But space in this letter is limited, so I am going to post you some of our back copies. You will be particularly interested in those covering the latter part of 1940 and when you have read them will know quite a lot about the way our girls stood up to the Blitz—whether their tin hats stayed on their heads or not! Today, thank goodness, we do not have much need for such headgear, but you might get a shock if you came suddenly upon one of our despatch riders, speeding through the London streets on her motor cycle, all curls hidden under the regulation crash helmet. Such millinery was not the fashion when you left England in 1938! And trousers for women were a rarity rather than a general rule.

Our Magazine is nearly as old as the War as the first copy came out December, 1939. It has gone on ever since, though the events of 1940 caused it to change from a monthly to a bi-monthly, and now the paper restrictions have cut us down to half our original size. A copy of every number goes to the British Museum, of course; and also to the Imperial War Museum: the Librarian at the latter tells me he intends to have them bound after the War, which is really rather exciting. Perhaps one day a copy will go under the foundation stone of some new Fire Station with the usual coins of the period.

In conclusion I should say that I know all our readers will wish me to thank you for your praise of the N.F.S. But you have nothing to thank us for—indeed, it is we who are deeply grateful to you and your companions for all you have done and endured. This letter brings you our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely, Mary Pitcairn, Editor.

MRS. STONEHAM—cont.

women officers, but mainly owing to Mrs. Stoneham's foresight in avoiding difficulties which might have arisen, and due to her guidance, it was soon realised that there were great advantages to be gained by training men and women officers side by side.

Mrs. Stoneham's charm of manner, understanding, and power of leadership, have endeared her to her staff and students, for to all she points a vivid picture of the true meaning of the word "officer."

In the Birthday Honours this year H.M. the King saw fit to confer on her the M.B.E., in recognition of the invaluable work she is doing and for the part she played during the London Blitz.

"We Serve" No. 9. Fitness Training

In the pre-blitz days "physical jerks" or P.T. (as it was generally called) for firewomen, was of the spasmodic order although in London's "C" Division the Group Commander, Mrs. Stoneham, had realised as early as December, 1939, that this type of exercise was essential to counteract the long hours of inactivity to which many of the girls were unaccustomed. In 1940, in "A" Division, joint classes with Civil Defence workers were started, but the raid period intervened and for the time being such training ceased. After this, the next development for women was a "daily dozen" under the instruction of one of the firemen, but when the Service was nationalised, Fitness Training at last came into the picture seriously, and is now an accepted part of the weekly routine.

When the first College Course was started at the N.F.S. College, Brighton, last year, Mrs. Blankenberg, of the Central Council of Recreative Physical Training, took charge of it and has been at every one since. Her method is not only to introduce the various exercises, but also to explain the physical and mental value of each and by this means those who go out to the Regions to encourage Fitness Training know just what is most suited for adoption in any particular case. Early this year the N.F.S. asked the Central Council to draw up a scheme of Fitness Training for Firewomen, and the special Course at Brighton was attended by potential A.G.Os., representing England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Since then much has been done and it is interesting to learn that the keen athlete is not necessarily the best Leader. In Mrs. Blankenberg's opinion the qualifications of a Leader include: (a) Someone who looks the part—is keen on carriage, appearance, etc.; (b) is really keen to make Fitness Training an extra bit of service, knowing how badly it is needed by firewomen; (c) is really willing to train. The ability of some Leaders is really remarkable, and refresher courses for them are arranged, so that their efficiency is maintained—indeed, when Peace comes, these young women may find ample opportunity for continuing a national work begun while in the N.F.S.

As an example of the work that is going on throughout the Regions, here is an account of the Fitness Training carried out in Region V (London):—

A short course was held in April at the London Women Officers' Training School, for 25 of these Leaders, this course being run under the direction of Mrs. L. H. Blankenberg, No. 5 Regional Representative of the Central Council of Recreative Physical Training, and other technical representatives of the Council. The course included suitable exercises and activities for firewomen of all ages. Simple free standing exercises in the form of the 'Daily Dozen,' Skipping, National Dances and Games formed the practical sessions, but much time was given as to how to pass on these activities. There were also sessions on Health Education and how to pass on to members of the Service the importance of the basic principles of health.

Since this first course, other short courses have been held at the Regional Women Officers' Training School and at each of the Women's Area Training Schools in the five areas in the Region.

In each area there is an Acting A.G.O. who is responsible for organising Fitness Training for firewomen, and a Leader has been appointed in each Division. Fitness Training and Games are given at Women's Area Training Schools, and sessions are being given in all Divisions and at Fire Force and Regional Fire Headquarters, in which firewomen of all ages can take part. Wherever possible, sessions are arranged in the evenings, as well as during the day, so that part-time firewomen can join in. The games, of which there are a great variety, and for which only very simple equipment is needed, are proving very popular.

A Mass Display of Fitness Training for firewomen is to be given at Regional Fire Headquarters in August, and much interest is being taken in practising for this event.

It will be noted that the training of Leaders to organise and take sessions of Fitness Training and games for women in the N.F.S. throughout the country is given by representatives of the Central Council of Recreative Physical Training, whose co-operation and responsibility in this training is sponsored by the Fire Service Department of the Home Office.

The Admins.

In this magazine which we rightly call our own, The merits of operational girls are very aptly shown. But what about the Admins. who work from morn till night—Don't you think a little praise is only just and right?

Give credit to the typists who sit patiently and wait Whilst Officers are on the 'phone, and to sundry queries state That exigencies of the Service make it difficult to say Which Officer is "on" and which is "off" today.

Pause and give a thought to the worthy Finance section, Who into many weary hours get time for the collection Of Red Cross, and National Savings, and are the target for all cracks Concerning travelling and subsistence, and that "blessing" income tax.

Don't forget Establishments, who in your hours of need Will answer all your queries with accuracy and speed, And tell you that although you're up at Fire Force today, According to their records you're in Division "A."

Then of course there's Transport and Catering and Stores And Building and Despatch and many other doors, Behind which are the factors which make the Admins. claim That their brainwork and efficiency give them a right to fame.

The next time that you hear of the long hours they have done, And of Operational "short leave" spent sitting in the sun, Just remember the poor old Admins. who sit and slave away That the hard-worked Operational can go and get their pay.

A.G.O. McCarthy, XII/32.

Solutions to Crossword Puzzle

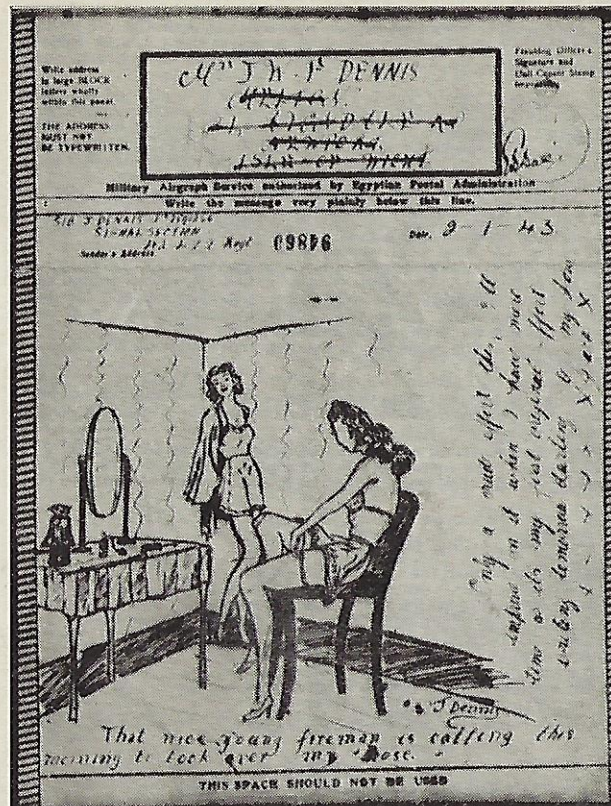
(last Issue)

ACROSS

1. Plotter.
7. Aid.
9. Ripe.
10. Team.
12. Abec.
13. Cap.
14. P.S.
15. Men.
17. P.P.
18. Eat.
20. SU.
21. Strand.
23. N.T.
24. Yard.
25. SN.
26. AE.
28. Alters.
30. Pump.
32. Gas.
33. Tender.

DOWN

1. Pram.
2. Liberty.
3. Open.
4. Tee.
5. Etc.
6. Reap.
7. Am.
8. Disputes.
11. Appointed.
16. Land.
18. Ear.
19. T.D.
20. Snar.
22. Ramps.
25. S.L.
27. Dog.
28. Ape.
29. Eve.
31. M.T.



Fire. Dennis (Newport, I.O.W.) sent us this amusing airgraph from her husband in the M.F.F.—his "first original effort," he says.

Taking the Course at Region V Women Officers' Training School, By L. Fw. E. Robinson, V 37, A.I.Z.

Situated in a very lovely residential part of Hampstead stands the N.W.O.T.S., a palatial building which belonged to the Bournes of the famous Oxford Street stores before being taken over by the N.F.S. for training purposes.

My feelings were very mixed when I was told to report at the Centre for a course of training. First, I wondered whether it would be a case of "be careful what you do or say as the eagle eye will be upon you"; and secondly, I was afraid we might all be "area conscious"—in other words, mixing only with our own clans. So I went off rather dubious as to how I was going to enjoy myself for the next 3½ weeks.

As I had never been in that part of London before, I wasn't at all sure where to go in spite of many instructions, and the long roads seemed endless. Fortunately I met a fellow student so we were able to cover the last lap together which made things easier as I felt that here at least was one person I could talk to.

On arrival we received a very warm welcome from the three Instructresses who were acting as Receptionists. Then we were given a number by which we would be known during our stay at the College, and a printed slip which also stated the squad we were in, the number of our bedroom, and the name of our Instructress. After seeing my room—and wondering what my new room-mates would be like—I went to the dining-hall where tea was already in progress, and found to my great delight and relief that there were quite a number of familiar faces. Later we had another welcome *en masse* from A.A.O. Elias, Commandant of the School, who hoped we would enjoy our stay there—which was our most fervent wish also!

By next morning we had all settled in and made friends. 09.00 hrs. started off our "learning period" which we found very interesting and varied. Our new horror (of the visit to the dentist type) was the "lecturette" to be given we knew not when. With bated breath we looked each day at the notice board to see whether the fateful day had arrived. At last it came, and I think I can safely state on behalf of all the students, that we thoroughly enjoyed it and found our colleagues' lecturettes most interesting.

As the days went by there seemed to be more and more to interest one and I found that I was really enjoying myself very much. I felt: here is a place in the N.F.S. where one is treated as a human being, instead of being just a very small cog in the big wheel which helps to make the N.F.S. revolve. A great deal was done to make us feel happy and settled. Everyone was friendly. Each night after dinner, which was served at 19.15 hrs., we congregated in the lounge for coffee and then Miss Elias and G.O. Bayerthal joined us, so that we felt like a very large happy family. Musical evenings were arranged for us, which I for one, particularly appreciated. There were other entertainments, and on the fine days we were allowed to have our lectures in the garden. This was lovely, for the gardens were a picture and the scent of the roses was a great improvement on the sleepy atmosphere of the lecture rooms!

I was really sorry when it was time to return to my Station. I had made many new friends, and so had others judging by the exchange of addresses and plans to meet again. All agreed that our thanks were due to Miss Elias, Miss Bayerthal and the rest of the staff who looked after us so well and made our stay so pleasant.

Now a word to those whose turn to attend a Training College is yet to come. Don't feel about going there as I did. But look forward to it, for I am sure you will find, as I did, that you want to stay longer and like myself, will have enjoyed every minute of your time.

N.F.S. Analogy I. Lehaïne, XI, W.2.A.I.Z.

F —is for fires, believe me they count.
I —is for intelligence, you'll need any amount.
R —is for resource of which you'll want plenty.
E —is for efficiency when summing up mentally.
W —is for work carried out with a will.
O —is for organising, we're learning it still.
M —is for mobilising, a part most important.
E —is for engine we're quite an assortment.
N —is for National we're yours to demand.
N—ever F—alling S—ervice.

To fires in our land.

AUTUMN EXHIBITION BY FIREMEN ARTISTS

Firemen and women of all Regions may submit oil paintings, water-colours, drawings and sculpture for the show to be held at the Royal Academy in November. Sending-in dates, October 25th, 26th and 27th; all subjects must be connected with activities of the N.F.S. Full particulars from Fm. R. S. E. Coram, Hon. Sec., Firemen Artists' Organising Committee, 94, Southwark Bridge Rd., London, S.E.1.

"Sub-Division Informed"

(Being a rhyming reference to para. 16 of N.F.S.I. 86/1942.)

There's a fire at 20 High Street, put the bell down, send X2,
Can't start it? 'Struth, why hasn't it been warmed?
Oh, you've got it going at last then, got the message, and a crew.
I'll see that Sub-Division is informed.

From fire at 20 High Street, make pumps 10, eleven-oh-five
(What a message! Where's the signature of sender?)
Right, turn the pumps out, tell the lads to look alive,
We're getting kinda busy, aren't we, Brenda?

This is National Fire Service, Station X, hello, hello!
What's that you say?—darts match at Station Z?
Sure, I'll send them with the M.D.U., just hang on half a mo'
The Sub-Division M.O.'s seeing red!

To Sub-Division 1 from Station X, is that you, Jack?
One light pump out of commission, defective,
Three pumps from 20 High Street fire have just reported back,
All right, old sport, there's no need for invective!

Good morning, Section Leader—Sub-Division, are you there?
S/L Black has just reported here for duty.
O.K. I'll send him on to Z, although it's hardly fair,
I like this guy, although he's rather snooty.

Now Jim, what's all the racket in the yard? It's like a circus!
What! 20 pumps arrived from Area 2?
Now why the blazes did they have to try and reinforce us?
I'll make the air at Sub-Division blue!

Hello there, Sub-Division, what d'you say you'd like to know?
How many fires we've had since last September?
Here, take my resignation! How the blazes can I sew,
And keep you taped on things you can't remember?

Anon., Region I, F.F. 2, 2/B Division.

Pity the Poor Driver

"Order my car"—The hunt is on—
Now where the hell's that driver gone?
The Station's searched both up and down
"Good Grief! she's out—Somewhere in town."

Her usual haunts are searched and then
The frantic firemen search again,
The driver meanwhile strolls along
Quite unaware that something's wrong.

The car won't start. "Oh help!" we pray,
"The Column's waiting." What a day!
The driver's back, climbs calmly in
Unknown her unforgivable sin.

They're off at last. Praise be for that!
We smile politely, touch our hat.
We grin. The Station's ours again,
They won't be back till after ten.

At half-past-ten the driver swears:
At 00 five, the worst she fears:
At ten past three she's getting mad,
The pubs are closed—Life sure is bad.

A quick drive home, Gosh, what a light!
A sudden swerve, close shave all right—
"Yes, book us back, I'm nearly dead."
(Thankful, the watchroom creep . . . to bed.)

Anon., Region VII (we think!).

Marriages

- 8th January, 1943.—A.G.O. McLean, X/26/B.Div.H.Q., to Sgnlman. J. O. Heath, R.C. of Signallers.
- 23rd January, 1943.—Fw. B. Chesters, X/27/Area Stores, to L/Cpl. E. Edwards, R.E.
- 13th February, 1943.—Fw. J. Prace, X/27/Area Stores, to Pte. N. E. Offard, R.A.P.C.
- 13th March, 1943.—Fw. Kelly, X/26/B.Div.H.Q., to Mr. E. W. Field (of Bath).
- 17th March, 1943.—Fw. Rogers, VII/17/A.2, to Midshipman P. Dymoke.
- 27th March, 1943.—Fw. Sherwood, VII/17/A.2, to Mr. R. Murphy.
- 27th March, 1943.—P/T. Fw. H. Palmer, XI/W.2 H.Q., to F/Sergt. R. Gilchrist.
- 10th April, 1943.—Fw. M. B. Whibley, XII/31/Div. C.H.Q., to Mr. H. Thomas (at Tunbridge Wells).
- 13th April, 1943.—Fw. G. Noble, XI/W.2 A.Div., to Marine Noble Jackson.
- 21st April, 1943.—A.G.O. F. Peacock, XI/W.2 H.Q., to Mr. Laurence Franks.
- 24th April, 1943.—Fw. N. Warner, VII/39/B Div. H.Q., to Pte. C. Pye.
- 26th April, 1943.—Fw. M. Cooke, VII/39/B.2.Z, to L/A/C. D. C. Davis.
- 1st May, 1943.—L/Fw. Gillett, VII/39/B.1.Z, to A.C.2 Morgan.
- 3rd May, 1943.—Fw. N. Stewart, XI/W.2 Area Training School, to Lt. John Hazel, R.A.S.C.
- 15th May, 1943.—L/Fw. C. V. Anker, IV/12/E.Div., to Sergt./Pilot Plumb, R.A.F.
- 15th May, 1943.—Fw. M. Quayle, XI/W.2 Div.B., to Marine Leonard McKenzie.
- 27th May, 1943.—Fw. H. M. Ashman, IV/12/E.Div., to Cpl. Garner, R.A.F.
- 27th May, 1943.—Fw. Fulcher, IV/12/E.Div., to Warrant Offr. Orchard, R.A.F.
- 29th May, 1943.—Fw. M. J. Dunham, IV/12/H.Q., to A.C.1 Watkins, R.A.F.
- 29th May, 1943.—Fw. L. Raven, X/27/D Div.H.Q., to Pte. J. Walker.
- 29th May, 1943.—A.G.O. Seddon, X/H.Q., to Sergt./Pilot Clarke (at Leigh).
- 7th June, 1943.—Fw. Nichol, X/43/A.1.Z, to L/A.C. Grieve, R.A.F.
- 12th June, 1943.—Fw. A. Betts, XII/31/Div. C.H.Q., to Mr. John Spencer (in London).
- 18th June, 1943.—P/T. L/Fw. J. Pender, to S.Coy. O. Smith, both of XI/W.2.A.1.Z.
- 19th June, 1943.—Fw. E. Blagborough, II/5/C.Sub.1, to S. L. N. Brown, II/5/C.1.W.
- 19th June, 1943.—A.G.O. A. A. Caldwell, II/5/C.Sub.2, to L/Motor Mechanic N. Bartle, R.N.
- 19th June, 1943.—Fw. E. Lacey, II/5/C.Div.H.Q., to Trooper L. H. Jones.
- 19th June, 1943.—Fw. Mitchell, V/Regl. H.Q., to Fm. Westhall, V/38/A.3.Z.
- 19th June, 1943.—G. O. N. M. Cronin, XII/30/Div. H.Q., to Col. O. F. G. Moon, XII/31/Div. C.H.Q. (at Broadstairs).
- 3rd July, 1943.—Fw. P. Stroud, XII/31 H.Q., to Mr. Ronald Gray (at Brighton).
- 17th July, 1943.—Fw. E. Nuttall, X/27/D.1.W., to Sapper Maurice Mitchell.
- 24th July, 1943.—Fw. N. Tyrell, X/27/D Div.H.Q., to L/Fn. Carter, X/27/D.1.V.
- 24th July, 1943.—Fw. A. Fisher, X/27/D Sub-Div. 3, to Mr. Leslie Hardy.
- 24th July, 1943.—Fw. N. Moore, X/27/D Sub-Div. 1, to Mr. Edward Lewis.
- 26th July, 1943.—Fw. G. Jones, II/4/E Sub-Div. 1 Control, to Fm. Ronald Beales, II/4/E.1.Z.
- 14th August, 1943.—Fw. C. Dolan, X/27/D Sub-Div. 1, to L/Cpl. Stanley Chemney.

Engagements

- Ex-Fw. Carver, IV/13/C.3.Z, to Fm. D. R. Woolland, IV/13/C.1.Y.
- Fw. M. E. Baldwin, V/Regl. H.Q., to Sgt. W. G. Westerhoff, U.S. Army Air Corps.
- Fw. V. Carver, V/37/A.1.Z, to Cpl. C. H. J. Robinson, R.A.F.
- Fw. Brocks, to L/Fn. Cane, both of VI/14/H.Q.
- Fw. Durant, VI/14/H.Q., to L/A.C. Jordan (of Portsmouth).
- Fw. Fogden, VI/14/H.Q., to the Rev. E. J. Spikin (of Reading).
- Fw. J. Davidson, to L/Fn. Taylor, both of X/26/B Div. H.Q.
- Fw. L. Dunn, X/26/B Div. H.Q., to T. Cooney, R.N.
- Fw. J. Killup, X/27/H.Q., to A.B. Frederick Marmon, R.N.
- Fw. D. Parr, X/27/H.Q., to Edward R. Smith, R.A.F.
- Fw. M. Williams, X/27/H.Q., to Mr. Howell S. Hughes.
- A.G.O. Walford, X/28/Div. C, to Cpl. Gerald Sutherland, R.A.F. (on the same day as she received promotion to present rank, 6th May).
- Fw. C. G. Piper, XII/31/Div. C.H.Q., to Driver Roy F. Hemsley, 209 Field Amb., R.A.S.C.
- Fw. V. B. Quinell, XII/31/C Div. H.Q., to Cpl. Harold E. Clark, 49th Reconnaissance Corps.

Births

- 18th May, 1943.—To Mrs. Doxey (late A.G.O., VII/39/B.2.Z), a daughter.
- 21st June, 1943.—To Mrs. Johnson (ex XI/Eastern Area, A Div. Control), a daughter—Irene.

NOTICE.—Items for September-October must reach the Editor, 5, Regent's Park Road, Gloucester Gate, London, N.W.1, by 25th September.