



Frank Young, who died on 11 April 1993 aged 69 years, began his army career by joining 70th Young Soldiers Bn, The Middlesex Regt in 1941. He transferred to R Sigs before volunteering for service with 1st Airborne Div Sigs in 1942. After parachute training he went, in 1943, to join the Div in N Africa, and saw action in Italy and at Arnhem.

At the end of the war in Europe he became a member of Special Allied Airborne Recce Force with the rank of Sgt, and went to Denmark. For many years Frank tried to make contact with the officer in charge of this group, and only recently achieved this objective.

Further post war activities saw Frank serve in Palestine until his demob, when he joined the Middlesex Yeomanry TA. After a short time in Civvy Street, he re-enlisted in R Sigs, and was posted to Malta and Cyprus. He had charge of ACF training in Newton Abbot, before being posted to 216 Sig Sqn (Para Bde Gp), and then to 94 Loc Regt RA (Celle), and 1 Div Sigs (Verden). He eventually became a WO with ACIO at Middlesbrough, London, and finally Canterbury. He retired in 1972 on completion of 31 years distinguished service.

On retirement he spent ten years with DHSS in Canterbury. He was also a SSAFA representative for many years in Thanet. In addition he was the UK rep for The League of Friends of the Airborne Museum (Hartenstein), organising the Annual Pilgrimage from 1978 to 1994 - yes, 1994, all arrangements have already been made.

Frank was an active member of the Thanet Branch PRA; in fact he was a Founder Member, Secretary 1980-84, and Vice President 1984-93. He was a member of Ilford 84, Aldershot PRA, Middlesex Yeomanry OCA, 1st AB Div Sigs OCA, Arnhem Veterans' Club, and the East Kent R Sigs Assn, where he had recently been awarded a badge for 50 years continuous contact with R Sigs, of which he was very proud.

Frank was a very caring person, and a doer. He will be sadly missed by his many friends, and indeed by all who knew him. He leaves behind his wife, Iris, their daughter, Christine, and their son, Michael, to whom we offer our sincere condolences.

(Composed by Thanet Branch PRA)

Postscript by Richard Hamilton.

I had the pleasure of Frank & Iris's company at Airborne Forces Days in Aldershot, and at Caythorpe Weekends, throughout the 1970's and 80's. Frank was well known as a "character", larger than life, vigorous, talkative and friendly, with a wealth of stories about wartime Para exploits - invariably other peoples, rarely his own. We became friends and corresponded regularly.

In 1987, Frank invited me to be Guest of the Thanet PRA Annual Dinner in Ramsgate, he said, "You might have to make a bit of a speech." So we went and my wife and I were treated like royalty throughout the entire weekend. From a menu of the evening -

Our Guest - Proposed by Lt Gen Sir Napier Crookenden, KCB, DSO, OBE, DL

Response by Capt RA Hamilton, R Sigs.

FYI - The General was CO of 9 PARA, which took the Merville Battery on D-Day, and later Commanded 16 Para Bde, was GOC Western Dist, Chairman of SSAFA, and had many other prestigious posts - rarely have I heard such a polished and accomplished speaker. I quaked at the thought of replying to such a wonderful speech, but Frank merely nodded and smiled as I rose to respond. I managed to make a fair show of it, although I knew my effort was overshadowed by the Great Man. When I finished, Frank led the applause.

Among the many gifts we were given that night, Frank arranged that as Guest I be presented with a beautifully carved wooden statuette of "William of Orange, Dickens Medal", a wartime pigeon which flew from Arnhem to London, 260 miles in 265 minutes, in September 1944. The carving was done by a Branch member and Arnhem Veteran. Today the statue sits in pride of place, on top of a bookcase at my home in Shetland. It is a permanent reminder of my old friend, Frank. In the years since his death, we have kept in touch with his widow, Iris, exchanging news and Christmas cards. Iris lives in sheltered housing in E Sussex, visited daily by Christine.

R.I.P. Frank Young - Airborne Brother.