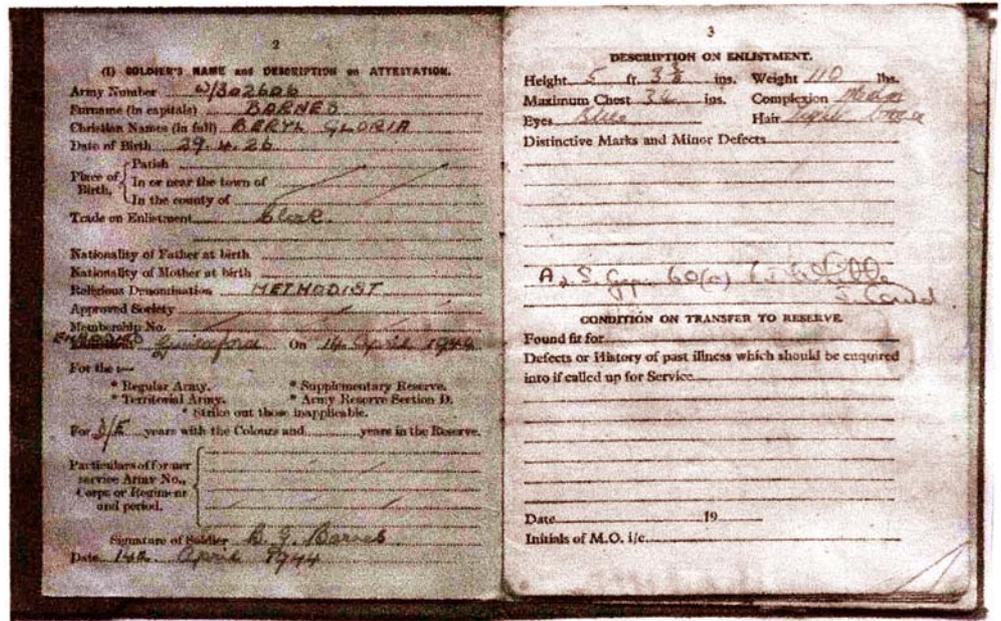


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|--|---|---|-------------------------------|
| Surname: Boyd | First Name(s): Beryl | Army Number: W/302606 | |
| Maiden name (if applicable): Barnes | Name used during service: Barnes / Boyd | Rank: Private | |
| Main base: Kensington, London | Training base: Guildford | Enrolled at: London | |
| Platoon/Section: A & S Group 60 (c) | Company/Battery: | Group/Regiment: Royal Army Service Corps | Command: Kensington |
| Year(s) of service: April 1944 to September 1946 | Reason for discharge: Married and moving to Australia | Trade: Clerk | |
| Uniform Issued: 1 Greatcoat 2 uniforms 4 shirts 2 ties 2 pyjamas 1 hat 1 shoulder bag 1 kit bag 2 pairs of shoes 2 pairs of stockings 4 pants (bloomers!) | Photo:  | | |
| Description of daily tasks: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I worked in the Guard House (Office) on a day to day basis and did daily office duties, typing letters, reports etc. and one day a stretcher had to be put in the guard room for me to guard a prisoner all night. She had been brought in by the Military Police, as she was AWL. • When I worked in Kensington Palace I was in the Pay Office. All the soldiers from the Kensington Barracks would have to line up in there to receive their pay. Again I mostly typed reports and did some bookkeeping. | | |

Pay book:



Memorable moments:

- I was an elementary level student and living at home (Kingsbury in the Wembley area) when the war started. My father joined the air force and my mother was to work with Civil Defence. So I was evacuated to Bedford and went on to High School there and included commercial subjects, which enabled me to work as a shorthand/typist/bookkeeper. I worked for United Artists Film Company in Wardour Street for a while but then we were evacuated to Gerrards Cross in Buckinghamshire. My friend and I at that time moved into a house with an Irish lady whose husband was serving overseas.
- Then my friend was called up and went into the WAAF. I did not fancy being left on my own so I tried to join the WRNS, but they only wanted Cooks and Stewards (this was not for me, I had no desire to cook and had never tried it). So I went to the ATS Enrolment Office and was accepted. It did not occur to me to do anything other than what I was trained to do.
- Did my initial training at Guildford and although I was now in a very different life style I enjoyed it. One of the girls on my course, Gerry, wanted to have a bit of fun and so suggested that she and I ride around the camp pretending that we were using a tandem bicycle. This was only going from our hut to the mess of course, no anywhere where we could cause trouble.
- Years later at a dance in London I met a soldier whom I had known slightly when in Buckinghamshire, and he told me he had a photo of me which I was surprised to hear. He then showed me the photo taken of the entire platoon at Guildford. He said he had been going out with Gerry and had recognised me sitting next to her – a coincidence. We made a date to meet some time in the future, I think to see a show or something similar, but I completely forgot about it until the day after, I was mortified, I did not know how to contact him, or he me for that matter, and I have felt guilty of that all my life.
- As we completed the course in Guildford it was stressed to us that we were now soldiers and were quite fit and able to carry our own kitbags. We were told that we must not ask a man to carry it for us, or expect him to do so.
- My first posting was to Palace Green (this is the road that runs beside Kensington Palace and the houses are very grand because they are the Embassies of foreign countries some of them were vacated because of the war and we had taken one over). On arriving at Kensington High Street Station I was not sure just where the

road was situated, so I asked a soldier who happened to be there, if I should turn left or right. He told me right, but added that he would walk there with me and insisted on carrying my kit bag! So I broke the golden rule quite early in my career.

- I worked in the Guard Room (Office) doing all types of clerical duties. One day a prisoner was brought in by the Military Police I think her crime was being AWL and she had to be guarded. So that night a bed was set up for me and one for her in the Guard Room. When we were getting ready for bed and I was getting into my blue and white striped pyjamas, she said to me "You are not going to wear those awful things are you?" She told me that she always slept in the nude and suggested that I try it as it was so much more comfortable. I did not want to be thought of as a "square" but I had never been so daring in my life. However, I did not sleep all night for fear that this brazen girl would escape and think nothing of running away naked, and I would be unable to follow her! She slept like a lamb all night!
- One day in the office I had a pain repeat that I had experienced many times before and my Mother diagnosed as growing pains, so I would dismiss it as it eased off, but this time it was noticed by others and so I had to go to sick bay. Which led to the Queen Victoria Hospital and a major operation. (I did not get to the bottom of the cause of this operation until I was being treated by a Doctor in Australia. He told me that I had tuberculosis of the stomach caused by drinking milk straight from the cow. I was mystified, being a city girl, but did remember having a holiday on a farm when I was quite small. He had to operate on me himself and said that he would check to make sure it was all cleared up – it was). Just prior to having the operation I asked one of the nurses if she would ring my mother as she was completely unaware of where I was, she did, but waited until after the operation. My mother was furious, she did not believe that the army had more jurisdiction over me than she did, so she rang up somewhere (it would not surprise me if it was the War Office). The next thing I knew was that I had two or three Officers beside my bed checking on me!
- From the hospital I was sent to a rehabilitation centre which was a lovely home in Surrey beside the River, and then when I returned to my unit I was sent on a training program at Golders Green, this was to be upgraded as a clerk!
- Sometimes when off duty I would go home to my Mother for a visit and one day we had a very heavy raid, which I had to go out in to return to duty. Once again mother felt that she could tell me not to go, so I had some hard talking to do and explain what would happen to me if I was posted AWL. The raid was a bad one and the bus arrived late at the station and it was without windows and we had to brush all the broken glass off the seats before we could sit down. There was a great deal of devastation to the houses we were using and so we spent the next few days clearing up and getting the rubble out of our typewriters.
- We decided one day that we should have our photo taken in our glamorous night wear and this prompted a few more photos.
- On completion I returned to my unit and now, I was to work in an office inside Kensington Palace. The pay office of the soldiers of Kensington Barracks and so once more it was general office duties with a little more bookkeeping this time. The soldiers would come and line up every week to receive their pay.
- There were some people living in the Palace and one family we saw a bit of was the Earl and Countess of Athlone. Many years later here in Queensland we had a Governor and his wife, Sir Henry Abel Smith and his wife Lady May Able Smith the daughter of the Count and Countess Athlone, another coincidence.
- My mother became ill and I was able to arrange a permanent sleeping out pass and so my army life became like a civilian job going to and fro each day only in uniform. I became friendly with a fellow passenger on the train I caught at North

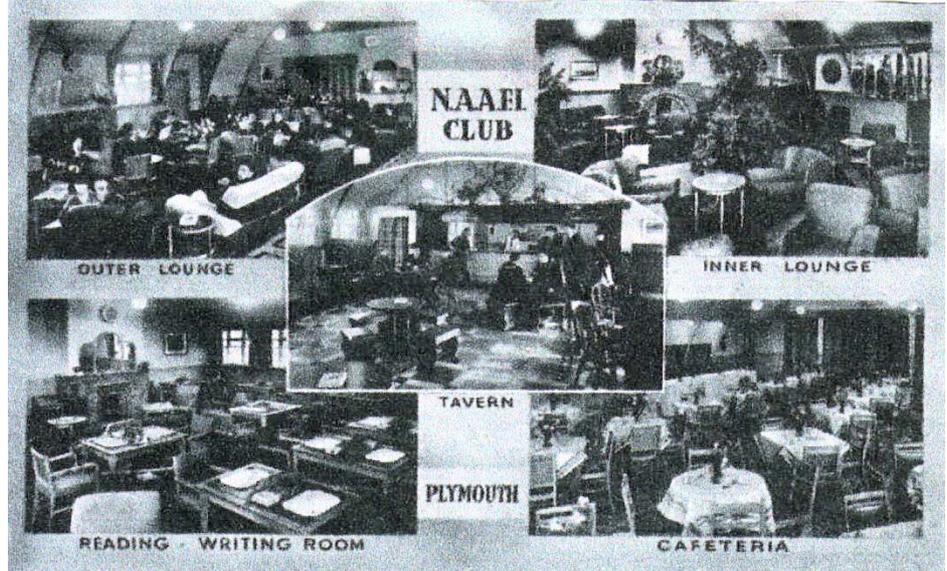
Harrow, she was a WREN and obviously had a sleeping out pass as myself. She would go each day to South Kensington so we were able to travel together. The last time I saw her she had spots all over her face and told me she did not know what was wrong with her but would see the MO when she got to her place of work. The next time I saw her face it was in the newspaper as the second murdered victim of Neville Heath. I had a terrible shock. She was a charming well brought up lady and she came to a terrible and undeserved end.

- My friend in the WAAF and I decided to organise a leave together and we made the destination Plymouth, and it was during that leave that I met the Australian Navy man I was to marry later on.
- Then I had a posting to Earls Court and now I was the only girl on staff, all the rest soldiers and I looked after all the office plus the switchboard. One day my CO came to me and said that a promotion had come through for me and a posting to Hastings. This was a shock, not only because of the sleeping out pass, but also that my husband to be was soon to arrive back in England with the Victory contingent and we were to be married. These were the thoughts running through my mind, but the CO went on to say that he had heard that I was soon to be married to an Australian, and so it would be difficult for me if I was in Hastings, and I did not need at such a time to receive a promotion. He said that if it was agreed to by me, he would give the promotion to one of his men. He did, I am not sure how he arranged that or what happened about the vacancy in Hastings.
- Work wise I only did in the ATS more or less what I would have done as a civilian, but I am very pleased that I had the opportunity. I enjoyed meeting and getting to know all those other girls from so many different walks of life. I did not get into any kind of trouble, so have no tales of woe to relate, but I think being in the service made me independent and much more self assured than I was when I joined as a rather shy girl. Obviously my next step along life's way was to get on a ship and sail so far from my own country. Many of we War brides who meet from time to time wonder how on earth we were able to do such a thing.

Photos:



Golders Green 40 9D Course, July 1944



Beryl Centre front.



Beryl left back row



Beryl second from left back row,



Beryl second from left back row