



The Parachute Regimental Association Aldershot Branch Newsletter



04/2017

Charity Number 1125551

Apr 2017

Monthly Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will take place at the **Conservative Club at 2000hrs on Friday 7th April 2017**. This will be followed by the April monthly meeting. The meeting after this will be held on **Friday 5th May 2017**.

Annual General Meeting

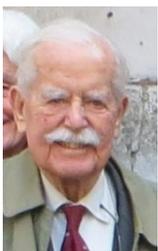
The Annual General Meeting will be held at 2000hrs on Friday 7th April, prior to the monthly meeting. All of the committee are up for re-election. This meeting is the most important meeting of the year and your attendance would be most appreciated.

Alistair Cameron



It is with sadness that I have to inform you of the death of Branch member Alistair Cameron, aged 71. Alistair died on Friday 24th February and his funeral was held at Aldershot Crematorium on Friday 24th March. Alistair served in 7 Para Royal Horse Artillery from 1963-72. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Jean and all of the family.

Mike McRitchie



Mike decided to cycle to Fleet from his home in Church Crookham. He fell off on his way home and hit his left thigh on the kerb and he has fractured his left femur in 2 places. Unfortunately, it is the same leg that has the hip replacement. He has been operated on and is now recovering in ward F4 at Frimley Park Hospital. I have been to visit Mike and in spite of his injuries he is in good spirits. His family live in Scotland so he is relying on visits from Branch members. Mike is looking forward to the visits from the members.

Julie Dinsey



I mentioned in last months newsletter that Julie had broken her upper right arm whilst on the skiing trip. Julie was operated on when she returned to Basingstoke and the surgeon told her she was repaired using meccano. Her arm is still very sore and it will take up to six months for it to heal. We wish Julie all the best for her recovery.

Welfare Member

If you are not well, or you know of another member who is ill, can you let me know so that I can inform the Welfare member, Chris Rogers.

Officers Mess Bombing 45th Anniversary

A service was held on Wednesday 22nd February to commemorate the bombing of the Officers Mess in Aldershot. Five female civilian staff, an elderly gardener and a Roman Catholic British Army Chaplain, Father Gerard Weston, was killed and nineteen wounded. Aside from the priest Weston (38), the others who died during the attack were the gardener John Haslar (58), the cleaner Jill Mansfield (34); a mother of an eight-year-old boy; as well as four other cleaners named Thelma Bosley (44), Margaret Grant (32), Cherie Munton (20) and Joan Lunn (39). Carl Bosley and Jim, Andy and John Grant attended and laid flowers for their mothers. I am sure you are aware that Carl and two of his brothers served in the Parachute Regiment. At the end of the service Geoff Butler gave a talk on the events that took place on that terrible day and the repercussions over the years after. Geoff was a private and was three months short of his 18th birthday and was based in 2 Para at Montgomery Lines at the time of the bombing.

**Aldershot
Tabbers Walking
Group**

Please bring waterproofs in a small back pack and a change of shoes/trainers at the end of the walk as we don't want to walk into the pub with muddy boots. This also helps when getting into the car for the ride home. The group will be meeting in the Garrison Church Car Park from 9am/9.15am next to the Wellington Statue. It is proposed that we car share to save taking empty cars. Peter Richens has now organised the following walks for April/May. The walks are 5/7 miles.

Thursday 6th April, Thursday 20th April and Thursday 4th May.

If you would like to attend any of the walks please turn up on the day or if you require further information please contact the Secretary.

**Tabbers Walk in
London**

Six members of the walking group attended the Intelligence walk in London on Tuesday 14 March. This was a very interesting walk and we are grateful to our guide Neil Fearn. There are so many hidden treasures in London that we don't know about.

**Municipal Gardens
Aldershot**

The refurbishment of the Children's play area in the Municipal Gardens in Grosvenor road is well under way and will be finished in April. Photos of the finished play area will be in the next newsletter. Your children or grandchildren will have a fantastic time playing on all of the new attractions.

**Pen-Y-Fan
Weekend**

The British Airborne Forces Club is now taking bookings for Dering Lines accommodation in Brecon for the Pen-Y-Fan weekend on Friday 19th till Sunday 21st May. The cost is £10 for the accommodation, but you must be a member of the BAFC to book for the weekend.

Sports Evening

The Naval Association and the Aldershot Branch of the Royal British Legion have now moved to the Conservative Club. Iain Rodgers and Stuart McLaren held a joint meeting with both committees. The meeting was to introduce ourselves and also to see if we could work together on future events. As a first event and chance to get to know each other we are holding Sports evening on the Wednesday 12th April 2017. This will initially consist of darts and snooker, sandwiches will be provided and branch members are asked to attend. Even if you are not taking part in the games we would like you to attend to support the Branch. Suggestions are needed from the branch on other types of games (someone did suggest Milling - not a good idea). Later on in the year we will be hoping to arrange other combined events such as a summer barbecue and perhaps a fancy dress party - more ideas needed. Please arrive between 7.30pm – 8pm. This will give us time to sort out the teams. Dress casual.

**Army v Navy
Rugby**

The annual Army v Navy Rugby match at Twickenham will take place on Saturday 29th April. I will issue the tickets to the members who have booked their tickets through me in two weeks time. This will be the 100th game between the Army and Navy. The tickets went on sale on the 1st November last year and all 82,000 tickets were sold within 4 days. This is the only game that is not an international that sells all seats.

**Falklands 35th
Anniversary**

This is advanced notice that the Falklands 35th Anniversary weekend will take place over the weekend 16th – 18th June. The main day will be Sunday 18th June. Further details will appear in the next newsletter.

Members Reports
Recruiting Old
Soldiers.

I am over 60 and the Armed Forces thinks I'm too old to track down terrorists. You can't be older than 42 to join the military. They've got the whole thing backwards.

Instead of sending 18-year olds off to fight, they ought to take us old guys. You shouldn't be able to join a military unit until you're at least 35.

For starters, researchers say 18-year-olds think about sex every ten seconds. Old guys only think about sex a couple of times a month, leaving us more than 280,000 additional seconds per day to concentrate on the enemy.

Young guys haven't lived long enough to be cranky, and a cranky soldier is a dangerous soldier. 'My back hurts! I can't sleep, I'm tired and hungry.' Were bad-tempered and impatient, and maybe letting us kill some ***hole that desperately deserves it will make us feel better and shut us up for a while.....

An 18-year-old doesn't even like to get up before 10am. Old guys always get up early to pee, so what the hell. Besides, like I said, I'm tired and can't sleep and since I'm already up, I may as well be up killing some fanatical son-of-a-bitch.

If captured we couldn't spill the beans because we'd forget where we put them. In fact, name, rank, and serial number would be a real brainteaser.

Boot camp would be easier for old guys.... We're used to getting screamed and yelled at and we're used to soft food. We've also developed an appreciation for guns. We've been using them for years as an excuse to get out of the house, away from the screaming and yelling.

They could lighten up on the obstacle course however..... I've been in combat and never saw a single 20-foot wall with rope hanging over the side, nor did I ever do any push-ups after completing basic training.

Actually, the running part is kind of a waste of energy, too..... I've never seen anyone outrun a bullet.

An 18-year-old has the whole world ahead of him. He's still learning to shave or to start a conversation with a pretty girl. He still hasn't figured out that a baseball cap has a brim to shade his eyes, not the back of his head.

These are all great reasons to keep our kids at home to learn a little more about life before sending them off into harm's way.

Let us old guys track down those terrorists..... The last thing an enemy would want to see is a couple million hacked off old farts with bad attitudes and automatic weapons, who know that their best years are already behind them.

HEY!! How about recruiting Women over 50.... in menopause! You think MEN have attitudes? Ohhhhhhhh my goodness!!! If nothing else, put them on border patrol. They'll have it secured the first night!

Thanks to Iain for the article above. Ladies, any complaints see Iain!!

John and Maria
Hare

Branch member John Hare and his wife Maria, sold their bungalow in Mytchett eight years ago and retired to the island of Dominica in the Caribbean. With internet it is now very easy to keep in touch and I have been sending the newsletter to John. I went on a Caribbean cruise a couple of weeks ago and the cruise ship called into Dominica. John and Maria met my sister Val and me as we came ashore. We went for a tour of the area in John's car and ended up at his house. The first two years were spent in rented accommodation while along with an architect, he helped to design the house he has built. It is superb and overlooks the sea. Whilst in his house I recorded a video which I will show after the April meeting. In

the video John talks to the members and explains what he got up to when he arrived on the island and how he built his house. The video then pans around the living room before going out onto the balcony. They would both like to say hello to the members and wish you all of the best. I know John and Maria will be reading this newsletter so I would like to thank them for their hospitality and the bottle of rum.

Stuart

Officers Mess Bombing 45th Anniversary



Tommy Simpson welcomes all those present



Peter Richens lays the Branch Wreath



The Wreaths and Flowers



Geoff Butler explains what happened

John and Maria Hare



John and Maria relaxing with a drink



Their superb house looks out to the sea