



The Parachute Regimental Association Aldershot Branch Newsletter



06/2014

Charity Number 1125551

June 2014

Monthly Meeting

The next monthly meeting will take place on **Friday 6th June at 2000hrs in Malta Barracks**. Please ensure that all PRA members park their vehicles on the edges of the parade square and leave their Aldershot Branch membership cards on the dashboard with their name visible. The meeting after this will be the monthly meeting held on **Friday 27th June 2014**. Will all members ensure that they close the gate after entering and leaving the Barracks.

Bar Opening Times

The bar will be open in June on Friday 6th from 2000hrs – 2359hrs, Friday 13th from 2000hrs – 2359hrs, Friday 20th from 2000hrs – 2359hrs and Friday 27th from 2000hrs – 2359hrs. A free Pool Table, Bar nibbles, Television and a good atmosphere await you. Please note that fresh ground coffee is available for those who have to drive or would like an alternative drink.

New Members

There were no new members last month.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting took place on Friday 2nd May prior to the monthly meeting. Len Clark informed the members that he wished to stand down as Entertainments Member. It was proposed, seconded and passed that Julie Dinsey be appointed the Entertainments Member. Jack Wigley retired as Welfare Member in October 2013 and the position was passed to George Pullin. The Chairman, Iain Rodgers and all of the committee and members would like to pass on their sincere thanks to Jack for his hard work and dedication over many years.

All of the remaining Committee members were willing to continue in their present positions. The following members were elected to serve in the following positions. **President** – David Taylor; **Vice President** – Mike McRitchie; **Chairman** – Iain Rodgers; **Vice Chairman** – Richie Gillett; **Secretary** – Stuart McLaren; **Treasurer** – Dave Rashbrook; **Welfare Member** – George Pullin; **Bar Member** – Gill Rashbrook; **Entertainments Member** – Julie Dinsey; **Property member** – Dennis Devey. The annual subscription of £15 is now due. Please make cheques payable to **“Aldershot Branch PRA”** and send them to the secretary at the address below.

Julie Dinsey

The Chairman, Iain Rodgers would like to thank Julie for standing in as secretary for three months whilst Stuart was away on holiday. It was a daunting position to take on and a job that she did superbly well.

Malta Barracks

The committee were informed by Captain John Coupland a few days ago that Malta Barracks will close at the end of June 2014. All recruit training was transferred to Pirbright last year. New accommodation has now been built for the staff still remaining at Malta Barracks and they will now transfer to operate alongside the troops. As the Aldershot Branch will be the only users of Malta Barracks it is not cost effective to keep the barracks open. Malta Barracks will be mothballed until it is decided what its future will be. The committee have been working hard behind the scenes for the past year to try and find alternative accommodation. This has been extremely difficult as we tend to be dealing with civilian organisations as most of the buildings and facilities have been outsourced. We are trying to acquire a location to store all of our items to give us breathing space to find new accommodation. As stated at the beginning of this newsletter the final monthly meeting to be held at Malta Barracks will be on Friday 27th June. This meeting is the July meeting as the ABF weekend is held over the first weekend in July. There is no meeting in August due to holidays. You will be informed of our meeting location for the September meeting which will

be held on Friday 29th August, due to the Arnhem trip, in the August newsletter. Due to hard work and endeavour the Aldershot Branch has had their own premises for many years and it is with great sadness that this day has come. We will keep you informed off any further news. If any member knows of any premises that would be suitable please contact the secretary.

70th Anniversary Summer Ball

The venue has been booked at Potters International Hotel on Saturday 28th June. The Summer Ball, which is being held on Armed Forces Day, is being held as the Branch's 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Arnhem commemoration. Please send in your menu choices and cheque to the secretary as soon as possible. Stuart has to notify the hotel within the next two week of the total numbers and menu choices.

Regimental Day and PRA AGM

The Regimental Day and PRA AGM is being held at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) on Saturday 21st June 2014. The Branch is running a minibus and all seats are booked. The minibus will be leaving the Princes Hall at 7.45am. Please ensure that you leave time to park your car and arrive at princes Hall on time. We should return to Aldershot between 6pm – 7pm.

Airborne Forces Day South

Airborne Forces Day South will be held on Sunday 29th June. The Portsmouth Branch has worked very hard to organise the event. This event will be held at the Royal Marines Museum Southsea. The day will start with a Memorial Service and March Past, this year Maj Gen Chip Chapman is the inspecting officer.

**AIRBORNE FORCES DAY
SOUTH**



Sunday 29th. June 2014
At
Royal Marines Museum Eastney
FREE PARKING
Special Arrangements for
MOBILITY PARKING

Parade forms up 1030
March on 1100
Major General Chapman will take the salute
Followed by
Hog Roast and other food
Drinks at The Royal Marines Ass. Club

John Newman Secretary:- Pompey Para's
02392 466732
johnnewman100@hotmail.co.uk

Arena Displays by
Rose and Thistle Pipe Band
Royal Marine Volunteer Cadet Corps
Fort Cumberland Guard Musketry and Cannon Display
T.S. Active MTC Continuous Arms Drill

National PRA, Colchester

We have received a request from Mike Collins who is the National PRA Secretary. They are trying to find the name of the RSM who is shaking the hand of Lt Colonel Thorpe who was Regimental Lt Colonel of the Parachute Regiment at the time of the photograph. The photograph was used at Lt Col Thorpe's funeral which was held on 17th July 2012. If any member recognises who the RSM is, can they contact the secretary with the information.



Airborne Forces Weekend

The unofficial Airborne Forces weekend will take place in the Trafalgar Inn, Short Street, Aldershot over the weekend 4-6 July. This weekend has grown over the years and has over 300 ex airborne members attend. If you have not attended over the last few years, why not call in for a couple of hours on the Saturday. You will be surprised at the varied age range of the people who attend.

Airborne March, Arnhem 2014

This year's Airborne March trip takes place in Arnhem from 4 – 7 September. Places are still available on this year's trip. The cost of a stay in the hotel is £250 and a stay on the campsite is £125. This year is the 68th Airborne march. If you would like further information please contact the secretary.

The Secretary's Holiday

I didn't want to mention in previous newsletters that I was going on a three month holiday as the newsletter gets posted on notice boards. This could have alerted people to the fact that my home was unoccupied for all that time. Many of the members have asked me where I went to on my holiday. I will try and keep it brief but it won't be easy. We flew to Dubai on January 20th and stayed with Graham and Caroline Lyden for a week. Graham is ex 3 Para and works in Dubai. We then boarded the Adonia cruise ship for a 28 day cruise to Hong Kong. The cruise took in stops at Abu Dhabi, Fujairah (UAE), Colombo (Sri Lanka), Yangon (Burma), Port Blair (India), Malacca (Malaysia), Singapore, Kuching (Malaysia), Bandar Seri Begawan (Brunei), Kota Kinabalu (Malaysia), Puerto Princesa and Manilla (Philippines). After two days in Hong Kong we flew to Auckland, New Zealand and toured north and south island in a campervan. We met up with our niece and nephew in the south island. The next flight was from Christchurch to Melbourne. We picked up another campervan and for the next two and a half weeks we toured from Melbourne to Sydney and then on to Brisbane. Whilst in Melbourne I was able to meet up with Joe Wisdom, Ian Mincher, Dick Murphy and Bob Trumper who receive the Aldershot Branch newsletter. We then flew north to Whitsunday at Airlie Beach for three days. After flying back to Brisbane we boarded another flight for a short stop at Honolulu, Hawaii. The next flight was to Los Angeles (3 days) followed by a flight to Las Vegas (3 days). Once we had lost all our money in Vegas we flew to New York for four days. The final flight in America was down to Fort Lauderdale in Miami. We then boarded the Celebrity Equinox cruise ship for our trip back to Europe stopping at the Azores, Lisbon, Cadiz, Gibraltar and finally Malaga. The final flight was back to Gatwick. The weather was fantastic and it only rained for two days whilst we were away. This was our retirement present and it was a trip that we will remember for the rest of our lives. I would like to thank Julie for standing in as secretary during my absence. See page 4 for eight of the 9,000 photos that I took.

Stuart's Holiday Photos



View from the top of Burj Khalifa Hotel Dubai



A monkey in the mangrove swamp in Brunei



Camping at Lake Tekapo, South Island NZ



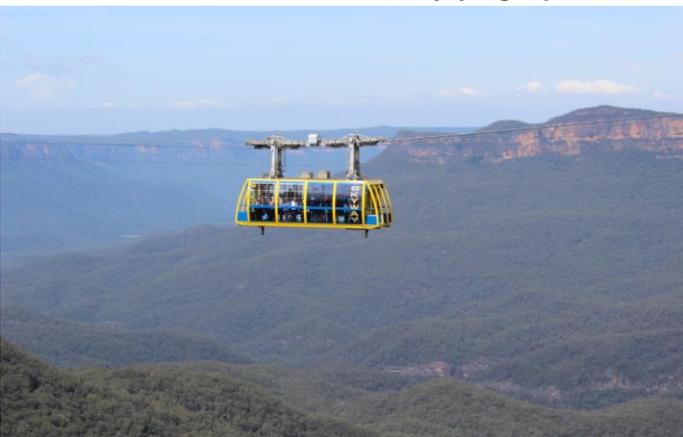
Mount Cook across Lake Pukaki NZ



Joe, Ian, Stuart, Dick and Bob enjoying a pint in Melbourne



Outside the Sydney Opera House



The Skyway over the Blue Mountains, Sydney



Barbary Ape in Gibraltar