



**The Parachute Regimental Association
Aldershot Branch
Newsletter**



06/2017

Charity Number 1125551

June 2017

Monthly Meeting

The monthly meeting will take place at the **Conservative Club at 2000hrs on Friday 2nd June 2017**. The meeting after this will be held on **Friday 30th June 2017**. This is a week early due to the ABF weekend in the Trafalgar Inn.

New Member

I am pleased to inform you that Graham Cordwell joined the Branch at the May meeting. Graham served in 2 Para from 1974 - 88. For the past 26 years Graham has been living in Norway and he recently thought that it would be good to join a PRA Branch and he chose the Aldershot Branch. Graham, welcome to the Branch.

Falklands 35th Anniversary

The **Falklands 35th Anniversary** Event will take place on **Sunday 18th June**.

The day will be in 3 phases.

1. Drumhead Service in the Military Cemetery starting at 1130am (gates open at 10am), follow signs for car parking. Tea/Coffee/Water will be served free of charge from 10am to 1115am.

2. March Past - Starts at 1.30pm forming up point at Willems Avenue.
Order of March: -
Regimental Mascot.

Band of The Parachute Regiment.

Colours Parties of 2 & 3 Para.

a. Number 1 Guard - Soldiers from 2 & 3 Para plus supporting unit of 16 Air Assault that supported 2 & 3 Para in Falklands.

Note: 2 x Guns from 7 Para RHA will be positioned each side of the Saluting Dias.

b. Number 2 Guard - Falklands 1982 Veterans.

c. Number 3 Guard - Standards and Members of The Parachute Regimental Association.

3. Reception at 2pm. Hot food and cash bar in Princess Hall and Princess Gardens.

nb: There will be no ticket issued as there will be no charge for the reception food.

Annual Subscriptions

Please note that the Annual Subscription of £15 is now due. Many of the members now pay by Standing Order. If you wish to pay by cheque please make the cheque payable to "**Aldershot Branch PRA**" and send the cheque to the secretary. If you intend to pay by Standing Order can you please notify the secretary. If you have not paid your subscriptions by the end of June you will not receive the newsletter.

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.

Regimental Day in Colchester

I have just been informed about the Regimental Day in Colchester on Friday On Friday 23 June 2017.

The Parachute Regiment will mark the occasion of the 40th year of the Colonel in Chief's appointment in the Regiment. The event will take place at Merville Barracks, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7UT and will consist of the following:

- Official parade by serving soldiers and veterans
- Presentations and Awards
- Capability Stands
- Red Devils Freefall Display Team
- Regimental Display Team
- Regimental Mascot
- Family Entertainment
- Museum Display
- Food Stands
- Bars and Messes open
- Free Parking

If you have not visited the Regiment in Colchester yet, on this our 17th year, this historic occasion offers the ideal opportunity to do so.

The Branch is prepared to pay for a coach to attend this event so the transport will be free to members and wives/partners. Guests will have to pay a fee, which will be decided once we have the costings. Obviously it will be members first for seats. Please note that this will mean an early start. If you would like to attend please notify me as soon as possible as I have to notify Colchester with the names for security reasons.

75th Anniversary of Blackbushe Airfield

Blackbushe Airport is 75 this year and on 1 & 2 July there is a big celebration going on. In the 1950's it was regularly used by the Paras being close to Aldershot. Happily we have Army co-operation with this year's big event, but I feel sure there must be many who flew from here wearing the Paras beret and wings who would like to know of what we're doing and hopefully attend? The website is www.blackbushe75.com where more details may be found. All profits shared between Help for Heroes, the Dougie Dalzell Memorial Trust, and Aerobility.

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 1st June, Thursday 15th June and Thursday 29th June.

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.

Branch Tabbers **2 Day Walk in** **Dorset**

Peter Richens who organises the Thursday walks suggested that the group look at going on a two day walk. We all agreed so Peter searched the internet for places and accommodation along the south coast. He found the Portland Bunkhouse at Portland Bill. This is an old naval building that was bought five years ago and converted by the owner into 8 bedrooms with 6 bunk beds in each room. There is a fully fitted kitchen, lounge and toilets and showers. The price to stay in the bunkhouse is £17 per person per night. After Peter had sorted out the routes for the walks he notified us and 9 members set off on Wednesday 10th May, by car I may add. After arriving at the Bunkhouse and settling in we went to the pub which was 200 metres down the road. The walk on the Thursday was along the coast and we covered 7 miles. We finished at the Elm Tree Pub and after lunch made our way back to Portland which was another 5 miles. After handing over our accommodation we left on the Friday morning and drove to Lulworth Cove. Another challenging 5 mile route awaited us. The views were terrific and the two days were fantastic. The 2 day walk will now be added to the year planner so if you would like to come next year book in. Our thanks go to Peter and Glyn Grace for arranging the walk and especially for cooking breakfast on both days. See page 8 for photos.

Army Boxing **Final** **3 Para v 13 Air** **Assault RLC**

3 Para faced 13 Air Assault RLC in the Army boxing final. The final was held in Colchester on Wednesday 3rd May. Once again the winner was decided on the final bout. Unfortunately, 3 Para lost to 13 Air Assault by 3 bouts to 4.

Unveiling of **Pegasus Statue**



The new Pegasus Statue at 16 Air Assault, Merville Barracks, Colchester was unveiled on Wednesday 3rd May. Over 100 soldiers were on parade along with PRA members and invited guests. Prayers and speeches were said to those assembled and the Parachute Regiment band played tunes from war films. Sophie Lambrechtsen Ter Horst was invited to unveil the statue. Sophie is the daughter of Kate Ter Horst who as you all know, was the Angel of Arnhem. Sophie was joined at the unveiling by David Whiteman who was a stretcher bearer at Arnhem. The statue was hidden behind three long drapes and when Sophie and David pulled on the cords, nothing happened. The Officer who was assisting them had to rip the drapes down, much to the amusement of the watching troops. In spite of the mishap the day was most enjoyable. See page 6 for photos.

Regimental Day **and PRA AGM**

The Regimental Day and PRA Annual General Meeting will take place at the National Arboretum on Saturday 8th July. Due to the high cost of hiring a minibus and the lack of numbers, the Branch will not be running transport this year. The full details of the day can be read on pages 4 & 5. If you are intending to attend using your own transport and would like to book a meal (this enables you to use the marquee) please contact me. The meal costs £5 each which I can book for you and you can repay the Branch. Please note the cut off date for booking.

Airborne Forces **Day South**

Airborne Forces Day South which is organised by the Portsmouth Branch will be held on Saturday 8th July. Unfortunately, this clashed with the Regimental Day at the National Arboretum and the ABF weekend in the Trafalgar Inn, Aldershot. The Airborne Forces Day South is being held in Whale Island, Portsmouth, PO2 8ER which is an army barracks and as such you will need passes to enter. Passes can be arranged if you send me the names of those attending and your vehicle details. Please inform me as soon as possible if you intend to go.

Airborne Forces Weekend in the Traf

This weekend is normally held on the first Saturday in July but again due to the Falklands 35th Anniversary it has been moved to Friday 7th till Sunday 9th July. This very enjoyable weekend has grown over the years and is supported by over 300 of the old and bold over the three days. I am sure that if you pop down for a beer you will meet up with old friends.

Branch member, John Ross, has been busy with his oil paints again. After painting the new sign for the Traf, John was asked by the landlord of the Traf, Stace, if he could paint a new "Trooper" painting. The original, which has hung in the Traf for many years, has suffered with damp and is slowly falling apart. I have seen a glimpse of the new painting and it is amazing. The new painting will be unveiled at 8pm on Friday 7th July. You will not be disappointed and it will be well worth attending the unveiling.

Sports Evening

Woody Woodward was deemed the best sportsman at the recent Sports evening between the Naval Association and the Aldershot Branch of the Royal British Legion. Woody and John Ross had both won their two darts games, but Woody mentioned that his wife was expecting him to come home with a trophy. A plastic cup was obtained from behind the bar, marked up with a black marker pen, and presented to Woody on the night. Woody has sent me an amusing letter regarding the trophy that I have included on page 4.

Pen-Y-Fan Weekend

The British Airborne Forces Club Pen-Y-Fan weekend which was held on Friday 19th till Sunday 21st May was a resounding success. The weather did not let us down and it was raining when we assembled in the car park at the bottom of the Fan. The mist and clouds were down to 400 metres from the start. Lou Sturge gave the briefing and read out the names of the Airborne soldiers who have fallen since last year. After the group photo we all set off. It was a case of getting up as quick as you can, a quick photo, and back down again. Fortunately, Dave and Gill Rashbrook had their campervan parked in the lay-by which acted as a meeting place for those who could not complete the climb and those who finished. Julie has threatened to put the campervan on Trip Advisor so that all those who had a beer can mark the hospitality out of 10. Be advised that she knows where you live! Thanks must go to the BAFC for organising the weekend and supplying the Hog Roast. See pages 7 & 8 for photos.

Army v Navy Rugby

Another fantastic day out for 30 Branch members at the 100th game between the Army and Navy on Saturday 29th April. The 82,000 tickets sold out in four days when they went online last November. The weather was good as it didn't rain. After a few beers in a local pub we made our way to the stadium. Our seats on the half way line and on the first tier were greatly appreciated. The game was very enjoyable with the Army edging out the Navy by 29 points to 20.

Stuart

Note from Woody

Monday 8th May

Stuart,

Concerning the Games Night against the Royal Naval Association and RBL team in the Conservative Club 12th April last and the presentation to me of "The Trophy".

I would like to thank the Branch Chairman and Secretary for the award and Presentation to me, (for me darting prowess against the Royal Naval Association and RBL team), for (this/that/the) worthless, priceless Plastic Cup.

At my age, not having thrown a dart in twenty years or more, suffering as I do from, Lumbar-spondilitis, Osteo-arthritis (L) knee, Arthritis both ankles, Tennis elbow and Haemorrhoids, it's difficult for me now to concentrate on throwing a dart in any bloody direction, let alone a dart board.

Having passed the "Cup" on to John Ross for safe keeping for the next event, I think perhaps that the Branch could afford to purchase a trophy that does not resemble too closely that of a plastic "Stool Sample Jar".

Thoroughly enjoyed the night, Roll on the next match.

Woody

REGIMENTAL MEMORIAL DAY

NATIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING PRA SATURDAY 8 July 2017

See below programme and timings for this year's Regimental Day / PRA Annual General meeting to be held at the National Memorial Arboretum. The day will take much the same form as last year with the service once again to be held at The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Memorial, fingers and everything crossed that the weather is kind to us.

<u>Timings</u>	<u>Events</u>
0900	NMA Opens
0930	Refreshments in Pods 3 & 4 of Marquee
1030-1130	AGM in Pods 3 & 4 of Marquee
1130-1145	Break / All Standard bearers to report to JJ Wilson and Peter Richens at the rear of pod 4
	Service at Memorial and wreath Laying
1145-1200	PRA Members Band and Standards to form up at rear of marquees ready to march to Memorial
1215-1300	Service at Memorial and wreath Laying

1315-1345	PRA parade back to Marquee's Col commandant / Guest of honour to take salute
1345-1600	Boxed lunches in Marquee with Bar Facilities available
1600-1700	Departure of Guests and PRA Members
1700	NMA doors close

Please note all the above timings are approximate.

NMA New Visitor Centre

I'm pleased to report that all work on the new Visitor Centre and the National Memorial are now complete so no assault course to manoeuvre around this year, a fantastic jobs been done and I recommend you come and see it for yourself. The main car parks double in size and should be able to more and then cope with blue badge holders plus lots of spaces for normal parking, with the overspill car park still available if required.

Tickets

Once again tickets for the meal will be £5 branches requiring tickets can order them from Mr John Carey Midland regional secretary. Please ensure all cheques are made payable to The Parachute Regimental Association (PRA) and enclose a self-addressed envelope with your cheque. The cut of date for tickets will be **Friday 16 June 2017** no bookings will be taken after this date so book early not to be disappointed. If you do not wish to purchase the meal ticket you can either use the NMA Restaurant or bring your own packed lunch. All the tables and seating in the marquees will be allocated to only those who have purchased tickets.

Dress

Serving Personnel uniform, PRA member's guests lounge suit or blazers beret and medals.

Standards

Standard Bearers report to: JJ Wilson and Peter Richens immediately after the AGM at the rear of the marquee for a quick briefing and rehearsal to make sure everybody's singing of the same hymn book.

Parking

Marshals will direct you to parking areas. Blue badge holders will able to use disabled spaces in the main car park. None badge holders can also use the main car with now plenty of parking spaces, when full the overspill car park will be available to use.

Coaches/Mini Buses can drop off at the designated points by the main entrance and drivers will be directed to parking areas

All cars will have to pay £3 to park all day.

Band

Once again we have The Parachute Regiment Band

Disabled Personnel

A designated area will be available for wheel chairs and carers to view the service.

Unveiling of the Pegasus Statue, Colchester



The Troops on Parade



PRA members keep warm



Sophie and David struggle with the unveiling



The Bellerophon and Pegasus Statue

Pen-Y-Fan Weekend



**Lou Sturge reads out the names of the fallen
Look at the mist behind him**



**I bet you didn't do this on P Company,
Colin Simpson**



Lou Sturge is now the auctioneer
If you scratch your head you have made a bet



Some of the Branch members having a quiet drink

Branch Tabbers Dorset Walk



We found a boat on the walk,
unfortunately, nobody told us the paint
was still wet



One of the few hills in Dorset !!



A beautiful village to walk through



Our final walk at Lulworth Cove