



The Parachute Regimental Association Aldershot Branch Newsletter



08/2016

Charity Number 1125551

Aug 2016

Monthly Meeting

There is no monthly meeting at the beginning of August; this is due to members going on holiday. The September monthly meeting will take place in the **Conservative Club at 2000hrs on Friday 26th August 2016**. This meeting is a week early due to the visit to take part in the Airborne March in Arnhem. The meeting after this, which will be the October meeting, will be held on **Friday 7th October 2016**.

New Members

I am delighted to inform you that five new members joined and one ex member rejoined at the last monthly meeting. The five new members who joined are; Major Curt Vines who is the serving Officer Commanding, Support Company 2 Para, Tommy Simpson who served in 3 Para, David Jones who served in 3 Para, Mal Cozens who served in 1 Para and Dick Huggan who served in 1 Para. Dick emigrated to Cape Town, South Africa, when he left the army and still lives there. Along with Dick in Cape Town are 26 other airborne forces members who have now been given permission to form the Cape Town Branch of the PRA. Dick returns regularly to visit his daughter and makes a point of coming back to Aldershot to catch up with old friends. The member who has rejoined is Dave Newton. In the past couple of months we have had a new member join who now lives in Tasmania and now we have another member who lives in Cape Town. Last year a member joined who lives in Canada. The Branch is fast becoming an international Branch. We would like to welcome you all to the Aldershot Branch.

Airborne March Arnhem

We have one place left for the trip to Arnhem for the 70th Airborne March. The trip takes place from Thursday 1st September till Sunday 4th September. The accommodation is in an 18ft x 24ft tent on the campsite next to the Old Church in Oosterbeek. The tent has lights and charging points for mobile phones. The cost for the trip is £135. If any member would like to take this place please contact the secretary soonest and he will give you a complete breakdown of the weekend.

100th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme

The Battle of the Somme started on the 1st July 1916. At 0730hrs a whistle sounded and that was the signal for the troops to go over the top, to what we now know was certain slaughter. We were informed at very short notice by the Aldershot Branch of the Royal British Legion that they were holding an overnight vigil starting at 2000hrs on Thursday 30th June and finishing at 0800hrs on Friday 1st July. The vigil was held at the Cenotaph in the Municipal Gardens in Grosvenor Road. A service was held at 0730hrs on the Friday morning which was attended by Jacqui Vosper who is the Lady Mayor of Rushmoor. The Reverend Steve Stewart, who is the vicar of Southwood Church, Cove conducted the service. The service was started by the blowing of a whistle and there was a two minutes silence after the whistle blast. Peter Richens carried the Branch Standard at the service and Stuart McLaren laid an Airborne wreath on behalf of the Branch. The Lady Mayor's wreath and the Branch wreath are still on display should you wish to go and pay your respects. See page 3 for photos.

Airborne Forces Weekend

We were blessed with fantastic weather for the whole weekend which started early on the Thursday evening. The refurbishment to the Traf went down well with the 300 people who turned up during the weekend. There were a lot of familiar faces along with some who had not been back for a long time. The five bar staff who worked behind the bar and those collecting glasses deserve a medal. In spite of the numbers the atmosphere was friendly and jovial. A group was booked for Sunday afternoon and many people who had booked into the Travelodge decided to stay for an extra day. In past years only half a dozen remained for the Sunday, but this year the Traf was full until closing time at midnight. Well done to Jade and Stace for all of the hard work in making the weekend a huge success. See page 4 for photos.

Branch Newsletter

The Chairman, Iain Rodgers would like to thank Chris Rogers for printing off 40 copies of the newsletter for the past few years. I know that the members who still receive the newsletter by Royal Mail are very pleased with the quality, especially the photos. The newsletters were printed using a coloured laser printer which is much more superior to an inkjet printer. Iain would also like to thank Sean Chambers in advance as he has very kindly offered to print the newsletters from now on.

Sannerville France

Branch member Brian Mulvey jumped into Sannerville France on the 4th June for the Normandy Commemoration. Iain Rodgers was part of the DZ crew and suited and booted they both attended the memorial service in the village the following day.

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 August. The walks will be 5/6 miles.

Thursday 11th August, Friday 19th August (see the next article) and Thursday 25th August.

If you would like to attend any of the walks or require further information please contact the Secretary.

Although we normally keep the distance to 5/6 miles the walk on Thursday 14th July was 7.5 miles. We drove to the Waterwitch Pub next to the Basingstoke Canal in Odiham. The first part of the walk was along the canal. We crossed the canal into Broad Oak Lane and headed to Dogmersfield Lake. After passing the lake we headed towards Tundry Pond. The scenery en route was fabulous. After a short break and the customary cup of tea and a banana we made our way back to the canal via footpaths and bridleways. Once back at the Waterwitch we took advantage of the hot sandwiches and rolls on offer along with a cool beer.

Aldershot Tabbers trip to London

The trip to London to climb over the o2 Arena has been booked on **Friday 19th August**. We will leave Aldershot train station at 1000hrs and travel to Waterloo Station. Once at the station we will head for the Thames and travel by river boat to the o2 Arena. We have 11 members booked to walk over the o2 Arena. Once we have completed the walk we will make our way back to Waterloo, taking in places of interest. I am sure we will be able to find a riverside pub for lunch. We will then end up in the Union Jack Club before making our way home. I was surprised and pleased to hear that they can arrange to take wheelchairs over the Arena.

Airborne Statue

Roger Barefoot has produced a statue of an Airborne soldier that he intends to present to the Trafalgar Inn for display in the bar. The statue as you can see from the photo on the right is in a light Bronze colour and is inside a glass dome. The wording on the base of the glass dome speaks volumes. The wording is; **“Every Day is Remembrance Day”**
Well done Roger.



Saturday 6th August at the Conservative Club

The Conservative Club are holding an evening to celebrate the opening of the Olympics in Brazil on **Saturday 6th August**. Come and have a Carnival night and dance the night away. Why not come dressed as a sportsman/woman or in the Rio Carnival style. The evening starts at 8pm. There is no charge for this event.

Saturday 13th August at the Conservative Club

The Conservative Club are proposing to hold a Summer Dance on **Saturday 13th August** starting at 8pm. A live group called **“Bandwagon”** have been booked for the evening. Dress is Suit or smart casual. There is no PRA Summer Ball this year so why not come along and dance the night away. There is no charge for this event.

Stuart

100th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme



**Peter is on Parade with the
Branch Standard**



People brave the rain to attend the service

Airborne Forces Weekend



Thank goodness the sun is shining as there is not much room inside



There is no room in the Inn

The front bar is full as well



**This photo was taken at 11.30pm on the Sunday evening
They didn't want to leave at midnight**