



From the Secretary – Maj (Retd) PA Raison



THE PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION

Patron: HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES, KG, KT, PC, GCB, AK, QSO, ADC

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1 April 2018

Regional and Branch Secretaries

Please see below the monthly news from RHQ PARA. If you have anything you would like to promote in this please send submissions by the 25th of each month to the Secretary at secretary@prahq.com

Topics:

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- B. Brentwood Imperial Youth Band
- C. British Airborne Pilgrimages 2018
- D. Royal British Legion – LIBOR Funded Trips
- E. Charity Commission News
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A. Ardennes Commemorations 2018

The first of this year's commemorations took place 23-26 march 2018. The Remembrance Pilgrimage this year was formed of one Veteran (8th Midlands Battalion) and one veteran (3 PARA Sqn RE) as well as family and friends. This included four daughters of the late Major Jack Watson MC (13th Lancashire Battalion) and 15 other members of the Watson family. RHQ PARA was represented by the new Regtl Lt Col, Liam Cradden MBE and the PRA Secretary. The National Standard Bearer was also present along with the appointed Regimental Bugler. Mrs Sally Warner, the daughter of the late Major Jack Watson was the tour guide for the weekend.

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This year was an extra special occasion at Bure as they had chosen to rename the square after Major Jack Watson MC. A large crowd gathered at the memorial to the 6th Airborne Division and the 13th (Lancashire) Battalion, The Parachute Regiment. The Bourgmestre de Tellin, M Jean Pierre Magnette welcomed everyone to Bure. The PRA Secretary conducted a short the service of remembrance which was followed by the wreath laying ceremony at the Memorials for those who fought in and around Bure along with supporting arms to liberate the village during the 3-5 January 1945. During the Act of Remembrance, the Regtl Lt Col read Binyons words and the Last Post was played. This was followed by one minute's silence, Reveille and the National Anthems. Wreaths and flowers were laid by the Veterans, daughters of the late Major Jack Watson MC, the Bourgmestre and the British Ambassador Alison Rose. The Bourgmestre then addressed all present and a response was given by the British Ambassador.

The Bourgmestre then conducted the unveiling ceremony of the plaque to commemorate the renaming of the square. Ralph Bennet of Tours International read out the citation for Major Jacks Watsons MC in French, followed by the PRA Secretary in English. The daughters of Major Jack Watson MC then unveiled the plaque.

The second day began at the Commonwealth Cemetery in Hotton, where the group were invited to lay a small wooden cross on the grave of one of those buried there. We were joined by the Bourgmestre de Hotton, Jacques Chaplier, along with a small number of local people and Belgium Standard Bearers. The PRA Secretary again conducted a short service and those gathered joined together for a simple wreath laying ceremony in memory of the fallen. Wreaths were laid by the Veterans along with the Regtl Lt Col, followed by flowers by the Bourgmestre. Binyons words were read by Tom, the Son of Lt Col Luard (CO 13th Battalion) The group then spent the rest of the day visiting the lone graves of men of the 6th Airborne Division who rest in peace in communal cemeteries away from the cemetery. Flowers and a wooden cross were laid on each grave in their memory.



B. Brentwood Imperial Youth Band

Brentwood Imperial Youth Band recently spent the day working with The Band of The Parachute Regiment at a musical Workshop, followed by a joint concert in the evening. This is the second year the workshop has taken place. The Band Director, Mr Johnpaul Wyndham has very generously donated the sum of £1744.50 to the Association, collected from those who attended. I would also like to thank the Bandmaster Jon Rockey and the band members, for their continued support to the Imperial Youth Band and the Association.

C. British Airborne Pilgrimages 2018

Tours International are the preferred supplier of Airborne Commemoration Pilgrimages for RHQ PARA and will be providing Pilgrimage Tours in 2018 to the Anniversaries for the Battles of the Ardennes, Normandy and Arnhem.

Free places are available for Airborne Veterans and Widows of WW2 Veterans returning to the theatre in which they fought. This is very kindly funded by the Airborne Forces Security Fund. The following combinations qualify for the places:

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| | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Veteran and Spouse | - 2 people |
| Veteran and Carer | - 2 people |
| Veteran, Spouse and Carer | - 3 people |
| Widow(er) and Carer | - 2 people. |

Those who qualify and are travelling with Tours International will receive the subsidy through the Tour Operator. Tours International can be contacted on: 01892 515825 or resv@tours-international.com

Those travelling independently, through other travel companies or veteran organisations will be required to claim the subsidy through RHQ PARA. Please contact Admin or the Secretary for further details and the application form.

D. Royal British Legion – LIBOR Funded Trips

The Royal British Legion is on a mission to take all surviving WW2 veterans back to where they served.

The Royal British Legion wants to take all surviving veterans of the Second World War on a free Remembrance tour to where they served during their time in the Armed Forces.

Tours will take place throughout 2018 and will give WW2 veterans the chance to meet up with fellow veterans and pay their respects at battlefield sites, cemeteries and memorials. The Treasury is enabling these free tours to be funded by Libor fines, and will enable the veterans to return with a family member and carer.

Philip Hammond, Chancellor of the Exchequer, said: "I'm delighted that we can continue to support those who want to return with The Royal British Legion to the countries where they served. We have committed over £5 million of Libor funds to help those who fought for our freedom to return to pay their respects and safeguard the memory of those who made the ultimate sacrifice."

No national database exists of WW2 veterans who are still alive today, so the Legion is asking the public to help us make sure every surviving veteran can take part. If you're a grandchild, neighbour or carer and know someone who fought in WW2, please tell them about this opportunity and encourage them to sign up!

For more information please contact Arena Travel: <http://www.arenatravel.com/our-holidays/remembrance-travel/libor-tours-of-remembrance> or call them on 01473 660800.

E. Charity Commission News

The Charity Commission News is a quarterly newsletter, which provides essential information for charity trustees and their advisers. This is vital reading for any trustee within the Branches and provides a wealth of information on new ways in which to boost charity funds for organizations of all sizes. Further details can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/charity-commission-news>

F. Insurance Renewal

The policy schedule for the renewal of the annual PRA Insurance is up for review. If anyone would like to suggest any amendments to the policy, please let me know by Fri 6 Apr 2018 at the latest.

G. Affiliation Fees

There are still a number of branches that have yet to pay their annual affiliation fee of £50. The annual policy is up for review at the present time. Thank you to those that have paid so far. Payment can be made by cheque payable to: The Parachute Regimental Association or by BACS transfer to: Sort Code 16-19- 26, Acct No 19954846. Please ensure you use your Branch name as a payment reference so that we can track payments.

H. Regimental Charity Collections and Donations

The Association Charity is extremely grateful for all donations received. All members actively involved in coordinating fundraising events and street collections for Branches do a tremendous amount of work in this area. The Parachute Regimental Association, Support our PARAs and Airborne Forces Security Fund charities work directly with organisations such as SSAFA and the RBL, who are mainly there as a point of contact for

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Airborne Veterans seeking assistance and as such do not provide funding for individual requirements. Your support to the Regimental Charities is vital to the direct support of Airborne Veterans now and in the future.

I. Last Post Information

The names and details of all Airborne Veterans that we are notified about are published in the Pegasus Magazine. At the moment we are receiving this information from a variety of sources, which is often not complete. Our limited resources and lack of staff are seriously hindering the confirmation process. It is therefore vital that all those who notify this HQ of the death of one of our veterans provide the information below:

First Name
Last Name
Known As
Service Number
Date of Birth
Date of Death
Brief Service History/Rank/Regiment/Battalion

Without this information we cannot confirm the identity of the individual or publish the details in Pegasus. We have no wish to upset the families or colleagues of our lost veterans, who are very keen to see their relative's military service in print. The support of all members in this matter is greatly appreciated.

J. Welfare Process

The Regimental Welfare team at RHQ PARA is here to assist any member of the Parachute Regiment or Airborne Forces in need. The process is designed to ensure transparency and provide an audit trail for any assistance given, which is a lawful requirement. The first part of the process must be initiated by a SSAFA or RBL caseworker. They will complete Form 'A' which is then submitted to the Regimental Welfare Team. They will then allocate funds from the Regimental Charities as required. The following numbers are very useful and should be used if you do not know your local SSAFA or RBL office number:

SSAFA Helpline: 0800 731 4880

RBL Helpline: 0808 802 8080

Any Branch that requires assistance from the Regimental Welfare Team can call them on: 01206 817102 or see the website for details.

EVENTS

The events calendar on the website is being constantly updated. Here is a selection of forthcoming events:

K. Pass out Parades (POP)

The next Pass Out Parades are as follows:

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 797 Bruneval Platoon | Friday 27 April 18 |
| 798 Breville Platoon | Friday 29 June 18 |
| 799 Athens Platoon | Friday 3 August 18 |
| 800 Normandy Platoon | Friday 19 October 18 |
| 801 Tamera Platoon | Friday 16 November 18 |
| 802 Arnhem | Friday 14 December 18 |

The parades take place at Helles Barracks, Catterick. Please ensure that you make contact with ITC Catterick prior to attending as cancellations do occur with minimum notice given.

L. Commemoration Dates for 2018/2019

For planning purposes please note the future dates for Commemorations:

Ardennes

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2018 23-26 Mar

Normandy

2018 5-7 Jun

Arnhem

74th 2018 21-23 Sep

75th 2019 20-22 Sep

M. Diary Dates

| | | |
|----------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 5 May 18 | 4 PARA Reunion | Lincoln |
| Les Ratcliffe: | 07711 853103 | |
| Dave Macaulay: | 07731 824247 | |
| 13 May 18 | Memorial Service | Hardwick Hall, Chesterfield |
| 20 May 18 | PARAs 10 | Colchester |
| 23 Jun 18 | Regimental Commemoration Day PRA AGM | National Memorial Arboretum |
| 6 Jul 18 | WO & Sgts Mess Past and Present | Aldershot |
| 7 Jul 18 | ABF South | Whale Island, Portsmouth |
| 14 Jul 18 | ABF North | Eden Camp, North Yorkshire |

Details of all these events and others are available on the Web Page at
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