



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

## NEWSLETTER March 2020

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 25<sup>th</sup> of each month to the Secretary at [secretary@prahq.com](mailto:secretary@prahq.com)

### Topics:

- A. Ardennes and Rhine Crossing Commemorations
- B. Affiliation Fees 2020
- C. Veteran Willaim (Bill) Iarder – 11 Para
- D. Tilshead Memorial Service
- E. Regimental Charity Collections and Donations
- F. Glasgow and West Veteran Visit
- G. Regimental Commemoration Day – 20 June 2020
- H. PRA Commemoration Dinner
- I. Welfare Process
- J. Last Post Information
- K. Charity Commission News
- L. National Standard Bearer - Replacement

### Events

- M. Pass Out Parades
- N. Diary Dates

### A. Ardennes and Rhine Crossing Commemorations

As I write this, we are in the final preparation stages for the Ardennes and Rhine Crossing Commemorations, which will take place over the period 20-26 march 2020. We are very lucky this year to have 11 Veterans travelling on various stages of the trip. Some of which have never been, or have not travelled for some time. A full report will be available after the event.

### B. Affiliation Fees 2020

Branch affiliation fees are due now for 2020. Branches that may be having some difficulty raising this sum are requested to make representation to their Regional Secretary. The annual Affiliation Fee remains at £50. This is despite the rising cost of replacing Branch Standards. A full review is under way and this cost may increase in the future.

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.

### Affiliation - A Reminder of the Benefits

1. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) permission to use the Regimental Logo on Branch Standards and letterheads.

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2. Full Public Liability Insurance and Branch Standard Insurance (new certificate issued in Apr 19).
3. Access to Regimental support for organised functions, i.e. The Band, RDIFFT, Pony Mascot, associated Regimental assets (subject to availability).
4. Support from the National Executive Committee and RHQ PRA on constitutional and branch management and membership matters.
5. The ability to fundraise in support of the Branch, its members and branch activities.
6. Receive Monthly Branch Newsletters and other correspondence.

### **C. Veteran Willaim (Bill) Iarder – 11 Para**

We were contacted recently by a lady in regards to the Arnhem Commemoration Medal, commissioned by the Dutch as part of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorations in 2019. It came to light that her Father was an 11 Para Veteran of Arnhem.

On the 18 September 1944, Bill jumped on the second wave into Arnhem. The first wave had landed the previous day but they had heard nothing from them and what lay ahead. Bill remembers vividly the sound of German MG fire on the DZ, close by and over his head 'something I will never forget' he said. They fought in and around the houses in Oosterbeek for day's until finally the call came for them to pull out.

With five others, Bill made his way to the banks of the Rhine. There were no boats to be seen and unable to swim they were stuck. A little while later a small boat drifted close by, which they managed to pull ashore. It was already leaking and had no oars but better than the alternative, so they all jumped aboard and started paddling with their hands to the other side. It took a while and all the time the boat was taking on water as they neared the opposite side. Just short of the bank, the boat finally gave up and sank beneath them, forcing them to scramble ashore as best they could. They had all made it and once ashore they set off up the bank away from immediate danger.

Some of Bill's family (seen below) were delighted to hear some of his stories for the first time in the run up to our visit and were there for the presentation of the medal.



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#### **D. Tilshead Memorial Service**

The Portsmouth (Pompey Paras) Branch of the PRA attended the Memorial Service for the Glider Pilot Regiment and Airborne Forces held at Tilshead Village on Saturday 23 February 2020.

This was in response to the local Tilshead community appeal earlier in 2019 for funds to replace memorial benches fallen into disrepair. We, Pompey Paras had contributed to the airborne appeal for contributions. The turnout was very impressive and the weather cleared for the outside service at the Tilshead village hall. This was followed by a further service on the edge of the plain, overlooking Westdown Camp. As always the range flags were outright in response to the stiff breeze as always expected in this area.

Two large granite style stones serve as memorials to those long gone days. One is inscribed to the Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces the other to the Glider Pilot Regiment. Wreaths were laid and the Act of Remembrance was observed. A bugler from 5 Rifles was in attendance.

Pompey Paras were privileged to lay the Regimental wreath on the plain.

The photographs show branch members in attendance at the bench in the village: Dr Henry Goodall, Vic Thorn (Regional Secretary), John Manning, and Bill Maddy.



#### **E. Regimental Charity Collections and Donations**

The Parachute Regimental Association 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 (PRA) and the Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Charity (PRAFC) work directly with organisations such as SSAFA and the RBL, who are mainly there as a first point of contact for 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.

#### **F. Glasgow and West Veteran Visit**

At RHQ we often hear about veterans in care homes that have served but have had little or no contact with the Regiment since their service. William Graham in Scotland was just such a veteran. One of the Care Assistants

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at his home got in touch with us to see if we could help in tracking down any information regarding his service. Here Branch Secretary Terry McCourt and Frank Cameron from the Glasgow and West Branch, very kindly visited William to talk through his career and to see if they could jog his memory. William served with 3 Para in Palestine. Terry and Frank helped complete his application to The Army Records Office in Glasgow so that they could apply for his complete record of service.



#### **G. Regimental Commemoration Day – 20 June 2020**

The Regimental Commemoration Day will take place on Saturday 20 June 20. Changes to the format of the meal have allowed us to cater for more people in 2020 due to popular demand. This is a fantastic opportunity to organise a Branch trip and to meet up with old comrades. The Colonel Commandant, Band and Regimental Mascot will be in attendance.

#### **H. PRA Commemoration Dinner**

A Commemoration Dinner will take place on the Saturday evening following the Regimental Commemoration Day on Saturday 20 June 20. This was a great success last year and therefore we have decided to do it again at the Bosworth Hall Hotel. Tickets for the dinner are limited and will be sold on a first come, first served basis.

The dinner allows those that have travelled some distance to prolong the weekend with the informal reception on the Friday and the dinner on the Saturday evening.

The Colonel Commandant, Regimental Lt Colonel, National Secretary, Regional Secretaries, plus some of the RHQ team will be attending. This will give everybody a chance to meet them either at the Friday informal gathering, during the Commemoration or at the Dinner on Saturday evening.

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Branch Secretaries are asked to raise subject of the dinner at their meetings and gather support from their members. Applications for tickets should be sent to John Carey. Tel: 01827 284585, Mob: 07766 724934, Email: [Jmc9365@msn.com](mailto:Jmc9365@msn.com)

#### **I. Welfare Process**

The Regimental Welfare Team at RHQ is ready to help, at short notice anyone, who requires assistance. In February they made 34 grants totalling £32,964.81.

The system is very simple and available 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 individual or Branch that requires assistance from the Regimental Welfare Team can call them on: 01206 817102 (Laura) or 01206 817103 (Sue). All information shared is confidential. See the website for further details.

#### **J. Last Post Information**

The names and details of all Airborne Veterans that we are notified about are published in the Pegasus Magazine. It is 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 appreciated.

#### **K. 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>

#### **L. National Standard Bearer - Replacement**

Ken Price, the National Standard Bearer for the Association will retire after the Ardennes/Rhine Crossing Commemorations in March this year. Ken has done a fantastic job for the past 14 years.

A replacement will be required on a volunteer basis, ideally with Branch Standard or Royal British Legion experience. Selection and training will take place in Colchester in April 20, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee (EC). Any person that is interested in taking up this appointment should contact the Secretary on [secretary@prahq.com](mailto:secretary@prahq.com) at the earliest opportunity to register their interest. All applicants must be

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available for the major Commemorations that are held throughout the year. The full conditions for the new National Standard Bearer will be confirmed by the EC at a later date.

I will add that following the merger of the charities and post the 75th Commemorations, a review will take place. This may mean that some of the current commemorations are not covered on a large scale and will have the minimum of representation. I do not have any further details yet and this will be discussed at the meeting of the EC on 18 Apr 20.

## **EVENTS**

The events calendar on the website is being constantly updated. If you are organising an event in your area, please let us know so that we can promote the event on the website and Facebook page.

### **M. Pass out Parades (POP)**

The scheduled Pass Out Parades for 2020 are as follows:

Arnhem	Fri 17 Apr 20
Rhine	Fri 8 May 20
Normandy	Fri 19 Jun 20
Breville	Fri 7 Aug 20
Bruneval	Fri 25 Sep 20
Primosole	Fri 23 Oct 20
Athens	Fri 20 Nov 20

The parades take place at Helles Barracks, Catterick. The support that members of the Association give to our recruits is outstanding. Please ensure that you make contact with ITC Catterick CSM at: [John.Willis443@mod.gov.uk](mailto:John.Willis443@mod.gov.uk) prior to attending as cancellations do occur, due to non-formation or amalgamation.

### **N. Diary Dates**

The diary is filling up now for 2020. Further event information is available on the website so please take a look: <https://theparachuteregimentalassociation.com/events/>

If you have any dates for 2020 please let me know at the earliest opportunity so that they can be added to the diary. Full details of events should be sent when available and updated accordingly.

6 - 8 Mar 20	<b>2 PARA Reunion</b>	Blackpool	POC: Dave Singletary
	<a href="mailto:david.singletary@ntlworld.com">david.singletary@ntlworld.com</a>	Mob: 07940 576977	
12 - 16 Mar 20	<b>1 PARA Reunion</b>	Blackpool	POC: Fred Walker
	<a href="mailto:Frdwalk1@aol.com">Frdwalk1@aol.com</a>	Mob: 07770 975587	
20 - 22 Mar 20	<b>3 PARA Reunion</b>	Blackpool	POC: Dave Dyson
	<a href="http://3parareunionclub.co.uk">3parareunionclub.co.uk</a>		
20-26 Mar 20	Ardennes/Rhine Crossing	France, Belgium, Germany	
20 - 23 Mar 20	Ardennes		
23 - 26 Mar 20	Rhine Crossing		
24 Mar 20	Op VARSITY Act of Remembrance	Marks Hall, Earls Colne	

The Service starts at 1050 hrs. Please allow time as it is some distance from the entrance. Lunch/refreshments will be available in the tea room afterwards.

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9 May 20	4 PARA Reunion	Leeds
POC: Les Ratcliffe, 07711 853103 or Dave Macaulay, 07731 824247		
16 May 20	PARAS 10	Colchester
12 Jun 20	Falklands Commemoration Service	The Jigsaw Memorial White Swan Centre Citadel East Killingworth Newcastle upon Tyne NE12 6SS

More details are available by clicking: [Here](#)

20 Jun 20	PRA Annual General Meeting	National Memorial Arboretum
20 Jun 20	Regimental commemoration Service	National Memorial Arboretum
20 Jun 20	PRA Commemoration Dinner	Bosworth Hall Hotel

<https://www.britanniahotels.com/hotels/bosworth-hall-hotel-spa>

11 Jul 20	80 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration	Tatton Park
13 Sep 20	Arnhem Service	Somerby

**Details of all these events and others are available on the Web Page at [www.theparachuteregimentalassociation.com](http://www.theparachuteregimentalassociation.com)**

*Paul Raison*

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