



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 May 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 25th of each month to the Secretary at secretary@prahq.com

Topics:

- A. RHQ News
- B. Support to Vulnerable Members
- C. Welfare Process
- D. Regimental Charity Donations
- E. Support Our Paras - The 2.6 Challenge
- F. Military Knight of Windsor – Ernest Morgan MM
- G. The Hartenstein Museum Appeal for Help
- H. UK MASK FORCE

Events

- I. Diary Dates

A. RHQ News

RHQ PARA and the Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Charity (PRAFC) staff have switched to remote working. The MOD has insisted that all staff conduct their work from home and this will have an impact on any items or information posted to the HQ. Please bear with us and we will respond as soon as we can. Membership applications cannot be processed at the moment but we are working on this.

B. Support to Vulnerable Members

I was very pleased at the response for help and assistance to vulnerable members of the Association. A number of past members got in touch and offered their services to anyone that was alone or in need of assistance. If you have any veterans within your Branches, that may be vulnerable through age or illness and do not have family that can support them in isolation, help is available.

The support that Branches are offering their members has been excellent and some great incentives have been thought up to support and assist those that need it. Please continue to support those that are vulnerable and need assistance. Many local Councils and agencies are available and the offer of support from totally unrelated or connected individuals to our members has been very helpful and generous. Government assistance is also available by registering at: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable>

Register with this service if either:

- you have a medical condition which means you're classed as being clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus
- you've been told by your GP or hospital clinician that you're clinically extremely vulnerable and need to 'shield'

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'Shielding' means not leaving your home and minimising contact with other members of your household.

You'll be able to ask for help if you need it - for example, with getting essential supplies or your basic care needs.

You can register yourself, or on behalf of someone else.

All Branches are asked to provide regular contact with those that do not engage in social media and a short phone calls could mean so much.

C. Cancellation of Events

The following events have now been cancelled:

- Normandy 76
- Tatton Park
- Eden Camp
- Airborne March (Wandeltocht) Arnhem

A decision is yet to be made in regards to Arnhem 76 but the Dutch Government have banned all public events up until the 1 September 20 at the moment. The Airborne March (Wandeltocht) that was due to take place on the 3 September has also been cancelled and gives a clear indication that restrictions will still be in place.

It is very likely that no events will be permitted to take place in 2020 and that we have to look ahead to 2021.

C. Welfare Process

For serving personnel please contact your Unit Welfare Officer (UWO) in the first instance for any welfare support.

For veterans please contact the Support our Paras (the official charity of The Parachute Regiment) Welfare Team for any queries.

Laura McPhilemy-Head of Welfare rwo@parawelfare.org 07702 190685 and Sue Laidler-Welfare Cell Manager welfarecell@parawelfare.org 07340 347136

We are based within RHQ PARA in Merville Barracks, Colchester.

Support our Paras can assist any past or present member of The Parachute Regiment or wider Airborne Forces plus their families if eligible.

If you require financial assistance please contact either SSAFA 0800 731 4880 info@ssafa.org.uk or the RBL 0808 802 8080 info@britishlegion.org.uk in the first instance. You will be allocated a caseworker who will complete a Form A request for assistance with you. This will then be sent to the Support our Paras Welfare Team for consideration. Successful grants are issued swiftly back to the caseworker for onward payment. Urgent grants can be made on the day if required.

This process is both confidential and transparent, providing an audit trail.

During the current climate of COVID-19 the Welfare Team are working remotely and continue to offer assistance.

In April we made grants of £12,373.99 to 24 people. We also sent out over 80 hampers/food parcels and 42 Heinz food packs at an approx cost of £3700.

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RHQ PRA Team:

Paul Raison (Veterans Officer) secretary@prahq.com

Mobile: 07385 839647

Julia Weymouth (PRA Admin) admin@prahq.com

Tel: 01206817077

Please note: An answerphone service is available on 01206 817077 and messages can be left. However, it may be a few days before they can be picked up.

In all cases, if the query is really urgent please email

D. Regimental Charity Donations

The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Charity (Support Our Paras) has suspended all charity fundraising events for the foreseeable future. It is great to see that a number of people out there are seeking to support the Regimental Charities through this unforeseen period. Your continued support to the Regimental Charities is vital to the direct support of Airborne Veterans now and in the future.

E. Support Our Paras - The 2.6 Challenge

From Sunday 26 April, lots of people have stepped up to the challenge to join Support our Paras, our community, and the whole UK to [take on your own 2.6 challenge](#) and fundraise for them.

It's simple: you choose a challenge related to 2.6 or 26 and make a difference. Whether you hop around your garden 26 times, eat 26 boiled eggs in a week, do 26 press ups with your kids, tab 2.6 miles, skip for 26 minutes, climb your stairs 26 times in a day... we want YOUR help.

How do you get started? Think of your 2.6/26 idea. Share your challenge on social media using the hashtag #TwoPointSixChallenge, #SupportourParas, set up your fundraising page and you can help support our Paras and save the UK's Charities.

Set up your fundraising page for us at [VirginMoneyGiving](#) Or [Justgiving](#)

No rules ([except ensuring that you're following government advice on exercising at this time](#)), just do what you can to be a part of it. Get active, have fun and do whatever you're able to! Anyone whose challenge raises over £26 will get a specially designed PARAS'2.6 T-shirt when lockdown is over.

F. Military Knight of Windsor – Ernest Morgan MM

I am pleased to announce that we now have a Para in Windsor Castle. Congratulations go to Ernest Morgan MM, who was appointed in January 2020. Read the full story of how this came about at the end of this newsletter.

G. The Hartenstein Museum Appeal for Help

Over the last couple of years, the museum has been working at their master plan to renovate and refurbish the entire museum. The museum closed in October last 2019. This master plan succeeded, with a grand reopening planned for Friday March 13. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 measures were implemented, the re-opening cancelled and the museum closed ever since.

The day after the closure, the museum they received 20,000 cancellations from visitors who had booked to come. These visitors will not be coming to the Netherlands again this year. The situation is worsened by that recent cancellation of the Airborne March (Wandeltocht) that was due to take place in the first week of September. The income from the 35,000 marchers and thousands of visitors will be lost.

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Situation

The visitor record has been broken every year since, 95% of the revenue of the museum is earned by the museum through ticket sales, the other 5% comes from the commune of Renkum for the free entrances for our schoolchildren.

The museum has a lot of costs. They have a precious collection that needs to be protected and this is covered by the small (paid) workforce of 6 people and with the help of 120 volunteers. However, if they cannot generate an income due to the closure, they will struggle to keep the museum afloat.

The museum has taken all the steps they can to lower the costs and have asked for help from the Dutch Government, the Airborne Region and the Provence. They also need your support.

How Can You Help

You can donate an amount of your choice to the museum by clicking on the link: [Hartenstein Donation](#)

For € 30 you can buy a friends subscription at: [Friends Membership](#) With this card you can visit the museum for free for a year.

You can make a donation with the text: 'GIFT' to Bank Account NL89RABO 03850 33648 in the name of: Airborne Museum.

H. UK MASK FORCE

Please see below a message from a former member of The Parachute Regiment who together with a team of others has come up with an idea to support the NHS and other Emergency Services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To All Airborne Friends,

A few weeks ago, a number of colleagues formed an alliance to develop a plan to supply much needed PPE to the NHS and Care Homes, both of which are suffering chronic shortages. We are all aware of the problems pertaining to the management of the NHS, but there is no point in dwelling upon that now. The battle before us is to raise as much money as possible to procure large volumes of PPE equipment quickly for distribution to the NHS and Care Homes.

UK MASK FORCE has been incorporated to fulfil that challenge with **100% of all monies raised going towards the purchase of FFP2 and FFP3 Face Masks, to be followed with other essential PPE** items. The team is heavily weighted with ex-military and particularly with ex-airborne. Lt Gen Louis Lillywhite, who commanded 23 PARA Field Ambulance, has taken the important role of Senior Medical Advisor and in the background, is General Sir Mike Jackson, who like me advises where needed. All the ex-military involved are highlighted below and their details are on the website.

This venture has been set up covering every aspect in great detail – medical, legal, accounting, PR, logistics, procurement, distribution and operations management. The unique strength, and perhaps the most important, is having one's own people on the ground in China working directly with the factories to make certain the PPE is made to the standards required here in the UK. We also intend to purchase locally where possible.

The Airborne Network is the launch pad and this notice signals the beginning, although I am quite amazed by the amount of money already donated by those who seem to have heard about the project by word of mouth.

Please look at the website by going to www.ukmaskforce.co.uk and I ask you to donate generously and/or to pass this on to everyone you know. This virus is not going away quickly and those doctors, nurses and care workers at the sharp end, helping to save lives, need every assistance they can get. *UK Mask Force* will do its very best to provide as much PPE as possible and help to draw this crisis in UK to a close.

Thank you for your support.

Alastair Ralston-Saul

(Formerly 1 PARA and 10 PARA)

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I. Diary Dates

The list below shows the events **that have yet to be cancelled**. This will be updated on the website on a regular basis. Further event information is available on the website so please take a look:

<https://theparachuteregimentalassociation.com/events/>

All cancelled events have been removed but details will be retained for the 2021 event. Once details of these have been confirmed please let me know.

If you have any dates for 2021 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.

13 Sep 20	Arnhem Service	Somerby
5 Sep 20	PARAS10	Catterick
17-20 Sep	Arnhem 76	Netherlands
5 Nov 20	Field of Remembrance	Westminster Abbey
6 Nov 20	St Lawrence Jewry	London
7 Nov 20	PARAS10	Colchester
8 Nov 20	Remembrance Day	London

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

www.theparachuteregimentalassociation.com

Paul Raison

OTHER INFORMATION:

Military Knights of Windsor – A Para in Windsor Castle

COVID-19 Basic Protective Measures

Help raise funds for Support Our Paras when you shop online – FREE!

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MILITARY KNIGHTS OF WINDSOR - A PARA IN WINDSOR CASTLE

I was appointed as a Military Knight of Windsor on 19 January 2020

The Military Knights of Windsor are the oldest military establishment in the Army List. Formed by King Edward III in 1348, shortly after the battle of Crecy (1346), the foundation consisted of Knights who, having taken their private armies to France to fight for the King, had been taken prisoner by the French who demanded heavy ransoms in return for their release. This often meant selling up their complete estates to raise enough money.

Known as the Alms Knights, they formed part of the College of St George which was created to support the establishment of the Most Honourable and Noble Order of the Garter. 26 'Poor Knights', mirroring the 26 Garter Knights, were given accommodation in the Lower Ward of Windsor Castle in exchange for daily prayer in St George's Chapel for, and on behalf of, the Monarch and the Garter Knights. All the Alms Knights were unaccompanied in their somewhat monastic existence in the Castle, though undoubtedly some must have been married.

Due to the decline in the number of Alms Knights once there was no longer a requirement for accommodation by ransomed landowners, King Henry VIII reduced the establishment to 13, and in accordance with his will, Queen Elizabeth I improved the accommodation of the Knights so that they were housed individually with one of their number appointed as Governor, and installed in the old belfry, now known as the Mary Tudor Tower.



New regulations for the establishment and governance of the Alms Knights were drawn up under the Statutes of 1559. In 1833, King William IV changed the designation of the Alms Knights to that of 'The Military Knights of Windsor' and at the same time granted them permission to wear uniform of Army Officers on the Unattached List. This dress is still worn today and comprises a scarlet tailcoat (in the summer), sword, sash and cocked hat with plume.

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This photo of the Military Knights was taken in 2016

The Knights are all retired Army Officers dependent on their Army Pensions as, apart from a small stipend, they are not paid for their duties. To qualify for admission to this select and elite community whose members live within the walls of Windsor Castle, candidates must be married, be under the age of 67 and have a distinguished army record. They must join a waiting list of applicants awaiting a vacancy to arise before being vetted by a selection process, approved by the Sovereign and then admitted with all due ceremony. The individual must be prepared to undertake the numerous duties expected of him over the year, most of which entail being on parade nearly every Sunday. The main event in the calendar is the Garter Ceremony when the Military Knights head this very colourful procession through the Castle precincts and into St George's Chapel, the spiritual home of the Order of the Garter. Additionally, there are four 'obits' (Remembrances of College Benefactors) in the year, plus the occasional military funeral and the laying up of a Garter Knight's Banner. A further duty involving the Military Knights is to be on parade for State Visits at Windsor Castle. On average, the Knights are on parade approximately 52 times in the year, in addition to which are several rehearsals. Most of these duties are linked to the Chapel, and only very occasionally are the Knights on parade away from Windsor. Some Military Knights undertake voluntary roles within the College and Castle. The Knights' homes in the Lower Ward of the castle are theirs for as long as they can carry out their duties, and in most cases, this takes them to the end of their days.

Today, the Military Knights, who are no longer necessarily poor, but are still military pensioners, participate in the Order's processions, escorting the Knights and Ladies of the Garter, and in the daily services in St. George's Chapel. They are not members of the Order itself, nor are they automatically a knight of any chivalric order.

There is a mix of cap badges and DE/LE Officers from Capt - Brig; with the Governor normally being a Maj Gen or Lt Gen.

In 2006, when I was 54 and in what I thought was my final year of service, I made some enquiries about the Military Knights of Windsor. I was extended in service until 2009. Although the minimum age for admission is 60, between 2006 - 2012, I received numerous phone calls and letters seeking confirmation that I was still interested.

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In 2012, I was called to Windsor Castle for an interview with the then Governor of the Military Knights (Maj Gen Sir Michael Hobbs KCVO CBE), which I successfully passed, and my name was added to the official list.

In 2014, me and my wife had to go to Windsor Castle for interviews with the present Governor of the Military Knights (Lt Gen P Pearson CB CBE); the Governor of Windsor Castle (Admiral Sir James Perowne KBE), and the Dean of St George's Chapel (The Right Reverend Sir David Conner KCVO).

On 16 July 2019 I was informed that my name was being put forward to HM The Queen for her approval for me to fill a vacancy that occurred on 26 June when a Military Knight died. On 23 July I was informed that HM had approved my appointment. I moved into Windsor Castle on 4 January 2020 and was officially installed as a Military Knight of Windsor on 19 January.

Previous Paras to have been appointed are:

Maj Gen Sir Peter Downward KCVO CB DSO DFC - 13th Bn Para Regt, 1944 - 45, and Glider Pilot Regt. Governor of the Military Knights 1989 - 2000. Now deceased.

Maj G R Mitchell MBE BEM (Gordon) - 1 SAS 1944 - 45, 1 Para and Gds Indep Para Coy 1946 - 51, 22 SAS 1962 - 65. Military Knight 1988 - 2001. Now deceased.

Capt (Hon Maj) P H Bolton MBE (Peter) - 9 Cdo WWII, 5th Bn Para Regt 1947. Military Knight 1990 - 2011. Now deceased.

Earlier this year I informed Maj Paul Raison of my appointment and RHQ Para and the PRA decided that a Regimental flag would be presented to me, to be flown from my house in the castle on The Queen's birthday (21 April) and Garter Day in June.



Ernie Morgan MM

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Please see below the advice given by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in regards to the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Basic protective measures against the new coronavirus

Stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the WHO website and through your national and local public health authority. Most people who become infected experience mild illness and recover, but it can be more severe for others. Take care of your health and protect others by doing the following:

Wash your hands frequently

Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.

Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.

Maintain social distancing

Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

Why? When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.

Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth

Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.

Practice respiratory hygiene

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.

Why? Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early

Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority.

Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on the situation in your area. Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also protect you and help prevent spread of viruses and other infections.

Stay informed and follow advice given by your healthcare provider

Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your healthcare provider, your national and local public health authority or your employer on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on whether COVID-19 is spreading in your area. They are best placed to advise on what people in your area should be doing to protect themselves.

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Help raise funds for Support Our Paras when you shop online – FREE!

It's a challenging time for all of us, but our work goes on. If you, your family and friends are taking advantage of safe deliveries to your home during #COVID-19, please sign up to raise FREE funds for us with every purchase you make. It is quick and easy way to raise funds from your home to help Support Our Paras.

Charities, including us, have been really hard hit by the number of events that have had to be cancelled and our fundraising has taken a serious knock however our Welfare cases are increasing. Please help by signing up to one or both of the free links below:-



Sign up to @GiveasyouLive (it's free!) and access the shop you want through their website. We'll receive a % of your spend as a donation, at no cost to you or us. With over 4,400 online retailers to shop from we'll be eternally grateful for your help. Please sign up at this link;

https://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/supportourparas?utm_source=charityfr&utm_medium=post&utm_campaign=FRCoronaGenericShopping&utm_content=26mar2020

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way to support a charity of your choice every time you shop, at no cost to you. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the net purchase price (excluding VAT, returns and shipping fees) of every eligible purchase to your chosen charity. Simply visit smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1131977-0 and login with your existing Amazon account to start supporting SUPPORT OUR PARAS today. Alternatively, go to 'Settings' on the Amazon App and turn AmazonSmile on for your device



The donations that we receive as a charity mean that we are able to continue supporting The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces through the welfare of veterans, serving soldiers and their families. In March this year we have issued grants of over £31K.

Thank you for your help and support in these unprecedented times. Please keep safe and well. Best Wishes from all at Support Our Paras.



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