



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 August 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. RHQ News
- B. Support to Vulnerable Members
- C. Airborne Masks – New Rules
- D. Pilgrim Bandits – PPE for Veterans
- E. Pegasus Journal Subscriptions
- F. Welfare Process
- G. Regimental Charity Donations
- H. Wilf Oldham – Bolton Branch
- I. Charity Registration - COBSEO
- J. A Winter in Belfast
- K. Albert Arthur Willday – Arnhem Veteran
- L. Arnhem 2020 – Outline Brief

### Events

- M. Diary Dates

### A. RHQ News

RHQ PARA and the Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Charity (PRAFC) staff continue to work remotely from home due to the restrictions in place. This will continue for the foreseeable future.

### B. Support to Vulnerable Members

The help and assistance to vulnerable members of the Association by Branches continues and has so far been outstanding. Additional support to only a small number of members has been required. Please remember that the Welfare team are here to help so please do not hesitate to get in touch with them if required.

Despite the change of rules in relation to social distancing, all members are advised to apply caution when outside their houses and visiting public places. The wearing of masks on public transport is now mandatory and if you or one of your members require PPE then please see Item D in this newsletter and contact your Regional Secretary.

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.

Government assistance is also available by registering at: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable>

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 214015

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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'

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

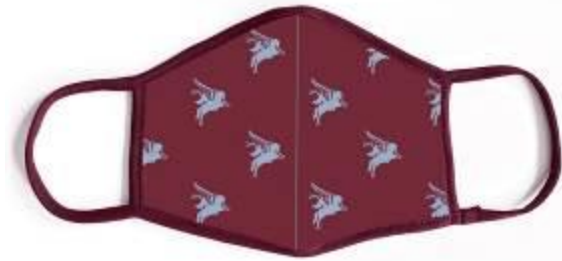
You'll be able to ask for help if you need it - for example, with getting essential supplies or your basic care needs.

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. Airborne Masks – New Rules**

Face coverings are now mandatory on public transport and in shops. You can now get a variety of 'Airborne' Face Masks and Coverings from the Airborne Shop: <https://www.airborneshop.com/gifts/face-coverings> The photographs below show the masks, which is also available in plain maroon.



If you do not have access to the internet you can call the Airborne Shop on: 0115 819 2173. Quote your PRA membership number to receive a discount.

### **D. Pilgrim Bandits – PPE for Veterans**

The Pilgrim Bandits Charity recently ran a fundraising event in support of the PRA. All funds raised were used to fund lifesaving PPE boxes that have been distributed to selected Parachute Regimental Association Branches, helping the old and vulnerable through this period.

This has resulted in them being able to supply all 11 Regions with PPE for distribution to their vulnerable members. The packs provided initially will contain 100 masks in packs of 5 and 200 pairs of gloves.

If you or any of your members requires PPE, please get in touch with your Regional Secretary. Our thanks to Matt Hellyer (Ex Para) and the Pilgrim Bandits team for their continued support.

### **E. Pegasus Journal Subscriptions**

The next Pegasus Journal will be the 2020 Yearbook, arriving in the first quarter of 2021. From next year, the annual Yearbook will cost £10.00 for UK subscribers, £15.00 in Europe and £18.00 for the Rest of the World, including delivery.

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The new annual Yearbook will have a limited print run. The only way to guarantee your annual hard copy is to contact Lisa Waller, the Pegasus Journal Manager, on 07534 881066 or at [lisa@pegasusjournal.org.uk](mailto:lisa@pegasusjournal.org.uk) and set up a Standing Order.

Single copies will also be available from The Airborne Shop [www.airborneshop.com](http://www.airborneshop.com) .

Finally, an Online digital version of the Journal is available for £7.50 at [www.pegasusjournal.org](http://www.pegasusjournal.org).

## **F. 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](mailto:rwo@parawelfare.org) 07702 190685 and Sue Laidler-Welfare Cell Manager [welfarecell@parawelfare.org](mailto: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](mailto:info@ssafa.org.uk) or the RBL 0808 802 8080 [info@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto: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 July we made grants of £24,149.18 to 30 recipients.

## **RHQ PRA Team:**

Paul Raison (Veterans Officer) [secretary@prahq.com](mailto:secretary@prahq.com)

Mobile: 07385 839647

Julia Weymouth (PRA Admin) [admin@prahq.com](mailto: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**

## **G. Regimental Charity Donations**

The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Charity (Support Our Paras) has suspended all charity fundraising events for the foreseeable future. There have been a number of fundraising events organised by individuals and groups to support our charity, which is great news. Your continued support to the Regimental Charities is vital to the direct support of Airborne Veterans now and in the future.

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## H. Wilf Oldham – Bolton Branch

99-year-old Arnhem veteran Wilf Oldham, was a guest at the Para Café on Thynne Street, Bolton last week. Along with other members of the Bolton Branch, Wilf enjoyed breakfast served by the friendly staff. They were joined by Mrs Linda Thomas, Mayoress of Bolton and Jonny Maude, a young 95-year-old ex Para. The Mayoress showed a great interest in Wilf's work in school clubs and associations in both Holland and the UK. The service and reception at the café was excellent so if you are in the area, why not pop in.

Wilf was also taken to Slaters Menswear in Bolton, to collect his new suit from the store by David Sharkey and Kevin Orton from the Bolton Branch. Slaters Menswear have very kindly donated the suit, including a new shirt ready for Wilf's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrations on the 28th of August 2020. At this time, he will also receive his MBE, awarded in the New Year Honours List. Thanks to David Sharkey for the photos and Slaters Menswear for the very generous donation. <https://www.slaters.co.uk/>



I.liAnnual

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## **I. Charity Registration - COBSEO**

It is a Branch requirement to register on an annual basis with the Charity Commission. We have recently done some work with The Confederation of Service Charities (COBSEO) in regards to providing Affiliate Membership to all Branches. One of the main requirements for this funding is that our Branches keep up to date with their annual reporting.

There are a number of Branches that have not supplied their annual reports to the Charity Commission and should do so at the earliest opportunity. This is a fairly straight forward process and can be completed online.

### **COBSEO Overview**

Cobseo represents the whole Serving and Veterans Community – Some 6 million people and their dependants. Membership of Cobseo is open to Charities who promote and further the welfare and general interests of the Armed Forces Community, subject to fulfilling our membership criteria. For more information:

<https://www.cobseo.org.uk/about-us/>

### **Member benefits**

- Develop policies for dealing with issues of common concern, particularly welfare
- Facilitate direct access to individual member charities, with appropriate expertise, in order to lead on our membership's behalf to present policies to government or equivalent
- The Chairman of Cobseo and members of the Executive Committee sit on various Government groups and committees to ensure the Armed Forces Community voice is heard and account is taken of their particular needs and concerns
- Regular communication from the Cobseo Office reviewing the activities of the Confederation, setting out subjects of interest and drawing members attention to key issues of the moment.
- Provide a Cobseo website in which there is a members' area that provides information and topics of interest and to which members are encouraged to contribute
- Training events, including Trustee Training
- Networking Opportunities
- Cobseo Annual General Meeting – The AGM is an opportunity for the Cobseo Chairman to report on the past activities of the Confederation and to bring the members up to date on issues of common concern. It is also an opportunity for the membership to have direct access to the Executive, Government Ministers and Officials and to discuss issues they may have. A keynote speaker is often invited to address the meeting.
- Central Cobseo office that will try and answer any query or question you may have

## **J. A Winter in Belfast – David Ellis**

A Winter in Belfast is a frank diary transcript of a young officer's experiences in The Parachute Regiment during a tour of duty in Belfast in the winter of 1976-77.

His hard-hitting account captures the reality of the daily lives of 10 Platoon, D Company, 2 PARA - the sad, the funny, the boredom and the ridiculous. Though the violence was less intense than in previous years, daily shootings and endless riots being a thing of the past, the frequent bombings and shootings meant that the toll of dead and wounded soldiers, police and civilians continued to mount.

Much of the violence in Northern Ireland during this period was sectarian. Loyalists and Republicans murdered each other, often in a completely random manner, properties were bombed and individuals targeted on a daily basis.

These forthright diary entries were written each evening throughout the tour, therefore, the 1977 style is authentic and does not concede to modern sensitivities or politically correct language. There is no intention to

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offend the reader or any member of the Battalion, the contents are merely a reflection of how things were said and done four decades ago. Officers and soldiers of D Company (plus other members of the Battalion that the author tracked down) have also added their own comments.

To order your copy:

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B08C3W9594/ref=ppx\\_yo\\_dt\\_b\\_asin\\_title\\_o00\\_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B08C3W9594/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o00_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1)

#### **K. Albert Arthur Willday – Arnhem Veteran**

I have been informed that Albert Arthur Willday, a much loved and well respected member of the Airborne Forces Association (WA) has recently been placed into palliative care. Our thoughts and best wishes are with Albert and his family. Albert is one of the few remaining veterans who went to Arnhem, having dropped in by glider with the Kings Own Scottish Borderers in September 1944.

Earlier this year, the branch put together the attached short memoir of Albert's life and Service History with the assistance of his daughter.

Our thanks to Jeff Moorcroft, Vice President and Secretary, Airborne Forces Association (WA).

#### **L. Arnhem 2020 – Outline Brief**

Please note that all events that are being held in Arnhem this year for the 76<sup>th</sup> Anniversary will be strictly controlled and are by invitation only. This includes:

The Airborne Plein (Arnhem)  
Ginkel Heath  
Driel  
Oosterbeek

There will be no Parachuting at Ginkel Heath on the Saturday as the Exercise to support this will finish on Friday 18 September 20. There will be no stands or stalls.

Access to the Cemetery on Sunday 20 September will be restricted while a short service of Remembrance takes place. There will be no public access at this time.

Please see the attached letter from the Airborne Commemoration Foundation.

#### **M. 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                                  |
| 17-20 Sep | Arnhem 76            | Netherlands Restricted events and access |
| 5 Nov 20  | Field of Remembrance | Westminster Abbey                        |
| 6 Nov 20  | St Lawrence Jewry    | London                                   |
| 7 Nov 20  | PARAS10              | Colchester                               |

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8 Nov 20

Remembrance Day

London

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

*Paul Raison*

**Notes/Attachments:**

- 1. Part Time Job Opportunity**
- 2. Albert Arthur Willday – Arnhem Veteran**
- 3. Arnhem Commemoration Foundation Letter**

**PART TIME JOB OPPORTUNITY**

General handyman/gardener required for country house in Warfield Berkshire.

Would suit retired/semi-retired gentleman with knowledge of gardens would be useful, if not a quick learner needed

Duties to include but not limited to:

- Formal garden lawn mowing & maintenance (house sits in formal gardens of 1-2 acres)
- Whole grounds 10 acres
- General maintenance (fence repairs/gates repairs etc)
- Perimeter security patrol to make sure all gates are locked on paddocks
- Indoor swimming pool chemical top up and measurements (once weekly)
- Occasional driving to local station / possibly London- using owner's car
- Must be dog friendly
- Vegetable patch and green house very important so would suit someone with a passion for things "green"
- Tennis court power wash occasionally
- Irrigation system monitoring
- House security when owner away & dog sitting

This above is envisaged to be 3-4 hours 4-5 days a week to suit

Self-employed @ £ 15 per hour (4 hours a day x 4 days a week)

There is a gardener's/handyman's office for all tools/bits/WC and changing facilities etc

For further details, please call or email:

[robb.simms-davies@rsdmail.co.uk](mailto:robb.simms-davies@rsdmail.co.uk)

+44 (0) 7730 800046

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