



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 January 2021

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. Happy New Year
- B. Support to Vulnerable Members
- C. Affiliation Fees 2021
- D. Christmas Hampers – Messages of Thanks
- E. Covid-19 Fraud and Scams
- F. Pegasus Journal Subscriptions
- G. Welfare Process
- H. Para Café - Bolton
- I. Regimental Charity Donation
- J. Charity Registration – COBSEO
- K. Support to Funerals

Events

- L. Diary Dates

A. Happy New Year

Well we start the New Year as we began in March 2020, Locked down. On a brighter note, we have comms, three meals a day, the TV/internet is working and we only have one patrol a day.

There are a number of important guides included in this newsletter that you should use to stay safe.

Please find attached to this newsletter a message from Lt General Sir John Lorimer KCB DSO MBE, President of the Parachute Regimental Association.

B. Support to Vulnerable Members

As we come out of Lockdown 2 and the country goes through a series of changes in regards to levels of protection in certain areas, it is essential that the help and assistance provided to vulnerable members of the Association by Branches continues. So far this support has been outstanding and thank you to all that have helped in any way.

Please remember that the Welfare team are here to help so please do not hesitate to get in touch with them if required on:

Laura McPhilemy, Head of Welfare. Email: HoW@supportourparas.org Tel: 07702 190685

or

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 214015

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Lisa Stapleton, Welfare Cell Manager. Email: wm@supportourparas.org Tel: 07340 347136

Please follow the rules in your local area and apply caution when outside your house or visiting public places. If you are in any doubt, please stay at home.

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

C. Affiliation Fees 2021

Thank you to all those that have forwarded their affiliation fees to Julia for 2021. 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 was completed last year and we now have substantially better cover than in previous years.

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.
2. Full Public Liability Insurance and Branch Standard Insurance (new certificate issued in Apr 21).
3. Access to Regimental support for organised functions, i.e. The Band, RDFFT, 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.

It is requested that all Affiliation Fees are paid NLT 31 March 2021.

D. Christmas Hampers – Messages of Thanks

The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Charity (PRAFC) has once provided Christmas Hampers this year. They were distributed to proven ex-Airborne soldiers and their dependents in need.

We have received many messages of thanks from those that received the hampers, which shows how much they are appreciated.

Thank you to all the Branch Secretaries that completed the paperwork and Gwen Appleton, Julia Weymouth and Lisa Stapleton, the RHQ Staff involved in their processing

Support Our Paras is still raising money to provide these hampers which this year cost the charity £30,000. You can help by clicking on the link and donating: [SOP Hampers](#) Thank you very much to all the Branches that have donated to this fund already. Your support to the PRAFC and the veterans and their families that receive the hampers is greatly appreciated by all.

E. Covid-19 Fraud and Scams

Another Lockdown has once again brought with it a number of scams. It is important that you remain vigilant and guard against criminals using the publicity around coronavirus as a chance to target you with fraudulent emails, phone calls, texts messages or social media posts.

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It's important not to let the criminals rush or panic you into making a decision that you later come to regret.

With fake news articles on the internet and in the press promoting remedies, cures and false advice around coronavirus, it's also important to only share articles from trustworthy sources. If you are in any doubt, then visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus or www.who.int/ for updates and information.

Criminals are experts at impersonating people, organisations and the police. They spend hours researching you for their scams, hoping you'll let your guard down for just a moment. Stop and think: it could protect you and your money.

General Advice

Emails and text messages

If you receive an email, text or WhatsApp message purporting to be from the government, HMRC, the World Health Organisation (WHO) or a coronavirus-related charity, then **take a moment to think** before you part with your money or information.

Never click on links or download attachments as criminals may infect your devices with malware or ask you to enter your personal or financial information into fake websites. In some cases, this can lead to your identity being stolen.

- Sam received an email from a government department, letting him know that he could claim financial help if he clicked on a link. When Sam clicked the link, he was directed to a fake website designed to look like that of the genuine organisation but which was actually collecting his personal and financial information. Sam failed to receive a payment and was also unaware that his computer was infected with malware as a result of clicking on the link.

Phone calls

If you receive a call offering you protective face masks, hand sanitiser, testing kits or medicine, be aware that they may not always be genuine. If you do receive a call, don't be afraid to **refuse, reject or ignore** their request. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

- Leon thought he was buying face masks and hand sanitisers that were sold out everywhere else. However, after completing his purchase, he failed to receive his order and his money was now in the hands of a criminal.

Social media posts

With world markets currently under immense pressure, the chance to move your money to new investments with unusually high returns may sound like too good an opportunity to miss. Proceed with caution and make sure you check the [Financial Conduct Authority's register for regulated firms](#), individuals and bodies. It could be fraud or a scam if you're being pressurised to act quickly. **If it sounds too good to be true it probably is.**

- Steve saw an advertisement from a stockbroking firm which claimed that due to coronavirus investments weren't making the profits that they could be. It said that moving his investment to this firm would guarantee high returns with little to no risk. Steve moved his investment and only realised he had been scammed when he was unable to contact the company on their normal number or via email in order to get his money back.

A knock on the door

You should always exercise caution when accepting help from an individual or allowing them access to your home in any capacity. You should only accept assistance or take visits from people well-known to you, or who you know have been sent by a government body or reputable organisation. If you are in any doubt about someone's identity, you should take steps to verify it – by directly contacting the organisation they claim to be from using a number you know to be genuine.

There are no cures or vaccines for Covid-19 at this time and medical or health professionals will not come to your home unannounced and without prior notification.

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If anyone attempts to force or coerce you into handing over funds – in person or otherwise – always contact the police.

- Linda was particularly worried about contracting the virus as she was vulnerable and lived alone. She received a knock on her door from someone claiming to be a health and safety worker advising that they needed to enter her home to complete an assessment and that she needed to pay for this upfront. Linda handed over the money, but no assessment was undertaken.

If you believe you've fallen for a scam, contact your bank immediately on a number you know to be correct, such as the one listed on a statement, their website or on the back of your debit or credit card.

F. Pegasus Journal Subscriptions

Pegasus Journal has changed. It will now be an Annual Yearbook, starting from the first Quarter of 2021, at a cost of £10. If you wish to subscribe to the Journal, YOU MUST ACT NOW.

You were sent a letter and standing order form with a reference number. To guarantee your copy of the magazine:

- YOU must send the Standing Order Form as soon as possible.
- Print run will be limited. Unless you subscribe you may miss out
- Some single copies will be available to buy from The Airborne Shop www.airborneshop.com for £10 + extra P&P.

If you have not received a form or would like a new one or any information, please contact Lisa Waller at pjm@supportourparas.org or call 07534 881066.

If you received a refund you have **six months** from the date of the cheque to bank the refund. If you prefer to **donate the refund to Support our Paras** for its vital welfare work, this will be much appreciated. Simply destroy the cheque and let me know at pjm@supportourparas.org.

NB The email address has changed. Any emails to lisa@pegasusjournal.org should still be picked up but we urge you to use the new email address.

G. 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. Email: HoW@supportourparas.org Tel: 07702 190685

or

Lisa Stapleton, Welfare Cell Manager. Email: wm@supportourparas.org Tel: 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.

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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 December the PRAFC made 32 grants of £15, 374.90. Grants that have been made include the following: rent, household furnishings, mental health support, employment training, mobility aids and funeral expenses.

H. Para Café - Bolton

The cafe opened to reach out to veterans from all regiments to reduce isolation and signpost them to the services they may need. Traditional services in honour of those who made the ultimate sacrifices for their country have had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. To mark this year's Remembrance Day, the newly-opened Para Café in Bolton has commissioned artist Kazer to paint a huge mural in memory of late paratrooper Albert Campbell, the grandad of co-owner Lauren Cole.

The mural depicts World War II's Operation Market Garden, as featured on the book 'A Drop Too Many' by Major General John Frost. Co-owner Danny Lloyd commissioned the mural as a surprise for Lauren, who said "I'm so proud of my grandad, it is fantastic and emotional to have this mural."

Danny said: "This year we are limited to what we can do on Remembrance Sunday and so wanted to do this as this is our first year at the cafe. "We opened it in memory of Albert Campbell."

Kazer, who painted the mural on Sweet Green Tavern, started work on the mural and has also painted poppies on the entrance to the café. He said: "A mural like this will mean a lot to a lot of people, and it will give exposure to the café". "The main focus and detail will be in the soldiers and finishing it will be weather-dependent, once it is done it will last a while". More updates to follow. Thanks to David Sharkey for the photos.



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I. 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 great 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 and their families, now and in the future.

J. COBSEO Charity Survey

The Parachute Regimental Association recently completed the COBSEO Charity Survey, which assesses the way in which any charity operates. This was completed as a condition of the Branches joining as Associate members.

I am pleased to say that the feedback from COBSEO has been very positive. This was there summary comment:

'The additional clarification in the comments boxes is very helpful, and the return as a whole represents an organisation whose governance is in good shape'.

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/>

K. Support to Funerals

During this difficult period, we have lost a number of veterans, many of whom are well known and respected members of our Association. In addition to this we have also been made aware of a large number of veterans who were not actively involved in the Association or were not even members.

In all cases and despite the restrictions in place, the Association has provided representation in some form at all the funerals that we have been notified of. I cannot express how grateful the families are of this support and we have received countless letters and emails, thanking the members for their support at such difficult times.

Often with very little notice the Branch Secretaries have mustered a small number of members and represented the Regimental Association. I would personally like to thank everyone who has helped support such events. We will continue to do what we can and give any Airborne Veteran the send-off that they deserve.

I would like to add that in all such cases the safety and health of our members is paramount and no one should attend if the rules do not allow it or they are concerned about their own safety.

Events

L. Diary Dates

Event information for 2021 is available on the website so please take a look:

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

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.

Details of all these events and others are available on the Web Page at
www.theparachuteregimentalassociation.com

Paul Raison

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Attachments:

Presidents Message – Lt General Sir John Lorimer
Veterans Railcard Application

Attached Notes:

1. Veterans Railcard

1. Veterans Railcard

The new veterans Railcard is now available and is valid from 5 November 2020. To apply online click [HERE](#):

To apply:

Online

You can save yourself time by buying your Veterans Railcard online. The only things you'll need are:

- Evidence of your eligibility as a veteran
- A good quality digital passport-style photo ready to upload
- A debit or credit card

What happens next?

Digital Railcard: if you opt for a digital Railcard, they will send you a download code once your application has been approved (which can take up to 5 working days) and once you download the Railcard app and upload the card onto your phone, you can start using it straight away.

Physical Railcard: they aim to dispatch your Railcard within one working day of it being approved (which can take up to 5 working days), but it's probably best to allow up to five working days for your Railcard to arrive. It'll be sent out free of charge by First Class post, but if you prefer, you have the option to pay for Special Delivery. You'll need to have your Railcard with you to be able to get a discount on your rail ticket, so be sure to leave enough time before your journey for the Railcard to reach you.

Cost

1 Year - £21 until March 21, £30 from April 21

3 Year - £61 until March 21, £70 from April 21

By Post

Alternatively, you will be able to download and complete the [application form](#) (copy provided with this newsletter) and you can then post it with a copy of your evidence of eligibility, passport style photo of yourself and your named companion (if applicable) and payment to:

National Railcards
PO Box 10776
Ashby-de-la-Zouch
LE65 9FA

Please make cheques and postal orders payable to 'ATOC Ltd Railcard'

Allow 15 working days* for your Railcard to be delivered.

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