



From the Secretary – Maj (Retd) PA Raison



THE PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION

Patron: His Majesty King Charles III KG, KT, PC, GCB, AK, QSO, ADC

NEWSLETTER January 2023

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 - 2023 In Brief
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- C. Festival of Remembrance 2022
- D. Veterans Survey'
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A. Happy New Year - 2023 In Brief

Happy New Year to all our members, wives, partners and families. I wish you all the very best for 2023. There are a number of events already planned for 2023. The details of these will be placed on the events page of the PRA Website: <https://theparachuteregimentalassociation.com/events/> as well as in brief form in this newsletter. Please refer to the website for the most accurate and up to date information when planning or looking for additional information as the event gets closer. The success of any event relies upon those attending, so please support the key events where you can.

B. PRAFC Christmas Hampers – Messages of Thanks

The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Charity (PRAFC) has once again 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 especially Julia Weymouth, Gwen Appleton and Lisa Stapleton the RHQ Staff involved in their processing.

SUPPORT OUR PARAS sent out 354 hampers at a cost of £85 each and are delighted that a number of PRA branches and individuals supported our 2022 appeal.

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.

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 214015

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Anyone wishing to assist directly in supporting this initiative, no matter how big or small, will be most gratefully received. Simply visit <https://justgiving.com/campaign/hamperappeal22> to give what you can.

Can I please ask that all Secretaries place a note in their diary for this year to remind them to submit their 2023 nominations in October/November in a timely manner. There have been a higher than usual number of late submissions for hampers this time around and we do not want any members to miss out in future.

C. Festival of Remembrance 2022

My sincere thanks to Evan Parsons for stepping up to the plate and volunteering to take part in this year's Festival of Remembrance service. Evan, a member of the London Branch, can be seen leading the way during the march into the arena at the Royal Albert Hall. It wasn't until I saw Evan at the Remembrance Day Parade at the Cenotaph, that he told me that he has misunderstood the invitation and thought that he was there as a spectator. I can only apologise and remind everyone not to volunteer for anything. Evan did enjoy the day and will dine out on his version of the story for many years to come.



D. Veterans' Survey

The government has launched its first Veterans Survey for veterans and their families. This is the first-ever exercise to collect feedback from the veteran community across the UK, coordinated by the Office for Veterans' Affairs and the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Responses to the survey will help the government better understand the experiences, needs and wellbeing of the veteran community.

The Survey takes approximately 20 mins to complete: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/veteranssurvey>

Deadline Wednesday 1st February 2023.

More details are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-veterans-get-their-say>

E. Veterans UK Online Services - AFCS

A new online Armed Forces compensation service has gone live. Veterans UK, part of Defence Business Services (DBS), has launched a new online claim service to help people to access injury and illness compensation more easily. Veterans UK is responsible for administering compensation and pensions schemes for both serving personnel, veterans and their families. The new service is part of our commitment to modernising the services we provide to the Defence community and is the first step in the digitalisation of DBS's Compensation Schemes.

Before launching the service, the Veterans Modernisation Team had to successfully complete a Cabinet Office Beta Assessment and provide evidence to show they had met a 14-point service standard.

How will the new online service help customers?

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- Although the paper claim form can still be used if customers prefer, the online service has been developed entirely using a 'user needs' approach, identifying what users want and need and providing a digital solution. It has the following added benefits for customers:
- The online form takes less time to complete in comparison to the paper form
- The online form is more intuitive, meaning it only asks questions relevant to the individuals claim and is based on previous questions
- Individuals can submit multiple claims on one application
- There is an option to save progress and take a break
- It allows individuals easily upload supporting documents relevant to their claim

The online form can be accessed via any internet device, including phones: For more information click on this link: [AFCS Online](#)

F. Regimental Charity Donations

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

Anyone looking to raise money for Support Our Paras should get in touch as soon as possible to see how the team can help you. Check out the website at: <https://supportourparas.org/>

G. Welfare Process

It is very important that Branches use the regimental welfare Team for any cases that are reported to them. We have had several cases recently that have escalated into quite complex cases and members of the Branch have been unnecessarily burdened by the work this has produced. The Welfare Team are trained to deal with these cases and will be able to identify the most suitable course of action for an individual in need.

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 and Airborne Forces) Welfare Team for any queries.

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

Lisa Stapleton, Welfare 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 and their dependants.

If you require financial assistance please contact either SSAFA 0800 260 6767 or use this link to find your nearest Branch: <https://www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/find-local-branch> 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.

H. Blue Light Card

Blue Light are offering a discount service for the emergency services, which includes HM Armed Forces Veterans, NHS and the social care sector, providing members with thousands of amazing discounts online and on the high street.

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For just £4.99, members of the Blue Light community can register for 2-years access to more than 15,000 discounts from large national retailers to local businesses across categories such as holidays, cars, days out, fashion, gifts, insurance, phones, and many more.

This includes Asda, who are currently giving card holders 10% discount on everything (Clothing, food etc) so there's a good chance for people to be able to save some money, especially with Christmas coming up. The link for the website to register is: www.bluelightcard.co.uk

I. Fundraising Regulator Charity Registration

We have been informed by the Lothian Branch that there may be a requirement to register with the Fundraising Regulator, prior to collections being permitted in Railway Stations and other areas. This is a condition set out by the location so please check the requirement when arranging your collections.

Charities that fundraise in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland can apply to register with the Fundraising Regulator. Please note the different sites depending on your location:

- <https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/>
- <https://www.goodfundraising.scot/fundraising-guarantee>

All registered organisations can display the Fundraising Badge on their fundraising materials – the logo that says 'registered with Fundraising Regulator' – and are listed in our public directory.

J. Diary Dates

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

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

If you have any dates for 2023, please let me know at the earliest opportunity so that they can be added to the diary. Information for events can be sent to be included on the website forecast of events. Full details of events such as date, time, outline of event, cost etc. must be provided and updated accordingly.

Month	Date	Event/POC Details	Location
Mar	10-12	2 Para Reunion Al Jones: allen.jones1@ntlworld.com or 07970415951	Blackpool
	16-19	1 Para Reunion Joe Bailey: joepara62@gmail.com or 07506069663	Blackpool
	24-26	3 Para Reunion Ray Larkin: raylarkin@virginmedia.com	Blackpool
May	6	Coronation of King Charles III	London
	14	Friends of the Tenth	Borough on the Hill, Leicester
Jun	3-8	Normandy 79	Normandy, France
Jul	8	Regimental Commemoration Day	National Memorial Arboretum
	8	Regimental Commemoration Dinner	Royal Court Hotel
Sep	15-17	Arnhem 79	Arnhem, Netherlands
Nov	12	Remembrance Day	Whitehall, London

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

Paul Raison

Attachments:

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