

The Jumper

Volume 10 Issue 2 May 2011



The Parachute Regimental Association Aberdeen Branch

HRH The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay, honorary branch life member

From, The Chairman and the Branch Trustees
Gentlemen,

Aberdeen PRA on the front line (Albeit in the form of a woolly hat)



In the March newsletter, alongside a picture of Bob Campbell and Ian Ross showing 50 newly made woolly hats, I explained that the branch had agreed to assist SOS (Support Our Soldiers) by donating 50 woolly hats to be placed in boxes destined for 2 and 3 Para currently serving in Helmand Province Afghanistan, the cost of the hats being covered from the 2011 Burns supper raffle proceeds. While the hats were being boxed up by SOS for February shipment, Abstitch made up another hat to be sent directly to our friend and Red Devil freefall display team aerial photographer L/Cpl Steve Candlish who left the Red Devils for a tour in Afghanistan with 2 Para. Steve is apparently babysitting a 70000 Lt fuel truck. If the insurgents realised what we pay for diesel they maybe wouldn't be so keen to blow it up. At today's UK diesel prices it's worth a cool £91K. Just keep heading my way buddy, my Land Rover could do with some. Steve was telling me that they're trying to get the locals to camouflage the truck as a Coca Cola tanker. Hope to get more pictures which I'll share with you. In the mean time we wish Steve and the rest of the lads a safe tour.

Fly a Flag for our Armed Forces

In the lead up to Armed Forces Day 2011, Aberdeen will once again show its support to the Armed Forces with the raising of the Armed Forces Flag on Monday 20 June 2011 at Aberdeen City Council Town House.

National Armed Forces Day 2011

This year's National Armed Forces Day (AFD) will be held on Saturday 25 June (**Aberdeen is Sunday 26th**) Now in its third year, the aim of AFD is to boost public support and appreciation of all those who serve and have served in HM Armed Forces (serving personnel, veterans and cadets). The city of Edinburgh has been chosen to host the 2011 national event for AFD and, as with previous years, this will be complemented by a variety of community-led events in towns and cities across the UK. As already stated, the main purpose of AFD is to raise awareness of the Armed Forces among the British public and the focus for 2011 is to build on the success of the 2010 AFD activities in local communities across the country. Further details are included with this newsletter and updates can be found on the AFD website: <http://www.armedforcesday.org.uk/>.

British Armed Forces and Veterans Day (BAFVD) Sunday 26 June 2011

Aberdeen City Council in partnership with the Aberdeen Universities Officers Training Corps is delighted to confirm that Aberdeen will once again celebrate British Armed Forces and Veterans Day 2011. The parade will march off at 11.00am from Albyn Place and proceeds down Union Street, finishing at King Street. The salute will be taken outside the Town House by Aberdeen's Lord Provost and senior commanding officers from the Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Navy at approximately 1220. During the parade, there will be a military fly past from RAF Lossiemouth. There will be a social gathering after the parade at the Gordon Barracks with a free lunch and a licensed bar where participants can relax and reminisce. Lunch tickets will be available from the parade RSM in Albyn Place. Coaches will take everyone to Gordon Barracks after fall out at 1230 in King St. All veterans and Regimental Associations are welcome to take part in the parade. Although the full extent of attending supporting assets is not yet known the key elements for Aberdeen PRA are: Be at Albyn Place some time between 10.15 and 10.45 on Sunday 26th June.

We will be marching down the whole length of Union Street
Coaches will take us to Gordon Barracks after the parade.

Airborne Forces Day Scotland 2011

ABFD will take place on **23 July 2011 in Dalkeith**. A 49 seater Coach c/w toilet (for those with pint mouths and ½ pint bladders) for the day out to Dalkeith has been ordered. The hire cost of the coach from Central Taxis & Coaches is £545 so we need to fill it to get maximum benefit. As ever with ABFD we have a reciprocal agreement between branches to try and sell the hosting branch's fund raising raffle books. On this occasion Lothian, the hosting branch, have elected to sell their raffles at £1 each or £10 per book. First prize is £300 in cash, 2nd prize is £150 in cash with the 3rd cash prize being £50. There is also a raft of other prizes such as televisions, video combi and a mountain bike so please try and purchase as many raffles as you can to assist Lothian with ABFD cost.

This next bit is just a personal opinion from someone who has done this before and just happens to be the Aberdeen branch chairman!! Far be it for me to criticise their efforts, but I can't help feeling our North Region colleagues in the Lothian branch have let a great opportunity slip through their hands with Edinburgh, their home town, hosting the National Armed Forces Day event. I believe what made the Aberdeen ABFD 2009 so special, along with all the hard work and effort we put in, was we tagged it on the back of the Aberdeen Armed Forces day and made full use of both civil authority and the military assets on parade at the same time to our mutual advantage. We also had our Regimental band on show alongside us which, to this day, is still talked about by other associations and public alike. Such things make all the difference! 3 times now, the Aberdeen branch has marched down Union St with our Regimental band. We first did it in 2005 at ABFD. We did it again at the 2009 Armed Forces Day then repeated it the following day at ABFD. No mean feat by the way and a credit to what this branch has achieved. Could we do it again for a fourth 4 time? You bet we can, but will we??

Gurkha Kitchen Curry Night Friday 25th March (back due to popular demand)

Once again a total of 45 members and guests attended the gathering on the night and ate like The Sherpa's of Mount Everest for the ridiculous price of £5 per head. Harry from the Gurkha kitchen once again did us proud and fed us with Mixed Pakoras consisting of chicken & veg along with that old Nepali favourite, Haggis Pakora followed by Lamb Curry and that other favourite, Nepali Everest chicken curry with mixed vegetables, Pilau rice and fresh made Nan breads. A magnificent spread well worth the effort in attending. On that note I have to say there were a couple who committed to attending that did not turn up and once again the branch had to incur that cost of the food ordered for them! We know who you are!! Forbes Skakle, assisted by Ian Ross and Ian Baxter, conducted our obligatory raffle which saw numerous good bottles won by members and their guests. We had hoped to maybe hold a follow up curry night around 4th June, however due to the club already having bookings for the function rooms this is not possible but I'll keep everyone posted when we commit to the next curry night gathering but the 4th June is cancelled.

The Jumper

Volume 10 Issue 2 May 2011

The Parachute Regimental Association Lapel Pin.

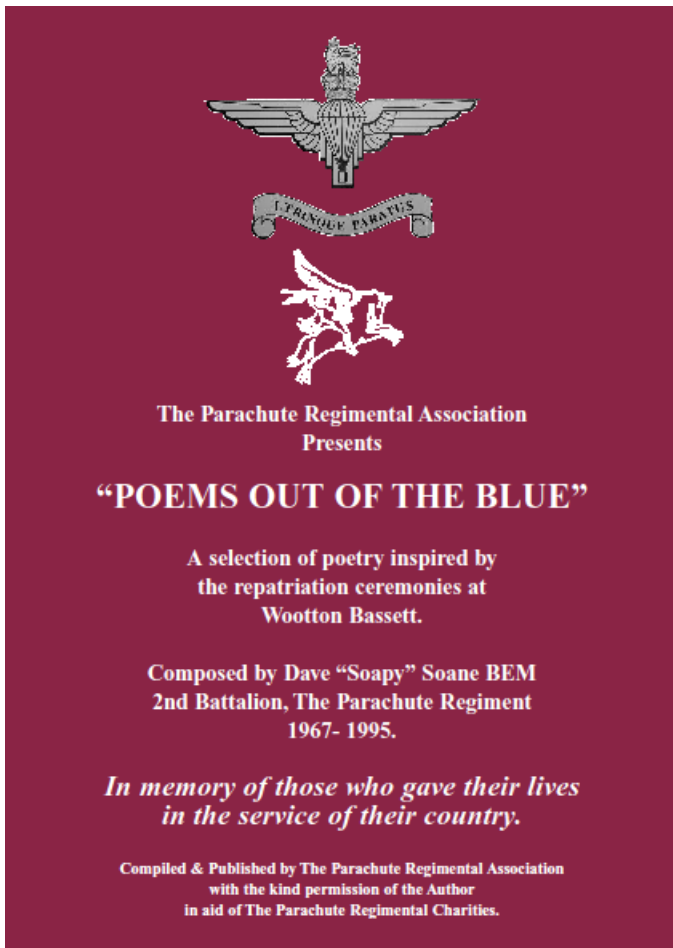


The following is taken from the PRA newsletter to all branches.

Attached is an example of an excellent fundraising idea of a lapel pin produced in cooperation with the Central Scotland Branch as a fundraising idea either for members to wear or to hand out to the public who made a contribution in support of the PRA at fundraising events and flag days. The initial order of 100 badges has been received at a production cost of £1.50 per badge. The additional cost of tooling has been paid and the badges are now ready to order. Branches wishing to place bulk orders can do so directly with the company at a cost of £1.50 per badge. Orders for single badges can be placed with Sandy here at RHQ. Cost of each badge from RHQ is £2.50. Branches may wish to agree their own price for their specific fundraising events. All proceeds are in aid of your branch or central PRA. Orders should be placed with Chris at: Ensign Motifs Ltd, Portkil Bay, Kilcraggan, Argyll, G84 0JQ. Tel 01436 842581. sales@ensignmotifs.co.uk or visit their website at www.ensignmotifs.co.uk. Please take advantage of this fantastic fundraising idea and "Thank You" and "Well Done" Central Scotland Branch.

We will look at ordering and stocking these lapel pins for Aberdeen branch members.

A Book of Poems Inspired by the Repatriation Ceremonies at Wootton Bassett, (Now Royal Wootton Bassett)



It is difficult to define the when and where the inspiration to write the poems came to 'Soapy.' Suffice to say they came from the sad but now regular occurrence of repatriation ceremonies passing through the quiet market town of Wootton Bassett. What started with a few local veterans paying silent respects to the first cortege has now become an international news event involving hundreds. It is a proud boast that the Standard Bearer of The Swindon branch of the Parachute Regimental Association has attended all repatriations which have passed through the town. The Swindon branch is now referred to by other visiting Standard Bearers for information and directions. One startling result of this event is that a bond has formed between the various representatives attending. There is no inter unit rivalry, no animosity, only a common bond of recognition and the honouring of the loss of a fellow serviceman or woman who has paid the ultimate sacrifice whilst serving this nation.

It was whilst attending these parades, listening to the inevitable banter and comments from family members and friends that 'Soapy' suddenly realised that far from losing their pride in their units it actually became stronger and during the return journey home thinking of the very sombre and poignant remarks, words just flowed into his head. Initially he ignored them but later as it happened more frequently he turned to his computer. He took the first of these poems to a repatriation ceremony and passed it amongst former Royal Marines who immediately liked it and asked if there were more. Having had the first offering accepted 'Soapy' continued to write, sometimes as late as the morning of a repatriation. By then he was being asked

for more and more copies which has now led to the publishing of this booklet. Dave Soane is not a professional writer; he is just another veteran who has just happened to pull 'POEMS OUT OF THE BLUE' and commit them to paper. If you have been kind enough to donate towards this booklet please, accept the poems in the spirit that they were written. No one cap badge or unit operates and survives without the support of others. Our Armed Forces are respected all over this world. To obtain your copy of this booklet of 28 wonderful Poems please send a cheque for £5.00 made payable to "The Parachute Regimental Association" to Mrs Sandy Milbank. RHQ PARA. Merville Barracks, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7UT. All proceeds are in aid of Regimental Charities. Branches wishing to obtain a number of copies for fundraising events are requested to please contact Sandy at RHQ PARA.

The Jumper

Volume 10 Issue 2 May 2011

Parachute Regiment soldiers face 'special payment' cut

Thousands of members of the Parachute Regiment could lose the right to special payments for their parachuting skills, under MoD cost-cutting plans. The Army could cut the number of those fully trained to parachute in 16 Air Assault Brigade - who include cooks and quartermasters - lowering the number who qualify for the £180-a-month bonus. The move would involve a 10% pay cut for the lowest-paid privates. The MoD said most soldiers would remain fully trained to parachute. However, it insisted no decisions had yet been taken on the extent of the changes. At the moment, almost 5,000 parachute-trained members of the armed forces receive the special supplement of nearly £6 a day in recognition of the extra risks and skills involved in parachuting. The Daily Telegraph reported that cutting the so-called Para Pay bonus would save millions of pounds a year. Colchester-based 16 Air Assault Brigade is the largest brigade in the Army with about 8,000 personnel in total. As well as the Parachute Regiment, its units provide artillery, engineers, logistical and medical capabilities. BBC defence correspondent Caroline Wyatt said the move could be a significant blow to morale for the soldiers of 16 Air Assault Brigade who have just returned from Helmand, in Afghanistan. While the Parachute Regiment has not made an operational jump since the Suez crisis in 1956, the SAS - of which more than 50% are Paras - parachuted in the Falklands, as well as more recently into Baghdad. Among those affected by the move could be quartermasters and cooks in 16 Air Assault Brigade who are traditionally fully trained to parachute. A Ministry of Defence spokeswoman said it was right that at a time of public spending restrictions "people who would never be asked to jump out of the back of a plane" might lose the payment. But the MoD said no-one affected would see their pay drop for at least a year after any change. Last year's strategic defence and security review outlined the future shape and size of Britain's armed forces with defence spending set to fall by 8% over four years. In a statement the MoD said the review "looked at reorganising the Army structure over the next 10 years to enable it to best meet the challenges of 2020 and beyond". It added: "In light of the SDSR, it is likely that the majority of Parachute Regiment soldiers will remain fully trained to parachute but the parachute requirement for 16 Air Assault Brigade as a whole will be reduced. "Soldiers who remain fully trained to parachute will continue to receive specialist pay. Personnel will be informed as soon as these plans have been finalised."

Branch management committee

This was discussed at last month's branch meeting and is repeated here as it is an extremely important item. It's worth informing and reminding everyone that, come the AGM of 2011, there will be several of the founding committee who have given 10 years service to the running of the Aberdeen branch. I, and they, believe it's only fair that these committee members, including myself, stand aside and make room for a fresh committee. We will be seeking nominations at the AGM for a new chairman, vice chairman, secretary and treasurer. There is also room for a few more committee members to assist on the side. I'll continue to bring this to the table over the next few months, and the October AGM will be here quicker than you think, so think hard about what you might do for the Aberdeen branch of the Parachute Regimental Association! Any branch's survival depends on volunteers stepping up to the plate and taking some responsibility for the running of the branch. We've done 10 years. Could you do a few?

Scottish Blond

On a bitterly cold winter's morning a husband and wife in Glasgow were listening to the radio during breakfast. They heard the announcer say, "We are going to have 8 to 10 inches of snow today. You must park your car on the even-numbered side of the street, so the Snowploughs can get through". So the good wife went out and moved her car as instructed. A week later while they are eating breakfast again, the radio announcer said, "We are expecting 10 to 12 inches of snow today. You must park your car on the odd-numbered side of the street, so the snowploughs can get through". The good wife went out and moved her car again. The next week they are again having breakfast when the radio announcer says, "We are expecting 12 to 14 inches of snow today. You must park....." Then the power went off.. The good wife was very upset, and with a worried look on her face she said, "I don't know what to do. Which side of the street do I need to park on so the snowploughs can get through?" Then, with all the love and understanding in his voice, that men who are married to blondes always exhibit, the husband replied "Why don't you just leave the bloody car in the garage this time?"

Best Regards

Bob Crocker, Chairman

Aberdeen Branch The Parachute Regimental Association

C/o The Sportsman's Club, 11 Queens Road Aberdeen AB15 4LY, Tel 01224 322795.

Chairman Bob Crocker Tel/Fax 01224 852361 (office), Mobile 07800612022

robert.crockerpr@btinternet.com

www.aberdeenpra.co.uk

Remember Meetings now start at 1930

Next Branch meeting takes place on Wednesday 29th June 2011, 1900 hours for 1930 hours

To Airborne, the world O'er, Shall brithers be for a' that

Disclaimer.

The Aberdeen Branch of The Parachute Regimental Association issue a disclaimer concerning any article or idea passed to branch members by way of this newsletter. This newsletter provides a conduit between the branch members to allow ideas, articles and topics to be viewed and discussed by its members. Although these ideas, articles and topics appear in this newsletter it does not necessarily reflect the view of the trustees or the membership.