



Mark Harding &lt;theraalewes@gmail.com&gt;

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**Newsletter - February 2020**

1 message

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**Cas Thoburn** <thoburnc603@mod.gov.uk>  
Reply-To: thoburnc603@mod.gov.uk  
To: "theraalewes@gmail.com" <theraalewes@gmail.com>

18 February 2020 at 11:06



# • The Gunners •

## Newsletter - February 2020

Welcome to the The Royal Artillery Charities newsletter. This is where you can keep right up to date with all the Regimental Family's news and information.

If you have any news for the Gunner website or the Newsletter from your regiments, branches, districts and regions we would love to receive them. Please ensure that you have permission to share information and images.

**The Gunners**



## · Message from the Association Secretary – Captain Allan Solly ·

This year the RA Association celebrates its 100th Anniversary. Since 1920 we have been providing quality support to Gunner veterans and serving soldiers and are proud of what we have achieved.

The RA Association has a long and prominent history.

The Royal Artillery Association was created on 26th May 1920 to form a 'Gunner Friend' network in every part of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth thereby establishing a bond of comradeship irrespective of rank between all artillerymen and to maintain our proud traditions. It was also designed to watch over and help those in need or distress and maintain contact with old comrades. Her Majesty The Queen is Patron.

Comradeship is mainly fostered through regular meetings of branches, where members get together for a meeting to plan activities and to discuss life and to watch over members and their dependants who are in need. Branches vary in size and composition but sadly membership is on the decline as latter generations seem less eager to seek comradeship with old friends.

All operational Batteries are branches and soldiers and officers are automatically members. Each branch (where possible) is affiliated to a Regular or Reserve Battery which is either local or in their recruiting area in order to encourage links between the serving soldiers and the retired Gunners, re-enforcing the Gunner Family ties. There are branches throughout England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. There are also Branches in Germany, Australia, Bermuda and South Africa.

Through these quarterly newsletters and its social media, Artillery House promotes various central activities of the Royal Artillery Association. Such activities include the Annual Assembly held at Blackpool where there is a weekend of parties and fun combined with the AGM, the annual Remembrance Services at the Hyde Park Memorial in November and at the National Memorial Arboretum, Lichfield in Staffordshire where we lay wreaths to fallen Artillerymen and women in our Gunner Garden. We celebrate St Barbara's Day (our Patron Saint) each year at Larkhill.

For many years before World War II the headquarters was based in Artillery House in Earls Court, London. Moves during its history included The Common then Connaught Barracks, the old Royal Artillery Academy and the Front Parade all in Woolwich before moving to Larkhill in late 2005 to co-locate with the Director Royal Artillery's staff.

Branches play a key role in welfare and indeed most branches still have welfare officers. It is our members who seek out those in need and distress and informed the Artillery Welfare Charities who provided the necessary benevolence. Comradeship is still a vital part of the Regimental Family though it does become more difficult to encourage the younger retired soldiers to join. The Royal Artillery Association is at the heart of the retired regiment and very supportive of the operational serving regiments.

## · RAA Assistant Secretary – Cas Thoburn ·

A big hello, my name is Cas and I am delighted to have taken over from Sarah. You might be thinking, I've heard that name before.....

I worked for ten years alongside Ian Vere Nicoll at the RACF, before taking a break as the Assistant Bursar at a local school. I have arrived at a special time as you celebrate the Association's 100th Year. Having recently visited the National Memorial Arboretum and Blackpool, I can confirm preparations are well underway for events taking place this year, which will be superb and I look forward to meeting you all.

Do keep in touch with me with any articles for the Gunner website and Newsletters to promote our Charity with events, reunions and fundraising. Please note, my email address has changed to [RAA-Asstsec@artycen.ra.mod.uk](mailto:RAA-Asstsec@artycen.ra.mod.uk)

## · Events ·

### Gunner Sunday - 26 April 2020

Gunner Sunday takes place in April at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, London. Refer to the [link](#) for event details and how to pre-book lunch.

Spring Dinner

RA Historical Society Lectures

The Spring Dinner 2020 will be held at the RA Mess, Larkhill on Friday 24 April at 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm. The dinner will take the form of a Ladies' Guest Night and is open to officers of the Royal Regiment, serving and retired, and their guests.

Dress for serving officers in Mess Dress (ceremonial) and black tie with decorations for retired officers.

Cost is £50 per head, apply for places by email [Jennifer.mcgrath924@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Jennifer.mcgrath924@mod.gov.uk) or 01980 845788.

Wednesday 1 April 2020

Newcombe Hall, Larkhill

North West Europe and Crossing the Rhine 1944-45

Napoleon's Russia Campaign 1812

2.15 pm - RA Mess

Cost is £28 per head

Book your place, email RAHS Secretary:  
[richard.clayton312@gmail.com](mailto:richard.clayton312@gmail.com)

## RA Assembly

The Royal Artillery Assembly is an event that is not to be missed this year. Last year over 500 friends gathered at the Grand Gala Dinner, and this year we celebrate our **100th Birthday**, additional entertainment has been booked to make the event extra special. As tradition dictates, we hold the Standard Bearers Competition and hope many of our Branches will enter their standards again this year.

To book this event please follow this [link](#) to our website to down your booking forms.





**BOOK EARLY**  
TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT.

# The Royal Artillery Assembly

CELEBRATING YOUR ASSOCIATION'S CENTENARY

**FRIDAY 15TH - SUNDAY 17TH MAY 2020**  
AT THE NORBRECK CASTLE HOTEL







For what will be one of the largest social gatherings of Gunners, a truly memorable weekend. Enjoy a spectacular programme of entertainment, including dancing to Live Bands, Fantastic Production Shows and International Cabarets. All appearing at the Royal Artillery Grand Gala Dinner Night.

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**3 Night Package inclusive of Dinner, Bed & Breakfast**  
(Including RA Grand Gala Dinner - Saturday 16th May) - Just **£152 PER PERSON**

**2 Night Package inclusive of Dinner, Bed & Breakfast**  
(Including RA Grand Gala Dinner - Saturday 16th May) - Just **£126 PER PERSON**

**Grand Gala Dinner Only - No Accommodation £25 PER PERSON**

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check in from 3pm</li> <li>• 3 Course Carvery Dinner</li> <li>• Entertainment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full English Breakfast</li> <li>• Annual Assembly</li> <li>• Standard Bearers Competition</li> <li>• Sunset Ceremony</li> <li>• Civic Reception</li> <li>• Gala dinner</li> <li>• Live Entertainment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full English Breakfast</li> <li>• Church Service</li> <li>• Themed Buffet</li> <li>• Entertainment</li> </ul>

**To book a Gala Inclusive Package - call 0871 222 0031 and quote RAR2020**  
Calls cost 13p per minute plus your chosen phone company access charge.

**A refundable deposit of £30 per person is required when booking Gala Inclusive Packages.**  
**Please remember to advise the reservationist of your branch when booking.**

**For Gala Dinner Only bookings - please call 01253 352 341**  
Accommodation reservations cannot be made on this line (01253 352 341)  
**PLEASE NOTE PARKING CHARGES APPLY FOR NON RESIDENTIAL GUESTS - £3 FOR 24HRS PARKING.**

Norbreck Castle Hotel, Queens Promenade, Blackpool, FY2 9AA. [www.britannichotels.com](http://www.britannichotels.com)

## Gunner Sunday - 26 April 2020

The Royal Artillery Association will conduct a Service of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum. Following the Service there will be wreath laying at the Royal Artillery Memorial Garden. Branches and Regiments are welcome to lay their own wreaths during this service.

## Event Info

### VE/VJ Day Celebrations

RBL are inviting those who contributed to the [#WW2](#) efforts to attend special VE Day in London in May & VJ Day commemorations taking place in August at the NMA. Find out more about the events & enter the ballot for [VE Day](#) and [VJ Day](#).



### · The Royal Artillery Charitable Fund ·

The Regt Sec, Chairman, RASM, RABSM and the Welfare Secretary recently visited Royal Hospital Chelsea to have lunch and a chat with the Royal Artillery In-Pensioners.



### We Are Here For You

RACF grants and donations for 2019 totalled £675,162; with an average grant of £711.00.

If you know someone that needs our help, please put them in touch with the team on 01980 634309 or [Rarhq-racf-welfare-mailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Rarhq-racf-welfare-mailbox@mod.gov.uk)



*Thank you letter for mobility support*

*"On behalf of my Mother and Father I'd like to thank you for the assistance that you gave to them. My mother continues to make use of the facilities that were constructed. Thank you very much".*

## How We Help

# NHS

## mental health care for veterans

**Mental illness is common and can affect anyone (including serving and ex-members of the Armed Forces and their families). Whilst some people cope by getting support from their family and friends, or by getting help with other issues in their lives, others need clinical care and treatment, which could be from the NHS, support groups or charities.**

### Accessing NHS mental health care for veterans

Access to both of these services is through the TILS. You can contact the service direct (see below) or ask your GP or a military charity to refer you.

North of England services: call 0303 123 1145 or email [vwals@nhs.net](mailto:vwals@nhs.net)

Midlands or East of England services: call 0300 323 0137 or email [mevs.mhm@nhs.net](mailto:mevs.mhm@nhs.net)

London or South East of England services: call 020 3317 6818 or email [cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net](mailto:cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net)

South West of England services: call 0300 365 0300 or email [sc.veterans@nhs.net](mailto:sc.veterans@nhs.net)

It is important to register with an NHS GP and tell them that you have served in the Armed Forces so, where appropriate, you can access these and other dedicated services for veterans.

## Fundraising for your Charity

The Charities revised their fundraising platform last year and we now use Charity Checkout. If you are fundraising for the RACF/RAA or giving the Charity individual donations, please click [here](#)

## Sergeant Roch Rochester

### Koblenz to Arnhem 200 Miles

The road to recovery was helped with the aid of a mountain hand bike from Captain David Seath RA Memorial Fund. This allowed Roch to enjoy time with his children out on the trails of Dartmoor but also the training to take part in the cycle challenge organised by BLESMA from Koblenz to Arnhem - a challenge of 200 miles.

Huge congratulations to Roch on completing the cycle ride on 20th September 2019 and he was delighted to be supported by fellow mates from 7th Para RHA to cheer him on at the finish line.

*'....without the funding to get the bike that fitted me and my requirements from David's Memorial Fund. The years of building myself up to the point as to where I am now and the help from many military charities including the Royal Artillery Association this would have been a bridge too far.....'*



## · Branch News ·

### Colchester and North Essex Branch

On Saturday 26th October Colchester and North Essex Branch RAA held their own Octoberfest in the garden of members Terri Sawkins and her partner Dave Spicer.



The night was a great success with most people dressing up as requested. Despite being wet and chilly the evening went well with Bratwurst and German beer being downed with relish. The night went with an extra swing as the local Bavarian Bratwurst Stall run by Paul and Charmaine Hedges provided all the rolls, sauces plus paper plates and serviettes free of charge to show their gratitude and thanks to the Armed Forces and Veterans for all they have done for our Country.

A copy of the attached photo is being presented to Paul and Charmaine as a token of our thanks and a letter of acknowledgement for their kindness will be given by the Branch Chairman and members.

This also helped our members to recognise the appreciation felt by people and businesses from Colchester and the surrounding area for the passed and present members of the Royal Artillery family.



## · Regimental News ·

### 103rd Regiment RA

Royal Artillery Officers' Association and 103rd Regt RA honour Saint Barbara.

The Royal Artillery Officers' Association and 103rd (Lancashire Artillery Volunteers) Regiment RA held their traditional annual Saint Barbara's Dinner at the Brigadier Philip Toosey Army Reserve Centre, Aigburth, Liverpool on Saturday 30th November 2019.

Lieutenant General Professor Sir Edmund Burton presided. Principal guests included Brigadier Mark Pullan, Commander 1st Artillery Brigade, who gave an update on the

Royal Regiment of Artillery and proposed the traditional toast 'Saint Barbara and the Royal Regiment', Mr David Briggs, Lord-Lieutenant of Cheshire, Mr Paul Griffiths, Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Major Sylvia Parkin, Deputy Lord-Lieutenant of The West Midlands who responded to the toast 'Our Guests', Dr Nicholas Jedynakiewicz Deputy Lord-Lieutenant of Merseyside and Brigadier Bill Kingdon, Honorary Colonel of the Regiment. 2Lt Luke Willers recounted the story how St. Barbara became the Gunners' Patron Saint.

Lieutenant Colonel Tim Reade, Commanding Officer of 103rd Regiment Royal Artillery read the response from Buckingham Palace to the Loyal Message sent to Her Majesty The Queen, Captain-General, Royal Artillery. After giving the '*State of the union*' review of the regimental year, he proposed the toast of '*Our Guests*'. The President made his closing address after receiving a presentation photograph from the Chairman, Colonel Michael Taylor to mark his standing down after nine years in office. His successor will be the Honorary Colonel, Brigadier Bill Kingdon. The programme of music was provided by The Band of the Lancashire Artillery Volunteers, and the Pipes and Drums of the Regiment directed by Captain Guy.



## · Awards/Grants ·

### Joan Wanklyn Award

The Joan Wanklyn Memorial prize is a bursary to be presented each year by the Royal Artillery Association in memory of Miss Joan Wanklyn who was, for many years, our Regimental Artist. The Bursary comprises a cheque of £500 is to be presented at the RA Assembly in May 2020.

Applications are open to the sons, daughters and grandchildren of Serving or Retired members of the Regiment, regardless of rank or station, who have reached the tertiary stage of education and are in or about to begin their first year of a course at a recognised College or University to study art in its broader form. Contact Jenny McGrath on 01980 845788 for further details. Applications are requested by **ASAP**

## · Veterans New RailCard ·

Military veterans will get cut-price train travel to help boost job prospects and bring them closer to family and friends, with a new railcard on sale from Armistice Day, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps announced on 22 January 2020.

For more information click [here](#)

## · Community and Companionship ·

Looking out for our Own  
The RA Charities can keep you in touch with the  
Regimental Family

**Join Your Association Here**





## The Royal Artillery Craft Beers

*We are proud to announce the arrival of two very special guests.*



### THEY TASTE GOOD. THEY DO GOOD.

Champions in their own right, these fine craft beers were hand-picked in June 2019 by a tasting committee of over 90 Gunner soldiers. Gunner IPA and Gunner Pilsner are more than simply great-tasting, flagship examples of the brewer's art. For every litre of beer sold, The Crafty Brewing Co., will make a donation to Royal Artillery Charities – to fund sport, adventure and challenge activities for all Gunners – be they regular or reserve.

So now, when you raise a glass of your very own Royal Artillery craft beer – to slake a thirst, make a toast or in tribute to absent friends – you'll be putting a smile on more faces than just your own.

These delicious Gunner craft beers make their debut this evening and are provided courtesy of The Crafty Brewing Co. for you to enjoy. They will shortly be available in keg and 500ml bottles to every Royal Artillery Mess and for purchase online from November 2019.

To place your advance order visit [www.craftybrewing.co.uk](http://www.craftybrewing.co.uk)



#### TASTING NOTES:

##### **Gunner IPA – ABV 4.2%**

*Gunner IPA is a modern classic. It is a golden amber, lightly-hopped IPA bearing all the hallmarks of its four international hop superstars – Simcoe, Chinook, Amarillo and Perle. Refreshing citrus and pine notes are mellowed by toasted fine English crystal malts.*

##### **Gunner Pilsner – ABV 5.0%**

*Gunner Pilsner is a refreshing, full-flavoured, mellow craft lager. Expertly crafted with pale malts and the prince of 'noble' hops – Tettnang. This pilsner is conditioned for 12 weeks and naturally carbonated for a crisp, mouth-filling quaff.*



## • The Gunner Lottery •

We have launched our [Gunner Lottery](#). The hope is that the Lottery can raise much need funds and raise awareness of the good work done by your charities. You can take part as an individual or as a Battery or RAA Branch syndicate.



The more people who sign up, the more the winnings!



## · Gunner Magazine ·

Do you Subscribe to the Gunner Magazine? If not then you can subscribe [here](#)



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 No: 238197. Artillery House, Royal Artillery Barracks, Larkhill, Wilts  
 SP4 8QT

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