



• The Gunners •

Newsletter - December 2025



Welcome to the Royal Artillery Charities Newsletter. This is where you can keep up to date with all the regimental family's news and information, we have over 3,000 subscribers.

If you have any articles for the communications team from your Regiment, Branch, District and Region, we would like to receive them, to share with our subscribers. Please ensure that you have permission to share information and images.

The Gunners

Message from the Chairman

Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Pountain CBE

Dear Members

I write having just attended the St Barbara's Day service and celebrations at Larkhill (St Barbara's Day 4th December), keenly aware that others have done similarly throughout the UK and more widely. As our Honorary Chaplain said, from the newest Gunner to the

Master Gunner St James's Park, from the youngest to oldest veteran, we all share a common and unique bond as members of the Gunner family.

That bond is reflected in the work of the RA Association to support comradeship and welfare, and I pay tribute and give thanks to all for their work this year – our new Regimental Secretary Colonel Paul Bates and the RAA team in Regimental Headquarters, the Controller and our charities' trustees, the Regimental Colonel and RASM, the RAA National Executive Committee, all our regional and local volunteers – serving and retired – and more widely all the other groupings who provide a network of support and fellowship, whether formally part of the RAA, affiliated or connected.

As we approach the end of 2026, we remember those we have lost over the last year, and we reach out to those who may be in need, trusting in our common and enduring bond. We think particularly of those families separated over the coming celebrations through operational commitments.

As I reported at our AGM in May at Blackpool, the Association grew by over 1,000 members since the previous year, and while the membership in our 78 branches throughout the UK remains largely constant, we have extended our virtual 'offer' in a continuing effort to reach all our family and be as relevant to all as we can be. In conversation with BC 5 Bty RA after the service at Larkhill, he spoke of the sharing of stories with the Swedish Artillery about what St Barbara's Day means, which reminded me that our international network was the subject of our latest workshop (Number 6) to understand the potential benefits of stronger RAA ties and closer links with our Commonwealth and key NATO allies' equivalent organisations. We shall be taking that work forward over the coming year.

On behalf of the membership, I take this opportunity to welcome our new Master Gunner and his wife, Lieutenant General and Mrs Elviss, and to thank Lieutenant General Sir Andrew and Lady Gregory most sincerely for their outstanding support to the Association over the last eight years, and to send them our warmest best wishes for the future.

A very happy Christmas to all, a peaceful and joyful New Year, and all the best for 2026!

Mark

· Events ·

Please monitor the RA [website](#) and [facebook page](#) for any further information and event updates.

Forecast of Events

RA ASSEMBLY AVAILABLE TO BOOK FROM MONDAY 19 JAN 26



FRIDAY 15TH – SUNDAY 17TH MAY 2026
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.

3 Night Package inclusive of Dinner, Bed & Breakfast

(Including RA Grand Gala Dinner – Saturday 16th May) – **Just £171.50 Per Person**

2 Night Package inclusive of Dinner, Bed & Breakfast

(Including RA Grand Gala Dinner – Saturday 16th May) – **Just £141.50 Per Person**

Grand Gala Dinner Only – No Accommodation £30.00 Per Person

FRIDAY

- Check in from 3pm
- 3 Course Carvery Dinner
- Entertainment

SATURDAY

- Full English Breakfast
- Standard Bearers Competition
- Annual Assembly
- Sunset Ceremony
- Civic Reception
- Gala Dinner
- Live Entertainment

SUNDAY

- Full English Breakfast
- Church Service
- Themed Buffet
- Entertainment

To book a Gala Inclusive Package – call 0161 923 0300 and quote RANB2026
 Calls charged at local rate plus your chosen phone company access charge.

A refundable deposit of £35 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 500 701

Accommodation reservations cannot be made on this line (01253 500 701)

FREE PARKING FOR RESIDENTIAL GUESTS, NON RESIDENTS TO PAY AT THE PAY AND DISPLAY.

Norbreck Castle Hotel, Queens Promenade, Blackpool, FY2 9AA. www.britanniahotels.com

St Barbara's Day, 7th December 2025

On Sunday 7th December, the Royal Regiment of Artillery held the annual St Barbara's day Service at the Royal Garrison Church of St Alban and St Barbara.

The Service was led by the Venerable Stephen Robbins CB, Honorary Chaplain to the Royal Regiment of Artillery; Rev Mark Henderson CF, Chaplain to 32nd Regiment RA and Rev Ross Marshall CF, Chaplain to 19th Regiment RA.

We remembered the serving members of the Royal Regiment of Artillery and members of the Association who died during the last year and the importance of the regimental family.

After the service, lunch was held in the RA Officers' Mess.

Thank you to everyone who attended this event to make it successful, and many thanks go to all who were involved with the organising of every aspect of the day.



• RAA Branch News •

[Join Your Association Here](#)

[Branch Forms](#)

[Message from the RAA Secretary](#)

[Major \(Ret'd\) Dickie Davies](#)

Dear All,

I simply cannot believe how quickly this year has passed, which I have no doubt, is down to how busy you have all been out there across our regions in 2025. Having had the privilege to attend many winter/festive events and functions, including some that will roll into January. The year started with the RA Gold Cup at Sandown in February, special thanks to Wycombe and District Branch for your support but equally to all the members that came along to what has become an incredibly well attended Gunner reunion event and a look forward to Thursday 19th Feb 2026 the date for our next gathering.

In April we switched to Gunner Sunday at the Royal Hospital Chelsea and once again I was humbled by the sheer numbers signing up. We will be back with our Chelsea Pensioners on the 12th April 2026 and I genuinely look forward to, continued strong ties that both ourselves the Association and the more broadly the Serving Regiment have nurtured and grown with the RHC over recent times.

Looking forward to May, we will see the annual gathering of all things Gunner at the Norbreck Castle Hotel in Blackpool for the RA Assembly 2026. The Assembly is another of our events that has been growing from strength to strength and will continue in this manner. The Assembly takes places on 15th - 17th of May and I look forward to seeing you over the weekend of events and activities, particularly those Branches, Regiments and Individuals who will be presented with awards during the AGM. *(Please can I ask that all Branches start thinking about citation and submissions now)*, so we can process and ensure that we capture the outstanding work and efforts that are being conducted by individuals and groups across the Gunner family.

As we reach the second half of 2026 our focus will switch to the Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance at the NMA. This event is now well established, taking place on the first Saturday of July, to this end this year will see us coming together on Saturday 4th and once again the numbers and support for this event is growing year on year and I simply just want to thank you all for your attendance.

Whilst I try to visit as many branches as I can throughout the year, it is post NMA that I really start to engage on my visit program as many of you in the Branches and Regions, collectively gather over the warmer months and longer evenings. This year has seen me attend many events and meetings, if I haven't managed to see you then I will be making a huge effort to get to those not visited over the last couple of years in 2026, so please contact me directly with your, 'When, What and Where' and I will get as many in my diary as possible. This year the highlights have been my visits to the Scottish Region (annual AGM and event), Anglia Region with continued growth of the Branch in Biggleswade and the supreme couple of days I spent with the Shoeburyness & South Essex Branch, quality time on my trip around North East, North Central and North West regions including Fylde's 25 Pdr Gun Park visit and an evening of activities with Aigburth- Merseyside Branch. I also had the honour of attending formal ceremonial events in Germany with the Branches and 26 Regt RA.

My planning programme for 2026 will particularly focus on those that I had to cancel this year for various reasons, which sadly included trips to Plymouth (Branch), Northern Ireland (Region) and St Barbara's Service (event) in Gateshead with NE branches and 101 Regt RA.

So to close, simply thank you to both the serving and the veteran communities of our wonderful Gunner family, for your continued; support, help, engagement and enthusiasm, Cas, Fay and myself look forward to seeing you at '**One of our... or One of your**' events in 2026, wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

'Once a Gunner Always a Gunner'

Regards as always,

Dickie

Artillery Clerks' Association

The Artillery Clerks' Association Committee is pleased to announce that Major General Neil Marshall OBE has accepted their invitation to become the next Honorary President of the Association, succeeding Lieutenant General Richard Nugee CB CVO CBE.

Major General Marshall will formally assume the role on 1 January 2026.

Major General Marshall's distinguished military service, leadership, and enduring commitment to the values of the Association have earned him the unanimous support and endorsement of all former Association Honorary Presidents. His experience and vision are expected to further strengthen and inspire the Association in the years ahead.

The Association Committee and members also wish to express their deep gratitude to Lieutenant General Richard Nugee for his outstanding service and valued contributions during his decade as Association Honorary President. His leadership and friendship have been greatly appreciated by all, particularly throughout the Association's 25th Anniversary Year in 2023 and the commissioning of the Silver Centre piece.



New Branch - Royal Artillery Afghanistan Veterans

If you served on Operations in Afghanistan, I encourage you to sign up to the new virtual Branch, this is specifically for the Afghanistan Veteran Community (serving and retired), remembering Op HERRICK and commemorating the operation for those who deployed.



Royal Artillery Afghanistan Veterans

(Royal Artillery Association Branch)

The Royal Artillery Afghanistan Veterans (RAAV) are now accepting members. Members can join the Royal Artillery Association via the link below, when completing the form, in service history, state you wish to join the RAAV.

There is also a Facebook group to keep up to date on all activities, events and information. Use the second QR code below to join the group.

RAAV Facebook Group:



Sign up to the RAA:



Email: raafghanveterans@outlook.com

RAA Branch Christmas Party Snaps

(Birmingham, Leeds, Sidcup and Poole Branches)





· The Royal Artillery Charitable Fund ·

RACF Welfare Team Quarterly Report

The RACF and RAA visited the Royal Hospital Chelsea dispersing the Annual Christmas grants to our 18 Gunner In-Pensioner's - "A wonderful visit to RHC with great company, and it's always a pleasure to be invited".



As 2025 comes to a close we have helped our Gunner family by providing 593 grants.

If you have a concern about finding the money for something you need, please contact us. We cannot however help with private medical or legal fees.

Please do not hesitate to ask for help if you need it. Call SSAFA on **0800 731 4880**, the Royal British Legion on **0808 802 8080** to get a case referred to the RACF or contact the team on either **0300 159 4560** or **0300 158 7035**.

Some messages of 'Thank You'

On behalf of my family and myself, I would like to extend our deepest and most sincere gratitude for this generous assistance.

Your support has come at a time of immense emotional difficulty, and it has brought not only financial relief but also a profound sense of care and solidarity.

It is deeply reassuring to know that we are not facing this moment alone — the compassion shown by the Welfare team, the Regiment, and the RACF as a whole has been truly moving.

Your gesture has reminded us of the strength of the bonds we share within this community, and the values we uphold together.

Please do pass on our heartfelt thanks to everyone involved in making this possible.

Your kindness has made a meaningful difference, and we are genuinely appreciative of the thoughtfulness and consideration shown to us during this time.

Wow – huge thanks to you and the RACF for this incredible grant. We are most grateful – it is very generous of you.

I wish to take this opportunity to offer a sincere thank you to the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund on behalf of Mr X and Veterans Aid for the kind & generous grant towards his resettlement.

I wish to ensure that this will assist enormously with his return to independent living and a secure home for the future near his family in Nottinghamshire.

· Regimental News ·

Thank you very much for your continued support and fundraising for the Gunner Charities.

Royal Artillery Association Battery Grants

One of the charitable objects of the Association is to promote comradeship, fostering esprit de corps and preserving traditions. Each year the Association makes funds available to Batteries in the form of annual grants to help fund Battery events, improve conditions for members of the Battery and their dependants.

Find out more information from Carla.brawn100@mod.gov.uk or through your chain of command.

47th Regiment Royal Artillery

10 (Assaye) Battery

On 25th September 2025, 10 (Assaye) Battery celebrated Assaye Day, an annual event that celebrates the Battery's formation and honours its distinguished history. This significant occasion provides an opportunity to reflect on the Battery's illustrious heritage,

including its pivotal role in the Battle of Assaye and the remarkable bravery of George Horlock VC, among other notable achievements.

The celebrations were enhanced by the attendance of 45 members, both past and present. Among the attendees were the outgoing and incoming Battery Commanders, whose presence symbolised the seamless continuity of leadership and the enduring legacy of the Battery. Their participation highlighted the importance of this historic occasion as a moment of reflection and unity. Additionally, members preparing to leave the Battery also took part, marking their final opportunity to honour its proud traditions. This unique gathering of personnel, from those newly joining to those departing, exemplified the shared pride that define the spirit of 10 (Assaye) Battery.

The evening's event was a resounding success, made possible by the exceptional support of the Royal Artillery Association (RAA). The complexity of organising such significant occasions would not have been achievable without the resources provided by the RAA, offering essential financial support, ultimately ensuring the celebrations could proceed. Their efforts not only enabled the Assaye Day celebrations to take place but also elevated the occasion, fostering a great sense of pride and belonging among all attendees. Through their contributions, the RAA ensured that the values and traditions of the Royal Artillery continue to inspire and resonate with future generations.

14 Regiment Royal Artillery

34 (Seringapatam) Battery, Kings Gurkha Artillery

On the 12th of June, 34 (Seringapatam) Bty was formally redesignated as the first Bty of the Kings Gurkha Artillery (KGA), marking an extremely significant event in the history of both the Brigade of Gurkhas (BG) and the Royal Artillery (RA). The family's day was organised for the 21st of June to welcome Gurkha families and integrate UKTAP families into the KGA.

The day began with an impressive equipment display in 34 Battery's Gunpark, showcasing the unit's capabilities. The festivities then moved to the Garrison events area, where a multicultural food fair featured delicious offerings from Caribbean, Malawian, Fijian, British, and Nepali cuisines. Families enjoyed a variety of fun activities including an assault course, jungle lane, face painting, bouncy castle, and Fire Truck display. The event concluded with a lively raffle draw followed by live music and dance, bringing the community together in celebration and camaraderie.

14RA 34 Bty's Family Day brought together GURTAP & UKTAP personnel, forming one of the RA's most diverse Battery. Families from Nepal, Brunei, the UK & the Commonwealth (Caribbean, Malawian, Fijian) united to celebrate our unique **Kaida**—the ethos and culture of the KGA. Events like this boost morale, strengthen bonds, and welcome new SP & families into the RA family.



106 (Yeomanry) Regiment Royal Artillery

457 (Hampshire Carabiners Yeomanry) Battery RA

457th (Hampshire Carabiners Yeomanry) Battery Royal Artillery is a diverse Army Reserve unit based at Blighmont Barracks, Southampton. As part of 106th (Yeomanry) Regiment Royal Artillery, it operates the High Velocity Missile Air Defence System and is the British Army's only Reserve Air Defence Regiment.

Over the past 12 months, the Battery has continued to demonstrate its operational relevance and commitment, deploying Reserve soldiers in support of 12th Regiment Royal Artillery on Operation SHADER in Northern Iraq. Additionally, the Battery has supported Project EALING (counter UAS trials) and WFX25 in California. The Battery remains committed in providing motivated and highly trained Reserve soldiers in support of its affiliated Regular Regiments operational taskings.

Given the inherently dispersed nature of the Army Reserves, with officers and soldiers residing across Hampshire, Wiltshire, Dorset, and Sussex, it's often a challenge to bring the entire Battery together outside of training commitments.

Thanks to the generous donation of £1,115.00 from the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund (RACF), the Battery was able to host an All-Ranks Summer Function on 05 July 2025 at Blighmont Barracks. The event brought together over 70 officers, soldiers, their guests, and former members of the Battery for a memorable evening of camaraderie, reconnection, and celebration.

Guests enjoyed a superb three-course dinner, followed by a cash-free game of roulette and the obligatory disco. The event was held in the Battery's own indoor marquee, which despite the humid conditions provided an excellent venue for the occasion.

On behalf of the Battery Commander, the officers, soldiers, and their families, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the RAA. Your kind financial donation made this occasion possible, strengthening the sense of community and celebrating our Gunner identity.



· Awards/Fundraising ·

RAA Annual Awards

The Royal Artillery Association has a number of awards that we present each year at the Royal Artillery Assembly, please consider those individuals in your Branch that make a difference. All of these awards can be found on the website where you can download the forms you need. Here is a list of the Awards that we that present at the RA Assembly:

- Certificate of Appreciation
- Certificate of Merit
- Royal Artillery Association Medal
- Royal Artillery Association Cup
- Royal Artillery Association Kerr Cup
- Royal Artillery Association Eire Cup

Submission deadline for the Awards is 23rd January 2026.

RAA Awards

· Communications ·

Gunner App

Gunner Net is a one-stop shop for the entire Gunner Family: Serving (Regular and Reserve), Retired and their Families. With links to every Gunner Regiment's Welfare, Padre and Medical personnel, it can provide easy to reach support for the whole Gunner Family should they need it. It also has a wealth of other agencies for support via the HARDFACTS system, with links across all areas to help make contact as easy as possible. We also provide links to each Gunner Regiment, including their many social media platforms, to make it easier to keep in contact with the whole Royal Regiment.

It remains a work in progress and we always encourage suggestions for improvement and links to agencies that will support the Gunner Family – please get in contact with the Communications Team if you have any ideas! Email: RARHQ-Publications@mod.gov.uk

Download the QR codes below:

Apple



Android

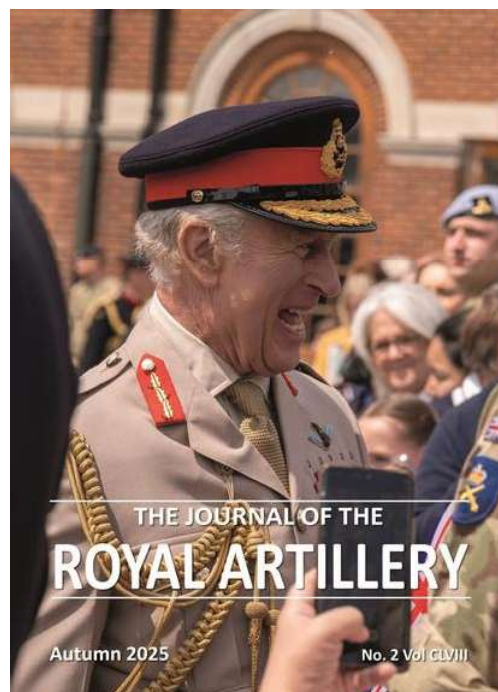


Gunner & Journal of the Royal Regiment of Artillery

The Gunner magazine and Journal of the Royal Artillery are now available to read via the website, please click on the button below to view the recent issue.

Gunner

RA Journal



•Notices•

Reporting a Death.....

Occasionally the office receives enquiries on how to report the death of an individual in receipt of an armed forces pension.

Guidance is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) on how to report the death of a member, whether the person was receiving a pension at the time of death or if they were a deferred member. The link below is informative and gives details of the information needed to report a death.

[Death of an Armed Forces Pension Scheme member - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

However, deaths can also be registered on 'Tell us Once' service, this is a government initiative in the UK (except NI) that allows you to notify multiple government agencies when a death is reported. The link below gives details of what is required:

[What to do after someone dies: Tell Us Once - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

This Service will notify relevant departments including: DVL, HM Passport Office, HMRC, local councils and the Armed Forces Pension Scheme. This service enables early notification of deaths, which means the processing of benefits are actioned quickly, to reduce the risk of potential overpayments that relatives may have to address in their time of grief.

RAA Annual Return & Summary of Accounts

For those Branches who want to make a start on their Annual Return and Summary of Accounts for 2025, the forms can be downloaded from the website.

- Summary of Accounts - Required by 31 January 2026
- Annual Return (with nominal roll) - Required by 1 March 2026

The RA Historical Society arranges Zoom On-Line Webinars for its members on Gunner military history subjects. If you would like a copy of the Back Catalogue with links to the You Tube recordings of webinars held in the last 12 Months, please contact the RAHS Secretary.

If you wish to attend the webinars below please contact the RAHS Secretary, Lt Col Richard Clayton: richard.clayton312@gmail.com:

RA Historical Society 2026 Programme

Date and Timings	Event	Subject	Lecturer/ Lead	Bookings Close
Wednesday 21 January 2026 1930 hrs	Webinar	Panic in London: Gothas, Bombs and Rockets in Two World Wars	Dr Linda Parker, Author & Secretary British Modern Military History Society	Sunday 18 January
Wednesday 25 February 2026 1930 hrs	Webinar	The Brassington Animations Part 2 12.5in RML Gun 1885 12in Siege Howitzer 1918	Mr Rob Brassington Animation Designer	Sunday 22 February

These events are open to all Gunners. To register please email Lt Col Clayton, RAHS Secretary:
richard.clayton312@gmail.com by the dates shown

All Gunners are eligible to join the Society. Please contact the Secretary for details.

• The Gunner Lottery •

Gunner Lottery is for the benefit of the Gunner charities and the Lottery can raise much needed funds and raise awareness of the good work done by the Royal Artillery charities. Thank you to everyone who supports the Lottery and congratulations to the winners each week. Good luck in the weekly Draws.

3 Digits: You'll win 5 Entries into the next Draw

4 Digits: £25 Cash Prize

5 Digits: £1,000 Cash Prize

6 Digits: £25,000 Cash Prize

You can take part as an individual or syndicate; Battery, Regiment or RAA Branch. You could be in with a chance of winning the top prize of £25,000 each week.

The Draw takes place every Friday.

JOIN TODAY [Gunner Lottery](#)



GUNNER LOTTERY JOIN TODAY

CASH PRIZES UP TO

£25,000

Supporting those who serve
Supporting those who served

For every £1 entry, at least 50p goes directly to royal artillery charities






REJOINERS: YOUR NATION NEEDS YOU

ARE YOU AN EX-REGULAR OFFICER OR SOLDIER?
HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT REJOINING THE ARMY?

DID YOU KNOW?
Depending on your personal circumstances, if you've left within the last 36 months, you could be fast-tracked back in within a month or sooner.

READY
RESILIENT
RESPONSIVE



ARMY
BE THE BEST



REJOINERS: YOUR NATION NEEDS YOU

THERE ARE TWO ROUTES AVAILABLE TO REJOINERS:

Fast Track Pathway. Is A Veteran Who:

- Left the Regular Army within the last 36 months.
- Is returning to the same Main Trade and capbadge.
- Had no less than 24 months remaining engagement or commission.
- On leaving had a medical grade of Medically Fully Deployable or Limited Deployable and can self-declare they have had no significant injury or illness.
- Have no unspent convictions.

Regular Rejoiner Pathway. This is for veterans who left the Regular Army but who are not eligible for the Fast Track. Your pathway is approximately 8 weeks, but can vary based on medicals, security vetting and interviews.

Fast Track Pathway - 4 weeks

Candidate contacts the Rejoiner Team	Rejoiners team conduct Prior Service and Employment Checks	Candidate conducts medicals and interviews if required (non Fast Track)	Application sent to the Army Personnel Centre	Application reviewed by Career Manager. Officers approved at an Army Employment Board	Offer made to the candidate	Rejoin arrives in Unit	Refresher training conducted as required
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Regular Rejoiner Pathway - Approximately 8 weeks

Age limit. The upper age limit for all rejoiners is 57.

How to apply?
<https://apply.army.mod.uk/how-to-join/entryoptions/regular-army-rejoiner>
or call the rejoiner team on 0345 600 8080

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Share

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<https://www.thegunners.org.uk/>

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