



Royal Navy



British Army



Royal Air Force

Aden Veterans Association Gloucestershire Branch

Volume 3 of 2024

Chairman's Report

As the nights draw in it is perhaps appropriate to update you on Michael Compton, who passed away on the afternoon of November 18th. Michael served your Branch so effectively and efficiently as our Secretary for seven years. He was always committed to ensuring that all the business of the Branch ran smoothly, especially the Anniversary Service of the Withdrawal from Aden held annually in Cheltenham. It is poignant that his passing is within eleven days of this year's 57th Anniversary. We will all have time to think of Michael on Friday 29th. All our thoughts are with Judith, their family and friends. Rest in Peace Michael. You will be greatly missed.



I have just returned from the Remembrance Day Service in Cheltenham. Your Branch was well represented and my thanks go to Robert Parrant for carrying our Standard and to Hugh Gibson, who laid our wreath. There was an excellent turnout from veterans, current serving military personnel and the general public. It was particularly pleasing to see so many young people on parade as well as watching this significant event in our calendar.

I would like to mention the amount of support that members have given to the Branch since Michael's resignation due to his deteriorating health. Sheila Gibson took the minutes at our October Branch meeting and Hugh distributed them by email. Dennis Flamson has volunteered to be our Branch Secretary, which he has now taken on. He has distributed our November newsletter. The role of Secretary is essential to keep our Branch running. I am sure that you will all thank Dennis and wish him a successful tenure as our Secretary. His appointment will be ratified at our January Branch meeting.

The 57th Anniversary of the Withdrawal from Aden will be held at the Cheltenham Cenotaph on Friday 29th November. Robert will parade our Standard and Dennis will lay our wreath. The RAFA club will be open after the service, for a hot drink and a hot dog. A donation of £3 would be much appreciated. I do hope that many of you will be able to attend this very important event, hosted by the Mayor of Cheltenham and attended by a Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire.

Jean Stubley has continued to organise our social events with great success. There was an excellent turn out at the Friar Tucks for our first Wednesday lunch in November. We

are now looking forward to our Christmas Lunch at the Bowden Hall Hotel on Wednesday 4th December. My thanks to Jean.

I would also like to thank all the committee members who have worked so well together during this transitional time. Without them your Branch would not be so active. My thanks to all our members, especially those of you who regularly attend events. Without your support there would be no Gloucestershire Branch.

A reminder that our next Branch meeting will be held at the Toby in Brockworth on Wednesday January 8th 2025. Jim Major will host a quiz after a short Branch meeting. Bottles of wine as prizes so please come along for a convivial start to 2025.

Happy Christmas to you all.

Rick Rutter Branch Chairman

Branch Secretary's Report

May I say that I look forward to my future appointment as Secretary to our branch. I will formally introduce myself when the appointment is ratified at the next branch meeting.

Dennis Flamson Branch Secretary (Elect)

Treasurer's Report

All is quiet on the financial front as we head towards the Branch Christmas Lunch.

All monies for that are in, and I will be shortly have the final account from the Hotel.

We all know the saying "Fings ain't what they used to be", and we can relate that to many experiences in our own lives. We opened our account with Lloyds Bank when the Branch was formed in 2008. Since then, we have enjoyed free banking, but that is about to change. In January 2025 we will have a chargeable Community account for non-profit organisations with a turnover of less than £250,000 per year: the nearest we come to that figure is £8,400 money in/out. in 2017/18, the year of our 50th Anniversary of withdrawal event, and £7,500 for our 55th event. Based on our last years' figures, I estimate that we will be paying around £100 per annum in bank charges. On the 15th November 2024 our bank balance was £4,450.90, so whilst bank charges are always unwelcome, we are in an excellent position as we go forward into the next period of the Branch's history.

David Gearing Branch Treasurer

Branch Social Secretary's Report

Another successful year from the point of view of well attended Wednesday monthly lunches. An average of 20 members attended each of 7 lunches (excluding Quarterly meetings and Christmas).

The last 3 were the Butchers Arms at Oakridge Lynch, The Cheese Roller, Shurdington and in September we tried The Friar Tuck at Quedgeley.

I hope you like the new venue for Quarterly meetings at The Cross Hands Toby Inn, Quedgeley. With very good numbers, the room they offer is "cosy" but they are very welcoming and the lunch seems popular. Our January meeting will be held there too. As always for lunches, timing is 12 for 12.30 pm.

We have one more event for 2024 – Bowden Hall, Bondend Lane, Upton St Leonards, GL4 8ED. Deposits were paid for 35, but if no one has to withdraw then we will have 33.

Open for discussion for next year as to whether we stay with the format of no guests in future. I hope you like this new, for us, venue and we all have a relaxing and sociable afternoon.

I look forward to arranging more lunches in 2025. Thank you for your support,

Jean Stubleby Branch Social Secretary

Future Events

57th Anniversary Aden Withdrawal 29th November 2024. The Service will be at the Cheltenham Cenotaph. Assemble at 10:30 in Council Offices, followed by the service in The Long Garden.

The annual Christmas Lunch will be held at The Bowden Hall Hotel, Bondend Lane, Upton St Leonard's, Gloucester GL4 8ED On Wednesday 4th December 12.00 for 12.30.

Future events first half of 2025

Branch meeting 8th January 2025, Toby Cavery Brockworth 11:00 Hours

ANZAC Day 22nd April 2025 at Leighterton.

St George's Day Service 23rd April 2025, Holy Trinity Church Longlevens at 19:00hrs

Earthcott Green Memorial Service 11th June 2025

West Dorset Branch Weymouth Event Gala Dinner Saturday 21st June, Parade, Munday 22nd June, Flag Raising, Monday 23rd June.

Full details for booking can be found on the West Dorset Branch website, (<https://adenveteransweymouth.co.uk/>) or if you are brave enough call Sylvia Johnson on 01305 833188!!

Editor's Report

Hi all, another year gone, nearly!!

Firstly, I would like to thank Ray, our Webmaster for standing in for me on Newsletter No 2 after Eve my wife broke her leg. I had to stand in for her work duties, but today, 18th November is Eve's first day back at work having been given all clear by her orthopaedic specialist.



Halifax MZ311 EY-M 80th Anniversary Memorial Dedication on 26th August 2024, Cleave Hill Gloucestershire

Tommy Clough



On 14th November at Cheltenham Crematorium, Rick and I said farewell to Tommy Clough, a Korean War Veteran. Tommy was well known to most of us, following a presentation he gave on the 15th Anniversary of our Branch formation.

Tommy was an Artillery Boy Entrant and started his army career at Woolwich Barracks aged 14!!

In 1951 he was posted to Korea and attached to the Gloster Regiment. He was captured by the Chinese along with some Gloster boys at the Battle of Imjin River.

He was in captivity for nearly three years escaping twice, which cost him dearly, receiving severe punishment for his escapades.

Tommy's first association with the Aden Veterans was participating in the Joining Forces Project collaboration with Gloucestershire University, creating eight Veterans Stories as videos on CD disc. AVA participants were, Sally Welzel, Rick Rutter, Chris Blick, Denis Sparrow, Brian "Padre" Woollaston and yours truly. Emlyn Phennah.

Tommy's Wake was held in the Warrant Officers and Sergeants mess in Imjin Barracks. His final accolade being, one of the Bars in the mess being named as the "Tommy Clough Bar
R.I.P. Tommy

New Members

Chris and Karen Mead

Chris and Karen have rejoined at our last luncheon meet up in the Friar Tuck, Quedgeley on 6th November. Chris was a Navigator with 84 Squadron. Based at Khormaksar. Welcome back Chris and Karen.

Obituaries

John Page

John passed away on 28 th August 2024. John served in Aden as a Senior Aircraftman at RAF Khormaksar from June 1959 to August 1961. John was Branch Vice Chairmen from 2016 to 2018.

We all send our condolences to John's wife Jenny and his family.
R.I.P John

Eve and I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Very Prosperous 2025

Emlyn Phennah Branch Newsletter Editor

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