



Royal Navy



British Army



Royal Air Force

Aden Veterans Association Gloucestershire Branch

Volume 3 of 2023

Chairman's Report



I am writing this after attending the Remembrance Day Service at the War Memorial in Cheltenham. Considering the weather there was a very good attendance, including a number of Branch members who marched in the parade. It was very encouraging to see so many young people, from a range of organisations, marching with representatives of the armed forces and veterans. My thanks to Michael Compton for laying our Wreath, Robert Parrant for parading our Branch Standard and to Chris Blick who put our Wreath on the 'Poppies to Paddington' train from Stroud on November 10th.

Since my last report for the Newsletter a group of members attended the National Association Reunion and AGM in Blackpool. It was very encouraging to hear our National Chair, Clive Candlin, confirming the National Committee's intention to remain in post until the 60th Anniversary of the Withdrawal from Aden. We hope that they will all enjoy good health in order to fulfil this aspiration. I know that they have the full support of the Gloucestershire Branch. We are delighted that Branches will be able to continue after November 2027 and retain their Standards for as long as they are able to function as a Branch. There was also a surprise appearance by our Committee member, Sally Welzel, who sang two numbers with Miller Magic, the band that entertained us after the Gala Dinner. We hope to show a short video clip of Sally singing during our January Branch meeting. I am sure that you will be impressed.

Later in September a small group of members attended the Battle of Britain Remembrance service in Cheltenham. Jim Major laid our Branch Wreath and Robert Parrant carried our Standard.

Our Wednesday lunches continue to be successful, well supported and enjoyed by all who attend. Thanks to Jean for researching the venues and organising these important aspects of our regular events. It takes real commitment and hard work to make them so successful. This year Sally Welzel, with the support of Jean, has negotiated and organised our Christmas Lunch at an incredibly good price. Numbers are healthy and the list is now closed. I am sure that we will enjoy the hospitality of the Robinswood Hotel. A venue that will remind us of the outstanding 55th Anniversary event held there last November.

I am looking forward to the 29th November and remembering the 56th Anniversary of the Withdrawal from Aden, which will be hosted by Cheltenham Borough Council in the

Municipal offices and at the War Memorial. The Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire Edward Gillespie along with the Mayor of Cheltenham will be attending. After the service the RAFA Club, thanks to Emlyn Phennah, will be providing hot drinks and hot-dogs to warm us up after the event. Michael Compton has liaised with the Borough Council in organising the Service. Unfortunately this is the last time that Cheltenham Borough Council will host us. However it is our intention to continue to remember November 29th in the future, hopefully still at the War Memorial in Cheltenham. Branch Padre Brian Woollaston will conduct the service, Sally Welzel will lay our Wreath and Robert Parrant will carry the Branch Standard. I expect that there will be many Branch members in attendance.

My thanks to the Branch committee for all that they do at this very busy time of year and for ensuring that your Branch thrives. It is so important that members continue to support events and enable our Branch to be so successful. Thank you all.

I want to place on record the committee's gratitude and appreciation of a significant, and very generous, donation to our Branch funds from our member Grahame Harper. We are profoundly grateful. Thank you Grahame.

Finally may I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Rick Rutter Branch Chairman

Branch Secretary's Report

Since the production of the last newsletter the Branch activities have continued as planned, but with little contribution from me, firstly, due to Covid, which struck just before the October meeting and secondly due to a hamstring injury which has prevented me from sitting down for two weeks. Anyway, many thanks to those who have assisted in my stead, particularly David Gearing for minuting the October meeting. Eight members of the Branch attended the Remembrance Sunday service at Cheltenham despite the weather being pretty miserable; thanks to Rob Parrant for carrying the standard in such unpleasant conditions. I managed to put my foot in the one and only pothole in front of the Borough offices just as we were giving "eyes left" – (this was noticed and recorded on mobile by my neighbour who was watching close by)!



We now look forward to the Service of Commemoration of the 56th Anniversary of Withdrawal from Aden on Wednesday 29th November. The format will be the same as for the service two years ago. Branch members are requested to assemble in the committee rooms at Cheltenham Borough Council for coffee – courtesy of the Mayor – at 10.15 to 10.30am. The Lord Lieutenant will arrive at the

CBC steps 10.30 am to be met by Chris Price, Rick Rutter and myself. Mr Gillespie will then meet the members in the Committee rooms. The procession will go to the memorial at 10.50 am. We have been advised that this will probably be the last time we will be able to avail ourselves of the mayoral hospitality, so please make your best efforts to attend.

Judith and I wish you all an enjoyable Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Michael Compton Branch Secretary

Treasurer's Report

We are now nearly 8 months into the current financial year, and our bank balance includes payments for all those attending the Christmas Lunch. Once the Lunch costs have been paid, and also costs for the 56th Anniversary of withdrawal from Aden event at Cheltenham Long Garden, we will be able to see the likely end of year position. I will have a clearer picture in time for the next Newsletter.

Important information I have had a request from our Bank, to ensure that all cheque payments, that we as individuals make to the Branch, should be made out in full to "The Aden Veterans Association Gloucestershire Branch". Whilst bank clerks have accepted "AVA etc" in the payment title, photo-scanning of cheques will now reject this.

David Gearing Branch Treasurer

Branch Social Secretary's Report

A short report for this Newsletter. As always I thank you for your support. Numbers attending lunches remain consistent. The Belfry at Littledean saw 16 of us. For those who like large portions, this met the bill. Our next venue was the New Dawn Inn at Norton with 17 diners. I found them very hospitable and offering a good service.

My final arrangement for this year was Egypt Mill at Nailsworth for 18. I had expected this to be out of our price range when I initially contacted them, but I thought their lunch time offering was reasonable for the well-presented meal that we had.

Sally has arranged this year's Christmas lunch, with only a minor input from me. It is good she has been supported with the numbers who will be present. I hope we can continue to meet for these social occasions and I am happy to check out any pubs you may know about.

Jean Stubley Branch Social Secretary

Future Events

Future Events {Kindly provided by our ex Chairman Chris Blick}

Wednesday 6th December 2023 AVA Gloucestershire Branch Christmas Lunch at Gloucester Robinswood Hotel Gloucester 12.00 for 12.30 hours. Please note that bookings for this event have been finalised.

Wednesday 3rd January 21024 at the Stroud Conservative Club at 11.30 hours Quarterly Meeting with a Quiz provided by Jim Major followed by a buffet lunch.

Wednesday 7th February 2024 First Wednesday Lunch 12.00 for 12.30 hours. Venue to be decided please ask Jean for information.

Wednesday 6th March 2024 First Wednesday Lunch 12.00 for 12.30 hours. Venue to be decided please ask Jean for information.

Wednesday 3rd April 2024 AVA Gloucestershire Quarterly Meeting at the Stroud Conservative Club 11.00 hours.

Saturday and Sunday 20/21 April 2024 possible visit to the Jet Age Museum Staverton with our display. Please check this out with Rick.

Sunday 21st or 28th April 2024 ANZAC Day Parade at Leighterton Cemetery.

Wednesday 1st May 2024 First Wednesday Lunch 12.00 for 12.30 hours. Venue to be decided please ask Jean for information.

Wednesday 5th June 2024 First Wednesday Lunch 12.00 for 12.30 hours. Venue to be decided please ask Jean for information.

Wednesday 14th June 2024 Earthcott Green Memorial Service 10.00 hours for coffee before Service at 11.00 hours in the Chapel then Wreath Laying at the War Memorial followed by a buffet lunch.

Friday 21st until Monday 24th June 2024 Weymouth Veterans Weekend. More details from Sylvia Johnson telephone 01305 833188.

Saturday 29th June 2024 National Armed Forces Day.

Wednesday 3rd July 2024 AVA Gloucestershire Branch Annual General Meeting at Stroud Conservative Club 11.00 hours followed by a buffet lunch.

Wednesday 7th August 2024 First Wednesday Lunch 12.00 for 12.30 hours. Venue to be decided please ask Jean for information.

Wednesday 4th August 2024 First Wednesday Lunch 12.00 for 12.30 hours. Venue to be decided please ask Jean for information.

Wednesday 2nd September 2024 First Wednesday Lunch 12.00 for 12.30 hours. Venue to be decided please ask Jean for information.

Friday 6th until Sunday 8th September 2024 the National Aden Veterans Association Annual General Meeting and Reunion in Blackpool. More details in the March issue of the Dhow Journal.

Sunday 15th September 2024 Battle of Britain Service Cheltenham.

Wednesday 2nd October 2024 Gloucestershire Branch Quarterly Meeting 11.00 hours Stroud Conservative Club.

Sunday 10th November 2024 Remembrance Day Service in Cheltenham 11.00 hours.

Friday 29th November 2024 57th Anniversary of the Withdrawal of British Troops from Aden.

Wednesday 4th December 2024 possible date for AVA Gloucestershire Branch Christmas Lunch.

Editor's Report



Gov UK News story

Veterans' Services stepped up as Veterans UK brand set to be phased out.

Veterans services in the UK are to receive a fresh start as the government today accepted the majority of recommendations from the Independent Review of UK Government Welfare Services for Veterans.

From:

[Cabinet Office](#), [Ministry of Defence](#), [Office for Veterans' Affairs](#), [The Rt Hon Dr Andrew Murrison MP](#), and [The Rt Hon Johnny Mercer MP](#)

Published 21 November 2023

Veterans services in the UK are to receive a fresh start as the government today accepted the majority of recommendations from the Independent Review of UK Government Welfare Services for Veterans.



The Veterans UK brand will be retired next year, as part of a move to better communicate the variety of services which the MOD provides for veterans and the wider Armed Forces Community. The move will clarify the services on offer and the MOD will establish and communicate an appropriate replacement in due course. It is a government priority to

ensure that every veteran knows where to turn to access government support if they need it.

To help this, the Veterans' Gateway will be improved, with user research already being undertaken, including involving veterans to help better target services.

To further clarify the roles and responsibilities across government and underlining the Office for Veterans' Affairs central role in coordinating veterans' support, the word 'Veterans' is being removed from the MOD Ministerial title 'Minister for Defence People Veterans and Service Families'.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs Johnny Mercer gave an update to the House of Commons today on progress of the Veterans' Welfare Review, which marks a fresh start for veterans' support services. "We are making huge strides with veterans' care in this

country but it is important that veterans know where to turn when accessing some of the services on offer. These changes will help veterans services become more effective, efficient and clear, ultimately benefiting veterans across the UK”.

Minister for Defence People and Families Andrew Murrison, said: “The recommendations in this review will help ensure we are taking that hard work in the right direction for our Armed Forces Community, who deserve the best services”.

The Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committees, VAPC, will be modernised to better support veterans’ welfare. Work is already under way following the Royal Assent of the MOD sponsored Private Members Bill in support of this work and in conjunction with the welfare review, government will work to clarify the role of VAPCs in a way that can better serve the Armed Forces Community.

Support which was looked at included services such as the Veterans Welfare Service, the Defence Transition Service, which supports military personnel as they move into civilian life, is also part of the review. Other services which were part of the review included the Integrated Personal Commissioning for Veterans, the Northern Ireland Veterans Support Office, the Veterans’ Gateway, the Veterans Advisory Pensions Committees and the Ilford Park Polish Home.

The government has accepted the principles behind most of the recommendations made by the Independent Review of UK Government Welfare Services for Veterans.

Emlyn Phennah

Committee Member

Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee South West

Military Charities Section

For this edition an insight to the Armed Forces Covenant & The NHS

Veterans: Priority NHS treatment

What is a veteran?

A veteran is anyone who has served for at least 1 day in the armed forces, whether regular or reserve. This also applies to Merchant Navy seafarers and fishermen who have served in a vessel when it was being used for military operations by the armed forces. There are around 2.6 million veterans in the UK. When servicemen and women leave the armed forces, their healthcare is the responsibility of the NHS.

It's highly important for continuing healthcare that you register with a NHS GP and remember to tell them you have served.

Telling the GP practice about your veteran status will trigger the transfer of your full medical documentation from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to your GP, and enable you to benefit from veteran-specific services like prosthetics and mental health.

No disadvantage'

You shouldn't be disadvantaged from accessing appropriate health services, so it's important that you notify your current GP that you're moving, particularly if you're on

a waiting list for medical treatment, so this information can be transferred across. Details of GP surgeries and other health services within your area can be found by using [find GP services](#).

All veterans are entitled to priority access to NHS care (including hospital, primary or community care) for conditions associated with their time within the armed forces i.e. (service-related). But this is always subject to clinical need and doesn't entitle you to jump the queue ahead of someone with a higher clinical need. If the NHS service you're dealing with is unaware of priority treatment, you are actively encouraged to tell them about it and ensure you have told them you have served.

Medical Military Codes (READ Codes)

NHS issued Codes for Military / Veterans

X a 8 D a - History relating to Military Service

1 3 q 3 - Served in Armed Forces

1 3 q 0 - History relating to Army Service

1 3 q 1 - History relating to Royal Navy Service

1 3 q 2 - History relating to Royal Air Force Service

1 3 J Y - History relating to Military Service

1 3 J i - Military Veteran

1 3 J i 0 - Army Veteran

1 3 J i 1 - Royal Air Force Veteran

1 3 J i 2 - Royal Navy Veteran

1 3 J i 3 - Royal Marines Veteran

These are case sensitive in NHS computer systems, so quote them as they are written here.

Failing that you can enlist local health care commissioners, local authority covenant leader or charities like RBL or SSAFA.

Obituaries

Good news Nil to report

Silly Talk

What does a cloud wear under his raincoat? Thunder wear.

Why is it so windy inside a stadium?

There are hundreds of fans.

Why did the garden feel overcrowded?

There wasn't mushroom.

What did the beach say to the tide when it came in?

Long time, no sea.

What kind of tree fits in your hand?

A palm tree.

What happens in a cave in the rainforest?

Amazon Echo.

Why did the golfer wear two pairs of pants?

In case he got a hole in one.

As we come to the end of another year it is time to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous 2024 from Ray and myself.

Emlyn Phennah Branch Newsletter Editor

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Footnote:

Your website. Between the 1st and 24th of November your branch website was visited 170 times.