



Royal Navy



British Army



Royal Air Force

Aden Veterans Association Gloucestershire Branch

Volume 3 2022

Chairman's Report

I write my report for this newsletter as I watch the leaves falling off the trees. Fortunately it is still quite mild as we move into November, however it is a sign that winter will soon be upon us. I hope that you are prepared for the colder weather when it arrives.

Much has happened since our last newsletter. The most significant occurred in September with the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Her Majesty served her Nation and Commonwealth with patience, wisdom and dedication.

I am sure that we all wish King Charles III a prosperous and happy reign.

The National Association AGM and Reunion, held in Blackpool, went ahead. Clive Candlin, our National Chairman, managed the occasion excellently, with a balance of respect, reflection and looking forward. Although he rightly reminded those present at the AGM that we are all getting older and that volunteers for the National Committee are still required. It was pleasing to note that Graham Mottley has become the membership secretary. This role has been undertaken by Clive and Tony Holland, in addition to their significant roles on the National Committee. Our Branch Standard was carried by Robert Parrant. Dennis Flamson carried the West Dorset Branch Standard. Thanks to both Standard Bearers.

Branch events have taken place over the last three months including our first Wednesday lunches, expertly organised by Jean Stublely.



On the 7th September a few of us visited Kemble airfield to look around a restored Britannia aircraft. Many of you will have flown out to Aden or returned home on one. My thanks go to Sheila and Hugh Gibson for suggesting the visit and to Emlyn Phennah for organising it. Jean arranged our lunch at the Thames Head, which was enjoyed by all. We were looked after by a number of those who restored the aircraft. Their commitment, enthusiasm and vast knowledge was evident for us all to see. I would

thoroughly recommend a visit if you have not seen Britannia 496 at Kemble.

In early October I received news concerning the health of Margaret, Clive Candlins wife. She has been diagnosed with a lung condition which requires her to be on oxygen for fifteen hours a day. I sent a message to Clive and Margaret on behalf of the Branch.

Unfortunately our speaker for the October Branch, Helen Balkwill, was unable to attend due to the rail strike. Hopefully Helen will join us for our January meeting to give her talk. She has a very interesting story about her father Peter, who worked for Airworks during and after the Withdrawal in 1967.

Your Branch has been represented at a number of Remembrance events held in Cheltenham, significantly Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday, where the Branch Standard was carried by Robert Parrant and our wreath was laid. However the most important event for our Branch will be the Service and Lunch to remember the 55th Anniversary of the British Withdrawal from Aden on November 29th 1967. A number of high profile invitees have accepted their invitation. You will no doubt know, by now, who they are. It is a real privilege for our Branch to have such a significant member of the Royal Family attending this very important event in our calendar.

I wish to record my thanks to a small group of our committee who have worked tirelessly on the planning for this event. Chris Price, Michael Compton, Sally Welzel, Brian Woollaston, Chris Blick and Jean Stubley. We are expecting a good turnout on what should be a truly memorable day. I hope to see you there.

I wish you all a Happy Christmas and good health in 2023.

Branch Secretary's Report

At last we can go public! Her Royal Highness Princess Anne will be attending our service of remembrance and luncheon on 29th November. It has been formally noted in the diary for November. I have to say that although you knew that she had been invited, we had to keep it from you that we had received notification of acceptance on 11th July, with the strict instruction that it could not be made public until announcement in the Royal Events Diary.

As you already know the planning for the Commemoration Service and lunch has been proceeding for more than 8 months. With the notification of HRH's attendance, the level of detail required together with the involvement of the Gloucestershire Lieutenancy and the various security agencies has meant a lot more work for the team. When all details have been approved, we will be issuing an instruction to all those attending.

Since the production of the last newsletter the Branch activities have continued pretty well as planned. We had our AGM on 6th July when Clive Candlin our National Chairman gave us notice that as the numbers of the AVA are becoming fewer, and fewer members wish to take on the mantle of being in the National Committee, the days of the AVA are numbered. From a personal point of view, I understand his position; even the job of Branch Secretary requires a measure of commitment. I have to say that I very much

respect the efforts that Clive and others have made during my period of involvement with the Association.

Treasurer's Report

Around this time of the year our Bank balance is greater because of funds accumulated for our Christmas lunch, but this year those funds are going towards our 55th Anniversary Service and lunch. As we know, this has taken more planning and will be an altogether more expensive event. We have received a grant of £1,000 from the national Association, and this has helped us to subsidise the meal to the same price level we paid 10 years ago at the 45th Anniversary, and also cover a number of substantial additional costs where we have not had the time to raise sufficient funds without prejudicing our existing funds. I am hopeful that we will break even, and I am grateful to the national Association for their generous grant.

As far as normal business goes, we have completed the formal round of meetings for this financial year, with just the informal January 2022 quiz meeting to come. Taking out the monies for the Service, lunch and associated costs our routine income is £673 and expenditure is £545 and we have a bank balance of £1,169. There will be some administrative costs before the end of the financial year, but we continue to be in a good financial state.

Postscript : On 31st October 1967 at about 1600 local time, I boarded a British United Airways Britannia at RAF Khormaksar to begin my journey home from Aden. Shortly after take-off, and flying up the coast by Mukalla, the aircraft developed a fault, and our scheduled refuelling stop at Tehran, Iran became a 3-day layover waiting for engine spares from UK. We were put up in a new, empty hotel, well looked after, and given tours of the city which was decorated for the upcoming coronation of the Shah of Iran.

How history moves on!

David Gearing Branch Treasurer

Branch Social Secretary's Report

How quickly the year has passed – last year waiting for Covid restrictions to be lifted, this year spent waiting for some rain!

The lunches since May have been well supported and I thank you. The Lamb at Eastcombe had 19 seated, The Dockers Club and Pub 15. The Ship at Upper Framilode was really good attendance with 24 diners and Kemble Airfield / Thames Head pub saw 12 turning out for an enjoyable tour and meal.

By the time you read this report, we will have had our final luncheon for 2022 at the Redgrove Harvester, Cheltenham with about 15 expected. (The 55 th is covered separately).

I hope you have enjoyed the selection of venues. I try to cover various areas in Gloucestershire and to vary the cost to suit as many as possible. Of course you will

realise that pretty well all pubs have had to increase their prices, and who knows what next year will bring.

You are always welcome to pass on to me any suggestions as to where to meet.

Jean Stublely Branch Social Secretary

Future Events

Final Meeting 2022. The final meeting date of 2022, 7th December being so close to November 29th, there will be no social function this month.

Branch Meeting 4th January 2023. This will take place in the Conservative Club in Stroud at 11:00hrs. Following the meeting a Quiz and Raffle will be held and a buffet lunch will follow.

Luncheon Outings for 01 February 2023 and 01 March 2023 {Saint David's Day} will be published on the website after mid-January 2023.

Helicopter Museum WW2 Event 1st April 2023.

Branch Meeting 5th April 2023 This will take place in the Conservative Club in Stroud at 11:00hrs. Following the meeting a Quiz and Raffle will be held and a buffet lunch will follow.

Saint George's Day Service 23rd April 2023, Details TBA.

Luncheon Outings 3rd May 2023 and 7th June 2023. Venue and Time TBA.

Earthcott Green Memorial Event 14th June 2023 at 10:00hrs.

Weymouth Armed Forces Weekend Saturday 17th June 2023, Sunday 18th June and Monday 19th June.

Gloucester Jet Age Museum and Docks Armed Forces Day 24th June 2023.

Falmouth Armed Forces Day 24th June 2023.

Branch Meeting 5th July 2023 This will take place in the Conservative Club in Stroud at 11:00hrs. Following the meeting a Quiz and Raffle will be held and a buffet lunch will follow.

Luncheon Outings 2nd August 2023 and 6th September 2023 Venue and Time TBA.

AVA AGM and Re-union Blackpool Friday 8th 2023 September to Sunday 10th September 2023.

Battle of Britain Day 83rd Anniversary, Sunday 17th September 2023.

Branch Meeting 4th October 2023. This will take place in the Conservative Club in Stroud at 11:00hrs. Following the meeting a Quiz and Raffle will be held and a buffet lunch will follow.

Armistice Day 11th November 2023. Service Venue and Time TBA.

Remembrance Sunday 12th November 2023 Long Garden Cheltenham.

56th Anniversary Aden Withdrawal 29th November 2023.

Christmas Lunch 6th December 2023 Venue and Time TBA

Editor's Report

I hope you are all well. Following the Indian Summer!! winter is now with us with temperatures in the 40's F. Please wrap up and stay warm.

A reminder of publishing future Newsletters on our Web site. It was agreed at our last AGM that the midyear newsletter should be published after the AGM's, These are normally held in the month of July. This will mean edition publishing dates on the website will change to March, August and November.

Military Charities Section



Soldiers, Sailors and Airman's Family Association

Soldiers Sailors and Airman's Family Association is the Oldest Tri-Military Charity in the UK

Our Timeline:

1885

Major Gildea founds the Soldiers and Sailors Families Association.

When the Second Expeditionary Force set sail for Egypt in February 1885, Major (later Colonel Sir) James Gildea wrote a letter to The Times appealing for money and volunteers to help the military families left behind at home. A fund was set up to provide allowances. Soon Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales (the future Queen Alexandra) became the first president of what was then called the Soldiers and Sailors Families Association (SSFA).

1892

SSFA sets up a nursing branch for serving families. Our nursing branch provided community nurses - later known as Alexandra Nurses - to look after the families of serving men in their own homes in the UK and abroad. We still provide some health services for our serving Forces today.

1900

The Royal Homes for Officers' Widows and Daughters opens. Our first housing service in 1900, was the rent of twelve suites of rooms in Elm Park Mansions to accommodate officers, widows and unmarried daughters. Shortly afterwards Broghill House in Wimbledon, southwest London, was purchased. The existing building was demolished and the Royal Homes for Officers' Widows and Unmarried Daughters built on the site. It was opened by King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in July 1905.

1914

Supporting families on the Home Front. At the outbreak of the First World War, the Government called on us to take care of the families of soldiers going to the Front. After five months, SSFA had paid out more than £1m from the National Relief Fund that we administered and we had 50,000 voluntary workers.

1919

SSFA becomes the Soldiers, Sailors Airman Families Association (SSAFA). Following the founding of the Royal Air Force in 1918, our president Queen Alexandra suggested the organisation should change its name to the Soldiers, Sailors, Airman Families Association (SSAFA).

1926

Our first Royal Charter. SSAFA was granted a Royal Charter of Incorporation in January 1926. Following a review of governance, a new revised Royal Charter and Rules came into effect in January 2014.

1931

Demand for help rises during hard times. Calls on SSAFA for help grew steadily in the 1930s due to the financial depression. We helped 25,203 families in 1931, compared with 18,368 families the previous year.

We continue to provide advice and support to families facing financial hardship today.

1941

Support for service men during the Second World War. In May 1941, SSAFA opened a special office - the SSAFA Overseas Department - to deal with enquiries from serving men about the safety of their families back home. Soon afterwards the first of many

overseas bureaux, where men could discuss family problems or make enquiries about relatives, opened in Cairo in September 1941.

1953

SSAFA assists Prisoners of War returning from Korea. At the request of the War Office, SSAFA sent a volunteer to meet British prisoners at the end of the Korean War to find out how we could help.

1982

There for families during the Falklands conflict. SSAFA provided support to the families of service men injured or killed in the Falklands. Our social workers accompanied the 541 bereaved relatives who travelled to the Falkland Islands the following year.

1982

HRH Prince Michael of Kent becomes SSAFA President. Prince Michael of Kent became our fourth President. He remains in the role.

1996

Working with Ministry of Defence to provide health and social care services. The Ministry of Defence contracted SSAFA and Guy's St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust to provide health and social care services to the military community in British Forces Germany and the European Support Group. Our professional staff ensured that families had access to hospital services similar to the care available on the NHS.

1997

SSAFA merged with the Forces Help Society and Lord Roberts Workshops. The official merger with Forces Help Society and Lord Roberts Workshops took place on 1 January 1997. Although SSAFA had already made a formal agreement in 1988 and many of our volunteers, including some Council members, had been active in both organisations.

2008

SSAFA Norton House opens for families of injured service personnel. In this year, we responded to a campaign by Sue Norton and her husband, Captain Peter Norton, who was injured while serving in Iraq to provide a free 'home away from home' for relatives visiting injured service men and women. Within months we had raised enough money to build and open a six-bedroom home in Surrey near the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court. A second SSAFA Norton House opened in Selly Oak, Birmingham, in 2009 near the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine.

2013

The Queen opens our new headquarters in central London. Her Majesty The Queen, SSAFA's patron for 60 years, formally opened our new central office at Queen Elizabeth House in London in November 2013.

2019

SSAFA Norton House relocates. Norton House, Stanford Hall was officially opened in May by our Vice President, Lady Carter. The home has relocated following the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre's move to the East Midlands.

SSAFA Gloucestershire.
5, Carne Place, Eastern Avenue, Gloucester,
020 4566 9131

And finally, a little humour:

Alphabet for the over 50s

A's for arthritis;
B's the bad back,
C's the chest pains, perhaps car-di-ac?
D is for dental decay and decline,
E is for eyesight, can't read that top line!
F is for farting and fluid retention,
G is for gut droop, which I'd rather not mention.
H high blood pressure---I'd rather it low;
I for incisions with scars you can show.
J is for joints, out of socket, won't mend,
K is for knees that crack when they bend,
L 's for libido, what happened to sex?
M is for memory, I forget what comes next..
N is neuralgia, in nerves way down low;
O is for osteo, bones that don't grow!
P for prescriptions, I have quite a few, just give me a pill and I'll be good as new!
Q is for queasy, is it fatal or flu?
R is for reflux, one meal turns to two.
S is for sleepless nights, counting my fears,
T is for Tinnitus; bells in my ears!
U is for urinary; troubles with flow;
V for vertigo, that's 'dizzy,' you know...
W for worry, now what's going 'round?
X is for X ray, and what might be found.
Y for another year I'm left here behind,
Z is for zest I still have---in my mind!

I've survived all the symptoms, my body's deployed, And I'm keeping twenty-six doctors employed.

**I wish all our readers a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
Nadolig Llawn a Blyddwyn Newydd Dda**

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