



Aden Veterans Association Gloucestershire Branch Volume 3, 2020

Chairman's Report

Chairman's Report:

I write my report as we move into Autumn. I can see the leaves starting to fall from the trees and no doubt will need to turn on the central heating this month. I would normally reflect on what our Branch has achieved since our last newsletter. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has prevented us from meeting, and has again resulted in the cancellation of many events, including our AGM.

However, on the positive side, a number of our Branch attended a short service to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain. This was held, in the Long Garden, in Cheltenham on the 20th October. My thanks go to all who attended, especially Jim Major, who laid our wreath, and Robert Parrant, who paraded our Branch Standard. It was such a pleasure to chat with members again, even if we had to maintain social distancing.

Congratulations to one of our members Emlyn Phennah who has been awarded the High Sherriff of Gloucester Award for his work with Veterans during the Covid-19 pandemic. This is well deserved as I know how much time, and hard work, Emlyn puts into his SSAFA role.

I am most grateful to Michael Compton, who has been liaising with Cheltenham Borough Council and the RBL, about the Field of Remembrance Dedication and Remembrance Day. He has also organised a COVID-19 secure remembrance service for the 53rd Anniversary of our withdrawal from Aden. The Lord Lieutenant, the MP and the Mayor of Cheltenham have all agreed to attend our service. Further details are contained in Michael's report.

Jean Stubley (Social Secretary) is in continuing discussion with Tortworth Court about the possibility of holding our Christmas Lunch under the current regulations. Hopefully a decision can be made in the near future. I gather that Tortworth Court will try to make every effort to ensure that this event will happen and will follow government guidance.

Finally, I would like to welcome Judith and Tony Holland (National Chair and National Treasurer) to Gloucestershire. They moved here during September. I know that they would like to attend our Branch events, when we get back to some kind of normality. We are looking forward to them joining the Gloucestershire Branch.

I do hope that you are continuing to cope with the current situation, that you are in good health and that we can resume 'normal service' during 2021.

Rick Rutter

Secretary's Report

This report is a combination of the statement for the last year up to July 2020 as well as notes on the current situation and our immediate future plans. For obvious reasons, the yearly report will be a short one. There are four people I would like to thank for their special contribution to the Branch activities – step forward Jean Stublely who must be congratulated for her initiative set up a combined Xmas lunch involving veterans from other organisations. I believe that this is the future; as an independent group on its own, our influence will dwindle, so we must evolve as a collective veteran's group if we are to keep our position as a respected influence over the younger generations. I would also like to thank Chris Blick, and Emlyn Phennah for contributions to the newsletter and Ray Bunnage for his work in the website. Currently we have 28 active members in the Branch and about 30 members who are on my mailing list who still wish to maintain contact.

Once again the pendulum of fortune seems to be going against us as the figures for the last few weeks show that we are still vulnerable to Covid-19. Having been in the services you will know what it is to follow the rules, and for those of us previously designated in the shielding category, this has become more important. But for those who have experienced the nervousness caused by an unseen threat, being on your guard should be second nature. Some of us trained using masks and some of us had the doubtful pleasure of donning NBC kit and then we were expected to work in it! So, although the current requirements are not so stringent, the fact that they are continuous is still very wearisome. I have missed the monthly get-togethers most, and look forward to the day when they can be reinstated.

Since the last newsletter we have had to cancel the AGM, and then, after arranging with the Carlton Club that we could have a socially distanced AGM in October, that had to be cancelled as well. One high point though – we were invited to attend the Battle of Britain Parade and Sunday Service at the Cheltenham Cenotaph. Although we had to follow the plan laid out by RBL, it was good to meet, albeit for such short time. Having seen how the Cheltenham Borough Council and RBL organised the event, we have asked for permission and it has been granted by the CBC Executive Committee, that we may hold the anniversary parade and service on Sunday 29th November with a few modifications. Both the Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, Edward Gillespie, and the Cheltenham MP, Alex Chalk, have agreed to attend. Despite the fact that we will not be able to socialise before and after the event, we would appreciate your attendance. Keeping socially distanced outside the CBC building will be the rule. We are already hoping for good weather, because there cannot be any service inside the CBC. In the event of bad weather - (yes you guessed it)– it will have to be cancelled. Still it will be chance to "show the colours" again. Detailed instructions will be sent those who let me know beforehand of their attendance. Finally, I have just had an invitation for our standard to be in attendance on Remembrance Sunday at Cheltenham. So if you are not attending your local services you will be welcome – socially distanced of course.

Having cancelled both attempts to hold the AGM, your Committee, has decided to give you the chance to have your say as we would expect, during the normal non-Covid-19 affected AGM. So I am enclosing the "virtual" agenda together with the various reports from your Committee. In accordance with rules of the Association, I am obliged to stand down after 3 years "in post".

Therefore, with the agenda you are requested to consider whether you would like to propose a member to join the Committee and take on the post of honorary secretary. The proposal will need to be seconded as well and sent to me by any means (e-mail or snail mail) by 30th November 2020

STOP PRESS

ANNIVERSARY 29TH NOVEMBER

LATEST

INSTRUCTIONS

Although many of the local events have been cancelled, I am pleased to say that the event at Cheltenham will go ahead, but in a truncated form. Here is a copy of the official instruction from on high:

Exception 14: Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day (18) Exception 14 is that— (a)the gathering takes place— (i)outdoors in a place which is not a private dwelling to commemorate Remembrance Sunday, or (ii)in Westminster Abbey on 11th November 2020 to commemorate Armistice Day and the centenary of the burial of the Unknown Soldier;(b)the persons attending the gathering are limited to—(i)persons there as part of their work, (ii)persons providing voluntary services in connection with the event, (iii)members of the armed forces, (iv)veterans of the armed forces or their representatives or carers, and16(v)spectators who participate in the gathering alone or only with members of their household, linked household or their linked childcare household, and (c)the gathering organiser or manager takes the required precautions in relation to the gathering (see regulation 14).

The changes to the normal format are:

1. There will be only one standard – in this case this will be the RBL standard. I have therefore asked Robert Parrant to stand down.
2. The only official person from our Branch who will take part is Jim Major our wreath layer.
3. I have spoken to Gary Angove of Cheltenham Borough Council, and he has stated the policy for the day is that although attendance by personnel other than the select few is to be discouraged for safety reasons, attendance by others cannot be legally prevented unless they are infringing distancing rules.
4. Any event on 29th November is still subject to consideration by CBC – To be advised
So, if you feel like me and I am sure many others, that you wish pay your customary respects on this important day, then will not be prevented from doing so you must comply with the distancing rules at all times. **Furthermore, you are warned that, any action you take will be entirely at your own risk.** For those of you who may wish to remain at home, there will be live-streaming and television. Whatever you decide I hope you will feel that you have paid your respects in the most appropriate way.

Kind Regards to you all and keep safe.

Michael Compton

Treasurer's Report

I find it hard to believe that it is 12 months since we last had a formal Branch Meeting.

At that last meeting, I outlined to Branch Members a forecast future where our income was diminishing, and where costs continued to rise. We would need to keep a careful eye on expenditure to ensure that we could continue the very successful formula that has made our Branch a beacon within the National Association. Then, we did not anticipate a snap general election, which served to curtail our 52nd Anniversary event, as the Cheltenham Civic Offices were required by the Returning Officer and not available for us to foregather. And of course, no-one saw the Covid-19 pandemic coming, which has turned the world upside down for all of us, especially those with health issues, and where many are struggling to cope with a new order the like of which we have never seen before.

Our Branch finances have therefore been at much of a standstill throughout 2020. For information of Branch Members, a Statement of Accounts for 2019-20 is appended with my notes, and you will see that we are in fact in a very healthy position with £1,491.97 at Lloyds Bank, Stroud. At the time of writing, there has been only one transaction in the current financial year, that being a donation from the widow of a former Member.

Along with all the other Branch Officers, I look forward to the day when we can meet again, either at the Carlton Club, Stroud, or at our popular First Wednesday lunches.

ADEN VETERANS ASSOCIATION GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 1st APRIL 2019 TO 31st MARCH 2020**

Bank Balance Brought Forward	1347.41
<u>Branch Raffles</u>	+532.00
<u>Donations from Branch Members</u>	+250.65
<u>Merchandise</u>	
Sales to Branch Members	+61.35
<u>Proceeds of Wine Auction 8 Jan 2020</u>	+18.00
<u>Internet Fees</u>	-136.66
<u>Postage, Stationery & Printing</u>	-118.81
<u>Mileage Allowance</u>	
Principally parade of Branch Standard at ceremonial events	-118.00
<u>Purchase of Certificate frame and mounting of Roll of Honour</u>	-111.80
<u>Purchase of 5 Wreaths from Royal British Legion</u>	-92.50
<u>Lecture Fee, Mr. P. Barnett, 2 Apr 2019</u>	-55.00

Christmas Lunch

Total cost, including purchases of chocolates for the Ladies and boxes for raffle prizes.	-2246.72	
Receipts from Branch Members	+2197.05	-49.67
 <u>Lunches at Branch Meetings</u>		
Cost from the Stroud Conservative Club	- 318.00	
Receipts from Branch Members	+ 283.00	-35.00

		1491.97
Balance at Lloyds Bank Stroud 31 st March 2020		1491.97
Total Income:	3342.05	
Total Expenditure:	3197.49	
Excess of Income over Expenditure	+144.56	

David Gearing

Social Secretary's Report

Hello everyone. It's hard to believe that we are coming up to November, without setting eyes on each other since the beginning of the year. I miss you all!

Update on Tortworth Court Christmas Lunch on 2/12/20.

I spoke to Kate at Tortworth and as the present Government Covid-19 rules state all events are closed so, our booking for Xmas Lunch is now Cancelled

Well we had best put in some positive thinking and plan in some dates for 2021 lunches.

I don't have any venues in mind yet – just hope those we missed out on this year are still open for us to try next year.

Proposed dates are as follows: -

Wednesday 6 January	Quarterly meeting
Wednesday 3 February	
Wednesday 3 March	
Wednesday 7 April	Quarterly meeting
Wednesday 5 May	
Wednesday 2 June	
Wednesday 7 July	Quarterly meeting
Wednesday 4 August	
Wednesday 1 September	

Wednesday 1 October Quarterly meeting
Wednesday 3 November
Wednesday 1 December Christmas lunch tbc
Times as usual 12;00 for 12.30 hours

Jean Stublely

Editorial Comment:

Hello again everyone, looks like you are stuck with me for a while, I will keep things fairly brief this time.

I apologise for the delay in publication, it has been held up to attempt to provide you with the very latest Government instructions on Lock down and how it has affected our plans for Christmas and most important Remembrance Day Arrangements and what the Cheltenham Chamber of Commerce will allow, in order for us to remember the Aden Withdrawal on the 29th of November.

Future Event Dates to note

I would like to mention some tentative dates for 2021, however, with the uncertain times we are living in right now, I have decided to publish the Weymouth and Blackpool and other 2021 dates, early in the spring when we hope to have a clearer picture of life post Covid-19.

Bereavements

I am pleased to announce, that to the best of my knowledge, we have not lost any members since the last News Letter

Emlyn Phennah

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