



# 26 Regiment Royal Artillery Association Newsletter November 2011

Dear Sirs, Honourable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Yes, it's that time again and it's fast approaching for us to get together to reunite our acquaintance once again. I have put together a programme of events for the weekend and attached to this letter is a copy of the Hotel Booking Form for you to complete and send back to me. But before we get into filling forms and writing out cheques, I would like to bring you up to-date with what has been going on since we all got together in March 2010:

## **Chairman: Steve Wallis MBE**

I hope this newsletter finds you all in good health and that you are all looking forward to our reunion as much as I am. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Shuggie for all his hard work and efforts since our last gathering. The post of secretary is sometimes a thankless task however it takes a lot of valuable time and effort to organise the committee meetings and reunions and I am certain you all appreciate his dedication. Since we last met our President, Maj Gen Bruce Brealey, has relinquished his tenure as Honorary Colonel and thus also the post of President of the Association. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of you all to thank him most sincerely for his valued support and advice and wish him all the best for the future. His replacement in both posts is Brig Nick Eeles, the current Director Royal Artillery, who commanded the Regiment from 2001-2003. I will obviously write to him and request his attendance as President at the reunion. Hot off the press is the news that Brig Eeles has been gazetted to be the General Officer Commanding 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, in the rank of Major General, in January 2012. I will ensure the congratulations of you all are offered to him. I would also like to offer my personal congratulations to Trev Persse on the award of the MBE. Finally may I please encourage you all to make Shuggie's life easier and get in your bookings and monies for the reunion ASP. Look forward to seeing you all in March.

## **Secretary: Shuggie McTaggart**

Over the past 18 months or so, it has to be said, things have been very quiet and I hope that's not a bad thing? After the last reunion at Coventry, I started work in preparation for the next reunion in 2012. I tried to find a venue that would be appropriate for everyone and would suit everyone's needs (well almost?). Out of the 3 hotels I looked at, the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool was the one that gave best value for money by far. I know from past experience and members feedback, it was said the Adelphi Hotel was possibly not up to standard for us to hold our reunions there anymore? So to put these concerns to the test, I arranged for the Executive Committee to hold the meeting there and stay in the accommodation overnight. We all found the hotel rooms and facilities to be very clean & tidy, also the staff were very helpful and friendly. The food was served to a very high standard and the bar prices weren't too bad either (Happy Hour). When you look at the prices and see what you are getting in return, it's not that bad. I couldn't get any other Hotel to match these prices or come anywhere near it.

It has been good to hear other social gatherings have been taking place in the months leading up to the main reunion, 16 Bty, 159 Bty and some of our Senior Members have organized a social meeting and by all accounts they had a great time, may it long continue.

In the past I have asked for feedback from members to establish what improvements or any changes they feel would benefit the way we go about our business and so far I've had very little feedback if any, except for what is discussed and agreed at the AGM. Please, if you have any suggestion/ideas you wish to propose at the next AGM, please do so. This is your association and you do have a say on what and how things should be done?

Finally, please remember to let me know when you change any of your contact details, believe me this is one of the hardest things about this role, keeping members contact details up to-date (Nightmare). I look forward to meeting those who can attend the reunion in March 2012, until then take care and keep safe.

*President: Brigadier NH Eeles*

## **Welfare: Brian Henderson**

I hope that everyone is looking after themselves, so it seems, as I have had no reason to put any welfare cases into the system? This is not unusual, as you are all too proud to ask for any help at anytime, or do you know of someone that might benefit from a little hand up from a situation they find themselves in. I have now completed a Royal British Legion caseworker's course and that did open my eyes to what help is available to any service man or woman that has received 7 days pay. If you are in doubt to whether you or someone you know is entitled to help just give me a call, anything said is always confidential. Here is a small list of things that can be applied for through the RBL: Benefits & Money Advice, War Pensions & Compensation, Short Break Centres, Handy Van Services, Immediate Needs Grants Scheme, Electrically Powered Vehicles, Home adaptations and lots more. **If in doubt phone me.**

## **Last Post**

It is with great sadness that we have to announce the following members have passed onto another place since the last reunion: Billy Jardean, John (Laurie) Summers, Tony McNaughton, Violet Walker, Pat Donnelly, Kevin (Mick) Houlihan, Ron (Jock) Nicholl, Johnny (Yorkie) Holmes, Bernie Hilditch, Peter Lawler, Jenny Katani and Tony (Taff) Baghurst.

***OUR THOUGHTS ARE ALWAYS WITH THEM AND THEIR CLOSE FAMILIES, AMEN***

## **New Members**

Jonathon Bates, Jeremy Mawdsley, Bruce Hodges, Anthony Brown, Laurence Hayes, Michael Walton, Robin Croxson, Trevor Childerley, Aaron Pilmore, Gary Heathwaite, Helen Wenman, Daniel Collins-Phillips, Kenneth Holt, Bob Thomas and Bax Baxter.

## **Website & Facebook**

Since the launch of the Association Website, it has been a great asset for the association and its members. Facebook is another way members are keeping in touch with each other, so if you want to find out what's going on, get connected. The Chairman and all its Members would like to give the Webmaster (Steff Jordan) a vote of thanks for all his hard work and the amount of time he gives up keeping the website up to-date.

## **Other Business**

### **Awards**

Congratulations are offered to Trev Persse on his outstanding achievements and the award of the MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2011.

### **Election of Officers**

The Chairman's post is to be re-elected at the next AGM on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2012. All correspondence for nominations for the post of Chairman is to be sent to the Secretary 28 days prior to the AGM. All nominees have to be proposed and seconded by an association member.

### **Reunion Weekend**

The reunion will be held on the weekend 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> of March 2012 at the Britannia Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool. We have negotiated the following prices below:

**Gala Dinner only:** £25.00 per person (This is to be paid in full, in advance)

**1 Night package:** £99.00 per person inclusive of bed, breakfast and gala dinner (Sat night)

**2 Night's package:** £129.00 per person inclusive of bed, breakfast and evening meals, (Either Fri & Sat or Sat & Sun nights). Gala Dinner is included in this price.

**3 Night's package:** £159.00 per person inclusive of bed, breakfast and evening meals (Fri, Sat & Sun night). Gala Dinner is included in this price.

*President: Brigadier NH Eeles*

## **Bookings**

All hotel bookings will be made directly to me, unfortunately the hotel management **will not be taking bookings direct from members**, as they prefer associations to administer their own matters. It is therefore requested payment is made in full when booking your accommodation or Gala Dinner only.

Cheques are to be made payable to '**26 Regiment Association**'.

Please can I request booking forms and cheques are sent to me no later than **1<sup>st</sup> February 2012**. If for some reasons you cannot pay by Cheque, then please get in touch with me and I will try to arrange with the hotel to sort out an alternative way to pay. A refund will be given to any member who has paid, but then is unable to attend.

### **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 12**

Welcome Reception and Drinks will be in the Banquet Hall Bar. The bar facility will be available from 2 pm and will be open to our members only. Evening meal will be in the Banquet Hall between 6pm-8pm. This will be a self-service (Buffet) arrangement. There will be no entertainment arranged for after the evening meal, social drinking only.

### **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 12**

Breakfast in Jenny's Restaurant between 7.00am-10.00am

**Meetings** The Council and General Meetings will take place in The Sefton Suite.

Council – 10.00am-10.45am

General Meeting – 11.00am-12.00pm

**Saturday Afternoon Entertainment** Liverpool City Centre is jammed packed with all sorts of things to do, Shop until you drop, Drink until you fall over and the list goes on. Flyers are available in the hotel lobby that will tell you "What is Going On".

**Gala Dinner** The Gala Dinner will take place in the Banquet Hall. Timings: 7.30pm for 8.00pm

The set menu will be:

**Starter** – Assorted Melon Cocktail.

**Main Course** – Roast Sirloin of Beef with Yorkshire Pudding & A Selection of Market Fresh Vegetables and Potatoes.

**Vegetarian Option** –Goats Cheese Tartlet

**Dessert** –Fruits of the Forest Cheesecake

**Afters** –Freshly Brewed Coffee

Wine is available for purchase from the bar for those who wish to consume it with their meal. Entertainment after the meal will be supplied by the Hotel's DJ & Disco.

### **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> March 12**

Breakfast in Jenny's Restaurant between 7.00am-10.00am

Those departing will need to be checked out between 11.00am-12.30pm

Dinner will be in the Main Restaurant on a self-service (Buffet) basis.

### **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 12**

Check out will be at the normal hotel check out times, please ask when you arrive for details.

## **General Points**

**Transport Links** Liverpool has very good transport links into the city centre and you should have no problems getting to the hotel by car, bus or train.

*President: Brigadier NH Eeles*

**Car Parking** There is car parking facilities close to the hotel, Lime Street Station, NCP at St John's and the Mount Pleasant Car Park. On average it will cost between £6 - 12.00 per day, Mount Pleasant being the cheapest at £6.00 per day, but you will have to renew your ticket each morning. There is limited car parking supplied from the hotel, but you will have to check on the day for availability, unfortunately it's not free; it will cost £12.00 per day.

**Raffle** The committee has decided not to hold a raffle again this year, but we would request members to donate £5.00 for this year's charitable contribution when booking their places. All money raised will be split 50/50, one half will be donated to the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund and the remainder to our welfare fund

**Disabled Facilities** The hotel has currently 4 bedrooms with full disabled facilities; please ensure you let me know your requirements when filling out your booking form.

**Drinks Prices** Drink prices, a subject close to all our hearts. Our bar will have the following price list for the weekend (see list on the last page), however the other bars in the hotel have happy hours at certain times of the day, something else to consider?

**Association Regimental Tie** Ties will be available at the reunion for those members who wish to purchase one at a cost of £14.00. It will be gratefully appreciated if members would wear their Regimental Tie for the Gala Dinner.

**Complaints** Please could I ask members to direct all complaints to me, if and when they occur over the weekend?

### Adelphi Hotel Bar Tariff

<b>DRAUGHT</b>	<b>Pint</b>	<b>Half</b>		<b>SPIRITS</b>	
				House Whiskey	£2.10
Carlsberg	£2.30	£1.20		Branded Whiskeys from	£2.10
San Miguel	£3.10	£1.60		House Vodka	£2.10
Strongbow	£2.30	£1.20		Branded Vodkas from	£2.10
Tetley Bitter	£2.30	£1.20		House Brandy	£2.10
Mild	£2.30	£1.20		Branded Brandys from	£2.10
Guinness	£2.50	£1.30		House Gin	£2.10
				Gordons Gin	£2.70
				Branded Gins from	£2.70
<b>BOTTLED BEER</b>				Liquers from	£2.80
Budweiser	£3.10			Vermouths from	£2.10
Becks	£3.10				
Holsten Pils	£3.10				
Miller Draught	£3.10			<b>SOFT DRINKS</b>	
Kaliber	£3.10			Postmix 16 fl oz	£2.00
Brown Ale	£3.10			large dash postmix	£1.00
Guinness Bottle	£3.10			dash postmix	£0.65
Woodpecker	£3.10			Cordial & Water pint	£1.10
Magners/Bulmers	£3.60			Cordial & Water 1/2 pint	£0.50
Smirnoff Ice	£3.10				
WKD	£3.10			Coca Cola Bottle	£1.70
				J20	£1.70
	<b>Glass</b>	<b>Bottle</b>		Baby Mixers	£1.50
House Wine	£2.30	£13.95		Baby Fruit Juice	£1.50
				Split Lemonade	£1.70

**Conclusion** If you would like to put forward any suggestions to the committee about improvements, new ideas etc, then please put them down on paper or e-mail them to me. This association will only be successful if your support and input is there?

Look forward to see you all in March 2012

Secretary

*President: Brigadier NH Eeles*



### **159 (Colenso) Battery Detachments Front 2011**

The 159 annual get together is gaining momentum, this year 43 ex members and families enjoyed a weekend just outside Wrexham, at the Holt Lodge Hotel, a bit like finding a good Gasthaus on exercise. A well done to those who travelled to get there, Yorkie Horbury from Abu Dhabi, Nobby Clark from Cyprus, Albert Alcock from Bavaria and Brian Pearson from Emsworth.



The weekend started on the Friday PM, some earlier than others and continued into the evening with the customary drinks and general chat, we were blessed with the weather being able to sit outside until late.

After a hearty breakfast on the Saturday people went off to pursue their various interests, golf was organised by Hamish Muir, 10 pin bowling organised by Lote and a trip to the Erddig Manor, a National Trust Property courtesy of Bernadette Dagnall. Once again the weather was fantastic, which allowed us to return to the hotel in time for a few more beers on the patio.

Then time to get changed for dinner, an all-inclusive carvery was laid on for us in our own room, at the end of the meal we had a rendition from the past of "Sloop John B" by Lote Kaitani, supported by the battery chorus. Well Done the Chorus!



It is hoped that a similar event will take place in 2012.

It is with sadness that during the year we lost Pete Matthews (Signaller) and dear Jenny Kaitani.

All the Best Jack Pye

*President: Brigadier NH Eeles*