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Newsletter - March 2021

1 message

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• The Gunners •

Newsletter - March 2021

Welcome to the The Royal Artillery Charities newsletter. This is where you can keep right up to date with all the Regimental Family's news and information.

If you have any news for the Gunner website or the Newsletter from your regiments, branches, districts and regions we would love to receive them. Please ensure that you have permission to share information and images.

The Gunners



Message from the Regimental Secretary

Colonel Matthew Carter

As I write, many of you will have grandchildren who returned to school on Monday 8th March – the first step in what we all hope will be a return to some sort of normality after what, for most of us, is one of the most strange and, in many cases, sadly, most tragic periods we have ever lived through.

As we look forward to Summer, when we hope we can once again spend time with our families and friends, I would like to say a huge 'thank you' to the RAA and RACF charity teams and to the finance staff in RHQRA who, despite numerous challenges, have managed to deliver a pretty much 'service as normal' level of support to our members and those serving and retired Gunners, and their families, who have found themselves in need.

I would also like to commend those of you in the regions, districts and branches, who have done all that you can to support each other and to reach out to our members who have been isolated, lonely or in need of assistance. I would make special mention of the many standard bearers who, when numbers and family wishes have permitted, have attended the funerals of Gunners who have died during the pandemic. Gestures like these mean so much to the bereaved families.

Inevitably most of our events over the last year have had to be cancelled or postponed and sadly this pattern is set to continue for a while yet.

- Gunner Sunday at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea has been cancelled for the second year running but is now planned for 24 October.
- The Royal Artillery Assembly and RAA AGM at Blackpool is cancelled. We had looked at alternative dates in either August or October but neither of these proved viable. After consultation with the NEC, the Regimental Colonel and the Master Gunner, it has therefore been agreed that we should focus our efforts on next year's event, which will be 20-22 May 2022.

We are hopeful that the annual service at the NMA will go ahead as normal on 3 July this year, but that obviously depends on government direction nearer the time.

Many of you will have been disappointed not to have received your copy of Gunner magazine at various times over the last year. This has been the result of COVID restrictions and gapped posts on the Gunner staff. It is planned that a new look Gunner will be launched in the Summer, with dedicated pages from each of the Gunner formations and from the regimental charities. Details will be sent out with the next addition of Gunner, but as you once again start to hold events at branch level, please forward any material for publication to Cas Thoburn. We will then collate and forward articles to the Editor of Gunner.

One of the projects that the Association Secretary and the Royal Artillery Sergeant Major have completed over the last few months, is a review and update of branch affiliations with regiments and batteries. Please be reassured that we have not tinkered with existing, well established, affiliations but we have tried to put in place revised arrangements where previous ones have fallen by the wayside. Details will be issued shortly and I would ask that branches make every effort to develop that relationship with their affiliated regiment or battery.

My two final points are: to thank those branches who have managed to continue to raise funds for the regimental charities during the last 12 months. As always these donations play a key role in enabling us to provide welfare support across the regimental family; on which point I would remind you that if you or another member is in need of support, the RACF is there to help. They provide a weekly update on the [Gunner FaceBook Page](#).

If you or someone you know needs help, speak to someone today.

Contact SSAFA on 0800 731 4880 or the RBL on 0808 802 8080. Email the RACF at sarahjane.hatt374@gmail.com or telephone 07784 952 882

With my best wishes,

Matthew Carter

· Events ·

Please monitor the RAA [website](#) and [facebook page](#) for any further information and event updates.

Forecast of Events 2021

·3rd July 2021·

Service of Remembrance - National Memorial Arboretum

The Royal Artillery Association will conduct a Service of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum. Following the Service there will be a short wreath laying service at the Royal Artillery Memorial Garden. Branches and Regiments are welcome to lay their own wreaths during the Service. Returns to be submitted by 11 June 2021.

(Photo below taken in October 2020 with COVID restrictions in place).

Event Info



·RA Historical Society·

Military History Webinars



The RA Historical Society arranges Zoom On-Line Webinars for its members on Gunner military history subjects. The webinars are recorded and placed on You Tube. If you wish to attend any of the events below please contact the RAHS Secretary, Lt Col Richard Clayton: richard.clayton312@gmail.com:

Thu 25 Mar 1930 - 2030 **Project Babylon: Dr Gerald Bull and the Iraqi Supergun 1988-90**

Wed 28 Apr 1930 - 2030 **Operation Goodwood and the Guns of Cagny, Normandy, 1944**

Tue 18 May 1930 - 2030 **Heritage, collective experience and ethos**

Tue 29 Jun 1930 - 2030 **The Final Judgement (Royal Artillery on the WEF/FWW)**

·Waterloo Uncovered·

In 2019 a team of military veterans and serving personnel, led by archaeologists, excavated the site of Wellington's Field Hospital on the world famous battlefield of Waterloo. This year they are running 3 more programmes for veterans which may be of interest to you, built around the archaeology of the Battle of Waterloo, they are looking to find participants who require support with their wellbeing, recovery, education, employment, or transition.

Virtual Support Programme - 6 month programme, open to veterans or serving personnel, ideal for anyone who is interested in military history or archaeology.

Finds Programme - 12 month programme, for veterans only, that focuses on archaeological finds, supported by the National Army Museum.

Creative Arts Programme - 12 month programme, for veterans only, explore the Battle of Waterloo through creative arts.

Applications are now open. Read the full article if you wish to get involved - [Waterloo Uncovered](#).



· The Royal Artillery Charitable Fund ·

RACF Welfare Team Quarterly Report

As we start 2021, the Welfare Grant team continues to offer financial support working from home to members of our Gunner Family who are struggling to find the money to pay for essential needs. In 2020 we awarded £577,214 and helped over 864 individuals whether they were RA veterans, serving Gunners or dependants.

The biggest category that people needed help with was household goods. Finding extra money for essential household goods can be impossible for many. We awarded over £90,000 helping with cookers, fridge-freezers, washing machines, carpets and other essential items. The next largest demand was for mobility support. This could be funding mobility scooters, help with specialist beds or other items that make mobility easier and less painful. We awarded over £77,000 on mobility support. The third highest area that we needed to help with was critical housing arrears. In a year when many saw a drop in household income finding money to pay for vital bills became a real worry. We were able to support those who were facing such dilemmas with over £57,00 in grants.

We had a busy Christmas awarding grants to some of our veterans and widows that were spending Christmas alone in care homes and how could not see their loved ones because of the lockdown restrictions.

For assistance, please call SSAFA on 0800 731 4880 or the RBL on 0808 802 8080. We are here for advice either by calling us or send us an email at sarahjane.hatt374@gmail.com Tel number 07784 952 882.

From time to time we receive letters and cards of appreciation and we would love to share a couple with you.

[95 year old widow of a WW2 veteran - Help awarded with Care Home top up fees](#)

This makes so much difference to my Mum. My Daughter now lives in the UK and has been doing the 'window visits' to keep up Mum's morale. It's been nearly 12 months since I last kissed my Mum which is heart breaking. I've seen her but through glass.

Please pass on our most sincere thanks to the Royal Artillery and of course yourself for all the great work you do.

[40 year old serving Gunner - Help to support flight home to St Vincent](#)

I would like to firstly express my sincere gratitude regarding my recent trip home. If not for your kind assistance, I would not have been able to see my son. I was able to be there and spend time with him in such a painful and sensitive time. I am happy to report that he is well on the way to a full recovery. I was personally and deeply moved by your speedy response and will never forget the level of interest expressed by your organisation. The way in which I received the funds to be able to fly back home in a swift manner is so appreciated, words cannot express my gratitude. It is therefore with sincere and heartfelt gratitude that I wish to express many thanks to your organisation for the funding of my ticket fees to travel. Again, I wanted to let you know I appreciate your help and support. I wish you and your organisation great success in your endeavours for the New Year and going forward for all your future projects.

How We Help



NEWS RELEASE

McCloud Case Outcome: how it might affect you

Following an age discrimination ruling made in 2019, many members of the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS) will be affected by the outcome of the so-called McCloud Case.

If you were serving on or before 31st March 2012 and on or after 1st April 2015 (including service leavers), the recently-announced Government decision on how to remedy the issue could be very relevant to you.

The Forces Pension Society (among others) lobbied hard in favour of one of the two remedial options being considered. To its credit, the Government agreed with our recommendation, titled "Defence Choice Underpin". The decision means that toward the end of your career, for the 7 year 'remedy period' (1 Apr 15 – 31 Mar 22 or your retirement date if earlier) you will be able to choose between the pension benefits offered by your legacy (AFPS 75 or 05) scheme or the reformed (AFPS 15) scheme.

At your point of decision, you will have all the information you need about the actual pension benefits you've earned. Your personal circumstances will then need to be assessed so you can make an informed decision. And the Forces Pension Society will be there to guide its Members through that decision-making process to best meet their, and their family's needs.

Right now there is no action for you to take since it is likely that it will be many months before the necessary legislation is enacted. If, by the time the remedy process is in place, you are in Resettlement or have already left the Armed Forces, you will be contacted by MoD and provided with the information you require.

In the interim, the Members' Area of our website will be updated continuously with reference information and guidance.

For information about joining the Forces Pension Society, visit www.forcespensionsociety.org

Maj Gen Neil Marshall, CEO, Forces Pension Society

· The Gunner Lottery ·

Gunner Lottery was launched last year for the benefit of the Gunner charities. The hope is that the Lottery can raise much needed funds and raise awareness of the good work done by the Royal Artillery charities.

You can take part as an individual or syndicate; Battery, Regiment or RAA Branch. You could be in with a chance of winning the top prize of £25,000 each week.

The Draw takes place every Friday.

JOIN TODAY [Gunner Lottery](#).

Gunner Lottery

JOIN TODAY

to be in with a chance of winning

For every £1 entry, at least
50p goes directly to The
Royal Artillery Charities





Fantastic cash prizes up to

£25,000

could be yours!

Supporting those who serve. Supporting those who have served.



www.thegunners.org.uk

· Branch News ·

Biggleswade Branch during 'Lockdown'

Unfortunately, the Branch has been unable to hold any meetings since the beginning of the first lockdown in March 2020 and zoom meetings was going to be difficult to include everyone. As a Branch it was decided the only way we could communicate and keep within government guidelines was via a monthly newsletter. The newsletter has proved very popular keeping everyone up to date with Branch, RAA and Community news. The newsletter is distributed via email but for those without a computer, a copy is posted to them.

We also continued with the 100 Club, members buy a number (between 1 and 100) for 50p. A monthly draw takes place and 4 numbers are picked at random; two cash prizes each of £10 and £5.

The Branch members stands at a healthy 46, and we welcomed two new members from RAA applications but unfortunately due to COVID we have been unable to meet them in person and look forward to formally welcoming them at our next Branch meeting. The Branch also keeps in regular contact with RAA and the RACF to support our members. Sadly, the Branch lost two members in December and due to the national restrictions, the President and myself were the only Branch members able to attend.

It has been a difficult year and a big part of our Branch is social events, supporting local activities and parades. We have been unable to organise Branch Meetings and the AGM. Our Standard Bearer, Les Dessent (photograph below) paraded outside his home for RAA 100 and VE and VJ Day celebrations. In November, despite the restrictions eight members of the Branch were able to parade on Remembrance Sunday at the War Memorial in Biggleswade.

As we start 2021 and the vaccination rollout is well underway, this gives us all hope that better days will come and once again we will be able to meet and greet each other.

In the meantime, stay safe and take care.

Ted Mc Kenzie, Chairman



· Regimental News ·

Thank you very much for your continued support and fundraising for the Gunner Charities.

Fundraising for your Charity

The Charities revised their fundraising platform last year and we now use Enthuse. If you are fundraising for the RACF/RAA or giving the Charity individual donations, please click [here](#) to donate.

We would like to congratulate all those who took part and say a big thank you to everyone for their donations.

12 Days of Christmas

On Christmas Day, WO1 (Master Gunner) Fletcher Unwin from the Land Warfare Centre and Sgt Tom Hart from 24 (Irish) Bty embarked on a challenge to complete back to back Combat Fitness Tests for 12 days, carrying a bergan of 25kg over 8 miles in under 2 hours until 5th January 2021. Each day other serving members were invited to join Fletch and Tom and in doing so to raise a minimum of £50 each towards the target.

Congratulations to them both on the completion of their challenge and smashing their target.



47 Regiment Royal Artillery

The Regiment held a Christmas jumper fundraiser and gave the proceeds to the RACF, pictured below is Major Standing, BC 31 (HQ) Bty promoting Bdr Butler. Congratulations.



100,000km Challenge - 47 Regt RA

The Regiment take on a HUGE challenge that started on Monday 8th Feb 2021, 47 Regt RA embarked on 100,000km challenge to raise money for the NHS and Royal Artillery charities. The total distances of running, cycling and tabbing will be accumulated.

They are asking for support from any members of the NHS and the Regiment to join in our collective journey so that we can publish and support their journeys.

The plan is to complete the 100,000km within 10 weeks and finishes on 11th April 2021.

SSgt Broadhurst and 2Lt Thomas are the contacts for all those wanting to get involved, distances will be logged using Strava and the biggest contributors to distances will be published each week

<https://www.facebook.com/lee.broadhurst.33>

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/47ragtd>

47 REGIMENT RA-
'GOES THE DISTANCE'
FOR NHS+RACF

We're going the distance to raise money for the NHS and RA charities, we will be running, cycling and tabbing 100,000 kilometres for citizens who have lost their life to COVID-19.

DONATE HERE:

#47GTD4NHS
#47GTD4RACF
#47runtheworld
#Flyfindfight

[JustGiving.com/fundraising/47ragtd](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/47ragtd)

Thank you to WO2 Alex Taylor for nominating the Gunner charities as his chosen Charity to receive £1,760.00. During lock down last year, Alex embarked on a project to create a special edition watch for current and serving members of 7 PARA RHA in collaboration with a reputable British watch company. On completion of the project Alex chose the RACF to benefit from the donation, gifted by the watch company.



Did you serve with 32 Regt RA or 47 Regt RA?

Sgt Steve Blurton is a Watchkeeper Unmanned Air System Pilot serving with 47 Regiment RA. He is keen to connect with ex members of the Regiment who served within an Aviation environment for the Gunners, in particular those who worked with Pheonix and Hermes 450. If you are interested, contact steve47ra@outlook.com



Royal Artillery Association Battery Grants

One of the charitable objects of the Association is to promote comradeship, fostering esprit de corps and preserving traditions. Each year the Association makes funds available to Batteries in the form of annual grants to help fund Battery events, improve conditions for members of the Battery and their dependants.

Find out more information from Jennifer.mcgrath924@mod.gov.uk or through your Commanding Officer.

The Cornwall Cup

All donations for the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund and Royal Artillery Association go towards winning the Cornwall Cup and must be received by **31 December 2021**.

Fundraising is vital for the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund if we are to keep supporting all our individual cases and our Regiments. As part of the regimental family I hope that the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund, if not already, will become the 'Charity of first choice' to all serving Gunners.

The Royal Artillery Charitable Fund and Royal Artillery Association are very grateful to everyone who has fund-raised on behalf of the Charities and for the funds that you have collected so far this year.



Joan Wanklyn Memorial Prize

The Joan Wanklyn Memorial prize is a bursary to be presented each year by the Royal Artillery Association in memory of Miss Joan Wanklyn who was, for many years, our Regimental Artist.

The Bursary comprises a cheque of £500 is to be presented at the RA Assembly. Applications are open to the sons, daughters and grandchildren of Serving or Retired members of the Regiment, regardless of rank or station, who have reached the tertiary stage of education and are in or about to begin their first year of a course at a recognised College or University to study art in its broader form.

Contact Emma Pagan-Skelley on 01980 845895 or Emma's email for further details emm.Pagan-Skelley100@mod.gov.uk .

· Community and Companionship ·

The RA Charities can keep you in touch with the
Regimental Family

Join Your Association Here

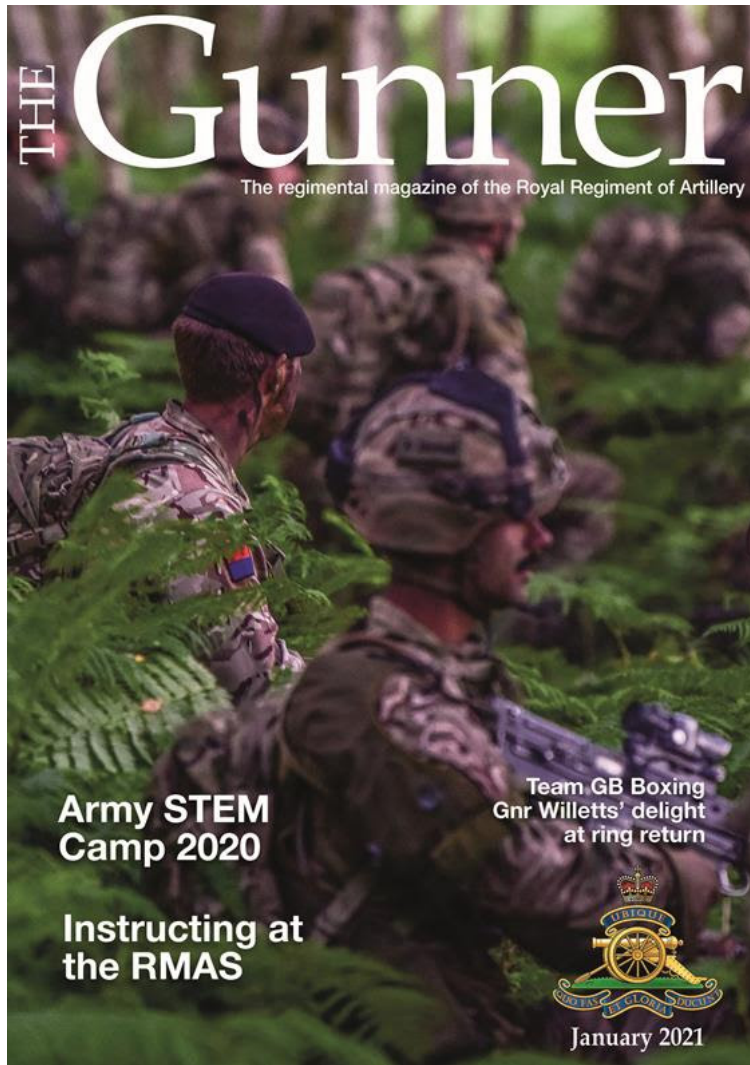
·RAA 100 Commemorative Coasters·

To celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Royal Artillery Association you can purchase a special commemorative coaster gift set. To order, please complete the order form at the attached [link](#) or the order form below.

RA ASSOCIATION SOUVENIR COASTERS	
RAA 100th Anniversary Commemorative Gift	
Order Form	
	
Name: _____ Address: _____ _____ _____ Postcode: _____ Tel No: _____	Quantity Required: _____ Price per set of six @ £10.95 each _____ (E8.00 per set plus £2.95 UK postage) BACS Transfer: reference with 'RAA Coasters' RAA A/C: 00181906 Sort Code: 30 99 88 or UK Sterling Cheque: 'Royal Artillery Association'
For overseas orders and multiple packs contact the RAA via the website at the attached link: https://www.thegunners.org.uk/contact Send your order with payment to The Royal Artillery Association:	
<i>The Royal Artillery Association, Artillery House, Artillery Centre, RA Barracks, Larkhill, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP4 8QT</i>	

· Gunner Magazine ·

Do you subscribe to the Gunner Magazine? If not, then you can find out further details [here](#)



REJOINERS:
YOUR NATION NEEDS YOU

ARE YOU AN EX-REGULAR OFFICER OR SOLDIER?
HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT REJOINING THE ARMY?

DID YOU KNOW?
Depending on your personal circumstances, if you've left within the last 36 months, you could be fast-tracked back in within a month or sooner.

**READY
RESILIENT
RESPONSIVE**


ARMY
BE THE BEST

REJOINERS: YOUR NATION NEEDS YOU

THERE ARE TWO ROUTES AVAILABLE TO REJOINERS:

Fast Track Pathway. Is A Veteran Who:

- Left the Regular Army within the last 36 months.
- Is returning to the same Main Trade and capbadge.
- Had no less than 24 months remaining engagement or commission.
- On leaving had a medical grade of Medically Fully Deployable or Limited Deployable and can self-declare they have had no significant injury or illness.
- Have no unspent convictions.

Regular Rejoinder Pathway. This is for veterans who left the Regular Army but who are not eligible for the Fast Track. Your pathway is approximately 8 weeks, but can vary based on medicals, security vetting and interviews.

Fast Track Pathway - 4 weeks



Regular Rejoinder Pathway - Approximately 8 weeks

Age limit. The upper age limit for all rejoiners is 57.

How to apply?

<https://apply.army.mod.uk/how-to-join/entryoptions/regular-army-rejoinder>
or call the rejoinder team on 0345 600 8080

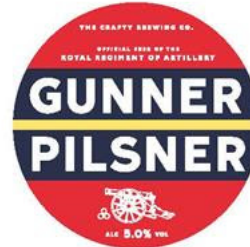
READY
RESILIENT
RESPONSIVE





The Royal Artillery Craft Beers

We are proud to announce the arrival of two very special guests.



THEY TASTE GOOD. THEY DO GOOD.

Champions in their own right, these fine craft beers were hand-picked in June 2019 by a tasting committee of over 90 Gunner soldiers. Gunner IPA and Gunner Pilsner are more than simply great-tasting, flagship examples of the brewer's art. For every litre of beer sold, The Crafty Brewing Co., will make a donation to Royal Artillery Charities – to fund sport, adventure and challenge activities for all Gunners – be they regular or reserve.

So now, when you raise a glass of your very own Royal Artillery craft beer – to slake a thirst, make a toast or in tribute to absent friends – you'll be putting a smile on more faces than just your own.

These delicious Gunner craft beers make their debut this evening and are provided courtesy of The Crafty Brewing Co. for you to enjoy. They will shortly be available in keg and 500ml bottles to every Royal Artillery Mess and for purchase online from November 2019.

To place your advance order visit www.craftybrewing.co.uk



TASTING NOTES:

Gunner IPA – ABV 4.2%

Gunner IPA is a modern classic. It is a golden amber, lightly-hopped IPA bearing all the hallmarks of its four international hop superstars – Simcoe, Chinook, Amarillo and Perle. Refreshing citrus and pine notes are mellowed by toasted fine English crystal malts.

Gunner Pilsner – ABV 5.0%

Gunner Pilsner is a refreshing, full-flavoured, mellow craft lager. Expertly crafted with pale malts and the prince of 'noble' hops – Tettnang. This pilsner is conditioned for 12 weeks and naturally carbonated for a crisp, mouth-filling quaff.



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