

# ABA Pegasus

December 2016

## Newsletter



### ***Chairman's Message***

Welcome to the first edition of the Airborne Alliance (ABA) Newsletter. In this newsletter you will find the article and photographs, which were submitted for inclusion in the latest edition of Pegasus. Unfortunately, the ABA article was not published and no indication was given from RHQ PARA that this would be the case. Indeed, the indications were quite the opposite.

We have been censored before and so this type of behaviour is not new - just disappointing. I will leave it to the reader to make the final judgement about whether or not there is anything untoward in this newsletter, which warrants exclusion.

One of the advantages of producing an in-house newsletter is that we can be a lot more specific about the state of regimental affairs in Scotland. That will be for subsequent and much larger issues if we decide to publish them. However, one of the many benefits from the formation of the ABA is that it has allowed us all to move on. At the same time we no longer harbour any false hopes about RHQ PARA.

From an ABA point of view 2016 has been a good year. We have dealt with most of the legacy issues arising from the time when branches were part of the PRA. Governance under the ABA constitution is now much stronger and much of the modernisation necessary to create an organisation appropriate for the circumstances in the 21st Century has been completed.

Our involvement with Dunfermline has given us a geographical focus, which was previously lacking. The local authority could not be more helpful and Dunfermline Abbey along with the adjacent Pittencrief Park containing the Glen Pavilion provide us with facilities unrivalled in Scotland for a veterans' organisation.

We look forward to a worthwhile 2017 and in particular the opportunity to strengthen fellowship amongst those who have worn the red beret.

***Clinton Hicks OBE***



*Members of the Stirlingshire Branch at Spean Bridge  
(See Stirlingshire section inside for full story)*



Not for the first time our submission to the Regimental Magazine begins with sad news. One of the few remaining survivors of 5th (Scottish) Battalion The Parachute Regiment died on the 19th September 2016. Nigel Turnbull passed away at the age of 93. He was a fine example of a parachute soldier in addition to being an excellent family man with wider interests in the local church as well as being a member of the Stirlingshire Branch of the PRA and subsequently the Airborne Alliance. A service was held in Dunipace Church near Denny and then at the Crematorium at Camelon. Members of 4 PARA attended both services along with representatives from the Airborne Alliance, Lothian PRA and also the Cumbernauld AFAS Branch.



Sid Stevens with the ABA National Standard at Nigel Turnbull's funeral

Earlier in the year the Aberdeen Branch said farewell to Jim Green, one of the last remaining Arnhem veterans and a loyal Branch member. His cheery demeanour will be sadly missed not only by his family but also by the many friends who cherish his memory.

## Perth & District



Turning to happier occasions, the Perth Branch Annual Gathering was enjoyed by guests as well as Branch members in great style. Tickets for this event are always snapped up due to it being one of the highlights of the ABA year. Perth Branch Committee were delighted to invite all members and their guests to the event and as usual it was a great opportunity to catch up with old comrades, not only from the Scottish Branches but included friends who had travelled up from Manchester, Durham and Newcastle to enjoy some fun and all for worthy causes. A grand opening got the day under way with a pipe band marching into the hall playing a medley of Strathspeys and reels which always gets the feet and hands tapping. The Grand Raffle, always good fun, with Kenny Banks and Doddy Davidson as comperes swapping comments with the crowd. This was followed by the £100.00 raffle and then the auction.



Above: Perth & District Annual Gathering

A great cheer resounded when the buffet was announced and true to form the food was excellent and beautifully presented. Clean plates are always an indication of how much the food was enjoyed. Another short display by the pipe band allowed time for the food to settle before moving on to the ever-popular whisky and vodka firing range. Yes that has yet to be explained to me too. Time passed quickly with more drinks and blether and then the request "Please move down to the main bar area" which allowed for clearing up in the function room for the evening's entertainment.

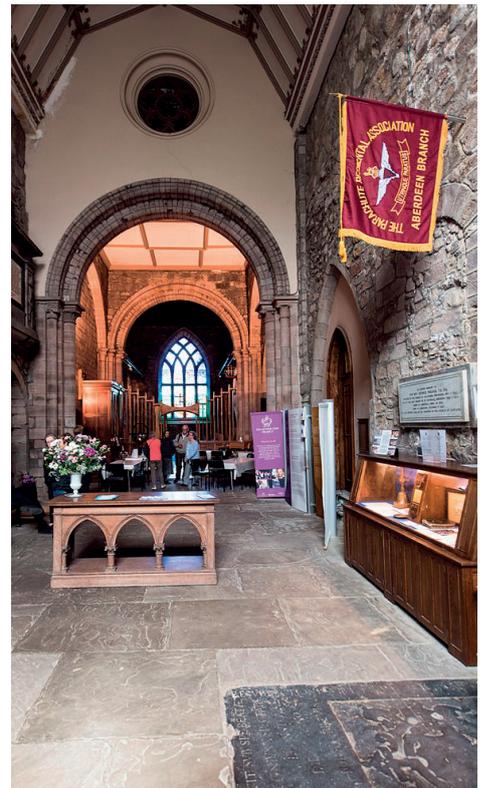
# Aberdeen



Laying Up the Aberdeen PRA Standard

One of the important changes during this period was when Bob Crocker, Aberdeen Branch Chairman for 15 years, stood down at the Branch AGM. Bob, quite rightly, felt that he had "done his bit". Everyone who knows Bob and he is, "well kent", appreciates the time and effort that he has put in to making the Branch the success that it continues to be. Ian Baxter, a long serving committee member has taken over and it is very encouraging to know that Aberdeen Branch affairs are in safe and capable hands.

On Sunday 5th June the Aberdeen Branch held their Standard Laying up Ceremony at the Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting in the City Centre. This was followed by a reception at the nearby Caledonian Hotel. Col Hicks and members from other Branches joined the Branch members and their families.



A Branch Dinner was held at Gordon Barracks, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen and anyone who has had the good fortune to attend one of these dinners would wax lyrical about the feast that they have enjoyed. Meticulously prepared and presented by the catering team from Aberdeen University Officer Training Corps, the food is second to none.

Looking forward to the next Branch Dinner, this is scheduled for the 2nd December. Appetites should be whetted by then before returning to the fray, with yet another break before the Burns Supper on the 27th January. If you are beginning to think it is all about eating in Aberdeen let me assure you that a Guest Shoot, sponsored by Aberdeen Full Bore Gun Club, is programmed for the 25th March 2017. Places will be scarce and if you want to be there, respond quickly when the details are published. Oh, by the way, they lay on a barbecue as well.

# Stirlingshire



On Sunday 16th July members of the Stirlingshire Branch held a very enjoyable lunch in Fort William prior to a visit to the Commando Memorial at Spean Bridge. Members of the Branch were in much demand for photographs with the tourists at the memorial.



Branch meetings, which for many years took place in Fallin, are now held in Stirling. Lt Col Winship has handed over as Chairman to Lt Col Levack.

# Airborne Forces Day 2017



Forward planning for this event is well under way and the date set is Saturday 29th July 2017. It will follow a similar format to the Annual Muster Day's we have had in Dunfermline but will be far more of a public display. Following a parade in this historic town we will utilise the magnificence of the Abbey for a service and the Pavilion, in nearby Pittencrieff Park, for displays and lunch. David Gatherum, our Project Officer, has already been performing his "no rain on my parade dance" to ward off inclement weather on the day.

## Other Events



Branches are finalising their arrangements for the Laying up of Standards, which, in the main will be accomplished locally with support coming from other Branches to mark the occasion. Dundee will lay up their Standard on Sunday 30th October and Stirlingshire on Sunday 13th November.

We have quite a number of Burns Suppers to look forward to in the New Year with all the Branches vying for supremacy in how best to celebrate our National poet. It is surprising to taste the variety of haggis that gets pounced upon and sliced up with "ready sleight" on these occasions but in my book everyone is a winner.

We hope that the accompanying photographs will give a good impression of our successful year and also encourage more "warriors" to join our ranks. If you would like to know more about the Airborne Alliance you can find us at [www.airbornealliance.co.uk](http://www.airbornealliance.co.uk) and we are also on Facebook.



*The ABA Executive Committee at a meeting in Dunfermline City Chambers*

Our best wishes go to all our members and friends North, South, East and West and our hopes for Good Health and Happy Landings wherever you are.

## AIRBORNE ALLIANCE

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Chairman:** Col (retd) CF Hicks OBE

**Secretary:** Maj (retd) VAJ Cowie

**Treasurer:** Miss E Collins

### Members:

Mr I Baxter • Mr V Herd

Mr D Gatherum • Mr P Malcolm

Lt Col (retd) W Levack • Mrs M Collins



### Annual Subscription Rates

Full Member ..... £10.00

Associate Member..... £10.00

### ABA Website

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### Secretary's Email

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