

**From: Lieutenant Colonel I A Vere Nicoll MBE
General Secretary**



ROYAL ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION

Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

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All Branch Secretaries

23rd September 2009

Dear Branch Secretary,

As autumn approaches, and in many places a wet summer recedes, I wanted to cover a number of RAA areas of interest so that members are aware of what is happening.

Firstly our two main events this year were both were a great success. The Royal Artillery Assembly was great fun and very well supported and every year the number of serving soldiers that come and join us continues to grow. It was a great party and I hope that all of your members will think about coming next year. The Service of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum had over 400 attending, and the use of the tent proved a success and for once during the summer the rain held off! It is a lovely day out, full of poignancy and comradeship. The Remembrance Day Service at Hyde Park is also a very moving tribute and this year we are encouraging branches to go to Firepower on the Saturday and then the Service on Sunday. The families of those killed in action from 2000 to 2008 have been invited to attend.

This year at St Barbara's Day is a very special event as the families of those who have been killed in action this year have been invited to come to the Service at which the Gunner Memorial with the names of their loved ones will be dedicated. Afterwards we will all go to a delicious lunch in the Warrant Officers and Sergeants' Mess. Do remember that for all these events Artillery House will cover at least half the costs of either a bus or minibus.

The website is doing very well and has over 3,500 members and the Membership Secretary is updating the site to make it even more user friendly. We also now have a FaceBook site that has taken off in the last few months so for those that use FaceBook do look at it and join in.

The Grand Draw made £2,621.45 and thank you for all those who bought tickets. Well done to the winners and for those that did not next year may be your lucky year!

With five Gunners killed in the last year Branch Standards have played their part at the Repatriation ceremony at Wotton Bassett. It is a very moving ceremony and very important that we have Branch Standards at the ceremony so if yours can come please do.

Registered Charity N° 238197

Registered Office: As above

(All communications to be addressed to The General Secretary)

You will have seen in the circular that car stickers are now available so hopefully we will see lots of cars with them in!

Branches have asked about recruiting stands to be used by branches at events. These were issued to Regions a few years ago and we are currently auditing where they are and will let you know so you can use them if you wish.

Finally two financial issues. Firstly the Gunner Garden at the National Memorial Arboretum does require maintenance and we are very privileged that the Staffordshire Branch takes the lead in the maintenance. However it does cost some money and the NEC wished me to ask the branches that any donations for the maintenance of the Garden would be most welcome. Cheques should be made payable to RACF and annotated Gardens.

Secondly I am looking at whether we could gift aid subscriptions from branches to Artillery House so we can maximise our income and I will write to you at a later date with the outcome.

If I do not see you before I wish you all a very good autumn.

Yours Sincerely
Janet Smith