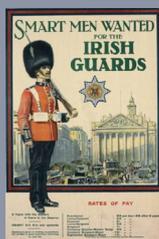




# IRISH GUARDS ASSOCIATION NORTH OF ENGLAND BRANCH

COMMITTEE ZOOM MEETING, 3RD SEPTEMBER 2020, 20.00 HRS



### Attendees:

S. Donegan, A. Williamson, J. Ross, A. Howard

### Apologies:

D. Ellis, J. Shanks, D. Hewitt, R. Flynn

### Next Meeting:

**November 8th, Remembrance Day  
(dependant on Government and City  
Council guidance)**

2021 NoE Branch Meeting Dates:  
To be decided at a later date.



If not already completed, can you please set up a Direct Debit, Standing Order.  
Please use your name as payment reference.

**Membership** - £10 or **Membership + Journal + Postage** - £20

**Acc. Name:** Irish Guards Association, North of England Branch **Sort:** 40 46 25 **Acc. Num:** 30476005  
or Pay via the Membership Page **PayPal** on our website [www.iga-noe.co.uk](http://www.iga-noe.co.uk)

**ASSOCIATION DINNER  
SATURDAY 15TH MAY 2021**

## **Fallen Comrades**

One minutes silence was held to remember those members and fellow 'Micks' that are no longer with us.

**Minutes of last meeting:** Emailed to all members

## **Secretaries Report:**

We are going through very strange times and what I can reassure our members is that we are still proactively looking at how guidance is changing and how, if possible, we can look at what we can do safely. One of these topics has been Remembrance Day. We have in the background planned for an event and I have been in regular contact with the WO2 that runs the parade and Liverpool City Council for updates. We have also devised a flyer which will be attached to this newsletter.

Our thanks go to our friends from the Imperial Corps of Drums, Liverpool, with their offer of support to us on Remembrance Day with a musical presentation. I can confirm that, as a committee, we will not carry on with any event against Local Government or Central Government guidance/advice and we most certainly will not participate in anything that would not be safe for our members, as your safety is paramount to us, however we will continue to plan and be prepared to adjust or cancel if required. There will be more information contained in the Event Managers report.

All journals have been distributed to those on our list. There is still an online version available on the following link.

**<https://payhip.com/irishguardsjournal>**

Our website has been updated so please get on there and have a look. We now, on the web, have nearly every journal available to our members (email me for the password if you are a member). A special thank you goes to an esteemed Mick, Brian Eager, who has and is a fantastic supporter of our Branch and has enabled us to have this facility on our web site. Thank you very much Brian, a true Mick in every sense.

On a personal note I would like to wish Paul Paterson (Patto), all the very best in his future ventures for when he leaves the Army. He has been instrumental in assisting and promoting our Branch within the Battalion and has become a very good friend, not only to me, but other Branch members. Good luck mate QS.

## Chairman's Report:

### 1. General

This has been a very strange and disappointing year for everyone within the Branch due to the Covid 19 pandemic and the total disconnection from normal branch activities.

Despite the very difficult circumstances we have all found ourselves in over the last 8 months, we have, as a committee, continued to function well with frequent Zoom conference calls, lots of banter and the continual one upmanship of certain members in relation to the fortunes of two major football organisations – will it ever stop ?.....probably not !

Relations with the Battalion are as strong as ever and we are extremely keen as a branch to see that grow as we continue to encourage many more of the youngsters to join us. There will be more of this post-Covid as the Branch Chairman come together to forge a new understanding on this subject.

The networking to try and establish links with employer organisations and also work on building our profile has been badly damaged by the Coronavirus pandemic and to that end, it will be my intention to start that initiative again

### 2. Branch Operations

Branch operations over this reporting period have been very quiet although we have managed where possible to support any welfare cases that have appeared at our door. It has also been very difficult to plan ahead with the threat of yet more of these local and possibly national lock-downs and it is difficult to see where an end point might be. However, with a bit of luck and a fair wind we are all hoping to get together for a bit of “Northern Mickery” either in December, probably again at the Adelphi Hotel. More news on that to follow. The Branch also intend to have some form of Remembrance Sunday event whether that is physical or virtual and I know that Andy and James are working on this at present.

I have to report that Paul Patterson, our Vice Chairman, is about to leave the Army and all members want to wish him the very best as he moves on to take on a new career. Paul contributes a huge amount to the Branch and is a much-valued member.

As ever, my thanks go to Andy Williamson and James Ross for their amazing dedication and hard work on keeping this Branch alive and well. Thanks to go to Dave Ellis, Ritchie Flynn, Alan Howard and Jimmy Shanks. I would like to see more people come on board to help them out, as on occasions they can get a little swamped with branch admin. Do not be afraid to volunteer!

All journals have now been issued despite difficulties associated with the lengthy National Lock-down over the Spring and Summer months.

The Branch website has been updated and looks really good. Members will be interested to know that James Ross has posted copies of all Regimental Journals from 1948 onto the website – quite an achievement.

### 3, Accounts

The accounts are looking very healthy and the Branch have done a lot of good work on rationalising the accounting system so that there is just one main account. We will use that money in the coming year to bring us all back together in style and celebrate the resumption of normal branch activities. I know Andy and James have many ideas on this.

### 4. Next Branch Dinner 2020

The next Branch Dinner will be on Saturday 15th May 2021 which will be a particularly special event after such a dreadful 2020. I will be encouraging more officers to attend too which will be a significant development.

## Treasurers Report

**Accounts Update:** RHQ – The Worshipful Livery Company of Tobacco Pipe Makers and Tobacco Blenders (known as the Pipe Makers) in London donated a sum of money to IG Association which we received £250.

We paid out for the Webpage support and for the remembrance flyer. The Webpage has been updated and once the minutes have been approved these will also be added.

We have paid for the Flyer for Remembrance Day, if the day is cancelled, we will only lose £25 as the bar \ Entertainment we will not need to pay as long we give them plenty of notice. We will take guidance from the local government.

We will allocate funds to welfare to support any IG families in the NOE who have fallen in difficult times for Christmas hampers.

The Branch finances are in a healthy situation and whilst we are going through this challenging time we support each other.

## Welfare Report

N/A as the welfare officer was unable to attend the zoom meeting. Any death notices will be placed on our social media and emailed to members (as has been happening during the pandemic).

## Event Managers Report

This year we have ordered and delivered the Irish Guards annual journal to all who have paid and requested them. We also have the facility to download the journal online for a cost of £5. of you visit the webpage you can order from the NOE Site.

With the new restriction in the North West we will still push ahead with the Remembrance parade on Sunday the 8th November. However, we are still waiting feedback from the Local council who organise the event if the parade is still going ahead. See below the flyer with all the details for the Remembrance Day.

We will need to plan a contingency in the event the parade being cancelled due to COVID 19.

I will highlight some options:

**Option 1** - The parade goes ahead with the approval of the Council and we can meet for drinks \ Buffet \ Entertainment etc.

**Option 2.** Only a select No of persons allowed to attend the parade, this will need to be agreed by the Chairman \ Secretary. The after party will be allowed with a minimum No's.

**Option 3:** Parade is Cancelled - We can join a Zoom Call and do a Virtual Remembrance Day parade. Details to be finalised.

We are also planning a mickery early December, this will also be with Local government guidance, I can only hope normality will return prior to Christmas.

In 2019 we sent all our members Christmas cards and we will be doing the same this year, it was a great success and the feedback was impressive.

This year has been a difficult year for many families and the NOE Branch will be supporting any families that have fallen on difficult times with a Christmas hamper. If you know of any IG NOE family who may need our support please Private Message or email Andy Williamson (Secretary) and we will support, if a name is given it will be kept in confidence and not shared with any other member.

## A.O.B.

PLEASE NOTE - OUR MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO ALL MICKS (when we can hold them again).  
KEEP WELL AND STAY SAFE.

Meeting was closed at: 21.00 hrs. Quis Separabit

Email: [iganoebbranch@gmail.com](mailto:iganoebbranch@gmail.com) Web site: [www.iga-noe.co.uk](http://www.iga-noe.co.uk)

## I.G.A. North of England Branch Minutes & Newsletter content

NOE Branch Accounts			
Item	Current Period Figures		
	Totals	Sub Totals	Detail
<b>Assets</b>			
Cash in Hand		£26.00	
Cash in Bank		£15,894.69	
Savings Bank			
<b>Total Cash</b>			£15,920.69
<b>Sundry Debtors</b>			
<b>Total Liquid Assets</b>			£15,920.69
<b>Shares</b>			
COIF			
Lloyds			
<b>Total Stocks</b>			0
<b>Total Current Assets</b>			15,920.69
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Sundry Creditors</b>			
Annual Dinner			
Rem Day		£25	
St Pat's Day			
AGM			
Web Page		£400	
Stationary			
<b>Total Liabilities</b>			0
<b>Net Working Capital (Current Assets minus Liabilities)</b>			15920.69
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
<b>Investments at Cost</b>			
(£)	Market Value	(£)	
<b>Property</b>			
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>			15920.69
<b>General Purpose Fund</b>			
Balance as per last Balance Sheet			£10,710.68
Add Excess of Income			5210.01
Subtract Excess of Expenditure			
<i>Accumulated General Purpose Fund</i>			
<i>Being Net Working Capital and Total Fixed Assets</i>			£15,920.69
I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief all liabilities and assets are shown on the Balance Sheet.			
Date:	01st September 2020	Signature of Account Holder .....	
Account verified by:			
Signature .....		on the .....	2020
<p>Accounts Update: RHQ - A charity in London donated a sum of money to IG Association which we recieved £250. We paid out for the Webpage support and for the remembrance flyer. The Webpage has been updated and once the minutes have been approved these will also be added. We have paid for the Flyer for Remembrance Day, if the day is cancelled we will only loose £25 as the bar \ Entertainment we will not need to pay as long we give them plenty of notice. We will take quidence from the local government. We will allocate funds to welfare to support any IG families in the NOE who have fallen in difficult times for Christmas hampers.. The Branch is a healthy situation and why we are going through this challenge time we support each other.</p>			

## I.G.A. North of England Branch Minutes & Newsletter content

### The story of Harry & John helps forge friendship with local school Wartime memories start of three - year adventure for Oakwood Avenue Primary School

A remarkable story of friendship in the Second World War has helped forge a special relationship between a Warrington Primary School and the Irish Guards. Chris Bent was researching his Dad's wartime documents when he found a poignant connection to Oakwood Avenue Primary School, Warrington. His Dad John Bent fought with comrade Harry Kenwright who was a pupil at the school in 1928. The story of the two men started when 17 years old John joined the Armoured Division of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Irish Guards and in 1943 met Harry. They fought together in Belgium and Holland and in April 1945 had crossed the Rhine and advanced into Germany. Tragically, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April Harry, who was in the leading tank, was hit by a shell from a Panzer tank. He was killed instantly. John had the onerous task of having to hurriedly bury his friend before continuing with the fighting. The story surfaced when Chris found a tiny photograph of his Dad's troop and started asking lots of questions. John pointed Harry out at the front and then told the sad tale.



John survived the war, though he was captured at Wistedt on 21<sup>st</sup> April, 1945 and taken to Westertimke Prisoner of War Camp. He witnessed the events surrounding Edward Charlton who lost his life that day and became the last recipient of the Victoria Cross in the European Theatre. He was able to tell his story to present day Oakwood Avenue pupils who were absolutely thrilled. It was the start of a special bond with the Irish Guards and the Harry & John story is now embedded into the school's curriculum. Gary Cunningham, executive head teacher at

the school, said he was fascinated when he first heard the story. "We have ownership of Harry & John and all of the Oakwood fallen – they are ours now" he said.

As well as connecting the school with memories of their former pupil, Chris also contacted the Irish Guards. This marked the beginning of the Regiment's relationship with the school. A moving Memorial Service was held at Padgate Cenotaph, where Harry is named, and Robbie Wilmont and James Ross spoke on behalf of the Regiment. Robbie has been particularly active in keeping the links with the school. He said "It has brought to light some of the horrific stories that come out of war, but the good thing to come from it was the fact that the relationship between the school and the Regiment has been forged as part of that story. I would like to encourage everyone to continue to maintain the links between the school and our Regiment for the future. The history behind that link is fascinating".



John attended the Memorial and laid a wreath by the name of his old friend. Sadly, he died in April 2018, aged 92, and Oakwood Avenue pupils sang at his funeral, while the Irish Guards sent a piper.

## I.G.A. North of England Branch Minutes & Newsletter content



Oakwood Avenue's friendship with the Irish Guards continued to develop and over the past three years it has involved trips to Wellington Barracks and welcoming soldiers to school (once with mascot Domhnall!). The most recent trip to London included a visit inside the Guard's Chapel to view a plaque in honour of Harry and John. Chris has also kept a strong link with the school, with Remembrance Day services and even live streaming a trip to see Harry's grave at Rheinberg Cemetery in Germany. "It's such a special story and it's been fantastic to be involved in everything that has been going on over the last three years" he reflected. "The Irish Guards have been incredible; they have really bought in to all of this and I think that their connection with the school is something incredibly moving and touching".

In a heartwarming message to his Dad, Chris added "The school and the Irish Guards have done you and Harry so proud and I'd like to think after all these years, since that fateful day in 1945, that maybe you are together again. Maybe you really did meet again".



**Harry Kenwright with his crew in Holland 1945**

**I.G.A. North of England Branch  
Minutes & Newsletter content**

## **Rolling Thunder by Gary Connerty**

It all started with a Facebook video rant by ex RCT wo2 Gavin (Harry) Wragg, Harry was saying how disgusted he was on hearing that yet another Parachute Regiment veteran was to be prosecuted under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement for his alleged actions on what has become to be known by Republicans as Bloody Sunday. Harry suggested that maybe a few likeminded ex-military bikers should ride to London and lobby the Government and vent their spleen, Rolling Thunder was born, within days Harry was inundated with messages of support, his baby grew at an alarming rate, so much so Harry had to organise an admin team, messages flowed in from all corners of the British Isles, regional teams were set up, regional meeting points were organised, regional support networks and road marshals were recruited, Rolling Thunder Ride for Soldier F was growing day by day...Anyway, 3am on 12th April 2019 was for me the start of a day I will never forget, I'd arranged to meet Stephen Stockford, Graham Ponton and Andy Cowan at the Clatterbridge junction on M56 at 0430 and make our way to Knutsford Services to join with the North West group, needless to say I was late and the lads had led off to Knutsford, no matter a quick text message to tell them I was bringing up the rear and would meet them there, I've got to say at this point, despite my thermals, fleece, thick leather armoured jacket and leather cut over that it was bloody freezing, I've got to admit I looked at the lights on the Runcorn bridge and thought there's a warm bed if I cut off here. It was cold but thankfully dry, It'll warm up when it gets light I thought craic on ..On reaching Knutsford there was Stocky on his Africa Twin and Pono riding pillion with Andy on his trusty old BMW, Andy isn't ex-military but felt he had to show his support for a worthy cause, a very decent lad he is, along with our little group were 50 to 60 other bikers from the area, one lad I spoke to, an ex-Sapper had ridden down from Glasgow on his 1200 Bandit, the next time I saw him was in London laid across his bike fast asleep ! John Hugton came across and introduced himself, John is a serving vicar and ex-military padre, he offered to bless our bikes, I politely refused his offer explaining religion wasn't really my thing but thanks, unfortunately John was one of the very few that had an accident that day, a few days in hospital, a bit battered and bruised but he was otherwise ok, sadly his bike was a write off, his misfortune was put down to bad luck and new un-scrubbed tyres, the girls with the cookies and hot coffee was well appreciated, Off we set on the first leg to Warwick Services, were Steve and the other marshals ushered other riders joining group which was growing steadily as we were heading South. The ride to Warwick was quite uneventful, I'd lost all track of time but was grateful to see first light hitting the horizon and the air starting to warm up a little, the feeling in my hands had gone AWOL a couple of hours earlier and I had an Icey blast getting in around my neck somewhere. Warwick Services was rammed with bikes, trikes and support vehicles of every make model, choppers, sportsters, cruisers, touring bikes another long rider a young lad had ridden from Kings Lynne on his Yamaha 125, half an hour later thousands of machines were rolling again, next stop Beaconsfield Services, I looked back once we were on the motorway all I could see was single headlights for miles. Beaconsfield Services was just a sea of bikes and veteran bikers, and the sun was out! Onwards to London on the M4 and A40 and into central London they didn't call this Rolling Thunder for nothing the rumble of thousands of bikes was phenomenal, people were coming out of shops and offices to see what was going on, then we hit Park Lane, the police had closed the hotel side of the road which was 10 abreast for the whole length soon enough both sides were full...Rolling Thunder got rolling again, some of the bikes especially the air cooled machines were starting to suffer in the stop start, including Andy's old BMW, so we decided to pull over and let the bikes cool down and watch the show roll by, I was glad to pull over and stretch the legs and have a brew, I'm sure the other lads were glad of a stretch things were starting to get numb, plus we could

## I.G.A. North of England Branch Minutes & Newsletter content

see and hear what everyone else was overawed about, it was some sight, the noise, flags flying it was brilliant. We set off again after half an hour and joined the bikes still rolling past and found ourselves on the Embankment, horror of horrors my bike died, battery dead through a couple of hours of slow stop start riding so up on the kerb to take stock and a photo opposite Parliament, this was when Stockie's Paris Dakar conquering Africa Twin was defeated by a 4 inch London kerb..(sorry mate I had to mention it)...Thanks to Andy's impression of Inspector Gadget we were soon up and running, off over Westminster Bridge and parked up outside Parliament for a well-earned rest. We stuck around for an hour and decided it was time for the track home I eventually arrived home at 0230, cold, knackered, headache, starving every bone and joint was sore and crawled into my pit, took me days to fully recover but wouldn't have missed it for the world , swore I'd never do it again, so there was Stocky and me heading to London three weeks later for Op Zulu, just a foot note, it makes you wonder why when 22, 000 bikes, 30, 000 riders and pillions along with a couple of thousand foot soldiers did the mainstream media keep silent.



## **I.G.A. North of England Branch Minutes & Newsletter content**

### **Information - MOD Hearing Loss Claims**

Did you serve after June 1987 in any regiment of the Army, Navy or Territorial Army? You may have been exposed to high level noise due to a lack of adequate hearing protections provided by the Ministry of Defence.

It may well be that you have experienced ringing in your ears and use other noises to mask that problem. We are widely recognised as one of the UK's leading firm of solicitors for acting against the Ministry of Defence on behalf of serving and former soldiers in respect of hearing loss and tinnitus.

The MOD even onto the present day do not provide adequate hearing protection for their soldiers and officers during the course of training. It is important that you act in any hearing loss claim as soon as possible and our advice is that you act within three years of becoming aware of your hearing loss or tinnitus symptoms.

We have been bringing actions against the Ministry of Defence for hearing loss for in excess of eight years and believe we have brought more successful cases against the Ministry of Defence than any other solicitors' firm in the United Kingdom. At present however we are only taking on actions for existing or former military personnel who have some element of Northern Ireland service. This does not mean that your case is solely based upon your Northern Ireland service but is likely to have led to greater exposure both to pipe ranges and to anti-terrorist training and allows us to bring the case before the Northern Ireland Courts, where damages awards are potentially greater than in the rest of the United Kingdom. As a soldier in the Ministry of Defence you have the right to bring a case against the Ministry of Defence in any part of the United Kingdom as long as you have had some service in that part of the UK, we regularly act for serving and retired soldiers from all regiments of the British Army.

In short , if you have served after June 1987 and have some element of Northern Ireland service and are suffering from either hearing loss and/or a ringing or buzzing in your ears, which is called tinnitus, then you should get in touch with us without delay for either a short telephone consultation or a meeting in person at our offices.

### **Annemarie Hastings**

Chief Executive

[www.beyondthebattlefield.org](http://www.beyondthebattlefield.org)

Tel: 02891228389

Mob: 07525726617

**I.G.A. North of England Branch  
Minutes & Newsletter content**

**IRISH GUARDS REGIMENTAL CHRISTMAS CARD 2020**

An A5 (21x15cm) colour photograph of the Queen's Guard Mount at Buckingham Palace during the Beast from the East Storm of 2018

The greeting inside reads "With Best Wishes for Christmas and New Year"

**£8.50 per pack of 10**

You may also wish to donate to the Irish Guards' Benevolent Fund



Please return this form to:

**Regimental Headquarters Irish Guards,  
Wellington Barracks, Birdcage Walk, London SW1E 6HQ**

All orders must be returned by Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November

Please Complete the Form in Clear Block Capitals

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSTAGE & PACKING (NO TRACKING)**

	UK	Ireland & Europe (Air Mail)
Per pack of 10	£3.50	£7.00

Collect in person from RHQ

Please Supply _____ Packs of 10 Christmas Cards (£8.50 per pack of 10)	
Postage	
Donation to Irish Guards Benevolent Fund	
<b>Total enclosed</b>	

Payment must accompany this order form. Cheques or online payment to: "NO.1 ACCOUNT IRISH GUARDS"

**Bank Details:** Number 1 Account Irish Guards **Account Number:** 00449476 **Sort Code:** 30-11-75

**IRISH GUARDS  
NORTH OF ENGLAND BRANCH**

# Remembrance Day

Armistice Day in 1920, the funeral of Unknown Soldier took place at the London Cenotaph

## Sunday 8th November 2020

**Timetable**

Muster at Irish Guards Memorial,  
St George's Gardens - 09:45  
Arrive St Georges Hall - 10:30  
Parade - 10:45  
2 Minute Silence - 11:00  
Adelphi Hotel - 12:00

**Entertainment:**  
**Dani Graham & Imperial Corps of Drums**  
**Raffle - Buffet**  
**Guinness £2.40 per pint**




For more information email [jamesross262@gmail.com](mailto:jamesross262@gmail.com)

Chairman - Lt. Col Simon Donegan  
 Vice Chairman - WO2 Paul Paterson (serving member)  
 Hon. Secretary - Andy Williamson [iganoebbranch@gmail.com](mailto:iganoebbranch@gmail.com)  
 Treasurer - Richie Flynn. Vice Treasurer - Alan Howard  
 Event Manager - Jimmy Ross  
 Welfare - David Ellis, T. Devine, Tommy Laven (serving member)  
 Standard Barer(s) - Jimmy Shanks, Dave Hewitt

We would like to thank our fellow Irish Guardsmen, Mick Harris and Dennis Bailey for supporting this set of minutes/newsletter.

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