



Royal Navy



British Army



Royal Air Force

Aden Veterans Association Gloucestershire Branch

Volume 1 of 2026

Chairman's Report

Since our last newsletter in October we have been involved in a number of events, including attending the Remembrance Day Service and Parade in Cheltenham and the 58th Anniversary of the Withdrawal from Aden. Both Services were held at the War Memorial on the Promenade. Our padre, Brian Woollaston, organised the Order of Service and conducted the Service, in very inclement weather, supported by a number of our Branch delivering readings and laying our wreath. Robert Parrent carried our Standard at both events. My sincere thanks to all who attended, especially those members who took an active part in the Service. Afterwards we retired to the RAFA club for a warm drink and a hot dog. I am very grateful to RAFA, and particularly to Nick Price, for providing hospitality to a significant group of our members.



In December we had a very successful Christmas lunch, organised by Jean Stubley, at the Bowden Hall hotel. In January we held a Branch meeting, followed by a quiz run by Jim Major. For those of you who were unable to attend I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a belated Happy New Year.

As we move into April the Branch will be involved in a range of events including St Georges Day service in Gloucester on 23rd and the ANZAC Day at Leighterton on the 26th. June will see many members attending VE Day in Cheltenham on the 8th, the annual Earthcott Green service on the 10th and the Weymouth weekend, hosted by our good friends the West Dorset Branch, from the 10th to the 21st. Full details of these events and others can be found on our website. Thanks to Ray Bunnage for keeping our website interesting and up to date. My thanks to all the committee members, especially our Secretary Dennis Flamson, for all the work that they put in to keep our Branch active and relevant to support the Aden Veterans.

Finally I want to pay my deep respects to our Vice-Chair, Sheila Gibson, who sadly passed away on December the 27th. She will be greatly missed by us all, especially for her warmth, laughter and positive personality. It was an honour to be invited to pay tribute to Sheila at the Service at the crematorium in Cheltenham. All the Branch have sent there sincere condolences to Hugh and the family.

Rick Rutter Branch Chairman

Branch Secretary's Report



Since the gathering at the Norbreck Castle Hotel in Blackpool in September it has been very quiet around events for the Aden Veterans.

We enjoyed our annual Christmas dinner at the Bowden Hall Hotel with about 20 attending, which was enjoyed by all.

The service to remember the withdrawal from Aden on the 29th November at the Cenotaph in Cheltenham was well attended . A big thank you to our padre for setting up our sound system for our service. Also,

thanks to the Scottish Piper for heading the march . Unfortunately the weather was not good to us with rain falling all through the ceremony.

The first meeting was held at the Toby Inn on the 7th January 2026. The minutes were distributed and are on our website.

It is with great sadness that we were informed of the passing of Sheila Marion Gibson. The funeral took place at the Cheltenham Crematorium which was well attended. Our Standard was carried by Dennis Flamson (Me). The service was taken by our own Padre Brian Woollaston. Later we all gathered at the Ellenborough Park Hotel for refreshments.

Sheila will be sadly missed by all. RIP.

Our next gathering was at the lunch on the 4th February at the Hich Orchard Pub which we all enjoyed and thanks to Jean Stublely for arranging such brilliant venues.

I had the privilege of attending an Aden Veterans Funeral of Desmond Roberts, which I was part of the Guard of Honour and wore my Yellow Sash of the Aden Veterans Association, It was held on Tuesday 10th February at 2.30 at Weston Super Mare Crematorium.

Dennis Flamson Secretary

Branch Social Secretary's Report

I think we have made another successfully supported start to 2026, with thanks to you all.

I arranged for a carvery for our Quarterly meeting held on 7/1/26, which was well attended. A carvery was provided by the Toby Inn, Brockworth. Whilst some favour a carvery, others prefer the buffet. Unfortunately unless we all have the same choice, the pub will make a room charge. Therefore it seems fairest to alternate the 4 Quarterly meeting between buffet and carvery. Some do not like the carvery queue –the manager

suggests eating at 12 noon to reduce waiting time. The next Quarterly meeting will be on Wednesday on 1/4/26 starting at 11am with a buffet this time.

NOTE: Emlyn Phennah has kindly volunteered to take over organising the Quarterly meetings. He will also keep an eye out for suitable lunch venues and in fact, has already looked at a few pubs to follow up. They are The Red Hart, Blaisdon, The New Dawn Norton, Tudor Inn, Slimbridge and the Teddington Hands, all of which we have previously been to.



17 members had lunch at The High Orchard, St Anns Way near the Quays. As well as a very reasonable lunch deal, there was an additional 20% off for Forces and ex Services. This helps balance visiting sometimes higher cost country pubs, during the warmer months (hopefully), which helps balance the overall cost throughout the year.

On 4 March we are booked at The Swan, Coombe Hill, Tewkesbury Road, we have been there before. They have offered us a special deal and I hope you enjoy the food and ambience there.



Chris Blick has recommended The Kings Head, Birdwood near Huntley which is booked for 6/5/26. Their Pensioners lunch is a main and pudding for £15. (No starter). If you require a starter, or any other options, that is at main menu prices.



The Huntsman Inn at Longden, do an excellent carvery on a Wednesday, so that is under consideration for 3/6/26. If you would like to join us, then please sign up to the lists that are circulated at the lunches and Quarterly meetings as well as being published on line. There is always a jolly atmosphere and chance to catch up with other members

I did not have any complaints regarding our second Christmas lunch at Bowden Hall in December 2025, so I hope that means it was a positive experience for those who attended. Our numbers were down, (25) but as no guests were to be invited that is not surprising. I am happy to receive suggestions for this year's venue and whether any guests should be included.

I would like to add how deeply saddened I am that Sheila, my dearest friend, whom I met through the Aden Veterans Association meetings has so suddenly been taken from us.

Always with a welcoming smile and positive attitude, she will be missed so much and I am thinking of Hugh and his family at this difficult time.

Jean Stubley Branch Social Secretary

Treasurers Report

We are now in the last month of our financial year, with just a few more transactions to be brought to account. We continue to be in a very good position, and we have increased our bank balance through the year and now will have the highest end of year balance in the Branch's history. This is good news as we approach the 2027 final activities within the National framework.

Based on our bank statement of 6th February 2026, the headline figures are:

Income : £1,427.00

Expenditure : £1,091.64

Cash at Bank : £3,851.33

David Gearing
Treasurer

Welfare Advisor

A belated Prosperous 2026 to you all.

The wisdom I wish to impart, this edition is about Benefits.

The State Pension Rate 2026-2027 will increase by 4.8% The main Benefits like Attendance Allowance etc will rise by a similar percentage

As a word of caution, Maternity Allowance, will only be £194.32!! Please take precautions if you can't afford it??

Seriously, any enquires you have on new benefits from April 2026 to March 2027, call me and I will look them up for you.

Finally, some of the Main Military Charities that you may need some time in the future.

Soldiers Sailors Airmen Families Association {SSAFA}

The Royal British Legion {TRBL}

The Royal Navy Benevolent Trust {RNBT}

The Army Benevolent Fund {ABF}

Royal Airforce Benevolent Fund {RA bf}

Combat Stress {CS}

Op Courage {NHS}

Veterans Advisory Pension Service {VAPC}

If you need any guidance on Benefits or Military Charities. Please Call Me.

Emlyn Phennah
AVA Welfare Advisory Service
07958 541637

Editor's Report

I thought it might be a good idea to update you on the branch website. During the past 30 days the site has had 96 visitors, from the UK, Spain, Netherlands, Guernsey and the United States. Not bad for a small Association. If you would like to visit the website but do not have a computer, why not get a relative to access the site for you: <https://www.adenveteransglos.co.uk/>

Nik Lloyd has given me permission to add his father, Barrie Lloyds photographs from his time in Aden, 1959/60 working in the MT section at Steamer Point to our branch website I will add them to Albums in due course.

Don't know about you but I'm looking forward to spending some time in the garden once the weather improves. It's been a long cold, wet and damp winter but sunny days are just around the corner.

Ray Bunnage Editor/website

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