



## Worthing Veterans Newsletter February 2026



**Veteran's News** A very slow month for us, however there were a few funerals – many thanks to all of those who took time out to show our respect on behalf of the WVA.

Enzo's Italian restaurant is hosting a fundraiser charity event in aid of the WVA, Tue 28<sup>th</sup> April 18:30 to 21:30. Anyone wishing to attend can get tickets here: [www.tickettailor.com/events/enzocharitynight/2083871](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/enzocharitynight/2083871) Tickets are £25, with £10 of every ticket going to the WVA, there is also a raffle etc etc.

Paul Holden at the worthing Journal has been doing some WW2 investigating and has found that 3 Cdo RM were stationed in East Worthing before deployment in the war. He has permission to erect a plaque in their honour – date and time to be confirmed but I am led to believe Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May. Order of Dress will be Veterans Rig.

Do we have any gardeners in the group? Residents of Mersham Gardens in Goring are looking for someone to cut their green and side lawns. Enquiries to Andrew Byford at [andrewb0088@btinternet.com](mailto:andrewb0088@btinternet.com)

Breakfast Club on Sat 7<sup>th</sup> March will also be the reading of the accounts so as not to ask members to attend 2 separate events, please can as many peeps as possible attend.



**Navy News Shoring up northern defences: What we know about new UK carrier strike group deployment.** HMS Prince of Wales will once again lead the Carrier Strike Group as it deploys to the North Atlantic and High North.

The UK is set to deploy its Carrier Strike Group (CSG) – led once again by HMS Prince of Wales – to the North Atlantic and High North, Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer has announced. He said the group would operate alongside forces from the US, Canada, and other Nato allies in a "powerful show" of commitment to Euro-Atlantic security.

Known as Operation Firecrest, the deployment comes as the MOD revealed incidents of Russian vessels threatening UK waters have increased by 30% in the last two years, with submarine activity in the North Atlantic now back to the same levels as the Cold War era. Sir Keir also connected the Carrier Strike Group's deployment to a broader effort to strengthen European deterrence. "That is why we are enhancing our nuclear cooperation with France," he said. "For decades, the UK has been the only nuclear power in Europe to commit its deterrent to protect all Nato members. "But now any adversary must know that in a crisis, they could be confronted by our combined strength."

The Prime Minister's announcement was made at the annual Munich Security Conference, where heads of state and government, foreign and defence ministers, and leaders of major organisations met to discuss the biggest issues facing the planet. They reflected on what was learnt, and what, if anything, had been achieved at this key event for defence. Prof Clarke said the CSG deployment made "perfect sense". "Its presence in the North Atlantic, which increases reconnaissance," he said. "We could increase our footprint and be a pattern for the future." However, he cautioned that this should not be overemphasised. "It would be better if we had more appropriate force mixes to offer. But we've got to carry it, so we offer it."

When asked whether the deployment was intended as a political signal or carried genuine military "clout", Lieutenant General (Ret'd) Ben Hodges replied: "Those are not mutually exclusive." "When you send a carrier somewhere, there's so much that goes with it – and that's exactly what the US does. "When it's announced that [USS] George Washington, the [USS] George W Bush or the [USS Gerald R] Ford is arriving, that is a huge strategic message, a political message, because it has clout," he said. He added he was a "simple infantryman", not a sailor, but knows what an aircraft carrier and all that comes with it represents. "I think adding capability to the North Atlantic, whatever that looks like – our great naval leadership will know how to use that properly," he said.

### **Mission ready**

Involving thousands of personnel from all three services of the Armed Forces, Op Firecrest will see the UK and US working side by side on Euro-Atlantic security around the North American East Coast.



It will see the CSG exercise alongside the UK-led Nato's Standing Naval Maritime Group 1, with HMS Dragon acting as the command ship of the Nato maritime group throughout the year.

This will include close cooperation with operational headquarters, Joint Force Command Norfolk, Virginia, which is set to be under the command of a British officer for the first time.

The CSG will sail across the Atlantic to visit a US port, with US jets also expected to operate from the flight deck of HMS Prince of Wales. In a post to X in the wake of the announcement, First Sea Lord General Sir Gwyn Jenkins said HMS Prince of Wales "stands ready" for the deployment. In addition, the deployment will bolster Alliance security in support of Nato's Arctic Sentry mission, in a region where melting sea ice is opening new maritime routes, heightening the threat from hostile state activity.

The deployment builds on the success of the UK's CSG25 mission to the Indo-Pacific, which featured more than 1,000 F-35 sorties and exercises with more than 30 nations and resulted in the UK's Carrier Strike Group being certified fully mission-ready and committed to Nato.



**Sailors get a rum deal as Royal Navy makes them go teetotal two days a week.** The Royal Navy is cracking down on alcohol consumption by ordering personnel to go teetotal for two days a week while on a ship.

The new rule affects all sailors, regardless of their rank, in a move to safeguard personnel and fit in with the Government's health advice. Further guidelines have been put in place to include no more than 14 units of alcohol a week, which is around six pints of beer. Guidelines are also in place to limit personnel to three units a day, which is equivalent to a glass of wine.

The Navy says the updated policy is in line with Government advice and ensures personnel remain fit for operations. A Royal Navy Spokesperson said: "The updated policy aligns with advice from the UK Chief Medical Officer, ensuring that our people remain fit for naval operations and comparable with modern military and civilian maritime standards. "It also prioritises the health of our people, which is paramount, and ensures they are ready to respond to the dynamic demands of naval operations, while also continuing to enjoy downtime."

The policy follows documents titled Alcohol Policy Onboard Ships, seen by the Daily Mail, which offers advice from military doctors. It revealed that alcohol consumption aboard ships "remains a significant concern" to service chiefs. The documents indicate that around 48% of personnel drink alcohol to the excess - a figure down from 55% in 2023. They said the figures highlight the "critical need for stricter alcohol policies to safeguard personnel, enhance operational performance and mitigate risks to operational capacity".

Alcohol has been deeply associated within the culture of the Royal Navy for hundreds of years - dating back to the 17th century when a daily rum ration was issued.



**Army News Parachute Regiment battalion set to lose jump status as SDR recommendations bite.** One of the Parachute Regiment's two battalions that make up part of the Army's rapid response formation are to lose their jump status, an MP has revealed.

Ben Obese-Jecty, the Conservative MP for Huntingdon and a former infantry officer, said he had been informed that only one of the battalions would keep its parachute status. He said on X: "After rumours that the Parachute Regiment was going to lose the ability to deploy by parachute, the Government has now confirmed to me that only one of the two battalions will be paratroopers. "So either 2 Para or 3 Para will no longer earn their para wings or receive jump pay. "Sad times to see the erosion of the capability, but a signal of the cuts to come as Labour scrabbles around to find the cash to fund its Defence Investment Plan."

The Parachute Regiment – the airborne infantry regiment of the British Army – is comprised of three regular battalions. But only 2 Para or 3 Para will be affected as 1st Battalion is permanently under the command of the Director Special Forces in the Special Forces Support Group, while the other battalions are the parachute infantry component of 16 Air Assault Brigade Combat Team.

#### Cuts proposed in Strategic Defence Review

Mr Obese-Jecty suggested the move was intended to save money, having been mentioned in last year's Strategic Defence Review. The 2025 SDR stated that the UK would retain an airborne parachute capability – but recommended this be focused on specialist troops and a single battalion. The size and role of parachute soldiers was discussed as far back as the SDR from 1998, which pointed out how operational realities had changed, with the need for large-scale parachute drops being less likely.

The last major drop involving paratroops was Suez in 1956, since when air insertion by helicopter has become more common. The SDR therefore concluded that some roles within 16 Air Assault Brigade did not require active jump status.

#### Potential negative impact

Mr Obese-Jecty had asked Defence Secretary John Healey what assessment he had made of the potential negative impact of removing parachute infantry deployment as a capability. Armed Forces Minister Al Carns, answering on Mr Healey's behalf, said: "The Strategic Defence Review (SDR) considered all aspects of Defence, including military parachuting capabilities. "The SDR recommended that airborne parachute capability and capacity should remain focused on specialists and a single battalion group. "The Government accepted the recommendations of the SDR in full and will publish the Defence Investment Plan as soon as possible to set out the plan for its implementation."

## P Company

At the moment, personnel wanting to join the Parachute Regiment must undertake P Company. Pegasus Company is a pre-parachute selection course with a strong emphasis on physical and mental fitness and endurance. Those who pass then go to RAF Brize Norton to take the Basic Parachute Course, after which they are awarded their wings. In addition to having earned the right to wear the wings, the soldiers also qualify for additional "jump" pay. It is currently unclear how the MOD and the Army intend to stream recruits into the parachute-capable battalion.

## Combat-proven

Both 2 and 3 Para are based at Merville Barracks in Colchester – a modern, purpose-built barracks for 16 Air Assault Brigade, which is also home to Artillery, Medics, Signallers and Logisticians as well as 16 Brigade Combat Team Headquarters.

## However.....

### **No cuts: MOD denies any Parachute Regiment battalion will lose its jump status**

A spokesperson refuted claims by Conservative MP and former Army officer Ben Obese-Jecty, who said he had been informed by the Government that either 2 Para or 3 Para would no longer be parachute-trained. "These claims are incorrect – there are no plans to cut any Parachute Battalion, nor Para pay. The PQ [parliamentary question] is clear that we are continuing with current plans for parachuting," the spokesperson explained.

Mr Obese-Jecty had asked Defence Secretary John Healey what assessment he had made of the potential negative impact of removing parachute infantry deployment as a capability. Armed Forces Minister Al Carns, answering on Mr Healey's behalf, said: "The Strategic Defence Review (SDR) considered all aspects of Defence, including military parachuting capabilities. "The SDR recommended that airborne parachute capability and capacity should remain focused on specialists and a single battalion group. "The Government accepted the recommendations of the SDR in full and will publish the Defence Investment Plan as soon as possible to set out the plan for its implementation."

Former Royal Yorkshire Regiment officer Mr Obese-Jecty then said on X: ""After rumours that the Parachute Regiment was going to lose the ability to deploy by parachute, the Government has now confirmed to me that only one of the two battalions will be paratroopers. "So either 2 Para or 3 Para will no longer earn their para wings or receive jump pay."

## Original claims caused uproar

News of the supposed loss of jump status caused upset across the military community and among its supporters. One person wrote on X: "I think that will be a grave error, the whole point of 16 Air assault Brigade is exactly what it says on the tin. "That is, the ability to get a whole Brigade into theatre as quickly as possible. There is only one way to do that, and that is by aircraft and parachute." Another wrote: "Whichever Battalion loses their

jump status, there will be a massive stigma associated with it. "On completion of P Company, soldiers will be desperate to join a true 'airborne' Battalion, as opposed to a support Battalion."

However, others did point out that combat jumps were a rarity, with whole battalion jumps even more so.

The MOD has now confirmed that the members of all three regular battalions will now be keeping the jump status, jump pay and the right to wear their wings.

**The end.... maybe**



**RAF News Tucked out back in vogue: RAF makes changes to dress regs and its appearance policy.** The RAF has updated its dress regs to allow personnel to wear the lightweight PCS jacket untucked – but how is the change being perceived? To tuck or not to tuck? That is the question.

The RAF has made several changes to its dress regulations and appearance policy, including one fundamental alteration to the lightweight jacket worn as part of the Personal Clothing System (PCS).

The garment, which is made for combat and is part of the uniform that RAF personnel wear when deployed on operations and exercises, was originally designed to be worn untucked, but for years it's been worn tucked in.

Historically, the lightweight PCS jacket would only be worn untucked whilst personnel are serving on operations. However, the RAF has now updated its policy and told personnel it should be worn untucked as standard.

Dividing opinion

A poll of the BFBS Forces News YouTube audience found that 37% were in favour of the change, while the remaining 63% felt the jacket should be tucked in. Nearly 1,000 people took part in the poll.

One voter commented that the jacket "looks messy untucked" while another said: "When it first came in we had it untucked, here we are full circle!" Others felt the change reflected a lowering of standards. One person said: "I was in the 1st Rifle company in my battalion issued PCS in 2011 for our deployment to the Falklands, we were told it was to be untucked, within 10 mins on parade we were all sent back in to get stable belts and tuck it in."

Jewellery, nail varnish and goatees now permitted

RAF appearance policy has also undergone some changes. Wording has been simplified to make the rules easier to understand and a ceremonial appearance standards policy has been implemented. An RAF spokesperson said: "The RAF's appearance policy aims to maintain high standards of appearance while ensuring that it reflects modern, inclusive values."

Beards have been permitted for some time in the RAF, but these changes now allow full goatees too

The full list of changes is as follows:

:: When it comes to facial hair, full goatees are allowed. Hair may be shorter on the sides and back or shaved. Mohawk/Mohican and mullet styles are still not allowed.

:: Up to four rings are allowed, including smart tech rings (subject to local PED rules) and thumb rings.

:: Women may wear up to four earrings per ear (three in the earlobe and one "helix" stud at the top of the ear). For ceremonial occasions, women may wear one pair of gold ear studs in their earlobes. Helix earrings are not to be worn.

:: When it comes to nail varnish, women may wear any colour of nail varnish, except glitter, metallic, or neon. For ceremonial events, they may wear nail varnish, but it must be clear, nude or French tips.

:: Updated guidance on tattoos is that scalp micropigmentation is permitted, so long as the colour is permitted under the hair policy.



**WindRunner: The largest cargo aircraft ever to be built, capable of carrying six Chinooks.** The team developing the largest cargo aircraft ever built has said that its military capabilities could be a game-changer.

The Radia WindRunner is so vast that it can carry six fully constructed Chinook helicopters. It is 109 metres long with a payload bay capacity roughly 12 times that of a Boeing 747. Mel Johnson, Radia's vice president of regulatory affairs, said: "It is a very remarkable scale. "There's things that can be moved that currently are difficult to move because of volume restrictions, and while typically you think about moving payload weight around and how many C-17s or C-5s to carry a certain amount of mass, oftentimes the missions are really limited by volume. "A good example of that is the movement of Chinooks. "You don't weight out with a load of Chinooks, but you certainly volume out, so having this extra volume provides the real transformational capability that can be utilised by the military."

This is Radia's first go at designing and building an aircraft, as the company primarily works in the energy sector, and it was developed to transport wind turbines.

The current heavy lifters in the Royal Air Force, like the Globemaster C-17 III, which has a 52-metre wingspan, often require disassembled cargo, meaning a Chinook can only be on board once its blades are removed. However, the WindRunner's design can hold four F-35 fighter jets without removing their wings; consequently, the aircraft can roll off onto the tarmac ready for combat.

Thad Bibb, the company's vice president of business development, defence, said: "We like to say roll on ready and roll off ready. "C-17 could carry one Chinook at a time max, and that's with the blades off and turbine off at the top right. "To disassemble that for C-17 or for C5 takes about two days to take apart, takes a team of 12, about five days to put it back together, plus you've got to do a functional check flight."

He went on: "When I was lieutenant colonel, we used to deliver the Chinooks directly into Afghanistan from Spain, and we've moved 100 helicopters in, and you can imagine the difference of carrying six Chinooks on a WindRunner versus one on the C-17. "And then on the WindRunner, you don't have to disassemble it, you can leave it fully assembled, so some big advantages there."

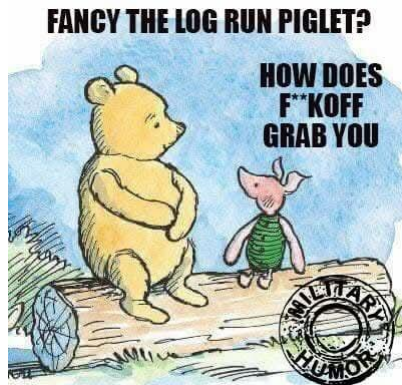
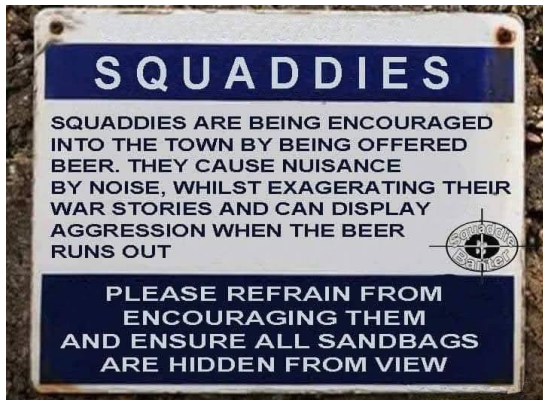
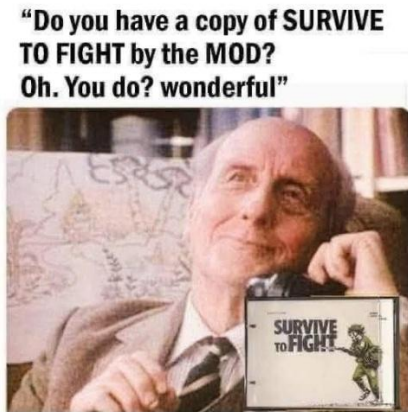
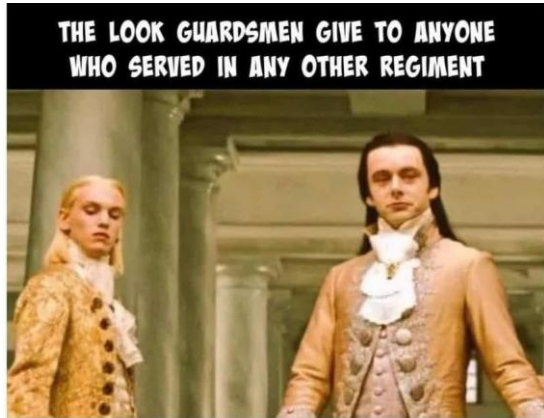
#### Ideal for Nato

Despite its vast size, the WindRunner does not need a massive, vulnerable air base. Thus, it is ideal for Nato's agile combat employment strategy and for delivering vital aircraft and military hardware to remote forward positions where they're needed.

US defence chiefs are paying close attention to the concept, given that the last C-17 was constructed more than ten years ago. With aircraft carriers, the preferred way to transport combat-ready aerial assets over huge distances, can the WindRunner offer a faster alternative? "Just to be able to have equipment ready and be able to be useful, having that faster turnaround time can increase the capability of the forces," Mr Johnson added. "It helps in the perspective of with the existing material be more effective. "Get the things back and forth and don't get it logged you know stuck in transit."

Radia is aiming for the first flight of this giant to take place in 2029.

And now for some banter...



When you used to drink all the time, but now you're out the military and have to be sober at work



Years of military training wasted!

Wasted!



That's all folks..... Submissions for inclusion gratefully received.

## Useful Contact Info – Military

**Worthing Veterans Association:** Providing a “one stop shop” point of contact for anything veteran related in and around Worthing. Contact Steve Hinton on [Worthing.veterans@hotmail.com](mailto:Worthing.veterans@hotmail.com) or call 07948920339.

**Blind Veterans:** Supporting veterans with sight loss to overcome their challenges. Website is [www.blindveterans.org.uk](http://www.blindveterans.org.uk) or call on 01273 307811.

**Boots on the Ground:** The charity runs small activity weekends for veterans and their families, offers back to work programs, sign posting and support services. Tel: 08000 699 990 or <https://www.bootsonthegrounduk.org/>

**Care for Veterans** - a multi-disciplinary approach towards the care and rehabilitation of residents, which includes physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, and neuropsychology, as well as social and recreational activities – all delivered from our facilities in Worthing, West Sussex. [www.careforveterans.org.uk/](http://www.careforveterans.org.uk/) 01903 213458

**Help for Heroes** Providing lifetime support to those wounded in the service of their country. No matter when someone served. <https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/get-support-today/> Or call Keith Rule on 07823882400 or email [keithrule@pm.me](mailto:keithrule@pm.me)

**Royal British Legion:** Website is [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk) or call 0808 802 8080.

**Royal Naval Association** With over 11,000 members across 250+ branches in the UK and overseas, we are a family of current and former Naval Service personnel, relatives and supporters of our country's Royal Navy. <https://royal-naval-association.co.uk/>  
Email: [admin@royalnavalassoc.com](mailto:admin@royalnavalassoc.com) Tel: 023 9272 3747

**RAF Association.** The charity that supports the RAF family. Tel: 0800 018 2361  
Website is: <https://rafa.org.uk/>

**SSAFA:** The UK's oldest military charity, providing support for veterans and families.  
Website is [www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk) or call SSAFA Sussex on 0800 169 9060.

**Veterans Gateway:** Point of contact for veterans and their families to access information, advice and support online for a range of issues. Website is [www.veteransgateway.org.uk](http://www.veteransgateway.org.uk) or call 08088021212.

**Walking With The Wounded:** Walking With The Wounded, a military charity for injured veterans in the UK, supports a pathway for vulnerable veterans to re-integrate back into society and sustain their independence. At the heart of this journey is employment. Website is [www.walkingwiththewounded.org](http://www.walkingwiththewounded.org) .

WWTW is not a crisis support organisation so all contact can be made through the website

## Useful Contact Info – civilian

(If anyone wants to recommend a local tradesman or charities to other veterans please let me know and they will be listed here.)

**Flamingo Rock:** Launched by one of our own. Gifts for him and her with a classic feel. Also bespoke items can be purchased. See website: <https://www.flamingorock.co.uk/>

**Carers Support West Sussex:** Providing support for family and friend carers across West Sussex. Website is [www.carerssupport.org.uk](http://www.carerssupport.org.uk) (you can chat online to them too) or call on 0300 028888.

**Freedom Powerchairs** Charity led mobility solutions, run by a RAF Veteran. 0800 0096631 or email [info@freedompowerchairs.org.uk](mailto:info@freedompowerchairs.org.uk)

**Helping Hands at Home** “No job too small” Home maintenance. Call Gerren on 07884 213613. Website is [www.hhhworthing.com](http://www.hhhworthing.com)

**Injury Treatment Centre:** Chartered physiotherapist dealing with joint and muscle injuries, and back and neck pain. Website is [www.injurytreatmentcentre.co.uk](http://www.injurytreatmentcentre.co.uk) or call 01903 205599.

**Wall Bros Carpets** Local firm run by strong supporters of the Veterans community. <https://wallbroscarpets.co.uk/> call them on [01903 20503638](tel:0190320503638)

**Painting & Decorating Services** No job too small, special care for veterans. Contact Teresa Lee on 07494711276 or email [teresalee309@gmail.com](mailto:teresalee309@gmail.com)

**Snack Shack** Located in the Lancing Business Park, run by a former Royal Marine. With space for up to 60/70 bods, interesting décor and obviously he knows what a brekky should taste like you should check this place out if in the area.

## Forecast of Events

<b>March 2026</b>	
Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Drop In – 1030 Gordon Room, Town Hall
Sat 7 <sup>th</sup>	Breakfast Club – Snack Shack 0930 – 1100
<b>April 2026</b>	
Wed 1 <sup>st</sup>	Formation of the RAF – otherwise known as April Fools Day 😊
Sat 4 <sup>th</sup>	Breakfast Club – Snack Shack 0930 – 1100
Mon 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>No Drop In – Bank Holiday</b>
<b>May 2026</b>	
Sat 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Army v Navy Rugby – Twickenham
Sat 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Breakfast Club – Snack Shack 0930 – 1100
Mon 4 <sup>th</sup>	<b>No Drop In – Elections...</b>
Fri 8 <sup>th</sup>	VE Day – Events TBC
Sun 10 <sup>th</sup>	3 Cdo RM Blue Plaque event – details TBC
Sun 24 <sup>th</sup>	HMS Hood Day
<b>June 2026</b>	
Mon 1 <sup>st</sup>	Drop In – Gordon Room 10:30 – 12:00
Sat 6 <sup>th</sup>	D Day
Sat 6 <sup>th</sup>	Breakfast Club – Snack Shack 0930 – 1100
Sun 14 <sup>th</sup>	Falkland Islands Victory Day
Thu 18 <sup>th</sup>	Waterloo Day
Sat 27 <sup>th</sup>	Armed Forces Day
Tue 30 <sup>th</sup>	The Day Sussex Died – Battle of Boar’s Head

# Annual Diary

A place for us to list annual events which may require observing at the Cenotaph, Parade, Dinner or visit to the pub. If anything is missing please let me know.

<b>January</b>	
<b>27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Holocaust Memorial Day</b>
<b>February</b>	
<b>March</b>	
<b>April</b>	
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Formation of the RAF 😊</b>
<b>May</b>	
<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>VE Day</b>
<b>24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>HMS Hood Day</b>
<b>June</b>	
<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>D Day</b>
<b>14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Falklands Victory</b>
<b>18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Waterloo Day</b>
<b>30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>The Day Sussex Died – Battle of Boar’s Head</b>
<b>July</b>	
<b>August</b>	
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Minden Day</b>
<b>15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>VJ Day</b>
<b>September</b>	
<b>13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Battle of Quebec (1759)</b>
<b>15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Battle of Britain Day</b>
<b>22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Battle of Arnhem (17<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> Sept 1944)</b>
<b>October</b>	
<b>21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Battle of Trafalgar</b>
<b>25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Charge of the light brigade (Balaclava) 1854 and Agincourt 1415.</b>
<b>28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Formation of the Royal Marines</b>
<b>November</b>	
<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Battle of Inkerman</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Armistice Day</b>
<b>December</b>	
<b>17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Lancaster Bomber crash</b>