

“Once a Marine, always a Marine” The Royal Marines Association (Malta Branch)

Brian Roberts

Two years ago, I wrote an article regarding the history of the Royal Marines and the Corps association with Malta for the Festa. The response was overwhelming and as a result I have been asked to write a follow up regarding the present day relationship we have with the Maltese Islands.

Of course, there are no more serving Marines here today, but there is a strong “historical” presence in the form of the Royal Marines Association (Malta Branch) which has members from all around the world. The main aim is to keep all ex-Royal Marines who served here in Malta stay in touch with each other.

In November each year, a re-union is held here in Malta when over 100 members and their families meet for a week of social and remembrance celebrations. This includes special visits to various parts of the Islands.

In November 2015 the group was invited to the Imperial Band Club for a concert by the Band and one of Peter’s famous pasta meals. Over 90 members attended to what was a memorable day. Our grateful thanks go to the committee, members of the band and Peter and his “team” for making it a great day for our members.

The Band was superb and produced a programme of wonderful quality and variety. The finale was a

rousing rendition of music from “Last Night at the Proms” which was enjoyed by everyone. I am told there were also a few tears!!

The concert took place in the newly refurbished Band Room and gave the Band and the Surmast the chance to test the acoustics in front of an audience, and I know everyone was pleased with the result.

Following the concert, the Royal Marines presented a plaque from the Branch to the Imperial Band Club and the Local Council as mementos of their visit; a visit which will be remembered for years to come.

As I mentioned in my previous article, the Royal Marines have had a long history with this part of Malta. It was the Royal Marines who landed in Mellieħa Bay to arm the Maltese against Napoleon and it was the Marines who freed Gozo from the hands of the French. No wonder that the Corps has such a lasting respect and attachment for Malta.

That goes for the Royal Marines Association (Malta Branch) who will continue to uphold those traditions no matter what the future brings.

In November 2016, the RMA Malta Branch is invited to visit the club again and I can assure you it will be the highlight of their visit to Malta.

Have a great Festa.

