



# Aldershot Garrison Remembrance Trail



## Introduction

Welcome to the Aldershot Garrison Remembrance Trail. This trail is an opportunity for you to spend time reflecting upon the themes of remembrance and sacrifice.

This trail will visit eight locations and covers a route of approx. 4 miles, which you are welcome to walk, run or jog individually or in groups. Feel free to adapt the trail to suit your own needs; what we offer here is a guide to accompany your journey, rather than a prescription.

You can start the Trail at any point, but we recommend beginning at the RASC Memorial, situated next to Catholic Cathedral Church of St Michael and St George at the junction of Queen's Avenue and Allison's Road (GU11 2BY).

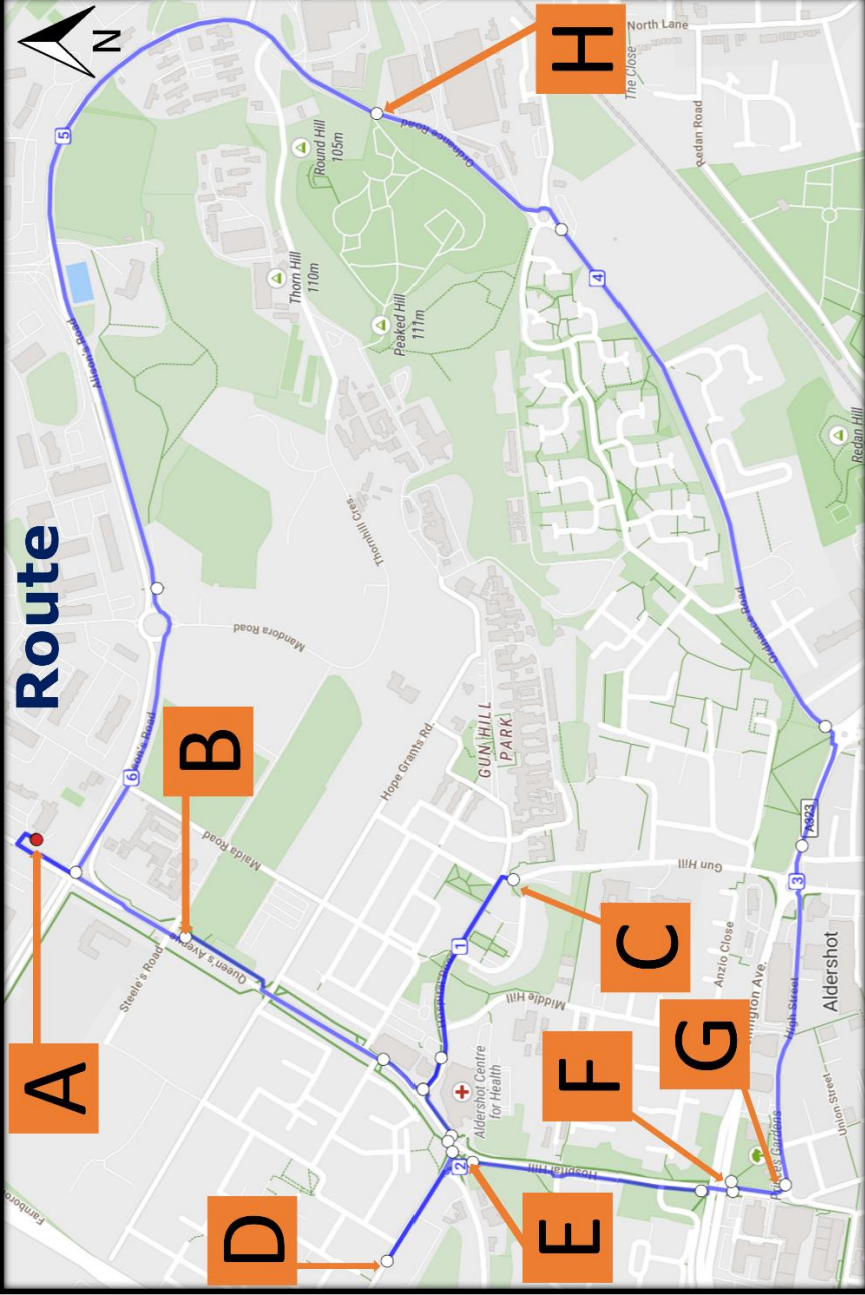
At each location, you'll be invited to *Read, Reflect and Remember*.

**Read:** This will be a few short words to help focus your mind and bring some context to the location you are in.

**Reflect:** This will be one or two questions for you to consider.

**Remember:** This will encourage you to take a moment's quiet and remember those service personnel who have sacrificed their lives in the pursuit of peace. There will be a short prayer which you might find useful as you remember.

# Route



- A. RASC Memorial** (next to the Catholic Cathedral)
  - B. 8<sup>th</sup> Division Memorial**
  - C. RAMC Memorial**
  - D. IRA Bombing Memorial**
  - E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Division Memorial**
  - F. Gurkha Memorial**
  - G. Airborne Soldier Statue**
  - H. Aldershot Military Cemetery**
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## The Trail

### A. RASC Memorial

**Read:** This memorial is dedicated to all those from the Royal Army Service Corps (later to become the Royal Corps of Transport and then the Royal Logistic Corps) who have died in the service of the Crown in both World Wars.



**Reflect:** As you embark on your Remembrance Trail, ask yourself the following questions:

- a. What does Remembrance mean to me?
- b. Why is it important to remember the sacrifice of others?

**Remember:** Pause for a few moments and remember those who have used these Garrison Churches before operations, but never returned home.

**A Prayer:** Creator God, you are the source of all life and motivation. May we journey in faith on this Remembrance Trail; grant us a glimpse of your glory as we remember those who have died in order that we might live in peace. Amen.

**Continue your Journey:** Keeping the RASC memorial on your left, cross at the junction with Allison's road and continue approx. 400m up Queen's Ave and cross Steeles Rd. The 8<sup>th</sup> Division Memorial will be on the corner to your left.

## B.8<sup>th</sup> Division Memorial



**Read:** The 8<sup>th</sup> Division was a British Army formation composed mostly of regular troops drawn from the garrisons of the Empire after the declaration of the Great War in 1914.

By 07 November, the Division was in Le Harve, France. The Division fought at many major battles including at Neuve Chapelle, Fromelles and Bois Grenier. On 01 July 1916, the Division fought in the opening day of the Battle of the Somme. Zero hour was 0730hrs. By 1900hrs the same day, The 8th Division had lost a staggering 5,424 troops killed, wounded and missing.

The Division continued to fight throughout the war, including at Ypres, Passchendaele, Aisne and the Advance to Picardy. The final fighting of the Division took place in the early hours of 11 November 1918. At 0709hrs the Divisional HQ received word of the armistice for 1100hrs that day.

Between 15 and 17 December the Division marched to Ath to begin the disbandment, while the men continued with training, education and recreation. Most of the Division's units were regular army, which would be returned to strength and resume their peace time deployments.

In the almost four years on the front line the Division had lost 63,858 troops killed, wounded and missing. To put those numbers into context, the new Tottenham Hotspur Stadium seats 62,850.

**Reflect:** Thinking about the sacrifice of the thousands of troops from the 8<sup>th</sup> Division, consider the following questions:

- a. What does it mean to be selfless?
- b. If I were to die on operations, how would I like to be remembered?

**Remember:** Pause for a few moments and remember the sacrifice of troops of the 8<sup>th</sup> Division and their families who would have mourned their deaths.

**A Prayer:** Father, our hearts and our minds remember those who have lost their lives whilst serving in the military. We ask Father, that you give your strength and comfort to those who grieve and know the pain of loss. During times of feeling alone and shattered by loss please shine your light and peace into their hearts. In the darkest times, please bring hope. Amen.

**Continue your journey:** Continue up Queen's Ave towards Aldershot Centre for Health, crossing Hope Grant's Rd and Scarlett's Road. Turn left on to Hospital Rd, pass Middle Hill and Darbyshire Rd before turning right on to Gun Hill. The RAMC memorial will be on your right.

## C. RAMC Memorial

**Read:** The RAMC memorial commemorates the 314 men of the Royal Army Medical Corps who lost their lives whilst serving in the Boer War of 1899 to 1902 in South Africa.

The monument is cited next to the former Cambridge Military Hospital. The sculpture at the centre of the memorial was created by Sir William Goscombe John and shows a wounded British soldier being cradled by an RAMC Medic whilst another orderly tends to his wounds. The memorial was opened by HM King Edward VII on 24 May 1905.

The Boer War highlighted the importance of medical care for the British Army; the medical services treated 22,000



wounded and a staggering 74,000 for dysentery and typhoid fever alone.

**Reflect:** Whilst looking at the sculpture, consider the following questions?

- a. What does it mean to care for someone?
- b. How do you feel knowing that some people risk their lives to save the lives of others?
- c. What is the value of non-combatants on the battlefield?

**Remember:** Pause for a few moments and remember both the lives saved and also the sacrifices made by the members of the Army Medical Services from their formation to the present day.

**A Prayer:** Almighty and everlasting God, we ask you to bless the work of the Army Medical Services. Help them to work with tenderness and sympathy to alleviate all human suffering. We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Healer of all people. Amen

**Continue your journey:** Retrace your steps back along Hospital Rd and turn left on to Queen's Ave. Continue to the crossroads at Aldershot Centre for Health. Cross over Queen's Ave and continue along Pennefather's Rd. On the left, and sadly hidden behind the fencing is the Memorial and garden to the victims of the IRA Bombing. Despite not being able to see the memorial, we feel it is still important to stop and reflect close to the site of the bombing.

## D. IRA Bombing Memorial



**Read:** On 22 February 1972, in retaliation for the events of Bloody Sunday, a Ford Cortina containing a 130kg time bomb was left in the car park outside the 16 Parachute Brigade Officers' Mess by the IRA. The bomb detonated killing six civilian staff, Army Chaplain Fr Gerard Weston MBE and injuring 19 others.

**Reflect:** Whilst pausing near the site of the memorial, consider the following questions

- a. What does the word peace mean to you?
- b. What could you do to be a peacemaker?

**Remember:** Pause for a few moments and remember all those who have been the innocent victims of terrorism.

**A Prayer:** Prince of Peace, we pray for all those who have had their lives changed as a result of terrorism; through injury or bereavement. We ask that you bring your peace to their hearts and to the whole world. Amen.

**Continue your journey:** Retrace your steps back along Pennefather's Rd and cross over Knollys Rd. On your right, just before Hospital Hill you will find the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division Memorial.

## E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Division Memorial

**Read:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> Division began the First World War with a war establishment of 18,179 men. By the end of 1914 the total number of dead, wounded or missing totalled a staggering 10,069. The Battle of Loos from Sep-Oct 1915 saw a further 5,446 casualties across the Division. The losses continued throughout the war, including 8,770 in 1917 and 10,201 in 1918. At the end of the war, the Division underwent a number of changes before being reformed in Aldershot in 28 June 1919. In 1923, this memorial was erected to commemorate the Division's casualties during the Great. The design incorporates the phrase; 'Grant them O Lord eternal rest.'



**Reflect:** Whilst looking at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division Memorial, ask yourself the following questions:

- a. How do you feel after rest?
- b. What do you think eternal rest might be like?

**Remember:** Pause for a few moments and remember the sacrifice of the members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division.

**A Prayer:** Support us, O Lord, all the day long of this troublous life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then, Lord, in your mercy grant us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Continue your journey:** Continue all the way down Hospital Hill and cross Wellington Ave (A323), then cross Princes Ave and enter Princes Gardens. On the near corner of the gardens you will find the Gurkha Memorial.

## F. Gurkha Memorial

**Read:** The statue was created by the Sculptor Amy Goodman. It depicts Havildar Kulbir Thapa VC carrying a British Tommy, Bill Keightley off the battlefield in 1915 without fear, and with war bullets in his shoulder, ultimately to save his life. Due to this act of Bravery, Havildar Kulbir Thapa was awarded the Victoria cross (VC). This is the first VC award within the Gurkhas. Since then, there have been another 12 Gurkha Victoria Crosses awarded.

**Reflect:** Whilst looking at the memorial ask yourself the following questions:

- a. What does it mean to be brave and courageous?
- b. What can I learn from the example of Havildar Kulbir Thapa?



**Royal Gurkha Rifles Prayer:** Almighty God, Father of all, whose ancient people looked to the hills, grant to us of the Brigade of Gurkhas, bound together in a bond of friendship, that we may serve our Sovereign with loyalty, integrity and cheerfulness; and, mindful of our traditions, may we swiftly follow wherever you lead, and so at the last come to our eternal home, for the sake of him who called his disciples his friends, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Continue your journey:** Keeping the Princes Hall to your right, walk along Princes Way until you reach the Airborne Soldier Statue at the next corner of Princes Gardens.



## G. Airborne Soldier Statue

**Read:** *The Airborne Soldier* is a 6ft tall bronze statue, which is mounted on a 4ft cube of granite from Mount Longdon in the Falklands Islands and has been commissioned as a memorial to those who have served with The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces in Aldershot Garrison from 1950 to 2000.



Since being raised in 1941, the Airborne Forces has fought in many different theatres of conflict, including Arnhem, Northern Ireland, the Falkland Islands, Iraq and Afghanistan. Most recently they were involved in Operation Pitting, the evacuation from Kabul in 2021.

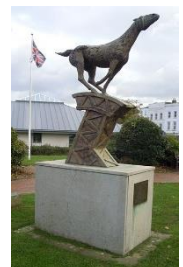
**Reflect:** Whilst looking at the memorial ask yourself the following questions:

- a. What can I do to show my gratitude for those who have died in the pursuit of peace?
- b. What can I do to support those who have returned from conflicts with the physical and mental scars of war?

**Remember:** Pause and remember the sacrifice of the Airborne Forces from 1941 to the present day.

**The Airborne Forces Prayer:** May the defence of the Most High be above and beneath, around and within us, in our going out and in our coming in, in our rising up and in our going down, through all our days and all our nights, until dawn when the Sun of Righteousness shall rise with healing in his wings for the peoples of the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Charging Horse Statue:** Across Princes Gardens can be seen the Charging Horse Statue. It is a sculpture by Jill Tweed of a charging horse on a section of a Bailey Bridge which symbolises the link between the town of Aldershot and the Royal Engineers and cavalry regiments. The sculpture was unveiled in 1994.



**Continue your journey:** Keeping Princes Gardens on your left continue on the High St to the NAAFI Roundabout, cross over the road towards Burger King, then cross Gun Hill and continue on the High St. (A323). At Ordnance roundabout, turn left on to Ordnance Rd. Walk along Ordnance road approx. 800m to the next roundabout, then cross South Atlantic Dr and continue on Ordnance Rd. Aldershot Military Cemetery will be on your left.

## H. Aldershot Military Cemetery



The military cemetery in Aldershot contains a Cross of Sacrifice and thousands of military graves. These include 692 First World War graves, 129 Second World War graves and 18 graves from the Falklands campaign.

**Reflect:** Whilst walking around the military cemetery, ask yourself the following questions:

- a. What would you be willing to sacrifice for someone you love?
- b. What would you be willing to sacrifice for someone you've never met?

**Remember:** Pause for a few moments and remember the sacrifice of those who are buried in this cemetery.

**A Prayer:** Sovereign Lord, we thank you for the sacrifice of those who have given their lives for our nation. You led by your own example demonstrating that greater love means to put your life on the line for your friends. You taught us to love one another. Please help us to honour those who have gone before us and laid down their lives by loving others as you them. Amen.

**Continue your journey:** Leave the cemetery where you entered and continue up the hill along Ordnance Rd in the same direction you were travelling before.

Continue on to Thornhill Rd and on to Allison's Rd where St Omar Bks will be on your right. Continue over the roundabout on Allison's Rd until you return to the crossroads with Queen's Ave. The Catholic Cathedral will be on your right. Cross Allison's Road and return to outside the Cathedral.

**Act of Remembrance:** To conclude the Aldershot Remembrance Trail, pause for one last time and hold a short Act of Remembrance.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning. We will remember them;

**We will remember them.**

Silence is kept

**Kohima Epitaph:**

When you go home, tell them of us and say;  
'For your tomorrow we gave our today.'

**A Prayer for our Armed Forces:**

O Lord our God, we commend to your gracious care and keeping the men and women of HM Armed Forces. We ask you to protect them from all danger to body and soul; to give them a loyal, courageous and disciplined spirit; to install in them the love of justice and liberty, and to grant that they may be called to serve only for the establishment of peace throughout the world; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.





We hope you have found this Remembrance Trail useful. It has been produced by the Aldershot Garrison Chaplaincy Team.

Army Chaplains provide a friendly and confidential service to all soldiers and their families, irrespective of religion, belief or tradition. For more information, speak to your Unit Padre.

## **Garrison Churches**

Each of our three Garrison Churches contain a number of memorials and monuments. These are well worth exploring as a continuation of this Remembrance Trail.

Each church also holds regular services, and you would be most welcome at any of them.

### **Royal Garrison Church of All Saints**

(Church of England)

Farnborough Road, Aldershot GU11 1QA

Sunday Holy Communion – 1000hrs

Monthly Café Church 1600hrs (see website for further details)



Website: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7374/>

Email: [royalgarrisonchurch101@gmail.com](mailto:royalgarrisonchurch101@gmail.com)

### **Cathedral of St Michael and St George**

(Roman Catholic)

Queens Avenue, Aldershot GU11 2BY

Sunday Mass – 1100hrs

Wednesday Mass – 1200hrs



Website: <https://www.rcbishopricforces.org.uk/cathedral>

Email: [stmichael.stgeorge@live.co.uk](mailto:stmichael.stgeorge@live.co.uk)

### **St Andrew's Garrison Church**

(Church of Scotland)

Queens Avenue, Aldershot GU11 2BY

Sunday Service – 1100hrs



Website: <http://www.standrewsaldershot.co.uk/>

Email: [standrewsgc@btconnect.com](mailto:standrewsgc@btconnect.com)