



# Lest We Forget

**33 Squadron Association  
at the 2017 Remembrance Day Parade**



Following on from the success of last year's Remembrance Day Parade in London, where for the first time in its history a 33 Squadron Association presence was recorded, our treasurer, Jez Reid, contacted the Royal British Legion early this year to register our intention to attend again. This year we increased our representation and planned to have 20 members marching past the Cenotaph on Sunday morning, 12 November.

As you will see from the photographs, it had been agreed that headgear would be worn this year. As the Chairman was quoted £194 for a bowler in a hat shop in Jermyn Street it was suggested that the aircrew wore forage hats to represent the six nations that provided 33 with pilots during WW2. In late 1944 in Europe, the multi-national 33 had gained the nickname 'The Mixed Pickles', a fact that was discovered in Jan Linzel's book. The Chairman sent out emails and made several calls around the globe trying to obtain suitable headgear, and thanks to Jan Westhoeve (ex-RNLAF/33 Squadron Association Associate member), Bill Denehan (ex-33 / USA), Captain Aaron Noble RCAF (Exchange Instructor MSHATF) and some great work by the NZ Defence Attaché in London, Wing Commander Lisa D'Oliveira, who provided an RNZAF and a RAAF hat, we managed five out of six. Getting hold of a South African hat proved too difficult, so with lapel flag pins being issued to assist the bystanders to identify which hat was which, Chris 'The Cat Whisperer' Perkins wore a South African lapel badge to augment his chip bag.

By 0900 there were veterans streaming in from every direction to form up on Horse Guards Parade at the prescribed time. Getting through security proved painless, queueing to use the one set of portaloos allocated for the 10 000+ attendees proved less so. The RBL had changed the column locations this year, but 'Chief Whip' Dick Brewster made sure everyone was there at the right place, at the right time, even if it meant phoning people who had finally made it into the portaloos!

When we eventually made it out onto a very chilly Whitehall we lined up just yards away from the Lord Moon, where we knew that Paul Davies would be waiting from 1200 onwards with pre-ordered refreshments. As we waited for the go, the new Association hip flasks, another lesson learned last year, were passed around generously to keep out the cold, and we finally started marching at around 1135-1140. Well done to Chris Cutting, our wreath bearer, and Chris Perkins with his stick. The support from the public around the route was fantastic, and once back at Horse Guards we quickly made our way to the Lord Moon to find Paul. It was another wonderful occasion and a real privilege to march with the group. Lesson for next year's Parade: Eamonn, bring your pace stick when you fly in from Spain! Ladies, Gentlemen, the list for 2018 is already open, contact Jez if you are interested.

