

THE DEAL MEMORIAL BANDSTAND

The Bandstand

On 22 September 1989, the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) exploded a bomb in the recreation room of the Staff Band at the Royal Marines School of Music in Deal. The explosion killed 11 Royal Marine Musicians and seriously injured 11 more.

The idea for building a bandstand as a living memorial to those that had been killed came from the Deal Round Table charity and a local man, Dennis Atkinson. Work started on the Memorial Bandstand in 1992, and the opening concert was held on 2 May 1993. It included a fanfare played by the Trumpeters from the Band of the Royal Marines School of Music.



The East Barracks in 1888, originally the Navy Hospital. In 1956, it became the offices and practice rooms for the Royal Marines School of Music. The school closed at Deal and moved to Portsmouth in 1996.

Today, with the generous help of sponsors and donations from the public, the Deal Memorial Bandstand Trust continues to stage free concerts at the bandstand from May to September. The Royal Marines Band return each year to play to huge crowds and to perform a rededication to those who were killed.



Seven days after the fatal explosion on 22 September 1989, the entire personnel of the Royal Marines School of Music marched through the crowded streets of Deal. Spaces were left in the parade line where the 11 men of the Staff Band would have normally marched.

The Royal Marine Musicians

Eleven sides of the twelve-sided bandstand are mounted with engraved plaques that bear the names of those who lost their lives:

Musician	Michael Ball
Band Corporal	Andy Cleatheroe
Band Corporal	Trevor Davis
Musician	Richard Fice
Musician	Richard Jones
Band Corporal	David McMillan
Musician	Chris Nolan
Band Corporal	Dean Pavey
Musician	Mark Petch
Musician	Tim Reeves
Musician	Bob Simmonds

The Royal Marines ranking structure is used, with 'band' prefixed to the rank (for example, Band Corporal). As with other bands of the British Armed Forces, the rank of Private is replaced with Musician.

*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.*

The Royal Marines in Deal and Walmer

The headquarters of the Royal Marines for the whole country was based at Deal. They have always had an affinity for the townspeople of Deal and Walmer.

The history of the Royal Marines began on 28 October 1664 with the formation of the Duke of York and Albany's Maritime Regiment of Foot. At that time, regiments were raised to serve with the naval infantry, as and when needed. However, it was not until 1861, when the barracks at Walmer



The Royal Marines Light Infantry (RMLI) band, around 1910, pose with their instruments.

were occupied by the Royal Marines, that they took up permanent residence. At one time, nearly 2000 men were accommodated in the buildings of the North, East and South Barracks.

They were used as a training barracks for recruits of the Royal Marines Light Infantry until 1923 when the Royal Marine Artillery and the Royal Marine Light Infantry were combined.

Music and the Royal Marines

The development of music in the Royal Marines is linked with the evolution of British military bands. By 1767, Royal Marines Divisional Bands had been formed at the naval dockyard-bases at Chatham, Plymouth and Portsmouth, as well as Deal.

The playing of pipes and the rhythmical beat of a drum were used to keep marching men in regular step as well as providing music on board ships, both before and during naval battles. The drum was also the normal method of giving signals on the battlefield or in a camp.

The Royal Navy decided to form a Royal Naval School of Music that would train musicians for their bands. This task was assigned to the Royal Marines. The school was founded in 1903 at Eastney Barracks in Portsmouth.

The Band Service became an integral part of the Royal Marines Corps. Personnel entered as boys, training primarily as musicians, but also as part of a warship's fighting team. In Deal, the Royal Marines performed at the end of Deal pier, and also on an earlier bandstand, close to the Timeball Tower, on land that had been purchased by the town council after the old Naval Yard closed in 1863.



The Royal Marines performing at the end of Deal pier.

In 1930, the School of Music moved to Deal and was housed in the former East Barracks. With their striking uniforms and high standard of music, the bandsmen were a popular attraction for the increasing number of leisure visitors coming to Deal.

The School of Music was evacuated in 1940 during the Second World War, then returned in early 1950. At the end of the year, it was renamed the Royal Marines School of Music with a new Royal Marines Band Service. This served both the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines. In 1996, the Royal Marines School of Music left Deal and relocated to the naval base in Portsmouth.



A lone Bugler plays the Last Post in the National RM Band Service Memorial Garden built in memory of the 11 men killed. The gardens are situated within the Barracks on the site of the explosion.

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