



Media Release 22 November 2017

## **Formation of The WRNS (Wrens) commemorated by BFPS**

The Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) or Wrens as they became known formed in 1917 during World War 1. By this time the Royal Navy was faced with a difficult manpower situation. To counter this the Admiralty decided to form a naval organisation for women so that they could fulfil the some of the shore posts thus leaving the men to serve on-board ship.

To celebrate the centenary of this formation and the way in which the WRNS helped to define the opportunities for women in the Royal Navy, the BFPS in conjunction with the WRNS Benevolent Trust and the Association of Wrens, has produced a commemorative cover to be released on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

A Smiler<sup>®</sup> stamp includes an iconic image of a Wren saluting and this will be cancelled by the special handstamp BFPS 3211 featuring the Association of Wrens badge. The images on the cover depict women who have served as Wrens over the years.

Each standard unsigned version will cost £7.50.

We will also have for sale sheets of the Wren Smiler<sup>®</sup> stamp used on the commemorative cover at a price of £38.

The covers and stamp sheets may be ordered through the BFPS shop or by post by sending a cheque (payable to 'BFPS CIC') to BFPS The Old Post Office Links Place Elie LEVEN KY9 1AX.

Ends

An image of the commemorative cover is attached.

## About BFPS

The British Forces Philatelic Service (BFPS) fundraises for Service charities through philately and is a not-for-profit organisation run by a small team of volunteers, all of whom are Veterans. BFPS was specially set-up to ensure that the Forces Philatelic Bureau survives and thrives. BFPS is a registered Community Interest Company (CIC) working closely with the British Forces Post Office (BFPO).

The BFPO has had responsibility for all aspects of military mail, including philatelic matters, since its formation in 1882. More recently, as part of a Strategic Defence and Security Review, BFPO was reorganised and as a result of this the Forces Philatelic Bureau was transferred to BFPS, which was specially set up, as the sole authorised body empowered to deal with all matters concerning the Forces Philatelic Bureau. BFPS is officially licensed by the UK MOD.

BFPS is managed by two retired career Army officers, each of whom has had extensive experience working within the BFPO in general and the Forces Philatelic Bureau in particular. The third member of the management team is an ex Royal Engineer Warrant Officer who has a passion for Forces philately. All are volunteers and are dedicated to keeping the Forces Philatelic Bureau alive and are working hard to ensure the future of this unique area of BFPO operations is secure and flourishes.

Links:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/british-forces-post-office-services>

<http://www.royalmail.com/personal/stamps-collectibles-gifts>

<http://www.postalmuseum.org/>

Contact:

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BFPS fundraises for Service charities through philately and is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company (CIC) limited by guarantee. Registered No 417647.

Registered address: The Old Post Office Links Place Elie Leven Fife KY9 1AX

## **About the Association of Wrens**

The Association of Wrens was formed in 1920 yet is still relevant today for those who wish to keep in touch with friends and colleagues from service days. Over 5,500 women members from both the UK and overseas share a unique camaraderie based on their determination that the spirit of the service is kept alive.

### **Contact:**

Association of Wrens  
(Women of the Royal Naval Services)  
Room 215  
Semaphore Tower (PP70)  
HM Naval Base  
Portsmouth PO1 3LT

Telephone: 02392 725141  
Email: [office@wrens.org.uk](mailto:office@wrens.org.uk)  
Website: <http://www.wrens.org.uk/>

Registered Charity No. 257040

## **About the Women's Royal Naval Service Benevolent Trust**

The primary objective of the Women's Royal Naval Service Benevolent Trust is to provide relief in cases of necessity or distress among its members and their dependants.

### **Contact:**

General Secretary: Mrs Sarah Ayton  
Grants Administrator: Mr Roger Collings

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311 Twyford Avenue  
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Registered Charity No. 206529

Office Hours: The Trust's office is normally manned Monday to Friday from 0900 to 1700.