




## THE GLIDER PILOT REGIMENT SOCIETY

**The Glider Pilot Regiment played a central role in several key engagements during World War Two, including the invasion of Sicily, D-Day, the Battle of Arnhem and Operation Varsity (the largest single successful airborne operation in history on 24th March, 1945).**

Established in 1942, it was formed of volunteers from other sections of the Army.

These men were subject to a gruelling selection and training process that ensured only the best candidates progressed. Flying training initially took place on powered aircraft, before progressing to small, Hotspur gliders, and eventually the huge Horsa and Hamilcar gliders which were capable of carrying troops, jeeps, artillery pieces and even tanks into enemy occupied territory.

 The loaded gliders were towed into enemy airspace by RAF bombers and transport aircraft, whereupon the Glider Pilots would perform terrific feats of flying. Skilfully manoeuvring the aircraft into position, they could touch down behind enemy lines in designated landing zones that often were little more than a farmer's field. Following landing the Glider Pilots would take up arms and enter combat alongside the troops they had carried into battle. The comprehensive breadth of their abilities led to Glider Pilots being christened as "Total Soldiers".

The Glider Pilot Regiment was disbanded in 1957. A Regimental Association provided support to veterans until 2016 when the organisation was wound down due to the declining number of veterans still alive.

**The new Glider Pilot Regiment Society has been set up in its place to continue supporting those who served, and to preserve and promote the rich and varied heritage of the Regiment through education and media. A network is now in place for veterans of the Glider Pilot Regiment and their families to engage with one another for the purpose of remembrance, community and heritage.**



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