



Affiliated to the AEA, but as always open to ALL 299 men past & present.

The aims and ideals of this association are decreed as being:

Promoting and maintaining contact with the members of 131 Independent Commando Squadron RE, 299 Para Squadron RE; and all other Airborne/Commando Associations. Relieving where practicable any hardship or distress suffered by a member, or dependent(s) of a member of this association.

Promoting and encouraging such events that may bring pleasure to all members of this association.

W. Dick, (Seadog), 2/8/2002

Date: June 5th, 2026, Monthly Meeting at the Minerva Inn, Hull.

Members present:

Ricky Able, Mick Beardshaw, Neil Cooper, Chris Duggan, Craig Gadd, Tony Irwin, Adam Morris, Pete Robson, Ken Russell, Chris Shillito, Paul Sims, Nigel Sisson, Andy Thomas, John Thompson, Martin Tindle, Tony Weldon, Dave Woollas, Dave Watson, Neil Yates.

Apologies:

Anthony Alcock, Kev Blacker, Derek French, Carl Henrickson, Dave Hines, Roger Holding, Syd Hoyle, Dean Ideson, Keith Morley, Bud Oldfield, Glenn Ratten,

Guests:

Chairman:

The new chairman John Thompson, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting and called for a proposal of the last minutes.

Minutes proposed:

A true record of the last meeting.

Proposer: Mick Beardshaw

Seconder: Nigel Sisson

Treasurer

Chairman confirmed from Glenn that the funds remain healthy and that he is still in the process of transferring the funds over to the AEA account system. This should be completed by the end of July.

Secretary

Dave mentioned that attached to our Association minutes there will be three attachments from the AEA to view. 1. The minutes of the AEA OGM held on the 29th April 2026. 2. The AEA Archivist Policy Document. 3. The AEA Shop Report for the 2026 OGM.

Vice Chairman

Craig started by informing the meeting that Eamon's been going down to Cromwell Lock for some time trying to get the local Parish to assist in the maintenance of the memorial. The area is in a bit of a poor state and requires some maintenance. Discussions are ongoing.

Shaun, the Lock Keeper at Cromwell sadly passed away unexpectedly in May. Shaun was very much onside and helped with the maintenance of the memorial. So, we're not sure what help we may or may not get from his replacement? As mentioned, Eamon has had a discussion with the Parish Council to hopefully get local involvement with maintenance of the memorial on more of a regular basis. We'll carry on doing our maintenance trips as arranged with the Birmingham Branch. Craig will speak to them to discuss the rota for this year.

Craig mentioned that he'd been in touch with Tony Costello to see how he was. Tony's 99 years old this year and still fighting fit. You can't keep an old paratrooper down. Tony pointed out his son is still taking good care of him.

Craig also confirmed that a sum of £500.00 had been agreed from the AEA for the 299 Association trip to Normandy in 2027.

The WhatsApp group is up and running so the text messages that Chris used to send will now cease, and all text messaging will be distributed via the WhatsApp Group. So, if you don't have it, please download the WhatsApp app to receive latest info. You will see there are two groups, a Member's page and a Bant's page. Please use the members page for genuine members info and the other page for well, banter. Otherwise, important info can easily get lost.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

John first gave an update on Brian Bilton, who has had part of his bowel removed and still receiving treatment in Castle Hill Hospital.

He's had a rough couple of weeks but is now taking food and drink in small amounts. Still only family visits at this time and more information will be passed on to us as it comes in. Dean Ideson is a family friend and will be our contact with the family.

After contacting members who we hadn't seen for a long time, John found out that one of our members had been finding it really tough for the last couple of years. His wife had a major operation and a serious health scare, but she's all good now. He himself had a couple of operations, also lost a couple of family members to cancer and while dealing with all this a good friend who he served with took his own life. John then stressed what we the Association are about; it's about touching base with one another, supporting, and looking out for each other, it's only a couple of hours once a month to show your face and chat with like-minded people. As per our letterhead that Seadog (Bill Dick) wrote many years ago.

John then called Chris Shillito up to accept a gift from the Association in respect and appreciation for his 13 years' service as Chairman of the Association, you have handed it over in a much stronger position than when you found it. Thank you once again.

Any other business:

Ricky Able and Chris Duggan gave an update on the proposed trip to Normandy. Dates to be confirmed but it will be around the celebrations of the 6th June 2027. It will be a five-day four nights accommodation and travel, Hull to Caen with a tour guide. The cost will be £700 approx. We need to fill a coach of around 40. The more we get the more the price will come down. All those interested can start to pay deposits of £100 from next month. Glenn will start a savings account as he did for previous trips for those who want it. More information will follow and be posted on the Association site as well as flyers and booking forms when all details are confirmed. Please confirm with Chris and Ricky as soon as possible your interest in going.

Cpl Adam Morris, 299 Sqn then gave a very professional and thorough presentation of their successful involvement in the Swiss Commando Course and a breakdown of events and programmes they've been involved in.

Welfare:

No reports other than Chair's update on Brian Bilton

Bus stop winner: Not run

Next meeting: Friday 3rd July 2026

With nothing more to discuss the Chairman closed the meeting

Dates for your diary

25th July Regimental Reunion Day at Rock Barracks, Woodbridge, Suffolk
9th – 11th October 2026 AEAAGM and John Rock Dinner
8th November 2026 Remembrance Parade

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WELFARE:

Help for Heroes <https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk>

Veterans Welfare Service <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/veterans-welfare-service>

SSAFA <https://www.ssafa.org.uk>

Royal British Legion <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk>

Hull 4 Heroes Supporting those that Served <https://hull4heroes.org.uk> 01482 534483