



299 ASSOCIATION RE

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: Friday 7th Nov. 2025 At the Minerva Inn Hull.

Members present:

Mike Beardshaw, Bri Bilton, Kev Blacker, Neil Cooper, Derek French, Craig Gadd, Walter Holbrook, Tony Irwin, Tom James, Martin Lawrence, Alan McGlynn, Bud Oldfield, Steve Oliver, Glenn Ratten, Pete Robson, Kenny Russell, Kev Saddington, Chris Shillito, Paul Sims, Andy Thomas, Martin Tindle, Tony Weldon, Pete Wilkinson, Dave Woollas, Neil Yates.

Apologies:

Tony Alcock, Gary Coe, Terry Cunningham, Chris Duggan, Dave Hines, Roger Holding, Syd Hoyle, Mike Maddison, Keith Morley, Paul Robinson, Rhys Swatman, John Thompson, Terry Walker, Dave Watson.

Guests:

None

Chairman

Chris called everyone to stand for the exhortation and for Tony Irwin to say the exhortation. Chris then reminded everyone that we'd had a wake today for Willie Harrison with a buffet for 60 people that went very well and which the family really appreciated. Chris then, in honour of Willie, recited the Airborne Prayer.

Minutes proposed:

A true record of the last meeting.

Proposer: Mike Beardshaw

Seconder: Martin Tindle

Treasurer

Our treasurer Glenn informed the meeting that the funds are healthy and that a donation of £2000.00 had been received and added to our funds from the AGM following our merger with them. The website has been paid for. another year. Glenn then raised the question about whether we were going to have another trip re Arnhem or somewhere else?

Secretary

Only thing received was an apology of absence from the meeting from Syd Hoyle and thanks to Craig for covering last months minutes during my absence.

Vice Chairman

Craig started by highlighting that the AGM took place a couple of weeks ago at the Scotland branch and reminded everyone that they should have received the merger details for the REA. Craig highlighted that out of the 147 he sent details to, only 15 had responded and requested that members **please** acknowledge and respond to the reminders he had sent out requesting members to forward contact details to him. This to enable him to build up on the core membership with the REA and with that we would possibly be the strongest branch nationally within the REA? He mentioned that everyone should have received an email from Ann Richardson, the national Secretary of the REA? The membership of the REA opens up further financial support to members. We are now part of the national branch but this does not alter anything within our association. He mentioned that the Yorkshire Branch are running a trip to Normandy and, as we are not running a trip at present, will put the details in our minutes. There are about 20 places available on a first come first served basis so please check details of this in our minutes?

Craig highlighted the fact that next year, the 6th June is the 20th(?) Anniversary of 299's role transition through para/cdo/para roles and that it would be nice to mark the occasion with 299 Troop. Next years REA AGM will be in Nottingham around October time? So please note that in your diaries?

At this point Derek reminded everyone that it will be the 80th Anniversary of the formation of 131 Parachute Engineer Regt in 2027. Craig thanked Derek for that and stated that 'Duds' is getting things in place for that and more information will follow.

Chris reiterated Craig's comments about everyone confirming their details for REA membership and, that it was a free membership and thanked Craig for putting himself, and his time, into doing all of this.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

First of all, Tony Irwin, he's won a lovely award, it's the Burgess Award from the Lord Mayor for his work with CESA a group of standard bearers who attend the funerals of ex servicemen many who have no family or relations and still get a dignified send off.

He also attends the graves of ex 299 men tidying the graves and putting fresh flowers on them, Well done Tony outstanding behaviour.

Highlighting that Tony does not just carry out Standard Bearer duties, but he also does a lot of funerals for people who don't have family or friends. He attended 49 funerals so far this last year, in all weathers and at 85 years old doing a great job. He not only does that but he also goes and tends graves that need tidying up. Very well-done Tony.

Three members are going down to London this weekend for the Remembrance Parade to represent 299 Association, Our vice chairman Craig Gadd, Carl Ham, and Kev Blacker. Well done Guys.

Chris then asked for as many members as possible, to turn up for Remembrance Sunday, mustering at Victoria Square at 10.00hrs TIA

Dress: Blazer, Beret, Association tie, Medals.

Dave Woollas is laying the wreath for us.

Re the AEA, this is my take on it. We had a lot of trouble at one time but they recognise us now, we're in the REA now, they recognise the commando dagger and also the Pegasus. So, it's a win win for us. Through this merger we are totally recognised as a separate association. Which is fantastic for 299 Association.

A couple of people not too well; Keith Morley, he's just had major surgery, Dave Watson 's had a bike accident and broken his femur, and Terry Walker came off his bike. So, what I can take from this is, stop getting on your effing bikes at your ages?? We wish the lad's all the best. (See Welfare comments for more details)

Is there anything from the floor?

Tom was asked to give an update on current 299 sqn activity and outlined they'd just come back from camp following a two-week exercise in Germany with 900 other reservists taking part in a mass group deployment. A really good exercise for the Sqn. 6th June 2026 they're putting on a display at a stately home near Wakefield with all sorts of activities being displayed. More info to follow.

On this note: Craig reminded all that Al Murray was our Honorary Colonel and his father was OC back in the day and always willing to support the Sqn.

Tony mentioned that it was the Bransholme service to the fallen this coming Monday 10th Nov, where we normally go down and lay a wreath at the Urban community. Timing is 10.30 for 11am Caladonian Way.

Bus stop:

Tonight's winner was Steve Oliver with Derek French's win last week being carried over to this week.

Chris closed the meeting and wished everybody A great Christmas and a prosperous New Year

Welfare:

Keith Morley will be back with us in the new year still recovering from a major operation.

Dave Watson is recovering from a road traffic accident having fractured his left hip in multiple places hopefully will be at the next meeting in February.

Terry Walker is recovering from an accident which has halted his training for a triathlon he also has lost his sight in his left eye hopefully only temporarily.

We wish them all a speedy recovery.

Simbo wants some fencing doing???

Any other business:

None

Next meeting:

6th February 2026 at The Minerva Inn, Hull

Dates for your diary:

CONTACTS:

Web site address: www.299association.co.uk

Chairman: Chris Shillito, chrisshillito299@outlook.com Mob: 07877277288.

Vice Chairman: Craig Gadd, craig.gadd@hotmail.com Mob: 07771880733

Treasurer: Glenn Ratten, glennratten@icloud.com Mob: 07795248328.

Secretary: Dave Woollas, dave.hotstepscountry@hotmail.co.uk

Web Master: Dave Hines, davehines2@davehines2.karoo.co.uk Mob: 07821698522.

Archivist: Tony Irwin, bigtirwin@hotmail.com Tel: 01482 793847, Mb: 07928956592.

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.