



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: 3rd October 2025, Monthly Meeting at the Minerva Inn, Hull.

Members present:

Mike Beardshaw, Brian Bilton, Kev Blacker, Neil Cooper, Derek French, Craig Gadd, Carl Ham, Tony Irwin, Glenn Ratten, Pete Robson, Kenny Russel, Chris Shillito, Paul Sims, Lee Smith, Tony Weldon

Apologies:

Tony Alcock, Gaz Coe, Chris Duggan, Terry Cunningham, Tony Foster, Carl Henrickson, Syd Hoyle, Dean Ideson, Martin Lawrence, Keith Morley, Bud Oldfield, Steve Oliver, Paul Robinson, Nigel Sisson, Rhys Swatman, John Thompson, Martin Tindle, Terry Walker, Dave Watson, Chris Wilcock, Dave Woollas,

Guests:

Daisy Gadd

Chairman

The chairman Chris Shillito, opened the meeting and welcomed all, to the October meeting. He asked Tony Irwin, to read the Exhortation, as we have lost three brothers within as many weeks. *"Until we meet again in the Squadron Bar"* Chris also read the Airborne Prayer.

Michael Halliday
John (Willy) Harrison
Alan Cross

May they Rest in Peace

Airborne Prayer

*May the defence of the Most High be above and beneath, around and within us,
in our going out and in our coming in,
in our rising up and in our going down,
through all our days and all our nights,
until the dawn when the Sun of righteousness shall arise,
with healing in his wings for the peoples of the world. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen*

Chris, also asked to raise a glass and toast *"absent friends"*.

Minutes proposed:

That is a true record of the last month's meeting.

Proposer: Tony Irwin

Seconder: Pete Robson

Treasurer

Our treasurer Glenn Ratten, went on to say nothing was paid out, so our funds, *"still remain healthy"* Glenn, asked if anyone was interested in a trip next year ie Arnhem or Normandy, only two people raised their hands but as it was a poorly attended meeting because of the weather, we will ask again at the next meeting.

Secretary

Our Secretary Dave Woollas was unable to attend and sends his apologies.

Vice Chairman:

Craig Gadd, started off by giving the details of Mick Halliday's celebration of life as Mick didn't want a funeral. Mick wasn't a member of the Association and kept his self to himself but had served with many members of the Association. His wife Paula is organising a get together, a

celebration of his life and Mick's birthday at the Fergusson & Fawsitt in Walkington, East Yorkshire, HU17 8RX on the 17th October 2025 from 11:30 – 16:30.

Anyone wanting to go, please let Craig know or put a yes on the Facebook page against the post Craig posted on Mick's passing.

Cromwell,

Craig went on to thank everyone for a great turn out to the 50th Anniversary of the Cromwell Lock tragedy, that happened back on 28th September 1975. It's has been a lot of hard work by all, to make sure the memorial garden looks its best all year round but especially for the 50th Anniversary. The service was well attended by many from 131 Commando Sqn RE, 299 Para Sqn RE, Airborne Force Riders and the standard bearers. Craig would also like to thank all the dignitaries that attended, the Kings representative Deputy Lord Lieutenant Mark Onyett. Deputy Commander Reserves, 3 UK-Div, Brigadier Fraser-Hitchen, Honorary Colonel 299 Para Sqn RE Al Murray and representatives from local Councillors & Mayors, Canal and River Trust, and the local Police Force, and the many veterans in attendance and especially for the families that made the long journey to attend the service. Craig said that the ten young sappers that lost their life's will never be forgotten by this Association.

In attendance were many from the Smith family led by Jim Smith and former wife Janey of Terry Smith, and Catriona Black, sister of Jimmy Black.

Craig, sends his thanks to all that made for a successful day, especially Eamon Smyth who could not attend due to breaking his femur, and Olaf Dudley, on the military side of things.

Moving forward it was discussed that the Memorial service and Anniversary of the tragedy will take place every 5yrs as not to dilute its importance.

Membership,

Gents for all members of 299 Association we need to update our date base. Please reply with your current address and contact details.

Chairmans Comments

A big thank you to the volunteers who attended the Cromwell Lock memorial to maintain and tidy the area on the Wednesday before the 50th Anniversary,

Mick Beardshaw, Craig Gadd, Tony Irwin, Chris Shillito, Tony Weldon.

Thanks to all the volunteers from 299 Association and Birmingham Branch who have maintained the monument throughout the year. It really was a fantastic turnout from 299 for the 50th Anniversary thanks to all who attended and to pay our respects to our airborne brothers who perished there on the 28th September 1975

A special thank you to our Vice Chairman Craig Gadd for all the hard work he put in for us.

We also placed a 299 Association shield in the lock keeper's office as a thank you for their part in the upkeep of the memorial garden and monument.

Thanks to the Brummies Mike Holdsworth, Eamon Smyth, Tommy Smith, Steve Brown and all who contributed to making the day run smoothly.

On the day of the next meeting, 7th November 2025 at 15.00hrs Sue the wife of John Willy Harrison, is coming to the Minerva and holding a wake to celebrate John's life. Sue is laying a buffet on for family and guests and any 299ers who would like to attend, all are welcome. It was suggested that members wear 299 rugby shirts for the wake and the meeting.

Our normal November meeting will start at the usual time 20.00 hrs. If you are coming to the wake in the afternoon, please let Chris know, so he can give Sue the numbers.

We will not be holding a raffle this year at this year's Remembrance Sunday just for a change, as it does hold the buffet up and takes up a lot of space and time. It usually pays for the buffet but this year it will come out of our funds and our friend and former 299 Tp, 131 Indep Commando Sqn member has kindly donated £200 towards our buffet. Very nice of you Carl Henrickson, thank you.

Remembrance Parade, this year will be the same as last year, muster at Victoria square at 10.00 hrs to be at the Cenotaph for 11.00 hrs to pay our respects to the fallen. Dress: Blazer, Medals, Beret, Association tie.

Any other business

Carl Ham, discussed the possibility of former reservists claiming a pension. At present any serving member is only entitled to a pension for service from 2015 under Armed Forces Pension Scheme 2015, (AFPS 15) but Carl stated that there's a case was going through the courts now and the outcome could change the way when reserve pensions are paid out from for reservists prior to this date. Carl has the templates for members to fill and send off to show an interest. Please contact Carl for further details.

Also, our very own standard bear Tony Irwin has been invited to the town hall to be awarded the Honorary Burgess Award by the Mayor of Hull and Admiral of the Humber, on the 7th November 2025. For his dedication and commitment as not just our standard bearer but also a member of CESA Hull, parading our standard at many funerals and events, sometimes four or five times a week.

The Honorary Burgess award, recognizes an individual for outstanding service or contribution to a town or city, granting them the highest civic honour that local council can bestow. It confers a title of distinction and can be awarded by a variety of towns and cities across the United Kingdom to people of merit who have made a significant impact on their community. Congratulations Tony on your award, truly deserved.

Bus stop winner:

Steve Oliver

Next meeting:

Will be on the 7th November 2025 at The Minerva Inn, Hull.

With nothing more to discuss, the Chairman closed the meeting.

Dates for your diary

Remembrance Parade

9th November 2025 Hull.

Form up at Victoria square at 10.00 hrs to be at the Cenotaph for 11.00 hrs to pay our respects to the fallen. Dress: Blazer, Medals, Beret, Association tie.

CONTACTS:

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

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

Vice Chairman: Craig Gadd 299gaddy@gmail.com Mob: 07771880733

Secretary: Dave Wollas dave.hotstepscountry@hotmail.co.uk Mob: 07951501025

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

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.