



299 Branch of the Airborne Engineers Association

Charity No: 1009201

Date: 4th April 2014

Members Present: M. Beardshaw, G. Beaumont, G. Coe, N. Cooper, G. Crum, T. Cunningham, W. Drayton, S. Hoyle, A. Irwin, A. Kitching, J. Mace, F. Pougher, G. Ratten, K. Robinson, C. Shillito, P. Sims, M. Tindle, A. Weldon

Apologies: A. Costello, J. Duffy, C. Gadd, A. Grimes, P. Hairsien, J. Harrison, D. Harvey, D. Ideson, M. Maddison, L. Ransom, P. Robson, K. Saddington, C. Walker, C. Woodward.

Welcome and 'Roll Call'

The chairman welcomed all present then opened the meeting.

Minutes from the last meeting were proposed as a true record?

Proposed by – A Irwin
Seconded by – C. Shillito

Treasure's Report: Martin reports our funds are still healthy. All money for the Arnhem Pilgrimage to be **paid before the end of June please.**

Correspondence: Letters have been sent out to our previous Chairmen, M. Hookem and A. Mossop requesting crucial missing J. Lee letters concerning our constitutional status within the AEA over the past five years. These are official requests from this association and will be filed and recorded along with supporting documentation in our records for all to see. These were read out and shown to the members present. No replies as yet.

AN OPEN LETTER TO MY FRIENDS AT 299, from Bunny Brown

This letter was read out by the secretary, who has thanked Bunny on behalf of our members for his input on our current constitutional debate; it was good to receive a genuine offer of help, and was much appreciated.

The 299 Association Web Sites: this is under the control of G. Newton.

Our Chairman, Bill Drayton wrote to G. Newton about alterations and omissions of our records on the 299 web site, (letters shown). His tempering with the records has been an ongoing problem for some time now. This activity destroys all confidence in accurate or truthful record keeping, therefore making the whole procedure a pointless exercise. **G. Newton replied he would not put anything on the web that he does not agree with**, no matter if it was discussed, proposed and seconded as a true record of events by the members of this association and he has no problem in adjusting the records to suit his own script. Apparently, he believes most, if not all the material written by the current elected secretary, G. Coe, "are only his own words, shared by no others, and are therefore not democratic" Perhaps if he attended the meetings he may well change his mind. He has since removed all past records from the web site, we now have a problem to be discussed at a later date, **it begs the question, is armchair censorship or this sort of control needed or wanted within this association?** Surely we have all had enough of this sort of domineering behaviour, open and honest discussion is the only thing required: this is something for us all to ponder; **a future vote may well be needed, so please give this problem some serious thought because it will be you men that will address the situation, remember this association belongs to us all, not the few.**

This association is now completely open and honest; therefore we feel it is important for you to know all the facts. G. Newton approached this committee prior to the March meeting with the following set of proposals:

- a) To reinstate as Chairman, A. Mossop, after resigning his position as the Chairman on the 13th February 2014.
- b) Permission to alter or omit anything he does not want included in the associations records, for whatever reason!

For these concessions he promised no more opposition to the members voting rights.

Can I say at this point, nothing would ever be agreed by this committee without the authority required from its members. He was told to bring his proposals to the same meeting to put before the members for them to decide, but unfortunately he failed to do so, and did not attend, we all know what happened at the meeting as a consequence of his decision.

Social Calendar: The Arnhem trips are to be split into two groups with 44 on the short trip and 12 on the longer one. The proposed Elvington trip is awaiting possible dates from the 1 Troop OC. 299 Sqd.

Chairman's Comments: The chairman announced that the next meeting will be the AGM, 2nd May and all committee places will become available, all nominations to the secretary in writing ASAP please.

The agenda for this meeting will be set by the secretary and will follow AEA guide lines and rules.

A full attendance is required; there are some important issues to be resolved.

Best behaviour is needed and a zero tolerance will be applied to any form of disruption.

Matters arising: The lifting of membership restrictions applied to this association by previous administrations has been raised again. Most members feel that the exclusion of certain groups of 299 men are not healthy for the future of this association and are completely unnecessary. The exclusions fall into two categories:

- a) All men currently serving with 299 Squadron are not allowed membership.
- b) Some groups of 299 ex Commando's are not allowed full membership.

These restrictions have been enforced vigorously and have been a bone of contention for far too long, causing much unrest and friction against those who wished to enforce them, this has been a root cause of many problems. A motion has been raised and tabled to be voted on at the AGM 2nd May.

Full membership of 299 Association for: all serving members of 299 Squadron and ANY man that served with 299 in whatever status. AEA membership would be optional not mandatory.

This was proposed by A. Irwin and seconded by T. Cunningham and the vote was unanimous.

Items from members: Syd. Hoyle attended this meeting and voiced his thanks for giving him a far better appreciation and understanding of the situation within the Hull branch.

Les Ransom: we wish him all the best for his 92nd birthday and a speedy recovery from his eye operation.

Craig Gadd: sponsor money needed for Gaddy's big bike ride, next meeting may be your last chance to Help 4 Hero's on this one so let's give him a good start.

Keith Farr (Farrke): this old 299er is planning to escape his penal institution of OZ, landing around the 28th April, but only around for a few days, Dave Hinds will keep us connected, so if he owes you money this could be your chance.

Paul Sims (Simbo): many thanks from all the members for sorting Les's card out on our behalf.

Next Meeting: 2nd May 2014 AGM at the Minerva, Cooperation Pier, Hull at 20.00hrs.

Dates for your diary: Forces Memorial Day – Yorkshire Air Museum, Elvington, Nr. York.
Sunday 7th September 2014.

Arnhem Pilgrimage 2014

The 6 day option 16/9/2014 – 22/9/2014

The 4 day option 18/9/2014 – 22/9/2014

Remembrance Sunday: 9th November 2014