



299 ASSOCIATION

Affiliated to the AEA, Charity No: 1009201

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

Promoting and maintaining contact with past and present members of 299 Squadron RE.

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

Relieving where practicable any hardship or distress suffered by a member, or dependent(s) of a member of this association.

Promoting and maintaining contact with the members of 131 Independent Squadron RE; and all other Airborne/Commando association.

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

Date: Friday 11th August 2017. (2nd Friday of the month, as voted for at the last meeting, because of non-availability of the meeting room in the Minerva).

Members Present: M. Beardshaw, B. Bilton, G. Coe, N. Cooper, A. Costello, T. Cunningham, W. Drayton, C. Duggan, D. French, D. Harvey, D. Hines, D. Ideson, A. Irwin, P. Jefferson, J. Mace, D. Meekin, O. A. Nelson-Girchen, F. Pougher, L. Ransom, G. Ratten, K. Robinson, P. Robson, K. Russell, S. Saxby, P. Sims, N. Sisson, B. Steele, A. Stimpson, J. Thompson, Mart. Tindle, C. Walker, A. Weldon, M. Williams.

Apologies: F. Gray, P. Robinson, M. Maddison, G. Beaumont, J. Duffy, C. Henrickson, M. Hall, A. Foster, A. Lee, S. Hoyle, K. Blacker, J. Brooks, C. Gadd, C. Lickiss, G. Newton, C. Shillito, D. Woolas, R. Franklin, L. Smith.

Prior to the last meeting, three members sent their apologies for their absence at that meeting to the Secretary, who happened to be out of the country at the time, therefore these names were not recorded in last month's minutes, the committee offers their apologies to **Tony Costello, Arthur Stimpson & John Duffy**.

Welcome and 'Roll Call'

DEATH OF FRED RANDS

The Secretary **Gary Coe** welcomed all present then opened the meeting in place of our Chairman **Chris Shillito** who, along with his wife **Sue**, is busy seeking the sun. He then asked **Johnny Mace** to break the sad news of the loss to this association of one of 299's former stalwarts **Fred Rands**, he died peacefully at his home on Wednesday 2nd August 2017 aged 85 after suffering with progressively poor health over the past few years. **Fred** served with 9 Squadron during the 50's before joining 299 1Troop at Hull, serving through the 60's into the 70's as a Corporal, nobody can remember him being any other rank. He was a first class soldier and engineer much respected amongst the ranks. As a civilian he worked as a painter & decorator, he also worked for a spell as a member on the permanent staff team at the Middleton Barracks in Hull.

Fred was 'old school' and known for his straight talking which he would, and did back up on many an occasion because he was a regular tough guy, but never a bully. He looked after his men and was rewarded with total loyalty and respect, his man management skills were second to none and was much envied by the established higher ranks, this forthright attitude of his may well have held him back on the promotional front, mainly because he showed little tolerance for any inaptitude amongst the higher ranks, he would have always expected better from them. He was forever the 'Complete Paratrooper' also a friend to most, with many been so very proud to have served with him. **RIP FRED.**

FUNERAL TO BE HELD AT THE CHANTERLANDS AVE CREMITORIUM, HULL, LARGE CHAPAL, ON TEUSDAY 15TH AUGUST 2017 AT 12.30 HRS.

N/B: A military presence has been asked for, therefore those attending please wear blazers, berets and decorations if possible. If we could muster a little earlier, there may be Pallbearing duties required, but we will respect whatever the family requires. The association Standard will be required.

The acting Chairman asked the meeting to be upstanding for a minutes silence in remembrance of Fred Rands.

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

Proposed by – **A. Irwin**

Seconded by – **M. Beardshaw**

Treasure's Report: Update from **Martin** ensures all's well in this department, the Arnhem cash is in place with money about to be paid to the carrier. Wreaths have been ordered for Arnhem and Remembrance Sunday.

Correspondence:

Posted on the message board 20/7/2017 at 19: 45: 52

Name: **Terry Cunningham**

E mail: terrycunningham@hotmail.com

Location: Hull

Number 411

Hi lads I had phone call from nev smales wife Sheila this afternoon to tell me that nev had got back home today, he's in a lot better place than last time I had anything to report, after the last cock up they did not remove the gall stones as he was in no fit state to stand it so has to go back at a later date, but for now its rest and recuperation. I wished all the very best from all at 299. I will keep you in the picture, **terry**.

Message from **Mike (Maddy) Maddison on the 22/7/2017:** "all that Commando training came in handy lads, completed the 3 peaks challenge in under 9 hours raising over £1K for the British Heart Foundation Charity in remembrance of a very close friend of mine, taken far too early by this dreadful disease. I would like to thank this Association for their backing, also you individuals who sponsored me in my task, a tremendous effort by all.

Life's a little hectic at the moment, just moved house, also got the finalisation for the Prison Service, start my training at Everthorpe on the 28th August, still tying lose ends up, but had to give back word on this year's Arnhem, never the less I'm the first name down for next year's trip, absent tonight, but hope to make the September meeting, thanks again **Maddy**"

Posted on the message board: 26/7/2017, 12:52:51

Name: **Tony Costello**

Email: aevcost@aevcost.karoo.co.uk

Location: Swanland

Number: 412

I have decided to close my recent Facebook listing and apologise to the numerous "friends" I can be contacted by email, phone, semaphore and smoke signals (if the wind is in the right direction). Cheers **TC**.

Posted on the message board 29/7/2017, 16:30:16.

Name: **John Phillips**

Email: john_phillips14@sky.com

Location: Birmingham

Number: 413

Game not finished, but well done Hull FC—see them again at Wembley. (Challenge cup semi-final against Leeds).

Posted on the message board: 7/8/2017, 10:31:00.

Name: **macey**.

Location: Cottingham.

Number: 415.

FRED RANDS

With sadness our comrade has passed away. Funeral to be held at Chants Ave. large Chapel Tues, August 15th at 12.30pm.

Posted on the message board: 10/8/2017, 09:45:28.

Name: **macey**.

Location: Cottingham.

Number: 417.

To all, just passing a message on from **Evelyn Rands, (Fred's wife)**, to say a massive thank you for the letter of condolence she received about **Fred** and his service with 299. She appreciated your thoughtfulness.

Social Calendar:

Only 4 Association members made the Airborne Forces Day parade and Service at Eden Camp this year, **Bri Bilton** picked up **Les Ransom** and **Tony Irwin** picked up **Simbo**, **Tony** carried the association Standard and they met up with our old 9 Sqn friend **Charlie McGolgan**, **Pete Fenty's** best mate from the Falkland War, he reports big numbers of the ex-military rough riders heading for Arnhem this year. On behalf of all members, I would like to thank you men for representing this association on this occasion, your attendance not only helps in promoting 299 Squadrons recruitment drive, it keeps this associations name in the frame, and although you were few in numbers it's the quality that counts every time.

Arnhem Pilgrimage: firstly, I must apologise to you all for the panic in gathering your Passport numbers and DOB at this late stage of the day, this is just another enforcement the EU are putting in place for the Brits, because of our decision to leave the union, I thank you all for your cooperation, unfortunately one of our group, **Rog Holding**, has had to give back word due to a sporting injuries requiring surgery, crucial ligament detachment and other problems I believe, we wish him well, two more are to join us in Holland, making a total of 35 people this year, full details will follow at the Sept. meeting.

Chairman's Comments: (Chris Shillito).

The landlord of the Ship Inn at Dunswell, (**Jonno**), has agreed to accommodate this association's **September meeting** and we thank him, **he never lets us down.**

Airborne Engineers Association Reunion/AGM anybody wishing to attend the Sat evening needs to fill in a form stating dinner only with a cheque for £26 p/p made out to 299 Association, and get it to "**Gaddy**" it's the only way we can keep tabs on the numbers eating, if you need a form, ask the committee. If possible, please make a big effort to support this function, after all most of you have no great distance to travel, plus you can show your support for the 299 men who organised it all.

Please lad's a big effort required for the following:

The Yorkshire Air Force Memorial Day Service & Parade (see dates for your dairy), on Sunday 3rd September 2017 at Elvington, York. Again we have been asked to support this Service & Parade, and when put before the association way back in April of this year 15 members gave a positive show of hands, after all, 299 is predominantly a Yorkshire unit supporting this Yorkshire museum and our presence promotes not only this association, but the Squadron's future recruits. **Names to Gaz Coe please, Tel: 01757 268188.**

Standard Bearing: ever since we lost **Colin (Woody) Woodward** both **Paul Sims & Tony Irwin** have been fulfilling this role and on behalf of this associations members I wish to offer them our thanks for taking on this task, this job will often be over looked as just `happening` but it is a role that many of us would not wish to do, and for this we are truly grateful.

Tony Irwin (Archivist) represents this association at the local **CESA organization, (Combined Ex-Servicemen's Association)** who meet twice a month and fulfil a vital voluntary role at Civic functions and the funerals of many an ex-serviceman who's family request a military presence. These people are a rare breed indeed, they unselfishly give their time freely in helping others in their greatest hour of need, a very worthy cause carried out by special people.

Matters arising: MEDALS

Over the last few months there has been several requests from members of this association for Ministry of Defence application forms needed for the claiming of medals and awards, this has produced some positive results, therefore if you think you may have an entitlement and you might meet the qualifying criteria, give it a go. I don't mind printing them off, but if you have the means, go to <https://www.gov.uk> down load, and print for yourselves.

Remembrance Sunday tickets for the London Cenotaph: the AEA have a few, if interested, talk to the Secretary.

Items from members: Wartime stories `out & about` Wistow, North Yorkshire, put together by Gary Coe.

I live in Wistow, a small village situated in the Vale of York, not far from Selby, over the past 30 odd years, since moving here, I have heard many first hand stories told about the various antics and activities of the RAF during WW2, this area is as flat as a billiard table and the Ministry of Defence must have considered it as one giant airfield throughout the war.

I had been hired to carry out some work on a property in the small nearby village of Church Fenton, and whilst working on this property I had noticed a rather grand looking framed medal hanging on a wall next to a photo of a lady equipped with a rather impressive demeanour, I asked the lady of the house about the medal and she proudly explained to me that it had been awarded to her mother for capturing a German pilot during the war, the photo was of her mother, apparently she had marched him into the village police station on the points of a pitch fork. This all happened in July 1940 on the day when the Hurricanes of 249 Squadron had arrived at RAF Church Fenton and they had immediately shot down a Junkers 88 intruder

looking for an easy target that very same day, the pilot had managed to bail out and was captured by **Mrs Caldwell**, and for her bravery she was awarded the O.B.E.

During WW2 RAF Church Fenton was the northern "Sector Operational Centre" controlling all aircraft movements from the many airfields in the North of England, most if not all were as a part of "Bomber Command" It was around the time of **Mrs Caldwell's** heroic's that one of its young pilots was awarded the nation's highest honours, the Victoria Cross. **Flight Lieutenant J.B. Nicolson** was only 23yrs old at the time and was the only fighter pilot to win the VC. It was especially appropriate for him to win this award whilst serving at RAF Church Fenton since he was a local lad brought up in the nearby village of Ulleskelf. He had distinguished himself in a dog fight over Southampton whilst the Squadron was detached to Boscombe Down, (the Battle of Britain was in full flow during this period), and the official citation, as it appeared in the London Gazette of the 15th November 1940 was as follows:

"During an engagement with the enemy near Southampton on 16th August 1940, Flight **Lieutenant Nicolson's** aircraft was hit by four cannon shells, two of which wounded him whilst another set fire to his gravity tank. When about to abandon his aircraft owing to the flames in the cockpit he sighted an enemy fighter. This he attacked and shot down, although as a result of staying in his burning aircraft he sustained serious burns to his hands, face, neck and legs.

Flight Lieutenant Nicolson has always displayed great enthusiasm for air fighting and this incident shows that he possesses courage and determination of a high order. By continuing to engage the enemy after he had had been wounded and his aircraft set on fire, he displayed exceptional gallantry and disregard for the safety of his own life"

He recovered from his injuries in the Royal Southampton Hospital before returning to RAF Church Fenton. He was promoted to Wing Commander but was unfortunately killed in May 1945.

All the village pubs around this area were popular with the RAF lads as long as they had plenty of beer, the biggest problem being for the landlords in keeping their cellars stocked to meet the demands of these young airmen, they all drank like there was no tomorrow, and for many of them this became so true. Every establishment has its own stories, but this is one that has to be told about this particular officer. It all evolves around the 'Bay Horse' in Cawood, was about a mile from my home. During the war the landlord used to allow aircrew to display memorabilia collected during their exploits and these items remained on view until the pub was eventually pulled down about 10yrs ago to make way for 'Executive Housing' that nobody wants to buy, and I have no idea what happened to all its 'stuff' Amongst the many items that I can remember was a large glass jar with a baby alligator on display, suspended in formaldehyde, with the grand title of **Flying Officer Frederick Lionel Bass Worthington** attached to it, one of the old locals told me the story about how this aircrew from some Squadron or another would carry their Squadron's drinks kitty around in an old black sock, and many was the night when they would arrive with the sock bulging with cash, dump it on the bar and say: 'Let's get cracking' this Flying Officer was an integral part of this Squadrons drinking sorties.

Flying Officer Frederick Lionel Bass Worthington was introduced to the locals at the Bay Horse in Cawood by a young airman from the Squadron who slipped him – very much alive – on to the domino table, this caused a massive scatter which had never been forgotten by the older generations who witnessed it. Members of the Squadron used to take this baby alligator all over the place, but the Bay Horse was his favourite pub. The airmen used to start him off on warm milk and stout and he would end the night on whisky. Then he used to swim to the bottom of the kitchen sink and sleep it off. When it finally came to the time for him to go to that great swamp in the sky, **Bass – Worthington** was well and truly pickled in this large glass jar and remained a talking point for many years to come.

Is there anyone out there who knows what happened to this officer? I would love to know.

Welfare report, (including snap's), from the 'Brummies' via Mike, (Ozzy), Holdsworth presented by Paul Sims.

Mike received the following update from **Bunny's** wife **Janet** on 8th August and sent it to **Simbo**: "so far he is the same in the head and mentally as we know him, he dose however try to do as much as possible, as he always did. This is a problem, as he had gone to the pub with **Dave Clarke** and had fallen over twice.

He feels, and is bloated all the time, this is a reaction to the drugs and because of the excessive fluids he is overweight, making him very weak on his feet, the hospital have given him a Zimmer frame to help get about.

Last week he started and continues to develop large blisters on his legs, and upon bursting can cause some embarrassment. His brother **Steve** & I will take him out for a curry next week, all being well. We will have to find a venue with no steps and a toilet on the same level.

His feet are so swollen he can't get any shoes on, so I'm going round to see him tomorrow to try on some Velcro sandals that I don't use any more. If this is successful we will be on for the curry next week. **Bunny** refuses to dwell on his problems and is hoping to take on the scribe's job in the Birmingham branch next May" **That's typical of the man.**

"**Dave Bowron** has been to my caravan in Wales for a few day's to convalesce. He tells me he had a great boozing time, but on one occasion he fell out of the wheel chair backwards when he tried to negotiate a ramp into the disabled toilets. He did do his usual stunt and used his head to cushion the fall resulting in no bruises. He calls his stumps **Pinky & Perky** and continues to make recovery. He said to tell **Gaddy** that his big toe still itches.

Alan Brough who was in the troop years ago has had a cancer removed from his abdomen, (Pancreas), also improves slowly.

I think I might emigrate to Hull before the Grimm Reaper gets to know my address, Ha Ha"

N/B: The snaps were passed around the meeting.

Welfare report by **Terry Cunningham** regarding the Doncaster lads: **Bud Oldfield** continues to improve after his hip replacement but unfortunately has now damaged a knee, but **Nev Smales** is going through the wringer with pain from the gall stones, the medics cannot control his pain long enough to enable the necessary surgery to proceed and on top of that he has developed an infection. **Nev** is almost permanently hospital bound and totally depressed.

The bad luck is still haunting the **Foster** family, **Tony** has been knocked off his motor bike resulting in one broken shoulder and plenty of bruising, he can now join his wife **Debs** on the recovery ward, it's called 'keeping it in the family'

I'm sorry to bring you all this bad news, it's beginning to read like a casualty report in a war zone, but we wish them all a speedy recovery, 'now' what did I do with them aspirin's?

Simbo's 'bus stop' tonight's winner was Bri. Bilton.

Web site address: www.299association.com

Next Meeting: To be held on Friday 1st September 2017 at 20.00hrs in the Ship Inn, Duswell.

Dates for your diary:

Allied Air Forces Memorial Day at Elvington Yorkshire Air Museum Near York, on Sunday 3rd September 2017.

The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight is scheduled to flypast at 14.25hrs, there will be a parade briefing around 12.00hrs for the Standard Bearers. The parade timings are to be confirmed later, a lot could depend on the weather, the museum is planning to run all the propeller driven aircraft during the morning including the Dakota, therefore if we muster at 11.00hrs in the car park, thus giving ourselves time to enjoy the exhibits before doing our bit. **Dress:** Berets, Blazers & Decorations, (please, if you've got them wear them), transport to be arranged & will be on a car sharing basis.

The association and Palestine Vets Standard will be paraded thanks to **Tony Irwin & Art Stimpsom.**

Arnhem Pilgrimage: Thursday 14th – Monday 18th September 2017.

The AEA Reunion/AGM to be held at THE BRITANNIA ROYAL HOTEL, FERENSWAY, HULL, HU1 3UF, over the weekend Friday the 20th to Monday the 23rd October 2017, a room has been booked for the AGM.

Very important: rooms at this hotel could be at a premium over this weekend, therefore book early to avoid disappointment. Remember it's the year of culture in Hull and they will not hang on to rooms on a promise.

There are other hotels close by, but if you want a guaranteed room at this hotel you can reserve with your card without money being taken out of your account. Booking slips are available.

Hotel Tel: 01482 325087, e-mail: enquires@hotels-hull.co.uk

Remembrance Sunday: 12th November 2017.

On Wednesday the 29th November 2017 a parade and service in York Minster is proposed to mark the 50th year of the withdrawal of British Forces from the Aden Protectorate, because of 131 Para. Eng. Reg. involvement in this theatre some may well be interested, details to follow.

With nothing more to discuss the Secretary closed the meeting thanking all for attending,

