



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 1st December 2017, at the Minerva

Members Present: D. Barker, M. Beardshaw, B. Bilton, J. Brooks, G. Coe, T. Cunningham, W. Drayton, A. Foster, R. Franklin, C. Gadd, R. Gill, D. Hines, A. Irwin, A. Kitching, J. Mace, M. Maddison, A. McGlynn, D. Meekin, F. Pougher, L. Ransom, G. Ratten, P. Robson, K. Saddington, C. Shillito, P. Sims, B. Steele, A. Stimpson, R. Swatman, Mart. Tindle, A. Weldon, C. Wilcock.

Apologies: F. Gray, A. Costello, S. Saxby, J. Thompson, C. Henrickson, T. Walker, C. Walker, M. Holdsworth, G. Beaumont N. Cooper, J. Duffy, C. Duggan, A. Green, P. Hairsine, S. Hoyle, A. Lee, C. Lickiss, K. Robinson, S. Saxby, D. Skolyes, L. Smith, D. Harvey.

Guests: Pauline Meekin, (Dave's lovely wife), Ben Frazer, (a soldier of the special kind) and Benny Bridges, (Ex Hull City Footballer, soldier and a good old life-time friend of 299).

Secretaries apology: I inadvertently left **Mike Maddison** off the members present list on last month's minutes, he said; "he was hiding in the corner" now that's some corner.! Sorry **Maddy**.

Welcome and 'Roll Call'

The Chairman **Chris Shillito** welcomed all present then opened a well-attended meeting (31) considering the weather conditions by asking **Dave Hines** to recite the EXHORTATION, that famous verse from **Laurence Binyon's** poem "To the Fallen" News just broken on the loss of Lindsey Love ex 1st Batt Para Regt. & 299 Squadron Para Eng., still short on details.

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

Proposed by – **Frank Pougher**

Seconded by – Glenn **Ratten**

Treasure's Report: The Treasurer **Martin Tindle** struggled to give an accurate breakdown on the association's finances because there are still outstanding checks to be accounted for after the Gala dinner event, he was hoping to have it stitched up by now. He reminded the meeting that he is taking monies for Arnhem 2018, putting some cash down is the only sure way of reserving a place.

Thanks to the efforts of **Tony Foster & Dave Hines** a total of £45 was put into this associations coffers this evening, **Tony** by using his photographic skills had produced a Remembrance Day portrait along with a disk of snaps taken from the day's events, and **Dave** produced another great, association calendar for 2018 using a selection of photos and a lot of computer skills, this again is an outstanding example of dedication and unselfish giving, something that we all can enjoy, many thanks to them both.

Correspondence: incoming since the last meeting.

Kev. Saddington: message Bd. 5/11/2017. Fella's, around 1985, we, (299 Troop), built a floating APB that successfully got 3 CDO over the Vaser, (I think it was the Vaser), this had never been done before and got the regulars out of their pits to see how it's done. My question is this; does anyone have the photos that used to hang in the 299 bar of this event? Particular the one with the 'Jolly Roger' flying, that myself and **Mike Beardshaw** made, if so, I would like to get some copies made.

Chris Shillito: message Bd. 9/11/2017, Gentlemen, Remembrance day parade on Sunday 12th November 2017, form up in Pease Street, Anlaby Road, opposite the 'Tigers Liar' pub at 10.00 hrs. Dress; Blazers Berets, (green or red), association tie and medals. Try to attend please, and show 299's respect at the Cenotaph. A few members are turning up at the Cenotaph on Saturday 11/11.2017 Armistice Day to mark the 11th hour, our Standard will be present.

Mike Holdsworth: message Bd. 10/11/2017. Posted funeral details for **Ian Butler & Roy Hicks**.

Chris Shillito: message Bd, 13/11/2017. Brilliant Remembrance Day Parade yesterday, a record turnout of 42, well done to some of our older lads for braving a very cold day in showing respect at the Cenotaph. A special thanks to our wreath layers **Dave Barker & Terry Cunningham** who did a great job for us, very smart & good drills. Then a well-earned drink at the Minerva with a buffet laid on by **Tony Weldon & big John Thompson**. We were joined by 299 Para Sqn, 'just one big family'

Two presentations were handed out, one to the family of **Colin Woodward** as a thank you for his service to 299 Association as our leading standard bearer over the many years, and to **Tony Weldon** for outstanding service to the association, also a big thank you to **Sophie & the girls** at the Minerva for making the day run smoothly, a great day with good friends.

Elain Thompson (nee Woodward), message Bd. 14/11/2017. To **Chris & all at 299, Marion (Woody)** and family would like to thank you all for the very unexpected & thoughtful gift you gave to us on Remembrance Day.

Colin is greatly missed every day and is still loved by us all so much. It was lovely that you all remembered him in this way,

THANK YOU AGAIN, LOVE TO YOU ALL, MARION AND FAMILY.

Tony Kitching: message Bd. 14/11/2017. Very sad news just in, an old ex 299 man died last week, (Tuesday 7th) **Lindsey Love**, ex 1 Para Regt & 299 Para Sqn RE, his son has already gone back to Australia, it had to be a quick funeral with no contact link to 299, he had been ill for some time and will be sadly missed RIP.

A very popular member of the Squadron during the late 60's.

Chris Shillito: message Bd, 22/11/2017. Five 299 Association men attended the Funeral of ex **131 Master Chef S/Sgt Roy Hicks** in Birmingham on Monday the 20th November. 38 Squadron men turned out to give **Roy** a good send off. A big thanks to **Simbo** for carrying the standard, and **Tony Kitch** for driving us down there, we picked up **Gary Coe & Bud Oldfield** on route. Well done all concerned for supporting our ex 301 Bro's and paying our last respects to **Roy**.

John Tommo: (the younger good looking one): message Bd. 23/11/2017. Just an update on one of our members, **Paul (Hairy) Hairsine**, he had a serious heart attack whilst out running last weekend, luckily for **Paul** there was a passer-by to help, otherwise he would have been in serious trouble, he was taken to hospital, straight into surgery, (all very successful), and **Paul** is on the mend, he was let home on Tuesday, (21st), "can't keep a good soldier down" this was a massive shock to him and the family and we wish a speedy recovery, and all our support. GET WELL SOON HAIRY.

John Tommo: message Bd: 23/11/2017. **Saddy**, that picture of the APB is in the Hull Troop bar mate, (or it was when I left).

Shady O' Grady: message Bd: 23/11/2017. **Hairy** – I hear you have been up to things just to get sympathy and a rest! You can't go for a run and come in an ambulance! Glad to hear you are OK and keep well old pal xx.

Mr K. D. Parfitt: message Bd: 23/11/2017. **Hairy**, shocked & really sorry to hear about your misadventure, but glad to hear that you are on the road to recovery. Take it easy Recce, and fingers crossed you are back on your feet soon. Cheers **Karl**.

Alan Lee: message Bd: 23/11/2017. **Hairy** so pleased to hear you're on the mend and I would like to add a really big THANK YOU for showing all our wives and girlfriends what happens "when you close the sweat shop" and the consequences for old stags, jump back on it buddy, don't take it easy, it doesn't help, lol.

Chris Shillito: message Bd. 24/11/2017. On behalf of the 299 Association, we wish you all the best and are very glad you are on the mend. Take it steady pal, we will see you in the Minerva soon, we hope.

N/B: **Paul Hairsine, or "Hairy"** as he is commonly known, handed his kit in during 2013 after reaching the rank of SSM with 299 Squadron, he had completed over 30 years' service, both red & green, lately showing interest in the association as a way of maintaining his many friendships gained throughout his 299 career. His civilian occupation as a Bricklayer has seen him move into a management & estimating role with all the pressures and responsibilities that comes with it. **Paul** is a family man,

very popular, and much respected by all, as observed by the many messages of good will. He joined this year's Arnhem Pilgrimage and marched with the association on Remembrance Sunday, and for those psychic's amongst you, how about this, whilst talking to **Paul** at the assembly point for the Remembrance parade, his Afghanistan campaign medal fell from its mounting, leaving the ribbon and mounting bar still on its rack, you will make of this what you like, but was this a sign from the dark side? For any more thoughts & discussions on this matter please consult **Billy Drayton**, but do not forget to cross his palm with silver!

We all wish **Paul** a speedy recovery, and for ease of recording I will group the next lot of messages together: posted on the association's message board during 24/11/2017.

Shaun Allen: Hairy, hope you're feeling better after your incident. I always thought jogging was bad for you.

Maddy: Hi Paul, speedy recovery and all the best.

Neil Busby: Attention seeker! Get back on your feet soon **Hairy**, hope you feel better quickly. All the best **Buz**.

Matt & Juliet: Sorry to hear about your visit to hospital **Paul**, thankfully you are on the road to recovery. Sending best wishes to you and your family. Take care, hope to catch up again at Remembrance next year.

Heppy: Hairy, sorry to hear the news – hope you recover soon. Anyway, I heard the story that you were on the 19th hole of the golf course and it was your round! Take it easy and if you need anything let me know.

Dean Ideson: Sorry to hear about your recent visit to hospital **Paul** – next time you go for a run let me know & I will bring the boiled rat pack sweets. Hope you are on the mend and have a speedy recovery buddy. Take care of yourself you shirker.

Message board: 26/11/2017

Paul Dughan: Just heard the news **Hairy!** You'll do anything to not finish a run! Hope they are looking after you pal. Best regards and get well soon from the 299 US of A contingent!

Rich Carr: Hairy, sorry to hear the news but great to hear you're on the mend! You'll have to let us know what all those right things were, so we can avoid them! Take care fella and keep smiling!

Adam Frame: Sorry to hear about your recent issue **Paul**, I know you'll fight it and get back on top in no time, All the best **Adam**.

PAUL HAIRSINE: Thanks for all the get well wishes, banter and abuse. A real tonic just when I needed it. I have had the temporary pacemaker removed and two stents fitted, it came as a bit of a shock as I thought I was doing all the right things. I might as well have gone on a six months bender and had the same effect with a lot more fun. I am informed that I will make a full recovery. See you all soon, thanks again, **Hairy**.

Gary Coe: message Bd: 27/11/2017. Gents; Councillor **Harrison** is asking for volunteers from this association again. It's to help with the building of a `**Santa's Grotto**` at the Ash Plantation, North Brandsholme on Wednesday 6th December, this is for the disadvantaged children living in the area, and for most it will be the highlight of their Christmas. Hull City Council applauds the commitment that 299 Association gives for its fellow citizens, also acknowledging that the people from this association never fail to give their time. It will be an early start ~ 9am, but any time given would be gratefully received. For further details ring **Gaz** on 01757 268188.

Gary N: message Bd: 28/11/2017. **Hairy** – I hope I'm not in the next bed to you when I next go in, so get well soon or I'll be after your boots.

Cam Baldry: message Bd: 29/11/2017. **Hairy**, sorry to hear that you've been unwell recently. I hope that you get better soon mate!

Chairman's Comments:

Chris informed the meeting that we have managed to secure bookings for next year's (2018) Arnhem trip at the same cost as this years' £290p/p. The cost should not exceed this figure, but may come down a little, it all depends on the numbers wanting to go, therefore can I urge you all to get your names down if you are interested, with a deposit, ASAP, the deposit is refundable up until monies have to be paid out for the ferry/rooms/bus, (we will let you know when that time comes), May 2018 at the AGM is when the full amount is required, or if you are uncertain at this point, take your name off the trip and get your money back, we cannot be more flexible. It will be the same hotel: Fletcher Hotels Doorwerth, we have tried for hotels in the city centre of Arnhem and for that week end you can double the price, it's the same in Nijmegen and they're always booked up a full year in advance, thus making it impossible for this year at the very least

The dates for 2018 are as follows: Thursday 20th Sept. overnight ferry, returning to Hull on Monday morning 24th Sept after an overnight sailing, this gives you all a full 10 months' notice in booking your time off from work/wife or both, is it enough? Surely shift patterns are not set in stone this early! Nobody would ever get any time off for a holiday.

Martin (Treasurer) is already collecting money from those who wish to pay in instalments and is always ready to take your deposit, (cheques payable to 299 Association), DOB & PASSPORT No's will be required for booking the ferry. We have organised this trip ourselves, (no carrier), therefore we can guarantee a better bus than the last trip and we are crossing to Rotterdam, just 1.5hrs from Osterbeek, no more travelling 6hrs from Zeebrugge. We cannot include any name on the list without a deposit, therefore if you want to go, please make a commitment now.

Roy Hicks Funeral: Some of the benefits to come from this sad occasion was the meeting up with our old friends from 301 Squadron, 'the Brums' these friendships have stood the test of time, many going back for 50-60 years. This group attending from 299 Association were more than willing to show their respect for **Roy**, as we all served with him, but just as important is the fact that we have offered this association's support for our friends and comrades from way back, never to be forgotten.

This occasion gave us all a chance to take part in a voluntary health check, and it's not good reading, time is wreaking havoc on many of us, knees, hips, backs, sugar, heart, also including the big 'C' just to mention a few small problems, the one thing that's still intact in bucket loads, is the spirit, we must allow for one or two of us having managed to maintain our youthful good looks..!

It's a real thumbs up for '**Bunny Brown**' he is in remission and looking good, razor-sharpe and getting mobile again, great news and looking forward to their Christmas Dinner on the 2nd December.

Hull City Council are asking this association for volunteers to help develop the children's 'Santa's Grotto' on the North Brandsholme Estate, the work is not hard and you are well looked after, (fed & watered). I am appealing to those who can spare a little time for this worthwhile activity, the project is run on a totally voluntary basis and is taking place on Wednesday 6th December at the 'Ash Plantation' for further details contact: **Gaz** 01757 268188 or **Sheggs** 01482 806690.

The "Roll of Honour" board is filling up far too quickly, **Paul Sims** is our custodian and informed the meeting that a new board will be required in the not too distant future. This opened up a debate on its location, over the last few years its home has been on the wall of 1 Troop 299 Squadron bar, another board may well be too much for this small bar, The owners of the Minerva has given permission for boards to be fixed in the meeting room, although this is open to the public, the Ship Inn at Dunswell was mentioned, **Jonno Palmer** the land lord is a trusted associate member of this association, or a WW2 museum somewhere down Whitefriargate in Hull city centre, the consensus this evening was for the Minerva, but I would like you all to consider any options and voice your opinions please, **Paul** will contact the architectural craftsman for the manufacture of another board by using CANARY JOINERY CO LTD "everything done on the cheap"

Matters arising: Thought you may be interested in this, it's taken from the AGM minutes of the Scottish Branch of the AEA.

General Service Medal with South Arabia Clasp – "Eoghann Maclachlainn has not yet received the GSM for his 1965 Aden Camp where he was wounded in action. **John Donaldson** has it in writing from the MoD that he is due this medal and will again contact the MoD on **Eoghann's** behalf for an explanation" Outrageous treatment from the establishment..

Items from members: **Craig Gadd** addressed the meeting with news of the many congratulations received by this association after the success of the Gala Dinner, a brilliant letter of thanks from **Tim VK of Chatham** amongst many. He went on to propose a donation of £200 for the Veterans Breakfast Club of Hull, this was put to the meeting with a unanimous decision to donate.

Terry Cunningham brought news from our Donny members with a lot of positives on their many health issues.

Simbo's Bus Stop: winner this month **Pete Robbo**.

Web site address: www.299association.com

Next Meeting: To be held at the Minerva on Friday 5th January 2018, Corporation Pier, Hull, at 20.00hrs.

With nothing more to discuss the Chairman closed the meeting by wishing all a very MERRY CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

PS: I have attached 299's annual report to these minutes because they never made the AEA Journal deadline.

299 Association's annual report 2017

This association seems to have enjoyed a very hectic year, some disappointments, especially when losing our friends, but many positives with the arrival of the next generation and all they have to offer.

Our membership continues to grow, averaging mid 30's for attendance at the meetings, we accept as full members any man who has served, or is serving with 299 Squadron, this accommodates our historic Commando's as well as our Airborne brothers and we all get along just fine, along with the usual bit of banter. We could never forget 299's history of 30 years spent wearing a green beret, some 299 men going to war as Commando Engineers. The wheel keeps turning, and the politicians will have their say, as the Squadron moved back to Para again with 23 Para. Eng. Regt.

Joining an association is viewed as a personal choice for any individual, "we still live in a free country" most 299 men are members of more than one association, but we turn nobody away, we welcome associate members, and they play a prominent part within this group. Many are ex-military, some are friends & family, including an Arnhem Vet, and it all seems to work very well.

299 makes its self-available by supporting many organizations, and other associations, and at times the demand for our inclusion can be overwhelming, we do get overloaded at times, but there is now enough of us to spread the load, so as not to burn out the regular members. Things are 'Buzzing' in Hull at the moment, lots of people wanting to be a part of this association, long may it last.

I do realize that 299 is at an advantage when compared to other association's affiliated to the AEA in that it has always being a reservist unit, from its conception in 1947, until this present day, combine this with its location i.e. the geography dictates that out of the thousands of men that served with the Squadron over the years, many survivors still live in the Hull area, it has to help with numbers.

Just to mention some of 299's activities over the past year e.g.

The association was invited to attend a Memorial Service with Standard at the 'Bullnose' late November 2016, this was the trawler's men's final departure point from Hull before heading for the Artic fishing grounds with all the dangers that this would bring. The service was filmed by Channel 4 TV, the connections with Hull made the associations' attendance paramount.

N/B the Bullnose is a projection of land into the Humber with the old lock gates entry for the long-gone fish dock, and is now a permanent memorial to the thousands of Hull trawler men lost at sea.

This association answers calls from the Hull City Council on a regular basis, often for volunteers to help in many ways, including construction of special themed events for the children living on a forgotten housing estate in Hull. This seems to be an ongoing commitment, but we are proud to serve whilst we can, because we know that the backbone of the British Army started their lives in these places, and we are all very proud of that fact, we must never forsake our roots.

The Yorkshire Air Museum at Elvington near York has written this association into its annual memorial service taking place in early September. Our connection with the museum started when the director Ian Reed asked for a military presence at his fathers (Des) funeral in 2012. Des was ex 6th Division Para Regt and D-Day Vet, we obliged, and now appear to be held in high regard.

Every year we organise an Arnhem Pilgrimage with this year being no exception, in 2017 a total of 36 enjoyed the trip, we class this excursion as essential, especially for our Arnhem Vet Les Ransom who

for every year, as he draws closer to the 'Ton' we hold a surprise birthday party in his local, "where is the surprise in that" I hear you ask? No matter, he always pretends to be surprised and never lets us down. One of the most ordinary hero's I have ever met, just another one of the boy's.

299 has had its fair share of loses: **Bill Rudd** was a big loss to everybody and a good friend to this association during our troubled time, he gave his advice honestly and kept us on the right path. We also lost former PSI **Fred Matterface**, his down to earth soldering suited the Hull men who, initially, he had threatened to come back and haul us all if we ever pushed him out of the aircraft again, good memories. Big **Trevor Key**, Aden Vet and the only bloke amongst us with big money, never stopped seeking adventure from freefalling well into his 70's to big game tracking in Africa. **Fred Rands** forever a Corporal, but always the absolute paratrooper, a real tough guy, every recruit he trained always completed P-company, barring injury, he had no time for glamour boy's and would never let them near a selection course, including the officers, he would make or break them, keeping up the standards in Hull as in his regular days. I have not forgotten or dismissed other friends from the old 131 Regt or the AEA its self, but this will be for others to do.

299 hosted the AEA AGM/Reunion this year and by all accounts it went down well, this is solely due to the excellent team who volunteered to organise this event, the team: **Major Chris Wilcock, Craig Gadd, Paul Sims and Dean Ideson**, this team were ably assisted by **Capt. J.C. Thompson OC 1 Troop 299 Squadron & Tony Costello**, this association is very fortunate to have such people with these skills. As I write this report, we are approaching Remembrance Sunday, and we are expecting a high turnout in Hull. The Squadron is also parading and will join this association after for drinks. This will be special for another reason **Colin Woodward (Woody)** died last year, ex 299 man who gave outstanding service to this association and was in for an award before he became ill, therefore a presentation is to take place for his widow, **Marion** to accept this award posthumously on his behalf.

I will continue; **Marion** received the award presented by our Chairman **Chris Shillito**, this was witnessed by her family, not many dry eyes about, **Chris** went on and surprised **Tony Weldon** with a well-deserved award, again for service with this association over and above what could be expected from any member, its therefore congratulations all round.

Earlier that day, 42 Association men paraded at the Cenotaph in Hull, a tremendous turnout, all took part in the service on this cold & windy day which started to claim casualties almost immediately. The standard bearer for the 'Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes' started to go 'rubber legged' but was quickly supported by 299 men **Dean Ideson & Tony Weldon** with that ex 'booty' **Brad Steele** taking over his standard, these men are now honouree 'Buffs' funny handshakes and all that, forever our Fraternal friends, often found hanging around in small groups. **Paul Sims** carried for 299 and has to be thanked, he was almost carried away in the gale. I have to mention **Craig Gadd** who paraded this day, including the march past on a stump giving him hell, never complains, his face said it all.

Armistice Day witnessed members from this association parading with standard at the Cenotaph in Hull, thanks to **Tony Irwin** who carried on our behalf, along with the Lord Mayor of Hull and most of his Councillors.

299 Squadron & the Association were invited to lay wreaths at a Memorial on a housing estate in Hull on Tuesday 14th November. The Memorial is titled 'To the Fallen' and is in memorandum to all the people who have given their life in service and that came from this this estate. The service was supported by the Deputy Lord Mayor of Hull, most of the city Councillors, Veterans, OC 1 Troop 299 Sqn and members from this Association, **Tony Irwin** carried our standard. **G. Coe**



Remembrance Sunday 12/11/2017 at the 'Minerva'

A good mixture of 299 Squadron, association members, friends & families.