



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 associations.

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

Date: Friday 6th December 2019 at the Minerva.

Members Present: D. Barker, M. Beardshaw, B. Bilton, J. Brooks, G. Coe, N. Cooper, T. Cunningham, R. Franklin, C. Gadd, C. Ham, D. Harvey, D. Hines, A. Irwin, M. Lawrence, J. Mace, R. Meachen, D. Meekin, K. Millington, F. Pougher, L. Ransom, P. Robson, M. Sadler, S. Saxby, C. Shillito, P. Sims, A. Stimpson, J. Thompson, Mart. Tindle, C. Walker, T. Walker, A. Weldon, Lt Col C. Wilcock, P. Wilkinson, P. Wolstenholme.

Apologies: F. Gray, P. Robinson, G. Ratten, M. Holdsworth, R. Gill, M. Hall, D. French, B. Steele, S. Hoyle, C. Duggan, S. Knowles, G. Beaumont, K. Blacker, L. Smith, A. Lee, A. Homan, D. Ideson.

Guests: Pauline Meekin, Ben Bridges

Welcome and 'Roll Call'

The Chairman **Chris Shillito** welcomed all present then opened the meeting by inviting **Pete Wolstenholme** to recite **Binyon's** 'Exhortation' and then went on to announce the sad news that former 299 Troop Commander **Capt. Tony Windas** passed away on Monday the 18th November after suffering a long illness, his funeral took place yesterday as a full Mass at St. Anthony's Church, Beverley High Road, Hull, on the 5th Dec at 14:00hrs. Association members did not line the route as in the past, but did dress as for parade, plenty of red & Green berets present. The wake was held at the Halifax Barracks at the corner of Endike Lane & Beverley High Road, in Hull.

Tony's cousin held it together well whilst delivering the eulogy of the year to a full Church, (standing room only), I counted two dozen former 299 men, including at least 5 former 299 Troop Commanders. **Tony** died far too young at 49 years leaving a wife and two young boys. It quickly became obvious that this man was most highly respected, especially amongst the military, and also a friend to all 299 men, past & present. **RIP old friend.**

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

Proposed by – **Tony Irwin**
Seconded by – Kev. **Millington**

Treasure's Report: **Glenn** is 'still' on holiday, last seen holding the line in Hong Kong, he's the one with the biggest umbrella! Many thanks to **Martin Tindle** who stepped back into this role in helping with the Normandy trip monies.

Relevant correspondence:

Civic duties in supporting Hulls City Fathers

Chris Shillito e-mailed on the 8th November reporting the above had taken place on this day, and the following proceedings needed to be reported. The association responded to the annual request for a military presence in the laying on of wreaths at the 'To the Fallen' memorial in the 'Urban' on the North Brandsholme Estate in Hull.

The following men represented this association at this parade & service; **Pete Robbo (carried), Shags, Simbo, Beards, Bri B, Bud P, & Dave Woolly**, the weather was at its worst, throwing it down with rain throughout the proceedings.

The Right Worshipful Lord Mayor of Kingston upon Hull and Admiral of the Humber Councillor Stephen Wilson led his Council on a short route towards the memorial and was joined by approximately 50 people for a short service conducted by the Clergy from the City Chambers, wreaths were laid following a short service with **Beards** laying for this association also **Simbo** gave a heartfelt and personal tribute to our old friend **Bill Drayton**, recently lost to us all.

After, it was back to the old pub for bacon sandwiches and hot drinks supplied by the residents and this was very much appreciated. **The City Fathers have expressed their thanks for this association's participation.**

N/B: We have to credit these men for their commitment to this association, and by answering this call to duty, which can never be expected by the rest of us, nor our City Fathers, they help keep 299 firmly fixed on as a part of this great city of Hull.

Chris Shillito message bd posted on 10/11/2019. A big thanks to the lads of 1 Troop Para Sqn for hosting the 299 Association on Friday night (8th Nov). **Eamon Smyth's** Toscaig Plaque template was on display in the bar, a great night had by all.

Allan Lee message bd posted on 10/11/2019. Following another good turnout for the remembrance parade in Hull. I would like to raise a glass and remember our absent friends **Bill & Mac** and all those whom we have served with and lost. We will remember them..!

Followed the next day by **Chris Shillito** who replied; "well said **Allan & RIP Big Bill and Macca**" Great turn out by the 299 Association on Sunday to show our respect at the Cenotaph. A. big thank you to all the people who donated prizes for the raffle which paid for the buffet with plenty left over.

Well done to **Simbo, Weldo and Eileen** for running it, Thanks to the staff of the Minerva for a superb buffet and looking after us all.

Plenty to eat and drink, also good friends, what more could we ask for. Well done to all concerned.

The following was posted on the association message board under the name of Marcin, on 13/11/2019

Super strona.....pozdrawian

Terry Cunningham googled this and it reads `Great website & best regards` in Polish. Sent from the USA!

RICH GILL WISHES TO SHARE BILL DRAYTON'S DEDECATION WITH YOU.

Richard Gill: e-mail dated 15/11/2019. **Mike Sunderland & I** went up to Scotland after **Bills** funeral for a bit of walking and climbing. And we did a very short dedication to **Bill Drayton** on the top of Sgorr Dhonuill, one of the Scottish Munro's above Loch Leven, accessible from South Ballachulish. The view was not great as the clouds were in. I was going to post on the association message board but not sure how this could be done. I attach the one we did for **Bill**, plus a picture showing the approach, not a lot to see, but it's the sentiment I think. We also did the same for **Macca** just after he had died, this was in the Grey Corries of Scotland, which I can also provide.

The file is too big for outlook, so have put it in a dropbox location and given you access to the folder.

<https://www.dropbox.com/home/Bill%20Drayton%20dedecation>

AGM/reunion 2020 Forwarded e-mail by **Dave Rutter** on 17/11/2019: The following arrived too late for the December Journal.

Adam Frame – Chairman for the Yorkshire Branch; I have booked the whole hotel at Harrogate for the AGM 2020. It is the Cedar Court Hotel, Park Parade, Harrogate, HG1 5AH. Taking place Friday 16 – 18 Oct. 2020 at a cost of £149 p/p for the weekend as follows:

**The price of £298.00 is for a double occupancy room, (74.50 per night), which includes; B&B on the Friday night/Sat.am.
Dinner B&B on the Sat/Sun. am.**

The single occupancy cost would be £85.00 per night on a B&B basis.

The buffet on the Friday would be an addition for those that wished to have it, guests would pay for this separately. For further details contact: adamandemma@gmail.com Mb: 0789904216.

N/B: book your car in upon arrival to avoid the Parking Police.

Chris Shillito posted on the message bd 19/11/2019. Gentlemen, it is my sad duty to inform you that our friend and ex 299 Troop Commander former **Capt. Tony Windas** passed away last night after a long illness. RIP old friend.

Les Ransom posted on the message bd 19/11/2019 an **open invitation** to all 299ers at the Ship Inn, Dunswell, Near Beverley on Sat 23rd November 2019

This was a celebration of Mary-Ann's (daughter) 40th birthday, plenty of good food, **free beer** as well as music.

Social Calendar:

BIG THANK YOU

Great night out at the Ship Inn on Saturday 23rd November for Mary-Ann's, (**Les's daughter**), 40th birthday and well attended by the association who gave their thanks to **Les** for the invite and his generosity. **Johnno Palmer** put on a fine spread as usual, choice of curries and hot-pot, plus a buffet to die for. The free barrel of beer went down well, and rest assured, for those who could not make the Ship that night, their share was not wasted. The people who use this public house have taken 299 to their hearts, and this association is very fortunate in counting the Ship Inn as our second home.

NORMANDY TRIP 2020

This trip will be booked over the Christmas holidays at a cost of £350 p/p (approx.) a block booking may attract a discount! A list of names is being drawn up tonight and places can only be confirmed with a non-refundable deposit of £50 p/p.

4 Day Tour: 11th Sept. 2020 total cost £350p/p

Day 1 local departure by coach, then to Caen in Normandy for a 3 night stay. (Continental breakfasts only).

Day 2 Pegasus Bridge & British Beaches, Ranville War Cemetery, Arromanches, (remains of Mulberry Harbour).

Day 3 America's D-Day, Bloody Omaha & American Airborne (Dick Winters Memorial), American Cemetery & Museum, Utah Beach and Overlord Museum, German Cemetery.

Day 4 homeward bound, remember to include entrance costs to Museums, other meals & drinks.

This trip is going ahead, we do not require set numbers, but have to book early to secure its happening. I will keep you informed on the details as and when I receive them.

Sgt Paul Robbie, RAF posted on the message bd 6/12/2019. Sorry I can't make the meeting, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, also I have recently made contact with a member of the BBMF (Battle of Britain Memorial Flight) at RAF Coningsby. How do you fancy another visit next year?

Derek French sent e-mail on 6/12/2019. Apologises, but my schedule does not allow me to be at the meeting tonight, I'm back in the smoke! I intend to be at the next one – Feb 2020, so will see you there. In the meantime Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year to everyone. I attach my electronic Christmas card to save on postage. It is of my local Ladies Choir – they really have got into the "Goodwill to all men" mode.

John H. Donaldson sent an e-mail on 6/12/2019. We at the Scottish Branch hope you and your members have a Merry Christmas and Happy, Prosperous and above all Safe New year. He really appreciated **Derek's** card.

Syd Hoyle set an e-mail on 6/12/2019. Thanks for forwarding Christmas card, very nice indeed. Sorry didn't have chance for a chin-wag after the funeral, what a good turnout by the lads! Apologies unable to make tonight's meeting, still in 'moving mode' with much to do before Christmas. With that in mind please pass on my Christmas Greetings to everyone, and of course a prosperous New Year to one and all.

Chairman's Comments:

Chris congratulated this association for the splendid Remembrance Sunday service & parade, over 40 association members marched this year with a gang of the 'sick, lame, too old, or even lazy came together at the Minerva, joining the families of both past & present friends, The weather was kind in Hull this year which allowed the vast number of people room to spread on to the Quay side of the Humber. 299 Squadron 1 Troop joined in with the association and their families which made for a very enjoyable day.

He went on to thank all members for their generous raffle prizes donation which went on to raise well over £300 which more than paid for the splendid Minerva buffet, with monies left over, £45 of this was given to the bar staff to share as a thank you for looking after us so well on the day.

Our Chairman passed comment on his pleasure in seeing 2 former regular RM Commandos wearing the 299 Association badge on their blazers, that's got to be a first!. He also noted and mentioned the fact that every year a few elusive members appear and march alongside with their comrades of old: **Don Shaw ex 299 & 9 Sqn, Charlie (Tug) Wilkinson ex 299 and Colin Sangwin ex 299 & 9 Sqn (Son of the famous Norman)**, these guys never miss, they parade every year without fail, playing little or no other part in the association's activities, but it's always good to see them. This year it was great to see **Kenny Russell** back in the fold again.

A big thank you had to go to those who made it work at the Minerva, the key to all this lies in the raffle which was run by **Simbo, Weldo and Eileen (Robbie)** ably helped by the late **Col. Woodies grandchildren**, all got involved in selling tickets, delivering prizes, etc. **Weldo** organised and dealt with the buffet performing a miracle on his budget and without this effort it all could have fallen flat. Therefore it's a big thanks to you, one and all.

One of our members **Rich Gill** wants to do something for breast cancer after his wife has had a recent brush with this awful disease, he has something organised in the sponsorship direction but the membership at tonight's meeting decided to have a whip round amongst all present with a consensus being reached that the profits from this evenings bus stop, plus monies left over from the Remembrance raffle thrown in, which brought a grand total of £340, this was handed straight to **John Thompson** to reap any percentage increase of financial benefits to charity donations. Well done the lads and thanks for your generosity.

The late **Bill Drayton's** memorial calendar produced by **Dave Hines (web master)** produced an extra-large demand amongst friends and family and **Dave** has responded by fulfilling their wants. He refuses in taking any money to help with his expenses, this prompted the Chairman in thanking him for his commitment, and this was reinforced by the whole meeting.

Every year around Armistice Day, poppy crosses from this association appear upon the known graves and memorials of past 299 men, this act has gone on for years, nobody has ever asked for it to be done, and it is a personal tribute by this one man who chooses to include this association in his solo act of remembrance. The entire meeting, led by the Chairman rose to applaud this selfless act by **Tony Irwin**. The secret is now out.

Chris offered the best wishes received from our distant members, our ex-pats who we never forget: **Dave Mace, John (Willy) Harrison**, just to mention two, the lads from Doncaster: **Bud, Nev, and big John Davis** who is fearfully not well, **Steve Brown & the Brums**, the never say die **John Donaldson & all the Jocks**, also **always keeping us safe, our Deano, and all our minute readers**.

Matters arising:

Flower Children of the Netherlands

Charlies forwarded message from **Gaddy**:

Dear friends and Colleagues,

Donations to the Arnhem Flower Children Appeal.

Since launching the appeal to donate to the flower children of Arnhem, we have been amazed and humbled by the kind support and donations we have received from our airborne family and the public in the form of berets and cash donations. This truly shows how grateful and respectful we are as paratroopers for the support the flower children have given to us since 1945. Currently we have around 300 berets and about £7200 in cash after fees. All of which has been accounted for and verified.

In Arnhem, the organizers of the Flower Children have been watching our progress with a great deal of interest, but with some concern. We have been in touch to allay their fears, however, we must treat their concerns seriously and with respect.

Some of the reasons that the organizers of the Flower Children **OBJECT** to for the children wearing the berets are:

- The Netherlands do not have a strong military tradition, therefore to give children a military symbol ie the maroon beret is not a popular idea.
- It is felt that by wearing a beret, the children will no longer look like children, let children be children.
- Concerns from parents and teachers that it has never been done before.
- This may induce feelings of expectations in future flower children.
- The maroon beret is something that is earned and only entitled to those who have trained for it. (They stopped selling them in the Airborne Museum for this reason).
- It would be better for the children to wear a pin badge, as was the tradition of the past.

TO THAT END, AS OF THIS MOMENT, WE WILL NO LONGER COLLECT DONATIONS FOR BERETS.

Kindest regards **Charlie McColgan**

N/B: In years gone by Arnhem Veterans often gave the flower children a pin badge off their own jackets as a souvenir and sign of friendship, sadly there are only a handful of veterans left and this tradition has declined in recent years.

We intend to replicate that honourable tradition by presenting each flower child of 2020 with a specially designed pin badge which will be based on the famous Flower Children Statue situated near the Hartenstein Airborne Museum. These will be marked 1945 – 2020 with the date changing with the year, making the badges collectible, we have enough funds for pin production for the next 2 years.

Donations will be refunded as required, for those objecting to the 'pin fund'

Many thanks for your continuous support.

Regards **Craig Gadd**

Items from members:

Further Donation

A further donation of £10 was presented to **Tony Irwin** whilst in Ypres during a recent visit. The money was destined for the Flower Children appeal after **Tony** had told the story to other travellers, the kindness of people! This money will go towards the new 'pin fund' via **Gaddy**.

Dud's is coming home

Chris Wilcock brought the good news that **Major O. Dudley** is taking command of 131 Squadron and all at 299 congratulate him in his new command.

Simbos bus Stop: one lucky winner this month: **Pete Wolstenholme** who promptly banged it in the breast cancer appeal, 'what a star'

Web site address: www.299association.com

Next Meeting will on Friday 7th February in the Minerva at the usual time.

The Chairman closed the meeting thanking the attenders for their presence and on behalf of 299 Association wished everybody a Merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Dates for your diary:

“The Battlefields of Normandy”

This is a 4 Day trip scheduled for 11th September 2020 for further details contact Gaz Coe on 01757 268188

Cromwell Lock disaster, 45th service of remembrance will take place on Sunday 27th September 2020 at the Lock Monument. Details to Follow.

AGM/reunion will be taking place over the week end Fri 16 – 18 Oct. 2020 at the Cedar Court Hotel, Park Parade, Harrogate, HG1 5AH. The Yorkshire branch of the AEA are hosting this year and for further details contact branch Chairman Adam Frame on adamandemma@gmail.com Mb: 07809904216

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 8TH NOV. 2020, muster 9:30hrs down Pease Street, Anlaby Road, Hull.
Dress for parade & service at the Cenotaph.

1 Troop 299 Squadron are parading in Hull this year and will be sharing the buffet at the Minerva with the association.

CONTACTS:

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

WELFARE:

The veterans Hub & Forum, coordinator Callum Day for all your problems

Address: Goodwin Community Hub, Anlaby Road, Hull. HU3 2LL, (opposite the `Tigers Lair`).

Tel: 01482 485958, email: veteranshub@goodwintrust.org

