



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 7th February 2020 at the Minerva.

Members Present: M. Beardshaw, K. Blacker, G. Coe, N. Cooper, G. Crum, T. Cunningham, C. Gadd, J. Harrison, W. Holbrook, D. Ideson, A. Irwin, M. Lawrence, R. Meachen, F. Pougher, G. Ratten, P. Robson, S. Saxby, C. Shillito, P. Sims, B. Steele, A. Stimpson, Mart. Tindle, A. Weldon, P. Wolstenholme, D. Woollas.

Apologies: F. Gray, P. Robinson, J. Duffy, J. Thompson, C. Duggan, D. Harvey, D. French, L. Smith, T. Walker, M. Holdsworth, J. Mace, S. Ives, D. Watson, A. Costello, M. Sadler, J. Brooks, A. Foster, R. Franklin, L. Ransom, C. Walker, G. Beaumont, K. Russell.

Guests: Eileen Robinson, Sue Harrison.

Welcome and 'Roll Call'

The Chairman, **Chris Shillito** welcomed all present then opened the meeting by inviting **Craig Gadd** to recite **Binyon's** 'Exhortation' as a poignant gesture in marking the loss of some more of our friends over the recent festive period. This New Year has started as the previous finished and we can only hope that this is the end of it all for the foreseeable future. **Sheila Smales, Neville's** wife passed away on 30th December 2019 and former **Sgt John Davis** died on 1st January 2020 aged 88yrs, condolences from this association were sent to the respective families.

Chris apologised for the late cancellation of the January meeting, but the 'Minerva' is an old historic and listed building, who's needs have to be taken care of, as and when required, and may not always be planned. **Chris** reserved a special thanks to those who come to these meetings from afar; tonight **John & Sus Harrison from Belgium**, plus the people who drive many miles and rarely miss a meeting, also, always good to see **Eileen Robbie** who will always be a part of the 299 family.

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

Proposed by – **Frank (Bud) Pougher**

Seconded by – **Terry Cunningham**

JOHN DAVIS

The funeral of former 299 man JOHN FREDRICK THOMAS DAVIS aged 88 years took place on the 27th January 2020 at 1300hrs at the Rose Hill Crematorium, Doncaster.

The 299 Association Chairman **Chris Shillito** thanked all the men who attended this service, especially the standard bearers carrying their respective colours; **Tony Irwin (299)**, **Mike Holdsworth (301)** and **Mick Williams (Royal British Legion)**. Good to see **John Brennan** also **Mally Hollis (Russell)** and **Ken Newton** from way back coming to pay their respects. Eighteen men representing all the units that **John** had served with, they lined the route to produce a Guard of Honour on route to the Chapel, the Cortege was led by the Standards at slow order with the Guard of Honour throwing one up as his Hurst entered the Chapel canopy area. This was a fitting tribute to this well-respected man who has given so much service to his country, mostly with 299 Sqn, 131 Para RE Regt.

Big John was born and brought up in Doncaster, he left school at the age of 15 years (1946) and run off to join the Merchant Navy, spent 4 years at sea and visited most of the world, and with National Service pending he signed on in the Royal Military Police for a short term enlistment (3 years regular + 3 years reserve), he volunteered for Airborne seeing over sea's postings in Egypt. To meet his reservist commitment he was directed to 2 Troop, 299 Sqn. 131 Para RE Regt (TA), 44 Brigade at the Scarborough Barracks in Doncaster. He served during the Suez Crisis, Cyprus and Aden and was a qualified Parachute training instructor, he was promoted to Troop Sergeant with 1 Troop 299 Sqn (V) at Hull, after the cut backs of the late 60's reduced 299 to one Troop only. During the 70's he was promoted to WO2 and transferred to 129 Sqn RE (V) (non para) in Hull eventually taking the Training Officers commission of Captain within the same unit, thus completing over 30 years as a reservist, plus 3 years regular service.

John was a hardworking man who was not afraid to have a go at anything in making a living; from process worker in the power stations, sales representative, building site work, even running his own business, nothing was out of bounds. He had married, but losing his wife in 2004, was something he never got over, he leaves 2 sons Andrew and Philip, plus many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Both his sons have shown their appreciation to those included in the military side of his life who attended his funeral and commented. "Very smart, he would have been flattered"

N/B: Recorded apology for non-attendance from a long-time friend and comrade in arms Lt Col (Retd) John Lee, President of the AEA.

Treasure's Report: **Glenn** up dated the meeting on our current financial status which still remains healthy, he went on to remind those people going on the "Battlefields of Normandy" trip in September they need to get their full payment to him by the June meeting, this matter is a definite! No cash, no trip

Former OC Bud Oldfield gave **Chris Shillito** £40 to get the lads a drink at **John Davis's** wake, and because some of them left the proceedings straight after the service it was decided to include these monies into the association funds, therefore it's a big thank you to **Bud**.

Relevant correspondence:

Secretary's apology: the following e-mail from Tony Costello got lost somewhere in my computer system.

A resolution proposed by me and passed with applause at our AGM on Saturday 19th October 2019 at Eden Camp, and was held in Hut 22 due to inclement weather. **Tony Costello (6th Airborne Division).**

The Palestine Veterans Association wish to place on the record their thanks to **Tony Irwin (299 Standard Bearer)** for the numerous occasions when he paraded our standard with dignity and respect.
Photo sent to Web Master.

Chris Shillito (Chairman) posted on the message bd on 8/12/2019. Brilliant meeting on Friday night (December meeting) at the Minerva, great turnout of friends having a few beers together before Christmas. We had a whip round for **Rich Gills** giving page for Breast cancer and raised £340, also gave the bar staff £50 for looking after us on Remembrance Sunday. '299's generosity knows no bounds', well done to everyone. A big thank you to our amazing Web Master **Dave Hines** for producing **Billy Drayton's (Vice Chairman)** tribute calendar for the lads and also doing an extra 10 for the family, all at his own expense (Awesome).

On behalf of the committee we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a great New Year. There is no meeting in January, the next one will be on 7th February 2020, all the best to you all.

N/B:

As the festive season drew nearer, many messages of good will were received from other branches of the AEA, as well as **Ken Newton & Bud Oldfield** former OC's, most of our ex-pats including **John (Willy) Harrison, Adam Garforth & Dave Mace** also many of our regular attenders who were wanting to send their best wishes via message board & e-mail, **thanks to you all**, and please do not feel offended if not mentioned, I'm certain everything was gratefully received.

The Secretary received the following e-mail on 28/12/2019. Hope I find you all well at 299. My name is **Richard Jopson** and I have been carrying out my "**Arnhem Boys**" project for the last five years, (see website below).

I'm wanting to ask if you could put me in contact with **Les Ransom**, or a close relative as I would love to have the opportunity to interview and photograph **Les** for this work. Regards Richard

Tel: 646 221 7137 e-mail: www.richardjopson.com e-mail: www.arnhemboys.com New York City.

The interview and photo shoot took place at 14:00hrs at Les's place on Tuesday 7th January 2020.

N/B: when I last looked Les had not so far been included on his page.

Terry Cunningham posted on the message bd on 31/12/2019. Gentlemen, it is with great sadness to inform you of the loss of **Sheila**, the wife of our friend and comrade **Nev Smales (former 2 Troop, Don & 1 Troop, Hull)** who passed away yesterday 30/12/2019. I will keep you posted with any further information as it is passed to me by **Bud Oldfield**.

Mystery posting on the 299 message bd, from **RAF Cranwell** on 31/12/2019. Congratulations to **Warrant Officer Mike Ratten RAF** upon been awarded the MSM in the New Year's honours list. (Meritorious Service Medal).

N/B: Mike is our Treasure's eldest son & a very good friend of this association.

Terry Cunningham posted on the message bd 1/1/2020. Sorry to be the bearer of bad news again; I have to inform you of the death of former **Sgt John Davis** this morning, further information as I get it from **Bud Oldfield** in Doncaster.

Steve Brown (Sec Birm'ham branch AEA) e-mail received on 9/1/2020, extract from their branch meeting minutes dated 8/1/2020 titled..... **Bunny Brown's Memorial Trophy**

This trophy has been awarded this year to **Eamon Smyth** for all the hard work in organising and replacing the Plaque at Toscaig Bridge in his own time. The award was presented by **Steve Brown to Eamon** followed by a round of applause. **Well done Eamon from all at 299.**

N/B: This Bridge was built by 299 Troop, 131 Indi Commando Sqn RE during the 1990's.

Carl Ham posted on the message bd on 14/1/2020. Congratulations to **Kev. Blacker** who has just completed the Spine Challenger race (108 miles) across the Pennines on foot, in torrential rain and stiff winds, fantastic effort **Kev. (See items from members section for more details on this item).**

Ken Newton, former OC 1 Troop, mid 60's, e-mail dated 29/1/2020. What a good turnout for the funeral of **John Davis**. A Sad occasion, but seeing you all again reminded me that my loyalties always have, and always will be 299. I have done a lot of things world-wide, rock climbing and commanding 2 Coy 10 Para Regt, but I have never had a bunch of mates such as I had with 299. Good soldiers, sometimes a bit 'naughty' but totally dependable and seeing you all there, at the funeral brought back all my memories of soldiering with you, many thanks, take care and please keep in touch.

Gaz Coe posted on the message bd 31/1/2020. Just had a big thank you from the family of **John Davis** for our presence at **John's** funeral, will we pass on their thanks to everybody who attended including **Mr Ken Jackson?** A friend from his RMP regular service day's during the early 50's.

A heartfelt message from **Nev, Smales** thanking all at 299 for the many thoughts and prayers from you all that he received on the loss of his wife **Sheila**. **Sheila's** funeral took place on the 28th January in Doncaster.

John Donaldson; taken from the minutes of the AEA Scotland's meeting of the 19th January 2020.

John Lonergan Memorial. It was agreed we would meet at the Guards Club (Edinburgh) on 12th April at 13:00hrs to remember and raise a glass to **John Lonergan, (KIA 12TH APRIL 1965 ADEN)**. Some form of permanent memorial to **John** was discussed and it was agreed that the photograph at Lonergan Lines be reproduced and placed in the Upper hall of the RBL in Edinburgh and a copy offered to the RBL in Grangemouth, the Chairman volunteered to undertake this task.

Adam Garfoth e-mail sent 5/2/2020, has changed his e-mail address yet again, he apologises for this, but sends his best wishes to all 299, (contact me if required)

He went on to say "you 299 boy's keep me going, young at heart, been scooting around on Facebook, catching up with a few old mates and sharing jokes, one step at a time is my motto, regarding winding down in life ...? Remember the old days mate, regards **Garth**."

Dave Watson e-mail dated 7/2/2020 sends his apologies for his non-attendance at tonight's meeting and wishes to be remembered to the Hofbrauhaus / Bailey's crew, seems like a blur after all these years. Has made contact with **Steve Ives (back in the UK I believe)** Secretary has his contact details.

Social Calendar: See "dates for your dairy" section.

Chairman's Comments: Chris has received via **Terry Cunningham** a limited print of an oil painting (artist unknown to me) of the Parachute Regimental Association marching from York Minster (think it may be the 50th anniversary of the regiment). This limited print had been donated from the family of **John Davis to former close friend and former OC of 299 Capt. Bud Oldfield** with the instructions to do what we want with it and **Bud** has passed it on to this association with the same message. Many suggestions were raised from the floor but it was decided to go for **Gaddy's** idea of approaching the charity of the "Pilgrim Bandits" for them to try and auction it in one of their fund raising nights, splitting monies between them and this association's funds.

Matters arising:

Membership of other associations

There are no rules governing anybody at 299 Association joining or belonging to anything that they want too, full membership of 299 Association is automatic through individual service given within the unit, and is open to current serving and veterans alike, the exceptions are people who have openly expressed their 'contempt' for 299 Association as it stands, which makes sense, nobody is forced to be a part of something they don't like, 299 membership is based on, and voted for as '**freedom of choice for everybody**'

299 Association is affiliated to the Airborne Engineers Association (AEA), this was voted for in 2009 simply because at that time a large percentage of association men served as Para RE, and it was what was wanted at that particular time, whereas now the men seeing service in the Commando RE are the majority, but we are all still 299 RE, therefore the affiliation still stands, but the future will always lie with the membership.

This does not detract from our Associate members who play a full and meaningful part in the 299 Association.

The Secretary always carries AEA membership application forms for anybody wishing to join, and will, on request obtain application forms for any other organisations, if wanted, most association men are members of other associations as is their given right, because we still in a free country!

Items from members:

Tony Irwin brings news of the following

Hulls Veterans Day Sat 25th April is combining with the Falkland Task Force W/E for a Service & Parade on Sun 26th April 2020.

Hull Task Force Association Group 82

The event will be called **The Kingston upon Hull Falklands Week End** and this has been agreed by the above association and Hull City Council Events Team. Working with the Royal Navy Logistic Team by requesting the presence of a Royal Navy vessel to visit Hull the same time as the event.

The Hull Fire Brigade are sending their 'Poppy Engine' to the event and East Yorkshire Bus Company are sending two buses to be displayed in, and with the honours of the Task Force vessels, the buses will display the 'MV Norland', 'Hull Tugs' and the trawlers of the 11th MCM, also they will provide a transport service for the veterans and the public visiting the Royal Naval vessel in port. **TBC.**

There will be displays and stalls by various associations and armed forces recruitment tents sited down Whitefriagate, Parliament Street and Trinity Square. The Hull Minster (Holy Trinity) are putting on a food fare in the Minster all happening on the Saturday 25th April 2020.

The Pusser Rum Company have sent a bottle of 15 year old rum from their Virgin Island site to be auctioned off at the event, also the Commander of HMS Clyde has also sent a bottle of Pussers from the ships company along with a message, HMS Clyde is on her final tour of duty in the Falkland's.

The Sunday service commences at 14:00hrs at the Minster followed by the parade, **Maj General (Retd) Julian Thompson (Falkland War Land Force Commander)** is amongst the dignitaries invited to these proceedings. **TBC by organizer Keith Thompson SAMA 82. (South Atlantic Medal Association).**

For further information contact Tony Irwin on Tel: 01482 793847.

N/B: The 299 Association have members who fought in the South Atlantic as a part of the Task Force and we in this association have great difficulty in accepting anyone posing as `L/Cpl. Walter Mitty` and are not likely to tolerate this sort of behaviour, which is now an imprison-able offence in the USA, and hopefully will shortly be so in the UK. This offence is known as `Stolen Valour` and the legislation for this despicable activity cannot come soon enough.

Carl Ham posted the welcome news on Kevin Blackers` massive achievements on the top of the Pennines, proving he still has what it takes in taking on the notorious and brutal race known as the Montane Spine Challenger held over the week end of 11 – 13th January 2020.

Key is a dedicated runner and always up for a challenge. This was a non-stop 108 mile race between Edale and Hardraw within a time limit of 60hrs. This section of the Pennine Way requires good physical fitness, resolve and courage and can be considered as one of the most difficult in the country. There was a minimum event safety team to support on-route, check point teams including excellent medical personal, also all runners were fitted with a GPS tracker with an emergency button just in case, but never the less, he will have experienced that **“Loneliness of the long distance runner”** as **Tom Courtenay** did, another Hull man making good back in the 60's.

WELL DONE KEV.

Simbo's bus Stop: one winner only this month; Simbo himself, (smell a rat..!)

Web site address: www.299association.com

Next Meeting: Friday 6th March 2020 at the Minerva, usual time.

WITH NOTHING MORE TO DISCUSS THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING THANKING ALL FOR THEIR ATTENDANCE

Dates for your diary:

AIRBORNE FORCES DAY – NORTHERN, EDEN CAMP, MALTON, 18TH JULY 2020.

Gates open at 9:30hrs, entry is free for maroon berets. Muster at 11:30hrs at the Top Car Park adjacent to hut 1 & 10.

Service 11:45hrs, to be conducted by Rev. John McNaughton, TBC.

“THE BATTLEFIELDS OF NORMANDY”

This is a 4 Day trip commencing on the 11th September 2020 details to be confirmed.
Further details contact Gaz Coe. Tel: 01757 268188, e-mail: coeblimey240@gmail.com

Cromwell Lock parade and Memorial Service to take place at the Lock Memorial garden on 27th September 2020, timings TBC.

AGM/reunion to be held over the week end Fri 16 – 18th Oct. 2020 at the Cedar Court Hotel, Park Parade, Harrogate, HG1 5AH. This event is been hosted by the Yorkshire branch of the AEA.

For further details contact 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:

Chairman: Chris Shillito, cls299@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 01482 806690, Mb: 07877277288.

Secretary: Gaz Coe, coeblimey240@gmail.com Tel: 01757 268188.

Treasurer: Glenn Ratten, glennratten@icloud.com Tel: 01757 700016, Mb: 07795248328.

Web Master: Dave Hines, davehines2@davehines2.karoo.co.uk Tel: 01482 860981, Mb: 07821698522.

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

