



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 5th January 2018 at the Minerva.

Members Present: M. Beardshaw, B. Bilton, K. Blacker, J. Brooks, G. Coe, N. Cooper, T. Cunningham, W. Drayton, C. Gadd, D. Harvey, D. Hines, A. Irwin, P. Jefferson A. Kitching, A. Lee, J. Mace, D. Meeking, F. Pougher, L. Ransom, G. Ratten, K. Robinson, P. Robson, K. Russell, S. Saxby, C. Shillito, P. Sims, L. Smith, A. Stimpson, J. Thompson, Mart. Tindle, T. Walker, A. Weldon.

Apologies: F. Gray, C. Walker, A. Costello, G. Beaumont, J. Duffy, C. Duggan, A. Foster, R. Franklin, D. French, P. Hairsine, M. Holdsworth, M. Maddison, B. Steele, C. Walker, D. Woollas.

N/B: these apologies' send their best wishes for 2018 to everybody at this association.

Guests: Eileen Robinson, Pauline Meekin.

Welcome and 'Roll Call'

The Chairman, **Chris Shillito** welcomed all present by wishing everybody a Happy New Year, he made a special reference to the presence of our two ladies present, (wives), then opened the meeting.

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

Proposed by – **Tony Kitching**

Seconded by – **Dave Hines**

Treasure's Report:

Treasurer, **Martin Tindle** was able to give the meeting a full account of the association funds now the AEA/Reunion week end monies have been finalised, all looks good, he is actively taking deposits for this year's Arnhem trip, (not many places left), make contact with him quickly if you want to go. Tel: 01482 653618.

Correspondence: relevant incoming since the last meeting.

Geoff. Montgomery: message Bd, 2/12/2017. Hey **Hairy** – glad to hear you are on the mend. Best wishes **Monty**.

Fred Gray: E-mail, 3/12/2017. Hi **Gary**, thanks for the minutes of the last meeting, and I can only add to the very many letters of congratulations regarding the superb organization of the reunion. A good effort by the organizers and the branch as

a whole. Best wishes to everyone for the New Year and I hope I will be able to attend at least one meeting next year Regards **Fred**.

Dave Rutter: E-mail, 3/12/2017. Hi **Gaz**, many thanks for the minutes of your recent meeting – we, (Aldershot), sit down to our last meeting in 2017 next Sunday, (10th), From then on we will be taking a break until March 2018 as some of our members are living way out of the area are reluctant to travel during the awful months of January & February. Well done 299 on a very successful year, and I feel sure with the current momentum it will be a full and eventful 2018 for you all. Sincere good wishes to all your members for the coming festive season and a prosperous New Year. **Dave**.

John Harrison: E-mail, 3/12/2017. **Gaz**, the very best to all the boys, especially **Hairy**. All have a great Xmas & a happy New Year, God bless, **Willy**.

Carl Henrickson: E-mail, 3/12/2017. Hi **Gary**, just a note to say thanks for doing the minutes of the meetings, I don't attend as much as I'd like so I appreciate the level of detail. I can imagine sitting amongst you all as I read! I hope to make the first meeting of 2018 as I won't be on a shift, all the very best **Carl**.

Mike (Ozzie) Holdsworth: E-mail, 3/12/2017. Guys, I have just arrived home from the Brummies' Christmas Ball, Uuurrrgh! Suffering yet again with the effects of this senile demented mind of mine, which is still writing checks that this tortured body can't pay.

At 3am this morning I ended up drinking with the legless **Dave Bowron** watching him doing press ups in his wheel chair, whilst in this elevated position he wriggles his stumps to the rhythm of the bar music, never a pretty sight, but he makes my jaws ache. Well guys! Thanks for the reading material, (minutes), and as **Geek** said "I'm off to my pit" stay well, I will update **Gaz** of the events in our minutes, regards **Ozzie**.

Syd Hoyle: E-mail, 3/12/2017. Hi **Gaz**, just a line to say thanks for the December minutes, also the annual report, another outstanding and active year, very well done lads.

A shock to learn of **Hairy's** situation, please pass on a "get well soon" from me please, if you see him before I do.

Good to know "Bunny" is bouncing back.

May I wish you, your committee and members of course Seasonal Greetings and a prosperous 2018, best wishes **Syd**.

Tony Foster: message Bd, 4/12/2017. Get well soon **Hairy** & have a good Christmas. If anyone would still like a photo & disc from Remembrance Sunday please let me know.

Chris Shillito: E-mail to all, 11/12/2017. Gentlemen, an ex 299 Troop, 131 Para Sqn man, **Lyndsey Love** passed away a few weeks ago. We, the 299 Association had unfortunately lost contact with him and only found out about his death from one of our members, which is very sad as we like to look after our own and would have attended his funeral. Details are scarce, but we think he was about 78 years of age, ex- 1st Battalion Para Reg. We don't have a photo as yet of him with a Royal Engineer Cap badge, but this was taken whilst in training in 1959, (photo attached), and view on request), if any of you guys have more information of him feel free to let me know.

Gaz Coe: message Bd, 7/12/2017. Many thanks to those members who managed to turn out to help this year with the 'Santa's Grotto' project for the children of North Brandsholme Estate. Councillor **Harrison** sends her best wishes to all at 299 and thanks everybody for their support in this annual Civic event.

Ian Reed: (Director of the Yorkshire Air Museum) E-mail, 13/12/2017. Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year, from the Yorkshire Air Museum, "Joyeux Noel et Bonne Amee", (to all our friends and supporters). (Links attached & sent to those who can receive).

Norman Arksey: message Bd, 14/12/2017. Thanks to this association for continuing to send the meeting minutes to me, I do appreciate it. I've just had the all clear from the medics and feeling a lot better all-round. I wish all the lads that know me a Merry Christmas and a great New Year, and to those who don't, the same.

Take care of yourselves, from an old colleague of the association. Cheers lads & your families, **Norman**. (The National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association Christmas card from **Norman** was passed around).

Chris Shillito: message Bd, 14/12/2017. **Norman**, on behalf of the 299 Association we are so pleased that you have had the all clear and look forward to seeing at the meetings in the Minerva. Have a great Christmas, all the very best to you and your family.

Gaz Coe: message Bd, 15/12/2017. Is there anybody reading this message board who are not receiving the meeting minutes directly to their computer, 'just ask me for them' likewise, if you want your name removing from the mailing list. Mind reading is not yet my forte. Season's Greetings, G.

Gaz Coe: message Bd. 17/12/2017. Sorry to bring bad news, at 2am today that Associate member and long-time friend of this association **Dave (Dazzle) Skoyles** passed away after waiting a long time for essential heart surgery which never came

in time, we will miss this ex REME friend, especially on the Arnhem trips. Condolences from this association will be taken care of, and we await further details.

Ray Franklin: message Bd, 19/12/2017. Funeral arrangements for **Dave Skoyles**; 10.30hrs Friday 29th December at Haltemprice Crematorium, Main St, Willerby, Hull, HU10 6NS. After at the 'Ship Inn' Dunswell, HU6 0AJ. The land lord (**Jonno Palmer**) & **Dave's** family welcome all 299 & friends on this very sad occasion.

Anita Harrison (Councillor): message Bd. 23/12/2017. A big thank you for helping with the festive lights at urban, (Brandsholm Estate), hope to see you next year, have a lovely Xmas and New Year xx.

John Phillips: message Bd. 23/12/2017. Wishing all 299 Association a very HAPPY CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR. Regards and respect from all with 301 & AEA Birmingham.

Chris Shillito: message Bd, 24/12/2017. Gentlemen, I and **Craig Gadd** visited the veterans Breakfast Club, we took a cheque for £270 donated by the 299 Association, and we enjoyed a breakfast at the Oyster Catcher and was made very welcome by the founder **Pete Barker** and his team, who are doing a great job. This money was collected in games and raffles at the AEA, AGM dinner, well done to all concerned.

I would like to wish all you 299ers out there a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and also to thank **Jonny the wallet Phillips** for his season's greetings from our Birmingham Bro's, and wish them all the very best in the coming year, from the men of the 299 Association.

Tony Costello: message Bd, 24/12/2017. Christmas Eve 2017 I will be at a Carol Service at St. Barnabas Church, Swanland.
Christmas Eve 1947, Seventy years ago I was at Midnight Mass. In the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem.
Memories: Salaam Aleekum.

Dean Ideson: message Bd, 28/12/2017. Hope my 299 family have had a wonderful Christmas with family & friends. I'm upset to hear the sad news about **Dave**, which is always made that bit worse this time of the year. Although on duty & unable to get off work on Friday, I will do my best to show my face and join you all to give **Dave** the send-off he deserves – **RIP Dave**.

Alan Lee: message Bd, 28/12/2017. Hi all, hope you all had a good Christmas. I was saddened to hear about **Dave Skoyles** or Cpl as I knew him in my time with 218, **Dave** gave me my first insight into off road driving as a very young 18yr old, and I never forgot it, up the steep side of a disused railway viaduct in a Land rover before entrusting me with the wheel with his tuition. I have only learned about this today by receiving a txt msg from **Shegsey** and I am grateful for that, giving me chance to attend the Crematorium to say goodbye, **RIP Dave**.

Mike (Ozzie) Holdsworth: E-mail, 1/1/2018. All the best for 2018 to all 299 from the 'Brums' he gives a bit of free advice; "do not to eat yellow snow"
Birmingham News; **Whally Gee** has been over for the Christmas period and goes back to Melbourne on 9th Jan. just as **Ozz** heads out for Brisbane in February, have given him 'Farkies' e-mail, **Tom Smith** is to stand in as Secretary during his absence.
These 'Black country' blokes have been busy over the festive period with feeding & helping the homeless, plus raising money for the local Sea Cadets, also doing the father Christmas thing for the needy children, it's all good 'stuff' and a pat on the back to them all.
"Bunny continues to make progress and is now persistent in trying to lose a few pounds by walking with a Zimmer frame rather than his electric scooter. We drank to remember **Roy Hick RIP** at the last meeting with a drop of brandy provided by his son **Garry**. **Bunny** fell over when he got home and cut his head, Para medics got him to bed"

Paul Robbie: message Bd, 2/1/2018. Just like to send my best wishes for 2018 to the men of the association, I will try and get to a couple of meetings this year and have a pint or two.

Capt. Olaf Dudley: E-mail, 2/1/2018. Moving on. Dear all, today has been my last day in 131 as I am transferring within the Army Reserve to London District to take up a civil engagement post within HQ at Horse Guards. The full letter was read out at the meeting.

Ian Richardson: (Communication Manager Yorkshire Air Museum), E-mail, 3/1/2018. Dear Association Secretary, please find attached invitation letter and booking form for participation in the 2018 Allied Air Forces Memorial Day. This year, we will of course be proudly marking the formation of the Royal Air Force and Women's Royal Air Force. In addition the Centenary of the Armistice and the end of World War 1, therefore we are anticipating greater attendance at this poignant international ceremony than ever.
May we also take this opportunity to extend our very Best Wishes for a happy and successful 2018?

N/B: Allied Air Forces Memorial Day – Sunday 2nd September 2018, the script was read out at the meeting, but remember, it's early days and the full itinerary is not yet known, but I assure you it will be special this year.

Social Calendar: E-mail from **Capt. Stuart Jordan** 131 Cdo. Sqn. RE.

Informal Celebratory Evening – Sat 24 Feb 2018 at Kingsbury – Promotion of Olaf Dudley to Major and 40 years of 131 as a Commando Squadron.

You are cordially invited to an informal **Celebratory Evening at Kingsbury on Saturday 24th February.**

2018 marks the **40th anniversary of the Squadron becoming a Commando unit**; and for 32 of those years, from recruit to Captain, **Olaf Dudley** has been an integral part of the Squadron.

January 2018 sees **Capt. Olaf Dudley promoted to Major and moving out of the Squadron.**

To serving and former members alike, **Olaf** has been a true friend, valued leader and wholehearted exponent of the Commando spirit. This evening will provide an opportunity for us to thank **Olaf** for his immense and highly valued contribution to the Squadron and its associated Commando family, congratulate him on his promotion and celebrate 40 successful year's as a Commando unit. Those who know **Olaf** well will appreciate that he is not the one to shine the spotlight on himself and he is keen for the evening to be a wider celebration of the Squadron in this 40th anniversary year.

I hope you are able to join us for the evening. If you are, then please reply by email to the undersigned indicating whether you require parking / supper / cot. Further details will follow in due course.

Parking will be available at the unit,

A curry supper will be provided (at minimal cost),

Basic accommodation in the drill hall will be available (usual drills; first come first served, cot beds provided, bring your own sleeping system),

Wets and toast available to get you going in the morning (some great cafes close by for a fry up).

In the meantime, **Olaf** is being dined out of the Squadron on 20th January, therefore please feel free to send me any suitable memorable stories that we could use in evidence during his leaving presentation!!

Stuart.Jordan@arup.com

Chairman's Comments:

Chis Shillito: thanked the 20 association members who attended the Funeral of our old friend and member **Dave Skoyles** on the 29/12/2017, it was a dark, wet and miserably day for saying good bye to this quite ex REME man, who commanded so much respect as to cram the Church full to bursting point, standing room only. It was a heart wrenching service including memories from his loving wife **Sam** and son **Stuart**, who displayed magnificent character in delivering their words, this was followed by refreshments at his local; The Ship Inn, Dunswell.

Dave was taken far too early, and some would say his death was preventable, but what can be said is this association will miss this kind & honest man, who served as a REME reservist for many years, seeing active service with NATO forces during the former Yugoslavian/Balkans conflict, we all left the service to a very appropriate piece of music 'Search for the Hero inside yourself' by **M. People**. Donations in **David's** memory went to Hull4Heroes.

Eulogy for Dave Skoyles:

It was deeply upsetting to learn of the sudden passing of Dave Skoyles. I remember meeting Dave when he enlisted into the REME Workshop of 218 RC7 (V) Sqn. during the 1970's. Straight away it was very obvious he was going to be a great asset to the Workshop. His attitude, manner, sense of humour, along with his wide engineering skills were second to none. He became a fantastic team member, always willing to get stuck into whatever the task, and willing to help others.

Some of the best times were when we got together at the end of the day, or evening, in the REME 'corner' of the bar, we mulled anything over and had some great times. Dave really was a stalwart in a great team of lads, who never shied away from any task.

Dave became a highly respected figure, not just within the Workshop, but by everybody who met him. He was a great friend to everybody.

It is such a tragic, sad and unfair loss. I can only think that 'Him upstairs' was in a fix, and Dave was the only one who could do the job!

It was a privilege to have worked with Dave, drank with him and to have him as a friend. I personally was so grateful of the support and encouragement he and the other Workshop lads gave me when I went to train with 299 Troop. Dave became a respected associate member of 299 Association, joining them on the Arnhem trips.

Thanks Dave for a great time. You haven't gone you know, because you'll never be forgotten. May I offer my sincerest sympathy and condolences to Sam and all of Dave's family? Rest in Peace Dave.

Dave Woollas.

Message from **Dave Skoye's** family to **Dean Ideson**, passed on by **Colin Walker**: **Dave's** lad asked me to pass the family's thank you to you. Apparently, **Dave** often used to speak to them about you attending funerals whenever you were able. **Dave** thought it was special that you managed to attend so often in uniform.

Stuart said that when the family turned into the approach road to the Crematorium, they were very strong and holding it together, they first saw 299 personnel waiting in line, and they started to lose it, they then saw you **Dean** and they fell apart because they all knew what it would have meant to **Dave** to see you there.

From the family, thank you very much **Dean**.

N/B: Dean Ideson is a serving Police Officer.

Chris informed the meeting that today is **Bunny Browns** birthday and he is sending him an association tie from us all.

He emphasised the fact that the Arnhem Pilgrimage is been thrown open to all comers, if you want to go YOU MUST ACT NOW, tomorrow may be too late.

Possible **NEW 299 ASSOCIATION BLAZER BADGE** based on a design submitted by **Capt. John C. Thompson 1 Troop OC 299 Para Sqn RE**. The new design was shown to all and a sample badge is to be commissioned for the membership to view for approval, we await sample and costings, the Chairman feels that if accepted, this action alone signifies that we are moving on towards a newer, and more progressive 299 Association, looking forward to even better things ahead.

Major Olaf Dudley or 'Duds' This opened up a whole debate about the man, **Chris** praised his dedication to 131 as well as his integrity and this was also followed by many accolades from other members at this meeting, just too many to mention, there was a strong support for the Kingsbury 'do' on the 24th Feb. and **Gaddy** has kindly volunteered to coordinate the operation down to London, therefore if you want to be a part of this, contact him on Mob: 07974086591.

I would just like spare a thought for a few of our friends that are struggling with health issues at this moment in time; **Paul Hairsine, Carol Mace, Brad Steele, Bunny Brown, Debbie Foster, Nev Smales, Fay Duffy, Linda Kitching**, we wish them all the best in their quest to get well again.

Matters arising:

Yet again we have people to thank; **Kenny Russell** brought stuff from home that he'd finished with, old Journals and Box sets of the military kind.

Dave Hinds has gone into production again with more 299 dairies and car window transfer stickers displaying the new association motif, these sold like hot cakes and between them both raised £30 for our coffers. Many thanks to them.

Items from members:

Tony Kitching put it to the meeting for those who wish to have a Clay Pigeon shooting day, and he was prepared to organise it if the numbers were right, it was put to the floor and he got the numbers, therefore he is looking at a day in March TBC. The Landlord of the Bay Horse, Cherry Burton will put on a free buffet.

OPEN INVITATION TO ALL 299 FOR THE 80TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF FRANK (BUD) POUCHER

It's to be held at: The North Ferriby Social Club

6 Low Street, North Ferriby, Near Hull, HU14 3DD -----Tel: 01482 634864

Kick off 8pm on Saturday 17th February 2018, just come as you are---!

Simbo's Bus Stop: one winner this month Keith Robbie, those who have!

Web site address: www.299association.com

Next Meeting: To be held at 20.00hrs at the Minerva on 2nd February 2018, Cooperation Pier, Hull.

Dates for your diary:

Informal Celebratory Evening – Sat 24th Feb 2018 at Kingsbury, see email.

Arnhem Pilgrimage 2018, Thursday night 20th Sept (overnight ferry) ----- Monday (morning) 24th Sept.

Yorkshire Air Museum Memorial Day: 2nd Sept. 2018, details TBC.

With nothing more to discuss the Chairman closed the meeting thanking all for their company.