



299 ASSOCIATION

Charity No: 1009201

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: 2nd May 2014

Members Present: R. Abel, M. Beardshaw, G. Beaumont, G. Coe, N. Cooper, G. Crum, T. Cunningham, W. Draper, W. Drayton, A. Irwin, S. Knowles, J. Mace, M. Maddison, A. Mossop, H. Nelson' Girtchen, S. Oliver, F. Pougher, L. Ransom, G. Ratten, K. Robinson, P. Robinson, P. Robson, K. Russell, C. Shillito, P. Sims, N. Sisson, R. Swatman, Mart. Tindle. Mike. Tindle, A.Weldon, C. Woodward.

Apologies: A. Costello, J. Duffy, C. Gadd, A. Grimes, P. Hairsien, J. Harrison, D. Harvey, S. Hoyle, D. Ideson, A. Kitchen, K. Saddington, C. Walker.

Guests: R. Franklin.

Welcome and 'Roll Call'

The chairman welcomed all present then opened the meeting.

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

Proposed by – A. Irwin

Seconded by – A. Weldon

Minutes of the last AGM: Our Chairman, Bill Drayton reported that the minutes of the last AGM were not taken; the following statement was included in the June 2013 minutes:
Apology; Chairman, (A.Mossop), apologised for the failure to submit any minutes for the AGM/OGM meetings of May 2013, this was due to work and family commitments. The current secretary Gary Coe had been voted into this vacant position unanimously, after been proposed by G. Ratten and seconded by A. Mossop.

Treasure's Report: Our treasurer Martin Tindle gave a full and comprehensive report on the state of our funds but had to report that unfortunately our bank account has now been **frozen on the 14th April** due to attempted access by our previous Chairman A. Mossop, who resigned the Chair in February 2014, Martin has contacted A. Mossop for clarification and reasons for his actions, this problem is to be rectified by Tony Mossop during the next few days.

Chairman's Report: The chairman thanked the members for their support over the last two meetings, these have been difficult times and your support was not only needed but greatly appreciated.

The first items to be mentioned were resignations; there has been a letter of resignation from this association by M. Hookem, dated the 6th November 2013, this is now accepted and therefore finalised.

Another letter of resignation was posted on the 299 message board from A. Mossop who resigned the Chair on the 13th February 2014 with immediate effect, this was also accepted.

He then welcomed all our newcomers: Craig Gadd, Tony Grimes, Paul Hairsien, Graham Beaumont, Wally Holbrook and Cpt. John Thompson, OC, 1Trp. 299 Para.

He then asked the meeting to stand with glasses in hand and toast our lost friends: Gordon Coupland, Tony Beardshaw, Colin Ryder, Bill Dick, and Colin Bowden. Pray; they shall not grow old-----.

Secretary's Report: The secretary also thanked the members for their support shown to the committee during a period in this association history, which at times has proved taxing, to say the least. He then gave an account of the highlights enjoyed during the last year and thanked all those who made it possible, this included: The hunt for the "Shoulder of Mutton" with Les.Ransom around Hardwick Hall, May 2013, thanks to S. Knowles. The brilliant trip to the BoB flight at RAF Coningsby, August 2013, thanks to D. Ideson. Our annual pilgrimage to Arnhem, Sept. 2013, thanks to Mart & Mal Tindle. Presentation & social night at the Ship Inn, Dec.2013, thanks to J. Palmer and Bill Dick. Les Ransom's 92 birthday bash, April 2014, thanks to J. Palmer again.

He went on to congratulate this association for the best turn out from this association so far for the Remembrance Day parade in Hull, thus giving us all a good target to try and equal or better this year, also many thanks for the welcome we all received from Cpt. John Thompson and his men back at the barracks, a good day for all concerned and a much needed friendship building occasion by the members towards the 299 men, that for far too long had been excluded from this association.

Our standard bearer Colin Woodward had to be thanked by us all; our colours have been carried endlessly by Colin throughout the year, not just for our benefit and needs, but as a part of the CESA organization, (Combined Ex Services Association). This is all done on a voluntary basis, "Woody" a job well done and thank you.

The secretary reminded everybody of the following; "nobody owns this association, it is not a private club under the total control of a chosen "FEW" with everybody else just making up the numbers, **it belongs to us all** and it is precious, money cannot buy this. We must never allow this to be taken away from us" Everybody is welcome and needed, we **ALL** contribute by our very presence, nobody is more important than anybody else and until we **ALL** embrace these factors there will always be discontentment. Please do not come to the meetings with a heavy heart set on causing mischief and disruption, leave arrogance at the door, we don't want it, if you don't like the situation, just don't come, you do not have to resign, just find something else you enjoy doing on a meeting night and leave 299 in peace. We now have our own official bouncer "**Reckless Ricardo Abel**" so take note.

The Committee Stood Down: nominations and elections for a new committee.

The secretary asked the meeting for volunteers to take on any of the vacant committee positions and the room fell silent, one man, Bill Draper put his name forward for the position of Chairman, this was put to the members but turned down, Bill was thanked for showing his commitment towards 299. The existing committee had offered to serve for one more year; this was put to the vote and accepted by a large majority.

This committee promises to serve the members wishes at all times when given a majority vote, regardless of their own individual preferences and opinions.

Outstanding Business Awaiting Decisions': The motion tabled at the last meeting to remove membership restrictions placed upon certain past and all serving members of 299 Squadron were to be voted on, the motion reads; **the criteria for full membership of the 299 Association will be as follows:**

a) All serving members of 299 Squadron.

b) Any man that served with 299 in whatever status, (Red or Green).

Airborne Engineers Association membership will be optional and not mandatory.

This motion had been proposed by A. Irwin and seconded by T. Cunningham

The motion was carried by a majority of; 24 for acceptance and 4 against.

The motion for moving away from the affiliation with the AEA has been suspended indefinitely because of two reasons;

1) The bank account is in abeyance.

2) Because I would like to share with you all, a letter received from John Lee, (AEA President), which I will reproduce for you to read and digest, this letter opens up a whole new concept highlighting the relationship between the AEA and its branches. It is definitely worth considering; this offers a new agenda for this 299 Association, your thoughts and comments will be welcomed. Those of you, who are disappointed in not moving away from the AEA at this moment in time, must remember this is only a suspension and the vote can be put to the members at any time in the future, there is no time limit, you only have to ask.

TO ALL MEMBERS OF 299 ASSOCIATION BRANCH, AEA

I have been aware for some time now of the feelings about continued membership of the Airborne Engineers Association (AEA) by some members of 299 Association Branch. I served in 131 Sqn from 1967 to 1982 in both the parachute and commando roles and knew many of the older members of 299 Troop personally; indeed, I was dined out of the Squadron at Hull at the end of my service with 131. With these facts and my current position as President of the Association I think that I can justifiably say that I can speak with some authority.

As I understand it the main item of contention is the membership position of those commandos only trained members of the branch. At the time of the discussions about 299 joining, it was appreciated that there were some members who fell into the above category and after discussion between the then Executive Committee and the then Chairman of 299 Association it was agreed that a special dispensation would be made for those members. Those commandos only trained members of 299 Association at the time of joining the AEA would be allowed to be full members, (it is after all the Airborne Engineers Association). This dispensation was confirmed by an e-mail dated 5th June 2009, (copy attached) from me to Mike Hookem, also copied to the then Association Chairman Joe Stoddart, and was discussed and approved at the next meeting of 299 Association.

Within the constitution, 'Branch Honorary Members' can also be admitted, they would have all the rights of full members except that of voting at formal AEA meetings, however, they can vote at branch meetings and thus play a full part in the activities. All the other branches have honorary members who do just that.

Having read the minutes of your branch meetings I can justifiably say that there have a number of inaccurate statements made, and I hope the above information will go some way towards rectifying

these. I am somewhat at a loss to understand the concerns of those members who are unhappy at the present situation. As explained above, at branch level they are full members and are welcome to any formal AEA event.

Should you wish to break away from the AEA have you asked yourselves what would you actually gain? All branches 'DO THEIR OWN THING' without any hindrances from the AEA, there are NO RULES telling them what they can or cannot do, and in some cases they can apply for assistance if necessary for a particular event. Examples of these are visits organized by branches open to other members, sporting and adventure activities and of course commemoration services at home and abroad. The excellent Gala Dinner organized by your organization and was enjoyed by all attendees.

The AEA was formed to promote friendship and re-uniting old comrades and now in our 25th year I feel that the aspiration of the founder members has been fully realized. **By staying in the association you can all take part in this as well. I sincerely hope that you will seriously consider the options at the AGM next month and accept that there is in my opinion no benefit to be obtained by formally leaving the AEA.**

Yours sincerely

John Lee
(President) AEA

Perhaps if this set of guide lines had been adhered too within the 299 association we would not be facing this predicament. The **"present situation"** John talks about is all foreign to us. Just some minor corrections; the exit of the AEA by some members, should read; most members, only six wanted to stay within the AEA affiliation. Any inaccurate statements made, may well be due to the failure of previous administrations in producing essential documentation asked for by the members, on many occasions. Only a selected few from this association will have ever set eyes on this format, this is a welcome first for most members.

The Chairman then closed the AGM.

For those of us who are not sure, what is our position at this moment in time?

1) First and foremost we ALL belong to 299 Association by presence of service, past or present with 299 Squadron or Troop, Red or Green.

2) Some members of 299 Association have joined the Airborne Engineers Association (AEA), more than 50%, this factor allows the 299 Association to be affiliated, linked or loosely attached in May 2009 to the AEA and any benefits this may offer.

3) Some members may have joined other associations; PRA, (Parachute Regimental Association), for example, in this case you'd belong to three associations and on and on.

4) But the one thing we ALL have in common is 299," because that's who we are"

ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

Correspondence: I have received a letter from Jackie Goodall the event organiser for the;

Arnhem 70th Commemoration Woodall Spa, I will forward relevant information for those on the computer and copies for those via post. Please read, I will make a preliminary booking for 20 people over the next few days but will want definite's by the next meeting. We can talk about possible sponsorship at a later date.

Web Site: The web site titled 299 Association has got absolutely nothing to do with this association; it is privately owned and operated by a former 299'er G. Newton, who is a law unto himself, therefore anything presented on his site has no authenticity and you use it at your own discretion, please do not expect any feedback from any posted messages. This information has only become common knowledge over the last few weeks and I apologise on behalf of the committee to anybody who has been misled.

Apology from Dave Harvey; Dave offered his apology via Tony Mossop for saluting at Colin Bowdens funeral, no offence was meant and non taken Dave, I'm dammed sure Col. couldn't have cared less, but thanks all the same.

Next Meeting: 6th June 2014, 20.00hrs at the Minerva, Cooperation Pier, Hull.

Dates for your diary:

ABF W/end 2014 to be hosted by 299 Para Sqn RE at their Wakefield barracks on the 11th – 12 July 2014 for full details contact WO2 Vince May 299 Sqn direct

Forces Memorial Day – Yorkshire Air Museum, Elvington, Nr. York.
Sunday 7th September 2014.

Arnhem Pilgrimage 2014

The 6 day option 16/9/2014 – 22/9/2014

The 4 day option 18/9/2014 – 22/9/2014

Remembrance Sunday 9th November 2014

