



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

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: 1st May 2015

Members Present: Baldry, Barker, Beardshaw, Beaumont, Bilton, Cherry, Coe, Cooper, Costello, Crum, Cunningham, Franklin, Davis, Drayton, Duffy, Duggan, Gadd, Grindley, Hairsien, Ham, Harvey, Hines, Hoyle, Ideson, Irwin, Kitching, Lickiss, Mace, Maddison, McMahon, Oldfield, Ovington, Ransom, Ratten, Robinson, Robson, Russell, Saddington, C. Sangwin, R. Sangwin, Shillito, Sims, Smales, Smith, Steele, Thompson, Mart.Tindle, Mick.Tindle, Walker, Weldon, Wilcock, Woollas, Woodward, Yates.

Apologies: I. Chapman, T. Walker, C. Henrickson, F. Rands, H. Leake, F. Pougher, R. Swatman, J. Brooks, A. Morris, P. Robinson.

Guests: B. Bridges.

Welcome and 'Roll Call'

The Chairman welcomed all present to a very well attended AGM, (54), and then opened the meeting by thanking all for attending the group photo, a brilliant show of strength especially those of you from out of town. Many old association men not seen for years making the effort; **make it a habit you'd wish to continue.**

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

Proposed by – G. Ratten

Seconded by – M. Maddison

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Minutes of the last AGM: The Chairman, Bill Drayton reported that he was pleased to announce a significant increase in the membership this year, mainly due to the removal of membership restrictions placed upon all serving 299 men, and certain Commando trained men.

The vote for removing these restrictions took place at last year's AGM and was carried by **24 for removing restrictions, and 4 against.**

For the first time since 2009, all 299 men where NOW welcomed into this association.

The motion for moving away from the affiliation with the AEA was suspended indefinitely at the last AGM on two counts;

- 1) For the consideration of a letter from the President of the AEA, John Lee, spelling out the truth behind 299's affiliation with the AEA.
- 2) The 299 Association bank account was in abeyance.

The bank account problem was quickly rectified, and the motion to end the affiliation with the AEA still remains "peacefully" on the table.

Treasure's Report: The Treasurer, Martin Tindle gave a full and comprehensive report on the state of our funds which are currently healthy. Names and deposits for this year's Arnhem Pilgrimage are well over due, we do need to know for booking purposes, the cut off point is the end of May. He went on to thank former Troop OC "Bud" Oldfield for his injection of funds which was put to good use at the Les Ransom's birthday "bash"

Chairman's report: Bill Drayton stated that this has been a very good year so far, as compared to the last one, first, thankfully, none of our members have died, and prior to the last AGM we had just recently lost two good friends, Col Bowden & Bill Dick. Their families' wishes where met at Ginkel Heath, Holland, Sept. 2014, as brilliantly described in Dean Ideson's piece for the Humberside police Journal, which is now with Dave Rutter for AEA Journal consideration.

Bill went on to thank the members for their attendance at the Remembrance Parade in Hull, 27 paraded, the best ever. Some very positive feedback came from independent observers.

In January this year we voted to **reintroduce** back into the minutes of the meetings, the Charter produced by Bill Dick during August 2002. This and all it stands for had somehow being **abandoned** by previous administrations, along with the 299 Association's name; the removal of these very **important factors** had been imposed upon the membership to comply with some **imaginary** terms of acceptance / conditions needed for the AEA affiliation of 2009.

Special mention for a few individuals:

On behalf of this association the Chairman thanked the **serving officers and men of 299 Squadron** for their support in all aspects of this association, their involvement and contributions are essential for the very future of this association, without knew young blood this association's outlook would be bleak.

Craig Gadd: for his total involvement in the "**Invictus Games**" from unveiling the medals, to the competing athlete, taking gold in the sitting volley ball.

This man volunteered to take part in the gruelling **Big Battlefield Bike Ride**, raising £2.500 for the Help 4 Heroes charity, thus putting a bit back for the help he had received along the way in coping with his life changing injuries.

We have to congratulate him on the brilliant way he covered the Afghan casualties & evacuation subject on the **BBC's Inside out documentary**, his excellent account left the country in no doubt about the cost our forces have to pay in the line of duty.

Colin Woodward: and his team, **Tony Costello and Tony Irwin**, these few represent this association in many unforeseen ways, and on many occasions. **Woody** and his right hand man **Tony Irwin**, take care of our Standards through thick and thin, displaying at every opportunity, mostly coordinated, transported and supported by **Tony Costello**.

Martin Tindle: for 10yrs loyal and trusted continuous service as a **299 Association committee member**, tested and battled scared, but still there, at this point in the proceedings the Chairman handed over to **former Squadron Training Officer Chris Shillito** who went on give a brief outline on Martin's service career, emphasizing the integrity of the man," he had never heard a bad word spoken against him"

Martin's former **CO, Capt." Bud" Oldfield** was then invited to make a presentation of a **FRED** "Airborne Soldier" on behalf of everybody, as a show of gratitude, he congratulated him on his honesty and dedication to 299 Association. We have to thank Bud for stepping in at such short notice.



Courtesy of Tony Costello

The Chairman then thanked all members for their support, time and efforts in making this association the place to be for a 299 man, this factor alone is reinforced by the numbers attending this evening.

Secretary's report: Gary Coe also thanked all the members, not only for their support and friendship, but for their participation in the many activities and functions enjoyed throughout the year: **Les Ransom** has to be singled out, 2014 was the 70th Anniversary of many events, this man, at his age (93), stepped up to the mark, whenever requested, with an energy and enthusiasm that puts most of us to shame, setting the example of **Airborne brotherhood and friendship** wherever he goes, he brings this ethos, "**spirit de corps**" developed and cultured throughout the ranks of the 1st Airborne Division from way back in the 1940's, and is still evident and essential in **299 Association** to this day, we are very fortunate in having him amongst us, thank you **Les**.

Highlights of the year:

The unveiling of the Airborne Forces memorial at RAF Barkston Heath, Lincolnshire:

Les Ransom (Arnhem Vet) had been invited to unveil this new memorial on the 31st May 2014, this he did and was accompanied by the 299 Chairman **Bill Drayton**.

WO 2 Pete Fenty ex 9 Sqn, Panel addition to his grave, Dedication Service.

299 Association responded to a request from the AEA President to represent the AEA at this dedication service, we fulfilled this commitment with 14 men, plus Standard in attendance on the 14th June 2014 at Cleethorpes Cemetery.

Cleethorpes Air Show: 26 / 27th July 2014.

299 Association and Standard paraded with the PRA at the opening of this Air Show, **Les Ransom, (Arnhem Vet)**, acting as one of the guests of Honour was introduced to the Red Devil display team after the drop, 8 members attended.

The Internment of the MV `Norland` Bell and Battle Honours.

A service and parade was held in Hull on Sunday the 10th August in and around The Holy Trinity Church, 19 men plus Standard attended from this association.

Arnhem 70th Commemoration at Woodhall Spa on the 6th September 2014.

11 men from this association plus the Standard took part in this annual event which included a Church service and Parade.

Annual Pilgrimage to Arnhem.

This trip was made up of 299 Association members and friends of 299 and was split into two groups, a 4 day, and a 6 day option, in total 54 people enjoyed the trip.

Our comrades ashes were carried by Squadron parachutists after been included on the jump manifest, (their last jump), and delivered onto the DZ for a service and release by the relatives, this was their last wish.

Social Night at the Ship Inn, Dunswell, Near Beverley on the 2nd April 2015.

This evening was planned to coincide with **Les Ransom's 93rd birthday**, another one to remember.

Battle of Britain Memorial Flight visit to RAF Coningsby, Lincolnshire, on 16th April 2015.

25 association men and friends enjoyed this visit, a great day out for all concerned.

Norland Bell and Battle Honours Memorial Service at the Holy Trinity Church on the 19th April 2015.

6 association men plus Standard attended.

Father Finn's Centenary Memorial Mass held at the Sacred Heart Church, Hull at noon on the 25th April 2015, (ANZAC DAY).

9 association men including Standard attended.

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 positions; he had received no written requests for consideration, but was prepared to put any late calls to the membership for them to decide, there were no takers. The previous committee agreed to stand for another year and this proposal was accepted at the vote unanimously. The committee thanked everybody in acknowledging their support.

ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

Association men with the CESA contingent of Standard bearer's, pictured with **Bishop Terrence Patrick Drainey** who conducted the Centenary Commemoration Mass for that hero from Hull; **Fr. William Finn**, killed doing God's work on the 25th April 1915 'V' beach, Gallipoli peninsular. The group pictured outside The Sacred Heart Church, Hull, built in memorandum by his brother, Frank Finn.



Courtesy of P. Harbour, (Hull Daily Mail)

25th April 2015

Social Calendar:

If there are any members wanting the association to organize another trip in conjunction to the Arnhem Pilgrimage for next year, (2016), now is the time to put your names and wishes forward, the committee would want a consensus on all aspects, ie estimated cost, destination, time scale and duration. Please don't ignore this if you would like to do something different next year. Craig Gadd has volunteered to be a point of contact, he needs your names and wishes, or you could use any committee member to pass your message on.

Face book: the committee will have nothing to do with the associations face book site; therefore if you want your message heard you must speak to the committee directly.

Matters arising: Blazer Badges

Unfortunately somebody masquerading as a representative of this association is intent on causing mischief for us all, **BEWARE**, the usual venue for association badge embroidery work is now compromised, therefore we are sourcing a new supplier for our needs, for safety reasons it would be best to go through Chris Shillito.

Welfare report: Good to see Graham Beaumont at the meeting, still awaiting further treatment but looking loads better. It's a big thank you to Johnny Mace for making this possible.

"Bud" Pougher is improving by the day, sends his apologies for missing the AGM / photo shoot, doctors orders kept him away.

Items from members: Message from "Bud" Oldfield thanking the association men for making him, Nev and John, (the "Donny" contingent), so very welcome, great to see the lads again and he can't believe that Nev managed another "**Sea Splash**" at this stage in his life; he was always the lucky one. He went on to thank their old pal and ours, Terry Cunningham for sorting out the digs and the logistics of their visit.

The Secretary sends a massive thank you to Tony Costello on behalf of all at this association; the time and effort this man puts in is astounding. Tony organized and ran this evening's photo shoot, contributes endless material to both me and the editor of the AEA Journal, (Dave Rutter), not bad going for an ex 6th Div. Palestine Vet.

Les Ransom: Les has a message to everybody at 299 and wishes it to be written into the minutes:

"My connection with this association and its men means everything to me, I am so proud and privileged in having you all as friends, when you get to my stage in life, 'I have passed my sell by date', there are not many old mates left and I know I'm very fortunate to be classed as just one of the 299 lad's. I am honoured in being a part of your association and so grateful for the kindness that you all have shown me over the years, I do hope we have many more good times to come and I wish you all the very best, thank you, Les"

The association has to thank Tony Irwin for framing the "Founder Members" script by Jack Brooks to be installed at 299 Squadron HQ, Wakefield by Major Chris Wilcock.

The association thanks "Weldo" for sorting out the meeting room at the Minerva.

The association thanks "Simbo" for organizing the "Bus stops" tonight's winners were; - Keith Robbie and Jim Cherry. Somebody failed to pick up their change, the bus stop was over and above what it should have been, if you have a claim please contact the Treasurer, Martin on Tel: 01482 653618.

Hot off the press: Just received this from Martin Tindle:

"Just thought I'd let you all know that "Fred" has made himself at home on my mantle piece and I'm also very happy that he's here, so thanks for all the effort you put in to get him here and everyone else who conspired behind my back to surprise me, thanks again its very much appreciated. See you all soon, Martin"

Next Meeting: To be held at the "Minerva" Corporation Pier, Hull, at 2000hrs on Friday 5th June 2015.

Dates for your diary:

Commando Sappers Reunion 15 – 17 May 2015 at the Royal Marine Base, Chivenor, Devon

Serving & former Commando trained members of 131 Indep Cdo Sqn, please do your best to attend this fantastic event.

Email: 131cdo@armymail.mod.uk for an application form by return, and/or see the Secretary for further details.

The itinerary reads: “Friday night in the bar, update, photo and military stands on Saturday morning, followed by the usual veterans vs. serving golf match, REA charity raffle, bar and live band playing a journey through the decades.

National Arboretum: Saturday 16th May 2015: Palestine Vets day, Standards will be paraded.

Hardwick Hall: Sunday 17th May 2015

Les Ransom has been formally invited to lay wreaths at the home of the 1st Airborne Division by the Parachute Regimental Association, amongst the day's itinerary there will be a Free Fall Para Drop, March past, stalls, etc. We all finish up as guests of the Chesterfield PRA for a dammed good buffet. Anybody interested in joining Les for the day out, please let the Secretary know ASAP. N/B it will be an early start.

Airborne Forces Day at Eden Camp on the 11th July 2015

Admission free for wearer's of the maroon beret...! Standards are to be paraded.

Summer Ball at the Middleton Barracks, Hull, on Saturday 2nd of August 2015 (details to follow)

Arnhem Pilgrimage 2015

One trip this year: 17th – 21st September 2015

Wreath laying at Cromwell Lock: 27th September 2015, (provisionally)

It is the 40th Anniversary of the Cromwell Lock disaster when 10 of our Scottish friends perished whilst taking part in the **Trent Chase exercise of 1975**; (further details to follow).

The AEA Reunion/AGM 16th – 19th October 2015 at Coventry, (for more info see the Sec.)

Remembrance Sunday: 8th November 2015

