



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: Friday 5th May 2017.

Members Present: M. Beardshaw, G. Beaumont, B. Bilton, K. Blacker, J. Brooks, N. Busby, J. Cherry, G. Coe, N. Cooper, A. Costello, T. Cunningham, W. Drayton, C. Duggan, A. Foster, R. Franklin, D. French, M. Gadd, A. Garforth, R. Gill, A. Green, A. Grimes, P. Hairsine, C. Ham, C. Henrickson, D. Hines, D. Ideson, A. Irwin, P. Jefferson, A. Lee, J. Mace, M. Maddison, S. McMahon, P. McGlynn, D. Meekin, O. A. Nelson-Circhen, G. Newton, F. Pougher, L. Ransom, G. Ratten, K. Robinson, P. Robson, K. Russell, K. Saddington, S. Saxby, C. Shillito, P. Sims, L. Smith, B. Steele, A. Stimpson, A. Thomas, J. Thompson, Mart. Tindle, C. Walker, A. Weldon, A. Windass.

Apologies: F. Gray, J. Duffy, B. Oldfield, N. Smales, J. Davis, C. Gadd, M. Hall, D. Barker, D. Harvey, S. Hoyle, A. Kitching, C. Likiss, T. Walker, C. Wilcock, D. Woollas.

Guests: Mike (Ozzy), Holdsworth & Johnny Philips, two of our friends from Birmingham.

Welcome and 'Roll Call'

The Chairman; **Chris Shillito** welcomed all present then opened the meeting which was exceptionally well attended, 55 attendees with many not seen for a while, A special welcome to **Adam Garforth, (Garth)**, one of our veteran Commandos who now lives between Bulgaria and Thailand, half a year in each, "variety is the spice of life" and we are lucky to catch him because unfortunately his visits to the UK are few and far between, this been a great way to catch up with some old mates. **Gazza Newton** dropped in after been to hell & back with some life changing health issues, also a number of first timers which is always good to see, this is mainly thanks to **Tommo** and others spreading the word, then allowing the paly-pal network to kick in. Our "Brummie friends" are always welcome with a big thank you to **Simbo** for looking after them.

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

Proposed by – **Keith Robinson.**

Seconded by – **Pete Robson**

Treasure's Annual Report:

The Treasurer; **Mart Tindle** gave a comprehensive account of our funds which remain in good order, especially after the injection of cash allocated to this association for our participation in the Lord Mayor of Kingston upon Hull's annual Charity Appeal for the year 2015 – 2016. He went on to praise member's money making efforts: **Simbo's Bus stops made £360**

over the past year and £170 was raised through the efforts of **Tony Costello** and **Dave Hines**. This means our annual admin costs are covered thus eliminating the need to collect subscriptions with all the hassle that this can bring.

He reminded the meeting that all monies for this year's Arnhem Pilgrimage must be paid by tonight, the final list of names for this trip are needed by the carriers for the booking of hotels & ferries. If you've missed tonight's deadline and still wish to be included, please contact Martin ASAP on Tel: 01482 653618 or e-mail : martintindle@hotmail.com Names are needed for the ferry cabins, this Arnhem weekend is heavily booked and is already full for the Hull-Rotterdam crossing, and we are now looking at the Hull- Zeebrugge crossing, any back word given after the ferries are booked could be a cost to the association funds.

Secretary's summary of key events over the past yearr: Gary Coe

The year had started badly with the sad loss to this associations of our Standard Bearer, friend and comrade **Colin (Woody) Woodward**, he died on Saturday 28th May 2016. He showed great courage in dealing with his terminal prognosis, displaying a strength of character that would surprise many who thought they knew him well.

His funeral took place on the 9th June 2016 with an audience that overfilled the Chapel, a multitude of association men, friends and family, all wanted to show their love and respect for this quiet, unassuming and honest man, whose obituary may well have read; "Always Steadfast"

John Tidyman's Funeral, (13th June 2016), Ex 6th Airborne division, Para Regt & Palestine Veteran.

Men from this association responded to a request from the Chairman of the Hull Branch of the PRA, **Don Shaw, (ex 299)** to make a presence, with Standard for his funeral, this request was fulfilled with nine, 299 men stepping forward.

At the July meeting **Craig Gadd, (Gaddy)**, declared his intensions for a sponsored free fall jump in aid of the BLESMA Charity, (British Limbless Ex Serviceman's Association). The meeting stood up for his challenge and voted to donate £300 from the association funds in support, many individuals from this association also sponsored him independently, **Dave & Pauline Meekin** threw in £100, just one example, the free fall weekend was a total success, raising £1800 for the cause. Well done **Gaddy**, just putting a bit back.

Another good 299 man died on the 5th July **Trevor Key**, who would never join any association, said it was against his religion, but was always a popular member of the Squadron, serving during the late 50's – early 60's, (Cyprus & Aden). His funeral on the 15th was supported by 12 men from this association plus Standard, carried by Tony Irwin, much to the appreciation of his family, **Trev** lived in the fast lane, spending most of his life in Africa, he never lost his quest for adventure.

S/Sgt Carl Ham posted the following: "our association member and friend **Capt. John Thompson** is handing his kit in after many years of service with 299 and he invited all members of 299, past and present to come to the Middleton Barracks on Sat 10th Sept for a social send-off bash"

Tony Weldon, (Weldo), 70yrs young had just completed "**The Walk of the World**" in the Netherlands for the fourteenth successive time, he has the scars and the medals to prove it.

On Sat 16th July 2016 a group from this association, led by that 94yr old Arnhem Vet **Les Ransom** Paraded with Standard at Eden Camp for The Airborne Forces Day, (Northern). This developed into a liquid reunion with our old friends from the Grimsby Branch of the PRA. Standard carried by Tony Irwin.

2 Para held an extraordinary function at Merville Barracks, Colchester on the 8th Sept and had invited **Les Ransom, (one of John Frosts men)**, to be one of their guests of honour, he was accompanied by **Tony Costello**, who produced a marvellous write up for the AEA Journal.

Arnhem Pilgrimage on the 15th Sept. 33 people enjoyed this trip and all 3 services were represented, the wreaths were laid by **Frank (Bud) Pougher & Brad Steele**. **Pete Robson** instigated the memorial plaques in remembrance of two old friends; **Col Bowden & Bill Dick**. **Bill Drayton, (Vice Chairman)**, submitted a brilliant write up about this trip and it was submitted to **Dave Rutter** for the AEA Journal.

The National PRA invited **Les Ransom, (Arnhem Vet)**, to be a guest of honour at their AGM weekend held at The Royal Court Hotel, Coventry on the 30th Sept. **Tony Irwin** accompanied **Les** and both men were treat like royalty.

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Kingston upon Hull and Admiral of the Humber, Councillor Anita Harrison released the funds from her **Charity Appeal** for the year 2015 – 2016 and **Craig Gadd** was invited to the Guild Hall in Hull on 23rd Sept for a check presentation on behalf of this association. **Councillor Harrison** praised everybody from 299 who

contributed gifts, time and support in making this year's appeal a great success, raising much needed funds for many local charities.

A special thanks went to **Tony Kitching**, whom without his foresight, drive and connections this association would have not been considered for this venture, missing out on the many benefits which will serve the future of this association for years to come.

N/B: At this stage we must thank the volunteers from this association who gave their time freely for the under privileged children in the North Brandsholme area of Hull. Two building projects were completed, both at the Ash Tree Plantation, North Brandsholme: "The Halloween experience" and "Santa's Grotto" These simple acts of charity have won us many friend in high places.

Sadly, the death of **Fred Matterface** on the 12th October 2016 was announced, **Fred** was posted to 299 as a PSI in the late 60's – early 70's. He was a very popular and much respected amongst the 299 men, he led from the front, was a brilliant engineer and a first class soldier. The news of his death came too late for a funeral party from this association. RIP **Fred**.

Saturday September 10th saw the big send off for "**Tommo**" **Capt. John Thompson**, the Middleton Barracks in Hull was rammed full of people such is the respect for this man, the accolades flowed all night and the bar was drunk dry.

October the 14th 2016 signalled the start of the Reunion/AGM weekend for the AEA, guested again this year by the Birmingham Branch of the AEA, a handful of men from this association attended and were well received as the friends we have been over the many years. Some of the ex-Commando's sneaked off for the unveiling of their RE monument at the National Memorial Arboretum whilst the Airborne lads 'enjoyed' the AGM. This was all topped off in the evening with a first class dinner which was much appreciated by all.

11th November 2016 Armistice Day a dozen members from this association joined the Lord Mayor of Hull at the Cenotaph to respect the 11th hour, Standard carried by **Tony Irwin**.

13th November 2016 Remembrance Sunday saw a brilliant turnout from this association, 34 paraded at the Cenotaph in Hull and even more managed to get down to the Minerva to enjoy the laid on buffet supervised by **Tony Weldon, (Weldo)**. The wreath laying party consisted of: **Mike Beardshaw, Les Ransom and Neil Cooper**. Standard carried by **Paul Sims**.

Dave Hines posted that a good number of association men had responded to **Brian Bilton's** request for 299 Association to attend the Memorial Service at the "**Bullnose**" on the 27th November 2016, this was the trawler men's final departure point in Hull before heading for the Artic fishing grounds and all the dangers that this would bring.

All Ranks Xmas Party at 299 Para Sqn RE took place on the 10th December at the AR Centre, George Street Wakefield. This was not well attended by association member's probably due to its location in Wakefield, although transport was laid on..!

January 2017, an inventory of events occurring throughout this year, (2017), was listed by **Capt. Olaf Dudley, (131 Cdo Eng. Sqn)**, these events are to be used collectively, as & when, for the celebrations in marking the 70th year in existence of 131 Para/Commando.

This year, 131 Cdo Sqn RE are heavily committed and cannot find the time to host a one off event for this 70th anniversary as it has done on past milestone anniversaries in other years. 15% deployment plus support for 24 Cod Eng. Regt. are just amongst a couple of the commitments, the list of events were published in the Feb minutes, I can provide if needed, or better still go to: 131cdo@armymail.mod.uk

Sad news broke on the 28th January 2017 with the death of **Bill Rudd MC**, he died after much suffering and will be sadly missed by all, this legend of 9 Para & 59 Cdo was a good friend to this association during our troubled times, he gave his advice honestly, and his support freely, his funeral took place on the 10th February in a packed Ripon Cathedral, it was attended by a large contingent from this association showing much respect for the man.

The association had voted to support **Alexander Blackman**, (Marine A) in his bid for freedom. A Mini Bus was laid on for the 8th Feb. 2017 to attend the hearing at the courts in London. **Alan Lee** wrote a brilliant account of the trip which was submitted for the March minutes. What was started at Doorwerth in Holland the year before with **Brad Steele** has now reached its conclusion, aided and abetted by **Alan Lee**, along with some other like-minded men from this association..!

April saw some big surprise birthday celebrations, all taking place on the same night Sat. 8th our friends **Terry Cunningham** reached his eightieth year and **Les Ransom** reaching his ninety fifth, many people from this association joined in with them in wishing both the very best for the future.

On Friday 28th April a handful of men from this association attended the Army/Navy Rugby weekend guested by 131 Sqn Cdo Egn down at the "**Lonergan Lines**" in Kingsbury, a great week end with good company and the right result for the Army.

Chairman's AGM address: Chris Shillito

Chris thanked all the membership for their support throughout this, his first full year as Chairman, he reminded the meeting that you the members are the heart and soul of this association, without you people it would not exist, the committee are only the administrators of your wishes and carry no authority at all, it is you people that set the agenda. **Chris** went on to thank some individuals personally because of their outstanding commitment to the cause.

John Donaldson, (Scotland): for his relentless struggle with the MOD for 131 Para RE medallic recognition for South Arabian active service during 1965, (Aden), he also thanked him for achieving his goal on behalf of the dead and wounded men from 300 Squadron in the said conflict, these men and their sacrifice would have remained neglected but for his efforts. A worthy achievement indeed, and a big thank you from 299, who knows what the final outcome would have been like with a little support from 'head office'

Tony Irwin: has taken over the association Standard bearing after the loss of **Colin Woodward**, he is ably assisted by **Paul Sims** when needed, **Chris** thanked them both, especially **Tony** for parading our Standard within the CESA organisation (Combined Ex Serviceman's Association), as and when needed, as well as looking after this associations Archives.

S/Sgt Carl Ham: for keeping this association up to date on all the Squadrons activities, **Carlos** provides that vital link wanted by the many "has beens" in this association. Again it's a thank you and well done.

Pub Land Lord **Jonno Palmer** of the Ship Inn, Dunswell, Near Hull, throws his doors open to this association whenever needed, this well liked, long-time and valued Associate member of this association is much respected by everybody and along with his loyal patrons play a massive part in this associations activities, we thank him, and all for their company and friendship.

Chris went on to thank our members who live too far away from Hull for taking part in association activities, but request the minutes and wish to be kept in the loop, there are too many to name, but you know who you are: **Bud Oldfield** and the rest of the 'Donny' lads, also people living in Kent, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, London, Thailand, USA, New Zealand, Scotland and Spain, please forgive me if left some out, your support is always welcome.

It's a big thank you to **Chris Wilcock, Craig Gadd, Dean Ideson and Paul Sims** for volunteering to form a separate committee to organize this year's AEA / Reunion which frees up the association's committee to get on with the day to day running of the association.

Tony Weldon; every year without fail, this bloke has run & walked miles, turning all his sponsorship money over to this association's funds, we all owe him a debt of gratitude. **Weldo**, you have reached the age when you can now stop, many thanks for your unselfish commitment.

A few names in the following list need to be recorded for their generosity of donations and time given freely to this association:

Paul Sims and his many Bus stops.

Bri Bilton and his Taxi.

Pete Robson and his memorabilia.

Terry Walker and his statuettes.

Dave Hines and his many productions.

Alan Lee & Mike Maddison for their mini bus driving.

The two Tony's, Costello & Foster for their photography.

Dave Meekin & Mike Beardshaw for donations.

Many thanks to them all.

This association is open to all 299 men without exception, any time given in attending a meeting would amount to about one or two hours a month, just to keep in touch with your friends. This association is going from strength to strength, every month 30+ people attend the monthly meetings and the committee try to plan an itinerary to suit most members, with no obligations to attend, all members choose their activities to fit around their own work, social and family commitments, but the one thing we all have in common is a mutual support and respect for each other, this is the only prerequisite needed.

The Chairman invited **Mike Holdsworth & Johnny Philips** from the Birmingham Branch of the AEA to give an update on the worrying health issues amongst its members, and they reported that Bunny Brown is currently waiting for his chemotherapy treatment to begin, he has an immediate appointment to have tubes inserted close to the tumour to direct the chemo on to the target, hopefully this will sort it out, fingers crossed time.

Dave Bowron has had a setback to his recovery, the problems which cost him his right leg was later found in his left leg, the consequences been he has had this leg amputated above the knee and to make matters worse he developed an infection in his right stump and has had to have this leg shortened to above the knee, this does not seem fair, but although down **Dave** is one hell of a fighter, especially now **Mike** has adjusted his wheelchair to stop him falling out. We wish the lads well.

THE COMMITTEE THEN STOOD DOWN and the outgoing Secretary **Gary Coe** asked the meeting for volunteers for the taking up of any place on the new committee, he informed the meeting that no written requests for positions had been received, there were no takers.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS; The incumbent officers were asked, and they agreed to remain in post for another year as is the common practise as there were no offerings from the membership, this was put to the members and was proposed by: **Arthur Stimpson** and seconded by: **Pete Robson**, was carried unanimously.

Therefore the new committee stands as follows:-

Chairman: Chris Shillito	01482 806690
Vice Chairman: Bill Drayton	01482 376259
Secretary: Gary Coe	01757 268188
Treasurer: Mart Tindle	01482 653618
Archivist: Tony Irwin	01482 793847
Web Master: Dave Hines	01482 860981

Rich Gill called for glasses to be raised to the committee

ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

Correspondence: Posted by Bunny Brown on 13th April 2017.

To all members of 299 many thanks for your support. None of us are here for ever, so all we can do is make the best of it, I have had a good full life, (thanks to so many good friends), I have another consultant appointment today, so I may get some better news. We can only do our bit and hope for the best.

Best regards Bunny.

Posted by John Lee, (President AEA), on 14th April 2017.

Pegasus statue unveiling, Merville Barracks, Colchester, 3rd May 2017.

Gentlemen,

Further to a request for information for those members wishing to attend the unveiling ceremony at Colchester on the 3rd May I have received the attached reply from the RSM for information. The SSM's e-mail address is 23ENGR-9ParaSqn-SHQ-SSM@mod.uk

It may be prudent to contact your local PRA Branches they may be able to help if things are difficult with 23.

Regards John.

Social Calendar: **The Palestine Veterans Day** visit to the NMA at Alwewas, on Saturday 20th May 2017, a mini bus is to be booked with timings, dress and pick up points to be confirmed later, (watch the message board). I will inform those without.

The association has a Marque about 20' by 10' it lives in one of **Les Ransom's** out house's, this is free to use by responsible members, please look after it and leave it as you find it, if you wreck it, replace it, it belongs to us all.

Matters arising: **Les Ransom accompanied by Dave Meekin** visited the 'Oppy Wood' memorial in Hull on Wednesday 5th May 2017, 100 years ago to the day, this battle took place around a small village in France and was fought entirely by the five Battalions of the Hull Pals who suffered huge casualties, These two association men attended this short service commemorating this battle, this was the action in which **Jack Harrison** was awarded his Victoria Cross, (Posthumously) for single-handedly taking out an enemy machine gun post, his body was never found, **Jack** worked as a School Teacher in Hull and was also a professional Rugby League player with Hull FC, (The Airlie Birds).

Items from members: **Mike Maddison** informed the meeting that he intended to climb The Three Peaks Challenge in memory of a good friend he lost to heart failure and he is looking for sponsorship for a heart disease charity, the meeting considered his wish and it was proposed by **Paul Sims** that £100 to be donated to this sponsorship, it was seconded by **Pete Robson** and was carried by the membership.

Les Ransom stood up and thanked the members who attended his 95th birthday at The Ship, he hoped you all enjoyed yourselves and invited the meeting to his hundredth, "if you lads can stay the course, keep taking the tablets" Apparently **Les** has been showing interest in going electronic, said "he's game for anything" knowing this, **Bill & Dorri Drayton** have lent him an eye pad and **Colin Walker** is having a go at teaching him how to use it, we wish them both the best.

Simbo's bus stops, two winners this month: Gazza Newton & Big Mac.

Web site address: www.299association.com

Next Meeting: Friday 2nd June 2017 at 20.00hrs in the Minerva on Corporation Pier, Hull.

Dates for your diary:

Palestine Veterans Day at the NMA (National Memorial Arboretum), Alwewas, on Saturday 20th May 2017.

Falklands/MV Norland Commemoration Parade, Holy Trinity, Hull, on Sunday 28th May 2017 to coincide with the taking of Goose Green. A Drum Head Service is planned for 14.00hrs in the Square, Muster at 13.15hrs, Dress blazers berets and decorations.

Airborne Forces Day, (Northern), Saturday 15th July 2017 at Eden Camp, Malton, parade and service starts at 11.00hrs.

Allied Air Forces Memorial Day at Elvington, Near York, on Sunday 3rd September 2017.

Arnhem Pilgrimage: Thursday 14th – Monday 18th September 2017. All monies must be paid by this meeting.

THE AEA REUNION/AGM TO BE HELD AT THE MERCURE ROYAL HOTEL, FERNSWAY, HULL. HU1 3UF over the weekend Friday the 20th to Monday the 23rd October 2017, a room has been booked for the AGM.

Very important: rooms at this hotel could be at a premium over this week end, therefore book early to avoid disappointment. Remember it's the year of culture in Hull and they will not hang onto rooms on a promise. There are other hotels close by, but if you want a guaranteed room at this hotel you can reserve with your card without money being taken out of your account. The booking slips will be enclosed in the June edition of the AEA Journal. Provisional costings for a room are £80 per night, this is on a B&B basis. Confirmation to follow.

Hotel Tel: 01482 325087, e-mail enquires@hotels-hull.co.uk

Remembrance Sunday: 12th November 2017.

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



299 ASSOCIATION ROYAL ENGINEERS
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
FRIDAY 5TH MAY 2017



Courtesy of Tony Costello