



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 3rd November 2017, at the Minerva

Members Present: D. Barker, M. Beardshaw, G. Beaumont, G. Coe, N. Cooper, A. Costello, T. Cunningham, W. Drayton, D. Harvey, D. Hines, S. Hoyle, A. Irwin, A. Lee, C. Lickiss, J. Mace, K. Millington F. Pougher, L. Ransom, G. Ratten, K. Robinson, P. Robson, K. Russell, K. Saddington, C. Shillito, P. Sims, B. Steele, A. Stimpson, J. C. Thompson, Mike. Tindle, Mart. Tindle, C. Walker, A. Weldon, C. Wilcock,

Apologies: F. Gray, D. French, J. Duffy, C. Gadd, R. Swatman, N. Sisson, B. Bilton, K. Blacker, J. Brooks, C. Duggan, A. Foster, R. Franklin, D. French, A. Grimes, C. Henrickson, D. Ideson, D. Meekin, D. Skoyles, L. Smith, J. Thompson, T. Walker, D. Woollas.

Welcome and 'Roll Call'

The Chairman **Chris Shillito** welcomed all present then opened the meeting by inviting **Paul Sims** to recite the Exhortation.

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

Proposed by – **P. Robson**.

Seconded by – **A. Irwin**.

Treasure's Report:

Martin gave a run down on our funds which are in good order, although a little disorganised at the moment, due to the movement of funds in an out of the account mainly due to the AEA/Reunion weekend, there are still bills to pay and monies to come in, we will have an accurate appraisal by the next meeting.

We have to give a big thank you to that veteran 299er **Fred Grey** who won the 'heads & tails' event at the Gala Ball and immediately handed back £70 of his winnings to our Secretary for inclusion into our chosen charity fund for this function, this has not yet being decided and will be thrown open to the floor for you guys to decide when the final accounting is complete.

N/B: urgently needed for Mrs Betty Gray, one Gala Ball menu please, this will keep her collection on track.

Tony Weldon has kindly donated £200 into our funds for the second year running to help pay for the buffet at the Minerva on Remembrance Sunday, outstanding generosity.

Deposits are now being taken for next year's Arnhem Pilgrimage, any amount will secure a place on the trip, we are still in negotiations with hotels, therefore cannot give a final figure as yet, we are hoping for no increase on last year's figure of £290p/p.

Correspondence: messages & letters sent to this association since the last meeting.

Chris Shillito: message bd. 9/10/2017 "A big thank you to all the people who donated raffle prizes for the AEA Gala Dinner, a great response from all concerned.

Chris Shillito: message bd. 22/10/2017 On behalf of the 299 Association I would like to thank **Craig Gadd, Chris Willcock, Paul Sims & Dean Ideson** for their hard work and organization skills for making last night a fantastic evening of entertainment enjoyed by everyone, well done guys you are a credit to our association, also a big thank you to **John Christopher Thompson** for the part he played in making it a very pleasant evening.

Terry Cunningham: message bd. 22/10/2017 Hi lads, update on **Nev. Smales**. He had a pre op on Tuesday of last week, followed by a visit to see the surgeon who sorted his trouble out and put him on the road to recovery, but unfortunately he has got a swelling in his side, when the surgeon examined him, he declared he's developed a weakness in his insides where he had his trouble, so he has now got to have another scan and see the surgeon in a months' time. I will keep you informed.

Syd Hoyle: message bd. 22/10/2017. Hi guys, feedback from Yorks Branch AEA, a well organised weekend thoroughly enjoyed by all, **Johnny Pat & the Aces** exceptional of course, been asked to pass on congratulations and a big thank you to all those concerned in organising this memorable event.

Johnny Mace: message bd.:22/10/2017. What a great night the AEA Gala Ball, well done the 299 organisers. It was good to see our Brummie comrades there, well done to **GAZ** on your certificate you certainly earned it. Well done, regards **Macey**.

Pete Robbo: message bd. 24/10/2017. AGM great night, well done all concerned with set up, many thanks from my wife and I. Great to see the Brummies again. **Robbo**.

Tony Foster: message bd, 24/10/2017. I would like to thank the association for the lovely flowers what you got for the wife, she was over the moon with them, thank you very much.

N/B: these flowers were kindly donated free-of-charge by Mike Beardshaw and delivered by our Chairman.

Gaz Coe: message bd. 25/10/2017. Fella's, we need volunteers to help put up the 'Halloween experience' for the kids on the Nth Brandsholme Estate, same place as last year, the Ash Plantation, for directions contact Tel: 01757 268188. Halloween – 31/10/2017 (Tue), any amount of time will be welcomed and I would like confirmation please, (numbers for sandwiches). Therefore come-on you retired 299 men, give a little time for those not as fortunate as ourselves, it's not hard work and you will feel better for the experience. **Gaz**.

Letter from the AEA President **Lt Col (Ret) John Lee** dated 26/10/2017.

Hello Gary,

Now the dust has settled I have had a chance to write to you and I would be obliged if you would kindly give my thanks to 299 association and in particular the committee for organising a truly excellent event. The whole weekend went off well and there have been many favourable comments made, especially the arrangements for the Gala Dinner with the table settings. There is I know a tremendous amount of work required in organising an event of this nature and although I expect a few grey hairs have appeared it was well worth it. The venue had certainly improved since our last visit and I found the staff very helpful and obliging.

It was good to meet some old friends from 299 and also of course others from 131 and is good to know the camaraderie we always had in the Squadron is as strong as ever.

Once again, please express my sincere thanks to all concerned for a most enjoyable weekend and congratulations on your well-deserved award.

Regards **John**.

Nigel Sisson: email sent on 26/10/2017. Hi **Gary**, I have a friend at running who has a connection to Arnhem and has sent me some info to pass on to the boy's if you think they will be interested. I told him about the trips you do, he nearly had my hand off how to get there. Hope everyone is well, I will try to make Remembrance but away so I am going to try and chase back.

N/B: Siss attached his mates email, including attachments to this script and I will send out to you all, following the minutes, it's a good read. (Just too much for inclusion).

Mike Holdsworth: message bd. 28/10/2017.

I have heard from **Roger Howles** that **Captain Ian Butler** ex 301 Troop Officer late 1960's has died.

Our thoughts go out to his wife **Shirley** and daughter **Imogen**.

Affectionately known as Angels 15 RIP. Regards **Mike**.

Letter from **Lt Col S. J. Carvel RE. CO 23 Para Egn Reg sent to Lt Col (Ret) John Lee. President of the AEA.**

John specifically asked me to share this letter with you all, and I received it on 1/11/2017.

John, I gave my thanks during the evening but I wanted to write to express my gratitude for the excellent Reunion Gala Dinner in Hull, organized by 299 Association last weekend.

Thank you very much, to you, the Chairman and all the Association members for inviting me, the Regimental Sergeant Major and other members of 23 Para Egn Reg to such a splendid occasion. It is a great honour to be invited to make a speech and I know the RSM was delighted to be able to give the ground truth after the first year in the appointment.

The event is one of the highlights on the calendar because of the opportunity to meet so many fellow airborne engineers and relax with a few cold drinks. Next year in Chatham I promises to bring the correct trousers so I can relax completely!

Please pass on my thanks to the membership Secretary and 299 Association in particular. The event appeared to run smoothly and it must be principally through their organisation and dedication. I look forward to 2018 in Chatham under **Baz Bassett's** leadership and hope to be able to bring **Ebba** along too.

Thank you again and see you soon.

Mike Holdsworth: message bd: 3/11/2017, Sorry everyone, but more bad news! **Roy Hicks**, (Cook Sgt), 131 Para Sqn died early this morning. Details to follow when received.

Roger Howles: message bd: 3/11/2017. **Mike** has sent info for **Capt. Ian Butler's** funeral on the 17/11/2017 anyone who would like to go please let me know on Mb: 07831262512.

Chris Shillito: message bd: 3/11/2017. On behalf of the 299 Association our condolences go to the families of **Ian Butler** and **Roy Hicks** at this very sad time, God bless them both.

Email: titled "What a Wonderful Year" Sent on 3/11/2017. From the Communications Manager at the Yorkshire Air Museum.

Dear friends, here is our very latest film following another brilliantly successful season. We are sending our thanks to all our visitors and supporters for the help in making this a special place.

Click on this link and then open on to the film.

<http://yorkshireairmuseum.org/latest-news/what-a-wonderful-year/>

Best regards from all at Yorkshire Air Museum & Allied Air Forces Memorial

Sqn News: **Capt. J.C. Thompson CO 1 Troop 299 Para Eng. Sqn.** started his brief talk by explaining his thinking in his design of the new association motif, it's a much improved version of the association blazer badge and he used it as decoration art work for the recent Gala Ball Dinner, a lot of work went into this, and we thank him for his efforts.

He went on to inform the meeting that the Squadron was to hold a conference on Sunday 4th November with the main issue of enlistment and retention up for discussion, including, as always, strategies for improving the numbers. The Squadron have 5 recruits going for selection at this present time with 2 ex SAS Troopers amongst them, hopefully 100% completion for this group which would be welcomed.

Hull Troop are expecting a new PSI anytime, also have men deployed in South Sudan helping with the famine crises including building and maintaining field hospitals. More deployments are expected for Belize in early February to be attached to 51 Sqn for employment in construction work.

Chairman's Comments: Chris Shillito

AEA Reunion & Gala Ball

I would like to start by thanking the 299 Association's entertainment committee who planned this event; **Craig Gadd, Major Chris Wilcock, Paul Sims and Dean Ideson** for organizing an outstanding AEA Reunion Dinner night. A superb evening was had by everyone, and due to their efforts these guys ran it like clockwork, they left no stone unturned, from the RE coloured strips on the table cloths, the flowers, the Squadron silver for the top table, including lots of special impressive little touches e.g. each table named after a RE. VC. Brilliant effort guys, and well done. I would also like to thank all the 299 members, not forgetting the wives & partners who attended this function thus providing support for our entertainment team, I counted 25+ 299 Association men present with many bringing friends and families, a great turnout.

Thanks to **Capt. John C. Thompson**, Officer Commanding 1 Troop, 299 Squadron who put a lot of effort into making it a very special evening by hosting our friends from around the country, he also carried out 'bags' of unseen prep work, all this whilst coping with the hospitalization of an aging parent, outstanding behaviour.

I must not forget **Tony Costello** our Palestine veteran, who after spending the same day up at The Eden Camp, (Malton), taking part in association work, he then raced back to Hull to take on the photography role at The Britannia Royal, and immediately sent his snaps that same night to the editor of the AEA Journal, a splendid effort that would have exhausted a man of half his age, how lucky are we to have such people in the team?

It's a well done **Craig** for running the heads & tails competition which saved us from making a loss, and a big thank you to **Simbo** for running an excellent raffle, also the many members who donated prizes of which we had far too many, we have held some back for Remembrance Sunday, after the Service & Parade we will be hosting 299 Squadron's serving members at the Minerva, and we can throw in a raffle on this occasion, because of the expected numbers on that day, we were likely to be far too many for the bar at the barracks, remember all serving members of the Squadron are full members of this association by rights, and we will be honoured to meet up & mix with these men that still do the business in our name.

N/B: **Tony Weldon** has kindly offered to pay for the buffet for the second year running, many thanks **Tony**.

Finally, many thanks to the staff of the Britannia Royal for a very efficient service and excellent food.

Airborne Engineers Association's AGM

A brief overview of the AEA 28th AGM held on the 21st October 2017 at The Britannia Royal Hotel in Hull.

10.00hrs The Chairman **John Ferry** opened the meeting by thanking 299 Association for hosting the weekend.

The proposal to open another branch in the West Country seems to have faltered, no further contact with the proposer.

The President, **John Lee** announced his awaited CAR BADGE, and they were on sale this weekend priced £12.50 each, those in want, who missed the sale, will now have to pay postage, for further details contact the Sec. Tel: 01757 268188.

Treasures report implies that the funds are healthy, the shop profits are up, and the only out goings this year were £1500 donation for the PEGESUS STATUE at the barracks in Colchester, also £20.45 for the golf trophy on offer this weekend.

AEA Journal editor reports that the main problem is people forgetting to fill in their request slips & cheque, (standing order!)

Billy Morris reported the bad news that only one new AEA member enrolled this year, it would seem that the AEA is in competition with the REA, (Royal Engineers Association), for men leaving the forces, young men are not that interested in joining any association, add this to the fact that the British Army has been shrinking over the last 50yrs and the drop in numbers is inevitable. The AEA still has over 1100 members nationally, and is still a functioning organization.

Welfare Advisor **Issy Leather** has received no request for help over the past year, this can only be a good thing.

The AEA Ultra Club, co-ordinated through **Billy Morris** is changing its title to the AEA Sports Club to incorporate activities over and above the norm, for example; **Craig Gadd's** individual sponsored free-fall parachuting in raising money for BLESMA. People are free to pursue their own activities as & when, cooperation between branches will largely be dependent on the geography.

A vote was necessary for the position of Chairman, and the incumbent **John Ferry** had agreed to stand for one more year only, **and he gave fair warning on this point**, he was therefore elected to stand for this his final year, well done **John** and thank you.

Points were raised from the floor: suggestion that monies lying in the bank account making no interest at all could be used in the Premium Bond Scheme, this quickly fell down on the fact that only individuals can hold bonds, but this point was taken on board and will be looked into.

It was proposed by **Craig Gadd** that because a healthy bank balance exists, could the AEA consider gifting a sum of money to the branch hosting the annual AEA/Reunion week end each year, just to offset some of the expense, this point was put to the floor and the sum of £500 was agreed, therefore the Chatham Branch will be the first to benefit from this by hosting next year's event.

The President; **John Lee** announced this year's Presidents Commendation, two recipients this year, both Secretary's; **Steve Brown** from the Birmingham Branch and **Gary Coe** from 299 Association, the awards were given out at the Ball with the Chairman of the Birmingham Branch **John Philips** accepting on behalf of **Steve**, who could not be with us on this occasion.

The Chairman: **John Ferry** proceeded to give a rundown on all the many events attended by the AEA over the last year.

Finally **John Lee** read out a letter, including a photo from the lock keeper at **Cromwell** on the River Trent, the photo showed the monument erected to the 10, 300 Sqn Para's who perished way back in 1975 and it was in a hell of a state, obviously not been cared for, this brought a response from the floor with **Mike Holdsworth** informing the meeting that an annual sum of £25 per year had been allocated for its maintenance, obviously it's not happening, we all agreed this is not enough money anyway, and big **Mike Walker & Kenny Wratten** (ex 300 Sqn men), were not having any of it, and for the immediate future the 131 men who live closest will take care of their friends from North of the Border, we cannot expect people to travel down from Scotland, and that's how it was left. Thinking in the long term we do need a plan that will stand the test of time.

Matters arising:

Armistice Day on Saturday 11th with Remembrance Sunday 12th, the day after, I know a few of you men always attend the 11/11 at the Cenotaph in Hull, our Standard will be present.

Remembrance Sunday each year our numbers marching increase and hopefully this will continue and we are calling for a maximum turnout, Muster at 10.00hrs Pease Street, Anlaby Road for the march to the Cenotaph for the service, Dress: Berets, Blazers with decorations, (please lads, if you've got them, wear them). Prey for good weather.

This year after the service we can enjoy a buffet at the Minerva courtesy of **Weldo**, and whilst doing so we can reflect on many of our friends and comrades that are no longer with us, one that always comes to mind at this time of the year is **Colin Woodward (Woody)** who carried the association Standard through all weathers, not only for this association but for the PRA, CESA organization, also the Palestine Veterans Association, sadly we lost **Col** during 2016, just as 299 where at the point of honouring him for his outstanding contribution to this association, his wife **Marion** and his daughters always attend the service of Remembrance in Hull, and we will be asking her to accept a Paratrooper Statue (Posthumously) on his behalf as a token of our respect for him.

As your Chairman I personally need to thank the men that turned up to 'The Ash Plantation' in North Brandsholme Estate, Hull on the 31st Oct. (Halloween), them few hours given was much appreciated by **Councillor Anita Harrison** in her quest to help the under privileged children from this estate.

This housing estate in Hull has its own memorial named 'To the Fallen' and it has being requested that this year 299 Association would make a representation for wreath laying on Tuesday the 14th November, including Standard. This memorial was designed for the memory of not only the people from Hull that were lost in the World Wars, but all those lost in the many conflicts since then, many young people coming from this estate.

Muster for this gathering at 10.15hrs at Appin Close, Nth Brandsholme, Hull. HU7 5BB.

Any other business:

Dave Hines: web master is running out of storage space for all the association 'stuff' photos and admin, etc. Therefore it was put to the members for the purchase of another detachable hard drive memory at the cost of £30 this was accepted by the meeting unanimously. This becomes essential as time goes by.

Terry Cunningham: gave the latest on **Nev. Smales** who is doing well considering, goes for another scan on the 7th Nov. and got a date with the surgeon on the 8th Dec. we wish him well.

Items from others: **Dave Rutter** editor AEA Journal, sent 30/10/2017.

An attached article will be sent referring to SSAFA, (Sailors Soldiers, Airmen, Families, Association's), will be published in the December AEA Journal, however there maybe members within this association that are not on the distribution list. The Secretary will circulate the full script after the meeting as a separate group, those without a computer who require a full script contact Sec. on Tel 01757 268188, (just too much for inclusion in these minutes).

Simbo's bus stop: winner this month lucky Charlie Lickiss.

Simbo addressed the meeting with regards to passing the hat around for the "BBC Children in Need" charity, the ladies from the Stone acre's Motor Dealership of Hull had approached **Paul** asking for support from this association in their fundraising activities and a total of £46 was collected on the night, well done lads.

Web site address: www.299association.com

Next Meeting: To be held at the Minerva on Friday 1st December 2018 at 20.00hrs, Cooperation Pier, Hull.

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

Dates for your diary:

Remembrance Sunday: 12th November 2017, muster at 10.00 hrs in Pease Street, Anlaby Road, Hull.

Back to the Minerva after, buffet laid on courtesy of Tony Weldon, family and friends of 299 welcome.

ADEN VETERANS ASSOCIATION: 50th Anniversary Commemoration Parade and Service – York Minster at 14.00hrs on Wednesday 29th November 2017, for further details talk to Tony Irwin Tel: 01482 793847.

