



299 ASSOCIATION

Affiliated to the AEA, but as always open to ALL 299 men past & present.

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 associations.

W. Dick, (Seadog), 2/8/2002

Date: Friday 5th November 2021, 20:00 hrs held at the Minerva whilst observing all the rules of mine host.

Members Present: M. Beardshaw, G. Coe, N. Cooper, A. Foster, C. Gadd, F. Gray, C. Ham, J. Harrison, D. Harvey, W. Holbrook, D. Ideson, A. Irwin, M. Lawrence, J. Mace, R. Meachen, D. Meekin, B. Oldfield, F. Pougher, G. Ratten, P. Robson, K. Russell, C. Shillito, P. Sims, L. Smith, B. Steele, R. Swatman, Mart.Tindle, C. Walker, T. Walker, A. Weldon, D. Woollas, N. Yates.

Secretary's apologies to Dave Woollas for missing his name off the members present list at last month's meeting, the AGM.

Apologies: R. Franklin, A. Alcock, P. Robinson, M. Maddison, A. Costello, C. Duggan, R. Holding, D. Hines, T. Cunningham, S. Hoyle, G. Beaumont, K. Blacker, D. French, R. Gill, A. Kitching, M. Sadler.

Guests: Mrs Pauline Meekin.

Welcome and 'Roll Call'

The Chairman **Chris Shillito** welcomed all present introducing **Fred Gray** our veteran 299 man at this meeting tonight, served in the 50's before making a career as a regular soldier with 9 Sqn, he then went on to make a fuss about that international celebrity & ex-pat **John 'Willy' Harrison**, who, like the preverbal 'bad penny' always turns up at least once a year, another nice surprise was the attendance of **Bud Oldfield** up from 'Donny' and many thanks to the drivers for making this happen, he then opened the meeting thanking all members for the massive amount of 'tombola' gifts donated by you people, this will be drawn in the Minerva after the Remembrance Sunday Parade. Thanks one and all, this effort is outstanding.

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

Proposed by – **F. Pougher**

Seconded by – **A. Irwin and carried.**

Treasure's Report:

Glenn Ratten reminded the meeting about this association's bank balance, then offered his apologies for the failure in retrieving our refunds for the Normandy trip cancelled by the tour operator **Legers**, he has been told by them that our money is almost at the point of been paid, but not quite there yet, may need a bit more airborne persuasion, **Glenn is confident the monies are forth coming, could that that be a flying pig going over the Minerva?**

Correspondence:

Acknowledgments received after the last meeting (AGM), all giving thanks for the minutes with passing comments:

Brad Steele: great photos of the well-deserved.

Tony Costello: well done to all, I will drop some 'Tombola' off at **Dave Hines** for the next meeting. This crafty ex 6th Div man is fighting virus shy at the moment, he is trying to reach 100 years of age, he sends his best to you all and we wish him well. He has been warned that it will cost him a small fortune if he achieves his ambition.

Syd Hoyle: sends his best to you all.

Steve Brown (former Secretary B'ham Branch): looks like you had a good AGM meeting, a big well done to **Craig** for putting himself forward for the Vice Chair, he will do a fantastic job no doubt. Please pass on my congratulations to **Craig** when you next see him.

John Donaldson (Scotland): sends his best wishes.

Mike Holdsworth (B'ham branch): Well done 299 for providing its members with wholesome information, this is the root of the comradeship you enjoy today. Well done the trophy recipients. **Mike Ozz.**

Fred Gray (Author of 'The Airborne Engineers' and former 299 man): I have just been informed by our local hospital that I have an appointment to have my right eye cataract op on 1st Nov. which means I cannot attend the meeting on the 5th. I now plan to bring my visit to Hull forward next week. Will you send me an address of one of your members so I can drop off a few items for the tombola? I did have the pleasure of meeting five members of the 299 association last week at the reunion, but I was so looking forward to the meeting on the 5th. After waiting so long for the cataract appointment I cannot turn it down. Please give my best wishes to the association members in Hull. I will only be in Hull for 3 days and then dash back down south.

Alan Cross: (late 60's-mid 70's), thought he'd escaped this association, (no chance), but he has been found hiding away in Torrevieja on the sunny Costa Blanca in the Province of Alicante in Spain. He has been sent a load of association 'gumph' including a bill for subscription's unpaid, and he replied as follows:-

"We managed to read the reports which was really interesting to read, there was a lot of people who I don't know, but on the whole I am full of admiration for the work that they do and the time they put in. It was sad to read of the deaths of old friends, we all think we're invincible but then life catches up with us. We are really sorry to hear about **Bill Drayton**, we have had many a good laugh together and we send our sympathy to his family. On the plus side it's great to hear there are still some old buddies going strong, as of now we still can't access the 3 attachments, I should maybe access some airborne imitative" (This problem solved).

Alan sends his best to all at the association, he now joins the ranks of the other ex-pats on our mailing list, he was asked if his contact details could be handed out and he replied "only if there is no abuse, **well**, maybe just a little for old time sake" If wanted, ask me for his contact details.

The Airborne Engineers Association (AGM), this was held at the Cedar Court Hotel, Harrogate on Saturday 16th October 2021.

This event was supported by 299 through the following men: **Chris Shillito (Chairman), Craig Gadd (Vice Chairman), Tony Irwin (Archivist), Paul Sims, Tony Weldon.** Two others fell foul of the Covid **Lawrence & Meachen**, I will try and summarize the points of interest, but if the full script is required please let me know.

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP: 1132

CONSTITUTION: Standard bearers dress code, honourees membership to be listed, breach of AEA rules procedure, these alterations will be put on the AEA website, as will the full minutes.

PRESIDENTS COMMENDATIONS: Maj (Retd) **Paul Moore & Charlie McColgan** in recognition for the "Ride of Respect" by them Para rough riders on their 'Harley's', (the rolling thunder). This gang raised over £13,000 for the South Atlantic Medal Association. These men attended the rededication of **Scotty Wilson's headstone who was KIA Mount Longdon, Falklands, 1982.** Hospitality hosted by our Scottish friends.

WELFARE: **Craig Gadd** asked what level of support the AEA could provide its members wellbeing. **NONE** was the answer, but can provide advice with regards to various charities who could help.

N/B: What you have to remember is these rules & regulations apply only to those 299 men who are paid up members of the AEA actively going about AEA business, the 299 association rule book is a simple show of hands by honest men.

299 ASSOCIATION'S REPORT: this was asked for by the AEA Chairman and delivered by Chris Shillito

We had our first real meeting at the Minerva the first Friday in August, we had a good turnout but still having to use masks etc.

First Friday in September we couldn't use the Minerva because of some freedom Festival in the area, therefore we fell back on the Ship Inn Dunswell where a friend of 299 is the land lord. He let us have the Marquee for our well attended meeting, just getting the lads back on track.

We had our AGM on the first Friday in October and nearly 50 of us turned up, we had a few long awaited presentations to make, Our Secretary **Gaz Coe** and webmaster **Dave Hines** received a silver Pegasus and one of the lads **Mike Beardshaw** who does a lot for the association received a bronze Paratrooper and our photographer **Tony Foster** received a 299 association shield, **Paul Sims** received the **Les Ransom Shield**. The committee was boosted by **Craig Gadd** who volunteered for the vacant Vice Chairman's job. We are looking forward to Remembrance Sunday which is always a good day in Hull where we march to the Cenotaph to pay our respects going back to the Minerva after where a buffet is laid on for family and friends.

Sorry it's not a full report **Steve** but **Gary Coe** did a full report in our minutes earlier in the year.

CROMWELL LOCK MEMORIAL GARDEN: The national Chairman informed the meeting that he had spoken with 23 Parachute Engineer Regiment with a view to getting the memorial garden at Cromwell Lock refurbished. Although it would be difficult for the regiment to organise this formally. **Capt. Marc Dorkings** arranged with three volunteers from 299 Para Sqn to conduct the works subject to obtaining permission from the Canal and River trust.

The Chairman asked those attending the meeting, in particular those representing 299 Association and the Birmingham branch if they were agreeable to the work being carried out and received a favourable reply.

It is the AEA Chairman's intention to call a separate 'Zoom' meeting with 299 Association, Birmingham branch and Scotland branch to discuss future care of the memorial.

PROCEEDS OF THE RAFFLE HELD AT THIS MEETING: to be split evenly between BLESMA and the Blind Veterans Association.

299 WEBSITE: It would appear Giacom, (last provider) have closed the inquiry I made regarding the transfer of the Domain as they say they have had "no contact and presume the inquiry has been fully resolved"

In the light of these developments, I have arranged a meeting on Tuesday 2nd November with a company in Drifffield, **Central Computers** who has agreed to assist me in the re installation of the website to the internet, but as I cannot recover the old domain name of 299association.com we will have to register a new domain name of 299association.co.uk.

There is a cost in registering the new domain and hosting the site of £40 per year. If the committee and members are in agreement with this action I will instruct Central Computers to re install the website to the internet, (which may take up to 72 hrs) as I'm hoping to get the website up and running prior to Remembrance Sunday. **Dave Hines.**

N/B: This was put to the meeting and agreed, we have to have a website.

Social Calendar:

Proposed trip to Arnhem 2022

Decision on this trip has not yet been made and will not be made until the next meeting, the committee is watching the pandemic and trying to predict its future spread and its effect on travel to Holland, especially after the debacle with the Normandy trip finally scheduled for this year, then cancelled, and we are still awaiting our refunds.

The celebrations in Holland are planned for Arnhem this year, and if on GO, this association would be looking at the following dates: Thursday 15th (overnight ferry) – Monday morning 19th September 2022 just in case you want to do some provisional requests for employment leave.

Because of the uncertainty surrounding this proposed trip there would be a large £100 per man non-refundable deposit to be paid immediately and it will not be totally risk free, **this is a fair warning.** There will be no time for special payment needs, favours or preferences, no money, no place on the trip, probably with a short window open to book your place, the association funds cannot cover the cost of this trip if it goes wrong, you will have to take responsibility for your own decision, and its risks. There are no certainties left in this world today, it's a good job you're all ex Special Forces and therefore use to taking a risk.

Names for this trip will **not** be taken, your deposit with our Treasurer will book your place on the bus, and **Glenn** takes cheques, we all hope the virus becomes less of a problem with time. The committee cannot book anything or do any costings until we have the numbers, therefore it's up to you lads, the one certainty you have is that this committee will not require a profit, we would not be able to tolerate an open list of people jumping on or off the trip as the fancy takes them, and of course refunds will be given out if the money has not yet been paid to our carrier's

The future of this trip is in your hands and will be decided by your actions at the next meeting. Now is your chance to stand on if you really want it.

N/B: Please don't come to the committee in a few weeks' time asking for a place on the trip, just read your minutes, play the game and give the committee a fighting chance to organise it, this is the best we can do.

Chairman's Comments:

Chris reminded the meeting about the Remembrance Sunday Parade on 14th November 2021 and is hoping for big 299 numbers paying their respects.

Muster: 10:00 hrs, Pease Street, Anlaby Road, Hull. Dress: Blazer, Tie, Berets and medals.

299 Wreath Layers: Paul Hairsine and Alan McGlyn.

The Chairman mentioned 299's Golfers who took part in the AEA **Fergie Semple** golf tournament. Well done to all the golfers for representing the 299 Association and doing so well. **Chris Duggan** won nearest pin with **Deano** coming second.

A big thank you to all of you who have brought raffle prizes tonight well done.

Anyone who couldn't make the November meeting and wants to help out with a raffle prize for Remembrance Sunday I have arranged with the bar staff at the Minerva to just hand to them, telling them it's for the 299 association raffle TIA.

I still have a few **Les Ransom** memorial calendars produced by Dave **Hines** £5 each with the money going into our coffers, thank you very much.

On our trip to Spain, **Weldo & I** stayed with **Willy & Sue Harrison** and we met up with **Gaz Coe** and since then **Gaz** has been in touch with an old friend ex 299 Troop **Alan Cross**, a top guy who lives in Spain. A few people will remember him from the old days. I believe **Willy & his wife Sue** who don't live far from **Alan** have met up with **Alan and his wife Dianne** for a meal and reacquainting old friendships. Great news.

Items from members:

Dean Ideson brought news of **Connor Bowden** (his nephew) serving with the Hussars who is 2 weeks before completion of his 6 month's sergeant's course, and he has gone down with Pneumonia, the medics have dosed him up because he wants to finish his course and insider info predicts best on the course is a real possibility. We wish him well, but can't help wondering if there is a bit of a chip off the old block somewhere. (**Colin / Deano**).

Simbos striptease bus Stop: only one winner this month **Dave Meekin** with night dress.

Simbo produced a quick release container parachute hook and promptly decided to raffle it, fetching £2, who on earth wanted that?

New Web site address: www.299association.co.uk

Next Meeting: Friday 3rd December 2021 kick off 20:00 hrs at the Minerva.

There will be no official meeting in January (social night only, to close to New Year's Eve), therefore the December meeting is probably the only chance to book your Arnhem trip, Feb would be too late, we will need the numbers now. Those with money owing from the Normandy trip may consider leaving it as a deposit for Arnhem, but you must inform the Treasurer of your intentions.

WITH NOTHING MORE TO DISCUSS THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING THANKING ALL FOR THEIR ATTENDANCE.

Last minute news flash: E-mail from Dave Hines regarding our website.

Hi all, at last the website is back up and running, as I said in my last email the new website name is;

www.299association.co.uk

This will not appear on an internet search for a few weeks, the above link will take you to the site and then save it on your favourite bar.

As regards to the old name 299association.com, I'm not sure if we can obtain a refund from Giacom, Glenn will have to approach them (as he is shown as the bill payer) to request a refund. If they decline it will remain unavailable until September next year.

I was initially quoted £40 per year for the new domain, name and hosting, the final bill has come to £45 per year. We are guaranteed there will be no advertising on the site which I understand can happen with the more well-known hosting sites.

Stay safe best regards Dave.

Dates for your diary:

“THE BATTLEFIELDS OF NORMANDY”

CANCELED

Cromwell Lock disaster Service of Remembrance CANCELED.

**REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 14th NOV. 2021, muster 10:00hrs down Pease Street, Anlaby Road, Hull.
Dress for parade & service at the Cenotaph.**

1 Troop 299 Squadron are parading in Hull this year and will be sharing the buffet at the Minerva with the association.

CONTACTS:

Chairman: Chris Shillito, chrisshillito299@outlook.com Tel: 01482 806690, Mb: 07877277288.

Vice Chairman: Craig Gadd, craig.gadd@hotmail.com Mb: 47771880733

Secretary: Gaz Coe, coeblimey240@gmail.com Tel: 01757 268188.

Treasurer: Glenn Ratten, glennratten@icloud.com Mb: 07795248328.

Web Master: Dave Hines, davehines2@davehines2.karoo.co.uk Tel: 01482 860981, Mb: 07821698522.

Archivist: Tony Irwin, bigtirwin@hotmail.com Tel; 01482 793847, Mb: 07928956592.

WELFARE:

The veterans Hub & Forum, coordinator Callum Day for all your problems

Address: Goodwin Community Hub, Anlaby Road, Hull. HU3 2LL, (opposite the `Tigers Lair`).

Tel: 01482 485958, email: veteranshub@goodwintrust.org

