



## 299 ASSOCIATION

Affiliated to the AEA, Charity No: 1009201

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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

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**Date:** Friday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2018 20:00hrs at the 'Minerva'

**Members Present** M. Beardshaw, B. Bilton, N. Bowden, G. Coe, N. Cooper, A. Costello, G. Crum, T. Cunningham, R. Franklin, D. French, C. Gadd, A. Green, C. Ham, C. Henrickson, D. Hines, A. Homan, D. Ideson, A. Irwin, P. Jefferson, A. Kitching, A. Lee, D. Meekin, K. Millington, M. Ovington, F. Pougher, J. Ransom, L. Ransom, G. Ratten, P. Robson, C. Shillito, P. Sims, B. Steele, A. Stimpson, Mart. Tindle, A. Weldon.

**Apologies:** F. Gray, C. Walker, J. Mace, J. Duffy, M. Maddison, P. Robinson, J. Thompson, G. Newton, C. Duggan, S. McMahon, W. Drayton, S. Hoyle, M. Parmley, D. Woolas, D. Harvey, K. Blacker.

**Guests:** Martin Sadler, Pauline Meekin.

### **Welcome and 'Roll Call'**

The Chairman **Chris Shillito** welcomed all present then opened the meeting by asking **Gaz Coe** to recite the Exhortation, that famous verse from Binyon's poem "For the Fallen"

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

Proposed by – **F. Pougher**.

Seconded by – **N. Cooper**.

**Treasure's Report:** **Martin** reported that the bank balance is healthy with all monies for this year's Arnhem trip paid and accounted for. **Glenn Ratten** reported that all places on the 2019 Arnhem trip are taken, but will still take names for the reserve list.

**Relevant correspondence:** a few messages copied for the benefit of those of you not on line.

**Simbo:** message bd. 24/9/2018. A big thank you to the committee for organising such a brilliant trip to Arnhem.

**Deano:** message bd. 24/9/2018. I would just like to say a massive thank you to all those who organised this year's Arnhem trip. Your hard work and efforts don't go unnoticed.  
As always it was fabulous spending time with great friends and company and I've not laughed so much in such a long time. I thoroughly enjoyed being with you all and look forward to the 75<sup>th</sup> next year. All the best.

PS: thanks for making **Stu**, the RAF boy so welcome and he asked me to pass on his thanks.

**Brad:** message bd. 24/9/2018. Fantastic Arnhem trip yet again. They keep getting better and better. A huge thank you to the committee for all their hard work making it all possible, and to the rest of the crazy gang thanks for the great memories.

**Steve Brown:** message bd. 26/9/2018. It was **Dave Bowron's** funeral today and it was a pleasure seeing so many 299 lads there. Thanks for your support once again, you are always there. Good health to you all.

**Sheggs:** message bd. 27/9/2018. A big thank you to the **Bowron** family for great hospitality shown to us at **Davey's** funeral and a special thank you to **Steve Brown** who kept the information flowing to help us get to the right place in the correct dress. Once again 301 troop gave a good send off to one of their own. **RIP DAVE.**

**Letter from John Philips (Chair. AEA Birm'ham Branch), dated 4/10/2018.**

Dear 299, at our monthly meeting last evening, Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018. **Roger Howells** gave a report and other reminiscences were made by our Branch members who availed themselves of the opportunity to visit Arnhem with 299 Association on their annual pilgrimage, also organized by 299 members.

On behalf of our members who accompanied 299 and other guests, may I thank you all for the organization, courtesy and good will shown to your fellow travellers, and for the memories that will linger long after the effects of the visit are forgotten.

When people of like mind are gathered together, the result can be amazing!

Yours's most sincerely **John.**

**Mike Maddie:** email dated 4/10/2018 Just been to a veterans get together on an American Cruise ship. A lady veteran gave me a framed piece of the American Stars & Stripes as a thank you for my service. Treated with massive respect, any vet from any country who turned up. Give my best to all, **Maddy.**

**Chairman's Comments:** **Chris Shillito** gave a run down on this year's Arnhem trip which was enjoyed by 40 people, everybody's expectation's seemed to be met even though the weather was not kind. The parachuting took place as planned on the Saturday but the service at the Engineers memorial in the afternoon had to be cut short. The Sunday memorial service of laying on of flowers by the local children at the Cemetery in Oosterbeek went ahead with everybody getting soaked, and the fly past was cancelled. But judging by the positive messages posted on the association notice board the trip was well received. **Chris** thanked those who voiced their support for the organisers and hopes for better weather next year on the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Our Arnhem vet **Les Ransom** accompanied by **Col. Walker** managed to keep dry on the Saturday by attending the annual reception of dignitaries held at the Oosterbeek Hotel, he is invited to this function every year, but he is not always up to this photo opportunity for VIP's, whose only interest is usually their own. This year he struck a chord with the OC of 2 Para, after all **Les** is one of the few remaining men who actually reached the bridge with **John Frost**, and 2 Para have something in store for **Les** at a later date.

**Cromwell Lock memorial service on the 23/9/2018,** **Chris** thanked the two men **Dave Hinds & Bri. Bilton** who represented this association at this annual event. 299 men put effort into the maintenance of this site at the lock throughout the year and it is no fault of ours that the day selected for the service coincided with many former 131 members being at the Arnhem weekend in Holland, this is something that should never happen again. Well done to those who made the effort in showing respect to the men who perished.

**The Funeral of Dave Bowron on 26/9/2018 at the Woodlands Crematorium, Birmingham,** **Chris** thanked the men from this association who came to say farewell to this popular former 301 man and friend, this, sadly is

the loss of yet another 'Brummie', anyone who served with this man will forever remember him, one of life's real character's and his funeral reflected this to a tee, family participation was the order of the day with poems from his children, a family tribute by his brother, followed by reflections of Dave's military career by the Chairman of the Birmingham branch of the AEA **Johnny Philips** who held it together well. **Chris** reserved a special thanks to **Paul Sims** who carried 299's standard with the donations going to the SSAFA organisation who had helped **Dave** immensely as he came closer to the end of his life.

**N/B: SSAFA = Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen and Families Association.**

**More bad news** just in from Birm'ham with the death of **Ray Sands**, one of the old Brigade, he served from the 1950's and early 60's, this man supplied and paid for the Birm'ham Branch standard. RIP RAY.

This evening's meeting witnessed acts of total unselfish behaviour from two members, firstly **Dave Hines** our web master, who had produced 299 Association diary's & personalised calendars with every photo featuring as a tribute to the late **Keith Robbie**, somewhere in the frame. **Tony Costello** produced group photos from the Yorkshire Air Museum Memorial Day parade, both men refused compensation for their expenses with all the cash raised from the sale of these items going into the association coffers. This money, along with **Simbo's** 'bus stops' more than covers our monthly admin expenses, therefore subscriptions are not needed as long as you all keep buying and taking part in the meetings. **Chris** thanked both men.

**Steve McMahon** has been rushed into Hull Royal Infirmary with liver problems, we believe, news just come through the grape vine via **Chris Duggan**, visiting times 2 – 3pm & 7 -8pm, welcome updates on the association message board please, for all to see.

**Chris** had brought the next batch of 299 Association Rugby Shirts to this meeting which are selling like 'hot cakes' the association takes no profit from this venture and they are sent around the world via our many expats who want to show their loyal allegiance to their former unit, happy days.

**Matters arising: General Service Medal (Aden); John Donaldson submitted the following report at the meeting of the Scottish branch of the Airborne Engineers on 16th September 2018.**

"The latest letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> August 2018, was received from the MOD (**Lord Howe**) and addressed to **Angus MacNeil MP**.

The MOD have once again dipped into their barrel of excuses, and the latest one is that because 300 Para Sqn RE and 131 Para Engr Regt were not on the posted or attached strength of any unit or formation serving in the Federation of Sought Arabia, and did not spend the required number of days in theatre, they do not qualify for medallic recognition.

The MOD do not seem to understand that 300 Para Sqn RE was a part of 131 Par Engr Regt and whilst 299, 301, 302 Sqn's and HQ were based at Al Anad, 300 Para Sqn was sent further up country to Al Milah and attached to 24 Fld Sqn RE who were based there, and that only 300 Para Sqn RE were involved in the firefight.

**Lord Howe** went on to say that he has asked his officials to re-examine the circumstances of the deaths and wounding's, (**Lord Howe** calls them injuries in an attempt to belittle them), as there seems to be some confusion around messages being disseminated by the MOD previously.

The deaths and wounding's caused by enemy fire at Al Milah are a matter of record in Hansard dated 13<sup>th</sup> April 1965, and also in other places, and there is no need for further investigation. **Lord Howe** is just looking for excuses not to award the GSM.

**John** has sent a letter to the MOD, copied to **Angus MacNeil MP**, explaining once again about the makeup of 131 Para Engr Regt and where they were based in the Federation of South Arabia.

**John** received a letter from the Defence Business Services who are responsible for the administration of medals, in reply to his letter to the Chief of the Defence Staff, they have pointed out that the issues raised are with the medals policy staff.

**John** has also sent a letter to **Maurice Corry MSP** at the Scottish Parliament asking for an update on letters he sent to the MOD, however, to date he has not received a reply. It would appear that he is no longer interested in giving his support.

AEA Scotland would like to thank the members of 299 Association for their continued support in this saga.

Watch this space there is more to come"

## **Veterans Community Hub**

**Royal navy, Army, Royal Air Force and Reservist's**

# **LAUNCH EVENT**

**You are all invited to join this launch on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2018 at 63 – 74 Anlaby Rd, Hull HU3 2LL. (Opposite the `Tigers Lair`) Between 10am – mid day.**

**This is a great opportunity to visit this new exciting hub and meet the partners that provide valuable support to our armed forces community, everyone is welcome, hope you can make it.**

## **REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED**

**N/B: This hub will be managed by Paddy Nolan, ex 1 Para and now a qualified Social Worker, he will be paid by the MOD with the running costs of the hub coming from the Royal British Legion. This is something that is badly needed for the vets in this area, "whatever your problem, Paddy and his team are here to help" Even if you can't make the launch, please familiarise yourselves with this facility, you never know when it will be needed.**

**Items from members: This script was put on the association message board by former 299 man: Adam Garforth (Garth) on 27/9/2018, ex-pat now living in Bulgaria.**

Ode to **Les Ransom** a cheerful old chap,  
Donned his maroon beret to rid Europe of cr.p,  
The life of a Parra is no laughing joke,  
But cheerful as ever the Parr's pulled a mighty stroke,  
The largest airborne assault called market garden was formed,  
To kick the invaders out of Europe,  
Bring honour to the Brigade and hope.

Good on yer **Les** you made 96,  
May you enjoy many more,  
before your braying on St Peters door.

No guarantee is ever certain of such bold and brave pursuits,  
Death and destruction a bloody nose maybe,  
The price was 8,000 young Para's to help make Europe free,  
We honour the survivors and moan the dead,  
A Battle forfeited before the Allies took Hitler's head.

Good on yer **Les** you made 96,  
May you enjoy many more,  
before your braying on St Peter's door.

His memories may be sad ones and many to boot,  
Telling his mates in the DZ bar of all the stashed loot,  
Yes he'd be minted, a millionaire,  
If he could remember where he buried the f...er,  
It's somewhere in Europe under ten foot of mud.

Good on yer **Les** you made 96,

May you enjoy many more,  
before your braying on St. Peter's door.

Bit of entertainment for you gentlemen, respectful humour was intended, all the best **Garth**.

**Tony Costello:** put out an appeal for anybody wishing to attend the last of the few Palestine Veterans Remembrance Service at Eden Camp, Malton, Nth. York's on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October, kick off 12:00hrs, standards will be paraded thanks to **Tony Irwin & Art Stimo**, for more details contact **TC** on [Tel:01482 632100](tel:01482632100).

**Terry Cunningham:** brought the meeting up to date with men from the old 2 Troop, Doncaster via **Bud Oldfield** who reports that all's well with him and **Nev**, but **John Davis** is struggling with the aging process. **Ken Newton** former OC of 2 Troop & 1 Troop has given up living in France and has moved to Bournemouth, will try and make contact!

**Rich Gill:** showing off a 299 Association Rugby shirt on the summit of **MONT BLANC** the highest in Western Europe at 4808M. Not bad for an old timer!



**THE 'GILLY HIGHTS'**

**Social calendar:** **Andy Green** is promoting an evening's entertainment to take place at the Village Hotel, Hessle, Hull. On **Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019**. An evening meal with after dinner speaker **Rusty Fairman**, blue team leader at the Iranian Embassy siege, band music and dancing, will be a ticketed event, prices & timings to be confirmed later. **Andy will keep us in the picture.**

The profits generated are for the **PILGRIM BANDITS CHARITY (No: 1136166).**

N/B: this charity was established by a small group of Special Forces in 2007 with the sole aim of using their unique training and experience to help and inspire injured personnel to live life to the full.

Their mantra is 'Always a little Further' and is core to the charity's attitude. The charity is not only for our armed forces, but covers all emergency services.

**Dave Hines:** is proposing a **5 DAY WW1 BATTLEFIELD TOUR 2019** for your consideration, he has out sourced the info using the tour company **Acklams** coaches, and has produced a working itinerary.

This is a draft proposal based on 20 members, visiting recommended sites in and around Belgium and France, taking into account the areas and Cemeteries of the armed forces from our area. The itinerary is flexible and can be adapted to take into account any personal visits.

Date of Travel: Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019 for 5 days, 4 nights, staying in the Ypres Novotel using a 20 seat Elite Coach with toilet.

**Cost £365.00 per person based on 2 sharing a twin room.**

The price includes: Elite coach travel, return overnight sailing from Hull to Rotterdam in 2 berth cabins with evening meal & breakfast, Dinner, bed & breakfast at Ypres Novotel, welcoming glass of sparkling wine or fruit juice, 10% discount on all drinks paid direct at hotel.

**To make this work 20 people are needed and will be taken on a first come first served basis, plus a £50 deposit.**

**For more info contact Dave Hines on Tel: 01482 860981, Mb: 07821698522.**

**Simbo's bus Stop:** One winner this month **Weldo**

**Web site address:** [www.299association.com](http://www.299association.com)

**Next Meeting: To be held at the `Minerva` Nelson Street, Victoria Pier, Hull. On Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> November at 20:00hrs**

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

**Dates for your diary:**

**29<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL AEA GALA DINNER – SATURDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> October 2018.** To be held at the King Charles Hotel, Brompton Road, Gillingham, Kent ME7 5QT. (Chatham Branch of the AEA), Booking forms attached to April's minutes.

**REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> NOV. 2018,** details to follow

**CONTACTS:**

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Treasurer: Martin Tindle, [martinrontindle@hotmail.com](mailto:martinrontindle@hotmail.com) Tel: 01482 653618, Mb: 07500264558.

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**WELFARE:**

The veterans Hub & Forum, point of contact Paddy Nolan, (ex 1 Para), for all your problems

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

Tel: 01482 485956, email: [veteranshub@goodwintrust.org](mailto:veteranshub@goodwintrust.org)

