



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

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: Friday 1st October 2021, 20:00hrs at the Minerva.

Members Present: A. Alcock, M. Beardshaw, G. Beaumont, B. Bilton, K. Blacker, J. Brooks, G. Coe, N. Cooper, T. Cunningham, C. Duggan, A. Foster, R. Franklin, D. French, C. Gadd, R. Gill, C. Ham, W. Holbrook, R. Holding, D. Hines, D. Ideson, A. Irwin, P. Jefferson, A. Kitching, S. Knowles, M. Lawrence, J. Mace, A. McGlynn, R. Meachen, D. Meekin, F. Pougher, G. Ratten, P. Robson, K. Russell, K. Saddington, M. Sadler, C. Shillito, P. Sims, L. Smith, J. Thompson, Mart. Tindle, C. Walker, A. Weldon, Maj. C. Wilcock, P. Wilkinson, N. Yates.

Apologies: F. Gray, S. Hoyle, T. Walker, P. Robinson, J. Harrison, M. Maddison, Mike Tindle, B. Steele, D. Harvey, Bud Oldfield & Nev Smales (Not to well) send their very best wishes.

Guests: Pauline Meekin, Linda Kitching, Michelle Ideson.

Welcome and 'Roll Call'

The Chairman **Chris Shillito** welcomed all present to this very well attended meeting (45), thanking everybody for making the effort to come early for the photo shoot organised by **Tony Foster**. He reminded the meeting this is the first AGM for two years, (normally held in May) and asked us all to remember those of us that have failed to make it through this pandemic and he read out their names, may they all rest in peace. The meeting observed one minutes silence and **Chris** then recited the Exhortation. He reserved a special thanks to those, who for whatever reason cannot make the meetings on a regular basis, but pull the stops out for the AGM traveling miles from all-over the country, outstanding behaviour and much appreciated.

N/B: the photos taken outside the Minerva were only made possible because of some nifty negotiations (Whisky), by Tony Weldon with a very kind building supervisor, (the surrounding area is still a building site).

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

Proposed by – **Craig Gadd**

Seconded by – **Jack Brooks** and carried

Treasure's Report:

The Treasurer **Glenn Ratten**, as usual gave a full statement of this association's accounts which are now prepared for audit, then went on to explain the situation due to the cancelation of the proposed Normandy trip this year, operating through Ledgers, this company forced the total payment from us all, six weeks prior to the leaving date then decided to cancelled the trip a few days before the intended departure without anything been booked, "it's called highway robbery" and now we begin the fight for our refunds, bearing in mind the trip had already previously been put back for one year, because of the virus, the Treasurer is confident in retrieving all monies because he had the sense to book up using his own bank account and his own credit card, thus leaving the banks to fight it out, but Ledgers will not refund unless forced, and there lies a lesson for those vets wanting to book a Battle field tour with this company in the future.

Correspondence:

The Secretary's annual summary for 2019 - 2020 was published in May 2021, and contained the last full year's activities before the pandemic. **N/B: If anybody requires another copy please let me know.**

Chairman's Annual report:

Chris gave his reasons why he is proud to be the Chairman of this association, he served besides many of you as a reservist in one of the best units in the British Army and to experience the comradeship in this association which was first cultured as serving soldiers with 299. He went on to thank the committee for their support, but most of all to thank you guys for turning up for the meetings, you people are the association and without you all, there would be nothing.

One of the most pleasurable aspects of his job is showing gratitude on your behalf to members for service's rendered and he started by presenting a statue of Bellephon mounted on Pegasus for services rendered to **Dave Hines** web master and fund raiser, **Dave** is responsible for a web site to be proud of, for example just look at the Roll of Honour and it presentation, just one of many joys from this fertile mind.

Next up **Mick Beardshaw** this guy has supported this association forever, his generosity knows no bounds and he's a very likable fella who is well respected by everybody. His honesty reflects his common sense approach to life. He is a rock solid 299 man and stands on at every opportunity, a very popular acknowledgment amongst the members. **Mick** received a **Fred**, (Paratrooper rigged for jumping).

The **Les Ransom** Shield went to **Paul Sims (Simbo)** who is totally 299, nothing happens without him being involved, everybody has befitted for knowing him and he set a high standard to follow whilst serving, always a massive influence on the new recruits over his long and eventful career, an essential part of this association.

This association is lucky in having a professional photographer amongst our membership **Tony Foster** ex 4 Para Reg has been associated with 299 Squadron over many years, some of his action shots could win awards, nothing is too much trouble for him, making himself available whenever we call, **Tony** was presented with a 299 Association wall plaque and was very well received.

Our Chairman sees fit to award me, **Gaz Coe** with a trophy, Bellephon mounted on Pegasus and although faltered and gratefully received I consider my efforts as just doing the job that you people have entrusted me to do, I thank you all for your thoughtfulness but as many of you know I always consider a committee position as a privilege and an honour with a little bit of responsibility. Thank you again.

The Committee stood down

The ex-Secretary informed the meeting that all committee positions are now vacant and up for grabs and will need filling, he reminded the meeting that a vacancy still exists for the roll of Vice Chairman, (general 'Dogs Body') to fill in when needed into any of the committee positions, must be prepared to knock out a set of minutes or Chair a meeting including telling a few bad jokes, which is essential, just really to become a good backup substitute for the committee, This position is precautionary to help cover for absenteeism due to holidays, sickness or even worst, and was last held by **Bill Drayton**.

Craig Gadd (Gaddy) asked to be considered for the Vice Chair position and this news was welcomed and put to the vote: it was proposed by **Alan McGlynn** seconded by **Kev Saddinton** and carried by the meeting.

Pete Robson proposed that the last incumbent committee members may consider standing again for one more year and they all agreed, this was put to the vote.

Proposed **P Robson**, Seconded **A. Weldon** and carried by the meeting.

It's welcome news that **Gaddy** has decided to join the committee side of the association, 20+ years 299 service, and war hero, including losing a leg in Afghan, also very well respected and most importantly he is young, relatively speaking and this is how it has to be if you all want this association to survive. The old Brigade of committee members will not last for ever and those amongst you with the skills need to prepare yourselves for taking on the responsibility, because you younger members are the link with those serving today. **Gaddy is now a member of the 'Rolling Thunder' Para motor bike gang and is at the National Arboretum this weekend doing charity work.**

ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

Correspondence: relevant incoming over the previous month.

Dave Rutter: email dated 7/9/2021

Hi guys, many thanks for the minutes of your recent meeting (Sept). Really envious of the numbers in attendance. Looking forward to the Harrogate reunion weekend, and as a Southerner I really love Yorkshire, should have moved up there years ago. The best **Dave**.

Fred Gray: email dated 10/9/2021

Many thanks for the minutes of the last meeting (Sept). It was my intention to come up to Hull for the September meeting but unfortunately when I spoke to my niece with whom I always stay when I come North she informed me there had been two Virus contacts through two of her daughters. I was not prepared to risk staying with her even though it was a great disappointment as I have not seen any of my family in the North for almost two years. However I shall just keep my fingers crossed and hope for better news in the future. Please pass on my best wishes to 299 Association and I hope maybe I shall meet a few in Harrogate for the association reunion. Last month I attended the memorial service for General Lyall Grant who commanded 131 Regiment TA when I first joined in 1953/4. Best regards **Fred**.

Chris Shillito posted on the message board 14/9/2021 **Cromwell Lock Service.**

This service is to remember the 10 soldiers from 300 Tp 131 Independent Parachute Squadron RE (V) who perished at Cromwell Lock whilst on Ex Trent Chase in September 1975. Followed by the order of service.

Chris Shillito posted on the message board on 15/9.2021

There are still a lot of 299 Association men alive that were there on that fateful night when our Airborne brothers drowned: **Tony Weldon, Martin Tindle, Chuck Wilkinson, Tony Kitching, Steve Ives, Bob Meachen, Bud Pougher, Dave Watson, Chris Shillito**, 299 had two boats on the river that night, are there any others out there that I have missed.? We also had a backup team on shore looking after us. **Mike Tindle (Troop Commander), Paul Sims, John Mace, any others?**

Derek French sent an email dated 18/9/2021 titled 'The Waggoner'

I have just received my copy of **The Waggoner – RASC, RCT newsletter**, and thought you might like to view an extract that they have published regarding **Les. Ransom**. The 299 Association is acknowledged in the extract – their fame spreadeth.

Former RASC LCpl **Les Ransom** died on 8th February 2021. An account of his remarkable wartime experiences is reproduced below by kind permission of the 299 Association, followed by his story taken from the 299 website.

Gaz Coe posted on the message board on 20/9/2021.

More bad news gents from Botany Bay in (Sydney), as expected **Carol Mace** lost her fight for life on the 17th September and may she rest in peace.

The family have struggled with this wretched progressive – nuclear palsy over the last few years, incurable and deadly.

We send our condolences to **Dave** and the rest of the **Mace** family and hope they can gain some inner strength because her suffering is now over. Bless you all, from the 299 Association.

Glenn Ratten & Chris Shillito posted condolences on the message board to **Dave Mace & Family**.

Chris Shillito posted the following on the message board on 21/9/2021

Gentlemen we have received an email stating there has been a problem with the paperwork for holding an official service at the Cromwell lock this year, which is a shame after missing last year because of covid. Permission may come through last minute but the 299 committee has made a command decision that our guys need time for planning and organising transport etc and have decided to cancel the 299 Association's involvement this year and hope to make up for it next year. If you wish to turn up to pay your respects individually and unofficially we have been asked not to wear berets or medals or uniforms as we would not wish to get anyone into any trouble.

N/B: I would like to add the 299 Association has had no input in the planning or organisation of this event.

I understand that a service was allowed at the last minute and the 299 Association was represented by two veterans of that fateful weekend: **Dave Watson and Walter Holbrook**.

Steve Wallis: email dated 23/9/2021 (Chairman AEA)

I am preparing the agenda for the upcoming AGM at Harrogate.

Are there any items that you wish to include in the agenda for discussion at the AGM? This includes any propositions or notices of motions that you wish to put before the meeting.

Additionally, I would like all groups to present a report at the AGM detailing its current state and activities.

Gary Coe: email dated 24/9/2021 the 299 Secretary in reply to above.

Unfortunately I will be out of the country for the national AGM therefore unable to put my bone of contention to the meeting personally. The question submitted is:

Q. What is the future for the Cromwell Lock Memorial Garden?

I ask this question because after tending this garden with other 299 personal over the past 7 years only to be told that the establishment always thought too many people are involve in its upkeep, (at that point 299 ceased to be involved and that was 1.5 years ago), **let me tell you all**, nobody other than 299 people got their hands dirty during this period, we bought replacement roses, flowers and compost **every year**, I still have the delivery notes and invoices., the men from Scotland send money down for the upkeep of this site, were dose it go? Plenty of people may get involved but nobody wants to work on the garden, what will happen when we are all gone?

On this fact alone I will not rest, this question has been asked before and the answer fudged," to be looked into" but it will need answering now to avoid smears of malpractice. 299 Association do not want any reimbursement for monies spent, this was the least we could do.

Unfortunately the memorial garden will have to go eventually, "this is my forecast", nobody wants to look after it, the people who want to keep the garden do not want to care for it, only to use it for their own reasons and this is an insult to the men who died, also this is a 131 problem why are other units showing great interest in it? Plenty of people have shown great interest in the Monument before, but nobody else has gardened since the old Para Reg man from Newark PRA who stopped about 10 years ago, and until 299 got involved, (I think he died).

There are many men still alive that were on the river that night and who took part in the fight for survival, 15 in this association alone, they count for nothing now, leaving the incident in the hands of the 'woner-be's or never been's, it's a disgrace.

I leave this question with you all at this meeting, please remember this, if it comes to a vote on keeping the garden, or not, those who want to keep the garden are your future gardeners, obvious volunteers! It's as simple as that, also, you must make sure their names and contact details are taken for drawing up the work rosters!

Matters arising:

Dave Hines reported that our internet provider **Giacom World Networks Ltd** have pulled the plug on our fully paid up contract on 27/9/2021, obviously not making them enough money. 'I wonder how much charity work

this company gets involved in and around the Hull area' **Gaddy** is going to look into it by tracing his original contact and will report back.

Items from members:

ARNHEM

There was a call from the floor for possible association trips for next year if and when travel becomes a real possibility, several suggestions were called out: the old favourite Arnhem, St Nazaire combined with Pegasus Bridge to be considered along with Normandy, a show of hands were asked for with an out & out majority for Arnhem, this was backed up with votes via proxy from **Maddison, Robinson, Walker, Burns and Steele.**

FUNDRAISING

Dave Hines has again produced at his own expense a magnificent 299 Association Calendar in remembrance of Les Ransom and it's full of photos of Les with you 299 people at numerous locations and events you are all included in there, with them selling like hot cakes, this activity alone raised over £100 for the association funds, many thanks again to that top man 'HINSEY' who deserves every accolade given.

Simbos striptease bus Stops: 3 winners at this meeting:

Paul Sims (Simbo) in knickers.

Gaz Coe in nylons.

Bob Meachen in bra.

Again it's a well done to Simbo and all you players, this little venture raised £60 for our coffers.

Web site address: www.299association.com when back on line.

Next Meeting: Friday 5th November 2021, kick off 20:00 hrs. Minerva.

N/B: Chairman, Chris Shillito is looking for tombola prizes delivered at this meeting, any old bottles, good quality junk, anything that can make a bob or two, this is for the tombola in the Minerva after the Remembrance Sunday parade on the 14th November, something not to be missed.

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

Dates for your diary:

“THE BATTLEFIELDS OF NORMANDY”

CANCELED

Cromwell Lock disaster Service of Remembrance CANCELED.

AGM/reunion 31st Anniversary to be held over the week end Fri 15 – 17th Oct. 2021 at the Cedar Court Hotel, Park Parade, Harrogate, HG1 5AH. This event is been hosted by the Yorkshire branch of the AEA.

For further details contact Adam Frame on adamandemma@gmail.com Mb: 07809904216

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 14th NOV. 2021, muster 9:30hrs 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



DAVE HINES RECEIVING HIS TROPHY FROM CHRIS SHILLITO



NELSON STREET NEXT TO THE MINERVA OVER LOOKING THE HUMBER