



# Airborne Engineers Association



Aldershot Branch  
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held at  
Potters International Hotel  
Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2011

**President**  
**Colonel D.M.R.Eagan**

## Meeting Opened at 11.30hrs

Chairman: Fred Gray. E-mail [F.gray3@ntlworld.com](mailto:F.gray3@ntlworld.com) Tele: 01252 668339

Secretary: Betty Gray. E-mail [b.gee33@ntlworld.com](mailto:b.gee33@ntlworld.com) Tele: 01252 668339

Treasurer: Dave Rutter. E-mail [d\\_rutter@sky.com](mailto:d_rutter@sky.com) Tele: 01252 326140

Entertainments: John Smith. E-mail [thesmith@sky.com](mailto:thesmith@sky.com) Tele 01252 326100

## Members Present

Lt Col Dick Brown, Wally Clift, Colonel Denis Eagan Phil Eccelstone, John Ferry, Tony Gilbert, Fred Gray. Gerry Hicks, Jim Hill, Brian Hubbard, John Lee, Tony Manley, John Mason, Billy Morris, Peter Myatt AFC, Ralph Pedder BEM, John Pfiffner, Dave Rutter, John Smith BEM, Joe Stoddart MBE, Bob Sullivan MBE, Bob Wardle.

## Apologies

John Aldridge, John Barrie, Colin Bond, Jack Braithwaite, Harold Covington, Syd Dane, Ron Day, Ted Ellis, Harry Evans, Bob Ferguson, Bert Flatters, Dennis Healey, Bryn Hitchings, Roy King, Barry Ladlow, Mick Leather, Derek Leggett, Frank Menzies-Hearne, Rick Mogg, John Murphy, Dave Normington, Jim O'Hagan, Harold Padfield, Eric Rundle, Brendan Snoddy, Sir Donald Speirs, Steve Stephenson, Derek Taylor, Tom Tuddenham, and Maj. Peter Wade.

Before the meeting opened Colonel Denis Eagan welcomed the branch members and asked those present to stand for a minute's silence in remembrance of Alex Smith and Ian McClellan, two former Squadron members who have recently passed away.

## Chairman's Remarks.

The Chairman welcomed a number of our members who had not been able to attend recent meeting due to illness and injury. Peter Myatt looked extremely well after his recent stay in hospital suffering with a mysterious ailment that as yet is still a mystery. Tony Gilbert is now back on his feet after knee and hip surgery. Wally Clift made a surprise appearance after his recent stay in hospital and it was very good to see him again. Unfortunately Roy King could not be present as his wife Wendy is still in the treatment stage for her long-standing health problems. Ted Ellis is now in full time care and is unlikely to be able to attend any of our meetings at any time in the future. Rick Mogg is still baffling his doctors but did show some improvement after his hip replacement three weeks ago. Ralph Pedder has bounced back from a scare and looking as fit as ever.

To all our "patients" welcome back and our very best wishes for those who couldn't make it.

**A very warm welcome to Jim Hill, Phil and Gay Ecclestone and the new Mrs Jenny Mason, attending our meeting for the first time.**

## Minutes of the previous meeting

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

Proposed by: Bob Sullivan  
Seconded by Bob Wardle

That the minutes were a true record of the meeting

**Carried**

## **Treasures Report**

The Treasurer, Dave Rutter, gave a short report on the branch Current and Savings Accounts and reported that both balances were subject to audit. They remain in a healthy state and will increase when the branch annual subscriptions have been fully paid up to date. Colonel Eagan did ask if the Gift Aid rule was being used to the best advantage. He was assured by Lt Colonel Dick Brown, the association treasurer, that it was claimed on an annual basis.

Proposed by John Lee  
Seconded by: Ralph Pedder

That the treasurer's report be accepted as a true record subject to audit

The Chairman then pointed out the annual problem of getting members to pay their branch subscription. A direct debit /standing order system is in place and is the most convenient way of paying the subscription into the branch account. Would those not already taking advantage of this system please consider it by the time of the next meeting.

## **Correspondence.**

The minutes of the Birmingham, Chatham, and Scotland Branches were made available for members to read.

Points brought to the attention of members were:

- Bob Jones of the Birmingham Branch is now back in the Heartlands Hospital. George and Elsie Barrett are to keep interested people informed through branch minutes.
- It was mentioned in the Yorkshire Branch minutes that the AEA Standard had been carried at 37 funerals and 12 other parades during 2010. An amazing number of events. Were they all members of the association who had died?
- Also from the Yorkshire Branch, they had sent 600 shoeboxes to Afghanistan. A superb amount!!
- An attendance proforma from the Yorkshire Branch for their Annual Dinner 12 March 2011 .Any member of the Aldershot Branch requiring one should contact the Branch Secretary on 01252 668339
- The Chatham Branch also sent a proforma for the John Rock Dinner to be held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June at the King Charles Hotel Chatham. Request for a proforma should be made to Mr Peter Kershaw, 26 Stoney Bank, Gillingham Kent ME7 3AG not later than 4<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

## **Branch Rep**

The next meeting of the executive committee is not until April. Joe Stoddart did say that he had been in contact with Major Clarke OC 9 Squadron and Colonel Ross CO 23 Regiment. Colonel Ross had sent a letter saying how much the Regiment appreciated the help and contact with the Airborne Engineers Association at home. They did appreciate the shoebox parcels and a number of letters from recipients had been received.

All members of the AEA are invited to the medals parade to be held in Rock Barracks on Thursday 31 March 2011. Details are enclosed with these minutes.

## **Entertainments**

### **Spring Lunch Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2011**

As of the 20<sup>th</sup> February, 38 members and wives /partners/family had booked for the lunch. Thirteen vacancies were left. Please contact John ASP if you require a booking. Mr Eric Bollace a Chelsea pensioner, and former Chief Clerk of 9 Squadron, has been invited as our guest. All expenses for Eric are to be borne by the branch.

John is investigating the possibility of a reunion of 3 Troop personnel that dropped on El Gamil airfield during the Suez Canal War in 1956. This year is the 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and a number of the Aldershot Branch were involved in the parachute phase of the operation. Individual letters are to be sent to those involved.

John has been in touch with the Army Rugby Union and complained about the conduct of the supporters being allowed to invade the pitch on numerous occasions, spoiling what had been a reasonably good game. Tickets and car parking tickets can be obtained through John, a price list is enclosed. A list of games to be played in Aldershot is also enclosed.

If tickets are required for Twickenham please be aware that John and Glenda will be away in Spain from 10<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April. John requires cheques by 19 March at the latest for him to be able to book numbers & car parking etc.

### **AOB**

The Branch Treasure, Dave Rutter, informed members that a very generous cheque had been received from Colin and Madeleine Bond. Colin and Madeleine live in Pembroke and are unable to attend our meetings due to health and distance, but continue to be staunch members of the branch. A vote of thanks was proposed by Dave Rutter for their generosity and continuing support. Every one present showed their appreciation in the usual way. The money is to be used to buy gifts for the raffle at the Spring Lunch, which will be in addition to those donated by members.

Dave also proposed that Joe Stoddart be made Chairman of the branch at the AGM when the present chairman stands down after his three-year tenure. Joe Stoddart then proposed that Dave Rutter should take over the post of Secretary when Betty Gray also stands down in April. Both proposals were accepted by the present Chairman and the members present.

John Mason brought to the attention of the meeting the dire state of the Church roof at Ranville Normandy. This has effectively become the Regimental Chapel of The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces. An appeal to raise 160,000 Euros is enclosed. Please read the attached appeal and make a donation if possible.

John Smith made it known that John and Jenny Mason have very generously decided to pay for the welcome drinks and coffee at the Spring Lunch. A vote of thanks was proposed by John and warmly endorsed by all present.

It was suggested by John Piffner that that it might be a good idea to pre-purchase £100 worth of postage stamps used for branch business, before the price rise in April. **Agreed.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1245Hrs.

**Next Meeting: AGM & OGM  
May 8<sup>th</sup> 2011  
1100hrs for 1130hrs**

Please inform John or Glenda if you would like to have lunch in the Potters after the meeting by May 1<sup>st</sup>. Twenty-six members/ wives/family attended lunch after the meeting in February.

As the annual subscription is due please bring your chequebooks to the next meeting!!