



# Airborne Engineers Association



Aldershot Branch  
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held at  
Potters International Hotel  
Aldershot  
Sunday 12 December 2010  
**President**  
**Colonel D.M.R.Eagan**

## **Meeting Opened at 11.30hrs**

Chairman: Fred Gray.	E-mail	<a href="mailto:f.gray3@ntlworld.com">f.gray3@ntlworld.com</a>	Tele: 01252 668339
Secretary: Betty Gray.	E-mail	<a href="mailto:b.gee33@ntlworld.com">b.gee33@ntlworld.com</a>	Tele: 01252 668339
Treasurer: Dave Rutter.	E-mail	<a href="mailto:d_rutter@sky.com">d_rutter@sky.com</a>	Tele: 01252 326140
Entertainments: John Smith.	E-mail	<a href="mailto:thesmith@sky.com">thesmith@sky.com</a>	Tele 01252 326100

## **Members Present**

Col. Denis Eagan, John Barrie, Brian Hubbard, Fred Gray, Tony Manley, Billy Morris, Roger Mockford, John Pfiffner, Dave Rutter, John Smith BEM, Joe Stoddart MBE, Bob Sullivan MBE and Bob Wardle.

## **Apologies**

Colin Bond, Jack Braithwaite, John Brennan, Bob Chatterton, Ron Day, Don Doherty, Phil Eccleston, Bob Ferguson, Bert Flatters, John Ferry, Dennis Healey, Anthony (Jim) Hill, Bryn Hitchings, Barry Ladlow, Mick Leather, Rick Mogg, Peter Myatt, Frank Menzies-Hearne, John Murphy, Dave Normington, Jim O'Hagan, Harold Padfield, Eric Rundle, Brendan Snoddy, Sir Donald Spiers CB TD, Steve Stephenson, Bob Sullivan MBE, Phil Taverner, Derek Taylor, Tom Tuddenham, Maj Peter Wade.

The Branch President Colonel Denis Eagan opened the meeting at 1130hrs and welcomed all those present. He then asked members to stand and observe a minute's silence in memory of Paddy Boyce, Ian Thompson and Ken Coley who had passed away in recent weeks.

## **Chairman's Remarks**

The Chairman said that he was surprised to see so many had been able to attend the meeting as the weather forecast for the weekend had been very poor and had probably put many members off driving. As it turned out the day was fine but very cold.

An update of members who were ill and could not attend included Wally Clift who has now been admitted to the Chertsey hospital suffering from depression and is likely to be there for about one month.

Peter Myatt has undergone a number of tests but as of yet his problem is still unknown. Further tests are to be held in the near future.

Rick Mogg is also having further tests but continues to baffle his doctors. He is due further test in about two weeks time.

Ted Ellis is now in a care home and is likely to stay there for some considerable time. He is visited by his neighbour and good friend Bob Wardle and members will be kept informed if there is any improvement or deterioration in his health.

Ralph Pedder is almost back to full fitness and expects to be at our next meeting in February 2011.

## **Minutes of the previous meeting**

Proposed by: Brian Hubbard

Seconded by: Billy Morris

That the minutes were a true record of the meeting

Carried

## **Matters Arising**

No matters arising

## **Treasurer's Report**

A brief report by the treasurer Dave Rutter showed that the branch funds were in a good healthy state.

Proposed by: John Barrie

Seconded by: Tony Manley

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

Carried.

## **Correspondence.**

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

The minutes of the AGM held at Bournemouth 2010 were made available to read.

Reports from 23 Airborne Engineer Regiment during their present tour in Afghanistan was made available for members to read.

## **Branch Representative**

The branch rep, Joe Stoddart MBE, gave a comprehensive report of the matters arising from the Annual General Meeting of the AEA in Bournemouth. The most important item being the proposal that the AEA should amalgamate with the AEA (REA) Branch. The proposal was rejected unanimously.

Joe also informed the meeting that the new Secretary of the Scotland Branch was Gill Nicol and the Chairman Frank Murray

## **Entertainments**

John Smith said that the cost for the proposed trip to Jersey in 2011 had escalated to such an extent that he did not think it was worthwhile to pursue it any further. He then proposed three alternative venues to celebrate the Aldershot Branch twenty-first formation year. After a short discussion the Squires Halt restaurant was accepted as the most popular venue. The lunch is to be held in April. The final date is to be verified after John has made enquiries with the restaurant. The cost per person is expected to be no more than £25 plus wine and drinks.

Dave Rutter (Treasurer) then made a proposal that £500 should be made available from branch funds to offset the cost. Seconded by Tony Manley and accepted unanimously by those present.

## Rugby Union.

Army Rugby Union fixtures for 2011 are:

- 09 Feb v Oxford University at Aldershot
- 20th April V RAF at Aldershot
- 07 May V Royal Navy at Twickenham

Tickets for the Twickenham match will be organized through John Smith as in previous years. Tickets for games played in Aldershot will be available at the gate.

## Membership

Billy Morris gave an up-date on the Association Membership, which now stands at 1410. Recruitment will continue on the return of 23 Regiment from Afghanistan.

## AOB

Tony Manley informed those present that the family of Paddy Boyce are trying to have his ashes interned in the Military Cemetery Aldershot. If permission is given the internment date will be 19th February 2011. As soon as details become available they will be passed on to members.

It was proposed by Bob Sullivan MBE that Mrs Glenda Smith and Mrs Sylvia Stoddart be made honorary members of the Aldershot Branch in recognition of their very hard work and support of the branch during the last ten years.

Carried unanimously

**There being no further business the President closed the meeting at 12. 30pm**

Thirteen members and wives members attended the lunch after the meeting.

**Next meeting will be on Sunday 20th February 2011, 11.00am for 11.30am followed by lunch for those who require it in the Potters restaurant.**

**Please inform John Smith on 01252 326100 at least one week in advance if you intend to have lunch.**



**Best Wishes for Christmas  
And  
The New Year  
From  
Fred & Betty Gray**





**9 Parachute Squadron**  
23 Engineer Regiment (Air Assault)  
Rock Barracks  
Sutton  
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2 Sep 10

Dear All,

We wanted to take this opportunity to write and introduce ourselves to you. Having both recently taken up our posts as OC and SSM, and with the Sqn deploying to Afghanistan, we thought that it was very important to touch base before we left. We've attached short biographies, which should serve to give you an idea of our backgrounds. We are both completely committed to the Sqn in its widest sense and to maintaining the inseparable bond with the Airborne Engineers Association. In our respective roles we acknowledge the great work done by our predecessors, Maj Joe Fossey and (now) WO1 (RSM) Paddy Beattie – they were fantastic ambassadors and worked tirelessly to maintain the reputation of the Sqn as a thoroughly professional organisation that looks after its family.

The Sqn deploys on operations to Afghanistan in September for six months. As you would expect we are well-trained, highly motivated and raring to go. While the tasks will vary, we will predominantly be focussing on the construction or maintenance of bridges, roads and operating bases. These will bring greater security to Helmand Province but also, by facilitating economic development, improve the quality of life of many Afghans. In all of this we will work in partnership with the Afghan National Army and Police and alongside coalition partners from 46 different nations. However, we can't pretend that we will be able to solve all of the world's problems in our six-month deployment, and will therefore remain mindful of the importance of our handover to the sqn that replaces us in theatre.

We will endeavour to keep you updated with our progress periodically and look forward to coming to talk to you about our experiences when we return.

Best wishes

Maj John Clark (OC)

WO2 (SSM) Marc Dorkings