



# *Airborne Engineers Association*

*Registered Charity Number: 1009201*

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## **MINUTES OF AN AIRBORNE ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT NOTTINGHAM ON 3 OCTOBER 2009**

Annexes:

A. Statement of Account as at 5 Oct 09.

### **Members Present**

Forty (40) Members were seated for the meeting.

### **Apologies**

Apologies were received from too many members to list - The Chairman directed that his and the President's thanks were recorded to all those members who had submitted apologies.

Two particular apologies were announced: Those of the President himself who could not attend due to his wife's illness and those of Joe Houlston (AEA Founder Member) who also could not attend but sent his best wishes to all comrades.

### **Remembrance**

The meeting was preceded by a period of silence/reflection for "**Absent Friends**".

### **Chairman's Opening Remarks**

- Overall, the association has had a busy and successful year.
- After the revealing of the John Rock Bust at Woodbridge – The Chairman directed that thanks be recorded once again for the efforts of Eric Blenkinsop in ensuring that the 'Bust Project' was such an outstanding success.
- The Chairman then provided a 'snapshot of the branches'.
- 299 Branch were officially welcomed as a new element of the Association. The branch was officially represented by Mike Hookem and Gary Newton.

- Charity efforts were summarised and The Chairman directed that thanks be recorded to all members who have Run, Cycled, Walked, Swum, Eaten, Boozed and Just Sat for Charity – Help for Heroes and many other charities have benefitted from those sterling efforts.
- Attention was drawn to the Association Standards and their presence at many events. The Chairman expressed his thanks to the Standard Bearers.
- **The Membership** are the best ambassadors/recruiters for the association – we should all make the effort to ensure our mates (or any new blood we meet) are signed up.
- The Chairman thanked Ray Coleman for all he has done for the shop as Ray stands down from the post – the shop remains our best source of income.
- Thanks are also registered for Dave Rutter, Dick Brown, Billy Morris and Dave Pace for their work on the Journal, the Accounts, Membership and Website respectively.
- The Chairman announced that Tony Roberts has kindly volunteered to be the 'Welfare Conduit' for the Association – welfare has been a lesser element within the Association but the balance should be addressed under Tony's guidance.
- The Chairman concluded his opening remarks with a thank you to Mick Humphries, his predecessor, who handed over the Chairmanship in good health and ready for future development.

### **Minutes of AGM 2008**

Comment on the AGM 2008 Minutes was called for. There being no remarks to add, the minutes were accepted as a true record.

Proposed: John Smith    Seconded: Bob Matthews    **Carried**

### **Treasurer's Report**

Dick Brown gave his report, stating that poor interest rates continue to work against us. A summary of the figures is at Annex A. Dick further stated that a Summary of Branch Accounts will be required on an annual basis to ensure latest figures are to hand for audit purposes. The report was accepted as presented.

Proposed: Eric Blenkinsop    Seconded: John Parker **Carried**

### **Membership Secretary's Report**

Billy Morris stated that 2009 has been a fairly slow year so far. Approaches will be made to the new 'management' of 23 Regt to provide some impetus and generate some 'younger blood'. In general terms, the membership is healthy and the arrival of the 299 Branch Members will boost us by approx 30 people. The report was accepted as presented.

Proposed: Ray Coleman    Seconded: Buster Shaw **Carried**

### **Journal – Editor's Report**

Dave Rutter reiterated his previous calls for input to the Journal; input from all is welcomed (provided it is printable!) and can only serve to enliven the publication. In particular, photographs of all eras/activities make useful pieces. Dave requested all Members to check their Standing Order arrangements to ensure they meet the current subscription cost. The report was accepted as presented.

Proposed: John McCarthy    Seconded: Brian Spivey **Carried**

### **Election of Officers**

The current Officers of the Association are willing to stay in post until the next AGM; therefore, it was proposed that they be confirmed in post for the next year.

Proposed: John Hooper    Seconded: Ray Coleman    **Carried**

## **Welfare Coordinator**

The Chairman stated that there have been instances when the Association has not been as effective as might be expected when welfare assistance has been required. To address this, a dual proposal was made: that the Association elects a Welfare Officer and that Tony Roberts be elected (as previously referred to in Chairman's remarks).

Proposed: John Hooper Seconded: Harry Lockwood **Carried**

## **Replacement Shop Manager**

After an outstanding tenure as Shop Manager, Ray Coleman has reluctantly decided to stand down.

A replacement volunteer was called for; no volunteers/nominations were received from the floor. After some discussion, an unexpected and very welcome volunteer was put forward – Jeanette Rutter (Dave's better half). The proposal was then made that Jeanette Rutter be appointed as the Shop Manager.

Proposed: John Smith Seconded: Fred Gray **Carried**

## **The Airborne Engineers Association Rules**

Dennis Eagan has made a great deal of effort to ensure our Association Rules are of proper utility in terms of our base reference document and also updated in terms of our charitable status. His latest draft was issued to all attendees at the AGM and had previously been circulated to all branches. The Chairman stated that the document should now be accepted as a working document and revised only when the passage of time or change of circumstances dictates. This was reinforced from the floor by John Hooper. It was therefore proposed that the July 2009 Draft be accepted as a working document.

Proposed: Bob Matthews Seconded: Tom Thornton **Carried**

The Chairman directed that a Vote of Thanks be recorded for Dennis Eagan from all Association Members.

## **President's Commendations**

It was proposed at an earlier AGM that there should be some form of recognition for valuable service to the Association (the only provision at that time was Lifetime Vice Presidency which is only awarded for outstanding and sustained contributions over a long period of time), this recognition taking the form of a President's Commendation for Valuable Service. It was decided at OGM that the presentation would take the form of a Citation and an enamelled badge based on the Association lapel pin.

Nominations for the first awards were called for in early 2009 – the following presentations of the President's Commendation were made at AGM 2009:

Jimmy Simpson – Scotland Branch  
Eric Blenkinsop – Chatham Branch  
Ray Coleman – Aldershot Branch  
John Smith – Aldershot Branch  
Mick Humphries – Aldershot Branch

On behalf of The President (previously submitted apologies), The Chairman, Joe Stoddart, presented the awards and commended all recipients for their contributions to the well being of the Association.

## **Annual General Meeting and Reunion 2009/2010**

John Smith gave a comprehensive briefing on AGM/Reunion 2010 and issued background literature to all present, the event is to be at Bournemouth on the weekend of 1-3 Oct 10 at the Carrington House Hotel.

The Chairman directed that a Vote of Thanks be recorded to Bunny Brown and the Birmingham Team for, once again, putting together an excellent package for the 2009 AGM and Reunion.

**Any Other Business**

No further points were raised under 'Any other Business'.

**Chairmans Closing Remarks**

In light of the OGM immediately following the AGM, The Chairman had nothing further to add. He declared a 30 minute break before reconvening for the OGM. The AGM closed in good order at 1125 hours.

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## **Minutes of an Airborne Engineers Association Ordinary General Meeting held at Nottingham 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2009**

**Members Present** - Twenty seven (27) Members returned for the OGM. The following Council Members were present: Joe Stoddart (Chairman), Geoff Howard (Gen Sec), Dick Brown (Treasurer), Dave Rutter (Vice President and Editor) and Billy Morris (Memb Sec).

Branches were represented by the following: Fred Gray (Aldershot and Archivist), Bob Matthews (Chatham), Jimmy Simpson (Scotland), Bunny Brown (Birmingham) and Mike Hookem (299 Branch).

**Apologies** - The President's apologies also apply here. Apologies were also received from Dave Pace (Webmaster). Attendance other than Council Members is voluntary therefore further apologies do not apply.

**Chairman's Opening Remarks** - The Chairman reminded all present that the OGM is a Council Meeting that is part of the annual cycle of meetings. The purpose of holding the OGM on the same day as the AGM is to take reports and deal with Association business that are not included in the format of the AGM. Association Members present are welcome and may feel free to input to discussions taking place.

**Minutes of OGM Held at Maidstone on 31 May 2009** - Comments on the minutes for the above OGM were called for. There being no remarks to add, the minutes were accepted as a true record.

Proposed: Bob Matthews, Seconded: Ray Coleman **Carried**

**Archivist's/Property Report** - There were two (2) distinct parts to this report delivered by Fred Gray and Tom Thornton:

Fred: A comprehensive summary of the whereabouts and movement of property was given. There is also a significant amount of effort going into the documentation of the locations etc. There is now a significant amount of property being well displayed and looked after in John Rock Barracks both in the messes and the offices. Some of the pieces on display have been retrieved from Elvington and moved to Woodbridge, which leads on to the second part of the report given by Tom.

Tom: Tom has visited Elvington to find that property was not on display and, worse, was poorly stored and not being cared for. As mentioned above, some property has been re-located but there is an issue with ownership once items have been donated to a museum.

Tom wished it to be recorded that he was personally extremely dismayed at the conditions at Elvington and fears that some items have even been lost.

*The President, John Lee, Fred and Tom have undertaken to look further into this and explore the possibility of locating further items to the new museum at Duxford.*

The Chairman suggested that OC 299 Sqn (Adam Frame) could be approached to assist in any move of property that results from these efforts.

The Chairman directed that a Vote of Thanks be recorded to Tom for his efforts and also to Fred for his ongoing involvement in these matters.

**AEA Sports Club Report** - Billy Morris pointed out that the AEA Sports Club is intended to represent all sports undertaken by AEA Members and reports of all activities are welcome – to be featured in the Journal. The sport does not have to be too strenuous/extreme – reports on Golf, Clay Pigeon Shooting, Rambling or anything that takes Member's fancy are welcome, they will all add to the Journal and may even expose some Members to be a lot less 'macho' than we all remember!

Photographs of sporting activities are particularly welcome as Billy still has aspirations to display them on a 'loop' at the reunion weekends.

The Chairman thanked Billy for his report and directed that a 'Well Done!' be recorded from the Association for his and Bob Chatterton's efforts in the Rhine to Rock and other distance runs for charity.

**Shop Manager's Report** - Ray Coleman, once again, expressed his regret at having to stand down as Shop Manager. He pointed out that it is the Association Members who provide the profit, not the Shop Manager and encouraged all to make full use of the shop. He went on to wish Jeanette well in running the shop and also his hope that she gains as much enjoyment from the activity as he has himself.

The Chairman thanked Ray for his report and, once again, expressed his and the Association's thanks for a job well done.

**Webmasters Report** - No formal report was submitted but the Chairman pointed out that the Website is looking extremely professional and is very user friendly after the recent revamp. He encouraged all Members who have access to use the site to gain information and use the Guestbook. The site is a great facility and should be used more. The Chairman registered his thanks to Dave Pace for a sterling effort.

**Branch Reports** - The Chairman had already given a comprehensive summary of Branch activities during his report; all Branches are highly active in the Commemorative, Social and Charitable spheres. The following particular points were made:

Chatham – Bob Matthews thanked all for a good turn out in saying farewell to John Grosvenor and lending their efforts in making it an event of appropriate significance.

299 Branch – Mike Hookem took the opportunity to say 'hello' to the Association and express his (and his Branch's) pleasure at becoming part of the whole. The Branch looks forward to its future involvement and will take full part in Association activities.

Ripon – The Yorkshire lads have volunteered to host the 2011 AGM and Reunion.

The Chairman registered his thanks to all Branch representatives for their input.

**Any Other Business** - No further points were raised under Any Other Business.

**Date/Venue of Next Meeting**- The Yorkshire (Ripon) Branch has kindly offered to host the next OGM at Ripon on Sun 7 Feb 10 (detailed venue TBC) – this will follow their Dinner in Ripon WOs and Sgts Mess on Sat 6 Feb 10.

**Closing Remarks** - The Chairman closed by thanking everyone for their attendance and input, he went on to wish everyone an excellent weekend and Gala Dinner. As the bar appeared to be open, the meeting closed in good order at 1320 hours.

*Geoff Howard*  
G HOWARD  
General Secretary

**Afternote:** Eldred Grocock regaled the meeting with his 'Tale of the Tree' – a moving and absolutely b\*&%dy hilarious story of how he had sustained the injury to his leg – ask him some time!