



## *Airborne Engineers Association*

*Registered Charity Number: 1009201*

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### **MINUTES OF AN AIRBORNE ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) AND AN ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (COUNCIL MEETING) HELD AT COVENTRY ON SATURDAY 29 OCTOBER 2011**

#### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)**

Attachments:

1. Treasurer's Report as at 30 September 2011.

#### **Members Present**

Forty two (42) Members were present for the Annual General Meeting.

*Apologies: Numerous apologies were received; the Chairman directed that the following particular apologies be recorded: Tony Roberts, Eric Blenkinsop, John Hooper, Brendan Snoddy, Tom Ormiston, Don Docherty, Ray Coleman, Dennis Eagan, Reg Grantham and Bob Chatterton.*

#### **Remembrance**

A 2 minute silence was held for "Departed friends and comrades", Frank Menzies-Hearn provided the 'Pipers Lament'..

#### **Chairman's Welcome and Remarks**

The Chairman, Joe Stoddart, spoke on a number of points, bulleted as follows:

- Gentlemen, thank you all for attending our Annual General Meeting. I know the effort made by all members to get here, some overcoming poor-health, current illness and sheer distance in order to attend. It is really good to see such a turn out. I thank you all.
- Since October of 2010, all of the branches have been busy and I had the great pleasure to attend a number of dinners and other celebrations. It should be noted that, on these occasions, as well as a good get-together, we do manage to make quite a substantial donation to charitable causes..
- During this past period, our Sappers in 23 Engineer Regiment (Air Assault) deployed to Afghanistan under Command of Lt Col Fraser Ross. I tried to keep in touch with him, the regiment and, in particular, Major John Clark, OC 9 Parachute Squadron RE.

- I received much feedback 'from the front' (distributed when received). On the Association's behalf I offered to help in any way we could while the unit was away. The families' back-up in Woodbridge proved to be as excellent as we would expect..
- Unfortunately, the Regiment returned with a number of casualties. I was proud to attend the Medal Ceremony at Rock Barracks where I will never forget the bravery of those young men. In particular; the sight of Josh Boggi, severely injured, standing in his wheelchair to receive his medal, was very humbling.
- The next trip to Woodbridge was for the Airborne Forces Day Reunion in July. An excellent weekend with many and varied activities – somewhat curtailed by unavailability of helicopters. On the Saturday evening I was fortunate in being able to present OC 9 Sqn and OC 51 Sqn with presentation pieces kindly provided by one of our members, Dave Lincoln. Our continued relationship with the Regiment is extremely important and one which must be nurtured. We will continue to support them in all that they do.
- As always, our individual branches have been busy with their own, full, agendas. Branches have been represented at Double Hills, Arnhem, Crete and Normandy. In November, our President has arranged for members to form a Marching Contingent at the Cenotaph Parade. Overall a good year for the Association and this is entirely due to you, The Members. Without your time, effort and plain enthusiasm we would be just another, ordinary, organisation.

### **Minutes of AGM 2010**

Any points, arising from AGM 2010, were requested from the floor. There being no points raised, the minutes were accepted as a true record.

### **Treasurers Report**

The Treasurer's figures are at Attachment 1. The Treasurer, Dick Brown, requested that the Association's official thanks be recorded to Jeanette Rutter for her continued, highly effective and valued management of the Association Shop..

Proposed by Brian Spivey, seconded by Bunny Brown. That the Treasurer's Report, as presented, be accepted. **Carried.**

### **Membership Report**

Membership stands at 1424.

New members in 2011 = 13

The Membership Secretary, Billy Morris, drew attention to the posters (Your Association Needs You!) he has produced and circulated to branches. These posters to be displayed wherever and whenever attention may be generated to the benefit of Association Membership.

Billy also drew Member's attention to a proposed design for 'car stickers'. Big enough to catch attention while being reasonably discreet. Stickers to be available from the

Association Shop – the proposal was well received. Billy will continue with arrangements for supply of the stickers.

Billy drew attention to the Membership Folder that will be available for amendment (new addresses, etc.) over the weekend – all Members please amend as appropriate.

Finally, Billy asked that thanks be recorded to Dave Pace for the new Web Page – much easier to view and use.

Proposed by Dave Liebrick, seconded by Jimmy Hill. That the Membership Report, as presented, be accepted. **Carried.**

### **Journal – Editor’s Report**

The Journal Editor, Dave Rutter, spoke on the following subjects:

- As always, more articles/input are required for future publications – without input there can be no journal. Where possible, please include photographs when submitting an article for publication – the inclusion of photographs greatly enhances the final product. All photographs will be returned once scanned onto the Editor’s computer.
- The cost of producing The Journal is rising, both production costs and the cost of postage. The situation requires constant review. Suggestions as to how we might proceed (more cheaply) in the future would be appreciated. At present, it is fair to say, we are just ‘keeping our heads above water’ in terms of funding for The Journal.
- *Afternote: The President, John Lee, spoke on the future of The Journal. As ‘food for thought’ he outlined the possibilities of Epublishing, ie: publishing The Journal on-line, probably on The Association web-site, so that Members can subsequently download all or parts of The Journal as required.*

*It was established that 7 Members present did not have immediate access to the Internet. John Smith (Aldershot Branch) raised the cost of printing – this may affect some Members. Notwithstanding the problems which may arise for some Members, the subject was left at the ‘food for thought’ stage as stated by The President.*

- Finally, The Editor stated that subscriptions would stay as they are for now, final requests for subscriptions to be enclosed with the December edition..

Proposed by John Ferry, seconded by Sandy Reid. That the Editor’s Report, as presented, be accepted. **Carried.**

### **Association Shop Report**

On behalf of the Shop Manager, Jeanette Rutter, Dave Rutter gave the following report:

- Thank you to the Treasurer for conducting the recent Audit.
- As with the Journal, recent increases in costs will not affect stock prices for the time being.

- 9 Indep Para Sqn RE Polo shirts are available but will be ordered to individual demand – they will not be held in stock.
- Finally, sincere thanks to all Members for your support to the shop – any suggestions for new lines are welcome and, if within scope, will be considered for inclusion in the Stock List.

Proposed by John Smith, seconded by Ron Hadden. That the Shop Report, as presented, be accepted. **Carried.**

### **Welfare Liaison Officer's Report**

The Welfare Liaison Officer, Tony Roberts, passed the following report via Joe Stoddart:

- As would be expected, persons who have requested advice and support are not named. Those Members deceased are, of course, named.
- A Member in the Midlands was assisted with advice and support through the local SSAFA office on matters relating to disabled accommodation and a move to another area.
- A Member in the Home Counties was provided with advice in regard to respite care should it be required.
- On the sad death of 'Ginge' Goodfellow, advice and contact numbers were provided for his immediate family in regard to statutory benefits, etc.

*It should be noted that the main support to the family was given by Fenimore Fleck with his oratory at the funeral and Dave Ruddock on his visits to Ginge in hospital.*

- We were all saddened at the passing of Paddy Boyce; his funeral took place in Inverness, a difficult distance for many who would have wished to attend. The difficulty was compounded by a spell of very severe weather that disrupted the transport system throughout the UK.

We were able, however, to make contact with the local SSAFA Branch in Kingussie who rose to the challenge of providing a Military Signature on Paddy's funeral. It should be noted that all SSAFA personnel outside London are volunteers and, by chance, the local man was an ex-Parachute Regiment man by name of John Padgett. John arranged a piper (ex-9 Sqn man, Biddy McMillan!) and members of the local PRA to attend with Berets and Standard.

All SSAFA Branch funding is raised by local donations; in light of this the AEA Council felt it appropriate to make a donation to the Kingussie SSAFA Branch, this was very much appreciated. It is difficult enough raising monies in well populated areas, let alone the sparsely populated Highlands.

- *I (Tony Roberts) feel all of the above action/involvement is in keeping with the Association's aims and abilities; we are not a fund raising charity with the structure and staff to consider and administer grants, etc. We are, however, a close band of*

*like-minded people who are available to any of our Airborne Engineer family as a point of contact when they find themselves in need of advice or support during times of anxiety and distress in their lives.*

The report was accepted as presented.

## **Election of Officers**

Sadly, Joe Stoddart has reached the end of his tenure as Chairman, an excellent nominee, John Ferry had been proposed as our next Chairman. John was requested to leave the meeting room while a vote was taken.

Joe addressed the meeting on John's behalf, the vote, when taken was unanimous in favour. John was duly elected as Chairman for the next 3 years.

On conclusion of the vote, John was invited to re-join the meeting and informed of the result. John gave a few words in acceptance.

The Chairman called for Members to vote on the re-election of the following Officers of the Association – all of whom have volunteered for another year in post:

- Geoff Howard – Secretary General
- Dick Brown – Treasurer
- Dave Rutter – Editor
- Billy Morris – Membership Secretary

The listed officers were re-elected unanimously.

The President, John Lee, then spoke on the election of Joe Stoddart as one of the two Vice-Presidents on the Association Council, an appointment carrying a tenure of three years. John proposed that this appointment be made.

A counter proposal was made (by the undersigned), counter proposal as follows:

*'That Joe Stoddart be elected Lifetime Vice-President in recognition of his service to the Airborne Engineers Association, his first 3 years to be as Vice-President to the Council'*

The proposal was seconded by Bunny Brown and put to the vote. **Carried unanimously.**

*Afternote: Lifetime Vice-President is the highest honour which can be awarded by the AEA. It is awarded to a Member who, in the unanimous opinion of the Council, has made an exceptional contribution to the AEA over at least 10 years.*

## **Constitution**

No proposals for amendment have been made since the last Annual General Meeting.

## **President's Commendations**

John Lee announced the award of President's Commendation to Members of The Association – The President's Commendation is awarded to an AEA Member who, in the

opinion of the President, has given particularly meritorious service to the AEA or one of its Branches. The following awards were announced:

- To John Donaldson – for his outstanding and selfless contribution to the profile and standing of the Association.
- To Dennis Eagan – for his invaluable and tireless work on the AEA Constitution and service to the Association in general and the Aldershot Branch.
- To Fred Gray – for his determined and unflinching work as the Association Historian and Archivist.
- To Bill Rudd – for his outstanding and unstinting work, both nationally and for the Yorkshire Branch. ‘Always flying the flag’.

### **FUTURE AGM VENUES**

The Chairman announced the following venues/organisers for future AGMs:

- 2012 – Kingston-upon-Hull – 299 Branch to organise/host.
- 2013 – Bournemouth – Aldershot Branch to organise/host.
- 2014 – Harrogate – Yorkshire Branch to organise/host.

### **Any Other Business**

- Remembrance Day Parade: The President has secured 24 places as a AEA Contingent at the Cenotaph Parade. This is a great honour for the Association and most places have been filled.

*Some re-distribution of tickets took place at the meeting.*

- Photograph albums: Fred Gray stated that Photograph Albums will be available to view during the weekend – he requested Members to take good care of the albums.
- Standard Bearer (Expenses): Joe Stoddart thanked John Parker for his work in ensuring the Standard is well represented at events/commemorations. All expenses (if being claimed) must be cleared with the Council before each event.
- Standard Bearer (Sash): John Parker spoke on the design and provision of a sash for the Standard Bearers use, he outlined various designs. It was decided to submit designs to the Council for approval.

*Bill Rudd stated that the Yorkshire Branch was happy to consider/share expenses for ‘Northern’ events and would contribute to the eventual cost of the sash(es). The Chairman thanked Bill for the generous gesture.*

*Joe Stoddart then presented John Parker with an Association waterproof fleece to help ‘stay warm when on duty!’*

### **President's Closing Remarks**

The President stated that the Association is in good order, AGM 2011 a great success and there is every reason to be confident about the future.

John thanked all for attending and providing invaluable input to the meeting.

He stated that the evening raffle would be in support of 'Combat Stress'.

Finally, the President directed that official thanks be recorded to Bunny Brown and the Brummies for organising/hosting the AGM and Reunion 2011.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

The Chairman announced that the Council OGM would take place 20 mins after the AGM had concluded.

The date of the next AGM can not be set until 299 Branch confirm the date at Kingston-upon-Hull, expected to be first or second weekend of October 2012.

The meeting closed in good order at 1125hrs.

*Geoff Howard*

G HOWARD  
General Secretary

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**TREASURER'S REPORT**

**Statement of Account as at 30 September 2011**

**Assets**

Cash in Hand	Nil
Cash at Bank	11766.12
Deposit Account	14355.32
Shop	2755.94
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>28877.38</b>

**Liabilities**

Newsletter	4930.89
Projects	2030.17
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>6961.06</b>

**Working Capital**

Assets	28877.38
Minus Liabilities	6961.06

**TOTAL WORKING CAPITAL = 21916.32**

*Richard Brown*

Treasurer



## **ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (OGM)**

### **Members Present**

Some 25 Members returned for the OGM.

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

The Chairman opened the meeting and briefed the floor that the purpose of the OGM is to deal with routine Council Business that is not included in the AGM – the Council convenes for an OGM twice per annum, one at the same time as the AGM and one approximately at the mid point between AGMs - all present are welcome, entitled to vote and Members' input is invited.

### **Previous Minutes**

The Secretary called for points arising from the minutes of the last OGM held at Wakefield on Sun 13 Mar 11.

There being no points arising, the previous minutes were accepted.

### **Reports**

The following reports had been presented/heard at the AGM:

- The Treasurer's Report.
- The Editor's Report.
- The Shop Report.
- The Membership Report.

### **Archivists/Property Report**

The Archivist/Property Member, Fred Gray, made the following remarks:

- All property (less some items at Elvington) is now distributed between Woodbridge, Chatham and Duxford.

Some small items, such as The Chairman's Gavel, are in use – other small items are at Fred's house, contact Fred for use of these items – a small, returnable loan fee will be charged.

- Fred is currently working on a written history of 9 Squadron between 1948 and 1977 – a task that is approximately two thirds complete and should be finished in about 2 years.
- Fred announced that his retirement as Archivist/Property Member/Historian will be in two years time. Now is the time to start looking for a replacement. Whoever is the replacement will need a fair amount of storage room!

## AEA Ultra Club Report

- This is the first year of Ultra Club activities (since changing from AEA Sports Club) – the year has been taken up with build up training for the Caesars Camp 100 mile race. Unfortunately, some of this build up training led to injuries being carried into the Caesars Camp – I (Billy) had to pull out at 38 miles and Bob (Chatterton) had to pull out at 65 miles.
- The build up has included a ‘Twice the Height of Everest’ race (using Pen Y Fan as the mountain) for the Macmillan Cancer Charity – 21 times up and down left us with sore knees and the reason for the Caesars Camp early withdrawals!
- Build up has also included a run from Aldershot to Portsmouth and many Saturday mornings on the training areas clocking up the miles.
- Dave Leibrick and Reg Grantham have very much had to restrict themselves to careful personal training due to injuries while Bob and I have entered the various events.
- We look forward to a Commemorative run on the Falklands during the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary year (still at the planning stage) and many other events during 2012.
- All members are reminded that anyone can take part in an ‘Ultra’ event – over 26.5 miles by foot, bike, canoe or whatever – just send us the resulting report for publication in the Journal (lots of photos too!)

## Branch Reports

- **Aldershot** – John Smith reported that the Branch meets bi-monthly at the Potters Hotel in Aldershot followed by a lunch. The branch continues to thrive and plans are under way for a Spring Lunch and a commemorative trip to remember the Rhine Crossings in 2012. A reunion dinner for El Gamil (55 years since Suez) is to be held in Bournemouth on 5 Nov, a dinner that will be well attended.
- **Chatham** – Frank Ryan reported that the Branch is in good heart. The Branch is planning a Christmas family dinner on 4 Dec and the major event for 2012 is, as always, the John Rock Dinner in Jun, any Member wishing to attend will be most welcome.
- **Birmingham Branch** – Bunny Brown reported that the Birmingham Branch is still going strong. Monthly meets are attended by 20+ Members. The Branch is planning a Christmas Dinner and a St Georges Dinner in 2012. The shoebox appeal for the 23 regt deployment was a great success.
- **Yorkshire Branch** – Bill Rudd reported that the Branch is busy on the social and charitable sides and is thriving. The Branch makes use of the Wakefield TAC (299 Para Sqn) for meetings and is planning an Xmas Dinner on 10 Dec and an Annual dinner in the Spring..
- *No representatives were present for the Scotland and 299 Branches.*

**Any Other Business**

No points for AOB had been previously submitted and there were no points from the floor.

**Chairman's Closing Remarks**

The Chairman thanked everyone for being present and for their input.

He directed that the next OGM be held at Aldershot on 22 Apr 12.

The meeting closed in good order at 1245hrs.

*Geoff Howard*

General Secretary

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