



## *Airborne Engineers Association*

*Registered Charity Number: 1009201*

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*President: John Lee - Tel: 01531 636865*

*Email: [jlee664@btinternet.com](mailto:jlee664@btinternet.com)*

*Chairman: Joe Stoddart MBE – Tel: 02380 243237*

*Email: [Sylvandjoe@aol.com](mailto:Sylvandjoe@aol.com)*

*Secretary: Geoff Howard – Tel: 01252 355903*

*Email: [Geoff.Howard606@mod.uk](mailto:Geoff.Howard606@mod.uk)*



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### **MINUTES OF AN AIRBORNE ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (COUNCIL MEETING) HELD AT RIPON ON SUNDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2010**

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#### Attachments:

1. Treasurer's Report as at 1 Feb 10.
2. Archivists/Property Report as at Feb 10.

#### **Members Present**

Joe Stoddart (Chairman), John Lee (President), Bill Rudd (Chairman, Yorkshire Branch), Bunny Brown (Chairman, Birmingham Branch), Mike Hookem (Chairman, 299 Branch), Dave Rutter (Editor/Vice President), Billy Morris (Membership Secretary/Sports Coordinator), Gary Newton (Secretary 299 Branch), Geoff Howard (General Secretary).

*Apologies: Bob Matthews (Chairman, Chatham Branch), Dick Brown (Treasurer), Fred Gray (Archivist and Historian), Tony Roberts (Welfare Coordinator).*

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

- The Chairman thanked all for attending and expressed his appreciation to Bill Rudd and the Yorkshire Branch for providing the excellent venue. He also thanked Bill for hosting Council Members at the Yorkshire Branch Annual Dinner the previous evening.
- He went on to state that his aims for the meeting were to complete business on the AEA Constitution, resolve funding issues for Double Hills and discuss future AGM arrangements.

#### **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Comment was called for on the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held at Nottingham on 3 October 2009. There being no matters arising the minutes were accepted. Proposed by Bill Rudd, seconded by Bunny Brown. **CARRIED.**

## **Treasurer's Report**

A copy of the Treasurer's Report is at Attachment 1. Dick Brown also submitted that he continues to investigate a strategy to earn more interest on the Deposit Account. This may mean that we will have to commit a proportion of the Fund into a long term investment. Proposed by John Lee, seconded by Dave Rutter that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. **CARRIED.**

## **Journal/Editor's Report**

Dave Rutter stated that we now have a distribution list of some 600 members, 37 have not renewed for this year. He went on to state that Articles should be submitted in plain text (Windows 7) and should be accompanied by photographs. Branches are requested to encourage their members to submit as much material as possible – Dave will do the editorial bit!

John Lee will conduct some research on colour imaging with a view to 'brightening up' the journal at minimal production cost.

Dave concluded by stating that the rising cost of postage remains his biggest concern. Proposed by Billy Morris, seconded by Gary Newton that the Journal Report be accepted. **CARRIED.**

*The Chairman directed that the Association Members thanks be recorded for Dave Rutter's untiring efforts in the production of The Journal – Members should now keep up their side of the bargain and maintain a steady flow of good material.*

## **Membership Report**

Billy Morris stated that the membership stood at 1389. He went on to state that he was increasingly receiving requests from individuals seeking to become part of the Association who technically were not eligible but clearly had a real interest and enthusiasm in, and for, the Association and it's aims. He requested Council direction.

*The decision of the Council was that membership could not be granted but that such applicants could subscribe to the Journal. On receipt of the subscription the applicant to be issued a lapel badge as a token of appreciation. There is no question of membership status being granted.*

*The President will draft a letter stating 'The Offer' for future cases arising.*

Billy went on to state that there are very few younger soldiers joining from 23 Regiment and again requested Council input.

*It was decided to write to the new OC of 9 Para Sqn (General Secretary to write and copy to Regt/ 2IC) and also produce a small poster for display around the Regt (Billy Morris to design).*

Proposed by Bill Rudd, seconded by Mike Hookem that the Membership Report be accepted.

**CARRIED.**

## **Archivist/Historian/Property Report**

A short report, submitted by Fred Gray, is at Attachment 2. The meeting accepted the report as submitted.

## **Sports Report**

Billy Morris stated once again that **ALL** reports of sporting activity are welcome for items in the Journal – in particular, photographs are required – Billy hopes to have as many photographs as possible in a display ‘loop’ for the AGM.

Billy went on to report that ‘Compass Challenge’ – a cycling and running event around the Isle of Wight will be going ahead with teams competing from the Association and 23 Regt. Further details to be published on the Association web site.

*Afternote: Compass Challenge is confirmed as taking place on 15 May 10 – the run will be 1 lap of the island while the cycle will be approx 2 and a bit laps – detailed recce will take place on 27/28 Mar 10.*

The report was accepted as presented.

## **Shop Report**

Dave Rutter reported on behalf of Jeanette. The handover from Ray Coleman of stock and accounts has taken place and the stock is now lodging with Dave and Jeanette.

Sales at the Oct 09 AGM totaled £682.00.

Sales since the AGM have totaled £500.00.

In general the shop is going well and remains our greatest source of income.

Proposed by Bunny Brown and seconded by John Lee that the Shop Report be accepted.

**CARRIED.**

## **Welfare Report**

A short report, submitted by Tony Roberts, is reproduced here:

The good news is that there has been little activity on the Welfare ‘front’, this could mean that all members and their families are not in distressed circumstances. Unfortunately, it could also mean that we do not know of an issue/problem.

However, it may be an opportune time to tell the OGM that the Royal British Legion has recently installed, in a number of Citizens Advice offices, a full-time debt expert – his/her salary is paid by the RBL, the advice is free and the aim is for ex-service personnel to have a point of contact with reference to debt problems. I can inform members of the towns in which this service is operating, all contact with me is, naturally, confidential. My contact number is 01823 325945.

SSAFA Forces Help is 125 YEARS OLD in 2010 and, as this is the charity that is most likely to come to the aid of older ex-servicemen, AEA Members may wish to support their local SSAFA Branch during this year when a great deal is happening to celebrate this 125 year Birthday. It is also the Daily Mail’s chosen charity for 2010.

The report was accepted as submitted.

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **AEA Rules/Constitution**

The Chairman stated that the final (minor corrections) amendments have been completed to the Version accepted by the AGM on 3 Oct 10 and that the Constitution item is now closed.

*Afternote: The amended Version was issued by The President on 2 Mar 10.*

### **Double Hills**

The Chairman stated that the issue of monies voted over to support the Double Hills event has lapsed. It is uncertain for how many years this deficiency has occurred. He proposed that £300.00 be paid to the organizer (Peter Yeates) now (to mitigate arrears) and the sum of £120 per annum be reinstated WEF 2010.

Seconded by the undersigned.

**CARRIED.**

The Chairman went on to state that, for continuity's sake, an 'Exercise Instruction' for the event should be written in liaison with Peter. This task was undertaken by the undersigned.

Bill Rudd made the suggestion that a 'Double Hills Liaison Officer' be appointed within the Association. This suggestion was accepted by the Council and the undersigned will approach some likely (local) candidates.

### **Reunions and AGM**

2010 – Dave Rutter will publish details in the Journal – Bournemouth 2 Oct 10 – Aldershot Branch.

2011 – Harrogate Oct 11 – Yorkshire Branch – Bill Rudd and team are gathering costings now.

2012 – Hull – 299 Branch kindly offered to organize the 2012 event under the guidance of Mike Hookem.

Dave Rutter advised the meeting that a Lottery Grant to support the event may be sought and Yorkshire Branch has been successful in gaining the grant in the past. Bill confirmed he would be seeking the grant again for 2011. Dave proposed that the appointed organizers apply for the grant on an annual basis – all requests (and subsequent results) to be notified to the Council.

Seconded by Bunny Brown.

**CARRIED.**

### **Frequency of OGM (Council Meeting)**

The undersigned proposed that the frequency of the OGM (Council Meeting) was reduced from 3 to 2 per annum. The new positioning to be: 1 x OGM at the AGM Venue (immediately following the AGM) and 1 x OGM to be hosted by a volunteer branch at approximately the 6 month interim point between AGMs. The new frequency to commence with the OGM in Oct 10.

Seconded by Bill Rudd.

**CARRIED.**

### **35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Trent Chase**

The commemorative events to mark this anniversary (when a number of soldiers from 131 Indep Para Sqn RE (V) lost their lives while exercising on the River Trent) will take place on the last weekend in Sep 10. Bunny Brown will keep the Association informed of the planned events.

### **299 Branch Dinner**

Mike Hookem stated that their Branch Annual Dinner is to take place on 24 Apr 10 and extended a warm invitation to all Council members.

### **World Cup Football Draw**

The Chairman stated that he will be organizing/administering the draw – tickets will be issued to branches in due course.

### **Chairman's Closing Remarks**

The Chairman thanked all for attending what had proved to be a very productive meeting and wished everyone a safe return journey.

**DONM** – The Date of the Next Meeting was set for **18 July 2010** at **Aldershot** – Details TBC.

There being no further business, the meeting closed in good order at 1200hrs.

*Geoff Howard*

G HOWARD  
General Secretary

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**TREASURER'S REPORT**

**Statement of Account as at 1 February 2010**

**Assets**

Cash in Hand	0.00
Cash at Bank	10346.82
Deposit Account	14343.36
Property Value	147.44
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>24837.62</b>

**Liabilities**

Newsletter	5877.83
Projects	2030.17
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>7908.00</b>

**Working Capital**

Assets	24837.62
Minus Liabilities	7908.00

**TOTAL WORKING CAPITAL = 16929.62**

**Richard Brown  
Treasurer**

## HISTORIAN AND PROPERTY MEMBER – REPORT

### Property

The AEA Standard (South) and the Union Flag, along with the gauntlets and carrying belt, remain at the home of the Chairman Aldershot Branch – Fred Gray. The standard of the AEA (North) is held by the Yorkshire Branch.

The gavel and medallion of the office of the Chairman of the AEA remain with the present Chairman, Joe Stoddart MBE.

Most of the remaining items i.e. photographs, books, maps and framed citations have been sent to the RE Museum at Chatham or 23 Engineer Regiment (Air Assault) at Woodbridge.

Recently, I sent Major Joe Fossey (OC 9 Sqn) a number of photographs of former officers of Airborne Engineers, including 131 Parachute Regiment RE (TA). He will have these enlarged and framed to hang in the Officers Mess at Rock Barracks, therefore preserving a little more of our history.

Lists of the members of the wartime Squadrons and Companies have now been accepted by the AB Forces Museum at Duxford. Post-war lists will follow shortly.

All of the photographs held by me in 6 large albums have now been copied by the curator of the museum at Duxford and placed into their archives. The originals remain with me for viewing by members at the annual reunions.

A number of documents of interest to members of AEA remain at the home of the Archivist.

### Historian

The recording of all activities of the Airborne Engineers from 1941 to 1980 is an ongoing task. The list of those who have served in the AE now runs into thousands and is increasing all the time. **Another historian does need to be found to take the history of Airborne Engineers forward from 1980 to the formation of 23 Regt and beyond.**

Myself and the President of the Association, John Lee, have agreed that we should go to Elvington to see for ourselves what is the situation regarding all items donated to that museum. Although they now belong to The Imperial War Museum they are held in trust for us and, if that is no longer the case, we need to know what is happening with all those artefacts. At the moment it would appear that some of them are in black bags, stored in any convenient corner!

Best wishes,

Fred Gray