



Airborne Engineers Association Aldershot Branch



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at
Potters International Hotel, Aldershot
Sunday 1st June 2008

President
Colonel D.M.R.Eagan

Meeting Opened at 11.30hrs

Chairman: Joe Stoddart MBE	e-mail sylvanjo@aol.com	Tele: 02380 243237
Secretary: Betty Gray	e-mail b.gee33@ntlworld.com	Tele: 01252 668339
Treasurer: Dave Rutter	e-mail d_rutter@sky.com	Tele: 01252 326140
Entertainments: John Smith BEM	e-mail thesmiths@beeb.net	Tele: 01252 326100

Members Present

John Barrie, Ray Coleman, Harold Covington, Ron Day, Col. Dennis Eagan, Harry Evans, Fred Gray, Tommy Handley, Gerry Hicks, Brian Hubbard, Roy King, Tony Manley, John Mason, Roger Mockford, Rick Mogg, Billy Morris, Ralph Pedder, Roy Sands, John Smith, Steve Stephenson, Joe Stoddart, Bob Wardle

Apologies

Colin Bond, Jack Braithwaite, Major Dick Brown, Bob Chatterton, Don Doherty, Ted Ellis, Bob Ferguson, Bert Flatters, Dennis Healey, Bryn Hitchen, Mick Humphries, Barry Ladlow, Derek Leggett, John Lee, Bill McPherson, John Murphy, Peter Myatt, Jim O'Hagan, Harold Padfield, Norman Penny, John Pffiffner, Eric Rundle, Dave Rutter, Sir Donald Spiers, Phil Taverner, Dennis Thomas, Derek Taylor, Tom Tuddenham, Peter Wade

Guests

None

The Branch President, Colonel Dennis Eagan, welcomed all those present. He then asked all members to stand for one minutes silence in remembrance of those members of the AEA and our former comrades who have passed away since our last AGM.

Chairman's Opening Address and Review of 2007/2008

The Branch Chairman, Joe Stoddart MBE gave a review of what had taken place during the previous year. He said that we had enjoyed an excellent Christmas Dinner held in the Potters International and had been able to welcome as our guest Major Peter Wade (Ret'd) who had been the Squadron 2i/c many years ago before he decamped to the Parachute Regiment. He has now become a member of the Branch. The Chairman reminded all that the proposed trip to Arnhem in 2008 did not take place because of a lack of response from members but thanks to John Smith we had a super visit to Twickenham to watch the Army play the Royal Navy.

Quite a number of the branch made the long journey to Woodbridge in Suffolk to support 23 Engineer Regiment and take part in the march through the town led by the Corps band and afterwards to be entertained by members of the regiment. Continuing on the regimental theme he pointed out that some members of the branch had sent parcels and newspapers to the soldiers now serving in Afghanistan and they have been most welcome. In addition to members personal parcels a £100 from branch funds provided a further twenty.

The branch have been able to continue to use Potters Hotel for meetings and attend Sunday Lunch immediately afterwards. The lunches have proved very popular in spite of recent price increases.

The annual BBQ also proved to be very popular. There was a good turnout and being a freebie and with wonderful weather, made it a perfect afternoon.

The annual Remembrance Service in the Garrison Church was well attended by branch members several others attended the St Andrews Service.

The Chairman also pointed out that our branch membership had increased from fifty-seven to sixty-seven during 2007 - 8

Minutes of the previous AGM

Proposed by: Billy Morris

Seconded by: Ron Day

That the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as a true record.

Carried

Matters Arising

None

Election of the Committee

The following members will stand for election:

Colonel Denis Eagan to remain as Branch President.

Joe Stoddart MBE is to stand down as Chairman after three years to take up the appointment as Chairman of the AEA. Other than that the committee remains the same as last year.

Fred Gray	Chairman
Dave Rutter	Treasurer
John Smith	Entertainments
Joe Stoddart MBE	Branch Representative.
Fred Gray	Liaison Officer
Betty Gray	Secretary

Proposed by: Harry Evans

Seconded by: Rick Mogg **Carried**

Treasurers Report

In the absence of the treasurer being away on holiday the Chairman presented the Treasures Report. The account had been audited by Fred Gray and found to be correct and very well presented. A statement of account had been prepared for members to study at their leisure. It was pointed out that the branch expenditure had exceeded income but this was due to a donation of £250 to the John Rock Bust fund and also the free BBQ held in September of last year. £216 was spent on wine for the Christmas Dinner and £100 for the welfare boxes to Afghanistan. To offset the expenditure three generous donations from Sir Donald Spiers, Colonel Dennis Eagan and Major Peter Wade were made to branch funds and a very good raffle at the BBQ raised a very healthy amount.

A cheque for £100 has been received from George and Rene Jones in Australia to buy further welfare boxes for 23 Engineer Regiment. The secretary has sent a letter of thanks to George and Rene on behalf of the branch.

Proposed by: Roger Mockford

Seconded by: Ray Coleman

That the report be accepted as correct.

Carried

Branch Policy

Number of meetings per year

- It was agreed that we would keep to six meetings a year and hold them on the 3rd Sunday of every other month where possible.
- Proposed by: John Barrie
Seconded by: Bob Wardle

Carried

Subscriptions

Branch subscriptions are to remain at £6 per year for all members.

Carried

It was discussed and then voted on that if any member has not paid their branch subscription three months after the AGM, it would then be assumed that they no longer wish to remain a member of the branch. Members are being encouraged to pay by Standing Order or Direct Debit but unfortunately there is still a small number who fail to respond to requests for their subscription

Diary of Events for 2008/9

AEA Committee Meeting Aldershot	6th July. 2008
Para weekend Southsea	12 th & 13 th July 2008
Double Hills Somerset	7 th September 2008
Presentation of John Rock Bust. Woodbridge	21 st November 2008
Music on Fire RMA Sandhurst	18 th 19 th & 20 th September 2008
John Rock Dinner Chatham	21st June 2008
Annual AGM and Reunion. Coventry	17th—19th October 2008
Branch BBQ. Fleet 17th August 2008	
Branch Dinner	Jan 2009 (date to be advised)

Entertainments.

John Smith, the Entertainments Secretary, has had twenty-one replies to his proposed Arnhem Trip 2009 for the 65th Anniversary. If you wish to go please complete the proforma sent with the April minutes as soon as possible. Time is getting very short and the booking must be made as soon as possible. John has offered an Easy Payment Plan as on previous trips. If anyone has misplaced their Performa contact Betty Gray 01252 668339 for a replacement.

There being no further business to discuss the Chairman called time on his last meeting before handing the gavel over to Fred Gray. Colonel Dennis Eagan closed the meeting by thanking Joe for all his hard work and dedication during his term as Chairman, a compliment that was appreciated by all those present.

The President closed the meeting at 12.05Hrs

The Ordinary Meeting followed at 12.15

Attendance

Same as AGM

Apologies

Same as AGM

Chairman's Remarks

The new Chairman, Fred Gray asked the President, Colonel Dennis Eagan, to formally open the new branch year 2008-9. He said that we had a wonderful branch in Aldershot and asked for their continued support for the coming year.

Fred Gray then asked if there were any other apologies from members not present, as on a number of occasions they had been sent in but not passed to the secretary.

Major John Shave and Major Paddy Fulton sent their regards to the branch through Steve Stevenson. John Mason gave a brief update on the health of John Shave and it was agreed that we should try to encourage him to come to the BBQ in August and also send him a copy of the minutes for his interest.

The Chairman reminded the meeting of the number of branch members engaged in running the wider organisation of the AEA. Major Dick Brown is the Treasurer, Dave Rutter (Journal), Billy Morris (Membership), Mick Humphries (Chairman), Ray Coleman (Association Shop) and Fred Gray (Archivist). Altogether a very busy group of people.

Guests and New Members.

Roy King was formally welcomed to the branch. Roy had been a member of the Yorkshire Branch for many years but has now moved down to the South of England to be closer to his roots and family. Welcome to Roy and his wife Wendy and we look forward to seeing them both in the near future.

Sir Donald Spears and Major Peter Wade have also become members in recent months. Sir Donald served in the Canal Zone in the very early fifties and later in 131 Para Engr Regt TA. Major Wade was the 2/ic of the Squadron in the late fifties and is well remembered for his outstanding organizing ability and his unusual nickname. Welcome to them both.

Minutes of Previous meeting

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting but it was pointed out that just a small number of members were having difficulty in opening their e-mail. This has led to a number of phone calls and additional postage when the minutes have to be sent out through the post. Members were asked to click the response button to let the secretary know that they have been able to open their emails. As at the meeting forty-one members have e-mail and twenty-nine on the postal system with one member, Denis Thomas in Australia.

Correspondence

Minutes from the Birmingham Branch showed that they had sent a number of shoebox parcels to Afghanistan. Brian and Pat Kerr had sent twenty-three out just recently and it is assumed that they are doing the same job for their branch as Dave and Jeanette Rutter are doing for ours. Individuals are also contributing to the numbers sent. Joe Stoddart asked that a vote of thanks be extended to Dave and Jeanette for their efforts in buying the items and then packing and posting them. John Smith also pointed out that those serving in Afghanistan like to read the newspapers and keep in touch of what is happening back home in the UK. Both the shoeboxes and newspapers go free of postage but they do need a Customs declaration label.

In the Yorkshire Branch minutes they have reported that the Hull Troop of the recently resurrected 131 Airborne Squadron RE (TA) have indicated that they would like to become a branch of the AEA. Hull has a huge number of members and former members living in the city and could well be a big boost to our membership. It will be discussed at the next AEA meeting and then put to the membership at the OGM in October.

On a different note they do say that Willy Wiltshire and "Ginge" Goodfellow are making good progress with their respective illnesses. Tom Thornton has been in and out of hospital on a number of occasions but now appears to be well on his way to full health.

The attached letter from Ian Murison, the RSM of 23 Engineer Regt Air Assault) has been sent from Afghanistan. Any comments on this letter are welcome at our next branch meeting.

Treasurers Report

As AGM

Branch Representative

There have been no AEA committee meetings to report on. The next meeting is to be held in Aldershot in July.

Entertainments

John Smith gave an outline plan of the proposed trip to Arnhem. As at the meeting twenty-one members had shown interest in going to Arnhem. John did say that a number of the Chelsea Pensioners may have an interest in the trip but certain conditions have to be met in regard to them.

The date for the BBQ has been set for the 17th August 2008. If we have a spell of bad weather it may be necessary to change it. There will be the normal raffle so once again please dig out those unwanted presents. More details will be sent out after our next meeting on the 20th July.

AOB

Just recently we heard that Derek Taylor (a former Chairman of the Aldershot Branch) had suddenly been taken ill. He has recovered and was expected at the meeting but unfortunately for some unknown reason he did not attend. Contact will be made with Derek to see how he is.

Ralph Pedder has offered a quantity of wine and beer that was left over from his eightieth birthday party held on Sunday 8th June. He has asked that it be donated to our BBQ. As we do not know how many will be attending it may well be advisable to bring only half of what you would normally bring and take home anything that is not used during the afternoon. Many thanks to Ralph for his generous donation.

Next Meeting

Will be held in Potters International

On the 27th July 2008

11.00am for 11.30am

**Please let Fred Gray know if you wish to stay for lunch
so that he can book the tables 01252 668339**

See over for late announcement

Late Announcement

Sadly Ron (Smokey) Gibson passed away on Monday 9th June he died peacefully in his sleep.

These are the details from John Mason.

The funeral is set for 15.30 hours on 20th June at the South Chapel City of London Cemetery & Crematorium, Aldersbrook Road, London E12 5DQ

Then on to the Barking Ruby Club, Gale Street, Dagenham, Essex RM9 4TX for drinks and refreshments.

Please feel free to inform as many people as you can and assure everybody that they would be very welcome should they wish to pay their respects. They are hoping for a large turnout of Ex-Servicemen's Associations. Requests that Standards be paraded, Berets and Medals worn.

We are asking that no flowers be sent but would welcome donations on the day to Dads favourite Charity RNLI

The cemetery is 5 minutes walk from Manor Park railway station (Liverpool Street line)
Nearest Tube stations East Ham (District Line) and Wanstead (Central Line) The connecting bus service is No 101. It stops near the main gate.

Please advise me if you intend to come, Nick has asked me for some guide as to numbers

John Mason

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