



# Airborne Engineers Association Aldershot Branch

Minutes of the OGM Meeting held at Potters International Hotel  
Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2011  
President: Colonel D.M.R.Eagan

**Col Dennis Eagan** opened the meeting at 1130 hours, welcoming all attendees and thanking them for their presence. He also expressed his delight at seeing so many members in attendance.

## **Members Present:**

Joe Stoddart, Dave Rutter, Dick Brown, John Lee, John Ferry, Rick Mogg, Fred Gray, Wally Clift, Tony Manley, Bob Sullivan, Harold Covington, Steve Stephenson, John Barrie, Phil Eccleston, Eric Borlace, John Pfiffner, Jerry Hicks, Brian Hubbard, Bob Wardle, Ralph Pedder, John Smith & Billy Morris

## **Apologies**

Brendan Snoddy, Sir Donald Spiers, Dennis Healey, Jimmy Hill, Ron Day, Colin Bond, Jim O'Hagan, John Mason, Sid Dane, Mick Humphries, Ray Coleman, Roger Mockford & Peter Myatt

## **Chairman's Remarks:**

Joe Stoddart called for a minute's silence in memory of the recent passing of Daphne Day and the passing of the wife of John Parker.

## **Minutes of the previous OGM – matters arising:**

The chairman asked if there were any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting. As there were no comments or observations it was proposed by Gerry Hicks and seconded by Eric Borlace that the previous minutes be accepted: **Carried**

## **Treasurers Report:**

The treasurer gave a breakdown of the funds (subject to audit) which he was pleased to announce were in the black and in a healthy state. Proposed by Ralph Pedder and seconded by Wally Clift, that the Treasurers Report (subject to audit) be accepted: **Carried**

## **Correspondence:**

Dave Rutter read extracts from the minutes of the recent meetings held by the Scotland, Chatham and Birmingham branches. He also read a letter of thanks from HQ The Royal British Legion thanking the Aldershot branch members for their generous donation of £220, which were the proceeds of the summer BBQ raffle.

## **Branch Representative's Report – Joe Stoddart**

The chairman explained that he would not be able to give a full update on the AGM/OGM held in Coventry, as the minutes from those meetings had not yet been produced.

## **Entertainments – John Smith**

John gave details of the problems he had experienced concerning the proposed trip in March 2012 commemorating Operation VARSITY. After a lengthy discussion it was unanimously agreed that due to the demands of the tour company for confirmation and a deposit to be paid by 21 December 2011, that it would be impossible to fulfil these demands at such short notice. John confirmed his intent to investigate the feasibility of organising a trip in March 2013.

After much discussion it was agreed unanimously that the branch Spring Luncheon would be held on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and that subject to availability; would be held at the Ely Hotel, Blackwater.

It was further agreed that the annual branch BBQ would be held on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> August – the venue would be Betty & Fred Gray's home at 65, Westover Road, Fleet. To alleviate some of the workload in the food preparation, members would be asked to assist Tony Manley by providing some of the culinary dishes.

## **Donation to the 1<sup>st</sup> Para Sqn Commemoration Stone – John Lee**

Prior to the branch meeting, members of the AEA council formed a quorum to discuss a proposal to make a financial donation forwards the production and installation of a suitably inscribed memorial stone in respect of 1<sup>st</sup> Para Sqn RE. The Sqn held their last and final reunion at Donington in September 2011.

The following council members were in attendance:

John Lee- President, Joe Stoddart – Life Vice President, Dave Rutter- Editor, John Ferry – Association Chairman, Billy Morris – Membership Secretary and Dick Brown – Treasurer.

Sharing the cost of this project will a donation from the funds of 1<sup>st</sup> Para Sqn RE. The Spalding PRA branch has also offered assistance in fulfilling this proposed project.

The full cost of the project (yet to be confirmed) will be approx £400 and it was agreed that the AEA would cover half of the cost. The stone is to be installed in the grounds of Donington church in late 2012.

### **Presentation to Col Dennis Eagan – John Lee**

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. For his invaluable and tireless work on the AEA Constitution and service to the Association in general and to the Aldershot Branch, the AEA President presented Col Dennis Eagan with the 'President's Commendation'.

### **Any Other Business**

Dave Rutter advised the members that the AEA Webmaster (Dave Pace) had now downloaded a selection of photographs taken during the AGM/Reunion weekend onto the AEA website. [www.airbornesappers.org.uk](http://www.airbornesappers.org.uk)

The chairman gave notice that he had received three requests for donations in support of "Help for Heroes" events. Two of these involved long duration cycle rides and one of a venture to climb Mount Aconcagua in Argentina. The letter of introduction concerning the mountaineering challenge came from Simon Eagan (son of Col Dennis Eagan). Simon and several colleagues had previously climbed Kilimanjaro and were now in serious training to undertake the task of climbing Mt Aconcagua (a height of 22,841ft) in February 2012.

Proposed by Joe Stoddart, seconded by Dave Rutter that the sum of £100 be donated to the cause 'Help for Heroes' in support of Simon Eagan's mountain challenge. **Carried Unanimously.**

Dave Rutter expressed his concern at the increasing cost for printing and the spiralling postage cost of the Airborne Engineers Journal. He outlined the current costings and stated that the subject would need to be addressed during the 2012 AGM/OGM. Several suggestions came from the floor:

1. Reduce the number of issues to 2 per annum.
2. Increase the cost to £10 for UK subscribers and a subsequent increase to overseas subscribers.
3. Reduce the size of the current journal from A4 to A5 – thereby reducing the postage costs and possibly the printing costs.

No action will be activated until the AGM but any further suggestions on this matter would be appreciated.

John Lee has been in touch with Brig John Hooper and was pleased to announce that he (John Hooper) is responding well to his treatment.

John Smith mentioned the on going health problems affecting Peter Myatt and said that Peter was currently in hospital suffering from pneumonia.

Billy Morris gave an update concerning membership of the Association – the latest member (1,425) John McIntosh (from Cornwall) happens to be a long lost friend of Ralph Pedder, Steve Stephenson and Bob Wardle.

**There being no further business Col Dennis Eagan closed the meeting at 1255 hours**

**The next branch meeting will be held at Potters International Hotel  
on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2012 (1100 for 1130 hrs)**