



Airborne Engineers Association

Registered Charity Number: 1009201

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**MINUTES OF AN AIRBORNE ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING/OGM
HELD AT MAIDSTONE ON 31 MAY 2009**

Annexes:

A. Statement of Account as at 31 May 09 prepared by Dick Brown.

Members Present

Joe Stoddart (Chairman), John Lee, Billy Morris, Ray Coleman, Dick Brown, Geoff Howard (Secretary).

In attendance: Bob Matthews (Branch Rep), Tom Ormiston (Branch Rep).

Apologies: Dave Rutter, Bunny Brown, Fred Gray and Bill Rudd.

Chairman's Opening Remarks

- The Chairman thanked all present for attending and expressed his appreciation to Bob Matthews and the Chatham branch for providing such an excellent venue.
- He once again encouraged committee and association members to 'keep association business moving forward between meetings by means of telephone and e-mail'*.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

There being no matters arising it was proposed by Billy Morris and seconded by John Lee that the minutes of the previous meeting held at Aldershot on 18 Jan 09 be accepted. CARRIED.

Treasurer's Report

A Statement of Account is at Annex A. Dick Brown made the following points:

- The account is healthy in general terms.

- The current financial climate is adversely affecting our income from interest. At present, from a deposit account of circa £14,000, we currently receive only £1.21 interest monthly.
- The shop continues to be our steadiest form of annual income.

Proposed by Ray Coleman and seconded by Billy Morris that the Treasurers Report as presented be accepted. CARRIED.

Journal – Editor’s Report

Dave Rutter submitted the following points via the Chairman:

- Members will notice that the postal charges have increased yet again! The UK postal cost per magazine is now 76p. Fortunately, the current journal subscription remains adequate for the increase in postage and printing.
- The number of subscribers to the journal currently stands at just over 600.
- Branches are once again reminded that photos from their branch functions and events would be much appreciated. Branch Chairmen are requested to remind their members of the need for more journal material.
- Journal subscriptions for many members are due WEF 1 Oct 09 – a reminder will be enclosed with the August edition for those who need to renew.

Closing date for submissions to the August Edition is Mon 13 Jul 09!!!!

The committee accepted the Editors Report as presented.

Archivist and Property Report

Fred Gray submitted the following via the Chairman:

- Fred continues to track (both personally and by coordinating others) the location of Airborne Engineer artefacts and memorabilia. This entails visits to Alvington, Duxford, Rock Barracks, Chatham and other places. Fred will continue in his efforts and will report to the AGM in October.

The committee accepted the Archivist/Property Report as presented.

**Afternote: Fred undertakes many trips at his own expense – not to mention his considerable personal commitment and effort. The Chairman expressed his own, and the committee’s thanks for this work and proposed that £50 be awarded to Fred in some small measure of help towards expenses. This was carried unanimously.*

Membership Secretary’s Report

Billy Morris made the following points:

- Current membership stands at 1356.
- Now that 23 Engr Regt (Air Assault) is well established, it would be helpful for the recruitment of the serving lads if a point of contact was established within the regiment for association matters.

The committee accepted the Membership Report as presented.

Afternote: The Secretary reported that he had a recent conversation with Fraser Ross (CO Des 23 Regt) and that Fraser had been clear in his view that OC 9 Sqn is the pivotal post for the AEA contact. These minutes will be copied to Fraser for his information.

Sports Club Coordinator's Report

Billy Morris made the following points:

- Once again a reminder that any branch sporting activities, be it fishing, golf, clay pigeon shooting or whatever – would be of interest to other members. Branch reps should submit short articles (with pics) on such events and Billy will assist Dave with publication in the Journal.
- Pictures would also be appreciated so that Billy can display them on Power Point loop during AEA functions/events (particularly appreciated for the AGM in October).
- Billy Morris and Bob Chatterton completed the run from Rhine Barracks (Aldershot) to Rock Barracks (Woodbridge) in 42 hours and 55 minutes. The total raised for H4H stands at £4,100 – the Chairman directed that a 'Well Done!' be recorded from all in the association. Donations can still be made on justgiving.com/rhinetorock150
- The CO 23 Engr Regt has undertaken to organize a return run 'Rock-to-Rhine' in reply!!

The committee accepted the Sports Coordinator's report as presented.

Afternote: Dick Brown stated that there is to be a 23 Engr Regt (Air Assault) V 24 Cdo Engr Regt sports competition shortly – he will publish some detail on the AEA Site in due course.

Shop Manager's Report

Ray Coleman made the following points:

- The shop continues to thrive and is the association's main source of income.
- A new version of the association cuff-links (slightly larger) will shortly be in stock – contact Ray for yours!
- Ray is investigating an association lapel badge to denote the award of 'The Presidents Award' – these should be available for presentation of the first awards at the AGM in October. **(Branch Chairmen are (gently) reminded that nominations for the award (max 2 per branch) were to be with the President by end May 09 – if there are any still to be submitted please send to John ASAP).**
- Sadly, for personal reasons, Ray will shortly need to stand down from the position of Shop Manager – this would be best achieved with a hand over/take over at the time of the Stocktake in September 2009. **Branch Chairmen are requested to raise this requirement at Branch Meetings and ask for a volunteer to take over these duties.**

The committee accepted the Shop Manager's report as presented.

The Chairman directed that a vote of thanks from the association be recorded for Ray – 'Thank you for your magnificent contribution to the wellbeing of the association'.

SITREP on AEA Constitution/Rules

Dennis Eagan's draft of AEA Rules as at 25 Apr 09 was received by the committee on 4 May 09, the following points were discussed:

- Eligibility for membership of the association.
- The status of categories of membership (National and Branch).
- Subscriptions and expenses.
- Distribution/issue of the new rules.

John Lee stated that he would incorporate all amendments as discussed at the meeting and circulate an amended draft before the AGM in October.

299 Association

- The issue of 299 Association becoming part of the AEA was discussed – most issues concerning their joining were covered when the status of categories of membership was discussed under the new draft.
- The committee decided to offer membership to 299 Association and John Lee has undertaken liaison on the matter with Mike Hookem (Chair of the 299 Association).

2009 AGM/Annual Dinner

- The Chairman stated that, so far, 86 Hotel/Dinner bookings have been made.
- The first tranche of invitations has been sent. Current status is that of 83 invitations sent, 21 replies have been returned of which 6 couples/singletons have accepted. The bulk of the first tranche were ex-OCs and SSMs of Airborne Engineer units, past and present.
- **All members intending to be there are encouraged to book ASAP in order for detailed planning to move ahead.**

Any Other Business

- WELFARE ADVICE OFFICER. The Chairman stated that he had been in contact with Tony Roberts in recent weeks. Tony is well and has offered his services as the association Welfare Advice Officer. The committee gratefully accepted the offer. Welcome on board Tony!
- CYPRUS MEMORIAL TRUST. The President outlined the Cyprus Memorial Trust initiative currently being undertaken to mark the 371 British Servicemen killed in the 1955-1959 Cyprus Emergency. Those lost included an Airborne Engineer – Sapper John ‘Topper’ Brown. John proposed that the association donate £200 to this memorial – this was seconded by Ray Coleman and CARRIED. More detail on the trust can be found at britishcyprusmemorial.org
- ARNHEM REPRESENTATION. The President is looking into making a gesture of remembrance on behalf of the association and is keen to learn of parties traveling to Arnhem this year – his contact details are at the top of these minutes.

BRANCH REPRESENTATIVES

Bob Matthews made the following points:

- Pete Kershaw is now Treasurer of the Chatham Branch and Mick Fisher has taken on the duties of Welfare Officer.
- Attendance at the John Rock dinner, 20 Jun 09, is currently 62.

Tom Ormiston stated that, while the Scotland Branch is in a relatively quiet period, the branch is flourishing and a number of social events are planned for the summer.

Chairman's Closing Remarks – Date/Venue of Next Meeting

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and for their input. The meeting closed in good order at 1230hrs.

The next Executive Committee Meeting will be held in Nottingham on Sat 3 Oct 09. Further details will be promulgated in due course.

Geoff Howard

GEOFF HOWARD
SECRETARY

Distribution:

Executive Committee members.

Branches.

Webmaster – for posting on AEA Site.

Copy to File.

NOTICE – Sponsored Ride by John Parker

- *Ex 9 Squadron man and current resident of Blackpool, John Parker is to cycle from Blackpool to Barrow-in-Furness and back on 29/30 Jul 09.*
- **A total of 148 miles, John says this is approximately 2 miles for every year of his life! His efforts are to raise money for COMBAT STRESS – Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society (Registered Charity No – England and Wales 206002 – Scotland SCO38828).**
- **If you wish to make a donation please make cheques payable to ‘Combat Stress’ and send them to John accompanied by a note which states that you wish the donation to benefit from Gift Aid and include your signature and home address.**
- **John’s address is:**
Mr John Birch Parker
17 Kent Road
BLACKPOOL
FY1 5HB