



Airborne Engineers Association Scotland



www.airbornesappersscotland.co.uk

Chairman – Frank Murray, Secretary – Gil Nicol, Treasurer – Vacant

Minutes of the 14th Annual General Meeting held at The Royal British Legion, Rodney Street, Edinburgh at 12.30hrs on Sunday 18th November 2012.

1. **Members Present** ; Frank Murray, Gil Nicol, Andy Mullen, Kim Panton, John Donaldson , Gordon Mc Leod, Raymond Mannion, Tom Ormiston, Jim Simpson, Doug Archibald, Ron Mc Cartan, David Brock, Peter Watt, Andy Paterson, Alex Mc Whirter, Craig Mc Quade, Roy Kay, Norrie Bishop and Ronnie Drummond.
2. **Apologies** ; Willie Grant, Hugh Mc Phee, Eon Mc Intyre, Kenny Wratten, Mick Walker, Brian Earl and all overseas members.
3. **Welfare Report** ; We are pleased to announce that Dougie Archibald has recovered successfully from his operation and we wish him all the best.
4. **Chairmans Welcome** ; Frank Murray welcomed all present and thanked them for attending. A minutes silence was observed in remembrance of all past members and those who have fallen in recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. We remember more recently , Joe Stoddart, Pat Harkins, Ian Muirhead, Clive Fairweather and Colonel Lachie Robertson (Ex XV Para)

Frank thanked all members who participated in The Remembrance Parade at The Cenotaph in London , The Armed Forces Day Parade, The Garden of Remembrance Parade in Edinburgh and The Funeral services in Aldershot, Kinross and Denny.

Frank also thanked Craig Mc Quade and his wife Kathy for the sterling work put in regarding the collecting , filling and distribution of the Shoeboxes.
5. **Minutes of Last Meeting** ; The minutes of the last meeting and previous A.G.M. were passed as being accurate by Jim Simpson and seconded by Dougie Archibald.
6. **Matters Arising** ; There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.
7. **Secretary's Report** ; (a) Gil Nicol expressed his thanks to Mick Walker for taking the minutes at the last meeting, when he was on holiday.

(b) Tom Ormiston attended the funeral, representing the branch, as well as paying his own personal tributes to Joe Stoddart MBE. A condolence card has been sent on behalf of the AEA Scotland Branch.

(c) Jim Simpson and Tom Robertson attended the funeral of Ian Muirhead in Kinross. Ian was a former member of 1 Troop, 9 Para Squadron RE 1954 -- 1957

(d) Frank Murray attended the funeral of Pat Harkins in Denny. Pat was the last remaining member of the crew taking part in operation "Trent Chase" in 1975 where 10 No Sappers perished at Cromwell Lock

We Will Remember Them

8. **Treasurers Report;** Dougie Archibald, on behalf of Mick Walker (on holiday), produced a detailed report of our finances and it was good to see that we are still in a financially healthy position. The accounts have been audited and found to be in order.

The Financial report and accounts were passed as being accurate by Jim Simpson and seconded by Craig Mc Quade.

9. **Website Report;** John Donaldson reported that everything is still in working order and there does not appear to be any problems.

Photographs are required of Pat Harkins and Ian Muirhead for The Roll of Honour and also the date of Captain Parkers death, also for The Roll of Honour, all of which will be displayed on our website.

10. **The Shoebox Appeal;** Craig Mc Quade stated that all is quiet at the moment, mainly because we do not have points of contact regarding the issuing of parcels. He has tried to get details from numerous Armed Forces Personnel but is finding this difficult (probably because of Security).

Hopefully all will get going again in the early part of 2013. The Kitty is empty and more funds are required.

Craig will try and determine who the contacts are for Airborne Engineers. It was suggested that he contact Bunny Brown at the Birmingham Branch of the Airborne Engineer Association.

Tom Ormiston stated that General sapper units (not Airborne sappers) do not appear to get the back up support that we give our lads. However that is not really our problem as we should be more concerned about supporting our own units.

11. **Election of Office Bearers and other Officiados;** The following positions were proposed and filled ;

The Chair was handed over to Gil Nicol from Frank Murray but after the election of Frank Murray as Chairman the chair was handed back to Frank.

(A) Chairman – Frank Murray –Proposed by Dougie Archibald and seconded by Craig Mc Quade.

(B) Secretary – Gil Nicol -----Proposed by John Donaldson and seconded by Andy Paterson

(C) Treasurer --- VACANT -----To be raised at next meeting as proposed member was not in attendance.

(D) Auditor – Jim Simpson -----Proposed by Dougie Archibald and seconded by Andy Mullen

(E) Webmaster –John Donaldson –Proposed by Dougie Archibald and seconded by Andy Mullen.

(F) Assistant Webmaster – Andy Mullen – Proposed by Gil Nicol and seconded by Craig Mc Quade

(G) Shoebox Appeal Co-ordinator – Craig Mc Quade –Proposed by Andy Mullen and seconded by Dougie Archibald

(H) Branch Representatives (1)– Jim Simpson – Proposed by Dougie Archibald and seconded by Andy Paterson.

(I) Branch Representative (2) – Gordon Mc Leod –Proposed by Gil Nicol and seconded by John Donaldson.

(J) Almoner – This position was proposed by Jim Simpson but it was agreed after general discussion that we stand by our existing system whereby information is posted on the website and acted upon by various individual members.

N.B It should be noted that in the absence of any other candidate Frank Murray accepted the position as Chairman for another year rather than have an empty chair

12. Subscriptions ; It was suggested that the annual subscription remain at £6.00/member/annum. This suggestion was accepted as a proposal by Kim Panton and seconded by Craig Mc Quade.

We were asked to remind those members present, at the AGM , to please consider this as a request for payment of the yearly subscriptions.

Cheques should be made payable to “The Airborne Engineers Association” and sent to Mick Walker at the following address ;-

1 Halbeath Road

Dunfermline

KY12 7QZ

13. Future Meetings ; All future meetings will be held on the 3rd Sunday of the month, every 2nd month, starting from and including January 2012 . Meetings will commence at 1300 hrs.

14. A.O.C.B. (a) We as a branch have sponsored the siting of crosses in The Garden of Remembrance, Edinburgh in remembrance of John Lonnergan (Killed by insurgents in Aden in 1965) and the 10 Sappers who lost their lives, tragically at Cromwell Lock in 1975 whilst participating in “Operation Trent Chase”

(b) On Sunday 14th October we held our Annual Golf Tournament where we competed for The Colin Reid Memorial Trophy—The winner was Andy Mullen who was duly presented with his trophy by our branch Chairman Frank Murray. The tournament was held at The Dunfermline Golf Club and fortunately it remained dry.

(c) On Wednesday 17th October we had an “intermeeting pint” at the Guards Club in Edinburgh where we met up with Dougie Archibald.

(d) On 5th November some branch members , alongside members from the Lothian Branch of the PRA, attended the service at The Garden of Remembrance in Edinburgh.

(e) On Sunday 11th November four branch members attended the Remembrance Day Parade at “The Cenotaph” in London and a great time was had by all. It was very humbling and memorable.

Whilst we were there we were treated with the utmost of respect by numerous members of the public of all sects and creed.

It was good to catch up with our colleagues from south of the border.

We had a taxi driver who refused to take our fare, a train guard who gave us a complimentary upgrade to 1st Class, another railway official who made sure that we got on the train at the proper section in Carlisle, members of the public who made sure we got the proper restaurant to feed our faces in before departing for Scotland and last but not least a young Polish waitress who wished she was forty years older and Gordon fifty years younger.

(f) The book “ A history of Airborne Engineers”1948 – 1984 is available from Fred Gray (details on our website), however if anyone wishes to save on the cost they can contact Gil Nicol who will order in bulk (thereby reducing postage costs) and he will collect them and later distribute at future meetings. The cost would be £20.00/book

(g) It was proposed by Andy Paterson that we subsidise the next group willing to attend the Remembrance Parade in London in 2013, the amount to be decided at a later date, this was seconded by Craig Mc Quade. This solution was arrived at after much discussion on various methods of subsidising the attendees at this parade.

(h) Tom Ormiston reported that the family of the late Joe Stoddart MBE were delighted at a representative from the Scotland Branch, AEA, being in attendance at his funeral.

There was a fantastic display of coloured berets at his funeral (Red, Green, Blue and black) emphasising not only the various branches of the Army Joe was involved in but also the high esteem he was held in.

Tom also thanked us for contributing towards the cost of travel.

(i) Jim Simpson spoke about Ian Moorhead's funeral emphasising that the church was full. Ian was a man, who after leaving the Army, went back to being a country lad, keeping up all his previous interest, Golf, Curling, Dogs, Horses and he was also a very keen "Burns" fan. Ian's son spoke very eloquently about his father.

(j) Frank Murray raised the point about a future visit to the "The Armed Forces Arboretum" and it was agreed that this was more of a personal nature and down to the individual. Norrie Bishop will still look at possible costings.

(k) Frank also raised the matter of a possible reunion with 131 Squadron, in London, in June 2013. This will be discussed in more detail at future meetings.

(l) Tickets are still available for The PRA Christmas Dance to be held on Friday 7th December 2012 and held in the Royal British Legion, Rodney Street, Edinburgh. Anyone wishing to attend contact Dougie Archibald after the meeting.

The meeting was brought to a close at 1400 hrs with a vote of thanks to the chair after which we adjourned for a group photograph (19 No) and some refreshments. It should be noted that the refreshments were supplied courtesy of Craig McQuade.

15. Date of Next Meeting; Our next meeting will be **Sunday 20th January 2013** at RBL Rodney Street, Edinburgh at 1300 hrs.

**“WE WISH YOU ALL A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR”**