



Airborne Engineers Association Scotland



www.airbornesappersscotland.co.uk

Chairman – **Mick Walker**

Secretary – **Gil Nicol**

Treasurer – **Craig Mc Quade**

**Minutes of Ordinary General Meeting held at The Royal British Legion, Rodney Street,
Edinburgh EH7 4EL at 1300hrs on Sunday 15 May 2016.**

1. **Members Present;** Mick Walker, Gil Nicol, John Donaldson, Gordon McLeod, Bob Hamilton, Alex Cockburn, Kim Panton, Norrie Bishop, Eoghann maclachlainn, Brian Earl, Andy Gemmell and Ronnie Drummond.
2. **Apologies;** Frank Murray, Craig McQuade, Dougie Archibald, Alex McWhirter, Andy Paterson, Willie Grant, Tom Ormiston, David Brock, Eoin McIntyre, Ron McCartan, Raymond Mannion and all overseas members
3. **Chairmans Welcome;** Mick Walker welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending.
4. **Welfare;** Mick Walker, happily, has recovered from his heart attack and is now on the mend.
5. **Minutes of Previous Meeting;** The minutes of the last meeting were passed as being accurate by Gordon McLeod and seconded by Brian Earl.
6. **Matters Arising;** There were no matters arising
7. **Secretary's Report;**
 - (a) **Renaming of Kingsbury Barracks—12th April 2016;** Branch members attended the renaming ceremony at Kingsbury Barracks. The barracks were renamed “Lonergan Lines” in memory of SSM John Lonergan who was tragically killed in action whilst attending camp at Al Milah, Aden in 1965. There was good representation from other Airborne Engineer Association branches as well as 131 Commando Squadron Royal Engineers. Major (Retd) Robin Ward led the tributes to John Lonergan and John Donaldson also gave a very good speech about the camp at Al Milah. This was a fitting tribute to a good man and soldier. Major Robin Ward also presented a trophy to Major Jim Foster OC 131 Commando Squadron Royal Engineers on behalf of 300 Squadron. We thank Robin for his kind contribution. Frank Murray has informed us that he had received correspondence from Johns family, now residing in Canada, stating how pleased they were that John could be remembered in this manner after 51 years. There was tribute to John Lonergan in the family's local newspaper in Canada.
In 131 Commando Squadron Royal Engineers newsletter there is a film regarding “Parachute Engineers” and 131 Parachute Engineer Regiment is very well represented.

- (b) 300 Squadron Flag;** We were very fortunate to be handed back 300 Squadron Flag that had been held by Jack Braithwaite. We will be looking at ways of restoring the flag. In the meantime Gordon McLeod has taken a photograph of the flag and has had it framed with a view to hanging it up on the Upper Hall wall at the RBL. Our thanks go to Jack and Gordon.
- (c) Jack Braithwaite;** Jack was at the renaming ceremony at Kingsbury barracks, however prior to this ceremony our Chairman (Mick Walker) had invited Jack to come along to one or all of our future meetings. Mick furnished Jack with the relevant dates and times. We not only wish Jack and his wife well but we also hope to see him in the near future. Jack was the last P.S.I in Glasgow and now lives in Harrogate
- (d) Cenotaph Parade, London 2016;** This parade will be held on Sunday 13 November 2016 and we have 3 members going to London to participate. Unfortunately, due to increased security requirements, we can no longer accept any other names.
- (e) List of Sappers;** We were supplied by Fred Gray, a scroll listing details of the 10 sappers who died whilst participating in "Operation Trent Chase" in 1975. This has been framed and will be mounted in the Upper Hall of R.B.L.S Rodney Street, Edinburgh .
- (f) AEA Scotland Lunch;** It had been agreed at a previous meeting that we cancel our Christmas Lunch and have a lunch sometime during the year. Mick Walker had looked at various venues and did not think they were suitable for what we had in mind and suggested we resort to the previous venue. This was discussed and the following agreed upon unanimously. The lunch will be on Saturday 27 August 2016 at The Royal Scots Club, Edinburgh. We have booked The Douglas Room at a cost of £95.00 (non-refundable deposit) This deposit will be paid out of the branch funds. The room can hold 44 people and to date we have 18 wishing to attend. The meal will be a 3 course meal, plus coffee or tea and will have a choice of 3 for each course. All meals will be chosen from the weekly set menu and paid for individually. The cost of the meal will be £17.50 per person and we have the room from 1200noon until 1700hrs, after which we can retire to the bar. Anyone interested please contact Gil Nicol at 0141-631-2092 or at gilbertandmyra@gmail.com.
- (g) 24 Field Squadron Reunion;** They are having a reunion on 5th – 7th August 2016 at Brighouse in Yorkshire and Tony Sanders extends an invitation to any member who wishes to attend .They had their 1st reunion a couple of years ago and one of the lads from Birmingham went along . Anyone wishing to attend can contact Tony Sanders at sanders44@btinternet.com
- (h) National AGM;** This will be held on Saturday 15 October 2016 at The Royal Court Hotel, Keresley, Coventry, commencing at 1000 hours.
- (i) Cromwell Lock;** A remembrance service will be held at Zetland Park, Grangemouth on Sunday 25 September 2016 at 1030hours for 1100hours. Please make an effort to attend. Those attending please note Berets, Medals, etc., to be worn. Brian Earl Proposed that Gordon McLeod be reimbursed for the framing of the scroll, this was seconded by John Donaldson .
- (j) John Ferry (AEA Chairman);** John has asked us to lay a wreath at the grave of one of his pals, Lance Corporal Scott Wilson, who was killed whilst in The Falklands. The ceremony will take place at the cemetery behind Easter Road football ground on Sunday 12 June at 1045hours. This was agreed upon and those who will be in attendance, please note, Berets, Medals, etc., to be worn. Once final details are available everyone will be informed.
- (k) Erskine Home;** We received a letter from Erskine Homes asking for a donation. It was agreed that we send them a cheque to the value of £50.00, this was unanimously agreed upon.

8. Treasurers Report; In the absence of our Treasurer (Craig Mc Quade) Mick Walker informed the members present that we are still in a healthy financial position. This was based on the balance submitted to Mick by Craig Mc Quade.

9. Website Report; John Donaldson informs us that all is ok with our website and we are still, receiving hits. John will select photographs from 131 Commando's website and post them onto our own website.

10. Future Meetings; All future meetings will be held on the 3rd Sunday of the month, every 2nd month starting from and including January 2016. Meetings will commence at 1300hrs.

11. A.O.C.B;

- (a) **Battlefield Tours 2017;** Gil Nicol is still collecting information and will have a more detailed report at our next meeting. There appears to be only a few members interested so we will be looking at Arnhem and Normandy Tours
- (b) **Aden 1965 GSM ;** John Donaldson received a letter, in reply to his, from RE RHQ Chatham informing him there was nothing they could do in securing the award of the GSM for service in Aden in 1965. They also intimated that there was no record of John applying for the GSM for service in Aden in 1965. They sent John a form to apply for the G.S.M which he duly completed and submitted. Their answer was to send him another Veterans Badge—he does not know why.

Kirsty Oswald, who is an MP for Renfrewshire, was debating on a National Defence Medal at Westminster Hall on 12 April 2016. She raised the point about the awarding of the G.S.M to members of 131 Para Engr Regt. who were in action at Al Milah, Aden in 1965. Her address was supported by other MPs at this meeting, trying to reinforce John's case. Needless to say The Government Minister waffled his way out of the situation, quoting a speech made by Sir Winston Churchill in 1944 on medallic recognition. At the moment everything is still with Kirsty Oswald who at least is trying to get something done. There will be other debates on a National Defence Medal hopefully in the near future.

- (c) **P.R.A.Lothian Branch;** Lothian Branch have invited us to participate in the celebration of their 300th meeting which will be held after our next meeting. Dress is optional.

12. Date of Next Meeting; OGM on Sunday 17 July 2016 (1300hrs) at R.B.L.Rodney Street, Edinburgh.