Minutes of the 15th Annual General Meeting of the Junior Leaders Branch of the Royal Engineers Association Held at the Ramada Hotel Dover on Saturday 4th October 2014.


Welcomes:
The Chairman welcomed all those attending and hoped that all would have an enjoyable weekend, and, formally opened the meeting at 14:00 hours.

1a. A Minute’s silence was held in honour of fellow members and all Junior Leaders that have paid the ultimate price doing their duty. Today as well, we remember two of our members who always attended re-union weekends, who have died this year. General Sir John Stibbon and Peter O’Callaghan.

1b. On behalf of the Branch The Chairman welcomed all new members to the Branch, along with Lt. Col. (Retd) Neil Jordan, the REA Deputy Controller, to the 14th Anniversary weekend, and, also thanked all others for their continuing support.

2. Minutes of the 2013 Annual General Meeting (AGM).
These were distributed, and, with the Minutes of the AGM had also been posted on the website.

Proposed by: L. Inge
Seconded by: B. Davis

That the minutes of the Minutes of the October 2013 AGM, as read, be passed.
Carried.

4. Matters Arising From the Previous Meetings.
There were no matters arising.

5. Presidents Report.
The President stated that the year had been quiet except for the passing of Peter O’Callaghan shortly after last years’ Re-Union, and General Sir John in February, that D. Bishop, K. Trevor, R. Ellis, and himself,
along with Angie Ellis had represented the Branch at Sir John's Memorial Service at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. He said that we had been made very welcome, especially by Lady Jean Stibbon, who wished to be remembered to the Branch, and also wished all members well. He went onto to say that congratulations should extended to the current Committee for all the hard work he knew had gone into planning the weekend.

Finally he thanked D. Bishop for all his hard work as Chairman over the 9 years in tenure.

Proposed by: K. Trevor  
Seconded by: D. Ivell

That the Presidents' Report, as read, be passed.

Carried

6. Chairman’s Report

The Chairman reported the following:
“This will be the last report that I give to the Branch. I will not be seeking re-election as Chairman.

My time looking after the Members interests along with my colleagues on the Committee has been an enjoyable experience. Something tells you when the time is right to move on, that time has come. At the end of the meeting a new Chairman will have been elected and I know you will give him the same support you have given me for the past nine years.

One of the best things we have done was to commission and dedicate the bench at the National Memorial Arboretum. We should be proud of that. The bench says we will not be forgotten there will be fresh horizons to climb, I am confident the new Chairman and his Committee whoever they may be will take the Branch forward.

The Cairn at Old Park has caused concern over the last year. I have received several emails and telephone calls telling me how distressed the fabric is. It is our responsibility and we cannot walk away from it. Further down the agenda we may hear the outcome our endeavours on this.

The Committee has worked well over this year as the same for previous years. New members Rob Taylor – Vice Chair, Iain George – Serving Member, and, Bill Brown who took on the temporary roll as Membership Secretary have worked along Michael, David Ormsby and myself. The key ingredient of a successful Committee is communication between all members.
This past year has worked moderately well. If I were a member of Ofsted I would say it needs slight attention.

Further down the agenda you will hear the intentions of Michael and Dave Ormsby regarding their continued service on the Committee. I have a feeling that a fresh wind will be flowing through the Branch over the next year or so, and, that can only benefit us.

The finances of the Branch are in good order with a successful audit in January. In conclusion we are a vibrant and cohesive Branch of the REA. May that long continue.

Just to conclude may I take you through the arrangements for this evening and the Drum Head Service tomorrow.

Our Guest of Honour is Maj.Gen Shaun Burley and Mrs Burley. He started his career as a 2Lt at Dover. I am sure we will make them feel welcome.

Some will have seen the itinerary dotted about the hotel. Tonight the first coach will the hotel at 1830 hours followed by the second run ay approximately 1850 hours. Konrad Tapp, as usual, is armed with his camera and will take the Group photograph. Dinner will commence at 1930 hours. Place settings will be listed. The band will play Call to Dinner at 1925. The retiring Chairman will welcome our guests, followed by the fanfare and the presentation of the Standard. The band will play the CRE and Iain George reciting the poem “The Re-Union” will follow this. David Ridley will give the Thanksgiving and Grace. Dinner will be served. In front of each guest, and, member will a 15th Anniversary mug as a memento of the weekend. Also on your place setting is whether or not you ordered Port for the toasts. No order – no Port. For our guests all these details will be listed on the table.

During dinner we will entertained by the Nottinghamshire Reserve Band and during their breaks we will serenaded by Tony Chouler who is a semi-professional singer.

The coach will leave the Town Hall at 2400 hours.

Sunday Drum Head Service will be held in the hotel and will be conducted by the Branch Padre Reverend David Ridley followed by lunch in the hotel for those who have ordered it.

That concludes my report"
Proposed by: S. Kitching  
Seconded by: D. Ivell

That the Chairman’s Report, as read, be passed

Carried

7. Vice-Chairman’s Report.

The Vice-Chairman reported the following:
That the plans for the 2014 Re-Union had gone well as normal and he went onto explain that he had already started to look at 2015 function, and, explained that he visited the Cathedral Hotel in Litchfield who had agreed that they would like see the Branch return for any future re-unions. The hotel had suggested that they would provide similar costing as for the 2013 function.

He went to suggest that depending on the Cairn negotiations at Brompton Barracks the Branch should consider holding the annual re-union in alternative locations i.e. Chatham and Litchfield.

Proposed by: K. Tapp  
Seconded by: M. Paterson

That the Vice-Presidents report, as read, be passed

Carried

8. Branch Secretary’s Report

The Branch Secretary reminded the members that all REA information is being posted on the Branch Website.
The Secretary reported the following correspondence had been sent and received during the last 12 months.
Correspondence Out:
a. Condolence Letters from the Chairman to Lady Jean Stibbon, and, Mrs Annie O’Callaghan.
Correspondence In:
   a. SE Group Minutes.
The Secretary explained that the REA were concerned regarding Associate Membership of the Association and had asked Branches to comment.
He went on to explain that the Committee had discussed this at their last meeting, and, felt the following comments were a true reflection of feeling.

1. Max associate members should be no more than 20% of membership.

4. Fully agree there should be a “Friends of the ………………..Association REA”

Following further discussion it was agreed that the comments should be sent to the SE Group Management representative for dissemination to the REA.

Future Events:

The Secretary advertised the following events:


b. Battlefield Tour July 2015: Being organized by the Medway Branch but open to all REA Branch members. Cost ££359:00 per head.

Details for both had been published on the branch website.

Proposed by: C. Beaumont
Seconded by: P. Piper

That the Secretary’s report, as read, be passed.

Carried.

9. Treasurers/Membership Report

The Treasurer issued an Annual Financial Summary up to and including, 30th December 2013 with the Branch Worth as at 31st December 2012. (Attached at Annex A) He explained to the meeting that the finance was in a good state of health, although there were still invoices to be received and settled with regard to the current weekend.

The Treasurers reminded the meeting that there was a need for a Branch audit in the New
Year and as result he requested two volunteers to attend the Committee Meeting on 10th January 2015 at the Union Jack Club Waterloo. The following members volunteered: Messrs Davis and Ivell.

Proposed by: D. Ivell
Seconded by L. Inge

That the Treasurer’s report, as read, be passed.

Carried

10. Membership Secretary’s Report.

In the absence of the Acting Membership Secretary the Vice-Chairman explained that the Branch currently had 93 paid members, and, that with so many people who had passed through the Regiment membership should be healthier.

He explained that he frequently entered Facebook and had noted that there were in excess of 1000 members many being ex Junior Leaders. He said that this would be a good method of recruitment. He said that he would liaise with W. Brown on the way forward.

Proposed by: M Dobson
Seconded by: D Ormsby

That the Membership Secretary’s report, as read, be passed.

Carried

11. Newsletter Editor’s/ Standard Bearers Report

In the absence of the Newsletter Editor the Chairman reported the following:

Over the past year there have been two issues of the Newsletter. Every year a plea goes out for articles of interest from members for the editions, but by and large it must fall on deaf ears. Most of the input is from Committee members, although the publication of photographs seems popular. Our annual plea is for more contribution from members. We have B. Davis’s jokes but these have to be policed prior to publication.

Due the increase of work commitment on S. Crowley, and, if the membership agrees the Chairman put himself forward as the Deputy editor officially as he had in fact been doing
**Standard Bearers**

The Chairman reported that we were lucky to have two Standard Bearers, Simon Crowley and Ray Ellis. Ray Ellis will parade the standard this weekend although Simon Crowley hopes to be with us for the Drum-head service tomorrow.

Ray Ellis paraded the Branch Standard at the Memorial Service for Gen. Sir John Stibbon at Sandhurst, as well as at the National Arboretum over the past year. Mr Ellis's commitment to the Branch needs to be recognised, as the Standard is the face of Branch when we parade. A vote of thanks was recorded for Mr Ellis.

*Proposed by: P. Piper  
Seconded by: C. Kirby*

That the Newsletter Editors/Standard Bearers report, as read, be passed

*Carried*

**12. Website Report**

The Chairman reported that the Website was being used extensively with some 23,000 visits, and, 638 messages posted. He explained that although he was standing down, Simon Rebbechi was prepared to continue administering the site for the Branch.

*Proposed by M. Dobson  
Seconded by D. Ormsby*

That the Website report, as read, be passed. Also that a vote of thanks be recorded for Mr S Rebbechi.

*Carried*

**13. Serving Members Report**

The Serving Member reported the following Corps activity.

**Tranche 4 Redundancy** notification on the 12 Jun14 and only applied to Queens Gurkha Engineers.
**Corps Recruiting** is now improving following the hasty introduction of the Corps Engagement Team. Reserve recruiting is beginning to respond although there remains a very long way to go. Successful retention will be crucial to our near term future manning requirements. The Corps is currently 93% manned with officers and soldiers.

**Operations:** Op HERRICK 20 will finish in Dec 14. The UK’s enduring presence in Afghanistan post Dec 14 will be named Op TORAL which will be no more than 400 personnel supporting the Afghan Army mainly at the new Afghan National Army Officer Academy in Kabul.

**A2020 New Employment Model (NEM).** This is the most extensive review of Service Personnel Terms and Conditions of Service (TACOS) for a generation covering terms of service, training, education and pay & allowances.

**Medal Change:** Changes to the qualification period for the Falkland Islands medal has moved to the 21 Oct 82.

*Proposed by: M Dobson  
Seconded by. R Ellis*

That the Serving Members report, as read, be passed

**Carried**

**14. Branch Committee**

M. Dobson, on behalf of David Ormsby and himself, explained that after many years (15) of serving on the Committee both he and Mr Ormsby would be standing down at the 2015 AGM. It had been their intention to stand down this year. However, due to the Chairman resigning and to maintain continuity they would be prepared to continue in post to assist the new Chairman, and a Treasurer designate, and, Secretary designate for the year.
At this juncture the Chairman asked for volunteers to fill the post of Treasurer Designate, and, Secretary Designate and to work alongside the current incumbents. The following volunteered as shown below:

Proposed by: L. Inge  
Seconded by: K. Tapp

That B. Davis becomes the Treasurer Designate.

Carried

Proposed by: R. Taylor  
Seconded by: D. Ormsby

That K. Tapp become the Secretary Designate.

Carried

Proposed by: M Dobson  
Seconded by: D. Ormsby

That I. George be elected as the Branch Chairman.

Carried

Proposed by: T. Chouler  
Seconded by: R. Taylor

That W. Brown be elected as Membership Secretary from Deputy Membership Secretary Designate.

Carried

Proposed by S. Burt  
Seconded by: K Tapp
That the positions of Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary remain with the current incumbents for a further year. All were prepared to serve a further 12 months term.

Carried

15. Increase Membership of the Branch.

See Item 10.

16. Proposals from the Floor.

Proposed by: D. Bishop
Seconded by: K. Tapp

That Mrs A Hayward & Mr John Coupe be elected as Associate Members of the Branch.

Mr Bishop explained to the meeting the reasons for their election. The Secretary will process the elections through the South East Group Director.

Carried

(Subsequent to the meeting it was discovered that Mr Coupe was already a REA member therefore could join the Branch as a full member. This will be processed as such).

Proposed by: R. Taylor
Seconded by: K. Tapp

That Branch subscriptions be increased as follows:

Membership Fees to increase to £8:00
Twenty Anniversary Fund to increase to £2:00

This to take effect in October 2015.

Carried
17. Annual General Meeting (AGM) & Re-Union Weekend 2015.

Proposed by: C. Beaumont
Seconded by: S Burt

That the AGM and Re-Union Weekend to be held in the Cathedral Hotel, Litchfield over the weekend of 2nd, 3rd and 4th October 2015 with the Drum-Head being held at the site of the Memorial Bench at the National Arboretum.

Carried

18. Any Other Business

D. Bishop and M. Dobson updated the meeting on the future of the Dover Harbour Board Social Club and the dis-repair of the Cairn. The Chairman explained that the Cairn had been vandalised and this had promoted a large amount of complaint on Facebook mostly by people who were not members of the Branch. He and others had gone to the Cairn that morning and tidied up the area. He went on to explain that it had been decided to de-commission the Cairn and continue the search for alternatives.

M. Dobson went on to explain that he had written to the Secretary of the Institute of Royal Engineers in March but to date had not received a reply. He had also attempted to make contact with somebody from Dover Harbour Board to try and discover the future of the area, but once again had not made contact.

He also explained that subsequent to all this, and with the intervention of Larry Inge a meeting had been set with the Corps Colonel for Wednesday 8th October 2014. He promised to inform everybody of the outcome of the meeting.

Following this update a discussion took place on future venues and it was agreed that the 2015 Annual General Meeting and Re-Union would be held in Litchfield with the drum-head service taking place at the site of the Memorial bench

Proposed by: MD
Seconded by: DO

That the above items be recorded as fact.
19. Format & Distribution of the Newsletter

As the Chairman explained earlier he had been assisting with the Newsletter for some time, and with the changing times maybe some thought should given to the format & distribution of the article, particularly due to mounting costs of postage. He asked the meeting to consider the above facts and after much discussion it was decided that the current system remained and the following was proposed.

Proposed by: M. Dobson  
Seconded by: S. Kitchen

That the current format and distribution of the Newsletter remains the same for a further year.

Carried

20. Additional Information

Royal Engineers Association (REA)

During the meeting the Chairman introduced Lt. Col. (Retd) N Jordan to the members and explained that he had kindly agreed to attend and update the Branch with regard to the REA.

Colonel Jordan announced that a new REA Controller had been appointed, that person being Lt.Col Keith Lowerson MBE. He explained that the Controller had been serving in Glasgow, and, that his first official day in office would be at the REA Annual General Meeting on Saturday 11th October 2014.

He explained that membership was steady and ongoing, although at present there was a strong emphasis on recruitment at Associate Membership level to help boost Branch strength.

Once again, he encouraged all to use the REA Facebook page on the Corps Website explaining that it contained many interesting features to aid all REA members, and, that it should aid the Branch to increase the membership by the way of promoting the organisation. He went onto to explain that the Branch should advertise in the Sapper magazine by including close-up “in – your – face” photographs of individuals as opposed to a general shot. If somebody were prepared to write an article he would process it through the system.
It was agreed after some discussion that the update had been very useful and a vote of thanks to the Deputy Controller was proposed.

Proposed by: D. Bishop
Seconded by: I. George

Carried.

Date of Next Meeting: Committee Meeting. 25th January 2014 commencing 1400 hours.
Venue: Union Jack Club, London

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 16:50 Hours