

HMS GANGES ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Meeting held at

RNA Uxbridge
388A Long Lane, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB10 9PG

12 March 2016

PRESENT:

Howard Trotter	Chairman
Cliff Snelling	Secretary
Phil Bridge	Treasurer/Webmaster
Ken Bushnell	Membership Secretary
Gary Faulkner	Certificate Secretary
Des Kerrigan	Events & Standards
Colin Gent	
Shep Woolley	

Observers: Kevin Wood, Carol Barnham, George Barnham, Dennis Cracknell, Ron Carr, Brian Shorthouse, Jim Budgen MBE, Terry Briggs, R Gibbs, Christine Snelling

Prior to the meeting commencing, at the request of Certificate Secretary Gary Faulkner, the Chairman presented a 70-year certificate to shipmate Jim Budgen, MBE.

Meeting opened: 1200

1. Opening Remarks

The Chairman thanked Kevin Wood for once again allowing us to hold our meeting at RNA Uxbridge.

The Chairman asked observers to please keep their questions/comments regarding points arising during the meeting until the end, under Any Other Business.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Florrie Ford who was unable to attend due to several family problems. The Committee sent their best wishes to Florrie with the hope that his circumstances would soon improve.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Secretary read out the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 January 2016 at RNA Uxbridge. The Minutes were approved and accepted.

4. Matters Arising

Item 2: The Secretary stated that invites had been sent to Richard Wrinch, Chairman of Shotley Parish Council, Derek Davis, Chairman of the HMS Ganges Museum, Bernard Nichols, Previous Chairman of Shotley Parish Council, and the widow and family of Trem Ling, inviting them join us at the Church Service on 17th April 2016 at Shotley. All had confirmed attendance.

Item 4: As Dick Lloyd was unable to change the deadline dates of the Gazette, the Secretary said that on 2 February he had mailed the Minutes of the AGM 2015 and the proposals for AGM 2016 to 2,016 UK members. At the same time the information was also emailed to overseas members.

Item 8: The Secretary said he had written to Roger Pascoe on 25 January.

Item 9: The Secretary said that he had advised the Almoner of the revised CTB guidelines discussed at the last meeting, and asked him to submit a piece for the Spring Gazette.

Item 11: Gary Faulkner handed the Secretary a box of coloured cards to use for voting at the AGM.

Item 2: Shep said that he had spoken to Tony Richards regarding subs and sent him a letter showing how his £20 was spent, and that Tony is now happy with the £20 subscription.

Colin Gent stated that he had just received his Gazette and confirmed that the guidelines for CTB (Item 9) were included, as was the details of Gazette Binders (Item 4).

5. Secretary's Report

5.1 The Secretary said he had not received a response from his letter written to Roger Pascoe on 25 January requesting an update of the Cornwall Division situation, and asking whether or not they would be able to continue to maintain the Mylor Memorial. Therefore on 26 February he telephoned and spoke with Roger's wife who told him that they were having another meeting on 3 March, but that their members were no longer able to maintain the memorial due to ill health and age. The Secretary asked that we be provided with an update, but so far nothing further has been heard.

Shep said that he had spoken with a good friend of his and tasked him with finding someone to carry out maintenance on the memorial, 2 or 3 times a year. The Association would be responsible for payment.

Des Kerrigan suggested the Secretary could maybe write to all Cornwall Division members but the Chairman felt that this was not a good idea. The Committee does not have a definite list of the Division members. The Secretary said that a project was already underway to update the information held by the Association of all Divisions.

5.2 Medals - another 45 applications have already been received. The production of another 100 medals is in progress and they should be ready in April for engraving.

5.3 The Secretary said that Peter Turton (ex-Ganges boy from SA) had been accepted for the RideLondon-Surrey event and would be raising money for the HMSGA charities (Pembroke House & RNRMC). Flyers would be going out with the Spring Gazette.

Shep asked the Secretary to write to RNBT and RNRMC advising them that they are the main charities that HMSGA will be supporting.

ACTION: Secretary

5.4 The Secretary said of the 2,016 members mailed in the UK so far 11 envelopes have been returned 'deceased' or 'gone away'. The Membership Secretary had been advised so that our records could be updated.

Cliff suggested that this year we should send out the AGM 2016 Minutes, together with a list of any proposals for AGM 2017 already received, with the Winter Gazette. He said he would submit a piece for the Gazette asking members who wished to register for voting in 2017 to contact Basil Downing-Waite. Basil would then send out the voting forms in February, when the proposals had been finalised after the 31 December deadline. The Committee agreed that this was an excellent idea.

6. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer handed out copies of the Balance Sheet, Profit/Loss Sheet and Bank Statements to the Committee and said that having just arrived back from Las Vegas, though a little jet lagged, he was here to report that the Association's financial situation remains in good order.

The Treasurer said that the finances he is responsible for amount to £79,990.64, made up as follows:

Current Account	£5,605.74
Tracker Account	£45,019.01
Reunion Account	£29,101.83
Petty Cash box	£110.46
Fixed Assets	£153.60

Phil stated that all payments to Warners Leisure Ltd for our Reunion have been met in accordance with the SOLUS Agreement, and that there was one final payment to make on 23 March 2016 of £20,700. The remaining money in the Reunion account is to pay for coaches, catering at Church Service, Sea Cadets expenses, etc.

The Grand Draw monies continue to come in and Phil thanked Dick and Catherine for all their efforts. Although the total is currently down on last year, Dick and Catherine should be congratulated on making a profit for the Association yet again.

The Treasurer said he had advanced Dick Lloyd £6,500 for the Gazette, but hopefully we will get some change back.

Payments for the Ganges Medal continue to come in and this money is held within the Community Account. At the moment there is a small profit. The Treasurer thanked Cliff and Christine for their efforts.

The Treasurer stated that Profit over Loss is currently £13,500, but this includes the Prize Draw and Medal monies. Phil said that last year he estimated that our annual profit over loss would be approximately £10-12K per year, and we are on track.

The Secretary queried the amount of profit as he felt that this question could be expected at AGM. The Treasurer said that he would be explaining at the AGM; that the amount in the Tracker fund was to cover the costs of the Gazette for a period of two years as our membership is falling and eventually our expenditure will exceed income. The Chairman suggested that profit be referred to as Working Capital.

Colin Gent stated that his Association had recently carried out a comparison of subs with other associations and the result showed that £20 was a reasonable fee. Overseas members do not receive any less than UK members, except the presence of the NSB at funerals and he suggested that, if required, perhaps the coffin drape could be despatched worldwide. The Committee agreed to look at this further.

Ken Bushnell asked how the website is maintained. The Treasurer said that it was mainly by donation but that when the donation fund runs out costs will be paid by the Association.

7. Membership Secretary's Report

As at 9 March 2016:

Active Members	1261
Life Members	1057
Associate Members	82
Lapsed Members	263
Total Membership	2663

Crossed the Bar	13
New Members	10

Ken said that this was his last report before AGM 2016 in April. The post of Membership Secretary is up for re-election but Ken said he was happy to carry on for another term.

Ken stated that he was encouraged with the continued arrival of new members at a time when many similar associations are struggling, not only to recruit, but to maintain their numbers. We have also seen, albeit slow, a return of past members.

Ken said the National Promotional Team will be active in attending numerous venues across the country during 2016 and it is hoped members in these areas will offer support to the team in their endeavours.

Ken stated that he would be updating the Membership List at the end of March and any member wishing to receive the updated list should please email him on membershipsec@hmsgangesassoc.org

For those members attending Reunion 2016, or just the AGM, MemSec's Station will be in attendance receiving subs or donations, and offering general assistance to membership enquiries.

Ken said that his house move was on track to the Portsmouth area and he hoped that it would be completed by the end of April. In the meantime, please contact MemSec on the above email, or telephone: 07842 154561.

8. Certificate Secretary's Report

Gary Faulkner said that since AGM 2016 he had printed, framed and sent out 55 Certificates, 5 x 40-year, 16 x 50-year, 26 x 60-year, and 8 x 70-year, and that he had 24 for presentation at Reunion at Evening Quarters. Thanks to donations he had achieved excess income over expenditure for the year.

Gary said that as the Gazette had just gone out he was prepared for a rush of requests before Reunion so there may be additional certificates for presentation. Shep stated that Eddie Seaborne would call out the names at Reunion for presentation by our President, Admiral Sir James Burnell-Nugent.

Gary stated that he still had some supplies, and these would be handed over, with his files, to Florrie, or whoever takes over as Certificate Secretary at AGM.

9. Events & Standards Report

Des Kerrigan reported that the National Standard is being kept busy under the charge of Tony Cooke, our National Standard Bearer. He is ably supported at the many funerals by Paddy Minns and Des, with other Divisional Standards when available, including Alan Hudspeth from Solent. Des said he was very aware of the work carried out by the Divisional Standards and Our Boys in Blazers both at Home and Abroad. Thank You All. You are all a credit to the Association. There is often a letter of gratitude received from the Families who have experienced the presence of an Association Standard and Personnel at the funeral of their Ganges loved one.

Paddy and Des had the privilege to parade our Ganges Divisional Standards, West London and Mercantile Marine Divisions respectively, at St Brides in the City of London at their annual Trafalgar Day Church Service back in October. Always an honour, never a chore.

There is planned in Portsmouth, and I believe in Plymouth, (Chatham?) and certainly Scapa Flow, Parades to mark the Centenary of the Battle of Jutland at the end of May this year. A Battle where Des believed there was more loss of Royal Navy life than any single other Battle. We hope to field an HMS Ganges Association Platoon for the Portsmouth Parade, which will take place in Southsea on Tuesday 31 May, the day after the May Bank Holiday. No finer details from the RNA yet, but as soon as they become available Des said he would publish something on our website. Members who are not online are asked to please 'buddy-up' with an Oppo who is, and do your best, if possible to attend. Des said he imagined that there would also be a requirement for Standards, so please fellas, make the effort for Your Association.

Des said he had probably left something or somebody out and for that his sincere apologies. If you hear of anything in your own locality, please let Des know and do your best to support it in your Ganges blazer.

Des asked if he could have approval from the Committee to purchase a wreath to be laid at Whitehall on Remembrance Parade on behalf of the HMS Ganges Association. This was unanimously agreed by the Committee.

The Treasurer proposed that Des, when attending official National events and carrying a standard, e.g. Jutland, be paid travelling expenses by the Association. Seconded by Ken Bushnell. Agreed by Committee.

10. Shotley Site Update

Des stated that having spoken to Babergh District Council at the end of January, and our own Jim Gitsham, there is very little further to report. A full Report was published in the Winter Gazette, page 12, as to the current situation. Our Council contact from the Planning Department tells us that the Decision Notice has been issued and the start of works is scheduled for the end of April; yes 2016!!

This build programme start date will give the Ganges Association Reunioneers a chance to get back on board and into the site on Sunday 17 April. Shep has put a lot of work into arranging our visit to our alma mater. There will be tea and stickies early afternoon on the Sunday followed by a traditional church service of thanksgiving in Nelson Hall led by the Association Chaplain, Revd Lisbeth. More information will be available at Reunion. Obviously all of our Association Members will be in our Thoughts and Prayers during this, our last access, to the HMS Ganges site.

Before this, on a date to be arranged, we will need a working party armed with Brooms to give Nelson Hall a full skirmish in order that we can have fitting surroundings for the events of Sunday 17th. Please keep your eye open on the Association website and possibly a short-notice phone call for volunteers for the working party. **Post meeting note:** The site access for Nelson Hall 'Clean Ship' has been arranged for Wednesday 6 April, at 1030. All Welcome. Volunteers please report to the Main Gate and Jim Gitsham. Hard broom, bucket and cloths if possible.

Again, I can only reiterate that this will be our last chance to visit the site, open to all Reunioneers, before it becomes a building site and the scheduled development commences

Nothing further to report. Please read Des's previous Report that was published in the Winter Gazette with regard to the site development and the intended preservation of the 'Assets'.

11. Webmaster's Report

Phil Bridge said that there are now 709 members signed up to the website. Everything is running smoothly and he of course continues to monitor the content.

12. Museum Report

George Barnham said that the museum is now getting ready to open on Easter Saturday (26th March) from 1100, last entry 1630. Lots of work has been going on during the winter time, more exhibits have been displayed.

George stated that the Museum was having all their collection transferred from Suffolk Heritage Direct to E-hive due to funding restraints on Suffolk County Council who previously funded this for free. This is taking some time as there are 9,500+ photos/documents to transfer.

The Museum has a new website provider (Vidahost) as Peter Haylock who provided it previously has retired.

On Saturday 5 March the Museum held a training day for those volunteers who help by manning the museum at weekends and Bank holidays. 26 people attended. Carol and George gave out a note of what is required and went over relevant points and answered any questions. A buffet was provided at the end of the session.

Carol and George informed everyone attending that they would be standing down as Trustees and Secretary of the Museum at the AGM on 9th April. So if anyone would like to take on the job as Secretary or be a Trustee, please contact the Museum Chairman, Derek Davis on 01473 787375, or 07796 600705.

13. Promotion Team

The Secretary read out a report from the Promotions Team.

Martin Wiltshire stated that so far the following events had been booked:

Suffolk County Show, 31 May-2 June. Cost, mileage only, estimated to be £150. Martin has requested assistance from both Shotley and Suffolk Coastal Divisions, so if you can help, please let Martin know.

Lincolnshire County Show, 21-23 June. £491 booking fee has been paid and Martin said he was waiting for the organisers to cash the cheque so that he could obtain a receipt.

Cleethorpes Armed Forces weekend, 24-26 June. Free entry. Return home 27 June. Bob Campbell (Solent Division) has kindly offered to assist Dave and Martin at both Lincoln and Cleethorpes, but it would be helpful if there were any Ganges boys in the area who could also assist and it is much easier with 4 people.

B&B has been booked, halfway between Lincoln and Cleethorpes, for 6 nights at a cost of £300. This was the cheapest and most convenient accommodation to be found as accommodation costs around show grounds shoot up whilst an event is on. Martin said he had calculated the mileage from Gosport to Lincolnshire Show, onwards to Cleethorpes, journeys to and from the B&B, and return to Gosport to be approximately £165.

Martin mentioned that he had applied for the Solent Division Standard to attend the Armed Forces Day parade, and said that any other Division Standards wishing to attend should register their details as soon as possible. Contact gavin.marshall@nelincs.gov.uk

Taking in the cost of insurance, Martin said the total cost for the three events will be approximately £1,156.

Martin said that he and Dave Cross would be unable to attend Weymouth on 18-19 June, due to other commitments. Shep Woolley said that the Solent Division were looking into covering this event.

Martin said he was also looking into the Dorset County Show. However, the site fee of £300 only includes two entry tickets, so two further tickets would need to be purchased at a cost of £21.99 each.

The Secretary asked if the Promotion Team warranted such expenditure; he felt that this question would be asked by the members. The Treasurer stated that last year the PT cost the Association £1,216, and that this year was likely to be more and he had already spoken to Martin to be prepared to answer this question at AGM. Phil said that the PT do a first class job promoting the Association, which the Committee fully supports. Colin Gent said he supported Phil's response, the PT should be judged on what they do rather than the cost. Ken Bushnell added that lots of people who attend events are very interested in the membership lists that he provides for the PT, looking for relatives and friends.

14. Reunion 2016 update

Shep Woolley stated that everything was on track for Reunion and passed around a copy of the Order of Service for the Sunday. He said he had had these printed at Holbrook Printers in Portsmouth at a cost of £122 for 500. Shep said that the coaches are booked, and the catering organised, as was the PA system and the Special Needs band who would be playing for us. The vicar, 'Bomber' Mills, would be doing the service for Perky's scattering of ashes, and the Association had agreed to pay for him to stay overnight in the Travelodge at a cost of £70. He is an ex-Ganges boy and will now join the Association.

Des volunteered to marshal Coach No. 1 which will take Perky's relatives and the Standard Bearers to Shotley.

Shep said that bags would be handed out to everyone containing Daily Orders, Order of Service for Sunday, badges and pens.

Beccles Sea Cadets have been organised for Saturday and Sunday.

Shep said that Robbie Robson may not be well enough to attend Reunion and issue tots. The Committee wished Robbie well. Dave Poyser will be Rum Bosun as usual, and organise the Uckers competition on Saturday afternoon.

Shep said that every room had been sold for Reunion, and he was making every effort to re-arrange some bookings to possibly free up another space. Commodore Williams and his wife are being accommodated at the Premier Inn.

Des proposed a vote of thanks to Shep and Jenny for all their hard work in organising the Reunion.

15. Reunion 2017 Venue & Arrangements

Reunion 2017 will be held at Gunton Hall. The dates printed in the Gazette are 14-17 April 2017. These dates were queried as this is Easter weekend. After the meeting Shep checked with IOW Tours and confirmed that the dates were in fact correct - 14-17 April 2017 it is!

16. Welfare

The Secretary stated that the Almoner had asked if it was possible to set up a fund to provide for members who may require financial assistance with medical bills.

Whilst sympathetic, the Committee agreed that the Association is not a registered charity. The Treasurer said that the money generated by the Association was for running the Association. A Welfare Fund would set a precedent, which we are not in a position to monitor.

Colin Gent added that the aims of the Association were only to promote links and maintain comradeship between all members to keep the 'Ganges Spirit' alive, and for like-minded people to gather together.

Gary Faulkner suggested that we could only give advice on charities to contact, e.g. RNBT, RBL, etc, as we are not a welfare organisation.

Kevin Wood said that this matter had been raised before at AGM 2006 and that members had voted against setting up a Welfare Fund.

17. Any Other Business

- Des Kerrigan stated that 11 members would be at Reunion who were 'on parade' at the 1953 Coronation Review and could we mention them at the AGM. Shep suggested that they be called up at the end of the AGM and honoured with a tot.
- Des also stated that he had a message from Dusty Miller in NZ to Association members. Dusty said that, as he approached his 82nd birthday, he was honoured to have known anyone at HMS Ganges - 'We had the good years'.
- The Secretary asked about announcing Committee vacancies at AGM. Colin Gent said we have a duty to say at AGM that we have two vacancies, and that in his report at AGM the Secretary should say that anyone who was interested in joining the Committee should contact him.
- Ken Bushnell stated that as neither he nor the Secretary were able to attend Scarborough this year the Christmas Draw should be held at the 12 November meeting. This was agreed.
- Des Kerrigan said that a Working Party was planned for 6 April to tidy up Nelson Hall prior to the Church Service on the 17th. This was being organised by Jim Gitsham.
- Colin Gent confirmed that he would stand as Temporary Vice Chairman until a new Chairman was appointed.
- Phil Bridge said that we used to make a presentation to the oldest member attending Reunion and could this be re-instated. The Committee agreed a bottle of Pusser's be presented to the oldest member attending Reunion 2016.
- On behalf of the Museum Carol Barnham said that they had run out of postcards and could they please have some more. Shep said he would get some from Martin Wiltshire but the Mem Sec's address would need to be updated.
- Carol asked if she could clarify that all members of the Committee were full members, not Associate. This was confirmed by the Secretary.
- Carol said that the Museum had some display boards for the Reunion that would need to be dropped off before the 15th. Shep advised Carol that this would be OK. Phil stated that he would bring his USB with photos for display at Reunion.
- Carol asked if the Association was doing anything special at Reunion to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday. Shep said that we would make a special toast.
- Ron Carr said he wished to thank the Almoner and the NSB on behalf of Essex Peninsular Division for their input to the funeral of Walter Godfrey in Colchester. Ron also said he wished to propose a vote of thanks to the Association for the production of the Ganges Medal, which was excellent.
- Jim Budgen thanked the Chairman and the Committee for presenting him with his 70-year certificate. He said he is unable to attend Reunion because his leukaemia means he must stay near the hospital. He felt that the Committee should promulgate the fact that Certificates can be presented at Committee meetings if members wished to attend.
- Shep Woolley said that there had been some comments about standard of dress at the 2015 Remembrance Parade. Des Kerrigan said he had received a letter from the RBL regarding this matter and had replied that all members of the HMSGGA attending the parade were fully aware of its significance and dress and behave accordingly. Gary Faulkner stated that the RBL letter had been sent to all Associations who took part in the Remembrance Day Parade at the Cenotaph.
ACTION: Secretary to include RBL letter in Summer Gazette as a reminder to all those members wishing to attend the 2016 event.

18. Next Meeting

Colin Gent said that he was now available for meetings on some weekdays. The Secretary will contact Committee members with a list of dates to see when they are available. It was suggested that a meeting would be held in Plymouth, in September, if this could be arranged.

Meeting closed: 1440