

MINUTES OF ADEN VETERANS ASSOCIATION GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE STROUD CONSERVATIVE CLUB ON
WEDNESDAY 6th JULY 2022 at 11.00 am

1. ACT OF HOMAGE, AND WELCOME.

Chris Price, our Branch President read the Act of Homage, and welcomed Clive Candlin, the AVA National Chairman, to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Ray Bunnage, Robert and Sybille Wood, Judith Compton, Dennis Flamson, Keith Spiret and Edward Knowlton.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM.

The minutes of the AGM held on 7th July 2021 had been shown on the Branch website and were circulated before the meeting. These minutes were proposed as an accurate record by John Longhurst, and seconded by Rose Longhurst.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM.

There were no matters arising.

5. REPORTS BY COMMITTEE OFFICERS

5.1. Chairman – Rick Rutter presented his report:

Welcome to the Branch AGM. Your Branch has attended many events since our last Branch meeting. I would like to thank all of you who have attended these wide ranging events.

Michael organised our attendance at the AFD held in Gloucester docks and also the Remembrance Service at Earthcott Green. Both are high profile events which we are privileged to attend. Edward 'Curly' Knowlton laid our wreath at the Memorial. The Branch Standard was paraded at both of these events. My thanks to Robert Parrant for carrying our Standard at Earthcott Green and to Dennis Flamson who carried our Standard at the World of War weekend held at the Helicopter Museum in Weston-Super-Mare. Dennis organised our visit. I must also mention John Longhurst who came out of 'retirement' to carry the Kernow Standard at Weymouth. In fact three Aden Veterans Branch Standards were carried by our members at the Parade in Weymouth. Robert carried ours and Dennis the West Dorset Branch. A good number of our members enjoyed the hospitality of the West Dorset Branch during a very enjoyable weekend. Photographs of the event are on the West Dorset Branch website. Denis Sparrow has been busy taking our display to AFD, Weston-Super-Mare and to Weymouth. Emlyn Phennah also manned a small stand for AFD at the Jet Age Museum in Staverton.

Your Branch was also represented at the St George's Day service held at St Barnabas Church in Gloucester in April, VE Day Remembrance Service in Cheltenham on May 8th and the D-

Day Service on June 8th. The Last two events are organised by Cheltenham Borough Council and the Cheltenham Branch of the RBL. We are invited to all their Remembrance Services, the next ones are;

Sunday 31st July at 11.45 for 12.00. Ops Banner 15th Anniversary of the formal end of operations in Northern Ireland, and on Monday 15th August at 10.45 for 11.00 VJ-Day Annual Commemoration.

These services are held at the War Memorial in front of the Council offices in Cheltenham.

David Gearing laid our wreath at the Falklands Service held in Quedgley by their RBS.

My thanks go to Jean Stublely for her excellent organisation of our First Wednesday lunches. She has also teamed up with Sally Welzel, who is leading on organising the 55th Anniversary of the Withdrawal from Aden. I would also like to thank Chris Blick for 'keeping me on my toes'. He knows all that there is know about our Branch.

After our AGM we will toast The Queen for her Platinum Jubilee. My thanks to Sheila Gibson for baking a wonderful cake and to Hugh and Sheila for providing port, sherry and orange juice for the toast.

On a sad note two of our members passed away during the last few months. Isobel Major, wife of Jim, who lays our wreath at the Battle of Britain Remembrance Service. It was good to see Jim at Weymouth and at our Wednesday lunch.

Ken Plowman, who was our oldest member at 99 years of age. Ken was a glider pilot in the Second World War, he was a wonderful man who achieved much in his long and varied life. A number of the Branch attended his Memorial Service in Churchdown.

Finally I would like to end on a happier note. Recently two of our members celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary. Many congratulations to Trish and Stan Shearer.

5.2 Secretary – Michael Compton reported:

Despite a lack of occasions when we could meet due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the Gloucestershire Branch of the Aden Veterans Association has once again proved that it is resilient bunch, most notably at the 54th Anniversary of the Withdrawal from Aden, on 29th November 2021. I would like to thank all the Aden Veterans who did respond, and also the support we received from RBL and the Mayor of Cheltenham.

It was after the event on 29th November, that when we met for a coffee in the bar of the Everyman Theatre that Sally Welzel made the proposal that we "push the boat out" for our 55th Anniversary. You will soon be aware of the plans that we have made so far.

Next on the list for thanks are Ray Bunnage for his management of the website, to Emlyn Phennah for his work on setting up the newsletter and finally to Rob Parrant our standard bearer.

As the keeper of the Branch members' information, I have had to record sad news with the passing of Isabel Major and Ken Plowman. On a more positive note, we are glad to see that Colin Lambert has joined us. Currently we have 36 active members.

As has already been advised the position of Branch Treasurer is due for re-election; David Gearing has indicated that if proposed he would be prepared to stand again. Although it is not in the Constitution that the position of Social Secretary is due for re-election, I would like to propose a special vote of thanks to Jean Stubley for all the work that she has done organising the lunches and the Xmas event, and to ask her on your behalf to continue in this role.

6.3. Treasurer – David Gearing presented his report. Statements of account, 2021-22 are attached to these minutes:

First of all, it has been a pleasure to have served start another 3 year stint as Branch treasurer. I am grateful to Branch Members for their support, now and for the last 10 years that I have served the Branch. It is thanks to that support that we find ourselves in a good financial position going forward. The timing of this Newsletter allows for the inclusion of the Statement of Accounts, which was presented at the recent AGM. We will be receiving a grant of £1,000 from the National Association in support of our 55th Anniversary Commemoration, and this will allow us to set the price to Members at the same level as the 2012 event, which was held at the same venue (albeit under different ownership). Over the coming months the Branch Committee will be fine-tuning the planning; I would like to add my thanks to Sally Welzel and Jean Stubley for spearheading the arrangements.

5.4. Social Secretary – Jean Stubley reported that so far this year, our “first Wednesday of the Month” lunches have been well supported with an attendance average of more than 20. Future arrangements are as follows:

The next meal that I have arranged is on 3 August at 12 for 12.30 pm. This is the Ship, Moor Street, Upper Framilode GL2 7LH.

Our visit to Kemble Airfield which was re-arranged from 3 August to 7 September is also confirmed. Address is: Cotswold Airport PC, Kemble, GL7 6BA. Members are invited to assemble for coffee at 10am in the café on site called The AV8. From there it is a short walk to look round the fully restored Britannia from 10.30am with lunch afterwards, only a short drive to The Thames Head Inn, Tetbury Road, Cirencester GL7 6NZ. Originally this was rather expensive, but they have suggested the Bar Menu.

I have noticed that most pubs that I contact have raised their prices quite a lot. Perhaps some thought should be given as to the type of place Members would prefer to go for lunch. I think the Chains are keeping their prices relatively stable, but the more individual pubs seem to have put their prices up considerably. If anyone has any thoughts then let me know.

Thank you so much for your continued support. It is so good to get together on these social occasions with such a friendly group of people.

6. SPEECH BY NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBER.

Clive Candlin, our National Chairman, started his address by saying he is delighted to be back. His wife, Margaret, had presented apologies for her absence due to her feeling unwell.

He began by giving a statement about the future of the AVA; the combination of increase in age of all members, and in particular those who serve on the National Committee, together with our gradually reducing membership, is leading him to the conclusion that the future of the AVA is limited to about 3 years. Indeed, key members of the National Committee have indicated that with their current medical conditions, they will be unable to continue. Unless, these positions can be filled we will be forced to lay up the colours in 2025. Organising such events as the Blackpool weekend has become onerous; also the organisation of the committee meetings has had to be radically changed because the hotel, normally used in Nottingham is being used for housing refugees. We have now decided to have the meeting during the Blackpool weekend; for other meetings we can resort to "Zoom".

The National committee has decided to recognise the efforts made by individuals at branch level, by awarding National Certificates of Merit. Personnel can be nominated by the National Committee or by the officers of the branch committees. He then presented certificates to Chris Blick, Robert Parrant and Michael Compton, at the same time inviting us to nominate any other members who deserve such recognition.

Finally, he stated that where appropriate, branches should consider joining in with other veteran associations for specific events.

7. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

In accordance with branch procedure, the positions of Branch Treasurer is due for re-election. A notice had been sent out with the agenda asking for any proposals. However, no proposal has been submitted; David Gearing stated that he is prepared to stay in post for another 3 years. There being no other proposal for the position David was confirmed nem.con.

8. APPROVAL OF BRANCH MEETINGS FOR 2023

Branch meetings are scheduled for 4th January, 5th April, 5th July (AGM) and 4th October.

9. STATE OF PLANNING FOR 55TH ANNIVERSARY OF WITHDRAWAL FROM ADEN

Michael Compton gave a verbal brief on the situation regarding the invitation of HRH Princess Royal to attend the event. All members were advised of the security implications this entails and that the final details will only be published after the official notification from the Palace. The grant of £1000 from National funds is much appreciated in meeting the extra costs of the special event.

10. ADDITIONAL PLANNED EVENTS FOR 2022

These were outlined as shown on the agenda. Details will be shown on the Branch website.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Dennis Sparrow informed the meeting of the current status of Brian Serrell's request for his local MP Alex Chalke's support in having another MOD review for "A GSM for the lost years". Mr Chalke's investigation had indicated that there may be possible grounds for a further review, because the nature of the official reply was a "standard answer", i.e. due consideration to the original application had not been given. Currently there is little further we can do until the turmoil in the government is resolved. Mr Chalke's position as Solicitor General has, up until now, been of use, but there is no guarantee he will hold the same position in the future. Clive Candlin indicated his support for the action taken so far.

12. PLATINUM JUBILEE LOYAL TOAST

As had been suggested by Jean Stublely, the meeting formally toasted Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. A celebration cake had been donated by Hugh and Sheila Gibson.

13. CLOSURE

The meeting closed for the raffle and lunch, which included the celebration cake, with everyone expressing thanks to Hugh and Sheila.

Michael Compton

ADEN VETERANS ASSOCIATION GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 1ST APRIL 2021 TO 31ST MARCH 2022

	Bank Balance brought forward	1420.57

Donations from Branch Members		+395.50
Branch Raffles		+316.00
<u>Branch Administrative Expenses</u>		
Office equipment and consumables	286.72	
Postage	134.64	
Carlton Club affiliation fee	10.50	-431.86
Sound System at 29 Nov 21 Commemoration		-190.00
Internet Fees		-86.49
Lecture fee, Mr P Barnett on 6 Oct 21		-63.10
<u>Lunches at Branch Meetings</u>		
Cost from the Carlton Club	255.00	
Receipts from Branch Members	230.00	-25.00
<u>Christmas Lunch</u>		
Hotel cost (1904.45) and refunds (78.00)	1982.45	
Receipts from Branch Members and other groups	1964.50	-17.95

	Bank Balance at 31 st March 2022	1317.67
Total Income	: £2906.00	
Total Expenditure	: £3008.90	
Excess of Expenditure over Income	: £102.90	

Statement of Accounts prepared by the Branch Treasurer

(David Gearing)

Accounts Auditor

(W Cruickshank)