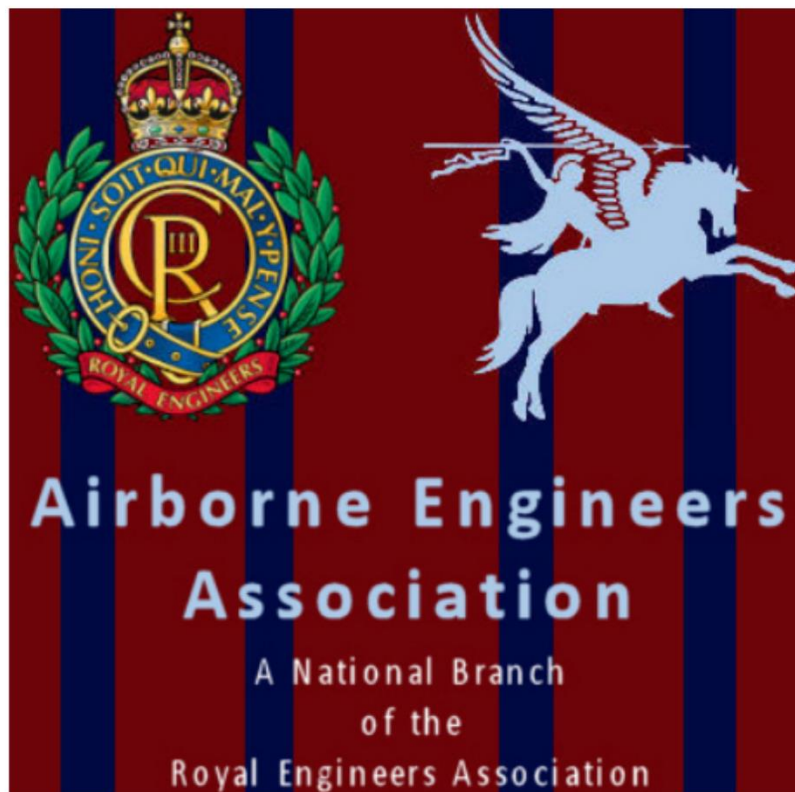




# THE AIRBORNE ENGINEERS JOURNAL



## Contents

Committee Contacts .....	3
23 Parachute Engineer Regiment Reunion .....	4
Stumpy's Plaque .....	5
Reply from Kath Houlston .....	5
Zetland Park Memorial Cairn .....	6
Unveiling of the Kiel Canal Memorial Bench .....	7
Exercise Trent Chase Memorial Bench Dedication Service .....	8
Remembrance Service for Scott Wilson .....	10
Annual Memorial Service for Cpl Andrew McIlvenny .....	11
AEA Normandy Battle Tour .....	14
Day 1 – 4 <sup>th</sup> June – Gold, Juno, Sword Beach .....	19
Day 2 – 5 <sup>th</sup> June – Para Sqn Commemorations .....	22
Day 3 – 6 <sup>th</sup> June – D Day Commemorations .....	26
Day 4 – 7 <sup>th</sup> June – Omaha Beach .....	28
Day 5 – 8 <sup>th</sup> June – Utah Beach .....	31
Photos taken during the Normandy Battle Tour .....	35
Dr Bruce Tocher .....	38
Operation Freshman .....	38
Yorkshire Air Museum .....	39
Wreath Laying at the Freshman Graves at Eiganes, Stavanger, Norway .....	41
From the Recent Birmingham Branch AGM .....	43
Real Friends .....	44
OGM Minutes .....	45
Appendices to OGM Minutes .....	50
Financial Report .....	50
23 Parachute Engineer Regiment Update .....	50
Membership Report for OGM 2026 .....	51
Airborne Engineers Association Archivist Policy Document .....	52
Shop Report for 2026 OGM .....	55
AEA Web Site .....	56
Joining the Airborne Engineers Association .....	56
AEA Journal .....	57
299 Association Branch Report for OGM .....	57
Aldershot Branch Report for OGM 2026 .....	58
Wales and West Branch update. OGM 2026 .....	58
Yorkshire & Lancashire Branch for OGM 2026 .....	59
AEA/REA Membership .....	60
Visit our Online Shops .....	61
From the Editor .....	62



The Airborne Engineers Association  
a National Branch of  
The Royal Engineers Association



June 2026, Issue No. 66

**For All Airborne Sappers - Service Not Self**

<https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/> or <https://www.aea.org.uk>

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**The next printed edition of the Journal will be published in November 2026  
Deadline for receipt of content is 15<sup>th</sup> November**



23 PARACHUTE  
ENGINEER REGIMENT



2026 REUNION

SATURDAY  
25 JULY 2026



ROCK BARRACKS, WOODBRIDGE

BAND,  
PARACHUTE  
DISPLAY



CHARITY  
AUCTION &  
BBQ

MORE INFORMATION AND TO SECURE YOUR  
TICKET CAN BE FOUND USING THE QR CODE



## Stumpy's Plaque

Following the very sad passing of Ian (Stumpy) Campbell, we are pleased to confirm that a brass plaque has been added to one of the benches in Aldershot Military Cemetery

If you are unfamiliar with the process of having a plaque added, for yourself when the time comes, or for someone else, please visit the following page on the AEA website:

<https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/bookofvalhalla.html>

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## Reply from Kath Houlston

Following the inclusion of Joe Houlston's obituary in the December 2025 Journal, we received the following via email from Kath Houlston on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Dear Dave,

Many thanks for sending two copies of the AEA Journal which were received in good order.

This is a special edition for our family as it bears the printout which Phil Taylor read out at Joe's funeral; also, as the presentation booklet for the funeral is included.

I'm sure readers will be especially interested in the history entitled 'A blast from the past' on page 13, where it acknowledges Joe as the founder member of the AEA. He was very proud to know that his germ of an idea had grown to be the resounding success it is today with so many branches and members able to enjoy a continuing comradeship. I know too that he was initially involved in the amalgamation of the Airborne Engineers Association with the Royal Engineers Association and was grateful to the people who have been able to bring this about.

Rest assured that these copies will find a place within our family history memorabilia. It is a wonderful thought that so long as the Association endures then Joe will not be forgotten.

We are extremely glad to have Issue 65 in our possession and found it to be an informative read. I can recall some of the people whose names are recorded within the pages, bringing back memories of when Joe served with them. He recounted many stories of his army life and as his wife I was the one who heard them all. During retirement he wrote his book 'Born to be a soldier' and recorded some of those stories. Sadly, it is only in private print so not available on the open market.

Very best regards from the Houlston family,

Kath Houlston

---

## Zetland Park Memorial Cairn

### Airborne Engineers Association Scotland Branch



The tulips given to the AEA Scotland Branch last year have now started to appear. We were given 10 bulbs to be planted at our cairn in Zetland Park Grangemouth, in memory of the 10 lost Sappers from 131 Parachute Squadron RE (TA) in the river Trent tragedy, on Ex Trent Chase, 28<sup>th</sup> September 1975

**We Will Remember Them**

## Unveiling of the Kiel Canal Memorial Bench

Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh, 30<sup>th</sup> May 2026

### Report From AEA Scotland

On the night of Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 1974, 15 Para, supported by 300 Troop, 131 Para Sqn RE, with elements of 2 Para and 4 Para, parachuted into Germany to form part of 16 Para Brigade Group on Ex Bold Guard.

In March 2026, a drop by 270 soldiers from 16 Air Assault Brigade made headlines as the largest parachute drop by the British Army in 10 years.

By contrast, the Ex Bold Guard airlift from the UK in 1974 included 35 C-130 Hercules aircraft carrying around 600 troops and their Heavy Drop equipment. It was the biggest United Kingdom Joint Airborne Task Force deployment of that year. They flew at 250 feet above the North Sea before climbing up to 1000 feet to approach the DZ from the north over the Kiel Canal in the dark with navigation lights off. A wind of 4 to 6 knots was forecast. The DZ was described by CO 15 Para, Lt Col Jim Burke, as "sporting". It was short, bounded by canals at either end, the Kiel Canal at the north, the start, and a minor canal at the south.

The RAF had been briefed not to drop late, in case the last paras in each chalk were not able to jump. Consequently, a total of 16 paras, all early numbers in their sticks, were dropped too soon and landed in the Canal. Most survived but six did not.

The six who died that night were, from 15 Para Captain Gerry Muir, A Company; Officer Cadet James Cooper, C Company; Sergeant Richard Tompkins, B Company; Sergeant Elliot Leask and Lance Corporal Brian Bett, Support Company and from 4 Para Private Edward Beach, A Company.

The RAF blamed the weather and inexperienced TA paras for the deaths. But those of us who were there saw the numbers landing in the water, followed by some of the Heavy Drop landing on the personnel DZ. Both were navigation failures which those jumping could have done nothing about.

At a ceremony organised by PRA Lothians on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2026, a Memorial Bench was unveiled. The ceremony was led by Major Alasdair Hutton, who had been OC A Company of 15 Para on Ex Bold Guard, and had himself narrowly avoided landing in the water of the Kiel Canal. The ceremony was extremely well supported, and several from AEA Scotland, some of whom had themselves been at the canal that night, attended.

As Alasdair Hutton said "This is a worthy memorial created by the Lothian branch of the Parachute Regimental Association which will stand as a lasting tribute to those six courageous men. We are honoured that the relatives of some of the men who died on Exercise Bold Guard are here with us today".

AEA Scotland was proud to support Lothians PRA on this significant occasion.



Photographed Left to Right:

Bill Pagan, Andy Nelson,  
Alex Cockburn,  
Gil Nicol, John Donaldson,  
Bob Urquhart (15 Para),  
Gordon McLeod and  
Mick Walker.

# Exercise Trent Chase Memorial Bench Dedication Service

## Airborne Engineers Association Scotland Branch



A Bench Dedication Service for the 10 Sappers killed whilst participating in "Operation Trent Chase" at Cromwell Lock in 1975 was held at the memorial stone in Zetland Park , Grangemouth on Sunday 7th June 2026



The inscription on the bench reads:



The service was held in memory of the following Sappers ;

Raymond Buchanan	20 yrs
Norman Bennett	20 yrs
James Black	18 yrs
Stuart Evenden	22 yrs
Peter Evenden	19 yrs
Ian Mercer	17 yrs
Alexander O'Brien	18 yrs
Terry Smith	20 yrs
Raymond Tempell	26 yrs
Joseph Walker	21 yrs

Pat Harkin, the sole survivor of the tragedy, died in 2012

#### **"We Will Remember Them"**

The event was very well attended with representation by The Lord Lieutenant, The Provost, The Veterans Champion, Family Members, AEA Scotland, PRA Lothian Airborne Forces Group, 131 Commando Engineers, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, various individual service personnel as well as local residents

A Reflection on this disaster was read out by Colonel (Retd) Bill Pagan who was a former Troop Officer of 300 Troop. The service was conducted by Major (Retd) Chris Withers. Our thanks to the Padre, Piper and Bugler who attended at short notice.

Once the service was concluded we retired to The Royal British Legion, Grangemouth where a buffet and refreshments were provided.

## Remembrance Service for Scott Wilson

### Airborne Engineers Association Scotland Branch

On Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2026 branch members and others attended the grave of Scott Wilson who is interred at Edinburgh Eastern Cemetery.

Scotty was a member of 9 Sqn and was tragically killed at the battle for Mount Longdon during The Falklands War in 1982.



This was well attended by members of AEA Scotland, 9 Sqn, PRA Lothian and other PRA Branches.

Scotty's lifelong friend from school was there and said a few kind words.

Wreaths and Crosses were laid as a mark of respect and a toast was held over the grave.



After the ceremony we all departed to The Guards Club, Edinburgh for a bite to eat and some refreshments.

This is a duty that we at AEA Scotland took on board to help our colleagues South of The Border to ensure that, on the date of his demise, there would be a collection of "Cherry Berets" to remember him.

**"We Will Remember Him"**

## Annual Memorial Service for Cpl Andrew McIlvenny

By Lt Col (retd) Baz Bassett

On Saturday the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2026 the annual memorial service for Cpl Andrew Macilvinney was held at the Holy Trinity Church Twydall.



### The Headstone in the Grounds of the Holy Trinity Church Twydall

This service has been held annually in memory of Andy Macilvinny for many years. Over the years this small ceremony has grown in attendance and popularity. Andy was a Cpl with 3 Troop 20 Fd Sqn RE, the troop was attached to 9 Para Sqn for OP Corporate becoming 4 Troop 9 Para Sqn RE throughout the operation.

### Paul Sinclair (4 Troop) Royal Hospital Chelsea and Author

Andy Mac at the time was with Wayne Tabard on the tank deck of the Sir Galahad when a bomb exploded, tragically killing him and Wayne Tabard. This year's ceremony attracted some key VIPs to the event, The Deputy Lt of Kent Brigadier Andrew Wood, The Worshipful Mayor of Medway, Lt Col Sean Parr CO 36 Engr Regt, Queens Gurkha Engineers, and RSM Andrew Iley of 1 RSME Regt.





**Dennis Potter RNA,  
Paul Sinclair,  
Deputy Lt of Kent,  
Lt Col Sean Parr,  
WO1 RSM Iley**

It was also supported by a number of riders of the SAMA 82 Falklands Ride of Respect 2026. As usual there was a splendid turn out of Veterans in support for this occasion along with the Chair of the REA Branch Tank McCan with members, Standard Bearers from the RNA and the REA and many other civilians alike. The ladies provided the splendid tea and cakes, many thanks for their hard work with money raised to SAMA (82) £305.88.



**Anything for a Photograph, some of the attending vets**



**Tam Drain, the Parade Marshall did a fantastic job in coordinating the event and keeping all guests organised, in line and on time.**



**The Mayor of Medway with the Standard Bearers for the event. The Mayor had to dash off for his wedding at 12 noon cutting it close but our thanks for his support to the event.**

A big thank you must go to Tim Van der Kraan who has selflessly taken on the organisation and running of the service annually. Unfortunately, having organised the event, this year he was at Normandy for the celebrations held there. Many thanks again Tim for your hard work in drawing this together.

I would point out that all the VIPs circulated. Meeting and engaging with the Veterans and guests. Again, the very strong support given to the service and also the recognition to the serving personnel and Veterans was very encouraging.

## AEA Normandy Battle Tour

### D-Day Commemorations, 4–9 June. Article by Phil Taylor and Ed Van der Sar

The AEA Normandy Battle Tour took place from 4–9 June 2026 and was centred on the D-Day commemorations across Normandy. This article, together with the accompanying photographs, provides a detailed account of the visit and may assist anyone planning a similar battlefield tour.

Many of the images include QR codes, which can be scanned to access additional historical information and visitor resources.

### Visitor Information and Recommendations

#### Currency

Although debit cards are widely accepted in France, UK banks may apply transaction charges to overseas purchases. Exchanging currency into Euros before travel can often be a more cost-effective option.

Approximate costs during the visit were:

- Museum admission: €10–20
- Hotel breakfast: approximately €12
- Café lunch: approximately €25
- Evening restaurant meal: €30–50

#### Mobile Phone Usage

Before travelling, check that your mobile phone package allows data roaming in France. This is particularly useful as many museums, memorials, and information boards feature QR codes that provide access to additional historical information, maps, and visitor resources.

#### Passport Requirements

Ensure that your passport meets current travel requirements. As a minimum, it should have at least three months' validity remaining beyond your planned return date.

#### Pre-Travel Preparation

To gain a greater understanding of the events surrounding the Normandy Campaign and D-Day landings, visitors may find it helpful to revisit a number of well-known films before travelling, including:

- *The Longest Day*
- *Saving Private Ryan*
- *Schindler's List*

These films provide useful historical context and help bring many of the locations visited during the tour to life.

#### Commemorative Events

During the D-Day anniversary period, Normandy hosts a wide range of commemorative events, including parades, military displays, ceremonies, concerts, and historical re-enactments.

Visitors are encouraged to consult the official D-Day Festival and Bayeux tourism websites before travelling in order to plan their itinerary and take advantage of the numerous events taking place across the region.

#### Accommodation

The group stayed at the **Kyriad Caen Nord Hotel**, The Kyriad Caen Nord served as an excellent base for exploring the Normandy battlefield areas. Its location, on the outskirts of Caen, is conveniently situated between the ferry terminal at Ouistreham and Caen city centre. Booking details can be found through [booking.com](https://www.booking.com). The price and service was good however evening meal was not available and the French restaurants near Hotel was limited.

For this visit, five double rooms were booked for five nights at a total cost of approximately €1,742 (£348 per room when booked well in advance).

### **Kyriad Caen Nord**

Impasse des Ormes, Parc Tertiaire – Boulevard du Bois  
14200 Hérouville-Saint-Clair, France  
Telephone: +33 (0)2 31 95 29 24

### **Ferry Travel**

#### **Brittany Ferries Terminal**

Avenue du Grand Large  
14150 Ouistreham, Normandy, France  
Telephone: +33 (0)2 31 36 36 50

The overnight ferry from Portsmouth to Ouistreham provides a convenient and direct route into Normandy. Typical return fares for two people range between £400 and £500, depending on the season and how far in advance the booking is made.

Cabins are compulsory on overnight crossings and should be reserved at the time of booking.

#### **Portsmouth Ferry Port Parking**

Long-stay parking at Portsmouth International Port is straightforward and conveniently located close to the terminal. Parking costs were approximately £70 for a five-day period at the time of travel.

#### **Food and Refreshments**

Food and drink on board the ferry can be relatively expensive. While a variety of meal options are available, travellers may wish to bring snacks and refreshments for the journey. The cooked breakfast offered on board was generally considered poor value for money when compared with alternatives available after arrival in France.

#### **Provisional Itinerary**

The following itinerary provides an overview of the tour. Detailed descriptions of each day's activities are provided in the subsequent sections.

#### **4 June – Day 1**

##### **Gold, Juno and Sword Beaches**

Arrival at Ouistreham at approximately 06:45 hrs following the overnight ferry crossing from Portsmouth. Meet with Ed at approximately 09:00 hrs before proceeding to the hotel. After checking in and leaving luggage, the tour commenced with visits to the British and Canadian landing beaches of Gold, Juno and Sword, together with associated museums, memorials and commemorative events.

#### **5 June – Day 2**

##### **6th Airborne Division Commemorations and Battle Sites**

A day dedicated to exploring the operational area of the British 6th Airborne Division, including key battle locations and commemorative events associated with the airborne landings east of the River Orne.

#### **6 June – Day 3**

##### **D-Day Commemorations – 6th Airborne Sector**

Attendance at D-Day anniversary commemorations within the 6th Airborne area, including:

- Pegasus Bridge
- Ranville Crossroads Commemoration
- Ranville War Cemetery
- Drop Zone "K"
- Arromanches-les-Bains
- Asnelles

#### **7 June – Day 4**

##### **Omaha Beach and the American Sector**

A full day examining the American landing area, travelling from Colleville-sur-Mer through the Omaha Beach sector and onwards towards Carentan.

## 8 June – Day 5

### Utah Beach and the US Airborne Sector

Visits included:

- Utah Beach
- Sainte-Mère-Église
- US 82nd Airborne Division locations
- US 101st Airborne Division locations
- Azeville Battery
- Crisbecq Battery
- Saint-Côme-du-Mont

## 9 June – Day 6

### Caen and Departure

A free day prior to departure. Local buses provided an inexpensive means of travel into Caen city centre, with fares of approximately €2 per journey.

The group visited the Caen Memorial Museum, which requires approximately four hours to fully appreciate, particularly if viewing the documentary films and exhibitions.

Following the museum visit, a taxi was taken to the ferry terminal at a cost of approximately €30 before boarding the return ferry to Portsmouth.

Many of the images include QR Codes, from which you can access further information.

Useful sources of information are the  
D-Day Normandy Visitor Guide  
and also the  
D-Day Festival Normandy Programme



[www.ddayfestival.com](http://www.ddayfestival.com)





# AEA Normandy 2026 Trip

FROM JUNE 4-9 2026

ARTICLE WRITTEN BY ED VAN DER LANN AND PHIL TAYLOR TO ASSIST OTHERS  
PLANNING A TRIP TO NORMANDY

## Introduction Order of Battle

### 6th Airborne Division June 1944


**3rd Parachute Brigade.**  
8th (Midland Counties) Bn. The Parachute Regiment.  
9th (Home Counties) Bn. The Parachute Regiment.  
1st Canadian Parachute Battalion.

**5th Parachute Brigade.**  
7th (Light Infantry) Bn. The Parachute Regiment.  
12th (Yorkshire) Bn. The Parachute Regiment.  
13th (Lancashire) Bn. The Parachute Regiment.

**6th Airlanding Brigade.**  
12th Bn. The Devonshire Regiment.  
2nd Bn. The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry.  
1st Bn. The Royal Ulster Rifles.

**3rd Parachute Squadron, Royal Engineers.**  
**591st Parachute Squadron, Royal Engineers.**  
**249th (East Anglia) Airborne Field Company, Royal Engineers.**  
**286th Airborne Field Park Company, Royal Engineers.**


**Divisional Troops.**  
6th Airborne Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps.  
22nd Independent Parachute Company, The Parachute Regiment.  
53rd (Worcestershire Yeomanry) Airlanding Light Regiment, Royal Artillery.  
3rd Airlanding Anti-Tank Battery, Royal Artillery.  
4th Airlanding Anti-Tank Battery, Royal Artillery.  
2nd Airlanding Light Anti-Aircraft Battery, Royal Artillery.  
2nd Forward Observation Unit (Airborne), Royal Artillery.  
6th Airborne Divisional Signals, Royal Corps of Signals.  
224th Parachute Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps.  
225th Parachute Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps.  
195th Airlanding Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps.  
716th Airborne Light Composite Company, Royal Army Service Corps.



**Operation Neptune**

## Introduction

### 3rd Para Sqn Order of Battle



**SCAN ME**

**War Diary 3rd Para Sqn RE**

**3rd Parachute Squadron, RE**  
Commander : Major Tim Roseveare  
Second-in-Command: Captain Allen Jack  
Intelligence Officer : Lieutenant Williams  
Squadron Sergeant Major : CSM R. Barr

**No.1 Troop :** Captain Freddy Fox  
Section Commander : Lieutenant D.A. Breese  
Section Commander : Lieutenant A. Wade  
Section Commander : Lieutenant A. Foster  
Section Commander : Lieutenant A. Lack

**No.2 Troop :** Captain Tim Luckes  
Section Commander : Lieutenant R.R. Beaumont  
6 Section : Lieutenant John Shave  
Section Commander : Lieutenant Nash  
Section Commander : Lieutenant E.V. Knox?

**No.3 Troop :** Captain Geoff Smith  
9 Section : Lieutenant T.D.V. Marsh  
10 Section : Lieutenant J.L. Inman  
11 Section : Lieutenant B.H. Holloway  
12 Section : Lieutenant Baillie

# Introduction Faces of the Past



## The broader picture

### NORMANDY INVASION — JUNE 6, 1944

#### OVERVIEW

also called Operation Overlord or D-Day, during World War II, the Allied invasion of western Europe, which was launched on June 6, 1944, with the amphibious landing of U.S., British, and Canadian forces in five separate beachheads on Normandy, France.



Commander of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force  
**GENERAL DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER**

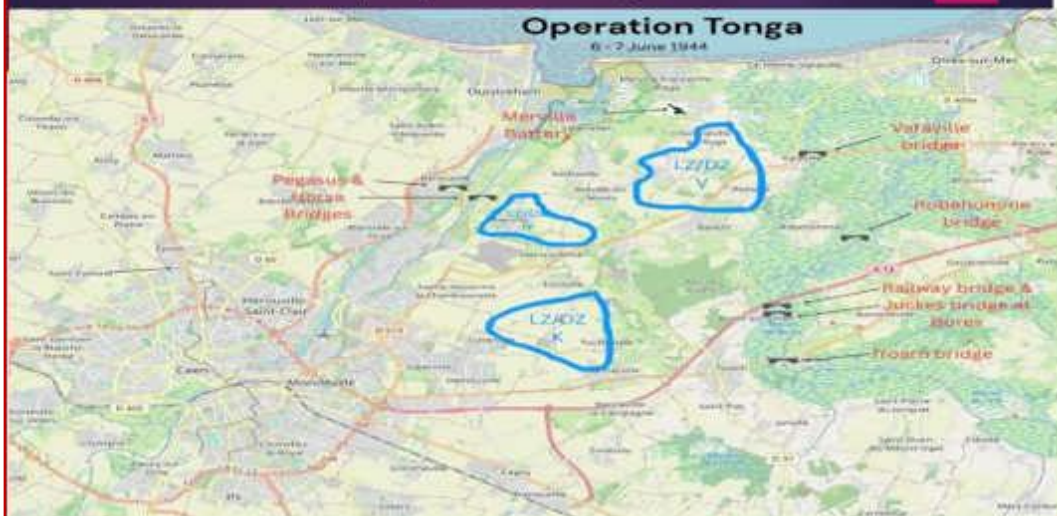
Originally planned for **MAY 1** and then **JUNE 5** but was delayed due to bad weather

NORMANDY COASTLINE  
80 km (50 miles)



D-Day footage in colour

## Map Operation Tonga





### Itinerary June 4



- ▶ 06.45h (lib) Arrêt à Quibéron, from Portsmouth, passport control etc.
- ▶ 08.00h Pick-up by Ed and Ton (cave for coffee, tea, hot food, snacks in dock facility in walking distance) (30 minutes drive to our hotel)
- ▶ 08.40h check in Hotel Kyriad, leave luggage at reception (rooms available after 14.00h).
- ▶ 09.30h-10.00 Coleville Montgomery; Batterie Hillman... next stop 15 minutes away
- ▶ 10.15h-10.45h Douvres radar station drive 10 min
- ▶ 11.00h-11.30h Beny sur Mer Canadian cemetery, drive 10 min
- ▶ 11.50h-12.40h Juno Beach centre - bunkers systems.
- ▶ 13.00h-13.45h next lunch in Courseulles sur Mer after a good meal we will drive 10 minutes to...
- ▶ 14.00h-14.30h British Normandy Memorial in Ver sur Mer drive approx 12 min to...
- ▶ 14.45h-15.30h memorial Royal Engineers... opposite Arromanches 360 or/and 5 min to
- ▶ Musée Embarquement Arromanches les bains 15 min drive to
- ▶ 16.00h-16.45h Batterie Longues sur Mer. 15 min to our last stop today...
- ▶ 17.30h Hotel Kyriad Caen Nord
- ▶ Diner suggestion is in our hotel at 19.00h!

**Map Itinerary June 4**  
**How does this work?**  
**You will only need to do this once!**  
**After opening by you an email will be automatically send to me to grant you access, I will return the mail giving access.**  
**All done!**

### Itinerary map June 4



Start at Hotel Kyriad, Caen Nord

- 1= Batterie Hillman, Colleville Montgomery
- 2=Canadian Cemetery, Beny sur Mer
- 3=Juno Beach Centre, Courseulles sur Mer
- 4=Centre Courseulles, Luch
- 5=British Normandy, Memorial Ver sur Mer
- 6=Engineers Memorial, 360 Cinema, Arromanches
- 7=Invasion museum, Arromanches
- 8=Batterie Longues

Total 100km, 2 hours drive

## AEA Normandy Tour stand 1 Hillman Battery






1. De 8 408 (Memorial Suffolk Regiment), 2. HQ, 3. Kitchen, 4. East guardpost, 5. Northern guardpost, 6. Command bunker, 7. Water supply, 8. trenches, 9. barbed wire outline.

Battle for Hillman






## AEA Normandy Tour stand 2 Douvres Radar





Assault on Douvres radar station




Douvres radar video










77 reg North Shore 22 Dragoon 41 Cdo 4 SS Bde 5th Bn RE Fort Gary Horse

## AEA Normandy Tour stand 3 Beny s Mer







BENY-SUR-MER CANADIAN WAR CEMETERY

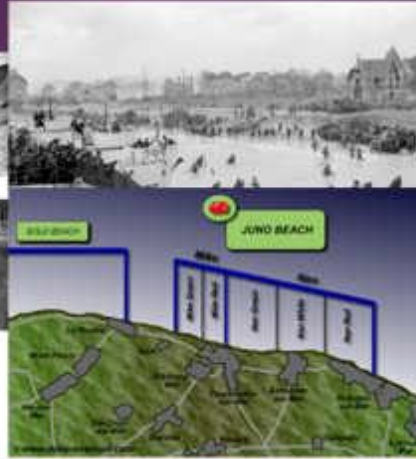
## AEA Normandy Tour stand 4 Juno Beach



Juno Beach Centre



Restored footage  
attack Juno  
Beach



## AEA Normandy Tour stand 5 British Normandy Memorial in Ver sur Mer



video

## AEA Normandy Tour stand 6 Arromanches, Memorial Garden and 360 cinema



Mulberry British  
Port 1944



AEA Normandy Tour stand 7 Longues sur Mer batterie

Guided tour

AEA Normandy Tour stand 7 Port en Bessin The underwater museum (pending time to spare)

D Day wrecks museum

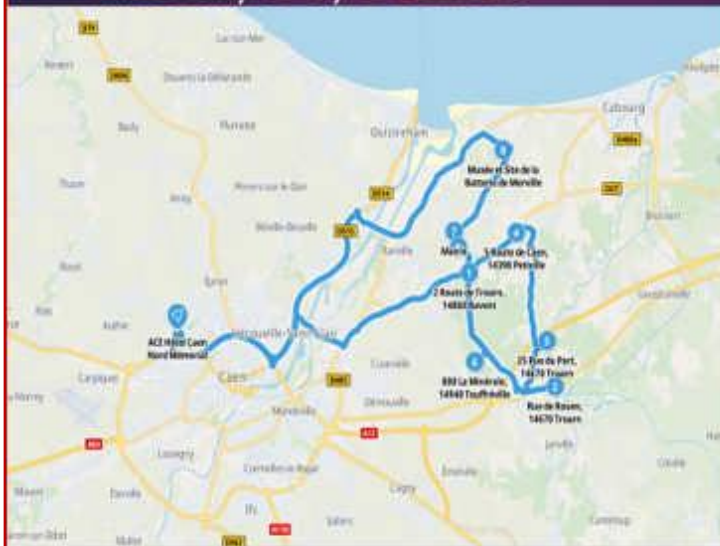
Day 2 – 5<sup>th</sup> June – Para Sqn Commemorations

AEA Normandy Battle Tour  
2026 Day 2 June 5  
Para Sqn Commemorations

## Itinerary June 5 revised to accomodate commemorations

- ▶ 08:30h depart for 1st stand in Les Menil, 09:00h Service of remembrance, dedication Standard, Vin d'honneur in Terres Barent, indication 3rd Para as battle at crossroads (F4)
- ▶ 10:30h depart for Breville and Chateau St. Come (11:00h ceremony, wreath laying P8 state, 10 minutes drive) 2nd stand (Airborne Engineer site): Samon Bridge, wreath laying: see app 1 Troam yellow arrow for details and map.
- ▶ 11:30h depart for Bures (15 min drive) 2nd stand (Airborne Engineer site): Jukes Bridge, See app 1 Bures orange marker.
- ▶ 11:45 Bures Duckes Bridge onwards to Troarn, 5 minutes to get to...
- ▶ 12:00 Troarn Roseyears Bridge, onwards to Troarn for lunch from 12:15 till 13:30
- ▶ 13:30h Next stop Sannerville (10 minutes) at 14:00h Para drop DZ-K (8th Para BN dropzone) HAP, LLP, A400M, (US)HC 130, TB-C (14:30 depart for Pegasus Bridge museum near Benouville for M&G with Nicolas Dumont, curator of the museum.
- ▶ 15:00h Pegasus Bridge museum near Benouville for M&G with Nicolas Dumont, curator of the museum, time to take a look at the museum, better today, tomorrow (D Day) will be very busy. (Parade ww2 motorcycles)
- ▶ 17:00h Service of remembrance Merville Battery (if we want that) or we leave for our hotel (30 minutes approx, dinner at 19:00h restaurant hotel).
- ▶ 20:00 (if you are keen) big parade of numerous ww2 vehicles at Coleville-Montcaumon just 10 away from us

## Itinerary Day 2 June 5



Start Hotel Kyriad, Caen  
 1=Les Menil, commemoration PRA  
 2=Troarn Bridge, Engineer commemoration  
 3=Bures, Jukes bridge  
 4=Petitville, Lunch  
 5=Chateau Ste Come/Breville  
 6=Sannerville LZ K drop parachute Reg  
 7=Pegasus Bridge Museum M&G  
 8=Merville Battery

Total 79km 1:38h

## AEA Normandy Tour stand 1, Le Mesnil Crossroads



Le Mesnil Crossroads



Ceremony 3rd Para BDE HQ at Le Mesnil



8th Midlands

## AEA Normandy Tour stand 2 Troarn Bridge



Maj Tim Roseveare,  
CO 3rd Para Sa RE



## AEA Normandy Tour stand 3 Bures (Juckes) Bridge



Capt. Thomas Roland Tim' Juckes, M.C. No. 2 Troop  
 #3rd Para Sqn, Royal Engineers KIA on 28th June 1944 in a  
 mortar barrage at LeMesnil aged 24, buried Ranville War  
 Cemetery, from Tewkesbury #Gloucestershire



## AEA Normandy Tour stand 4 Chateau St Come & Bois de Mont



## AEA Normandy Tour stand 4 Chateau St Come & Bois de Mont



Chateau St Come

Maj John Howard at Ch St Come

The chateau after the battle

HQ Bois du mont + graves



Map war diary  
9 Para



9 Para action  
St Come

## AEA Normandy Tour stand 5 Breville

Story battle for Breville



Battle for the high  
grounds Breville

## AEA Normandy Tour stand 6 Amfreville



Commando in AMFREVILLE



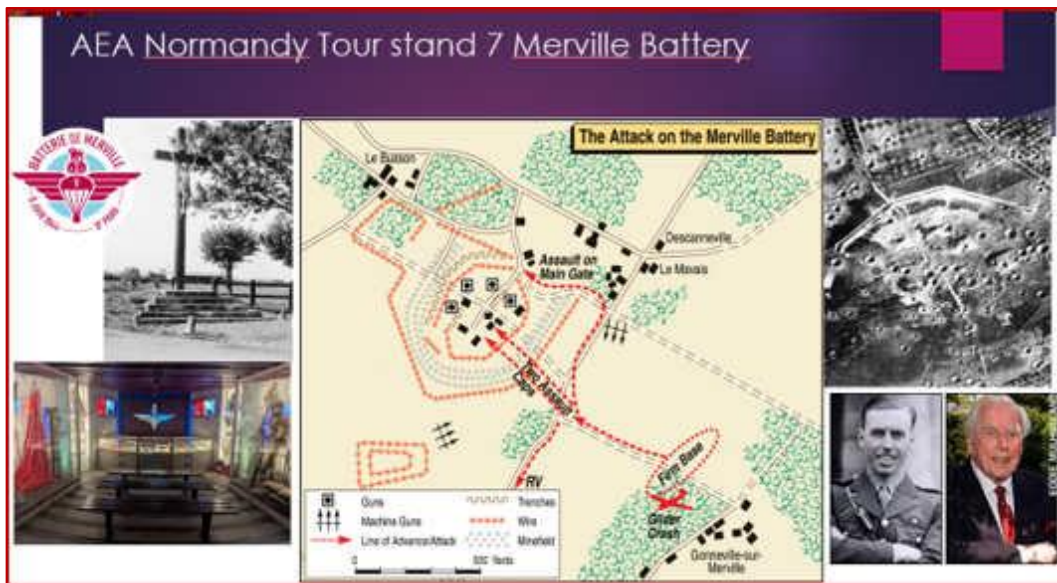
1st Special Service Brigade



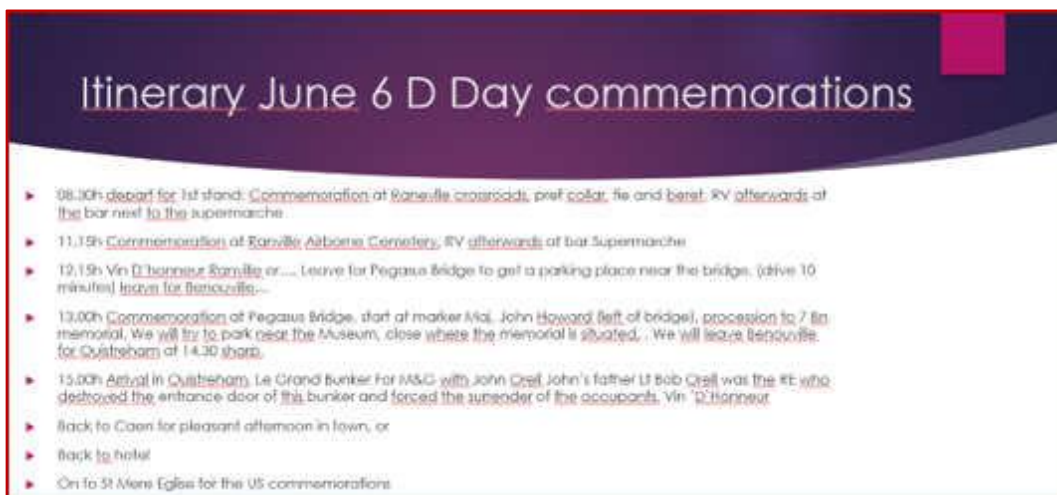
No 4 Commando

No 3 Commando

No 6 Commando



Day 3 – 6<sup>th</sup> June – D Day Commemorations



## Itinerary June 6 map



Start Hotel Kyriad, Caen  
 1=Commemoration crossroads,  
 Ranville  
 2=Commemoration Airborne  
 Cemetery, Ranville  
 3=Commemoration Pegasus  
 Bridge, Benouville  
 4=Cpmmemoration Arranches

Total 93km 1:40h

## Stand 1 Ranville Crossroads Commemoration



## Stand 2 Ranville Airborne Cemetery Commemoration



Ranville Church & Cemetery Video



Ranville Cemetery stories Video



### Stand 3 Pegasus Bridge Commemoration



### Stand 4 Arromanches commemoration, pending info.....



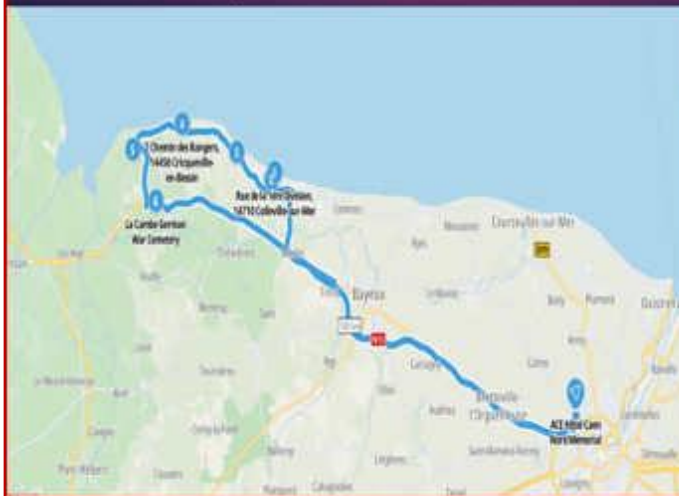
Day 4 – 7<sup>th</sup> June – Omaha Beach

Three logos and medals are displayed: the Royal Air Force (RAF) crest, the Pegasus Bridge logo featuring a winged horse, and a gold military medal. Below the logos, the text reads: 'AEA Normandy Battle Tour 2026 Day 4 June 7 Omaha Beach'.

## Itinerary June 7 Omaha Beach

- ▶ 08.30h depart for 1st stand: about 45 minutes drive, Omaha Beach WN 60 (German bunker system 60)
- ▶ 10.45h back to Colleville US Cemetery, RV Parking. We will stay for 1 hour. Leave at 12.00h for lunch in Vierville, a 10 minutes drive, lunch from 12.15 to 13.15.
- ▶ 13.15h we will move on to Point du Hoc, only a 10 min drive
- ▶ 13.30h Visit Point du Hoc, US Rangers memorial, back to the parking and at 14.45 a 20 min drive to
- ▶ 15.15h Battery Maisy, until 10 years ago undiscovered, a 20 minutes drive to
- ▶ 16.00h La Cambe, German War cemetery, we will stay for 60 minutes. This is the last stand for today.
- ▶ 16.30h back to our hotel, we will arrive after a 45 min drive
- ▶ 17.15h R&R at our hotel, dinner optional in our hotel or elsewhere, we can provide transport to Caen centre, back on our own accord with a taxi. Just let me know on our way in.

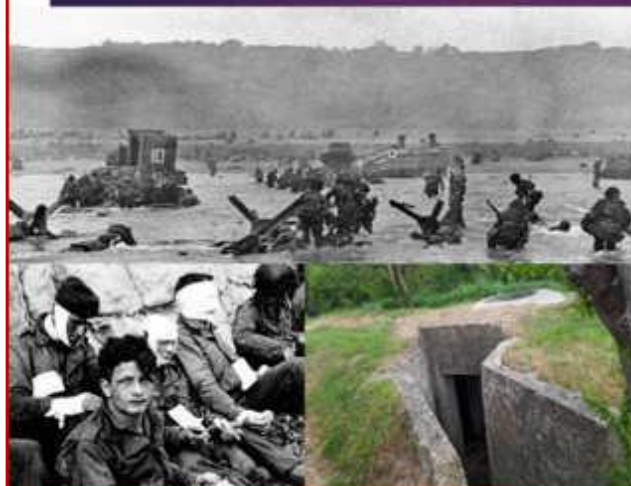
## Itinerary June 7



Start Hotel Kyriad, Caen  
 1=Omaha Beach, Colleville  
 2=US Cemetery, Colleville  
 3=Lunch in Vierville  
 4=Point du Hoc, Rangers memorial  
 5=Battery Maisy  
 6=German Cemetery, La Cambe

Total 130km 2h

## Stand 1 Omaha Beach & WN 60



1st wave Omaha video

## Stand 2 US Cemetery Colleville



Colleville US Cemetery



## Lunch in Vierville: 12.15h-13.15h



## Stand 3 Point du Hoc



Rampers of Point du Hoc



Video Point du Hoc



Stand 4 Battery Maisy



Short story    Video tour    Full story




Stand 5 La Cambe German Cemetery





What happened to the German war dead



Day 5 – 8<sup>th</sup> June – Utah Beach

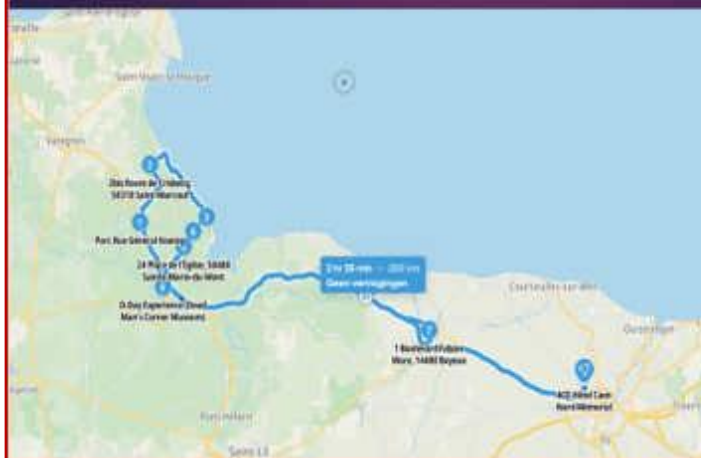


AEA Normandy Battle  
Tour 2026 Day 5 June 8  
*Utah Beach*

## Itinerary June 8 Utah Beach

- ▶ 06.30h depart for 1st stand: (about 1 hour drive)
- ▶ 09.30h Stand 1 The town of Ste Mere Eglise, see the town square and museum, we will stay for one hour, please have refreshments in the town square, don't forget to visit the church, absolutely magnificent. A short 15 min drive to.
- ▶ 10.45h Stand 2 Battery of Azerville/ Crisbeque, fully restored now including trenches and cafes. We will leave here at 11.45h for the coast.
- ▶ 12.00h Stand 3 La Madeleine, Utah Beach (and museum)
- ▶ Lunch at Utah Beach (2 restaurants across the road, we will leave at 13.30h for a 10 minutes drive to..
- ▶ 13.45h Dick Winters memorial/ Manoir Brecourt, stay for 15 minutes, drive to
- ▶ 14.15h St Come du Mont/ D Day Experience/ Dead man's corner + museum, stay here is 1 hour, a 30 minutes drive to..
- ▶ 16.00h we leave for our last stand for today, Bayeux British cemetery (and if we want the Battle for Normandy museum opposite the cemetery). We will stay 45 minutes and leave for our hotel at 16.45h
- ▶ 17.15h back at our hotel, drinks and R&R

## Itinerary June 8



Start Hotel Kyriad

- 1=Ste Mere Eglise
- 2=Battery Azerville+ + Crisbeque
- 3=Utah Beach + lunch
- 4=Manoir Brecourt/ Band of Brothers
- 5=St. Come du Mont
- 6=Dead man's corner museum
- 7=Bayeux CWGC cemetery

## Stand 1 Ste Mere Eglise




Then & Now video




John Steele the real story



Battery Crisbeque




## Stand 2 Batterie Azeville/ Crisbeque




*Deutsche Küstenbatterien in der Normandie*  
 1944 - Normandie  
 1944 - Normandie  
 1944 - Normandie

**BATTERIE DE CRISBEQUE**

## Stand 3 Utah Beach/ La Madeleine

 German defences



Original footage invasion Utah Beach

**"LEFT HOOK"**  
 German defences

## Stand 4 Manoir Brecourt/ Band of Brothers

 Assault on canon Manoir Brecourt



Assault on canon Manoir Brecourt

**D-DAY**  
 6 JUN 1944

**EASY COMPANY**  
 ASSAULT SUR  
 LE MANOIR DE BRECOURT

Stand 6 St Come du Mont/ D Day Experience

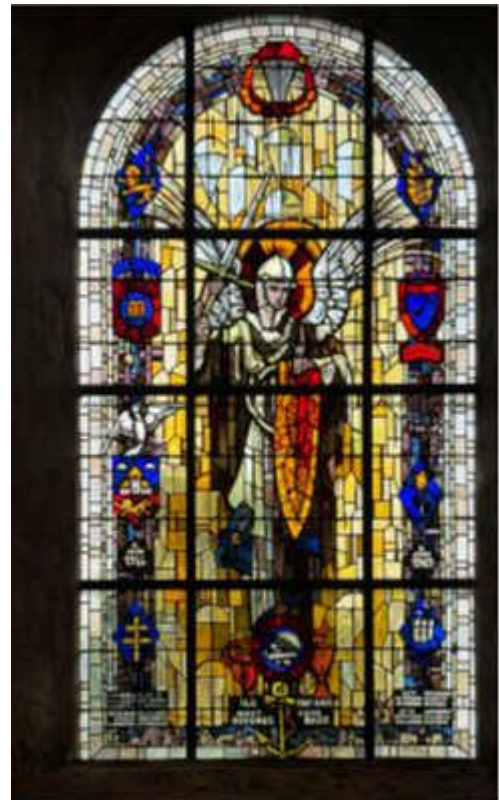


Stand 7 Bayeux British cemetery/ Museum



*We Will Remember Them*

Photos taken during the Normandy Battle Tour







## Dr Bruce Tocher



We are pleased to let you know that following nomination for a President's Commendation (see December 2025 Journal) and being presented with the award citation last year, Dr Bruce Tocher has now been formally presented with his framed Commendation Certificate

**Bruce being presented with his President's award at the Third Thursday Lunch Club by Lt Col D Crosbie, CO 23 Parachute Engineer Regiment**

## Operation Freshman



I am just back in Norway after an amazing visit to the Yorkshire Air Museum where we had a Memorial event for the Operation Freshman families - the primary aim being for them to have a tour inside the museum's Halifax bomber. The event went really well, with people coming over from Australia and Canada to attend. We also had displays of military equipment related to Operation Freshman, and I gave a presentation on the raid to the families, guests and museum volunteers.

All the best,

Bruce

## Yorkshire Air Museum

LinkedIn Post from Harriet Mann

It has been an absolute honour and privilege to work with [Dr Bruce A. Tocher](#) over the past 7 months planning the reunion for the descendants of the men who perished in Operation Freshman. In November 1942, two gliders and two Halifax Bombers set off from Scotland with the intention of destroying the massive Norsk Hydro Factory in Vemork, Norway - sadly, this was not to happen. It was fascinating to hear the full story and tragic outcomes from Bruce's talk. Bruce emailed [The Yorkshire Air Museum](#) on my very first day and it was wonderful on Thursday to see our conversations come to life, alongside the families of the men (some of whom had travelled from Canada and Australia), and Colonel David Holmes, representing The Canadian High Commission, the Canadian Armed Forces and the Royal Canadian Air Force, and Flight Lieutenant Liam Bone, representing the Australian High Commission, and [Elizabeth Smith](#) from the [Commonwealth War Graves Commission](#). I was immensely proud to represent my Museum, which at its heart, is a memorial to Allied Airmen. I can't thank my team of volunteers enough for their support and compassion on the day. I am a firm believer that luck is what dictates how war progresses, and Operation Freshman is a devastating reminder that for many, luck was not on their side. However, as I stood with the descendants in front of our beautiful Halifax MKIII, I felt incredibly emotional, and incredibly lucky, to be part of this.





Link to LinkedIn Article

[https://www.linkedin.com/posts/harriet-mann-b83641164\\_it-has-been-an-absolute-honour-and-privilege-ugcPost-7461438717547806721-\\_sSg?utm\\_source=social\\_share\\_send&utm\\_medium=member\\_desktop\\_web&rcm=ACoAAAY3vlgBld9\\_Gb4MmLvpQ\\_m1aqkmTkLVa8Y](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/harriet-mann-b83641164_it-has-been-an-absolute-honour-and-privilege-ugcPost-7461438717547806721-_sSg?utm_source=social_share_send&utm_medium=member_desktop_web&rcm=ACoAAAY3vlgBld9_Gb4MmLvpQ_m1aqkmTkLVa8Y)

**Confirmed Op Freshman presentation dates for the remainder of 2026 are as follows:**

- 10.08.2026 Burntwood Family History Group: <https://www.bfhg.org.uk/diary> Talk (Open to the public) starts at 7.00 p.m. in the Erasmus Darwin Academy, Pool Rd, Burntwood WS7 3QW.
- 07.09.2025 Army & Navy Club (The Rag: <https://therag.co.uk/club-member-events/>), 36 Pall Mall, London (Members only, but guest attendance is possible by arrangement). Talk starts at 18.30.
- 08.09.2026 Number 9 Society Lunch, Caledonian Club London (Members only). Talk starts at 12.30
- 09.09.2026 u3a Exploring your Family History Group in Bath (Members only). Lecture will start at 1400. Contact Jean Waltham ([jeanwaltham@hotmail.com](mailto:jeanwaltham@hotmail.com)) to register interest/attendance

We will endeavour to let you know any other presentation dates in 2026 and beyond as soon as possible

**Wreath Laying at the Freshman Graves at Eiganes, Stavanger, Norway**

17th of May 2026, Norway's National Day



Remembering the Fallen on Norway's National Day As always, it is heartwarming to attend the annual wreath-laying ceremony at the Commonwealth Graves at Eiganes, Stavanger on the 17th of May. The Mayor of Stavanger, Tormod Wilson Losnedal, gave an excellent speech, and the service was attended by visiting British Naval Officers from H.M.S. Prince of Wales, and other dignitaries. **Lest we Forget**





Link to the LinkedIn Article

[https://www.linkedin.com/posts/dr-bruce-a-tocher-420b282a\\_remembering-the-fallen-on-norways-national-activity-7461724235137282048-tun-?utm\\_source=social\\_share\\_send&utm\\_medium=member\\_desktop\\_web&rcm=ACoAAAY3vlgBld9\\_Gb4MmLvp\\_Q\\_m1aqkmTkLVa8Y](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/dr-bruce-a-tocher-420b282a_remembering-the-fallen-on-norways-national-activity-7461724235137282048-tun-?utm_source=social_share_send&utm_medium=member_desktop_web&rcm=ACoAAAY3vlgBld9_Gb4MmLvp_Q_m1aqkmTkLVa8Y)

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## From the Recent Birmingham Branch AGM

Eamon Smyth receiving the 'Bunny Brown Memorial Trophy' from Chairman Tom Smth for his outstanding work in the organising of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Cromwell Lock disaster in September 2025.



Steve Brown presenting an AEA Plaque to Craig the owner of the Venue where the Birmingham Branch has held its meetings, mostly, for 20 plus years. This was in recognition of the clubs continued support to the branch over this long period.



A Birmingham Branch group photo taken at the Branch AGM.

## Real Friends

From Roger Howles - Photos taken in 2007 showing the real friends you get when you serve in Airborne Forces

Friends who got together again for a sentimental journey to Canada where in the sixties they had taken part in the building of Webber Bridge over a tributary of the St Lawrence.

They are, left to right:

Malcolm Nash, Roger Howles, Alan Brough and Robert Dorrell





*Airborne Engineers Association*  
*Registered Charity Number 1009201*

*President: Lt Col David Crosbie RFE*  
*Chairman: Dave Leibrick – Tel: 07722 256742*  
*Email: [daveleibrick@outlook.com](mailto:daveleibrick@outlook.com)*  
*Secretary: Mike Robertson BEM – Tel: 07958 650592*  
*Email: [michaelf.robertson@outlook.com](mailto:michaelf.robertson@outlook.com)*

**MINUTES OF THE AIRBORNE ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION  
ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING  
29 APRIL 2026**

**1. OPENING**

- 1.1 The Chairman opened the meeting at 18.30 hrs
- 1.2 Formal apologies were received from the following: John Askey, John Jinks, Baz Basset & Steve Brown.
- 1.3 Members attending at the start were; Dave Leibrick, Mike Robertson, Steve Wallis (part), Jon Nichols (part) Steve (Billy) Morris, John Lee, Paul Moore, Tim Van der Kraan, Phil Taylor, Dave Pace, (Capt) Marc Dorkings, Bill Pagan. Gil Nicol. Craig Gadd.
- 1.4 The Chairman led the minute silence in memory of fallen comrades.
- 1.5 Ahead of the meeting Steve Wallis requested that he presents his agenda item early in the meeting due to have to leave after 40 minutes or so. (The reordering of the agenda is reflected in these minutes).

**2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

- 2.1 The minutes of previous AGM meeting have been produced, circulated, and included on the website.
- 2.2 There were no comments from the floor, so the Chairman asked for a proposer and seconder that the minutes as recorded be accepted.

Proposer: Paul Moore      Seconder: John Lee      Vote: Carried

**3. AGM and John Rock Dinner update**

Steve Wallis

- 3.1 We are in a good position in terms of organising the AGM which Steve is organising with Dave Raes.
- 3.2 Guests so far include; Peter Wall, Ken Kirk, Alistair Dickenson +1 (President of the REA) and Al Murrey (yet to confirmed). John Clark and Ian McGill have also been invited. 120 places were originally requested. 107 confirmed seats are already confirmed and its only April. Consequently, Steve will be contacting the venue to increase the required seats to 150.
- 3.3 Deposit to the venue has been paid. Received £3000.00 from central funds. Have £7186.00 currently in bank towards the dinner.
- 3.4 60 rooms were originally requested, of which nearly all have been booked. Consequently, Steve will be requesting a further 10 rooms if still available. Some people are attending but not staying at the hotel.
- 3.5 Income and outgoing accounts/balance sheet are being maintained. It is anticipated that £600+ will be available to send back to AEA accounts or a nominated charity.

**3.6** The Regimental CO and RSM are not available due to operational commitments- delegates will be nominated by the Regt closer to the time. Both will most likely stay for 2 nights and attend the AGM on the Saturday morning.

Steve stated that many people who normally attend, still have not booked. MJR stated that he would post a reminder on the 9 Sqn WhatsApp group.

**3.7** Table plans being developed and guest are being spread out across the tables.

#### **4. REMEMBRANCE PARADE ARRANGEMENTS**

Steve Wallis

**4.1** Steve stated that 42 places asked for from the RBL, the actual number to be confirmed in early June. Nomination requests will be sent out in the usual way in due course.

**4.2** Plan is to keep the AEA allocation separate from that of the REA.

#### **5.0 ELECTION OF OFFICERS & PRESIDENT**

**5.1** Journal support is required but not forthcoming from member despite several requests.

Dave Pace clarified that he is happy to produce the document. However, what is required is a journal "reporter" to gather all the articles, rather than an editor.

**5.2** Discussion explored how we can best attract the right person. It was suggested that each branch nominate a branch representative to gather this at branch level and feed it into Dave P. In the meantime, Dave pace will continue to do what he is doing

**5.3** Also suggested and agreed that "Journal Articles" be included as an agenda item at branch meetings.

**5.4** Dave Leibrick agreed to put out some comms on this to attract a willing "Reporter" volunteer.

#### **6. REVISION TO THE CONSTITUTION**

**6.1** Archivist draft policy document has been revised put up on the website for comments and approval at the AGM in October. A copy is attached to these minutes

#### **7. TREASURERS REPORT, FINANCE & FUNDING**

**7.1** The associations treasurer (Capt) Marc Dorkings presented the summary treasures report as attached to these minutes.

The National Branch has net working capital of £7,627.66 Marc advised that some of this cash can be used for the AGM Proposer: Jon Nichols Seconder: Tim Van Der Kraan Vote: Carried

**7.2** Applications for Funding There were a number of applications for funding as follows;

**7.2.1** A Regimental Cocktail party is being held in Woodbridge in June (date TBC) invitation will be sent out to committee members in due course. Marc Dorkings proposed that £500.00 be made available to cover the cost of those AEA members attending. This was agreed. It was suggested that invitations should be extended to other members rather than just AEA Committee members. Marc agreed to try and secure 15 places so that invites can be extended to other AEA members.

Although Marc as treasure has the authority to approve spend for certain amounts he advised that this be voted on in the usual way.

Proposer: Dave Leibrick Seconder: Jon Nichols Vote: Carried

(post meeting note: Due to operational reasons this event has now been cancelled)

**7.2.2** Steve Morris requested that £100.00 be approved to cover the cost of the Fergal Semple and crazy golf prizes.

Proposer: Mike Robertson Seconder: Craig Gadd Vote: Carried

**7.2.3** Paul Moore requested that a sum be approved to support the SAMA Ride of Respect. This was unanimously supported by the committee. Marc stated that there may be legal issues on where a charity donating to another charity and will check. Notwithstanding this, Phil suggested £300.00 and suggested that the REA be asked to match it. The Committee agreed to this proposal.

**7.2.4** Paul Moore and Phil Taylor also suggested that a sum of money be approved for a contribution to the transport cost the 2027 trip to Arnhem. In the Yorkshire Branch will be the lead in organising the trip on behalf of the association. However, 299 Branch will also be organising a trip. After a brief discussion it was suggested and agreed that sums not exceeding £500.00 be approved for each organised trip (£500.00 for the Yorkshire and Lancashire Branch and another £500.00 for the 299 Branch).

Proposer: Paul Moore Seconder: Gil Nicol Vote: Carried

It was emphasised that both organised trips will be open to all associated members. Admin instruction will be produced and distributed closer to the time.

**7.2.5** Craig Gadd asked about the associations position on financial donations for welfare issues. Marc Dorkings advised that there are provisions in the REA funds for this and application should be made to the REA. Information in making such applications is on the REA website. Phil advised that a SSAFA case worker report will be required. Paul Moore is the point of contact for advice on Welfare and SSAFA matter as the association Welfare Liaison Officer. Marc Dorkings agreed to discuss this with the REA and clarify who the main contact is within the REA and the process of applying for support.

**7.2.6** Steve Morris requested that a sum of £500.00 be approved for the 2Tp – 9 Parachute Sqn RE for the 45th Falklands reunion dinner and the Bush Hotel on 7th August 2025 to cover the room hire. Marc advised that sums can only be allocated for “meetings” and advised that this event be combined with the Aldershot Branch OGM. This was agreed.

Proposer: Steve Morris Seconder: Mike Robertson Vote: Carried

**7.2.7** Gil Nicol requested that a sum of £500.00 be approved for a bench and other items for the commemoration garden at Zetland Park. Marc Dorkings requested that Gil sends him a list of items’ and breakdown of costs so that it can be considered.

Proposer: Gil Nicol Seconder: Dave Leibrick Vote: Carried

## **8. ASSOCIATION SHOP REPORT**

Jon Nichols

**8.1** The associations shop report was prepared by Jon Nichols and outlined by the meeting secretary and is attached to these minutes.

**8.2** Jon outlined the fact that due to various personal circumstance that he has to stand down as the shop manager and will also be unable to store the stock as he has done in the past. Consequently, Jon gave formal notice of his resignation as shop manager with effect from the AGM in October. A replacement shop manager is not forthcoming despite repeated requests from members.

**8.2.1** We have the association shop and regimental PRI, now that the merger is complete and that the association is much closer to the Regiment do we need two shops? Various options were discussed including what to do with current stock.

**8.2.2** The committee agreed that Jon has done a sterling job with running the shop and its development including the online platform over the last 4 years.

**8.2.3** Marc Dorkings agreed to explore options with the Regimental PRI and the REA.

**8.2.4** Dave Pace agreed to run off the current stock holding which is of a value of around £3.5k.

**8.2.5** In the meantime, Dave Leibrick agreed to send out yet another request to attract a volunteer to help with the shop.

## **9. JOURNAL EDITORS & WEBMASTERS REPORT**

Dave Pace

**9.1** Dave Pace presented the Journal editors and webmaster report which is attached to these minutes.

**9.2** It was confirmed that the mid-year journal will be digital with a printed version in November. The mid-year will include the OGM minutes and the Nov version will be the printed version with the AGM minutes included.

**9.3** Dave is still digitising the journals.

**9.4** Members need to ensure that their contact details are up to date.

**9.5** Dave continues to update the website.

## **10. MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

**10.1** The national membership secretary Steve (Billy) Morris outlined the membership report which is attached to these minutes.

**10.2** Discussions were had on ideas to have members update their details and new members as a result of the merger include their details to ensure that they are kept up with association events and communications.

**10.3** Those that are REA members but not yet AEA, just need to go on to the REA website and select what branches they want to be affiliated to. Once they attend a branch meeting, they will receive their membership paraphernalia (car, badges, car sticker etc).

## **11. WELFARE LIAISONS OFFICERS REPORT**

**11.1** The Welfare Officers report was presented by Maj (Retd) Paul Moore.

There is only one case being supported by Paul and the moment. The individual and family have requested privacy during the difficult time. However, Paul has sent the family AEA contact details with reassurance that the association will be there if the family needs any further support in the future.

## **12. ARCHIVIST REPORT**

**12.1** Dave Leibrick outlined the main points included in the of the Archivist Policy Document that is currently in draft form. The policy document outlines the protocols and standard for archivists responsible for the acquisition, preservation, management, and accessibility of archival materials.

The purpose is to ensure the long-term protection and effective use of records of enduring value within the organisation.

## **13. PRESIDENTS AWARDS/COMMENDATIONS**

**13.1** Various nomination have been received and are being processed. The nominations need to be made in good time prior to the AGM and John Rock Dinner.

**13.2** John Lee agreed to continue to prepare and print off the certificates. However, they need to be signed by the president before framing.

## **14. BRANCH REPORTS**

**14.1** Branch reports were presented by respective branch representatives present, All submitted branch reports are attached to these minutes.

## **15. 23 PARACHUTE ENGINEER REGIMENT UPDATE**

**15.1** The Regimental update was delivered by Marc Dorkings. The report is attached to these minutes.

## **16. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**16.1** There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

## **17. ITEMS FROM MEMBERS**

**17.1** Dave Pace suggested a feature on the Regimental and the individual Squadrons in the November journal that includes the respective squadrons history. Marc Dorkings will provide the individual SSM's contact details and for them to provide contributions.

## **18. MAJOR REMEMBRANCE EVENTS AND SERVICES**

**18.1** The following major events have been attended by members of our Association since the AGM in Oct 2025 (The look back):

- National Service of Remembrance at the Cenotaph Sunday 11th November 2025

**18.2** The following major events (Look Forward) will be attended by members of our Association between now and the AGM in October.

- Squadron Falklands wreath laying at Aldershot Military Cemetery – Saturday 13th June meeting at 10.30hrs.
- Hardwick Hall – Saturday 9th May.
- Double Hills – Sunday 6th Sept.
- Arnhem Anniversary Commemorations – 17th-20th Sept.
- Cromwell Lock – Saturday 28th Sept.
- 1st Para Sqn Remembrance Service – Donington – 27th Sept
- Airborne Riders/ride of respect/Falklands 6-7 June
- Normandy Remembrance trip – 5th June

## **19 ANY OTHER BUSINESS AT NATIONAL LEVEL**

None

## **20. NATIONAL PRESIDENTS' POINTS**

**20.1** Phil mentioned that Paul Moore has established a Social Branch in Durham.

## **21. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting is the AGM at 10.00 on 10<sup>th</sup> October in Nottingham

## **22. CHAIRMANS' CLOSING REMARKS**

**22.1** The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the OGM and for their participation and looked forward to seeing everyone at the AGM in October.

**22.2** The Chairman closed the meeting at 20.50

## Appendices to OGM Minutes

### Financial Report

Airborne Engineers Association National Branch Financial Report as @ 29 Apr 2026

Date: 29 April 2026

- Income: £365.00 (Kind donation from Stumpy Campbell's funeral by his daughter-in-law)  
o £174.40 (From closure of AEA main account Bob Matthews)
- Expenditure: £45.50 (Flowers for Stumpy Campbells funeral)
- Cash at Bank: £7,627.66
- Debtors/Creditors: Nil
- Net Working Capital: £7,627.66



New Soldo Bank cards in the post. App works fine and virtual card is already active making payments a lot easier.

Best regards

National Branch Treasurer

Marc Dorkings

## 23 Parachute Engineer Regiment Update

 <b>23 Parachute Engineer Regiment</b> <b>Unit Update 2026</b> 			
<p><b>12 Para HQ &amp; Sp Sqn</b></p> <p>Ex <b>SAILFISH</b>, Belize – Assistance to 9 Para Engr Sqn.                      Ex <b>SAILFISH DIVE</b>, Belize – proof of concept of diving in austere environs.                      Ex <b>MAYAN WARRIOR</b>, Belize – Recce Tp Engr Recce/Recce Strike support to 3 PARA BG.                      Ex <b>HARAKA STORM</b>, Kenya – Support to 70 Sqn.                      Ex <b>EAGLE SCOUT</b>, UK – Recce Tp annual recce cadre.                      Ex <b>EAGLE BUILD</b>, UK – Support to Fd Sqns .                      Ex <b>EAGLE BUILD DIVE</b>, UK – fast water diving exercise.                      Ex <b>SAXON SURVEILLANCE</b>, UK – Engr Recce exercise and drone CONEMP dev.</p>	<p><b>9 Para Sqn</b></p> <p>Ex <b>SAILFISH</b>, Belize – Construction tasking, constructing a concrete pad and a Hanger.                      Ex <b>DAKOTA WALK</b>, OTA – TL-B with emphasis on mental endurance and navigation. Inc 20 miler.                      Ex <b>EAGLE BUILD</b>, WTA – Build up training focusing on combat Engineering.  <b>US Best Sapper</b></p>	<p><b>51 Para Sqn</b></p> <p>Ex <b>BLUE MAKITA</b>, 2 PARA, Cbt Engr Sp in SENTA.  <b>AQUILA COMBAT</b>, BCS TL-C in SENTA.  <b>ALPINE SAPPER</b>, <b>NORDIC SAPPER</b>.  <b>AQUILA CRAWL</b>, TL-A ex in Woodbridge Station.                      Ex <b>ORION</b>, 2 PARA, TL-E ex in France.                      Op L, Activated @R in support of Op L. Currently maintaining R1(24).                      TLZ - WB AF TLZ Constr.                      Ex <b>EAGLE BUILD</b>, WB AF/WRTA –Special to Arm Trg, Cbt Engineering.                      Ex <b>EAGLE BATTLE</b>, LFTT – Training on Live Firing to ensure readiness.</p>	<p><b>70 Gurkha Para Engr Sqn</b></p> <p>Ex <b>HARAKHA STORM</b>, BATUK – TL-F with 1 RGR BG. Achieving validation prior to taking over AMBG readiness.                      Ex <b>KHUKURI SURVIVE</b>, multiple iterations building 'Triple E' underground bunker                      Ex <b>DARIOLO KHUKURI</b>, STENTA – TL-B.                      Ex <b>BARUDKO DHAMAKA SPTA</b> –DEMS Exercise.  <b>Cambrian Patrol</b> – 70 Sqn                      Achieved Gold. A first for 23 Para Engr Regt.</p>
<p><b>RHQ</b></p> <p>Success at Corps Boxing Championships – 2 Victories from 23 SP.                      Apr 26 – Exercise Eagles Build, Regimental Exercise in Weymouth                      P Coy passes so far in 2026 = Over the last three UCC and AAPPS courses, 57 SP started and 37 passed, achieving a 65% pass rate—the highest in 16X.                       Deployed elements of the JFEG to Japan, Italy, Finland, US, France.</p>		<p><b>Looking Forward</b></p> <p>7 June 26 – Regimental Section Comps                      25 July 26 Regimental Reunion – Open to all that have served within 23 PER/9 Para Sqn.                      Handover of AMBG1 from 51 Para Sqn to 70 Gurkha Para Sqn.                      Aug 26 - CO (Lt Col Dave Crosbie) handover to Lt Col Rob Sharrock.                      Oct 26 – Ex RHINO TITAN, Divisional Level Exercise in Germany.</p>	

## Membership Report for OGM 2026

Date: 29 April 2026

Since the merger it has become very hard to keep up to date with membership numbers and branch totals. I am finding when new and current members join through the REA web page, they are not requesting a branch to join/be affiliated too, and this in turn is causing members being put in the central branch AEA.

We have the core of members who we know are already in branches but are not on the new system (On the REA database and then in-turn being put into the AEA branch).

This has also highlighted the fact that we now are not getting any joining fees the £25 life membership that included the lapel badge, membership card, and car window sticker. We do have an excellent data base that Dave Pace (Web master) has put together and we are managing.

We are in the process of contacting Ann Richardson at the REA who deals with the national membership process. The plan is to get her to allocate via the members home address the nearest branch, this will trigger the branch secretary to reach out and hopefully get them involved in the branch activities. There are however large numbers of the current AEA membership who still must visit the REA website and join through the days' pay scheme. (it is free you have already paid years ago) to get their plastic ID card.

Action branch secretaries: -I request all branch secretaries reach out at the next branch meeting to get all members who have not entered their details on the REA database to do so asap. This will in-turn enable us to maintain up to date records. Below are current numbers: · Total REA members 9807 · Total AEA members 313 all branches · Those that joined REA for 1st time 116 (but were already AEA members) · Total numbers of AEA members who we had current up to date information pre- merger 561 · Number not on Ann's AEA branch list 133 · Total records in Dave Paces Email address worksheet 321 (This is the current email contact and how we get the electronic journal out to you and correspondence)

Steve (Billy) Morris  
Membership Secretary

## Airborne Engineers Association Archivist Policy Document Guidelines and Procedures for the Management of Archival Materials

The aim –

To record and collate, to arrange storage and appropriate dissemination of all items submitted to the Association which relate either to the history of the association or to the history of Airborne units of the Royal Engineers.

To make available to those engaged in historical research any relevant documents held by the association and to control such access to avoid loss.

To inform the AGM of donations to the association during the previous year.

To inform members of the history of the association and of the operations of airborne units of the corps via articles in the Journal and other displays which, from time to time are deemed to be appropriate.

In the event of the demise of the Association, to arrange for the safe depositing of all the association's historical documents with an appropriate museum or library as decided by the Executive Committee.

The Archivist Member may recruit a deputy who will share the burden of recording and collating the history of the association and of Airborne Engineers. If no volunteer offers their service the Archivist or assistant does not have to be a member of the AEA

### 1. Introduction

This policy document outlines the protocols and standard for archivists responsible for the acquisition, preservation, management, and accessibility of archival materials. The purpose is to ensure the long-term protection and effective use of records of enduring value within the organisation.

The AEA has many documents which have been offered to members for storage and documentation. For some years Fred Gray gave willingly of his time to store and record these items. Prior to 9 Parachute Squadron moving to Rock Barracks and becoming part of 23 Air Assault Regt, memorabilia and history documents were spread out and maintained by veterans. The Regt has some memorabilia, Diaries, Photographic records various trophies and presentations etc. These are recorded by the Regt and sub units and are not currently dealt with by this document. The MOD has regulations regards recording, gifts etc. This may well be amended in the near future. However, primarily this document deals with material that has been offered up and maintained by volunteers of the AEA pre amalgamation.

It was decided at the Oct 2021 AGM that these records and memorabilia be secured and maintained in the RE Museum. Collection hand over etc was arranged by Fred Gray, Baz Bassett and the RE Museum. Key reasons were:

- Security storage
- Access to documents by serving and retired
- Research by other museums and sources
- Digitisation programme
- Control of loaning the material.
- Point of contact at the RE Museum (Currently Nick Gibson and Baz Bassett)

Arrangements were therefore made and these documents are now held at the RE Museum

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff involved in the handling, processing, and management of archival records, whether in physical or digital form. It covers the entire lifecycle of archival materials, from acquisition to eventual disposal or permanent retention.

### 3. Acquisition and Appraisal

- All records considered for inclusion in the archive must be appraised based on their historical, administrative, legal, or cultural significance.
- Items can be offered up to the AEA for inclusion, but initial requests should go via the Secretary AEA and the Archivist for assessment
- Archivists will follow established selection criteria to determine which materials are to be preserved.
- Criteria may cover these points, is it:
  - Interesting to the AEA
  - Is it replicated
  - Documents, condition, permission to hold, historical
  - Size and maintenance
  - Is for the RE Museum or Regt
  - Historical o Value, Insurance, delivery collection costs
  - Authority or permission to hold items
- Donors and creators of records must be informed of the terms and conditions of transfer or deposit
- Items that may be better placed with the 23 Parachute Engineer Regiment will be offered to the Adit 23 Parachute Engineer Regt for consideration.

### 4. Arrangement and Description

- The RE Museum is working with the Archivist so that records will be arranged in accordance with their provenance and original order, where possible.
- Comprehensive cataloguing and description will be undertaken to facilitate access and retrieval.
- Descriptive standards such as ISAD(G) if available may be adhered to for consistency and clarity. This format may be accessible from the RE Museum
- Further recording may be necessary, if and when digitised.

### 5. Preservation and Conservation

- Archivists are responsible for ensuring suitable environmental conditions for storage, including temperature, humidity, and security controls.
- Regular inspections and conservation measures will be implemented to prevent deterioration.
- It is hoped that the archivist and assistant archivist attend the RE Museum for an annual visit.
- Digitisation may be undertaken to enhance access and reduce handling of fragile originals.

### 6. Access and Use

- Access to archival materials can be arranged via the RE Museum curator and representatives via organisational policies, and donor agreements.
- Researchers must adhere to reading room rules and observe the proper handling of materials.
- Requests for copies or publication must be reviewed and authorised by the archivist. Any major items or those requiring removal is to be cleared by the Executive cttee.

### 7. Data Protection and Confidentiality

- Personal and sensitive information contained in archival records must be managed in accordance with data protection legislation.
- Access to restricted materials will be controlled and recorded.

## 8. Training and Professional Development

- Archivists are expected to maintain up-to-date knowledge of best practices and legal requirements through ongoing training and professional development. With the lack of experience, guidance and support will be sought by the RE Museum staff.
- Participation in professional networks and conferences is encouraged.
- There is already a good link with FORM (Friend of the RE Museum) and REHS the RE Historical Society.

## 9. Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed biennially by the archivist or as required to reflect changes in legislation, standards, or organisational practices.

## 10. Contact

For further information regarding this policy or the management of archival materials, please contact either the Archivist (currently Baz Bassett) [mrb375@gmail.com](mailto:mrb375@gmail.com) or the secretary AEA

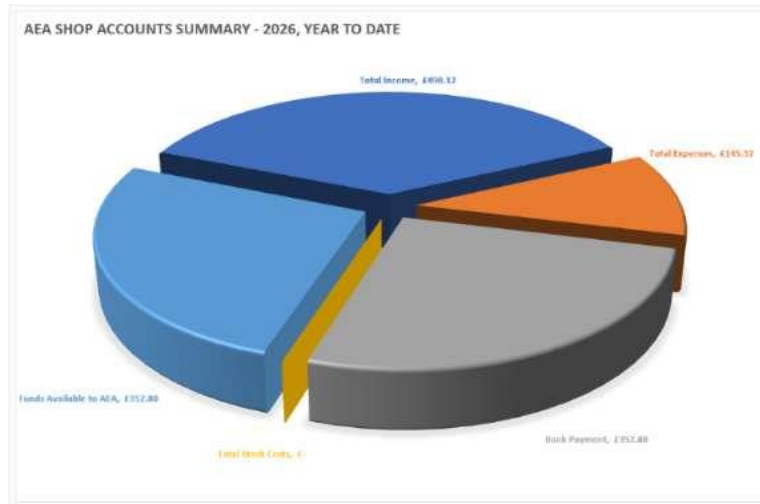
M R Bassett BEM (Lt Col Retd)  
Archivist AEA

Shop Report for 2026 OGM

Date: 29 April 2026

Following closure of the AEA bank account, payments from the AEA Shop have not been made. Is there an update on the bank account these payments should be made to?

AEA Shop



Q1 2026 Sales

Number of sales transactions – 24

Total Income - £498.12

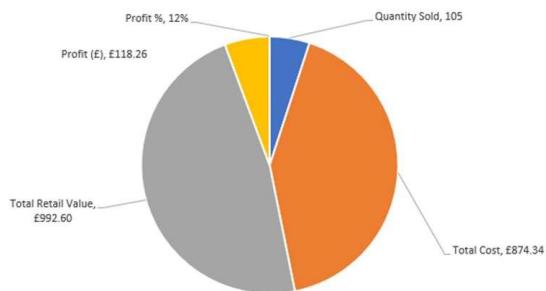
Total Expenses - £145.32

Quarterly Payment to AEA Account – 352.80

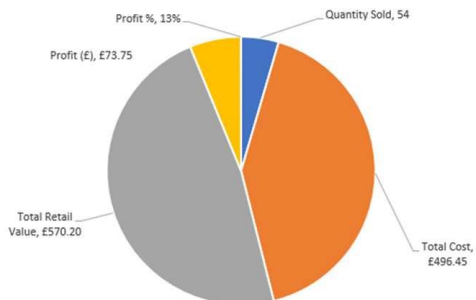
PRI Shop

Q1 2026 Sales

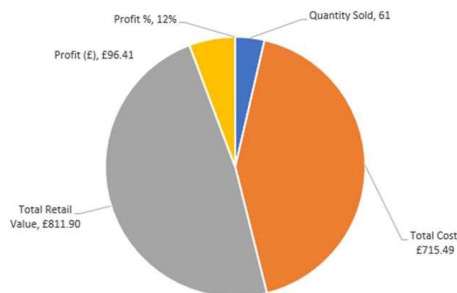
Jan Sales & Profit



Feb Sales & Profit



Mar Sales & Profit



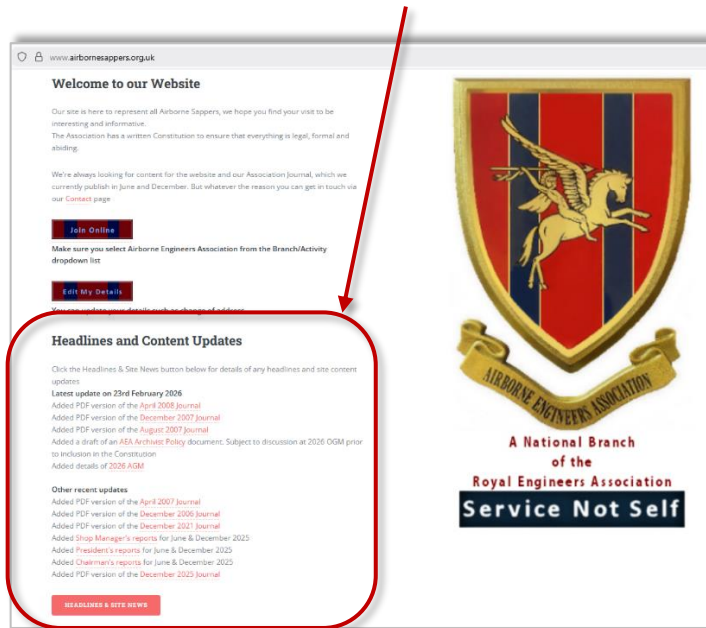
Since startup in October 2025:

110 orders were collected from the PRI shop, totalling £2,450.70

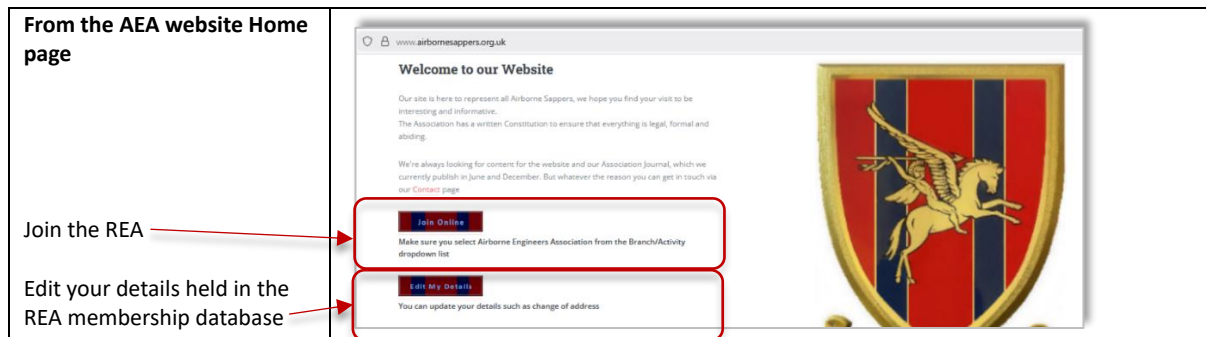
42 orders were shipped from the PRI shop totalling £1,217.60. Including three orders sent to Jersey, Australia and Canada

## AEA Web Site

- The AEA website still has some content to be added. Ongoing updates are planned for the photo albums and Roll of Honour pages; however, I'm concentrating at the moment on digitising printed versions of the Journal into PDF files.
- The 23 Para Engr Regt PRI Shop has been live for a few months now and is doing well, that's the place to visit if you're looking for Squadron specific T Shirts, Sweatshirts etc. <https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/pri/>
- The site Home page includes a date for the latest content updates and a button to visit the "Headlines & Site News" page for a more detailed list of updates, always a good starting point when you visit the site.



## Joining the Airborne Engineers Association (A National Branch of the Royal Engineers Association) and updating your contact details



**NOTE:** Through this "Join Online" process you're technically joining the REA and will receive a membership card and lapel badge, however, you are specifying you want to join the AEA (A National Branch of the REA)

As ever all feedback is welcome, as is any content we can add to the site.

AEA Website	<a href="https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/">https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/</a>
	or
	<a href="https://www.aea.org.uk/">https://www.aea.org.uk/</a>
AEA Shop	<a href="https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/shop/">https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/shop/</a>
PRI Shop	<a href="https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/pri/">https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/pri/</a>

## AEA Journal

- From the AEA website:  
*"For many years, the Journal has been a great source of information and a means to keep in touch, as well as providing an extensive archive of what we've been up to. Let's keep it going."*
- Several older printed editions of the Journal have recently been digitised into PDF files and there are many others already digitised; however, this work is ongoing. You can view available PDF versions of the Journal via this link <https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/journal/journalindex.html> where you see a PDF icon on the Journal Index page that issue has been digitised.

### **We are planning to send at least some future Journal issues in printed format!**

**With that in mind we would like to ensure we have your correct postal address on file. Please get in touch as follows, in this case particularly for your postal address but updating your email address is important too.**

Contact	Dave Pace, AEA Webmaster
Phone	07977 282620
Email	<a href="mailto:contactaeawebmaster@gmail.com">contactaeawebmaster@gmail.com</a>
Post	169 College Road, Deal, Kent, CT14 6BX

Or update your details via the "Edit My Details" button on the AEA site Home page

Please also use Dave Pace's contact details to send in or contact us about any articles or other content for inclusion in the Journal and website

## 299 Association Branch Report for OGM

29 April 2026

Remembrance parade in Hull a great turn out then onwards to our meeting place the Minerva for refreshments. 3 of us attend the National event in London also.

No meeting in December and January. First meeting of the was February.

We have no trip planned this year as yet and unlikely to but looking at Normandy next year.

This Friday is an our AGM and Chris Shillito has made it common knowledge that he will be no longer standing as Chairman after 13 yrs at the helm.

A couple of welfare issues one of our members wives reached out and asks if we can support them financially for a recliner chair as he is now in a home suffering with dementia and another member asked for support towards his mobility scooter which we managed to sort out.

NFR

Kind Regards,

Craig Gadd

Vice chairman 299 Association RE

## Aldershot Branch Report for OGM 2026

Date: 29 April 2026

The branch this year has had its Spring Lunch get-together held at the Bush Hotel Farnham in February an excellent 3 course meal and the usual team games organised by Billy Morris. We raised £262 for branch funds in the member's raffle. A visit to the Royal Hospital Chelsea in April was undertaken, with excellent weather, coupled with London tube disruptions could not stop the 15 branch members getting to the RV. We were hosted by in pensioners Tony Manley and Paul Sinclair; Bob Prosser also joined us during the day. After the very informative tour with went to the club for a very nice curry lunch washed down with a few beers. The branch as regular meetings, the next one being on Sunday 19th July 26.

Steve (Billy) Morris

## Wales and West Branch update. OGM 2026

1. Branch is now a Social Branch

2. Branch Members – 77 on the books. a. Many of those shown on the database do not respond to emails, letters or attend meetings (No change from Last Year). From this year, anyone who has not paid subs will not receive any future contact from the branch b. 3 new members recently through recruitment event

3. Meetings: a. Meetings are taking place on a quarterly basis subject to availability b. The last meeting was held on 28 March with 8 in attendance c. The next meeting is planned for June 2026. d. Future meetings are planned further afield

4. Charity: a. The current branch charity is the Herefordshire Veterans support Centre. b. The branch has a whip round after each meeting which they use to buy refreshments for veterans who visit the centre.

5. Welfare: a. Pat Neal continues to receive treatment for his cancer. H has now been officially signed off by the NHS

6. AGM:

a. Several Members from the branch will be attending the AGM in Nottingham

## Yorkshire & Lancashire Branch for OGM 2026

Date: 29 April 2026

1. Number of Active Members The branch has 83 members on the email distribution list, with 35 registered on the REA system. Approximately 20 members are considered active, defined as those who have responded to branch emails or attended at least one event within the past year.

2. Amount Available in Branch Fund £3,800.87

3. Number of Meetings Held per Year Four meetings are held annually, typically in March, June, September, and November.

4. Significant Branch Event of the Year A New Branch Name Dinner Night was held on 13 February. This event was introduced in place of the traditional December Christmas function, which was often affected by a congested calendar of competing events.

5. Point of Interest / Useful Practice Moving the primary social event from December to February has proven beneficial, avoiding scheduling conflicts and significantly improving attendance. As part of a recruiting and retention initiative we will be presenting those that attend meetings a Blue Airborne Tee shirt branded with Yorkshire and Lancashire AEA. In process of creating a WhatsApp group for branch admin to see if that engages more members.

Lt Col (Retd) Phil Taylor  
AEA National Branch of REA  
Vice President/ Deputy Group Director  
Yorkshire and Lancashire Branch Chairmen/Secretary.

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## AEA/REA Membership

Register online or update your details:

<https://www.reahq.org.uk/membership/>

or from the AEA website at:

<https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/>

When registering for the first time please select your preferred geographic Branch, either

- AEA 299 Association
- AEA Aldershot Branch
- AEA Birmingham Branch
- AEA Scotland Branch
- AEA Yorkshire & Lancashire Branch
- AEA Chatham Social Branch
- AEA East Midlands Social Branch
- AEA Wales & West Social Branch
- AEA Woodbridge Social Branch
- AEA Central Admin Branch (See note below)

**NOTE:** The Central Admin Branch exists to ensure all members who, for whatever reason, do not want to be or cannot be affiliated to a geographic Branch. Its aim is to ensure members not affiliated to a geographic Branch receive all important communications such as the Journal

Discussions on this topic are ongoing, particularly with regard to the Central Admin Branch but the principle will remain the same. Our aim is to get as many members as possible affiliated with a geographic Branch or the Central Admin Branch

**If you know of anyone who is not receiving the Journal or other communications but is eligible to get them then let us know. Similarly, if you have any questions or concerns regarding registration please [get in touch with us](#)**

## Visit our Online Shops

### AEA Shop

<https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/shop/>

Baseball Caps and Beanies	 Scan for AEA Shop	<b>Clothing</b> T Shirts – Polo Shirts - Sweatshirts – Rugby Shirts - Running Vests - Jumpers
Ties – Bow Ties – Tie Clips – Lapel Badges - Cufflinks		<b>Micellaneous Items</b> Association Car Sticker – Association Plaque – Pegasus Lapel Brooch
Fleece and Softshell Jackets		<b>Airborne Sappers Mugs</b> Available in 444ml and 325ml
<b>We'd Like Your Feedback</b> Let us know what you think of our products and service by leaving a review		

### 23 Parachute Engineer Regiment PRI Shop

<https://www.airbornesappers.org.uk/pri/>

<b>Welcome to our new online shop</b>		
Uniform Badges & Blazer Badges	 Scan for PRI Shop	<b>Clothing</b> Jumpers – Sweatshirts – Hoodies – T Shirts – Polo Shirts – PT Kit
<b>Micellaneous Items</b> Key Rings – Notebooks – Decals		Unit Plaques
Ties – Tie Pins – Bow Ties		<b>We'd Like Your Feedback</b> Let us know what you think of our products and service by leaving a review

Facebook - Shop Discussion Group - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2016356088754648>

From the Editor

*Thank you to everyone who contributed to this  
edition of the Journal.*

*Your input is most welcome and much appreciated,  
its existence depends on your input*

The next edition is scheduled for publication  
in November 2026

Deadline for receipt of content is 15<sup>th</sup>  
November

Let's keep the Journal going from strength to  
strength



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Royal Engineers Association

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