

**Minutes of Operation Crown Association Meeting**  
**12noon 6<sup>th</sup> March 2011**  
**National Arboretum Memorial, Lichfield**

The Chairman, Mike Stanbridge, opened the meeting at 12.00 noon and welcomed everyone, thanking them all for attending the meeting. He then thanked John Hamnett and Carlton "Buck" Brown for their joint efforts in maintaining the Associations website and chat forum as well as organising the last UK reunion and the successful trip to Thailand. Concerning the future development of the Association, for which there had been some proposals, his opinion was that there was very little benefit in having a more formal structure possibly involving more cost, time and effort. However, he was concerned that there had been considerable personal expenditure to date by John and Carlton amounting to £176.00p and £114.00p respectively in order to maintain the Associations activities and sought member's approval to reimburse them. The proposal was passed and accepted.

Mike then handed over to Carlton "Buck" Brown the Secretary/Treasurer to take the meeting through the following agenda.

1. Response to questionnaires
2. Presentation of Accounts
3. Provisional arrangement for next reunion in Lichfield Sep 2011
4. Provisional itinerary for Thailand trip Nov 2011
5. Vote on future structure of Association
6. Election of Officers
7. AOB

**Item 1 - Questionnaires**

Carlton thanked everyone for coming and said there would be a break in the meeting at 1.00pm for lunch because of the number of items to be discussed. The results of the questionnaires were then announced. In summary, 94 questionnaires was sent out via email and 47 returned their answers the answers representing a 50% response.

Q1: Proposal for a more formal Association structure: 33% Yes and 17% No. But of total questionnaires sent out these figures equate to 16% in favour and 9% against.

Q2: Annual or one-off subscription: 31% yes for annual and 19% for one-off payment. As a percentage of the total asked these figures equate to 15% and 10% respectively.

Q3: Acceptable Fees: 40% suggested £5 to £10 and 10% suggested £5. As overall percentages these equate to 20% and 5% respectively.

Q4: Future Committee Role in Association: 29 unable to and 18 were willing.

Q5: Attendance at Sep 2011 Lichfield Reunion: 38 positive if they could bring their partner and 9 unable to attend.

Q6: Thailand trip Nov 2011: 24 negatives and 23 positives if they could bring their partners.

In conclusion, Carlton summed up by saying that the figures were inconclusive with regard to a more formal structure to the Association but very positive with regard to adequate people wishing to take on an active role as well as attending the two planned reunions.

**Item 2 - Accounts**

Whilst the accounts for the past 2 years had been audited it was explained that there was no legal requirement because no income was generated other than that paid in by members to pay for events and purchases. The accounts are 'open book' to members to see invoices, proof of payment, bank statements etc whenever members wish.

From the Auditors report, the First Association Reunion in 2009 went, technically, into the red by £484.48 but this was because the Op Crown ties and the donation cheque for £1200.00p from the "Not Forgotten Association" had not appeared on the Bank Statement. When the figures did appear at EoY there was a £670.52 credit balance. The bank statement balance is currently £982.92 in credit due, in part, not only to the sale of Operation Crown ties (there are still 10 to sell) but the sale of photo CD's of the first reunion when the group met with the Mayor of Salisbury for a civic reception. Account entries still to be made are £70.50p for NMA refreshments and £30.00p for Auditors fees. With this reduction of £100.50p the current balance is £882.42p.

#### **Item 4 – Next Reunion Sep 2011**

The dates for the reunion in Lichfield are confirmed for 9 - 11 September 2011 inclusive, starting at 4.00pm, meeting up at the Cathedral Lodge Hotel. This will be followed by a Carvery at the Hotel on that evening.

The plan to visit Whittington Barracks, home of the Staffordshire Regiment museum and the RAMC Training Centre has had to be cancelled as the RAMC facility is not due to open for another 2 years and the museum is closed. However, there are many other attractions in Lichfield with the Cathedral and a museum in memory of Samuel Johnson who was born there. There is also a Saturday market day.

A Reunion dinner will take place in the evening at the Alrewas RBL, which is close to the National Arboretum Memorial for which transport is to be provided.

Costs for the weekend, not including hotel accommodation, are £29/pp and £42 if a tumbler, glass and name badge are required. At present over 60 have indicated a wish to attend they will be emailed nearer the time with contact details of the hotel and the B&B rates.

#### **Item 5 – Thai Trip Nov 2011**

The provisional dates for the trip are the 2-18 Nov 2011 and 40 have expressed an interest. Based on last years feedback some changes to the itinerary are proposed, namely, less time in Bangkok, more time at Kanchanaburi and a few days by the sea.

Hence, the proposed itinerary is:

- 2 Nov Assemble Heathrow and fly to Bangkok
- 3-4 Nov Bangkok Hotel
- 5-7 Nov Kanchanaburi and visit "Bridge on the River Kwai"
- 8-13 Nov Ubon with Remembrance Parade on the 11<sup>th</sup> and visit the airfield
- 14-17 Nov Dolphin Bay Resort at Hua Hin
- 18 Nov Bangkok for flight back to UK

The estimated cost is £1200pp with decisions yet to be made on mode of transport Kanchanaburi - Ubon and Ubon - Hua Hin but details will be emailed to those interested in due course.

#### **Item 6 – Association Structure**

After some discussion it was proposed by **Peter Limb RE** and seconded by **Ray Hough RE** that the Association should remain much the same though it should have a more formal internal structure for the following reasons:

- The Association would only get smaller over time as members got older
- The cost in financial terms needed to run the Association could not be justified
- With family and other commitments it would be difficult to find sufficient members willing to devote their time in running the Association

The motion was carried.

With regard to membership of the Association, Carlton Brown felt that a one-off subscription was more appropriate rather than the time and effort in collecting annual fees. The manufacture of a lapel badge had also been investigated and as a result **John Lloyd REME** seconded by **Alan Myers ACC** proposed that membership should be a one-off fee of £10.00p for which members would receive a lapel badge whilst at the same time make a small donation to the organisation of the Association.

The motion was carried.

#### **Item 7 – Election of Officers**

- The present Chairman Lt Col Mike Stanbridge said that as he was in better health he was willing to stand for a further year as Chairman. As a result **Mick Burgin RE** proposed Mike Stanbridge and **Neville Wareham RE** seconded should remain as Chairman. The motion was carried.
- The Chairman then proposed that both John Hamnett as webmaster and Carlton Brown as Secretary/Events Coordinator should continue for a further year in their present roles. It was seconded by **Mick Burgin RE**. The motion was carried.
- Carlton then asked for the following to agree to continue as unit representatives:
  - **Roger Andrews:** In a new role as Newsletter Editor. Scope yet to be discussed and agreed as to its format, frequency and distribution.
  - **John Lloyd:** REME Rep
  - **Alan Myers:** ACC rep
  - **John Knowles:** RAMC Rep
  - **Cliffe Watts BEM:** RAOC Rep
  - **George Smart:** RE RepAll have agreed to continue.
- **Mick Burgin RE** proposed that both John and Carlton be reimbursed fully for their expenditure of running the Association to date and this was seconded by **John Brown REME**. The motion was carried but both John and Carlton have since, very kindly, donated the money to the Association. It was agreed, however, that when necessary the Association should fund the purchase of a new Scanner for use by John.
- Future Expenses: Any future, reasonable, expenses incurred by Committee members should also be reimbursed subject to prior approval by the Chair on behalf of members. (This note inserted by Chairman post AGM)

#### **Item 8 - AOB**

- The meeting was informed that Mick Allen was in hospital seriously ill and that a card from Port Vale FC signed by its Chairman Bill Bratt would be circulated for all present to sign.
- A special mention and welcome for attending the meeting to Hilary Nash (Major Rtd) and ex 3 Tp Comd 59 Fd Sqn RE, Neville Wareham 59 Fd Sqn RE. Ian Clarke RAOC and Gordon King 34 Fd Sqn RE.
- Special thanks were given to:
  - **Noel Jackson** for the production of large printouts, not only of the Airfield as it is today but an aerial photo of Crown Camp
  - **John Lloyd** for his excellent report of the Thailand trip published in the “Craftsman” magazine.
- The Chairman then said he had written an article for the “Sapper” magazine on the formation and growth of the Association together with a report on Thailand trip in Nov last year. The article will, hopefully, be in the April edition.

- A design for a Commemorative Medal has been produced by Roger Andrews RE and this was displayed to all with a copy of the letter to the Medals Office at the MOD and their reply. The Chairman announced that he was in contact the Thai Embassy with the purpose of having the medal officially recognised and presented by the Thai Govt.
- There being no further business a further general meeting is planned for a date yet to be arranged in March 2012 and the meeting closed at 2.45pm.

Signed:

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M.J. Stanbridge  
OCA Chairman  
March 2011

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C. Brown  
OCA Hon Sec & Treasurer  
March 2011