



27/10/2017

Dear Members,

The Chairman has resigned issuing a statement to the effect that the Committee has undermined him in removing him from the accounting process. The Committee has in fact simply not included him in a change process as a result of months of the ex Chairman interfering in the Treasurer's handling of the accounts.

There are two sides to every story and this is our version of events:

- Three years ago Mike asked for someone to relieve him of the Treasurers duties as he was struggling with the dual role of Chairman and Treasurer. He explained his time was limited because he was also involved with other military organisations, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, lecturing at the local college and other military associations. Alan volunteered and since then his handling of the accounts has been without fault.
- HSBC (former OCA bankers) closed the local branch that Alan was using. Alan requested we change banks asking to use his local Lloyds bank. This was agreed by all and the change was made.
- Earlier this year, Alan requested that we change to on-line banking for convenience and again this was agreed by all. Alan made the change to online banking and the first transaction was to pay Award Productions Ltd their fee for the setting up of the Commemorative Medal. This was paid online by Alan with John in attendance. All Committee Members including Mike were informed by email within half an hour.
- There then followed an email exchange as to why Alan was able to make transactions without the approval of another signatory. Mike was dissatisfied with this and decided to unilaterally to freeze the account without the agreement of another account signatory. It is unacceptable to act in a unilateral manner when there is a Committee and understood process in place.
- Mike began discussions at his local Lloyds Winchester branch which has led to a lot of misinformation and/or misunderstanding. Mike had been informed that Lloyds bank did not provide dual-authorisation, online banking. Mike then stated that if it was within his power he would close down the Lloyds account and open another with different co-signatories. This is again unacceptable, unilateral action when there is a Committee and understood process in place.
- John and Alan went to the Lloyds Stoke-on-Trent branch where the account was originally opened to be informed that they did indeed operate a dual online banking authorisation system. It was at this point that a two mandate, two signatory, dual online bank account was arranged for the sake of clarity and simplicity.



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All the Committee were involved in any decisions concerning the actions of Alan and John. The Committee all communicated their feelings to Mike that Alan should be allowed to carry out his duties without hindrance. Mike's increasingly autocratic and dictatorial style during these discussions led to the Committee's decision not to include Mike on the new bank mandate.

The OCA bank account is now operating exactly as it did when we used a dual signatory, paper-cheque system with the exception that it now operates online in common with many much larger organisations. Mike is able to get account information via the Treasurer at any time within reason, again in common with many much larger organisations.

We are an informal Association, as voted for by the membership many years ago and as such we have no formal, recorded Association rules/practises. We therefore maintain an informal approach but also mimic some common business practices to maintain some order particularly where funds are concerned. It is our view that there is no one individual within the Committee or Chairman with sole responsibility for any part of our Association. This we suggest is too formal for our purposes and not in keeping with the spirit of our Association. As an Association of friends, family and former colleagues we all share a collective responsibility to serve and promote the Association for our mutual benefit.

We are sad that Mike has chosen this course of action and not waited until the 2018 AGM where we suspect that our Association will take an even more informal format. We have achieved many objectives in reuniting former colleagues and their families who served at Crown and Post Crown. We have celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Crown Field in Thailand with another tremendous 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Post Crown Celebration in the offing for 2018 again in Thailand. We have brought the Commemorative Medal into fruition with the assistance of Roger Andrews and despite the lack of assistance of the Authorities concerned. Mike and the Committee have all been active in achieving all of the Association Aims.

We hope this unhappy situation does not leave a bad taste in the mouth after our community came into being in July of 2007 and with all it's achievements along the way. Members are advised that this does not signal the end of the Association but merely a change in direction. We look forward to seeing everybody at our forthcoming events in Thailand and Annual Reunion in the UK next year.

Sincerely,

Neville Wareham, Noel Jackson, Alan Myers and John Hamnett