

Winter conference and AGM 29th January 2005.

No change in Area Committee following AGM

The Area Vice-chairman, Secretary and PRO were all returned unopposed for a further term of two years at the Area AGM at Atherton Branch on January 29th. A modest turnout of delegates representing 26 branches was given a warm welcome for their first visit to Atherton's new headquarters near the town centre.

The Treasurer reported a slight loss of income over the previous year, but area funds remain in a strong position.

VE and VJ 60th anniversary Commemoration date concern

Questions continue to be raised concerning the date chosen for the commemoration of VE and VJ days on July 10 in London. The Area President has continued to question the General Secretary why the Association was not consulted by the MOD regarding the timing of the commemoration. Several delegates made the point that the war in the Far East was still ongoing on this date. It was felt the date chosen was government led, in order to involve Members of Parliament before the House rises for the summer recess.

The Area committee urged the delegates to contact their local Council's to ascertain what they intended to do to mark the occasions. The Area Secretary reported that the major local authorities in the North -West had already been written to. Most have responded saying they have this subject in hand.

Royal Navy Presentation Team ignores local RNA branches during visit

Conference delegates learned that invitations to meet the RN Presentation team on it's recent visit to Stockport did not include the Hazel Grove and North Reddish Branches who both reside in the borough. Both the local RBL and White Ensign Association branches received invitations. Following representations to Headquarters by the Hazel Grove branch, the Area Secretary and the Area President, the position was rectified with the General Secretary sending to the RNPT a current Association yearbook listing all our UK branches. Whether this will resolve the matter is open to doubt, as the Area Secretary has since learnt that the Bury St Edmunds branch has found itself without an official invitation for the RNPT visit to the town in mid February.

Delegates question Association Greenwich Dinner costs

With no interest shown from those shipmates who attended conference on the subject of the Trafalgar Dinner planned for September, the National Council Member informed the delegates that despite efforts made on their behalf to drastically reduce the cost of the dinner, or possibly pay for it out of Association funds, had been turned down at the December meeting of Council. It was estimated that the cost of attending this event for a couple from the north-west would be in the region of £400.00.

Further aid from the Area arrives at the Harare Branch

The Area PRO reported that a parcel from the Area containing essential items of personal care items such as soap, toothpaste and similar items almost impossible to obtain in Zimbabwe, have been gratefully received by the Branch. They received an earlier parcel, containing Area RNA Ties donated by the area in late December, posted by the Bury branch.

Accommodation at a premium for National Conference

With the refurbishment of Ascot racecourse now underway, Royal Ascot week has been transferred to York during the same period as the Bridlington National Conference weekend. It is felt that many race-goers will make for the resorts of Scarborough and Bridlington during the same week, which could result in accommodation being difficult to obtain for RNA members. Several shipmates have already reported difficulties in booking hotel and guesthouse accommodation for the weekend. Intending delegates were urged to book early to avoid disappointment.

The next area conference will be held at the Norbreck Castle, Blackpool over the weekend of April 29th to the 2nd May 2005. This will incorporate the Area 10 Reunion.