

**MINUTES OF THE AUTUMN AREA CONFERENCE HELD AT  
THE BOLTON LABOUR CLUB  
ON OCTOBER 28<sup>th</sup> 2006**

The meeting commenced at 1400. The delegates were welcomed to conference by their hosts, at the Bolton branch. The Chairman asked the meeting to remember the following shipmates who had crossed the bar since the last meeting. S/ms Ray Woan & Roy Christopher (Leyland) S/m Bill Webb DSM (Chairman Liverpool Branch). Also Pat O'Donnell, Ernie Gerrard, Cyril Cooke. Iris Dodd. also from the Liverpool Branch. Elwyn Evans & Frank Pullin (Llandudno). S/m Ken Townson (Chairman, Macclesfield Branch). Joe Whittiker President, (North Manchester); and Tom Harris of the same branch. Norman Haywood, & Tony Parsons, (Oswestry). George Tucker (Skelmersdale). Leslie Pollard (Southport)

APOLOGIES were entered for; Beaumaris, Fleetwood, Llandudno Llangollen Macclesfield Peel Preston & Rhyl Branches

Having explained the rules of conference, the Chairman asked the delegates could the minutes of the Area conference which took place on July 29<sup>th</sup> 2006 be taken as read. This was agreed. Proposed by, S/m C Baker (Blackpool) and Seconded by S/m Mrs J Webber (Ellesmere Port)

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

The Secretary gave details of the following correspondence received during period July to October 2006 Rochdale branch suspended one of their members due to inappropriate behaviour at a branch meeting. As the person concerned failed to appear at a meeting called to enquire into the incident, they have had no alternative but to expel him from the branch. An appeal following this action has been lodged with Headquarters. It is now understood, this matter has been resolved without recourse to appeal between the Branch, Headquarters and the individual concerned. It is expected that the shipmate concerned will be admitted to the Headquarters roll.

The Chatham branch rededicated the 1917 Memorial to the 135 naval ratings killed in the bombing of Chatham Barracks during the First World War. The memorial was unveiled on the former parade ground in RNB on Sunday September 10<sup>th</sup> at 1100 There was a parade led by the band of the Royal Marine's (Plymouth) and the honour guard from HMS President. Platoons consisted of RN, RNR RNA RMA former RNVR Association of WRNS and Chatham based ship and Submarine Associations Branch and Area Standards attended.

The War Pensions Committee has vacancies for members to serve on their committee. The period of appointment is for three years commencing February 2007. S/m Thomas of this branch has indicated his interest in these appointments, but more applications from shipmates are welcome.

In July, I attended the Burscough Carnival which has been revived following the recent interest in the former Royal Naval Air Station, HMS Ringtail which was located nearby. Despite very poor weather on the day, we did attract several people to our smaller than usual publicity stand. We also managed to sign up one ex RM who lived nearby, and he has been put in touch with the nearest branch (Skelmersdale) The branch Secretary has been given the person's details and has been in contact.

The Llandudno RNA club ceased trading on August 25<sup>th</sup>. The branch will continue to meet at the club until the premises are sold.

The latest visiting ships forecast dated 16<sup>th</sup> September has been received from the NRO.

I received a letter recently from the US Cruiser Sailors Association inviting free membership of their Association for 2007. Benefits of belonging to them include a free copy of their magazine each quarter throughout next year. This has turned out to be not quite accurate: an e-mail received last Friday from their Association membership Secretary states; unfortunately they can only offer free membership for one year. Thereafter, their yearly membership fee would apply which is currently \$30 US Dollars. Anyone interested please contact me.

Please be advised that Millom & District RNA branch dedicated their new standard on Sunday October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006. It was dedicated at a morning service at St. Georges Millom. An account of the ceremony appears on the Area website.

In the September issue of the Circular Letter to Branches, the General Secretary voices his concern regarding the lack of information which is given to members at branch meetings. He cites various announcements and dates of events given in the Circular which are not passed on by the branch Secretary's to their members. I know this happens in this

Area. On my travels between the various branches, I have heard the branch Secretary announce when giving his report – “no correspondence this month” when I have known for a fact, that during that last month he had received the Circular Letter to Branches, and the minutes of the Area conference. I realise the vast content of the Circular Letter is of little interest to us here in the northwest, --A branch Standard Dedication in say Devon etc is hardly likely to attract a coach load of shipmates from Merseyside or elsewhere in our region; But there are items of information in the Circular and the Area conference minutes that are relevant to us, - all we ask, is that our Branch Secretary's keep their shipmates informed of events that concern them.

Still on the subject of the Circular Letter, Harry, our Area President, has taken up the issue with the General Secretary. In a letter to him dated October 2006, Harry describes the main complaints concerning the Circular; briefly - only one copy per branch, it has no opinion about anything contained in it, in other words it sits on the fence. Its appearance looks cheap, more like daily orders. RNA members learn more about the Association from national or even local newspapers and so on. I am sure the President will say more on this subject later.

Several changes to Branch Secretary's details have taken place in the last quarter these will be given in the forthcoming minutes of this conference. The Area website branch information pages are updated on a regular basis. However, we can only keep this information up to date if the branches who change their officials inform me when they do so.

I received a letter recently from the Porton Down Veterans Benevolent Fund who are a recently established charity formed to promote the interests of ex servicemen who attended the Chemical and Biological research establishment during the years 1939 -1989 and were exposed to various agents, the effects of which were not, and are still not known or fully appreciated. Basically, this fund is appealing for donations to help alleviate the causes of sickness and distress in volunteers which may have been caused by their attendance at this establishment. They cite in particular the recent inquest into the death of an RAF person who died as a result of a nerve gas experiment in 1953 I have further details of this Benevolent Fund organisation should anyone require further information about it.

The North West Festival of Remembrance Concert featuring the Ashton on Mersey Showband and special guests will take place at the Plaza Theatre Stockport on Sunday November 5<sup>th</sup> commencing at 1400. This event was revived last year with a new concert director following the sad death of Ernie Waite who for many years produced this annual event in Blackpool. Branch Standards are most welcome. I have booking forms with me today if anyone wishes to attend. Ticket prices are £10 with all proceeds going to a military charity.

Nominations for the Area committee have now closed.  
There were no matters arising from the correspondence.

### **AREA TREASURER**

S/m Brocking having distributed the financial statements to the delegates earlier for the previous period, July to September said it had been a quiet time in the Area. Although expenditure exceeded income by £467.31 this was explained by two payments of £207.00 (Standard Bearers expenses) and £250.00 (Crosby Branch Barham Memorial expenses). Delegate's expenses (£142.00) were continuing to exceed the income from the President's appeal (£70.00). At a recent meeting of the Area committee the Secretary was authorised to purchase a self contained 4 channel audio system for use at Area conferences reunions and PR events requiring public address equipment. This would help reduce dependency on some host branches and other venue's sound equipment which, in some cases was not under our control. Funding for this would be about £250.00 and would be funded from the Area magazine account which was in a healthy state.

There were no matters arising from the Treasurers report

### **NCM's REPORT**

S/m Atkinson said he had little if anything to report having missed the September National Council meeting due to illness. Also unfortunately, to date he had not received the minutes of that meeting and therefore, he was in the dark as to what transpired in council. S/m Atkinson explained that S/m Caulfield had been present at the meeting in his capacity as PRO. He hoped perhaps, S/m Caulfield would be able to give the delegates some insight into what took place at that meeting when he gave his report later.

### **AREA TOTE DRAW**

The Area Tote Draw produced the following winners; for August (£25) No. 5 **Kendal**. September (£25) No.125 **Runcorn**, and at this meeting (£100) No.8 **Deeside**.

## PRESIDENTS APPEAL

The President's appeal realised £80.00 donated by the following branches.

ATHERTON	£ 5.00	LIVERPOOL	£ 5.00
BEAUMARIS	£20.00	NORTH MANCHESTER	£ 5.00
CHESTER	£ 5.00	RUNCORN	£ 5.00
CROSBY	£ 5.00	SKIPTON	£10.00
LEYLAND	£10.00	TRAFFORD	£ 5.00
		WREXHAM	£ 5.00

## PROs REPORT

S/m Caulfield referring to the NCM's report regarding the National Council meeting in September reported, that most things that were discussed at that meeting had been included in the September Circular Letter to Branches. One item of note was the utilisation of the money remaining after the purchase of a bus for Pembroke House, which enabled the RNA to buy a smaller specially adapted vehicle for their use also. Not all the agenda at the council meeting was dealt with. Five items have been deferred until the December meeting.

A review initiated by the Deputy President of the Association which seeks the views of its members was also included in the September Circular Letter. All branch Secretary's have received copies of this, and should have circulated the information to their branch members.

The IMC conference weekend hosted by the RNA in Portsmouth was judged a successful event by all concerned. S/m Caulfield added if anyone wished to know what transpired at the IMC conference, this is also contained in the Circular Letter.

Once again the Publicity tent was in attendance at the Cartmel race meeting in August. Although we attended free of charge, on this occasion we did not sponsor a race. We had good support from the General public, and although a lot of interest was shown in our publicity tent, unfortunately it did not produce any new members.

Still on the subject of recruiting, the age group we should be targeting is the 45 – 60 age groups. Next year we see the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Falklands war - those who served in the Falklands would be the age groups the RNA should be targeting. He hoped to put something forward with Headquarters on this subject shortly. Southport branch are already planning to commemorate the Falklands anniversary next year. S/m Caulfield said he would request national funding for this, publicity wise in all areas.

## AREA WELFARE ADVISOR

S/m Thomas commenced his report by introducing his branch's oldest member who was aged 96 today. S/m Thomas said he had not much to report to the meeting for the simple reason, very few people had been in contact with him. He could not help people unless they contacted him. "Yesterday" said S/m Thomas he had visited the widow of an ex serviceman, who required help with decorating, carpeting and who needed a tumble dryer to dry her washing. She did not realise, until a neighbour advised her to contact the RBL for help. There are all sorts of people in the welfare organisations who can help in cases such as these. In our own branches we have people who need help who live on low incomes, who from day to day 'rob Peter to pay Paul' just to survive. "It is up to all of us" continued S/m Thomas to look around your own branch members and see if anyone needs help. Ask them if they need assistance in any way. Help is out there via the many welfare agencies – there are over 400 of these, apart from the RNBT and the RNA, who can help in various ways. Please do not be shy in asking for help, -"remember" said S/m Thomas we have all contributed in some way in the past to these organisations: they have the funds to help us.

Before the commencement of any other Business, the Area President addressed the meeting. S/m Harley thanked S/m Thomas and the members of the Bolton branch for laying on the facilities for this meeting, which was an excellent venue. The President remarked on the October Circular Letter to Branches which he received yesterday (October 27<sup>th</sup>) He had noted the General Secretary's remarks concerning the lack of information being passed to the members of branches, referred to in the Area Secretary's report earlier. S/m Harley said he had written to the General Secretary referring to his opening remarks in the Circular on this very subject. He had spent over three years expending time and effort, -- sadly to no avail, informing your predecessor and the current Association President of the widespread disdain displayed by our shipmates towards the Association Circular. These attitudes are not confined to this Area, following contacts with shipmates in other Area's he had yet to hear any support for the Circular. S/m Harley said he had included in his letter to the General Secretary a list of the most common complaints [which he listed to the delegates] he had been made aware of by shipmates. To date, he had not received a reply to his letter.

The President compared the Circular Letter to our own magazine (*Vanguard*) "Our magazine has an opinion, which generates discussion, unlike the Circular that has no opinion and therefore invites no questions" he said "why not? "What is wrong in asking questions of our Association".

S/m Harley paid tribute to the Crosby branch for their recent commemoration service in the restoration of the graves of several shipmates of *HMS Barham* which features in the current edition of the Area magazine. He also noted the number of branches represented at this conference (22) Again, he reiterated that it was at national conference where we needed to make ourselves heard. To send just 17 -18 delegates from an area that boasts over 57 branches is bluntly pretty pathetic. We will not be listened too unless we make our presence felt at national level. He reminded the delegates that the RNA existed for its members, which did not appear to be the case at the present time.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

S/m Caulfield (PRO) gave information about accommodation in Torquay for next years conference. He said there were quite a lot of B&B guest houses, on Scarborough Road, nearby the conference venue.

S/m Crute (South Liverpool) said he agreed with the remarks made by the Area President. It should be appreciated that this Area has a President who is not afraid to speak his mind. He recalled the national conference in June at Aberystwyth, and the conduct of the national President at that meeting. S/m Crute went on to ask why no motion was forthcoming from the branches within this Area regarding a breakaway from Chelsea Manor Street "Perhaps the opportunity might arise at next years conference in Torquay" he said. S/m Crute also mentioned that recently, our Area Chaplain, John Williams celebrated his 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary as Chaplain. It would be nice if the Area could thank him for the work he has done not only for the RNA but for his service as a whole in the North West.

S/m Tollerton (Crosby) thanked the Area committee for their financial help in his branch's recent *HMS Barham* commemoration. He also thanked everyone who attended and helped in any way at this event. S/m Tollerton then raised a question to the PRO regarding next year's conference at Torquay. Instead of our shipmates going down there individually, could we not get together beforehand to decide what we need to raise there, which motions to support or oppose.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

S/m Caulfield PRO in reply, said he had been considering the idea of all the delegates from the Area travelling together to Torquay. However, given the size of this Area this could present some difficulty. Although he believed the Liverpool branch may run a coach to Torquay that could only cater for the Merseyside branches, the problem would still be from branches in the outlying areas. He appreciated the intervention from S/m Tollerton regarding approaching National Express coaches or similar. He would now make further enquiries into this, and hopefully, be in a position to report progress at the winter conference in January.

S/m Pickering (Runcorn) asked, whilst considering transport, "could we not as an area book a hotel for the weekend in Torquay?"

S/m Caulfield responding observed that many of the larger hotels in Torquay were now operated by coach companies such as Shearings/Wallace Arnolds and others.

S/m Mrs S Haigh (Skipton) brought to the notice of the meeting that a Festival of Remembrance would be held in Skipton in October next year with a Royal Marine band in attendance. Because they are a small branch they would like to see as many RNA Standards and Shipmates as possible. The exact date of the event will be advised when known.

S/m Crute (South Liverpool) reminded the delegates that in 2008 the city of Liverpool would be celebrating the "City of Culture" that year. "It would be wonderful" he said if an event similar to BOA 2003 could be arranged by the Area for its annual reunion - possibly based in the Adelphi Hotel with hopefully a parade for the Navy and Merchant Navy on the same lines as BOA 2003.

The Chairman reminded the meeting about next years Area Spring conference and reunion in Manchester. He promised that next year's weekend would be as good if not better than this year's affair. The entertainment is already arranged, but we do need the support of the shipmates from the branches. Drinks prices remain the same as last year and as an added bonus on the Sunday evening there will be free Tots and a free ladies Bar on the Saturday and Sunday evenings.

S/m Halliday (Leyland) referring to the earlier comments concerning the Falklands anniversary next year, said his Branch Chairman, Standard Bearer and himself were invited to a parade in Chorley. He observed, that there were more people attending that parade than attended a Remembrance Day Service.

S/m W Clarke(Skelmersdale) returning to the subject of accommodation in Torquay for next years National Conference, suggested that the Area contact the Torbay Tourist board stating our hotel requirements for the weekend in question. Most times, they can organise a concession rate.

S/m Atkinson (NCM) mentioned the Trecarn Hotel in Babbacombe which specialised in ships reunions. The Hotel is owned by Shearings/Wallace Arnolds and would make an ideal base for conference weekend. However, he felt as this hotel is in demand for ships reunions throughout the year we may have left it to late for our purposes.

**VENUE FOR THE WINTER AREA CONFERENCE AND AGM (January 27<sup>th</sup> 2007)**

Liverpool branch were the only bidders to host the Winter Area conference and AGM. Therefore the winter conference and AGM will take place at the Liverpool branch club, Bowring Green Park Liverpool on Saturday January 27<sup>th</sup> 2007 commencing at 1200 (please note changed time)

The Chairman closed the meeting at 1535

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**BRANCH AND MISCELLANEOUS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Area Address List**

<b>Hazel Grove Branch</b>	Secretary Address change. S/m J Kelly 7 Vernon Close POYNTON Cheshire SK12 1NG Tele: 01625 872808
<b>Llandudno branch</b>	Secretary's Address. S/m Sylvia Jones Flat 6 12/16 Clonmel Street LLANDUDNO LL30 2LE Tele: 01492 860206 (After 1800)
<b>Morecambe Branch</b>	Secretary Change: S/m N Baxter 40 Roeburn Drive MORECAMBE Lanc's LA4 4RN Tele: 01524 388 ?
<b>Rhyl Branch</b>	Secretary Change: S/m Margaret Weaver 7 North Avenue RHYL Denbigshire LL18 1HT 01745 354027

**Visiting Ships Forecast**

The latest forecast of ships expected to visit this region within the next quarter, is as follows; HMS Quorn visiting Douglas (IOM) on November 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006

**Area Spring Conference/ Reunion 2007**

The spring conference and reunion will take place at the Britannia Country House hotel Didsbury Manchester on Friday April 27<sup>th</sup> 2007 until Monday April 30<sup>th</sup> 2007. Cost per person is £145. **Booking forms are enclosed with these minutes.** Please support this event Subsidised bar throughout the weekend. Entertainment on all three nights, Ladies free bar .Sat/Sun evenings. Free Tots on one night.

**No.10 Area Website**

Don't forget to visit your Area website; [www.rna-10-area.co.uk](http://www.rna-10-area.co.uk) for the latest news of the Area and national news. Keep up to date via the links pages with other areas, branches and ship associations etc.

**Vanguard Magazine**

Contributions for possible inclusion in the spring 2007 issue of the magazine should reach the Area Secretary not later than January 20<sup>th</sup> 2007

**AGM 2006**

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting which took place at the Runcorn Branch club, on January 28<sup>th</sup> 2006 are included with these minutes. Branch Secretary's are requested to hand these to their Delegate when attending the January 2007 AGM.

**AGM 2007**

As stated elsewhere, this will take place at the Liverpool Branch club on Saturday January 27<sup>th</sup> 2007 (see Pro Forma)

**Please note the earlier start time of conference at 1200**