



Minutes of
RNA Portland Branch General Meeting held at the Masonic Centre
Wednesday 2nd April 2025

The meeting was opened by Chairman S/M Dusty Miller at 20.00. 34 Members were present.

1. **Apologies:** were received from 9 Members.

2. **Chairman's Opening Comments:**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting. He welcomed Nicky from Island Community Action who is here tonight for the charity cheque presentation.

S/M Dusty asked if everyone had seen a copy of the Minutes of the March General Meeting and the Monthly Newsletter.

3. **Minutes of the Last Meeting** were accepted.

Matters Arising: Nil

Proposed by S/M Dave McCaughey

Seconded by S/M Carole Nelson

For: 29

Against: 0

Abstentions: 5

Presentation to Nicky Turrell, Island Community Action

S/M Dusty thanked Branch Members for raising £742, through monthly raffles and other sources. This was raised to £800 which was presented to Nicky Turrell, representing the ICA. Nicky thanked the Branch on behalf of the ICA, stating that the money could not have come at a better time as the older people's project money finished yesterday. Thanks to everyone.

4. **Secretary's Remarks and Correspondence:**

Email sent to Commander Matthew Court, ref menu choices for himself and his wife Rachel for the Annual Dinner.

Thank you letter from General Secretary Bill Oliphant, ref £500 Branch donation to Central Office.

Email from Kate Aldous, Governance Support Officer, Central Office, ref Form 1 Branch Officials, Form 2 Branch Financial Report and Form 5 Branch Activities Form.

Facebook post from Kevin P Cameron, ref Making a film about life at HMS Osprey, including families. If anyone or family members would like to take part, S/M Christine has details and it is on our Facebook page. It would be gratefully received by Kevin.

Email from Iain Stone ref acknowledgement of £300 paid by Portland Branch for our use of the Masonic Centre.

Matters Arising:

S/M Nige has contacted HMS Portland ref difficulty in contacting Cdr Court. Reply received. Unfortunately, Cdr Court has sustained an injury, which is why he is not onboard and why he is not answering his emails. Also, because of his accident he would not be able to attend our annual dinner. However, Nige's message will be passed on, so hopefully he will reply with a more definitive answer. No reply received as yet.

Form 5 is a Branch Activity Form and it is the first time that we have filled this in. It lists all the different types of Members that the Branch has and how many. Also how many new Members we recruited last year and how many Members Crossed The Bar. How many funerals did the Branch support last year? How many ceremonial events were undertaken? How many social activities happened? When these had been counted numerically, it required a list of activities. It took considerable time to put this together and the help of many Committee Members to do it. But, it does make us realise how many things the Branch is involved with and how many people are supported by Members of the Branch. Many thanks to S/M Ben who paraded the Branch Standard on so many occasions. Portland Branch should be very proud of itself!

S/M Dusty thanked the Committee and Members for all their efforts.

5. Items discussed at Committee Meeting

National Conference Expenses – S/M Dusty Miller said that the costs were quite expensive this year. S/M Pete said that S/Ms Dusty and Karen do an awful lot on behalf on the Branch and a vote was held. See Any Other Voting Items below.

6. Reports:

- a. Standard Bearer's/Ceremonial Report – S/M Ben Cartwright reported:

S/M Bob Featherstone has acquired a programme of events from Portland Town Council. They are:

8th May – 09.00 Proclamation in Victoria Gardens.

16.00 Service at Cenotaph

21.30 Beacon Lighting/ Brass Band at New Ground

23rd June - Armed Forces Flag raising in Victoria Square
22-28th June – Armed Forces Week
15th August - 10.00 VJ Day Service All Saints Church
3rd September –(time to be announced) Merchant Navy Day, St George’s Church
9th November – 11.00 Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph
12.30 American Memorial
11th November – Dorset Council Remembrance Service
11.00 Armistice Day Portland Cenotaph

Some of these will clash with the Weymouth events.

Weymouth RBL has given S/M Ben a list of events happening on the Esplanade during the coming months

Thursday, 25th April - ANZAC Memorial Service. 1030 (for 1100) at the Monument on the Sea Front. This will be followed at 1200 by a short concert performed by the ANZAC Band. At 1400 there will be a graveside service in Melcombe Regis cemetery.

Thursday, 8th May 2025 - VE day Service 2100 on the Beach followed by the Beacon lighting.

Monday, 26th May 2025 - American Memorial Day Service 1100 at the US Memorial.*

Friday, 6th June 2025 - Korean Memorial Service 1100 Weymouth Seafront.

Friday, 20th - Monday 23rd June 2025 – Armed Forces Weekend:

Friday, 20th June 2025 - Military vehicle displays, music from the 1940s, and information stands.

Saturday, 21st June 2025 - Entertainment at the Jubilee Clock.

Sunday, 22nd June 2025 - Parade and Veterans service on Weymouth Seafront. Muster by 10:00 (Esplanade closed to Vehicles).

Monday, 23rd June 2025: Flag raising ceremony at The New Town Hall.

Friday, 15th August – VJ Memorial Service 1100 at the War Memorial.

Saturday, 16th August – VJ picnic and concert at the Nothe Fort. Bring your own scran.

The Branch Standard was paraded at the funeral of Lt Cdr ‘John’ Bull in Poole. This was a request from the National Welfare & Wellbeing Officer. The family donated £150 to the RNA.

b. **Social Secretary’s Report** – S/M Dave Prowse reported:

Annual Dinner– Saturday 26th April at 18.45 for 19.15 in the Masonic Centre Main Hall. Entertainer -Mike Walker. Cost £27.50 per person. The menu is on our Facebook page and on our Website. Please give S/M Dave your menu choices and payment ASAP. 47 on the list.

Skittles at Dorchester – Friday 6th June 19.00 for 19.30, in the Trinity Club with Dorchester and other branches. S/M Ben has booked the ICA minibus. 13 names on the list.

20/20 Cricket at Southampton. S/M Ben has booked the ICA minibus for Sunday 13th July. It is a double header with Hampshire Women v Bears at 11.00 and Hampshire Men v Sussex at 15.00. Note change in start times. Early bird tickets have been purchased at £18.00 per person, (which includes a discount of £2.00 per person for a group of 6-11). All 9 have paid, thank you.

Away Weekend – Saturday 4th to Wednesday 8th October at the Imperial Hotel, Eastbourne. 37 on the list and all have paid the interim deposit of £30.00 per person. The balance is required by the August Meeting. Payments can be made at each meeting. You are advised to arrange travel insurance.

Trafalgar Night Dinner – Saturday 18th October in the Masonic Centre Main Hall. Entertainment is Steve Williams Disco.

Christmas Social – Saturday 20th December in the Masonic Centre Main Hall. Entertainer is Georgy Broad.

c. **HMS Portland Liaison Officer Report** – S/M Nigel Rimell reported:

Nil report.

d. **Fundraising Report** - S/M Karen Miller reported:

S/M Karen reported that a stall at the SALT Bash is still being considered. Volunteers have come forward, thank you.

e. **Membership Secretary's Report** – S/M Karen Miller reported:

A Branch Member's wallet was found in Poole, containing his membership card. S/M Karen was contacted to get in touch with the person. However, there was an incorrect address on our records as he had moved. The wallet was eventually returned but it highlights the importance that correct details are held. S/M Karen would like to check the details of all Members, starting with those here tonight.

f. **National Area/Conference Report** – S/M Pete Shoesmith reported:

Area Reunion Rally – everyone enjoyed the weekend. S/M Pete has had some comments to pass on to the organising committee. The charity funds did well. Details are awaited.

g. **Webmasters Report** – rnaportland.org S/M Bob Featherstone reported

The Website continues to be updated with no major problems which affect Members access or the overall appearance.

There is a continual error shown in the error log for the “News Ticker” which scrolls across the “Home” page which is beyond our control but does not appear to affect it working. The Calendar has been updated to show forthcoming ceremonial events in Weymouth, Members may be interested in and I have received a timetable of events from PTC which has been passed to S/M President as Ceremonial Officer. Once all events have been confirmed they will be uploaded to the website calendar.

h. **Wellbeing Report** – S/M Gill Essom reported:

S/M Johnny Harte is here tonight. A card was sent to him.

S/M George Osborne – a card was sent to Dorchester Branch to pass on to his family.

S/M Derek and Jean Charnock – Derek is in DCH and is very poorly. Jean is not too well either.

S/M Arthur Copus – S/M Karen has been to visit him and he is in good spirits.

i. **Treasurer’s Report** – S/M Pete Shoemith reported:

The Branch Account stands at £5569.70

The Social Fund stands at £615.19.

The Annual Charity Fund (ICA) stands at £742.20 (after 12 months)

Matters arising: S/M Pete reported that Lloyds Bank are changing the Branch Account to a Community Account which will incur bank charges. This will be £4.25 per month, plus fees for paying in. A Charity Form was completed and sent it in to the bank. This has been accepted and it now means that we continue with no charges on the Treasurer’s Account as before.

S/M Pete also thanked S/M Christine ref all the paperwork forms for Central Office. The Financial Report needed amending and extra details added. This has now been sent in again.

Proposed by: S/M David White Seconded by: S/M Bob Featherstone

For: 33 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1

7. **Any Other Voting Items :**

National Conference expenses for S/Ms Dusty & Karen Miller amount to £506.00, which breaks down to £266.00 for the hotel and £240.00 for combined tickets to events. S/M Pete Shoemith proposed that the Branch pays these expenses as they both do a wonderful job for the Branch.

Proposed by: S/M Pete Shoemith Seconded by: S/M Dickie Bird

For: 32 Against: 0 Abstentions: 2

8. AOB

S/M Dave Prowse thanked S/M Pete for sorting the Bank Account and saving the Branch a fortune.

S/M Dennis Matthews said that DCH have Liaison Person – Hannah, a former Wren, who helps people with appointments. Her phone number is 0800 783 8058.

S/M Ben Cartwright said that as of 6th July he will not be eligible to drive the minibus. He can book it but not drive it.

S/M Karen Miller thanked everyone here for updating their details on the records.

9. Chairman’s Closing Comments:

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending tonight’s Meeting. It was nice to give out the cheque to ICA. Hopefully we will have a Guest of Honour at the Annual Dinner – it is rather fluid at the moment.

10.**Date of Next Meeting:** - Wednesday 7th May 2025.

11.**Meeting Closed at:** 21.25

Chairman

Secretary