



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

The meeting was opened by Chairman S/M Dusty Miller at 20.00. 37 Members were present.

1. **Apologies:** were received from 13 Members.

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

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting. He extended a warm welcome to S/M Bill Davis from West Bromwich Branch and Harry Hendry representing the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance who will receive a cheque and give a presentation later. He said that he has managed to make contact with Hannah, the person who delivers the Cyber Awareness talk on behalf of Dorset Police and a date is being arranged. S/M Dusty reminded Members about the HMS Foylebank Memorial this coming Friday, 4th July, meeting at 10.45. He asked if there were any volunteers to read Drake's Prayer? If not he was happy to do it himself. S/M Dusty asked if everyone had seen a copy of the Minutes of the June General Branch Meeting and the Monthly Newsletter.

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

Matters Arising: Nil

Proposed by S/M Ginge Sarsfield

Seconded by S/M Ian Tate

For: 33

Against: 0

Abstentions: 4

Presentation of a cheque for £1000 by S/M Peter Shoesmith, raised at No4 Area Reunion Rally to Harry Hendry of Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance. Portland Branch nominated this charity.

Presentation by Harry Hendry about the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance.

Thanks to all for their efforts in raising all this money. All our money is funded by others. There are 21 Air Ambulance charities in the UK and they attended 45,000 missions last year. The Dorset & Somerset one started in 2000 and has one helicopter and two critical care cars, should the helicopter be unavailable. In 2008 they moved to Henstridge. In 2017 a more modern helicopter arrived which can do night flights. In 2024, a deposit was paid for a second aircraft, which hopefully will allow a 24 hour service.

Between April 2024 and March 2025, the Dorset & Somerset attended 2961 missions, made up of 1575 flights and 1386 journeys by the enhanced critical care cars. Incident types are: Trauma 44%, Cardiac 18%, Medical 37% and Transfers 1%. Blood is now carried, although has to be changed every few days and this is done by the Devon Freewheelers Motorcyclists.

The Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance costs £10m per year. Each mission costs £3,500. They are part of the 5 Air Ambulances in the South West and the main call centre for all is based in Exeter. The team is made up of 14 Critical Care Doctors and PHEM Trainees, 19 Specialist Practitioners, 5 Pilots and Co-Pilots and 4 Patient and Family Liaison Nurses. Staff are always trying to improve their services. The Day Shift is 07.00-17.00 and the Night Shift is 16.00-02.00. They can be anywhere in the two counties within 20 minutes. Equipment on board includes a red backpack weighing 25kg, dressing pack and blood and plasma pack, all neatly stored.

Harry asked how many Members had a smartphone with the app 'What 3 Words' installed? He recommended that you do this if you are able as it can pinpoint your position if you need help anywhere. It is very important if you are in a rural location.

Finally, Harry explained how people can help the charity:

Fight for Life Lottery	Collection Boxes
Regular Donor	Recycling
Events	Corporate Partnership
Personal Challenges	CPR Awareness
Fundraising	Volunteer
Charity Merchandise	

At the end, Harry held a Q& A session. S/M Dusty thanked Harry for his very informative presentation.

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

Email from S/M Alan Cox, No 4 Area Branch Secretary, ref Support at a local funeral – S/M Ben has replied.

Email from S/M Brett Crabtree, No4 Area Welfare & Wellbeing Officer, ref Online workshops with strategies to manage anxiety.

Thank you card from S/M Josie Cartwright, ref flowers and messages from the Branch.

Matters Arising: Nil

5. **Items discussed at Committee Meeting**

HMS Foylebank 85th Anniversary, Friday 4th July 2025 – S/M Dusty Miller. After discussion, the Committee thought it would be beneficial to attend, so if RNA Branch Members could muster at the Foylebank Memorial at 10.45. Reading of Drake's Prayer which was read at the original dedication service at the memorial. 11.00 - Minute's Silence. Portland Branch Standard will be present.

6. **Reports:**

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

S/M Ben thanked all Members who attended the HMS Sidon Memorial Service and the Veterans Parade in Weymouth. Many Standards were on parade.

Diary events include:

DAY	DATE	LOCATION	Time	EVENT
Friday	4 July	HMS Foylebank Memorial (near Portland Beacon)	1045	HMS Foylebank 85th Anniversary. Reading of Drake's Prayer. Minute's Silence
Friday	15 August	All Saints Church	TBA	VJ Service
Saturday	16 August	Nothe Fort	All day	VJ picnic and concert. Take your own food
Wednesday	3 September	St Georges Church	TBA	Merchant Navy Day Service
Sunday	9 November	Drill Hall Cenotaph	1000 1030 for 1100 1230	March to Cenotaph Remembrance Sunday US Memorial
Tuesday	11 November	Cenotaph	1045 for 1100	Armistice Day
				Illustrious

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

Skittles at Dorchester – Friday 6th June was enjoyable. We let another team win the trophy this time. Thanks to Ben for booking and driving the minibus.

20/20 Cricket at Southampton. Sunday 13th July. Women v Bears at 11.00 and Hampshire Men v Sussex at 15.00. S/M Dave will inform each of you of the pickup times and places.

Away Weekend – Saturday 4th to Wednesday 8th October at the Imperial Hotel, Eastbourne. There are 35 on the list. The balance is required by the August Meeting. You are advised to arrange travel insurance. We have an option on two more twin rooms until August, if anyone else would like to go.

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.

Annual Dinner 2026 – Saturday 18th April in the Masonic Centre Main Hall.

c. **HMS Portland Liaison Officer Report** – S/M Nigel Rimell sent in a report

Nil report.

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

Thanks to all those who have contributed books, jigsaws, tombola prizes. Any help on the day of the fete – Saturday 2nd August, will be appreciated.

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

We now have 95 Members.

f. **National Area/Conference Report** – S/M Pete Shoemith/Dusty Miller reported:

S/M Dusty reported: The National Conference went well. There was a free bar on HMS Warrior on the Friday evening. On Saturday evening he sat next to Vice Admiral John McAnnally a former National President of the RNA. At the Conference itself it was voted to have the 2026 Conference at Salford and 2027 at Durham. The motion for splitting the Conference into two weekends, the second for the social side, was defeated. Roughly 33% For, 33% Against and 33% Abstained, and a 2/3 majority was required.

S/M Pete reported that he now had the Minutes for the May Area Meeting at St Austell. The next Area Meeting is on 13th September at Saltash. S/M Pete has heard that S/M Area 4 Secretary Alan Cox is recovering well. S/M Brett Crabtree the Area 4 Welfare and Wellbeing Officer is looking at Area coverage.

S/M Pete gave thanks to S/Ms Dusty and Karen for attending the National Conference on behalf of Portland Branch.

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

Despite some website health recommendations which remain beyond Webmasters control to implement, the website remains fully updated and continues to operate smoothly. Two broken links were found last week, the first of which meant that access was denied to the last set of Draft Branch Meeting Minutes; this has been fixed and secondly Central office deleted a document linked to in one of our archive posts. This has been amended and the link deleted.

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

S/M Josie Cartwright is doing well under Ben's care. Thanks to Karen for sorting out the flowers and taking them round.

S/M Bill Gear is not well. Gill will phone to see how he is.

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

The Branch Account stands at £4863.42

The Social Fund stands at £510.19.

The Annual Charity Fund (Island Leg Club) stands at £93.75 (after 3 months)

Matters arising: Nil

Proposed by: S/M Dickie Bird Seconded by: S/M Dodge Howes

For: 37

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

7. Any Other Voting Items :

Proposed by: Seconded by:

For: Against: Abstentions:

8. AOB

S/M Ginge Sarsfield on behalf of Brian Hodder, thanked those who attended the HMS Sidon Commemoration for their support.

9. Chairman's Closing Comments:

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending tonight's Meeting. It was great to see so many here. Hopefully, many of you will be able to attend the HMS Foylebank Memorial on Friday.

10.**Date of Next Meeting:** - Wednesday 6th August 2025.

11.**Meeting Closed at:** 21.30

Chairman

Secretary