



Minutes of
RNA Portland Branch General Meeting held at the Masonic Centre
Wednesday 1st October 2025

The meeting was opened by Chairman S/M Dusty Miller at 20.00. 33 Members were present.

1. **Apologies:** were received from 8 Members.

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

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting. He has received a request from the Masonic Lodge Standing Order Committee to see if the Branch can supply a volunteer to hoist the flag three or four times a year. If you are able to assist with this, please speak to S/M Dusty or Vanessa.

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

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

Matters Arising: Nil

Proposed by S/M Doc Foster

Seconded by S/M Dodge Howes

For: 27

Against: 0

Abstentions: 6

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

Nil.

Matters Arising: Nil

5. **Items discussed at Committee Meeting**

General Branch Meeting change of venue 06-05-2026 – S/M Christine Tuck.

A Masonic Lodge which meets occasionally on the same night as our RNA General Branch Meeting has asked if would mind swapping venues on Wednesday 6th May 2026. It will be their 80th Anniversary and they will be having a large number present, with a celebratory meal afterwards. Could we move to Shaftesbury Hall for this one occasion? The bar will be open for us. The Committee discussed the request and agreed to the move.

Branch 70th Anniversary Gift – S/M Karen Miller

Plans are progressing with this, which is good.

6. Reports:

a. Standard Bearer's/Ceremonial Report – S/M Ben Cartwright sent in a report:

S/M Ben reported details for Remembrance Day and Armistice Day are below.

S/M Dennis Matthews stated that the Illustrious Memorial Service will be on Saturday 18th October at 11.00. The National Chairman of the HMS Illustrious Association will be in attendance and will be asked to take part in the service. The Portland Sea Cadets are also helping.

Diary events include:

DAY	DATE	LOCATION	Time	EVENT
Sunday	9 November	Drill Hall Cenotaph	1000 1030 for 1100 1230	March to Cenotaph Remembrance Sunday US Memorial
Tuesday	11 November	Cenotaph	1045 for1100	Armistice Day
Saturday	18 October	Illustrious Memorial	1100	HMS Illustrious Memorial Service

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

Away Weekend 2025 – Saturday 4th to Wednesday 8th October at the Imperial Hotel, Eastbourne. Unfortunately, two more have had to drop out, so now we have only 31 going. It won't make any difference to the amount we've paid. We will be leaving at 0900 on Saturday and stopping for lunch in Chichester. S/M Dave has informed all those going of the pick up times, coach seating and dining room seating plans. The lists are also on our Website and Facebook page.

Trafalgar Night Dinner 2025 - Saturday 18th October in the Masonic Centre Main Hall. Entertainment – Steve Williams Disco. Cost £27.50 per person to include choice of 3 starters, 3 main or vegetarian option, 3 sweet or cheese and biscuits, tea or coffee and a glass of port. The menu is on our Facebook page. Please enter your names on the list and let me have your payment and menu choices this evening or as soon as possible. There are 47 on the list, including the Guests of Honour, so there's room for plenty more.

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.

Away Weekend 2026 – S/M Dave recently received offers for last minute weekends for groups this November for at least £70 less per person. This is the first year this has happened, perhaps other groups are struggling to find numbers as well. It may be worth bearing this in mind for next year if we don't get sufficient interest to book early. The advantage is that we

don't have to commit to booking so far ahead, the disadvantage is that the total payment would be required when booking. It would also mean a last minute rush to arrange it. Also, there is no guarantee there will be any last minute offers for groups next year. There would probably be few single rooms available as well.

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

Nil report.

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

Regarding the Christmas Draw at our December Branch Meeting – if anyone has donations, please bring your items to the November Meeting.

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

Membership donations of £10 will be collected from next month.

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

The Area Meeting on 13th September in Saltash was attended by S/Ms Pete, Ben and David White. One important note was that the Nofam Welfare & Wellbeing Guidelines have changed. This will help reps considerably and there is clarification for all. Our Area Welfare & Wellbeing Rep S/M Brett Crabtree has worked hard on this. S/M Pete will print a copy for S/Ms Gill and Lin.

The Area Reunion Rally at Bideford 2026 is 6-9th March. 3 nights will cost £205 per person. 2 nights will be £165 per person. A £20 deposit will be required at the November Meeting and the balance at the January Meeting.

Several Branch Members attended the funeral at Chideock Church, of S/M Mike Jones of Bridport Branch. Mike used to attend our Meetings, Dinners and Bideford regularly.

g. **Webmasters Report** – <https://rnaportland.org> S/M Bob Featherstone reported:

As previously indicated on Facebook, the Branch Website has now been rebuilt and uploaded to the Host Server, previously Redraw who are now owned by Rocket Fibre.

Normal service has been resumed with notices and news being uploaded along with Minutes of Branch Meetings and additionally there is a page in the Shipmates Locker containing copies of the AFPS Quarterly Digests for those interested. You will also find the Gallery there although images only go back to 2023.

Please do have a look at the Website, the look and feel is now a little more refined and can be found at <https://rnaportland.org>

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

S/M Al Greenslade is having treatment.

S/M Len Christopher has had surgery and is owed a bottle.

S/M Ben has been to see S/M Arthur Copus who is doing well.

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

The Branch Account stands at £4,428.27

The Social Fund stands at £510.19

The Annual Charity Fund (Island Leg Club) stands at £326.60 (after 6 months)

Matters arising: Nil

Proposed by: S/M Ginge Sarsfield

Seconded by: S/M David White

For: 33

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

7. **Any Other Voting Items :**

Proposed by:

Seconded by:

For:

Against:

Abstentions:

8. **AOB**

S/M Dave reported that there will be no raffle on the coach on the Away Weekend as we don't have the same driver any more and we are not having a trip out whilst there. It will be up to the individual if they wish to tip the driver.

9. **Chairman's Closing Comments:**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending tonight's Meeting. He hoped that everyone going on the Away Weekend has a great time. There'll be fireworks at the next Meeting judging by the date!

10. **Date of Next Meeting:** - Wednesday 5th November 2025.

11. **Meeting Closed at:** 21.10

Chairman

Secretary