



Minutes of
RNA Portland Branch General Meeting held at the Masonic Centre
Wednesday 3rd December 2025

The meeting was opened by Chairman S/M Dusty Miller at 20.05. 37 Members were present.

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

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

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting. He thanked them for attending the service on Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day. The Remembrance service was very long again this year. If people wish to complain, the address is civic@portlandtowncouncil.gov.uk The more people who complain, the better the chance of having it shortened.

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

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

Matters Arising: Nil

Proposed by S/M Nigel Rimell

Seconded by S/M Alex Oswald

For: 30

Against: 0

Abstentions: 7

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

Email from PTC ref Invitation to The Mayor's Civic Christmas Carol Service on Sunday 7th December at 14.30 at Easton Methodist Church.

Thank you letter from the RBL for the Branch's purchase of wreaths, which we lay at various ceremonial events. Also, the Branch received a Christmas card from them.

Matters Arising: Nil

5. **Items discussed at Committee Meeting**

Widows Christmas List – S/M Pete Shoemith. The list has been amended and given to Gill. There are now 22 on the list. £400 has been allocated for the cards and vouchers.

Safeguarding and DBS Checks – S/M Lin MacCormack. Both Gill and Lin attended the Dorchester Branch Meeting when Jon Everett, National Welfare and Wellbeing Officer attended. DBS checks were completed and will follow shortly. Queries were made regarding Safeguarding and at present the RNA does not run a course for this. The Committee will wait to find out when one is available for them to attend.

Election of Branch Officers 2026 – S/M Christine Tuck. As there will not be another Committee Meeting until a week before the AGM, the Election Form has been prepared for those due for re-election. This will be taken to the January Branch Meeting for all to see and add to as required.

6. **Reports:**

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

S/M Dusty thanked S/M Ben for 25 years of sterling service as Portland Branch Standard Bearer. The Branch is now looking for a new Standard Bearer and training will be provided. If you think that you may be able to fulfil this valuable role please see S/Ms Ben or Dusty.

S/M Ben thanked those who attended the Remembrance Day Service and Parade. Many Branch Members attended.

Thanks also to those who attended S/M Alan Cox's funeral on Friday 21st November. Alan was No 4 Area Secretary and a Member of Weymouth Branch. Quite a few of our Branch attended at Weymouth Crematorium and afterwards at Weymouth Football Club

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

Christmas Social – Saturday 20th December in the Masonic Centre Main Hall at 19.30. Entertainer is Georgy Broad. Ticket price £15.00 per person, including buffet. Please put your names on the list and pay either this evening. Wrapped raffle prizes appreciated.

Annual Dinner 2026 – Saturday 18th April in the Masonic Centre Main Hall. Entertainment – Steve Williams Disco.

Proposed Away Weekend 2026 – Thursday 8th to Monday 12th October at the Daish's Hotel, Shanklin, Isle of Wight. Four nights half board, including return coach travel, for £305 per person. There is entertainment at the hotel each evening. There are 2 free places for a total number of 35-44 and 3 free places for a total of 45-50. The single room supplement is £10.00 per person.

As usual, S/M Dave will divide the value of the free places and the total cost of the single room supplements between all of us. This would make the total cost approximately £291.00 per person for 40 or £286.00 for 45.

The booking must be confirmed with a non-refundable deposit of £250.00, regardless of the number intending to go. So Dave will need your non-refundable deposit of £7.50 per person and your commitment at the January Meeting. An interim deposit of £30.00 per person would

be required in March and the balance in August. Dave will collect any amount that people wish to pay at each Meeting to spread the cost. 35 people will be needed to make this viable. Please put your names on the list if interested – there are 27 names already, so a few places left.

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

Nil report.

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

Thanks very much for support this evening.

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

S/M Elliot Gover's Membership card has come through – a Serving Member.

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

The Annual Reunion at Bideford 2026 – Portland Branch has two tables with 18 Members going.

S/M Pete has heard that Cdr Tim Leeder has been made up to Captain and been drafted to Plymouth. Pete heard from Captain Tim's wife Madeline Hopwood. Congratulations have been sent from the Branch.

The Annual Conference 2026 is at Salford Quays 12-14th June. S/M Pete will not be going. If anyone would like to represent the Branch please let him know.

2026 RNA Diaries are now being ordered, £7 each.

The Area AGM will be at Bude on Saturday 17th January. Area President David White will be standing down. On behalf of Portland Branch S/M Pete thanked S/M David for his service to Area 4.

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

The Branch Website experienced a blacklist event from Rocket Fibre Server Firewall in early November which meant that we lost access for two days. The Webmaster had to contact the Server host in order to get him to reset and hopefully whitelist the Branch Website. With that done, to date, there have been no other interruptions.

Currently, the Branch Website remains stable and up to date.

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

S/M Gill has had a chat with S/M Iris Jones, who wants to come to Bideford.
Gill has also been to see S/Ms Tony and Joan Seal. Tony is a full timer carer now for Joan which is why he is unable to come to meetings.
S/M Peter Hall is awaiting surgery.

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

S/M Pete said he will still pay cash and cheques into the account monthly. The charge for doing so will be 42p. The monthly account charge is £4.50. The PO doesn't seem to be aware at the moment of what is happening with paying in for Lloyds Bank.

Tonight's Christmas Draw raised £192 on the main raffle and £76 on the bottle raffle, which will be split between the Branch funds and annual charity, which is the Island leg Club.

The Branch Account stands at £3,753.07

The Social Fund stands at £510.19

The Annual Charity Fund (Island Leg Club) stands at £406.10 (after 8 months)

Matters arising: Nil

Proposed by: S/M Ginge Sarsfield Seconded by: S/M Doc Foster

For: 35 Against: 0 Abstentions: 2

7. **Any Other Voting Items** :

Proposed by: Seconded by:

For: Against: Abstentions:

8. **AOB**

S/M Karen stated that local man Wayne Ingram has a book published which may interest you, 'A Soldier of Conscience.' He is ex -Army and tells his story, helping a young lad who had a facial disfigurement.

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

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending tonight's Meeting. A big thank you to S/M Karen for organising tonight's Christmas Draw and sorting everything out along with her helpers, S/Ms Lin MacCormack and Lynne Rimell. Enjoy the rest of the evening!

10. **Date of Next Meeting**: - Wednesday 7th January 2026.

11. **Meeting Closed at**: 20.50

Chairman

Secretary