



Minutes of
RNA Portland Branch General Meeting held at the Masonic Centre
Wednesday 4th February 2026

The meeting was opened at 20.45 by Chairman S/M Dusty Miller. 37 Members were present.

1. **Apologies:** were received from 11 Members.

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

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting and welcomed S/M Bill Wheeler, a new Member to the Branch. Tonight we're going to have a rum raffle, with a bottle Pusser's Rum as the prize. If this proves popular we may well have one more often.

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

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

Matters Arising: Nil

Proposed by S/M Ian Tate

Seconded by S/M Dodge Howes

For: 31 Against: 0

Abstention: 6

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

Email from Jon Everett, WWO National Co-ordinator, ref recording of all WWO information and a training session if needed. S/M Christine has spoken with both S/Ms Gill and Lin regarding this and they have the situation under control, as Gill passes all details to Lin, who completes the Monthly Form for Central Office.

Letter received by Branch Chairman, S/M Dusty Miller from Lt (SCC) Rachel Harris RNR, ref Invitation to Members of the Branch to Portland Sea Cadet Prize Giving Evening on Thursday 5th February to present awards.

Email received from the Royal British Legion, ref Cycling Challenges 2026.

Email sent to Andy Christie, RNA National Chairman, ref Guest of Honour at our 70th Anniversary Annual Dinner on Saturday 18th April.

Email sent to Cdr Louis Wilson-Chalon (RNR) and wife Lorna, ref Guests of Honour at our Trafalgar Night Dinner on Saturday 24th October. Reply received accepting the invitation.

5. Items discussed at Committee Meeting

Area 4 Webmaster - S/M Bob Featherstone has now taken over the reins of Area 4 Website. All News items and important 'In Memoriam' notices that are for the Area Website should continue to be channelled through him as Branch PRO.

Guest of Honour for Trafalgar Night Dinner 2026 - S/M Nige Rimell has suggested that his ex-Flight Commander from HMS London, Cdr Louis Wilson-Chalon (RNR) be our Guest of Honour. The Committee were in agreement and details to be passed to the Secretary for a formal invitation to be sent.

Bank Charges – S/M Pete Shoemsmith stated that cheques now cost 50p each to be paid in and also to be sent from the account. The Post Office have been told by Lloyds Bank not to accept cheques for paying in. Cash payments are now preferred.

Rig for General Branch Meetings – S/M Dusty Miller suggested that rather than wear full rig for our General Branch Meetings he has purchased an RNA polo shirt. The Secretary's Guide suggested more informal dress so he was following this advice. If others wished to continue with full rig then he was fine with that idea.

Increase Branch fees back to £15 in 2027/8 – S/M Dusty Miller suggested that as Branch funds are getting lower, that we increase our subscriptions either next year or the following year. After discussion it was decided to leave them as they are for now and look again later.

Charity for 2026 – S/M Dusty Miller said various suggestions have come in regarding this: Portland Sea Cadets, Little Troopers (children of servicemen). To bring to the Branch Meeting in March.

6. Reports:

a. Ceremonial Report – S/M Ben Cartwright reported:

Thanks to all Members who attended S/M Jan Evans's funeral at All Saints' Church. The family were delighted with the turnout.

The Area has a new Ceremonial Officer, S/M Lee Perry from Plymouth Branch. Also the Area Standard Bearer has retired.

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

70th Anniversary Annual Dinner – Saturday 18th April in the Masonic Centre Main Hall. Entertainment – Steve Williams Disco. 3 choices of starter, 3 choices of main or vegetarian option, 3 choices of dessert or cheese & biscuits, tea or coffee & mints and a glass of port – all this for £30 per person. Costs have increased slightly due to increased catering expenses. Please add your name to the list. The menu will be posted on our Facebook page and Website soon. Please pay and give your menu choices to S/M Dave by the April Meeting.

Away Weekend 2026 – Thursday 8th to Monday 12th October at the Daish's Hotel, Shanklin, Isle of Wight. We now have 31 on the list and everyone has paid their non-refundable deposit

of £7.50. The £250 total non-refundable deposit has been paid to Daish's. We will be sharing a coach and our pick up point will be Victoria Square on Portland. An interim deposit of £30 per person will be required in March and the balance in August. S/M Dave will collect any amount that you wish to pay at each meeting to spread the cost.

Dorchester Skittles Evening – Friday 5th June. Further details to follow.

Vitality Blast 20-20 Cricket – at the Utilita Bowl near Southampton. Possible dates are Friday 29th May from 1500, Friday 26th June from 1500, Sunday 5th July from 1130. All 3 are 'double header' – men's and women's matches. More details to follow. Hopefully we can book a minibus. Please put your name on the list if interested.

Buckham Fair, near Beaminster – Sunday 2nd August. This is returning after a break of several years. We went there from 2015 to 2018, a good day out. Organised by Martin and Philippa Clunes, it has raised £600,000 for local charities. Advanced tickets are £20, supporting Dorset County Hospital. Please put your names on the list if interested. We will try to book a minibus if sufficient interest.

Trafalgar Night Dinner – Saturday 24th October in the Masonic Centre Main Hall.

Christmas Social – Saturday 5th December in the Masonic Centre Main Hall. Please note a change of date from 19th December.

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

Nil report.

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

£145 was raised tonight in the rum raffle. Some will be used to purchase the next bottle of rum. The rest will be divided between the Island Leg Club Charity and the Branch funds. Thank you for your wonderful support.

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

We now have 96 members with new member Bill Wheeler here tonight. S/M Karen also has another enquiry.

National Area/Conference Report – S/M Pete Shoemsmith reported:

The AGM and Area Meeting was on Saturday 17th January in Bude, and was attended by S/Ms Pete, Ben and David White. 17 Branches attended, 8 sent apologies and 1 did not reply. Two Branches have closed in the last year, Exeter and St Ives. There are now 26 Branches. S/M Malcolm Day from Chard is the new President, Brett Crabtree from Plymouth is the new

Area Secretary and Jon Everett who is National Welfare and Wellbeing Officer has also become Area Welfare and Wellbeing Officer. Our own S/M Bob is the new Area Webmaster. S/M David White was presented with a quail and some Pussers Rum for his services to the Area. He was also honoured with the award of Area Life Vice President.

The Annual Reunion at Bideford 2026 – there are 166 attending. S/M Christine is sorting the Branch Raffle Prize.

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

The Branch Website continues to remain stable and all background processes are up to date.

If anyone has anything they wish to be publicised on the Branch Website, please can they email S/M Bob with details sooner rather than later. His email address is on the Website.

g. **Wellbeing Report** – S/M Lin McCormack reported:

S/M Gill has had a phone call from S/M Malcolm Baldwin, who was in DCH having treatment on his legs, but he is now home.

It's nice to see S/M Tony Seal here tonight. Tony is S/M Joan's carer and he has had some assistance this evening so that he could be here.

Iris Jones – is awaiting surgery on her shoulder.

S/M Dennis Matthews is in hospital having an investigation.

S/M Al Greenslade – welcome back to our meetings! Al is due a bottle after having treatment and a period of isolation.

Mrs June Thompson had sent a thank you card for her Xmas gift. She is moving to her daughter's in Lincolnshire.

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

The Branch Account stands at £3,769.82

The Social Fund stands at £510.19

The Annual Charity Fund (Island Leg Club) stands at £663.85 (after 10 months)

Matters arising: Nil

Proposed by: S/M Ginge Sarsfield

Seconded by: S/M Ian Tate

For: 37

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

7. Any Other Voting Items :

S/M Dusty asked Members what type of raffle they would like at Meetings – the usual numbers raffle or rum raffle, or alternate. By a show of hands it was agreed to alternate the raffles.

Proposed by: Seconded by:

For: Against: Abstentions:

8. AOB Nil

9. Chairman’s Closing Comments:

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending tonight’s Meeting. He said he must thank Vanessa who looks after us at meetings behind the bar!

10. Date of Next Meeting: - Wednesday 4th March 2026.

11. Meeting Closed at: 21.40

Chairman

Secretary