



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

The meeting was opened at 20.05 by Vice Chairman S/M Nigel Rimell. 44 Members were present.

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

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

The Vice Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting and said it was nice to see so many here tonight with such miserable weather outside.

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

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

Matters Arising: Nil

Proposed by S/M Dickie Bird

Seconded by S/M Bob Featherstone

For: 38

Against: 0

Abstention: 6

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

Email correspondence with S/M Andy Christie, RNA National Chairman, ref 70th Anniversary Annual Dinner. He has accepted our invitation and is looking forward to meeting everyone.

5. **Items discussed at Committee Meeting**

Proposed Guest Speakers – S/M Dusty Miller hoped that we can arrange the following:

April – our next Branch charity.

May – Island Leg Club for the presentation of the money raised.

July – Wayne Ingram to talk about his book ‘Soldier of Conscience.’

Visit to Central Office on Friday 17th July – S/M Dusty Miller reported that he has reserved twelve spaces but more can be obtained if necessary and he will ask at the Branch General Meeting . The day outline is:- meet at 11.30 at the gate, lunch in the garden, chat with the

staff, a boat trip around the harbour and possibly Ship Anson afterwards. They were thinking of travelling by train but going by car was fine for those who wished.

Charity for 2026 – S/M Dusty Miller- This will be decided at the Branch Meeting tonight. Suggestions received are Portland Sea Cadets, Little Troopers and Branch Funds. See Voting items.

6. Reports:

a. Ceremonial Report – S/M Ben Cartwright sent in a report:

Coffee Morning at St Andrew's Church for Portland Sea Cadets on Thursday 26th March 2026 at 10.00.

National Standard Bearer's Competition is on Saturday 9th May at HMS Collingwood at 10.00. Training will be given on the day before. All details are in the February Circular.

ANZAC Day Memorial Service is on Saturday 25th April at 11.00 at the ANZAC Memorial on the Esplanade.

Weymouth Veterans' Parade is on Sunday 21st June.

S/M Nige reported that S/M Ben had kindly offered to carry the Branch Standard at Bideford as a one off. The position of Branch Standard Bearer is vacant and training will be given. This position comes with various joining gifts – a Standard, gauntlets and a tin of brasso! There are travel perks available with this position as well!

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

70th Anniversary Annual Dinner – Saturday 18th April in the Masonic Centre Main Hall at 18.45 for 19.15. Guest of Honour is S/M Andy Christie, RNA National Chairman. 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. 37 on the list so far, so room for more. The menu is on our Facebook page and Website. Please pay and give your menu choices to S/M Dave by the April Meeting.

Dorchester Skittles Evening – Friday 5th June at the Trinity Club, Dorchester, with Dorchester Branch and others. Further details to follow.

Vitality Blast 20-20 Cricket – at the Utilita Bowl near Southampton. Sunday 5th July. 'Double header' v Kent Spitfires – women's match at 11.30, men's at 15.30. Early bird group tickets at £24.00 – 15% =£20.40 each available until 30th April. 10 have expressed interest.

Buckham Fair – Sunday 2nd August. Advance tickets £20 available now. Supporting Dorset County Hospital. 7 have expressed interest. Further details to follow.

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. We will be sharing a coach with pick ups at Bridport bus station, Victoria Square on Portland and Weymouth Esplanade. An interim deposit of £30 per person is required this month and the balance in August. S/M Dave will collect any amount that you wish to pay at each meeting to spread the cost.

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

Christmas Social – Saturday 5th December in the Masonic Centre Main Hall.

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

Nil report.

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

S/M Karen asked if people would be interested in a fundraising coffee morning. There are options to consider – if held at Easton Methodist Church Hall we would supply the cakes, coffee and tea and do it ourselves. Or we could see if we can get on the list of charities at St Andrew’s Church, Southwell for their coffee mornings. We would need to supply the raffle prizes here. This will be investigated further.

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

Apart from 3 Members, everyone has paid their Membership subscriptions. Thank you all. We also have one new Full Member – S/M Dorian Dando.

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

The Bideford Reunion weekend is this coming weekend. Everyone should have received a programme.

The Annual Dinner Guest of Honour is Andy Christie. He will present our 70th Anniversary certificate and will give a 10-15 minute talk.

Regarding the Open Day at Central Office – last time we went they got the rum out on the boat trip!

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

The Branch Website continues to remain stable and up to date. If anyone takes any photos during the formal dinner at Bideford, please could they send them to me for our Website, the Area 4 Website and also the circulars.

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

It is lovely to see S/M Dennis Matthews and S/M Al Greenslade both here tonight. Bottle have been delivered.

Iris Jones – Gill has met with her. Iris's daughter is keeping an eye on her.

S/M Pete Hall is not too well.

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

Bank charges from Lloyds are now 75p to pay in £100 cash. Cheques are 50p each. However, Pete paid in £1900 cash at the Post Office and there was no charge but they cannot take cheques for Lloyds. Cash is much preferred if you can please.

The Branch Account stands at £4,130.29

The Social Fund stands at £510.19

The Annual Charity Fund (Island Leg Club) stands at £703.85 (after 11 months)

Matters arising: Nil

Proposed by: S/M David White

Seconded by: S/M Ginge Sarsfield

For: 44

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

S/M Pete reported that after tonight's wonderful raffle the Annual Charity now stands at £747.60. We will decide what to make it up to next month.

7. **Any Other Voting Items** :

S/M Nige said that the three Charity suggestions for the next year are:

The Portland Sea Cadets; the Little Troopers; Portland Branch funds.

It was proposed that this be decided by a show of hands.

Proposed by: S/M Ginge Sarsfield

Seconded by: Daz Askew.

Portland Sea Cadets 24

Little Troopers 16

Branch Funds 4

Portland Sea Cadets will be the new charity starting next month.

8. **AOB**

S/M Dennis Matthews thanked S/M Gill for the card and bottle of 'O Be Joyful!'

S/M Karen Miller asked Members to try to come to our Annual Dinner as it is the Branch's 70th Anniversary this year.

S/M Christine Tuck said that the Blue Light Card formerly just for the NHS members now accepts service and ex-service personnel. It is a discount card and well worth having.

S/M Karen Miller said that she and Dusty had been to visit S/M Arfer. He has some Naval books which he will donate to the Branch to raise funds for us.

9. Vice Chairman's Closing Comments:

The Vice Chairman thanked everyone for attending tonight's Meeting. It was a well attended and pleasurable meeting.

10. **Date of Next Meeting:** - Wednesday 1st April 2026.

11. **Meeting Closed at:** 21.05

Chairman

Secretary