



Minutes of RNA Portland Branch General Meeting
held at Portland Masonic Centre,
on Wednesday 5th August 2026

The meeting was opened at 20.05 by Chairman S/M Dusty Miller. 36 Members were present.

1. **Apologies**: were received from 12 Members.

2. Chairman's Opening Comments:

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting. He asked Members to be upstanding in memory of S/M Steve Skerman, a Portland Branch Committee Member for many years, who Crossed The Bar on Sunday 2nd August.

Saturday 1st August was Black Tot Day in the Corner House Inn. There were lots of songs sung and drinks drunk! Their nominated charities were the Portland TS Penn Sea Cadets and Portland Branch RNA. Both charities received the magnificent sum of £558!

We still urgently need a Branch Standard Bearer – please see S/Ms Dusty or Ben if you are able to do this worthwhile job.

S/M Dusty asked if everyone had seen a copy of the Minutes of the July Branch General 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 Roger Fullbrook

For: 33

Against: 0

Abstention: 3

4. Secretary's Remarks and Correspondence:

Email from Hilary Brown, Deputy Clerk, PTC, ref Remembrance Sunday, 8th November 2026. Information regarding a Bugler and Standard Bearers required. Committee members have replied to this.

Email from Hilary Brown, Deputy Clerk, PTC, ref VJ Memorial Day Saturday 15th August 2026 at 16.00 at All Saints' Church, Easton, Portland.

Email from S/M Brett Crabtree, Area 4 Secretary, ref RNAMC press release for all Branches from S/M Annette Laurie. (To be added to the Branch Monthly Newsletter).

Email correspondence with Cdr Louis Wilson-Chaley, our Guest of Honour, regarding a date change for our Trafalgar Night Dinner.

Matters Arising: Nil

5. Items discussed at Committee Meeting

Consideration of travel expenses for the new Standard Bearer to attend the training session at HMS Raleigh in October – S/M Ben Cartwright explained that there is a training day on Saturday 31st October at HMS Raleigh for Standard Bearer Training to help with attaining/maintaining standards in preparation for November ceremonies. It is between 09.00-16.00. People may wish to stay locally overnight and are invited to Torpoint & Rame Branch Meeting at the Old Comrades Services Club to include a fish and chip supper on the Friday evening. This will be voted on later in the meeting.

Gift of a Bottle of Rum from the Portland Island Leg Club – S/M Christine Tuck explained that the gift was to say ‘thank-you’ to the Branch for the large amount of money we raised for the club. After discussion it was decided to use this as the raffle prize at the next Branch Meeting. S/M Christine to send a thank you note.

6. Reports:

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

We await details of Steve Skerman’s funeral.

The following events have been confirmed:

Saturday 15th August -VJ Day Memorial Service at All Saints Church, Easton, Portland at 16.00.

Sunday 13th September -Avalanche Memorial Service, St Andrew’s Church Southwell at 16.00.

Sunday 8th November – Remembrance Sunday

Wednesday 11th November – Armistice Day

More details will follow when they are received.

Unconfirmed event dates are :

Thursday 3rd September -Merchant Navy Day Service, St George’s Church, Portland.

Saturday 17th October – HMS Illustrious Memorial Service.

Sunday 6th December – Civic Carol Service.

Hopefully we will receive details of these events soon.

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

Vitality Blast 20-20 Cricket – at the Utilita Bowl on Sunday 5th July was a good day out for 9 of our Members. Thanks to S/M Nige for driving the minibus.

Away Weekend 2026 – Thursday 8th to Monday 12th October at Daish's Hotel, Shanklin, Isle of Wight. There are 34 on the list. Pickups at Bridport bus station, Victoria Square and Weymouth Esplanade. Full payment of £296 per person is now due. If you haven't paid the balance by this evening, please make arrangements to pay S/M Dave as soon as possible, preferably by cheque payable to 'Portland Royal Naval Association.' If you have to cancel before 27th August you lose your deposit of £37.50 pp. After that date if you cancel, the nearer the departure date the more you lose.

Trafalgar Night Dinner 2026 – Please note that we had to change the date to Saturday 17th October in the Masonic Centre Main Hall. Choice of 3 starters, 3 main or vegetarian option, 3 dessert or cheese biscuits, tea or coffee and a glass of port all for £30 per person. Entertainer is Donna.

Christmas Social 2026 – Saturday 5th December in the Masonic Centre Main Hall. Entertainment - Steve Williams Disco.

Annual Dinner 2027 – Saturday 24th April at 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:

The coffee morning is arranged for Saturday 15th August at 10.00 at Easton Methodist Church Hall. Please could those bringing cakes have them at the Hall by 09.00. Thanks to all who have donated items for the Tombola. Over 30 Raffle prizes have been received. Thanks to everyone who has contributed – whether cakes, raffle or tombola. Your support has been amazing!

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

We received four new Members last month which is great news.

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

Open Day at Central Office on Friday 17th July was enjoyed by 9 of our Members. It was a great day. Instead of the boat trip, we had a tour of the dockyard. We met the new Membership Secretary, John Boreham. We are looking forward to going again next year.

The Area Meeting is on Saturday 19th September at Southill Community Centre, Weymouth at 14.30. Let S/M Pete know if you wish to go.

The AGM is at Dorchester in January 2027.

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

The Branch website finally received just under 3500 visits in July, this was a large increase on June (2342) albeit, most visits probably originated overseas. The website has also settled down now as new Security Certificates have been applied by the Host Server.

News and events continue to be published on webpages as they arise. Shipmates are encouraged to submit any material they wish to be published on the website to S/M Bob at the earliest opportunity.

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

A card will be sent to S/M Steve Skerman's family from the Branch.

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

The Branch Account stands at £3,303.12

The Social Fund stands at £510.19

The Annual Charity Fund (Portland Sea Cadets) stands at £160.75 (after 4 months)

Matters arising: Nil

Proposed by: S/M Dickie Bird

Seconded by: S/M Doc Foster

For: 36

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

7. **Any Other Voting Items** :

To provide travel expenses for a new Standard Bearer to attend the training session at HMS Raleigh on Saturday 31st October. (see item 5)

Proposed by: S/M Ben Cartwright

Seconded by: S/M Bernie Cranny

For: 36

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

8. **AOB** Nil

9. Chairman's Closing Comments:

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending tonight's Meeting. Another nice Meeting!

10. Date of Next Meeting: - Wednesday 2nd September.

11. Meeting Closed at: 21.10

Chairman

Secretary