

47 Royal Marine Commando Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Sunday 8th June 2025 in the Salle des Fêtes, Port-en-Bessin

Attendance: Bob Perry (Chairman), Paddy O'Connell (Vice Chairman), Anne-Marie Nicholls (Secretary), Allen Withington (Treasurer), Geof Haywood (Events Co-ordinator), Lisa Roberts (Membership Co-ordinator), Lou Sartorel (Standard Bearer), Phil Chappell, Richard Scrambler, May Scrambler, Jill Haywood, Shirley-Anne Perry, Joyce Stephens, Neil Stephens, Pat Roberts, Richard Hearn, Jacqui Hearn, Dave Shorrock.

Apologies: Nil apologies received.

Item	Action
ITEM 1 - Chairman's Opening Remarks Bob Perry welcomed all attendees to the AGM. He asked everyone to stand and mark a short period of silence in memory of our veterans and/or any family or friends that have passed during the last 12 months. Bob Perry remarked that his first year as chairman had been extremely busy but rewarding - this is reflected in the review of activities and also the improvements that have been made to some of the administrative functions of the Association which remains a vibrant and financially strong organisation. He felt privileged to be chairman of such a well respected and family orientated Association. Bob Perry thanked the committee for their tireless effort, working together to achieve the very best for the membership. The new website should be live by the end of the month; reason for the delay is due to a persistent problem with porting some of 'The Men' details and photographs from the old site to the new. Once the new website was launched then Bob Perry hoped to introduce a short monthly 'MailChimp' newsletter with links to the new website. Despatch would continue to be produced twice a year.	Chairman Chairman Chairman
ITEM 2 - Previous AGM Minutes The Minutes of the 2024 AGM had been circulated to the membership. No responses had been received and attendees were therefore asked to approve the minutes as published. <u>CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY</u>	Secretary

ITEM 3 - Review of Association Activities June 2024 - June 2025

Anne-Marie Nicholls outlined the following events that had occurred in the last 12 months:

Port-en-Bessin (June)

80th anniversary commemorations (joined by RMA and 47 Cdo (RG) RM).
Lt Gen Sir Charlie Stickland in attendance.
Asnelles bench & Asnelles memorial wall unveiled.
'In the Footsteps of 47 Commando' - 400 walkers - £13k raised for RM Charity.
Street named '47 RM Commando' at Tracy-sur-Mer.
Last Night Auction - over £3k raised for RM Charity.
Seamless handover of Chairman appointment at AGM.

Fecamp (September)

80th anniversary commemorations.
Elizabeth Walton, daughter of Major Walton MC RM, attended for first time.
3 x Streets/Square named '47 RM Commando/Major Walton'.

RMA Families Weekend CTCRM (September)

Lou Sartorel appointed RMA National Standard Bearer.

NHS South East Coast Ambulance Trust

Duchy College - Military & Protective Services Academy (October)

Bob Perry and Ken Cowdery accompanied groups conducting 'In the Footsteps of 47 Commando' march.

47 Cdo (RG) RM Luncheon Devonport (October)

Twelve of our members attended.

Life President & President Appointments (October)

Admiral the Rt Hon Lord West of Spithead GCB DSC PC.
Colonel Will Norcott RM - CO 47 Cdo (RG) RM.

Royal Marines Historical Society (October)

Ken Cowdery was presented with the RMHS Award for his work 'In the Footsteps of 47 Commando'.

Walcheren (November)

80th anniversary commemorations (joined by RMA and 47 Cdo (RG) RM).
HM Ambassador, 1st Sea Lord and Maj Gen Tony Turner in attendance.
Commando silhouette figure unveiled.
Medal Group of Capt Roger Lloyd RM (incl Dutch Order of Bronze Lion)
presented to the Polderhuis museum.
Visit to Carmen Battery.

(Continued...)

Remembrance Ceremonies (November)

Allen Withington laid a wreath at Graspan Memorial in London.
Pauline Harris laid a wreath at the 47 RM Commando memorial at Eastney.

HMS Victory Dinner (November)

Inaugural black tie annual dinner on board Nelson's Flagship. Forty members attended.

RM Charity Annual Fundraising Event (November)

The framed copy of a map carried on D-Day by 47 veteran Edward Cox raised £14k for the RM Charity.

Kapelsche Veer (January)

80th anniversary commemoration was attended by Bob and Shirley Perry along with Kelly Heathfield. Bob Perry laid the wreath on behalf of the British Embassy and delivered the Exhortation on behalf of all participating nations.

Mountbatten Festival of Music (March)

Stéphane and Nathalie Pitel were the Association's guests for the MFM weekend. Approx 35 members attended the concert in the Royal Albert Hall.

All

ITEM 4 - Treasurer's Report

Allen Withington presented the financial accounts for calendar year 2024 (attached to these minutes) with an explanation of all transactions and balances. He emphasised the following points:

The accounts are very healthy. There was a deficit of £3.6k; this was mainly due to the new memorial bench at Asnelles, hosting the Mayors at the MFM and a transfer of shop stock from the balance sheet.

It was explained that due to our Association's charitable relationship with the RMA-The Royal Marines Charity (RMA-TRMC) we are no longer able to levy a subscription fee upon our members (lately £15). Therefore the committee had unanimously decided to change the method, with immediate effect, by which members can continue to voluntary donate to the 47 RMCA. This change will bring the Association in line with the overwhelming majority of other RMA branches that have now moved away from individual subscriptions. This change will be publicised in the next edition of Despatch and also on the new website when launched.

It was proposed that the accounts for calendar year 2024 be accepted as a true record.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Bob Perry thanked the Treasurer for his report and the work that he undertakes on behalf of the membership.

Membership
Co-ord

Treasurer

All

ITEM 5 - Re-election of Committee Members

Bob Perry informed attendees that all of the current executive committee (Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Events Co-ordinator) had indicated that they were content to continue to serve in their respective roles. In addition, neither he nor the Secretary had been notified of any person wishing to be considered for any of the above appointments. Accordingly, the Chairman did not seek a vote on the re-election of the executive committee officials.

Chairman

Bob Perry informed attendees that the following additional co-opted members had volunteered for the following positions or indicated that they wished to remain in role:

Membership Co-ordinator - Lisa Roberts
Despatch Editor - Georgi Nicholls
Webmaster - Abby Eaton
Historical Records/'Following in the Footsteps' walk - Ken Cowdery
Standard Bearer - Lou Sartorel

Secretary

Lisa Roberts explained that she would be in touch with all members regarding the move to voluntary donations. She also asked all members to ensure that their RMA membership was linked to 47 RMCA (RMA branch) via the RMA website. If anyone was unsure of the way to proceed then please ask.

Membership Co-ord

Bob Perry thanked Lisa Roberts and all those members for actively volunteering their time and expertise to serve on the committee - it showed what a strong position the Association was in.

ITEM 6 - Approval of the Constitution

The Chairman explained that the existing constitution made many references to supporting our veterans who are sadly no longer with us. With that in mind he had rewritten the constitution to bring it more into line now that the Association was an established branch of the RMA. The latest version of the constitution had been unanimously approved by the committee and been circulated to the membership - no comment or amendments had been proposed. The Chairman asked attendees to approve the latest version of the constitution that would be available to view on the new website.

Chairman
Secretary

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 7 - Propositions

No propositions had been forwarded to the Secretary for consideration.

Secretary

ITEM 8 - Update on Future Events

Fecamp

Geof Haywood stated that the commemorations would take place between 1st-3rd September. The town issues the programme and we will follow the lead of the mayor. Geof also said that we would take the opportunity to pay our normal respects to the Belgian fallen and also to Major Walton MC RM.

Events Co-ord

(Continued...)

Walcheren

This year would be the normal programme between the 1st-3rd November - there would be no visit to Kapelsche Veer. As usual, hotel rooms would be block booked in the Hotel de Burg in Domburg.

Events Co-ord

Mountbatten Festival of Music 2026

It was anticipated that tickets for MFM 26 would be available in July. Geof Haywood will block book stalls tickets as usual - he usually pays and then recoups the cost of the ticket from attendees. Bob Perry reminded all prospective attendees that a booking fee is now charged by the Royal Albert Hall ticket office - this would be added to the cost of the ticket. On a linked note Geof Haywood reminded all that the Union Jack Club (UJC) is for service/retired service personnel who are required to adhere to UJC policy for booking guests into the club, especially those who request accommodation over the MFM weekend when the club is extremely busy.

Events Co-ord

Lou Sartorel stated that if you were prepared to 'bucket shake' for the RM Charity prior to the matinee or evening performances then a free ticket would be provided.

Annual Dinner

It was agreed by everyone who attended the annual dinner on HMS Victory that it was a fantastic event and the annual dinner theme should be continued. Geof Haywood thought it was highly unlikely that HMS Victory would be available in future on the same terms that the Association had been fortunate to secure last November.

Bob Perry suggested that a dinner in London would be fairly central for all members. HMS President, on the northern bank of the Thames near Tower Bridge may be available. He asked Paddy O'Connell and Anne-Marie Nicholls to lead the search for a suitable venue.

Vice Chairman
Secretary
Events Co-ord

AFTER NOTE: Paddy O'Connell has reported that our Association has been granted permission to use HMS President for a black tie dinner. He will investigate further and propose available dates to the committee.

Vice Chairman

ITEM 9 - Any Other Business

Wreaths - Bob Perry stated that the Association spends approximately £1k each year on wreaths and other floral tributes. The committee have agreed a wreath matrix that stipulates what size/type of wreath should be laid at each of our planned events. This course of action brings a degree of standardisation and will reduce costs.

Retired Standard - Bob Perry proposed that the retired standard - designed by the veterans - should be appropriately folded and housed in a custom crafted solid oak glazed flag box. Martin Cox, son of 47 veteran Edward Cox, who produced the coasters and leather trays has offered to produce the flag box at no cost to the Association. It was further proposed that the 'Veterans' Flag' could be displayed at future AGMs and annual dinners as a reminder that everything the Association does is in memory of our veterans.

(Continued...)

Lou Sartorel added that it was military traditional that retired standards should normally be laid up in a museum, church or other place of historical significance and allowed to decay until there is nothing left - 48 RM Commando have laid up a retired standard in a church in Gravesend. Although Bob Perry was very aware of this practice he was in favour of housing the retired standard in a flag box as the Association is not particularly affiliated to any church - further discussion would be required before a final decision was made.

Chairman/All

Association Identity - Pat Roberts and Joyce Stephens thought that the identity of the Association was at risk, especially during our visit to Port-en-Bessin/Normandy, due to our closer links with the RMA. It was thought that veterans' family members were relegated 'to the back' especially at Bayeux CWGC cemetery. Phil Chappell stated that the RM Prayer was usually spoken by a veteran/family with reverence rather than read out in military fashion. Lou Sartorel also added his thoughts along the same lines as already discussed. Paddy O'Connell said that the Association was very well respected as a group and we perhaps needed to be a bit more assertive.

Bob Perry thanked all participants for raising this issue and for their candid views. He was aware that this issue would be raised and had therefore discussed this with the committee prior to the AGM. We are perhaps victims of our own success - for many years our veterans thought that the serving and retired Corps did not appreciate their achievements in WW2. However, better liaison would take place with the RMA and 47 Cdo (Raiding Group) RM to ensure that Association families were always front and centre during all future events. He apologised that this had occurred this year and asked members to trust the committee - the unique identity of the 47RMCA will be maintained.

Chairman

ITEM 10 - Date of Next Meeting

With no further business the Chairman closed the meeting. Next year's AGM would take place in Port-en-Bessin on Monday 8th June with a time to be determined.

Secretary

Anne-Marie Nicholls
Secretary

Enclosure:

47 RM Cdo Association Accounts for 1 January - 31 December 2024.

47 ROYAL MARINE COMMANDO BRANCH
ROYAL MARINES ASSOCIATION
INCOME & EXPENDITURE

YEAR TO 31ST DECEMBER 2024

PREVIOUS YEAR 2023

	£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOME						
Membership subscriptions			1,075.00			930.00
Donations						
General donations	1,383.00				426.68	
PEB Donations					1,116.00	
PEB Auction RMA	1,800.00				210.00	
Funeral donations					535.05	
			3,183.00			2,287.73
Amazon	133.96				69.20	
Book Sales	124.00					
Merchandise Sales	20.00					
			277.96			69.20
TOTAL INCOME			4,535.96			3,286.93
EXPENDITURE						
Wreaths etc	740.00				710.00	
Web Hosting etc	21.60				143.71	
Despatch Printing & Postage					85.00	
Other	72.00				333.30	
Funeral Costs	197.10				195.30	
Room Hire					100.00	
Finance Charges/ SUMUP	86.00				30.00	
Stock write - off	622.92					
PEB recon.					165.00	
Fecamp					352.80	
MFM Mayors Visit	1,615.00					
Asnelles Bench	1,600.75				1,500.00	
Asnelles Wall	Donations	(2,426.70)			2,100.00	
	Expenditur	1,936.00			(2,118.50)	
			4,464.67			3,596.61
Walcheren						
Net Travel and misc. exps	537.00					
Wreaths					44.00	
Insurance (50%)					145.50	
			537.00			189.50
PEB						
Net trip receipts(members)					(5,502.20)	
RMA contribution					(1,834.33)	
Coach					2,065.20	
Hotel					5,810.33	
Insurance (50%)					145.50	
Other	2542.50					
Expenses	542.18					
			3,084.68			684.50
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			8,086.35			4,470.61
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE			- 3,550.39			- 1,183.68

**47 ROYAL MARINE COMMANDO BRANCH
ROYAL MARINES ASSOCIATION
BALANCE SHEET**

AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2024

AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2023

	£	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Painting Port-en-Bessin					
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stock					
	192.92				
	350.00				
	80.00				
	<u>0</u>				622.92
Balance at Bank		19,083.81			22,111.92
Debtor					51.50
MFM 2025	<u>103.7</u>		103.70		<u>_____</u>
					<u>_____</u>
Petty Cash Euros		27.31			27.31
Sterling	<u>48.44</u>				
	<u>75.75</u>				<u>27.31</u>
TOTAL		<u>19,263.26</u>			<u>22,813.65</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Creditors					
	_____				_____
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>19,263.26</u>			<u>22,813.65</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>£</u>	<u>19,263.26</u>			<u>£</u> <u>22,813.65</u>
REPRESENTED BY:-					
Undistributable Reserves (Painting)					6080.00
T'sfer to RM					<u>-6080.00</u>
General Reserves					6,032.23
Bal. Dec. '23		22,813.65			(1,183.68)
Surplus / (Deficit)		(3,550.39)			<u>17,965.10</u>
Transfer from Restricted Fund		<u>_____</u>			
		<u>19,263.26</u>			<u>22,813.65</u>
Restricted Fund					17,965.10
Spend in year					
Transfer to General Reserve					<u>(17,965.10)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS & RESERVES	<u>£</u>	<u>19,263.26</u>			<u>£</u> <u>22,813.65</u>