

DRAFT

**4th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
THE RIFLES AND RGBW REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION**

Held in the Officers' Mess 1RIFLES Beachley Barracks Chepstow NP16 7YG
10h30 hrs on Saturday 20th February 2016

Attendance:

Maj Gen N Welch OBE
Brig PEO'R-B Davidson-Houston CBE, President
Col (Retd) SJ Oxlade MBE Chairman
Lt Col (Retd) ATD Lerwill OBE, Secretary
Attendance (45) List at Annex A

Apologies:

Apologies (20) List Annex A

ITEM

DISCUSSION

The 2015 Annual General Meeting was preceded by Topical Updates:

1. The RIFLES - current Situation (Lt Col Lerwill)
2. RIFLES Benevolence (Lt Col Lerwill). Grants totalling £290K was paid out to 66 Cases in 2015 while a further "20K had been disbursed to 34 Cases in January 2016.

Annual General Meeting 2015 Agenda.

1. Chairman's Report
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2013 and Matters Arising
3. Report on the Account (Income & Expenditure)
4. Regimental Reunions 2016
5. RGBW Charities Trust & Association - The Way Ahead
6. AOB
7. Date of Next Meeting

1 Opening Remarks by the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed All to the Meeting and informed Members of Association activities in 2016 (see Item 4 below). He thanked the Rifles Offices in Gloucester and Salisbury, particularly the support of Lesley Bradshaw and Sue Nelmes, for their efforts in 2015 and reported that the Salisbury Office would not be editing the 2017 Annual Newsletter and, therefore, the future format was to be considered.

The Chairman then welcomed the President and the Chairman of the RGBW Trust, Major General Welch OBE who would speak on the Board decisions regarding the future of the Trust and Association (ITEM 5).

The Chairman then reminded the Meeting that this was the 2015 AGM delayed and that the 2016 AGM would be held in October as usual.

2 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2014, 18th October 2014

The Minutes of the 2014 AGM were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Proposed: Captain W Sherman
Seconded: Captain SP North

There were no Matters Arising

3 Accounts

Lt Col (Retd) Motum reported on Account action as at 31 Mar 15 identifying key areas of Reunion and Social activity costs, sponsorship towards the final Imjin Battlefield Tour and the monies expended on the two major Association activities in 2015: the Loos Battlefield Tour (£12K-) and the Windsor Loos parade, service and tea with the Patron (£15.5K). He then reminded the Meeting that the Accounts had been lodged with the Charity Commission and were available for viewing on line.

Lt Col Motum briefed that the RGBW Charities Fund Accounts were placed with Cazenoves the same investment brokers used by The RIFLES; that the Association Account held £500K and had subsidised 2014 Reunions with £10K and the 2015 Reunions to £9K which was seen as both acceptable and sustainable.

The Balance Sheet as at 31 Mar 15 is attached as at Annex B to the Minutes.

4 REGIMENTAL REUNIONS AND AGM FOR 2016

- **GLOUCESTER - 12 Mar 16**
- **HORSE GUARDS RETREAT - 2 Jun 16.** Massed Bands of The Rifles (3), Burma Band (Durham), Royal Hamilton LI (CAN), RGR Band, RGR Pipers. This night is for the SW (incl Berkshire) and NE Regions.
- **DEVIZES - 5 Jun**
- **SALISBURY - 09 | 10Jul**
- **READING - 23 | 24Jul "Maiwand Weekend"**
- **AGM - 8 or 22 Oct in Brock Barracks, Reading**
- **REMEMBRANCE - 11 Nov The Garden of Remembrance | 13 Nov The cenotaph Parade**
- **FEROZESHAH DAY 4 Dec 16**

Attention was drawn also to RIFLES Freedoms in the South West 2016

Members were encouraged to support these parades, in particular Swindon and Reading where OCA contingents were invited to march.

- **9 Apr 16 - SWINDON.** Exercising the extension of the Grant of Freedom, first awarded to WILTS on 5 May 59, a contingent from 3RIFLES & 13pl 7RIFLES (Swindon) with Rifles Band & Bugles. **Desired Aim - contingent of OCA.**
- **8 May 16 - READING.** Exercising the extension of the Grant of Freedom, first awarded to R.BERKS on and subsequently to DERR and RGBW, contingents from 7RIFLES with Rifles Band & Bugles and an OCA contingent. **Rifles Oxford Office Lead**
- **24 Jun 16 - BODMIN.** A sounding of Retreat in the Castle Bodmin - evening.
- **25 Jun 16 - PLYMOUTH.** Exercising the Grant of Freedom a 4RIFLES contingent supported by 6RIFLES, OCA (DandD, RGBW and LI) and ACF contingents will be the MAIN Event on Armed Forces Day. Potential for 50,000 pers on site.
- **25 Sep 16 - BLANDFORD FORUM.** Exercising the Grant of Freedom by a contingent from 5RIFLES supported by a contingent of 6RIFLES and the Rifles Salamanca Band & Bugles

5 RGBW CHARITIES TRUST & ASSOCIATION - THE WAY AHEAD

The Chairman of the RGBW Regimental Charities Trust, Major General Welch OBE, informed the Meeting of decisions taken by the Board of Trustees on the future of the Charities Funds - Regimental Trust (including The Officers' Club and Memorials), the Regimental Association and The Rocke Bequest.

He briefed on the Army today; its tempo (383 deployments to 66 countries in 2015); the need for MOD to cut 30% of its civil service manpower by 2020; that 2017 would herald the 10th anniversary of the formation of the Rifles; and that the RGBW Trust needed now to discharge its duties in different ways – how best to take the Trust forward and how best to serve the remaining elements of the RGBW: in short to maintain and sustain its legacy. He informed the Meeting that:

RGBW Charities Funds

The Regimental Charities Funds had been simplified; changed Investment Managers to Cazenoves, in line with the Rifles, and would be passed to the Rifles in a “Restricted Fund” for management accruing the benefits of saving Accountants fees as well as wise guidance of the city heavyweights on the Rifles Board of Trustees. He stressed that the RGBW Board of Trustees would continue to control the Funds.

RGBW Museums

One RGBW museum, either SOGM or the Wardrobe would lose MOD funding from 1st April 2017 but the Trust was determined that the Regiment's legacy should be taken forward. Accordingly, £60,000 per annum was to be made available for five (5) years for the ‘losing’ museum but if MOD moved the goal posts over this period, the RGBW Board of Trustees would then revisit this plan.

Regimental Association

There is now a strong desire for The Rifles Association (TRA) to evolve and eventually subsume the Forming Regiments' Associations. The RGBW Board of Trustees,/Regimental Association Trustees have therefore decided to take a number of steps to position the Regimental Association ready for the day that the circumstances are right to become fully integrated with the TRA

Major General Welch OBE then handed the floor over to the Regimental Association President.

Brigadier Davidson-Houston CBE then outlined the steps to be taken to start the convergence with the TRA. He invited Lt Col Motum, The Rifles County Secretary Gloucester Office to outline the principles behind the formation of the TRA set out by the first Col Comdt of The Rifles, Gen Sir Nicholas Parker KCB CBE ADC(Gen), which included:

- The TRA would be “.....built on the forming (Regiments) branches...”
- Recognition that this would take time and advocated change that “.....finds its own pace...”. Change will not be forced on members of the D and D, LI, RGBW or RGJ Regimental Associations.

The Regimental Association President then summarised how the RGBW Regimental Board of Trustees would seek to achieve convergence through incremental change to our current structure and practises – evolutionary rather than revolutionary. He pointed out that change was also being driven by the need to reduce the burden on The Rifles County Offices in Salisbury and Gloucester as they have had to take on wider Rifles responsibilities in other counties. The proposal was:

- To maintain the status quo with regard to Regimental Association current activities, as long as there were sufficient members supporting them.
- To establish County Committees for each of the three Counties (and possibly for the City and County of Bristol) with a County Chairman for each. They would replace the single

Regimental Association Chairman. and be members of the Regimental Association Executive Committee. The role of the President and Vice-Presidents would remain.

- For Branches outside the 3 or 4 Counties would be affiliated to their nearest County Committee. He noted that Riflemen leaving The Rifles since formation in 2007 would be encouraged to join the Branches in the County of their choice, recognising that many would prefer to keep in touch via social media.
- The RGBW Board of Trustees would remain the Regimental Association Trustees until it was deemed timely to integrate fully into the TRA.
- The RGBW Board of Trustees would employ a salaried Secretary and, possibly, a Book keeper supported with the technical means to manage Association matters, to compensate for the reduced support from The Rifles County Offices..

The Chairman of the RGBW Board of Trustees then invited questions from Members present.

Wide ranging discussion followed covering concerns over the transfer of Trust monies (**Povey**), the potential loss of utilities for both museums now (**O'Hare**); how the flow of information would be managed (**Miller**), what the lines of communication would be (**North**) and the absolute need for County sub Committees to support the Chairmen (**Sherman**). **The Chairman** responded that any changes to MOD positions would see the Trust reviewing its decisions; the need to maintain information flow, and membership support for the new Association structure was strongly recommended and that much would be detailed in a new Association Constitution that would be written and placed before an Extraordinary General Meeting coinciding with the 2016 AGM in October. **In general, support was expressed by Members for the changes proposed by the RGBW Board of Trustees.** (**The Chairman** then departed the AGM to attend a meeting at HQ ARRC in his capacity as ACGS).

The President outlined the next steps:

- He would draft a short paper setting out the proposal for the future of the Regimental Association.
- The current Chairman of the Regimental Association would lead n the drafting of an amended Constitution.
- Regimental Funds would move under the management of The Rifles Trustees in a "Restricted Fund" - only make investment decisions.
- Recruitment of a Secretary and possibly a Book Keeper for the Regimental Association would take place as soon as possible.
- Draft papers would be distributed to the Regimental Association Executive Committee for consultation with the Branches prior to an Extraordinary AGM in October 2016.

6 **AOB.**

- a. **Sandes Home Memorial.** The future security of this Memorial was tabled and discussed by the Executive Committee who decided that it should remain on its present site until the long term future of Abercorn Barracks and, especially, the Sandes Home is known. The Executive Committee would monitor the situation and report to Members as necessary.
- b. **DERR Silver Bugles.** Members were informed that 11x DERR silver bugles had been loaned to the LI, RGJ and RIFLES Bugle Association, completely refurbished to parade standard and would be seen at the Horse Guards Sounding of Retreat on 1st and 2nd June 2016.

7 **Date of Next Meeting**

The Next Meeting will take place on **Saturday 8th or 22nd October 2016 at 11h00** in Brock Barracks, Reading, Berkshire RG30 1HW

**ATD Lerwill OBE
Lieutenant Colonel (Retd)
Acting Secretary**

20th February 2016

**SJA Oxlade MBE
Colonel (Retd)
Chairman**

20th February 2016

Annexes:

- A. Attendance
- B. Reunion Costs

Distribution:

President
Chairman
Executive Committee (9)
Association Newsletter 2015
RIFLES & RGBW Regimental Association Website
Branch Secretaries (18)
Rifles Offices (2)