

THE BLYTHE SAPPERS
73rd MANAGEMENT MEETING
1100hrs Wednesday 26th February 2014
THE ARMY AND NAVY CLUB, LONDON

Present:

Sapper Scott Robinson	Chairman
Sapper Hooky Walker	Vice Chairman
Sapper Alasdair Wilson	Chairman Elect 2015
Sapper Stuart Sinclair	Council Link Member
Sapper Peter Clayton	Honorary Treasurer
Sapper David Hamilton	Honorary Auditor
Sapper Charles Holman	Membership Secretary
Sapper Larry Inge	Dinner Secretary
Sapper Carel Bouwens	Honorary Secretary

ITEM ONE. Introduction.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to this his first meeting and expressed his confidence that he will enjoy his year in the post.

ITEM 2. Apologies for Absence.

There were no apologies.

ITEM 3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

The minutes of the 72nd meeting were accepted as a true record.

ITEM 4. Matters Arising.

- a. Council Link Member apologised that he had as yet not written to the widow of Sapper Mike Stancombe with regard to a donation to her chosen charity, but said he had not forgotten this commitment.
- b. He continued that members of Council had unanimously agreed to invite Sapper John McLennan to join them on Council in recognition of his long, loyal and devoted service as Honorary Secretary to the Blythe Sappers. The Honorary Secretary agreed to put the invitation to him.
- c. Sapper Alasdair Wilson advised the meeting that the donation provided by the Blythe Sappers for the Samaritan Fund of the RE Officers Widows' Society had been directed at the widow of a retired sapper officer and she had expressed her extreme gratitude for this act of kindness.

ITEM 5. Finance Report.

- a. The Honorary Treasurer presented the proposed budget for 2014, which he said was based upon retaining a small amount of capital at the year end to ensure there are funds to meet unforeseen expenses. The budget also includes a provision of £2,500 for charitable donations and this led to a discussion on the cost to members of lunches. After some debate the Honorary Secretary agreed to make a proposal to the next meeting on the charge for lunches.
- b. The Honorary Auditor informed the Committee that he had reviewed the accounts for the FY 2013 and was pleased to report that he found them to be sound. However he did report that 19 members had failed to pay their annual subscriptions. Whilst some of these failures may be a consequence of Sappers not wishing to retain their membership it was felt that those that failed to settle their dues should be struck off, albeit after some reminders and cajoling. The Honorary Treasurer

and the Honorary Membership Secretary agreed to investigate the situation and report back at the next meeting.

- c. The Honorary Auditor then suggested that it is timely to review the rate of subscriptions for new joining members and suggested that it should be increased to £20. The Committee felt that this was a sensible proposal and agreed that both subscriptions and joining fees for those joining the Society henceforth are increased to £20 each.
- d. Finally the Honorary treasurer confirmed that he had concluded his investigation into our banking arrangements and recommended that we stay as we are. This was accepted.

ITEM 6. Corps Report.

Sapper Charles Holman reported that as the Corps Report is only published 6 monthly that he had not received and update and that there is no change from the previous report.

ITEM 7. HONORARY/ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP.

Sapper Hamilton presented his proposal for the resurrection of associate and honorary membership, honours which had been abandoned several years back. It was reported that Council did not appear to be in favour of this proposal and would be certain to veto it if it came to a vote. However it was pointed out that friends of the Society could have the distinction of “Blythe Sapper” conferred upon them from recommendations of the Management Committee through the normal membership process. They would not be required to pay a subscription or joining fee but would be expected to pay their way at Society events. The Committee agreed to maintain the status quo.

ITEM 8. Casualties.

- a. Deceased: The following Blythe Sappers have been notified as having died since the last meeting:
 - Sapper John Stibbon
 - Sapper Mike Cottell
 - Sapper Derek Brownson
- b. Resignations: There have been no resignations since the last meeting.

ITEM 9. DATES FOR 2015.

- a. The Honorary Secretary advised the meeting that he had proposed dates for lunches to the Chairman Elect for 2015. Dependent upon the Chairman Elect’s final approval (ie after arranging speakers) the provisional dates are:
 - Thursday 26th February 2015
 - Thursday 28th May 2015
 - Thursday 24th September 2015
 - Thursday 3rd December 2015
- b. The Honorary Dinner Secretary suggested that the Guest night for 2015 be held on a date similar to that for this year and all agreed that Saturday 25th July 2015 was eminently suitable.

ITEM 10. GUEST NIGHT 2014.

The Dinner Secretary provided a comprehensive and clear brief on proposed arrangements for the Guest Night on Saturday 26th July 2014. He confirmed that a string quartet would be provided from the central pool of musicians. He pointed out that accommodation could be tight as there are alterations to the whole balance of single accommodation underway in Brompton Barracks and this could adversely affect availability for the officers’ mess. However he confirmed that most accommodation is en suite and that there are also 5 to 7

VIP suites available. The Honorary Secretary agreed to decide which costing template to adopt and to provide the seating plan along with names of attendees for both the mess and access security. The Honorary Dinner Secretary agreed to provide place cards, menu cards and the accommodation plot.

ITEM 11. Nominations for Membership.

The following nominations have been proposed and seconded for membership of the Blythe Sappers:

<i>Nomination</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>	<i>Seconder</i>
Maj Gen Dicky Davis	Sapper Idris Pearce	Sapper Mark Mans
Lt Col John Prosser	Sapper Roger Christie	Sapper Mike Stephens
Maj Kevin Claber	Sapper Jeremy Blades	Sapper Robert Stephens
Lt Col Tim Blad	Sapper Carel Bouwens	Sapper Peter Hornby
Col Mark Burrows	Sapper Tony Keeley	Sapper Idris Pearce
Col Simon Hulme	Sapper Jonathan Welch	Sapper Aiden Smyth
Lt Col David Quinn	Sapper Larry Inge	Sapper Charles Holman
Maj Simon Sole	Sapper Charles Pickles	Sapper Carel Bouwens

There were no objections to these nominations and consequently they will be notified by the Membership Secretary of their promotions.

ITEM 12. Attendance and Arrangements for today's lunch.

Principal Guest: Colonel Tim Collins (ex R Irish)

Total Number attending: 92

Number of Guests: 28

Those to rise: Nil

ITEM 13. Any Other Business.

The Vice Chairman notified the meeting that he had presented a copy of Volume XII of the Corps History to RUSI and it had been gratefully accepted.

ITEM 11. Next Meeting.

- a. The date of the next meeting is set for 1100 hrs Wednesday 28th May 2014, which will be followed by a Council meeting at noon. Sapper Stuart Sinclair apologised that he would be unable to attend either meeting.
- b. There being no other business the meeting closed at 1156 hrs.

Sapper Scott Robinson
Chairman, the Blythe Sappers

Sapper Carel Bouwens
Honorary Secretary
The Blythe Sappers