

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE KING’S OWN SCOTTISH BORDERERS ASSOCIATION HELD BY VIDEO ON 20 FEBRUARY 2021**

(The meeting was carried over from 17 Oct 2020 due to COVID 19)

1. **Attending**

Colonel AJ Loudon MBE President KOSB Association

Lieutenant Colonel RS Combe MBE Vice Chairman KOSB Association

Lieutenant Colonel CGO Hogg OBE DL Trustee

Major DP Sturrock TD WS Trustee

Major AG Horsburgh Trustee

Captain Andrew Herberts Trustee

Major Lance Thornton Association Executive Officer

Major David Harvey Serving Representative

Mr Gerry O’Neill Museum Officer

 **Apologies**

Major Richard Edlmann Trustee

Captain Tom Duff Treasurer

 **Branches**

Lieutenant Colonel GA Middlemiss BEM DL Edinburgh

Major EFR Scroggie MBE Edinburgh

Mr Bill Heaney Berwick upon Tweed

Lieutenant Colonel RJ Stuart MBE Stranraer

Major IDH Gibbs London

Captain MHP Falk London

Mr Pat McIntyre Riders Branch

 **Apologies**

Mr R Hill Northern Ireland

Mr R Rae Dumfries

Mr C Fretwell Lanarkshire

1. **Chairman’s Welcome**

Angus Loudon welcomed all and noted that it has been a tough year necessitating the postponement of our normal AGM to this point, and its re-scheduling online rather than face to face.

This AGM will be functional and business focused and covers the statutory requirement to hold an AGM, but AL held out the hope that we would be meeting face to face soon, and hopes to see many Borderers at the AGM to be held in Berwick later in the year.

He noted that we have lost a number of fellow Borderers during the past year, and Major Alastair Brooks MC recently.  Alastair was a KOSB stalwart and one of the last remaining National Service officers and one of the few to have been awarded a gallantry medal.  He passing is noted with great sadness.

AL also welcomed Bob Stuart to the meeting and congratulated him on his promotion and forthcoming command of 6 SCOTS, becoming the first LE Officer to take a command.  The meeting echoed this sentiment.

1. **Minutes of previous meeting**

Minutes of the previous KOSB Association AGM held on Saturday 12 October 2019 at Locharbriggs Social Club Dumfries were read and passed as a true record.

 Proposer: David Sturrock

 Seconded: Colin Hogg

1. **Matter arising**
2. Follow up to Bob Bolton’s question about ORs being represented on the board of trustees.  David Sturrock noted that nothing in the constitution or the articles of association are any bar to any group being represented on the board.  Angus Loudon confirmed that the criteria for membership rests solely on the skills, expertise and ability to commit time of any particular candidate.  This will be further discussed at the Trustees’ meeting in June, but in the meantime, with our XO providing a strong link to the association membership and David Harvey representing a link to the serving community, the Chairman felt that there were no voices in danger of being ignored.  Grant Horsburgh pointed out that BB’s point had referred to a request for a rep from each branch being on the committee.  It was felt that this would make the board unwieldly and ultimately reduce its effectiveness as a decision making body.  There was an attempt in 2020 to give branches a formal opportunity to engage with the trustees outside the AGM, led by Russell Combe.  This will be continued in 2021.

Bob Stuart noted that the improvement in communication since Lance Thornton took the XO post has been marked and with the appointment of Gerry O’Neill as MO the comms have continued to be strong.  He welcomed this and also said that he tells his branch members that there is no excuse for a lack of knowledge about developments in Berwick given the messaging from Facebook, the website and email.  He congratulated the team on their use of the new comms channels.  He did suggest that some sort of schematic outlining the comms channels and also the roles of the trustees be prepared for the membership to pre-empt such enquiries as BB represented.

1. Bill Heaney noted that 6c in the minutes asked whether Borderers might be asked to make a donation to the costs of Minden Day at Berwick on the day.  It was agreed that this was not unreasonable given the cost of putting on the event (about £6k). This would be examined further.
2. **Accounts**

David Sturrock went through the accounts, noting that the full accounts were available both through Companies House and the Scottish Charities regulator, OSCR.

He noted that while sub have increased (with thanks to the work of the XO), there was a shortfall versus previous years in Donations and Legacies because a regular anonymous donation of £5k did not materialise in 2019.

Welfare spend showed a decline too, continuing a trend evident in the past few years.  AL asked if other charities were seeing this as HQ RRS believe that Covid will stimulate a marked increase in requests for help.  Andy Middlemiss said his SSAFA branch in Perth and Kinross had seen a surprising fall in case numbers for welfare, but a notable increase in demand for mentoring (helping the transition from the military to civilian life).  Colin Hogg stated that this was being reflected at the national level at SSAFA, and no-one is entirely sure why this is the case.

Balance Sheet: DS stated that investments have been volatile since Covid, but have recovered well.  Angus Loudon thanked Tom Duff, David Sturrock and Lance Thornton on the accounts and subscriptions.  He noted that we are now able to claim Gift Aid on donations and subs and that this was proving a good source of revenue.  He said that he was in touch with our investment managers who are suggesting a potential change in investment mandate.  [Andrew Herberts note: the current mandate asks the manager to focus on income generation however in recent years this focus has meant that large parts of the investment universe are closed to our managers because of a lack on income yield (e.g. the technology sector has delivered excellent returns over time, but it does not tend to pay dividends and so is under-represented in our portfolio).  This chasing of income can lead to a concentrated and therefore more risky portfolio.  They suggest that we consider a total return mandate which is agnostic between income and capital returns.  This approach is more flexible and should, in the long term, generate higher overall returns.  Association needs for cash can be met from either income or realising capital gains.]

The financial statement is attached to these minutes.

1. **Branch Reports**
2. Northern Ireland- Sorry I am unable to attend the Zoom link but, technology & I have not caught up yet!

Like all other branches the pandemic has put a stop to all meetings & get- togethers. As a branch, we continue to support each other through Whatsapp and problems that occur are quickly sorted out. We are in good health and those who are of age or key workers have received their first vaccination. We lost an associate member at the beginning of the lockdown; wife of the late Dusty Millar, but this was due to a short illness. Our main highlight of last year was the erecting & dedication of the memorial stone at Palace Barracks. We thank the association and all those who contributed towards this. We had one welfare issue which we found out about via another association. An ex-Borderer’s marriage had broken down and he had not been on our radar. We got his details and were able to help him furnish his home & move in. On behalf of the Northern Ireland members, we pass on our regards to everyone and look forward to returning to some form of normality, whenever this may take place.

Ronnie Hill

1. Dumfries- The advent of Covid has curtailed all events planned and has resulted in little or no correspondence reference local Regimental issues of note.

Forward planning has been made impossible with members shielding and adhering to the rules on essential journeys, and no indication of any let up on th restrictions.

I fully accept that modern technology allows for meetings to be held via internet platforms, however this requires a modicum of knowledge not yet accrued by most of our members.

I wish to report that we have nothing planned in the near future and apologise for the lack of input for the AGM.

We will not have anyone taking part in the conference but would appreciate being kept informed of any outcome and minutes arising from the meeting.

Please convey our apologies for not being able to take part, and our best wishes to all Borderers attending and a sincere hope that we can attend the next one in person.

Ronnie Rae

1. Stranraer- As expected COVID 19 has affected all branch activities with the main challenge being comms with more senior members who do not have access to social media or technology. Things are stable and we look forward to getting some normality back and a return to Branch activities.

Bob Stuart

1. London- We were fortunate to hold our Branch AGM in Mar 2020 just before lockdown started, sadly no events or functions since then due to COVID 19. We are maintaining comms by e mail and in some cases by written letters. Events planned for 2021 may slip due to restrictions we will keep all informed, the date for the rehearsal of Trooping the Colour may change. Thanks to LT and GO’N for keeping us up to date with RHQ activities.

Ian Gibbs

1. Berwick- The Berwick Branch has, like everyone else, suffered from the restrictions imposed because of Covid-19.

The annual Branch Dinner, planned for 20th March, had to be cancelled and it is unlikely to take place in March 2021 as restrictions will still be in place at that time. The annual Minden Parade was also cancelled and that was a pity as it would otherwise have taken place on Saturday 1st August.

However, in mid-July, it was announced that Branches could hold a ‘Mini Minden Parade’ on the understanding that Government guidelines on social distancing would be followed. The Association EXO organised the parade in The Barracks for the Berwick Branch with the current Mayor, Councillor Anne Forbes, being present when the Branch Members went forward for their Minden Rose.

Also present on the day was Mrs Doreen Wildman, the daughter of the late Cpl Joe Hunt, who had joined 1 KOSB in June 1944 and had made a point of travelling up from his home in Kent to take part in the Minden Parade in his later years. Mrs Wildman had wanted to see what the Minden Parade was but, sadly, only got to see the ‘Mini Minden Parade.’ After the parade, she and her husband planted a small rose bush in the flower bed in front of the Officers Mess in memory of her father.

The Branch is grateful to Debra Jerdan for taking photographs of the parade. Although not on duty that day, Debra is the Detachment Commander of the Berwick Detachment, Northumbria Army Cadet Force, who help us each year on the Minden Parade by carrying the trays of roses and by clearing all the chairs away after the parade.

Later in the morning, many Borderers gathered on Parade, outside The Barracks, where more roses were given out in safety while the Berwick & Eyemouth Pipe Band entertained everyone. It was good to see so many Borderers still make the effort to come to Berwick just to meet up with friends and enjoy a special day.

It is unfortunate that the Minden Parade and so many other Regimental events failed to take place this year. However, the safety of all Borderers, and their families, is the main priority during these worrying times and it would have been utterly foolish to have held all the events and put everyone at risk.

The Branch was sad to hear that Maj Ken Fraser announced on 7th December 2020 that, due to ill health, he has to stand down from his role as Branch Chairman with immediate effect. Ken took over as Branch Chairman in March 2012 and, during his tenure, did an excellent job of organising Branch events, like the excellent annual Branch Dinner, commemorating The Raising of the Regiment in March 1689, and held each year in the Marshall Meadows Country House Hotel, Berwick upon Tweed, as near to 18th March as could be arranged. This has always been a great event and Ken has done well to arrange great entertainment for the evening and to keep the costs down.

Ken has also done a tremendous job of commanding the annual Minden Parade in Berwick since its creation and until recently, ensuring that everybody was properly turned out and marching in good order round the town. Ken has been a great Chairman for the Berwick Branch and we hope that he will continue to join us at future events for some time yet. The next Minden Parade in Berwick will take place on Saturday 31st July 2021 and it is hoped that all Borderers will make a huge effort to be there to make up for the loss experienced during this year of social turmoil.

Bill Heaney

1. Edinburgh- The Branch has been quiet due to restrictions however we managed to have two Borderers breakfasts before the lockdown started which were well received by those attending, all other events were cancelled. We did manage to have members parade to mark VE/VJ 75 as well as Minden and Remembrance. A wreath was laid on behalf of the association at the garden of Remembrance and the Scottish War memorial.

Euan Scroggie

1. Lanarkshire- no report
2. Riders- our latest branch currently have around 29 members and are ready to welcome any Borderer who has a motorcycle and enjoys riding it with his fellow Borderers

Pat McIntyre

1. **Regimental calendar**

Lance Thornton briefed that the Regimental calendar was not firm due to COVID 19 restrictions, events early in the year are very unlikely our best hope is it will be safe for Minden. The Calendar is attached to these minutes.

Russell Combe the Vice-Chairman briefed the AGM on the event to unveil the restored statue of FM Earl Haig at 3pm on Sat 19 Jun 2021. This is to occur in Montreuil-sur-Mer, Pas-de-Calais, France, where Haig’s WW1 wartime HQ was located. It is slightly inland from Le Touquet, to the south of Boulogne-sur-Mer. There will be a number of other activities throughout the weekend, guided tours and historical talks from Fri evening. The weekend will conclude with a civic reception at 1230 in the Town Hall, Le Touquet.

The statue was erected originally in 1931 by French public subscription. The sculptor was Paul Landowski, who also created the ‘Christ the Redeemer’ statue overlooking Rio de Janeiro. FM Haig is the only British military figure honoured with an equestrian statue in France. Destroyed by the Germans in WW2, it was replaced in 1950. However, now needing restored at an estimated cost of £40,000. Restoration Committee exists to manage the project and fund raise. Involved is Lord Astor of Hever (Johnny) who is the grandson of FM Early Haig. He is the son of Earl Haig’s youngest daughter, Lady Irene, who married Gavin Astor, 2nd Baron Astor of Hever.

FM Earl Haig was Colonel of the Regiment from 1923 until his death in 1928. He was also Colonel of the Regiment for the following:

* Royal Horse Guards (RHG) ‘The Blues’. Now the ‘Blues and Royals’.
* 17th/21st Lancers, who had merged is 1922, now Queen’s Royal Lancers (QRL). Although a 7th Hussar, FM Earl Haig was Commanding Officer, 17th Lancers from 1901 to 1903.
* London Scottish, now part of the London Regiment.

All the Regiments have been invited to send contingents to take part in the event. The EXO is the POC at Berwick with the Trustees lead by the Vice-Chairman, who plans to attend the event. Association members, in particular from the London and Southern Counties Branch, are also encouraged to attend. Due to COVID-19, the event may be delayed to a date in September, or possibly postponed until 2022. More information will be promulgated when known.

1. **AOB**

Lance Thornton gave an update on the Chronicle, currently at the proof reading stage, there are 190 pages with some excellent articles. LT thanked all those who contributed and reminded all that the Chronicle is an important part of the Regimental archive and stories or experiences from all members are welcome. He also asked those present to find possible advertisers to buy space in the Chronicle to help offset costs. It is hoped to start distributing the 2020 edition on 18 Mar 2021.

Angus Loudon stated it is a very good publication and encouraged all Borderers to read it and contribute if possible.

Russell Combe mentioned that we are looking at an E version to increase the reach.

Gerry O’Neill gave a museum update in that the accountability of items is being transferred to the MODES system. It is a purchased software package used by most Army museums and AMOT. Displays are being cleaned and updated. A museum FB has been created to inform the wider public of what we do and to generate interest..

Grant Horsburgh mentioned that GO’N has been liaising with various military and civilian museums to increase our profile and learn about best practices. He has also looked at getting students from Newcastle University to assist, GH thanked GO’N for his sterling work.

Angus Loudon mentioned that the difference over the past 18 months within the museum has been remarkable and thanked all involved for their hard work.

Andrew Herberts mentioned that Peter McCutcheon will act as our education and outreach lead within the museum.

Andy Middlemiss asked GO’N about family enquiry trends.

Gerry O’Neill stated we are still getting a lot of enquiries however many are being signposted to APC Glasgow as we do not hold the records. We have a modest income from research as there is a minimum charge/donation of £25 with many people giving more.

Angus Loudon then briefed on the situation regarding the Pipes and Drums at 1 SCOTS, as a result the following statement was issued on the website, FB and mailing list to inform all Borderers of the current situation.

During the re-rolling of 1 SCOTS into a Specialist Infantry Battalion (SpecInf Bn) there was no establishment created for a Pipes and Drums platoon. The Commanding Officer tried to maintain a working band; however, due to the nature of the Battalion’s role and deployments, this proved unsustainable. The decision was made some 18 months ago to move the P&D personnel to Balaklava Company, 5 SCOTS, in Edinburgh. This has also proved to be very difficult to manage as, once again, there is no formal establishment, and the pipers and drummers were effectively mis-employed on the black economy. As a result, our pipers and drummers did not have a proper career path or appropriate career management.  This was clearly very unsatisfactory for all concerned.  Therefore, in order to provide the correct career management for the soldiers involved, it was recently proposed to the Colonel of the Regiment that the remaining P&D personnel be re-distributed to pipe bands around the other SCOTS Bns.

In the week beginning 15 Feb 2021 the Colonel of the Regiment made the decision to disband the 1 SCOTS P&D platoon, with all remaining soldiers being posted to piping and drumming posts in 2 SCOTS, 3 SCOTS or 4 SCOTS, and they were able to select which Battalions to move to.

This will inevitably mean that no items of KOSB piping and drumming uniform or accoutrements will be seen on parade again with a Regular band. This is very sad for us all who recall marching proudly behind the skirl of the pipes and the beat of the drum as they played ‘Blue Bonnets’.  The upside, however, is that our people will be properly employed and managed in P&D posts, and be able to enjoy the benefits of a piping or drumming career. Be assured that none of the others three SpecInf Bns have retained their Drums or Bugles Platoons, and so all of these battalions are in the same situation.

All KOSB Regimental property held by 1 SCOTS P&D will be checked and returned to RHQ in Berwick where it will be properly secured and, as appropriate, incorporated into a suitable display.

Andy Middlemiss briefed on:

Members will recall we had several battlefield tour plans in mind after the very successful McCutcheon led one to Arnhem in 2019, and the previous 4 to WW1 battlefields. The pandemic has of course scuppered plans for this year, but here’s what we are dwelling on – three areas, some more feasible than others:

1. **The Doable** – D Day and NW Europe/ Crossing the Rhine- involving the 1st, 4th, 5th and 6th Bns would seem the sensible option, if looking for something that offers an affordable solution, open to all, and what might be doable from a travel POV. When …? maybe spring of 2022 –and if he is available , as he has many other commitments next year ,led by Peter McCutcheon – a very experienced D Day guide, who took many Officer Cadets’ tours to Normandy, while on the staff at Sandhurst. Numbers ? We would cap at about 25, a manageable and good number. The concept would be, like all previous 5 tours, to put out a calling letter in mid year, to gauge interest, then make a plan after that, once the pandemic rules are clearer. .

2. **The Long Shot** . Burma (Myanmar) has been on several Borderers’ radars for a number of years now … this is even less of a runner now sadly, because of the coup, than it was even pre pandemic, in terms of a more expensive option, with several health and journey risks, and so likely to attract far fewer. But it remains on a bucket list for many of us- to incl Kohima (which the KOSB didn’t take part in) and Imphal (which we did) in India. We did have a provisional tour roughed out, with a guide pencilled in from Indus Travel. The Admin Box battle in the Arakan, (Rohingya State) where CGM’s father was KIA as CO by own arty, is unlikely ever to be allowed for a long while- and is on the FCO no no list.

3. **The Virtual Boer War.** It is the Coulson VC 120th anniversary this coming May, and I have a tour guide chum out in SA, who is looking at what he might do online for us, for a small fee pp, in the form of a filmed , guided one hour or so tour on site ...that wd be really good .

"*During a rear-guard action, near Lambrechtfontein, on the 18th of May, 1901, seeing Corporal Cranmer, 7th Mounted Infantry, dismounted, his horse having been shot, remained behind and took him up on his own horse. He rode a short distance, when the horse was shot, and both Lieutenant Coulson and the Corporal were brought to the ground. Lieutenant Coulson told Corporal Cranmer to get along with the wounded horse as best he could, and he would look after himself. Corporal Cranmer got on the horse and rode away to the column. No. 4792 Corporal Shaw (Lincolns), 7th Mounted Infantry, seeing Lieutenant Coulson's position of danger, rode back through the rear-guard, and took him up on his horse. A few minutes later Corporal Shaw was shot through the body, and there is reason to believe that Lieutenant Coulson was wounded also, as he fell off his horse. Corporal Shaw fell off a few minutes later. This Officer on many occasions throughout the Campaign displayed great coolness and gallantry under fire."*

 ANDY MIDDLEMISS 20 FEB 2021

Angus Loudon thanked Andy Middlemiss for his work on previous tours and was looking forward to a future tour.

David Harvey gave an update on the Army in Scotland regarding recruiting and tasking’s. The COVID pandemic has seen the Army on OP RESCRIPT in support to the NHS conducting testing and vaccinations, the bulk of this work is by RSDGs with our own Bob Stuart coordinating as SO1.

Manning is steady however recruiting will always be a challenge, the CTT are still working hard with young people while the ACF in Scotland is still very popular.

He further mentioned that during these restricted times that a veterans chat hub could be established to allow Borderers to communicate in a relaxed way.

Magnus Falk suggested that we could set up a virtual tour of the museum to be published on FB and website, recordings could be made on a go pro camera and edited before posting.

Russell Combe would investigate and liaise.

Magnus Falk mentioned that the “shoe account” is still active, Borderers could get reduced price Churches shoes at 45% reduction on published prices. Interested Borderers should e mail shoe@kosb.co.uk with size style colour details and possibly try them on first in a shop. Shoes are then sent to MF with payment being made, the small profit goes into Association funds.

Angus Loudon gave an update on the Barracks re development:

Trustees have all seen the reports produced by AMION, Outland architects and the NCS, reports are very detailed. A draft “Visions Document” is being prepared by the partners along with a MofU.

Option 1 in the report seems to be the favoured option of the partners costing around £6.8 million. The plan would see residential space in the West wing and Clock block. A café in the old Officers Mess. In the East Wing O&A blocks would become museum space for KOSB and Berwick Museums. B&C blocks would contain office and storage space along with artists’ studios and workshops. A covered area linking the gym to the East wing with retail space below. The Mob store to house the Berwick archive with a separate room for the KOSB archive under our control.

Key points are:

EH will leave the site as a partner and will only retain ownership.

The Museums Northumberland team are uncertain about the current plan.

Site management needs to be agreed by all partners.

Suggestion of veterans’ housing/residences in Clock block

KOSB ‘redlines’ have been noted by partners:

* No desire for a wholly integrated museum, but we support a collaborative approach where the KOSB are part of the Barracks story.
* We retain total control of our collection and archive.
* We will manage our collection.
* We would like a veteran’s hub in our office area.

Angus Loudon stated that future funding for Museum Northumberland is pending. Developers are keen to use the site as it is deemed an attractive site. More details are required so we can prepare fund raising for our part of the development.

Angus Loudon stated it’s a long process and he will continue to represent our views on the key issues and get what is best for the KOSB as committed and key partners, if it all fails we still have a guarantee to stay in the Barracks.

Bill Heaney asked if we would still be able to display our last Colours and is there enough space to display our collection.

Angus Loudon replied that compromise would be needed and that collections will have to be rationalised. For the KOSB we can fit what we currently display in O&A blocks into a new layout in O Block using all 3 floors, using current underutilized areas. EH are keen to reduce costs.

1. **Date of next meeting**

Angus Loudon closed the meeting at 1240 and thanked all for their participation the proposed next meeting will at Berwick on 16 Oct 2021.