



EST 2004

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In future, because of the high cost in terms of manpower and expense, with a large number of members living abroad, they will only be able to access information from the website.

Please write to David Robson at 34 Raynes Road, Lee on Solent, Hampshire PO13 9AL, or email the Chairman at: bowker.chapman@hotmail.co.uk

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**The Combined Armed Forces Federation UK
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held
in the Writing Room of the Union Jack Club
Waterloo, Thursday May 13th 2010**

Present

Chris Watkin	Chairman
David Robson	Secretary General
Michael Kennedy	Treasurer
Denys Royle	Member
June Willmott	Member
Albert Bennett	Member
Gordon Nash	Member
John Kelsey	Member
Norman Evans	Member

1. Silence:

The Chairman led the meeting in one minute's silence in remembrance of Colleagues and those who have fallen in defence of our Nation, followed by the Extract from the "Ode to Remembrance".

2. Apologies

Frank Rixon B.E.M. Membership Secretary

David Everiss Co/opted

Peter Holden Co/opted

Geoff Meanwell Co/opted

Alan Joyner, Alan Brooks, Mike Birley (Falklands), Stan Moderate (Singapore), David Kirkpatrick, Peter Matcham, Bob Smith, Kater Lester, Ray Penrose, Jim Spurrier, Terry Brown, DR Taylor, Ray Drinkwater, Harry Hawcroft (USA), and David Doy, (New Zealand)

3. In Remembrance:

Frank Warrington

David Watson

4. Welcome:

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and was especially grateful for those who had travelled long distances for their first meeting.

5. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting were received.

Members were sorry to hear that the Overseas Officer (Eddie Ely) had not been well and had had to withdraw from this commitment. Other Members interested to undertake this role were invited to contact the Chairman.

6. Membership Report:

Frank Rixon reported that there had been 11 new members registering since the last AGM and that he had been in correspondence with Members and other officers on 58 occasions.

In addition he had had regular emails and telephone calls from members concerning membership status, payment of fees and Service Records.

Some Members had written to renew membership and he was anxious to assure them that once registered, they were in regular membership while fees were being paid.

A discussion followed concerning the level of membership and the way in which a large number had failed to respond to their renewal notice. This was disappointing, in view of the recent submission of the detailed case to the Pensions Ombudsman (see below). There may be an opportunity to remind Members of their dues, should a positive response be received from the Pensions Ombudsman and before Government is required to meet any obligations imposed upon them.

7. Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer submitted the audited accounts and circulated copies to those present.

He reported that he was appointed Treasurer of your Federation at the AGM on the 6th June 2006, and that he now had pleasure in presenting this, his fourth Treasurers report.

The process of maintaining the accounts has been continued with our main current Account retained with the Alliance and Leicester Bank and the High Interest Reserve Account being held with Standard Life Bank

Maintenance of the Federations Membership is held on Computer. A monthly system for membership renewal and reminders is operated by the Treasurer as well as receiving New Member Applications on a regular basis from the Membership Secretary Mr Frank Rixon. Bank Statements are also received via the Secretary General. These are also reconciled monthly via our computerised data base and amended with amounts received and when due.

Correspondence with members who move, change accounts or query payments are also undertaken at regular intervals.

Approximately two thirds of members prefer to pay by Annual Cheque, the rest by Standing Order as advised.

Accounts for payment are also received and prepared for payment before sending to the Secretary General for authorisation second signature before settlement. A computerised debit Data base is also maintained of all cheques written and checked by our independent accountant in preparation for the accounts

Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2010 and Management Notes to the Accounts Process are supplied and should be read in conjunction with this report. Members requiring further copies of the accounts should contact the Secretary General, quoting their membership number and address.

In brief, the accounts demonstrate c. 50% lower expenditure this year, because of the expenses incurred in the previous year with the publication of the Researched Report. Income was down by c. £1,700 on account of issues raised in Item 6, but then overall Balance was some 40% higher by today's date.

Nevertheless, the Treasurer expressed concern about trends and warned against future expectations. He alluded to the expected lack of enthusiasm being partially related to the inability to maintain interest thorough the website and through normal postal services for those who did not access the internet (probably about 50% of the Membership).

The discussion which followed alluded to the fact that the main purpose of the Reserves had been to meet the requirements for the presentation of our case and that future expenditure was unlikely to consume resources, beyond the Federation's perceived needs. He recommended that the Annual Subscriptions remain at £24.00 (or £2.00pm through Standing Order)

The Accounts were received and sincere thanks were expressed for the Treasurer's work and commitment on behalf of Members.

(Members who require sight of the audited accounts should contact the Secretary General with their membership Number)

8. Secretary General's Report:

The Secretary General was aware of the way in which the casual observer might perceive evidence of progress but he had, nevertheless, been working intensely on promoting the Report. Much effort had gone into chasing MPs and Government Departments who had procrastinated and had ignored challenges to the evidence they had presented. In addition, enquiries from the Intellectual Property Office had been a necessary but time-consuming activity.

The pursuit of queries and answers received from MPs and Government Departments had been a necessary part of the procedure, on account of the fact that the Ombudsman would have rejected any case which had not reached a conclusion with the "Employer"

At that stage, the only way forward was to prepare an Appeal to the Pensions Ombudsman. This required a concise but detailed summary of the history Government Reports, Orders in Council, and Acts of Parliament going back to 1959. Inevitably, his work had required a great deal of additional checking of facts so that the Appeal had clarity and solid foundations. The needs of his own personal life had had to be set aside and his health had been compromised, as a result. Thankfully, this Appeal was now in the hands of the Ombudsman, awaiting his response.

The Secretary General summarised the basis for the Appeal, including the poor grasp of the facts expressed by senior Members of the Government as a means of avoiding responsibility, and took questions from those present.

However, Mr John Thurso MP had been particularly helpful in assisting the progress of the Appeal through appropriate channels and it was recommended that his help should be acknowledged and recorded. The Daily Mail had also responded positively to receipt of the Report and had given a generous donation.

The discussion which followed acknowledged the progress which had been made and referred to the fact that other organisations, attempting a similar challenge, had yet to produce any evidence (apparently) and had cost their members in excess of £1million – all to no avail. As stated previously, their failed legal action had compromised our position and had confused matters with counsel's "beliefs" being taken as fact. On these grounds, the Judgement (Hudson and Others v. MOD and the Treasury 2003), still needed to be set aside.

Members present, who were also members of those organisations expressed grateful thanks to the progress which had been made by CAFF UK and the Secretary General, in particular. This had been achieved at minimal cost to members and was worthy of greater recognition.

One Member drew attention to commitments given by leading members of the Liberal Democrats during the recent Election Campaign and he agreed to forward correspondence to the Chairman for a follow-up

The Secretary General expressed his gratitude to the Membership for their continued financial support over the last year. He felt sure that they would be

10. Honoraria:

AGREED:

1. That current rates for the Secretary General and Treasurer (when appointed) should remain at £1,000

Proposed: Mr N Evans Seconded: Mrs J Willmott Unanimous

2. That the Chairman's rate should be increased to £500

Proposed: Mr M Kennedy Seconded: Mr A Bennett Unanimous

11. Armed Forces Pension Group (AFPG):

Those Members present who were also members of this organisation explained disagreements which had arisen and which had resulted in a split with a new organisation forming (believed to be called "The Way Ahead"). Members were recommended to examine the AFPG website.

It was understood that Colin Challen MP had now withdrawn his interest in this group and that other investigations were underway relating to the recovery of monies previously paid by their members.

In the event, it appeared that CAFF UK had stolen a march on this group and remained resolute in pursuing the challenge without needing to be associated with the AFPG nor the new group, at this stage.

12. Next Meeting:

The Chairman thanked all those present for their attendance and it was:

AGREED:

That the next AGM will take place on:

**Thursday 19th May 2011 at 1.00pm for 1.30pm
Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, Waterloo, London**