



# **ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION**

**Minutes of  
86<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
and  
Annual General Meeting**

**Held at  
The Adelphi Hotel  
Liverpool**

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

Charity Number 266982

Incorporated by Royal Charter

Full Recognition by the Royal Navy

## Delegates

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Representative</b>	<b>Branch</b>	<b>Representative</b>
Aldershot	Martin Maguire	Lee-on-the-Solent	Soapy Watson
Anglesey Branch	John Edwards	Leighton & Linslade	Ken Brown
Aylesbury No1	Glen Beck	Liskeard	Jerry Fleming
Bloxwich	Christine Mawhinney	Llanelli	David Eirwyn Evans
Bolton	Anthony Smith	Londonderry	Robert Buchanan
Bracknell	Anthony Boddrell	Maidstone	Steve Champion
Bridport	Wally Thompson	Mansfield	Andrew Hamilton
Bromley	Frances Halifax	Monmouth	John Clarke
Burgess Hill	Terence Scully	Nottingham	Tom Rotherham
Carmarthen	Donald Griffiths	Oswestry	Mike Evans
Chatham	Dennis Potter	Pendleton	John Coxon
Chester	Fred Pilgrim	Peterborough	Paul Godfrey
City of Edinburgh	Karen Elliot BEM	Plymouth	Desmond McCarthy MBE
City of Glasgow	Brian MacKenzie	Portland	Adrian Cartwright
City of Inverness	Trevor Carnall	Rhondda	Graham Warner
Colchester	Maggie Whittaker	Riders	David Doran
Crewe	Bruce Lamb	Royston	Graham Parry
Crosby	John Arnold	Runcorn	Geoffrey Miller
Dartford	Ron Dorey	Rushden	Peter Brooksby
Dorchester	Ben Cartwright	Scarborough	Shaun Brosnan
Dublin	Nigel Brislane	Shrewsbury	Graham Meredith
East Antrim	Bobby Loughran	South Bristol	Adrian Andrews
Ferndown & District	Gareth Peaston	Spennymoor & Ferryhill	Elizabeth Lewarne
Folkestone	Timothy Geere	St. Austell	Bill Lambert
Forth Valley	David Cutler	St Neots & District	Anne Sanders
Gosport	Valerie Gleave	Sunderland	David Staines
Greenford	Ann Foley	Tewkesbury	Paul Mawhinney
Haven	David Griggs MBE	Torfaen	Gordon Williams
Hazel Grove	Peter Gundry	West Lothian	Lesley Stewart
Horsham	Ken Chandler	Worthing	Tony Avery
Huddersfield	Jack Horner	Wrexham	Kevin Hackett
Knowle	Vic Hocking	York & District	Patricia Farrington
Ist Garden City Letchworth	Penelope Jarvis		

## Present

S/M VAdm D Potts CB – National President/Conference Chair  
S/M Cdre M Slawson OBE RN – Deputy National President  
S/M K Ridley – National Chairman, NCM 6  
S/M N Purkiss – Chairman, Standing Orders/Governance Committee  
S/M I Irvine – National Honorary Treasurer  
S/M B Coburn – National Ceremonial Advisor  
S/M G Williams – Governance Committee  
S/M S Caulfield – National Events Coordinator  
S/M G Booth – Retention and Recruitment Advisor4  
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S/M G Apperley – National Welfare Advisor  
S/M S Davies – Deputy National Welfare Advisor  
S/M T Day – Governance Committee  
NCM's Representing Areas 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, Scottish

## In Attendance

S/m W Oliphant – General Secretary  
S/M K Cornelius – Accountant  
S/M K Brindley – Finance/Membership  
S/M G Swanson – Wellbeing Delivery Manager/Minutes  
WOI C Robson – Vice President  
S/M D MacAskill - Engagement Manager  
S/M S Field – Membership Officer  
S/M N Huxtable – Photography  
S/M L Ford – Sound Engineer

NOTE: A full sound recording is available of Conference, held in Central Office for historical archive purposes. Copies may be obtained by Areas and Branches if required.

<b>Agenda Item No.</b>	<b>Minutes</b>
1	<b>March On: The National Standard</b> National Standard Marched on by S/M Steve Champion, National Standard Bearer
2	<b>Opening Prayers</b> The RNA Honorary Chaplain and Chaplain of the Fleet, the Ven Andrew Hillier, was unable to attend Conference, therefore the General Secretary, S/m Bill Oliphant, led prayers to start the Conference.
3	<b>Silent Tribute in memory of Shipmates who have Crossed The Bar</b>

4	<p><b>Opening Remarks by the National President</b></p> <p>The NP welcomed the Lord Mayor, First Sea Lord, Guests and Shipmates and provided an overview of the agenda also welcoming Vice Admiral Mike Gretton and Dr Jann Witt who would provide an historical insight into the events during the Battle of the Atlantic.</p>
5	<p><b>Patronal Messages – The General Secretary</b></p> <p>Bill Oliphant, General Secretary stated that although the King had yet to confirm his patronage of the Association, the National President had taken the opportunity nevertheless to send loyal greetings ahead of Conference.</p> <p><b>Post Meeting Note:</b> A response from Buckingham Palace was waiting in Central Office on return from the weekend in Liverpool. The King’s letter is attached.</p>
6	<p><b>The Lord Mayor of the City of Liverpool, Cllr Mary Rasmussen, confers the Freedom of Association to the City of Liverpool</b></p> <p>NP introduced Cllr Liam Robinson - Leader of Liverpool City Council and Nuala Gallagher - Corporate Director of City Development who gave their thanks for their invitation to the Association’s AGM and indicated that the Council had conferred the Freedom of the Association of Liverpool City at a recent Council Meeting.</p> <p>The Lord Mayor led with Presentation of the Freedom of Association and Signing of the scrolls.</p>
7	<p><b>Address The First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Ben Key KCB CBE ADC</b></p> <p>Sir Ben Key expressed that it was his pleasure and privilege to be invited to attend the RNA’s Annual Conference on this special occasion of being presented with the Freedom of Association with the City of Liverpool.</p> <p>He continued to provide an overview of the expanse of the effort the Royal Navy was currently contributing to with the Russians invasion of the Ukraine explaining that the RN’s focus is to maintain economic stability through global deployment.</p>
8	<p><b>Battle of the Atlantic</b></p> <p>Presentation provided by Dr Jann Witt, of the German Naval Association who is an Historian and Author.</p> <p>Presentation provided by Vice Admiral Mike Gretton CB CVO</p>

9	<p><b>Conference Standing Orders</b></p> <p>N Purkiss, stated that there is one amendment to SO 9 shall be prescribed as Rule 20 should read as prescribed in Rule 22.</p> <p>Proposed: John Clarke (Monmouth) Seconded: Paul Godfrey (Peterborough)</p> <p><b>Motion Approved</b></p>
10	<p><b>The National Presidents Address</b></p> <p>NP thanked the sponsors and supporters of the event for the contribution including the RNRMC for their support of the BoA veterans and the funding of projects across the RNA, Greenwich Hospital, Pussers Rum, Haynes-Boone Lawyers, Brooms Professional Services and MW Ship Management who have sponsored the lunch today.</p> <p>The NP also congratulated and thanked RNA National Standard Bearer S/M Steve Champion, winner of the National Standard Bearers Competition.</p> <p>It was commented that recruitment of members now stands at 17,000 and with a view to not only recruiting but retaining new members. He stated that with Comradeship being the centre of RNA activity, Central Office had developed the concept of the 7Cs – the seven components of Comradeship expressed as: Community, Connection, Companionship Commemoration, Care, Compassion and Celebration.</p> <p>The NP acknowledged the sad passing of our late patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth where he had the privilege of representing the RNA at her funeral. He informed shipmates that although Central Office is in touch with Buckingham Palace regarding patronage, it is unlikely that we will hear anything until later in the year. And, although the Royal Charter states that, “We do reserve unto Ourselves, Our Heirs and successors to be the Patron of the Association” we are not counting our chickens and certainly not presuming that His Majesty King Charles will automatically assume the patronage of the Association. NP was however, very hopeful.</p> <p>The NP commented on the success of the Welfare and Wellbeing Workshop in February this year and stated that the improved provision of Welfare and Wellbeing within the Association was a priority for Central Office.</p> <p>He reiterated the vision of National Council is “to have further developed and maintained the RNA on a sustainable footing, which will meet the original Objects, while maintaining relevance and respect in modern society” and, by improving our service, to make it more accessible and attractive to a younger cohort.</p> <p>It was emphasised that it has become acutely apparent that more work is needed to improve our Governance at all levels across the Association.</p>

	<p>Recounting the history of where we find ourselves, NP reflected that it was advantageous, not least with tax, to become a charity so when the opportunity arose, the RNA, quite rightly, applied to become a charity. As we know however, a charity required a Board of Trustees, but that was easy – the RNA had a National Council, so that became the Board of Trustees for the Association. However, what we have now come to realise is that this has introduced an inherent Conflict of Interest. On the one hand, an NCM represents his Area at Council, but, as a Trustee, his or her first responsibility must always lie with what is best for the charity. These two responsibilities don't always accord.</p> <p>He reported that, work was therefore underway to identify the optimal way to separate the National Trustee Responsibilities from the National Council's operational responsibilities which would require establishing a separate Trustee Board. The changes should not be evident at Branch level but will require a revision to the Charter.</p> <p>The NP updated on staff changes across the Association and within Central Office.</p> <p>The NP thanked Lyndon for his support over the National Conference weekend and to Gemma Swanson for taking the minutes.</p> <p>The NP expressed his gratitude to the Raleigh Mentors, who work to support new recruits and their families during training and helping them adjust and transition into Naval Service.</p> <p>The NP reminded the conference of the Naval Associations Parade in Whitehall on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September and encouraged representation.</p> <p>The NP concluded by stating the Association continues to go from strength to strength but will require all members to sell us within your local communities on the “sense of worth and joy that membership of this great institution brings.”</p> <p>It was suggested that we should investigate working with the Royal Navy Presentation Team to support our awareness and recruitment efforts. RNA CO staff will take this as an Action.  <b>Action</b> – CO to reach out to the RN Presentation Team</p>
11	<p><b>Presidents Annual Awards</b></p> <p><b>Sword of Honour</b> (Area with greatest increase in 2022) – Awarded to Scottish Area  <b>Briggs Dirk</b> (Large Branches Recruiting) – Awarded to Sunderland Branch  <b>Briggs Rose Bowl</b> (Small Branches Recruiting) – Awarded to Saltash Branch  <b>Overseas Branches</b> (Overseas Recruiting) – Torrevieja Branch  <b>The Tasker Bowl</b> (Area with most Gift Aid returns) – No. 3 Area  <b>Lt Cdr Robert Evans Sherwood DSO RD RNR memorial Sword</b> (Branch with highest donations proportionate to membership numbers) – Greenford Branch</p>

12	<p><b>Standing Orders Committee</b></p> <p><b>a) Report by Chair SOC</b>  Nick Purkiss informed that an update has been made to both the Complaints Policy and the Chairmans Guide.</p> <p><b>b) National Council Elections NCM &amp; DNCM. Results:</b></p> <p>Area 5 DNCM – Diane Sadler – Norwich</p> <p>Area 6 NCM – Keith Ridley – St Neots &amp; District  DNCM – Anthony Boddrell – Bracknell</p> <p>Area 7 NCM – Lance Higgin-Young – Rhondda  DNCM – Graham Warner – Rhondda</p> <p>Area 8 DNCM – George Barbrook - Lichfield</p> <p>Area 9 NCM – Keith Crawford – Spalding  DNCM – Kevin Winter – Newark</p> <p>Area 11 NCM – Roslyn Hastie-Murray - Tyne</p>
13	<p><b>Minutes of the 2022 AGM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Acceptance</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Proposed:</b> Brian MacKenzie (City of Glasgow)  <b>Seconded:</b> Peter Gundry (Hazelgrove)  <b>One abstention</b> – Huddersfield (hadn't seen the minutes before today)</p> <p>Approved and agreed as a true and accurate record.</p> <p><b>Matters Arising</b> - none</p>
14	<p><b>Annual Accounts for the FY 2022 – Honorary Treasurer – S/M Ian Irvin</b></p> <p>Ian Irvin stated that the former Treasurer at the Edinburgh Branch used to announce, when delivering his monthly report, that we were solvent. As an accountant, Ian thought that was unduly brief but, on reflection, the former Treasurer had told us really all that we, as a branch, needed to know.”</p> <p>Ian continued to say that he can, with confidence, inform Conference that the Royal Naval Association is solvent and that there are sufficient resources available to meet our envisaged liabilities over the short to medium term although regular contribution to our funds on a</p>

	<p>monthly, quarterly or annual basis would indeed help us to do all that we are doing and allow us to progress the many other initiatives currently being taken forward.</p> <p>He stated that the more cash we have available the more that we can do for Shipmates.</p> <p>Ian noted that the situation regarding our investments has been raised and we did indeed suffer a reduction during the past financial year, as did many others in the market, but in our case the situation has been compounded by the fact that our fund manager has underperformed against their peers, which is worrying. Our funds are managed alongside the funds belonging to the Royal Naval Royal Marines Charity for which he informed that he also sits on the RNRMC Investment Committee and assured us that any concerns we have regarding our fund managers is mirrored by the concerns of RNRMC, and confirmed the Investment Committee, has the performance of the fund managers under constant review.</p> <p>Ian assured the AGM that we along with other charities, always write a deficit budget, the reason for this being because it is very difficult to predict income, as a large portion comes from legacies and donations which, by their very nature, are unpredictable.</p> <p>It was confirmed that we do have reserves to cover any shortfall, which we draw on from time to time, as we did during the last financial year.</p> <p>We have been advised of a sizeable legacy although it could be months before this reaches our accounts.</p> <p>It is hoped with the introduction of the new initiatives such as the Lottery and the Will writing service will help to smooth things out over the coming months and years.</p> <p><b>Proposed:</b> Paul Watson (Lee on the Solent &amp; Stubbington)  <b>Seconded:</b> Graham Warner (Rhondda)</p> <p><b>Unanimously Approved</b></p>
15	<p><b>The National Council's Report to Conference – National Chairman S/M Keith Ridley</b></p> <p>Keith started by informing conference of apologies from both Vice President Rita Lock and Keith Crawford NCM 9 who were unwell and unable to attend.</p> <p>He thanked S/M Paul Stephenson for his support as-the National Vice Chairman over six years up to September 2022.</p> <p>During his address Keith stated that the introduction of virtual meetings had reduced costs of meetings significantly for the association.</p>



	<p>He congratulated S/m WO Claire Robson and Lynda Pearson on the successful Welfare and Wellbeing Workshop in February stating the event was a great success and an area of focus and progress for the RNA going forward.</p> <p>Keith bid Farewell to Andy Christie as Deputy General Secretary and Lynda Pearson as Wellbeing Delivery Manager and thanked them for the work and dedication during their time in their respective roles. It was acknowledged the work between RNRMC and Broom Services for undertaking the Associations accounts.</p> <p>It was confirmed that a Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee has been introduced.</p> <p>The GS was congratulated on the increase in membership to &gt;17000 and echoed the need to encourage members to provide donations.</p> <p>We welcomed the St Vincent Branch to into the RNA.</p> <p>Thanks was provided to the Raleigh Mentors who encouraged the promotion of membership to the families of those passing out.</p> <p>It was Confirmed that the AGM and National Conference in 2024 will take place in Cardiff.</p> <p>Keith thanked the shipmates of Area 10 for organising this year's Conference and AGM.</p> <p>Keith concluded by stating that after 7 years as the National Chairman he will be stepping down at the National Council meeting in September 2023. The National President interjected to thank Keith and Maureen for their hard work and dedication to the RNA over the years and stated that he and the RNA are hugely indebted to them both.</p>
16	<p><b>Motions of Urgency</b></p> <p>Area 8 representative Paul Mawhinney presented to the Conference and proposed a motion for Area 8 to host the conference in 2025.</p> <p><b>Proposed:</b> Paul Mawhinney (Tewkesbury)  <b>Seconded:</b> Anthony Boddrell (Bracknell)</p> <p>Unanimously Approved.</p>
17	<p><b>National Council Motions - None</b></p> <p>Alice Farrow, Head of Communications, introduced the new RNA Lottery and provided an overview of how it works.</p> <p>GS thanked June and Anothony Boddrell for their support and assistance with the Fireside chats which had continued into their 3<sup>rd</sup> year and were still proving popular with our members.</p>

18	<b>Branch Motions:</b> None received.
19	<p><b>RNA Central Charities Raffle Draw</b></p> <p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Prize – £500</b> – S/M Brian Kelly, West Lothian Branch  <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Prize – £300</b> – Runcorn Branch  <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Prize – £200</b> – East Antrim Branch</p>
20	<p><b>Closure of Conference</b></p> <p>Following the Playing of the National Anthem, the National Standard was Marched off accompanied by Area and Branch Standards.</p>