

RECORD OF DECISIONS - NMBVA NEC MEETING
Held on 19th November 2010 at Kegworth.

Members Present:

Tex Pemberton (Chairman); Malcolm White (Vice Chairman and Postal Coordinator North); Ted Williams (Secretary); Dick Richardson (Treasurer); Ian Williams (Membership Secretary); Brian Roche (NEC Member and Postal Coordinator South); Ray Taylor (NEC Member); Ron Blain (International Liaison Officer).

ITEM:

1. **Absent Friends:** The Chairman and members paid Homage.
2. Chairman welcomed NEC members and in particular new members arising from the AGM: Ian Williams who has taken over as Membership Secretary; Dick Richardson our new Treasurer and Ray Taylor elected as NEC Committee member. The Chairman also congratulated the Secretary on the excellent coordination of the Reunion weekend, enjoyed by one and all.
3. Apologies: Annie Burden due to work commitments.
4. Record of Decisions of the meeting of 6th/7th August 2010 was accepted as a true record.
5. **Matters arising from Previous meeting held at Yew Lodge Hotel on 6th/7th August 2010 that are not on Agenda:**
 - a. **Copyright:** There is an urgency of need to review the copyright and use of the Association emblem and variations, local and International.

ACTION: Chairman.
 - b. **NMBVA Database:**
 - (1) The Custodian and postal coordinators will continually monitor postal members' geographical groupings to determine opportunities to form new Branches.
 - (2) Removal of members from the database and the website for non-payment of subscriptions – as per the Constitution – should only be undertaken after an approach for payment has been made, reasons determined, and Branches notified.
 - (3) Data Protection Act, as applied to the Association Database is to be reviewed and the position stated (Chairman).

ACTION: Membership Secretary; Webmaster; Postal Coordinators North, South, and Overseas; Treasurer.
 - c. **PJM:** There is some indication that procedures may change by the end of this year and subsequently the Chairman has written (9 Aug 10) to the MHC Defence Adviser (and will visit) to ask for an overall clarification of the PJM issue. A response is awaited and will be disseminated.

ACTION: Chairman.

- d. **COBSEO:** Possible membership of COBSEO is deferred to April 2011 meeting Agenda to determine the benefits more fully.

ACTION: Chairman and Secretary.

6. **Budget for 1st September 2010 to 30th June 2011.** Members discussed the budget – which will be for 10 months only arising from the decision of the AGM to change the financial year to 1 July to 30 June annually. The budget was brought into balance and will be disseminated to Branches. A total of £420 was collected at the AGM raffle in aid of the Gurkha Welfare Fund. The NEC decided to round this up to £450.

ACTION: Chairman and Treasurer.

7. **Budget for 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012.**

- a. This budget will come into being before the 2012 AGM and so must be shared with the membership prior to that. It is in outline only at this time and further work is necessary. It will be completed by the time of the closure of the next NEC meeting and Delegates meeting on 8th and 9th April 2011.

ACTION: Chairman and Treasurer.

- b. NEC agreed it is desirable to consider a percentage profit margin for the sale of regalia shop stock.

ACTION: Chairman, Treasurer, and Regalia Officer.

- c. Ron Blain the ILO proposed that in the light of the apparent need to increase revenue to the Association, the membership is invited to agree a Direct Debit mandate to contribute a small monthly sum to subscription charges. After some discussion it was agreed that the ILO would update the proposal with further information and prepare a submission to the membership in the Keris magazine to be published in May/June 2011.

ACTION: ILO.

8. **Association Treasurer.** Dick Richardson of Grantham Branch accepted the position of Association Treasurer during this meeting and therefore NEC contingency arrangements were unnecessary. Committee listings on website have been adjusted accordingly. Therefore, it will be necessary to remove Grahame Bamford from the account signatories list and add Dick Richardson, the other two being the Chairman and Vice Chairman. We will also take the opportunity to amend the signatories for the Memorial fund, removing Grahame Bamford; George Tullis; and John McAulay, replacing them with the Chairman; Vice Chairman; and Treasurer.

ACTION: Treasurer.

9. **Actions arising from the AGM.** The notes here refer to the approved Minutes that are posted on the website and available to the membership from the Secretary:

- a. Members asked that NEC follow up a number of medal issues contained in the Minutes.

ACTION: Chairman.

- b. The Keris magazine needs more sponsored advertisements to offset the magazine cost. Secretary will include this in an Information letter to Branches.

ACTION: Secretary.

- c. The Newsletter and Keris are opportunities for Branch notes. Secretary will advise Branches.

ACTION: Secretary.

- d. At the AGM it was agreed that the NEC would consider the most cost- effective options for distribution of the Newsletter and Keris. It will also be necessary to make some adjustment of Association office machinery and software to facilitate preparation of print masters for the Keris and Newsletter publications.

ACTION: Editor-in-Chief.

- e. There is a need to determine the holdings of Branch Standards across the Association and to register Standards and Standard Bearers to ensure accuracy of insurance policy arrangements and cover. The Secretary will advise Branches and develop the register. The date of renewal of the Policy will be determined and only registered standards will be covered. A proposal was made that Branches may wish to contribute to the insurance costs?

ACTION: Secretary.

- f. In order to have rapid communication with fast moving information, and to reduce postage costs, it is necessary to have an email contact with every Branch. There are just one or two Branches outstanding and Secretary will follow-up.

ACTION: Secretary.

- g. It was proposed by the majority of members at the AGM that NEC should explore the feasibility of having a member's panel audit of Association accounts to keep costs down. It was further suggested that regulation may require a professional audit. Finally it was proposed that a mixture of panel and professional audit may be the solution. NEC considered the options:

- (1) A three member panel overnight would seem to be the minimum and estimated costs for travel and accommodation may exceed the cost of a professional audit. We could however reduce costs if we were to opt for a geographical audit, i.e. members from the same area.
- (2) Companies House have confirmed that as a result of the Companies Act of 2009, there is no requirement for a professional audit if the balance of the account does not exceed £3.26m, nor turnover of £6.5m. Therefore a panel is an acceptable audit for the Association.
- (3) We are subsequently in a position to select the preferred options and NEC has a mandate for this.
- (4) There is however some discussion to be had with Inland Revenue.

ACTION: Chairman and Treasurer.

- h. Following a briefing at the AGM by David Knowles, Treasurer General of the World Veterans Federation, The Chairman will meet with him in the New Year to determine the advantages of the NMBVA becoming a member of the WVF.

ACTION: Chairman.

- i. Mike Weller the National Standard Bearer proposed the laying up of the original National Standard and a suitable location will be considered, starting with the Chapel at the National Arboretum. [Afternote: The National Arboretum regrets it is unable to take our standard at this time therefore other locations will be explored].

ACTION: Ray Taylor NEC Member.

- j. Mike Hawkins of Leicester Branch proposed that our Constitution should contain reference to an annual donation to some worthwhile charity. The NEC concluded that this should be a budget consideration and the beneficiary can be determined each year at the AGM, suggestions being invited from members. Budgets in future will therefore make reference to donations.

ACTION: Chairman and Treasurer.

- k. Mike Smith of Nottingham Branch proposed and members at the AGM fully supported that what to date has been known as the AGM weekend be renamed the 'Reunion' weekend, incorporating the AGM. Members at the AGM, and the NEC, agree. All further reference to the weekend will be 'Reunion' weekend.

ACTION: All NEC Members.

- l. The NEC considered a proposal to the AGM by John McAulay, Membership Secretary and Secretary Doncaster Branch, for a Symposium for Branches and believes such a gathering would be in the best interests of the Association. After due consideration of options it was determined that a symposium should be combined with the Delegates annual meeting in 2012 and proposals for costings and venue would be prepared for inclusion in the Keris magazine to be published in 2011. Final decisions, based upon members responses would be taken at the AGM in 2011.

ACTION: Editor-in-Chief and Secretary.

- m. Maurice Humphrey of Doncaster Branch proposed that in order to improve the Association revenue position, particularly so with the wish of members to have an annual Newsletter and Keris magazine, membership subscriptions should be increased by £1 per annum. This proposal will be put to the membership in the 2011 Keris magazine and the result announced at the AGM in 2011.

ACTION: Editor in Chief and Treasurer.

- n. Harry Power of Tyneside Branch asked the NEC to consider postal voting so that the views of the majority of members of the Association can be heard. The NEC took the decision that the Newsletter and the Keris magazine would be used, as a trial, to invite members to vote on issues, (see 12 below).

ACTION: Chairman, Editor-in-Chief and Secretary.

- o. At the AGM members voted in favour of a return to the same venue for the Reunion in 2011. Members also voted in favour of the Isle of Wight Company making the arrangements. The Secretary will coordinate activity with the IoW Company.

ACTION: Secretary.

- 10. **Date and Venue of Reunion 2011.** The venue for 2011 will be the Royal Court Hotel Coventry on 14 to 17 October 2011. The AGM will be on Saturday 15 October. Following a request by members to consider moving the Reunion around, the Secretary will conduct a review of alternative venues, north, south and across country, and bring options forward to the next meeting. A proposal to merge the Delegates meeting with the AGM, in order to give the wider membership decision - making opportunity is overtaken by the proposal for Ballot Voting addressed elsewhere in this Record. It was also made clear at the AGM that the membership preference is for Branch business to be raised at Delegates meetings and individual membership issues at the AGM.

ACTION: Secretary.

- 11. **Distribution of 'packs' for the Reunion weekend.** A 'pack' will be distributed to every member who gives notice to attend the Reunion weekend. The pack will contain: the Agenda; the audited accounts; papers relevant to the Agenda (such as revised Constitution). Packs need to be distributed also, to each Branch of the Association so that they can in turn consider the business of the AGM and advise Branch members, some of whom may be attending, albeit issues may only be raised by members on behalf of themselves, not on behalf of their Branches (Constitution 9B). 'Packs' need to be with all recipients at least 60 days before the AGM.

ACTION: Secretary.

- 12. **Circulation of proposals and invitations to Members to vote.** Following on from the proposal of Harry Power at 9.n. above, to open voting to the wider membership, the NEC agreed that it could benefit the Association to take a wider view and therefore, using both the annual Newsletter and Keris magazine, all Association paid-up members will be invited to vote on issues various, motions and proposals that have a strategic impact on Association business. The start of this wider consultation will be a postal ballot of members, details of which will be contained in the December Newsletter, asking if they are FOR or AGAINST such a proposal; whether they would wish to vote on the election of Officers for the National Executive Committee, currently the remit of the AGM (see Constitution 10), or whether they would prefer to leave it to those attending the AGM to decide. It will, however, require a proposal to change the Constitution in 2011 before ballot voting could take place. Members will also be invited to submit proposal that they would wish to see considered in a postal ballot, including changes to the Constitution.

ACTION: Chairman, Secretary and Editor –in-Chief.

- 13. **Communication – Options, Methods and Flexibility.** With the advent of the annual Newsletter and Keris magazine, intended to improve communication across the Association, the decision was taken, as a trial, to distribute the annual Newsletter to the Surrey Branch electronically, at their request. The Branch has also asked to receive the Keris magazine as a parcel rather than distribution to individual members.

The Branch guarantees to further distribute both publications to all its members and the rationale for their request is simply to keep costs down. The Editor-in-Chief made the point that costings for printing, packaging and postage were based on a minimum numbers contract and we must balance 'flexible' arrangement requests to ensure a cost-effective operation whilst at the same time acceding to requests where possible.

ACTION: Editor-in-Chief.

14. **NMBVAA and our future relationships.** The Chairman and International Liaison Officer briefed the NEC about exchanges with both parties - the National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association Australia (NMBVAA) on the one hand and the four breakaway Independent State Associations of Queensland; New South Wales; South Australia; and Tasmania on the other. After discussion it was agreed: that the law of Australia in relation to Independent States was very different to the laws of the United Kingdom and we should recognise that; that the National body had taken the view, albeit reluctantly, to 'live and let live'; that there was a wish by the UK membership to reengage with all M&BVA colleagues in Australia. The NEC did however question the use of the word 'National' by the Independent States as a misrepresentation and hoped for a future resolution of this but again recognised it as an issue for Australian Associations to resolve. The debate closed with the wish that at some time in the future the NMBVAA could be 'repaired' but agreed that our website and relationship should reconnect with both parties. It was also considered that there should probably be a ranking line diagram to avoid confusion and further discussion with Australia will be undertaken.

ACTION: Chairman, ILO and Webmaster.

15. **Proposal to have Vice Presidents.** NEC considered and agreed the introduction of Vice Presidents as honorary appointments to recognise and reward exceptional service to the Association. This proposal would bring the Association in line with many other similar Associations and Organisations. The names of those appointed would appear as a footer on Association paper. These would be lifetime appointments and would not be subject to election each year. A proposal will be brought to the Membership.

ACTION: Chairman.

17. **Progress of Newsletter.** Editor in Chief produced a prepared print-master and said the completed Newsletter should be ready for distribution at the end of the first week in December.

ACTION: Editor-in-Chief.

18. **Appointment of Association Welfare Officer.** Ted Williams, the Association Secretary was appointed as the AWO. His duties will be to liaise with, and assist as necessary, Branch Welfare Officers and Postal Coordinators in the fulfilment of Association Objective 2, 'To assist members in their time of need.'

ACTION: Secretary.

19. **Appointment of Association Recruiting Officer.** Ray Taylor, NEC Committee member, was appointed ARO. His duties will be to work with Branches and other bodies to recruit new members to the Association.

ACTION: Ray Taylor.

20. **Further changes to the Constitution.** After discussion it was decided to bring forward proposals to make further changes to the Constitution to: delete Assistant National Secretary from the list of Officers, the post being considered unnecessary; to propose Vice Presidents as per 15 above; to adjust the scrambled wording of Association Objective 3 on the website; and to clarify what is meant by the 'payment date' for subscriptions for all members, recognising that It is difficult to encouraging change to BSOs for existing members.

ACTION: Chairman, Secretary, Postal Coordinators.

21. **How do we consolidate Membership list?** The Vice Chairman proposed some minor changes to consolidate the data base. These were agreed in principle and he will work with the Membership Secretary to add clarity and circulate a firm proposal for consideration by the NEC when the procurement of the appropriate software and SD Cards has been costed.

ACTION: Vice Chairman and Membership Secretary.

22. **AOB**

- a. **Veterans Concessionary Travel Scheme.** Chairman said he was aware of this scheme and would advertise it to all members.

ACTION: Chairman

- b. **Standardised Table of Subscriptions.** The Treasurer said he would seek to standardise the table of subscriptions paid to be used by all Branches.

ACTION: Treasurer.

23. **Dates of Next Meetings:**

- a. NEC - 8 April 2011 starting at 1200 - Yew Lodge Hotel, Kegworth.
b. Delegates meeting - 9 April 2011 starting at 1030 - Yew Lodge Hotel.
c. NEC - 5/6 August 2011, starting at 1200.

Record approved by Chairman: 27th November 2010 and posted on website