



XXIV SQUADRON ASSOCIATION ROYAL AIR FORCE

President: Air Vice Marshal J.F.H. Tetley. C.B. C.V.O. R.A.F.
Chairman: Group Captain K. Chapman

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT RAF LYNEHAM ON THE 5th OCTOBER 2002.

Members attending: Messrs J. F. H. Tetley (President) K Chapman (Chairman) C Harley (Deputy Chair) D. R. Burgin (Secretary)

R. Bates G. Bell R. Brawn M. Coumbs R. Dew G. Gair L. Hagon R. Hastings M. Hills D. Hobbs W. Holden G. Jones B. Jones P. Looker W. Makepeace J. Millar T. Norcross D. Parkinson T. Paterson W. Smith D. Smith R. Stewart N. Thompson P. Tootal C. Townsend M. Watkins S. Webb C. Williams S. Wright (33 in total)

The Chairman extended a warm welcome all members present with a special mention to those that had travelled long distances.

Item 1/2002 Apologies for Absence

The Secretary had received notification of a large number of apologies of absence by letter, phone, electronic mail and word of mouth, along with some generous donations to the Association funds. Apologies of special interest were from ex OC's of 24 Squadron, namely Tempest Archbell in Durban, Geof Moss, Mike Davis, and through ill health Jock Hannah and Pincher Martin.

As in previous years, the list of notifications and letters was made available for all attending to read. A full list of apologies is as follows:-

T. Archbell + donation, C. Carrington J.Cheshire T.Clack J.Clark + donation M.Davis + donation J.Dickinson G.Donald T.Dowding T.Dower + donation D.Goodman R.Hale J.Hannah + donation V.Hemmings J.Hobbs R.Jay G.Jones + donation D.Keogh + donation J.Larkworthy + donation M.Lythgoe J.Martin P.Martin J.McArthur J.McWicker + donation K.Morris + donation G.Moss + donation R.Payne M.Sawbridge J.Smither + donation T Southgate B.Spurway C.Squire E.Staker A.Turner P.Walker S.Wheeler

Item 1a/2002 In Memorium

The members stood in silence in remembrance of the following comrades:-

Arthur Mitchell, Hughie Hughes, Peter McCann, Frank Dewell, Raimund Puda. (more details in Issue 9 Newsletter)

Item 2/2002 Minutes of the previous AGM

No observations were raised against the accuracy of the 2001 Minutes, and were duly passed as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed Sam Wright, seconded Richard Bates, passed by all.

Item 3/2002 Matters Arising

Three actions were left outstanding from the 2001 AGM for the Committee to attend to, namely:-

- Item 6/2001 - Secretary to Spring Clean the membership list and remove "Ghost" Members.
- Item 8/2001 - Committee to arrange Summer Social to Bletchley Park and publicise date.
- Item 8/2001 - Committee to select venue and publicise details of informal off-agenda social event on October 5th after main Reunion.

All Complete.

Item 4/2002 Chairman's Report

The Chairman was pleased to report seeing such an excellent turn out for this 87th Anniversary year Reunion and Ladies Guest Night Dinner. It is clear that 24 Squadron Association is well established as one of the strongest squadron associations. Continued support at these Reunions make the autumn gathering a firm fixture in the calendar.

This is in line with the longevity of the Squadron which has been in existence for 87 of the 98 years since man's maiden flight in September 1904. No better proof that XXIV Sqn really *is* one of the oldest and most distinguished flying units anywhere in the world.

A special thanks went to the Secretary and Treasurer of the Committee for keeping it running smoothly and professionally. Our presence on the Internet, with thanks to John Martin, is invaluable in promoting the Association and maintaining links with the membership and other interested parties.

The Newsletter continues to be a valuable lifeline to the many members who cannot make it each year to the Reunions. A volunteer to take over after Issue 10 (summer 2003) from the current Editor, David Burgin, who has produced the previous 9 issues, would help spread the work load. In the meantime you are all urged to make a contribution by sending in articles either, type written, floppy disc, audio tape or e-mail.

Finally the Chairman thanked Wing Commander Rick Hobson, who has been in post during a particularly stressful and eventful time for XXIV Sqn, for hosting the Association. He also expressed appreciation of the considerable

efforts of the Squadron liaison team of Flt Lt Phil Whitworth and Flt Sgt Brenda Hinkinbottom to ensure that all arrangements ran smoothly.

Item 5/2002 Treasurer's Report

Apologies were received in advance from the Treasurer and his report was delivered by the Deputy Chairman. An Income and Expenditure Sheet and Balance Sheet for the Year ending 31 October 2001 was presented to the AGM.

The last financial year showed our Income as £3,200 and the Expenditure as £3,400, a net deficit for the year of £200. Cash reserves are over £2,000 and we can therefore afford to contain this overshoot for a few years yet. Expenditure for the twice yearly mailshots to Members, which include the Newsletter and Minutes, for printing and postage is the main reason for the deficit. Reunion and Social events have always been self financing from those present.

It should also be noted from the 2001 Income sheet that a sum of around £275 has also been generously donated, for which the Association is very grateful.

In line with previous years and to help in a modest way towards the much needed charitable work that is carried out all round the year by the current serving members of 24 Squadron, a donation of £60 was voted towards Burton Hill House School at Malmesbury. To be paid direct by Treasurer.

Proposed T Paterson, Seconded W Holden.

Item 6/2002 Secretary's Report

The Association is still a growth organisation with 12 additional members this year which is down slightly on the previous year's 15 new members. Of the 12 new members, we gained 4 from the Internet and 2 from Aeroplane Monthly. A spring cleaning exercise was carried out on the membership list to reveal any "Ghosts" by sending pre-printed postcards to 100 selected members who had not been in contact for over 2 years. The result was that 32 replied to continue membership, leaving 68 flagged as non active, a worthwhile exercise.

This years Reunion programme attracted 49 for the Friday Evening Ladies Guest Night (Yr 2001 = 63) and Saturday AGM and Lunch about equal (2001 = 59, 2002 = 60). It is hoped that this and last years successful formula is carried forward to future years and is as well supported.

This years Issue 9 Newsletter featuring some quality black and white WWII photographs from John White and William Knight ran to 24 pages and was published in a condensed format on the Web Site. The request for a fresh Editor to bring a new look failed to draw any response, This worthwhile and interesting job would be well supported by the Secretary in his efforts to devout more time to expanding our presence on the Internet. The plea is

therefore once again for plenty of material to be submitted, especially photos with brief details. All material will be returned or turned over to the Squadron Historian to add to the comprehensive collection that is on display each Reunion. Note also that Issues 5, 6, 7 and 8 are available on the Web Site for reference.

The Summer Social is managing to acquire a reputation of its own and draws a smaller dedicated band of followers some of whom cannot always make our main Autumn event . This year the event was held on 8th June at Bletchley Park, home of the Enigma machine and Station X and once more proved an interesting a very sociable occasion.

Our presence is well registered with the most popular search engines on the Internet, and has now moved to a slightly more remembered address www.24sqnassociation.royalairforce.net and has links to many other similar organisations. The site shows, amongst other things, a list of all members, which has been directly instrumental in putting people in touch after some 60 years. A great benefit to those searching for contacts and helps promote the good name of 24 Squadron and its Association. Our thanks to John Martin for his help and assistance in getting us up and running alongside his Halton Apprentice site.

The Association has received two invitations worth a mention:-

- a) from member Jack McWicker, Fort Walton Beach, Florida to drop in if down that way. (see your address list for details)
- b) The Mayor of Wevelgem, Belgium to the inauguration of the memorials dedicated to the crews of No 21 and 107 Sqn RAF and No 432 Sqn RCAF who fell on Belgium soil in WWII. This will be held on Sunday November 10th 2002. (24 Sqn were based at Wevelgem during WWI)

The Secretary added his thanks to the support and help received from the 24 Squadron Liaison team on site who, despite a hectic schedule, worked hard to ensure that final arrangements went according to plan.

Item 7/2002 Annual Election of Officers

The present Committee are all willing to serve for another term but as is required by the constitution, offered themselves up to the AGM for election.

It was proposed by our President, John Tetley, with his full endorsement that the current team remain in place; seconded by all present.

The Committee structure for 2002/03 is:-

Chairman	Keith Chapman	Deputy Chairman	Clive Harley
Treasurer	Keith Rayner	Secretary	David Burgin

Item 8/2002 Future Social Events

The Chairman asked the floor for suggestions for the 2003 Summer Social. No specific favourite was offered and so the Chairman proposed The War Cabinet Rooms in Whitehall, followed by lunch in the bar of the RAF Club Piccadilly. The general mood was one of agreement and details, dates and times would be included with the Minutes. Provisional date Saturday 7th June 2003.

Action on Committee

Suggestions of Neatishead Radar Museum and a Canal Boat trip were considered but not taken forward.

Item 9/2002 Any other Business

The Association President John Tetley noted the similarities being experienced by the Squadron between the first Hercules arriving at Lyneham and the current C130J. This adapting to change was also reflected in a still growing Association. A vote of thanks was offered to the Committee and the Squadron for making the days events a success.

Sam Wright, a leading figure on the "Save Lyneham" campaign committee briefed the membership on the developments concerning the proposed closure of RAF Lyneham and transfer of aircraft to Brize Norton. Sam urged members to write to their own MPs in support of the campaign.

Richard Bates reminded members that the Allied Museum in Berlin, which is dedicated to the Berlin Airlift and features the Squadron's role during that operation, is a worth a visit.

It was proposed by Trevor Paterson and seconded by all present to make the customary modest donation to Burton Hill House at Malmesbury, the Squadron's nominated charity. Brian Jones, our own intrepid Global Ballooner, opened the fete at the school last year.

Action on Treasurer

The 2002 AGM closed at 11:50hrs in anticipation of Lunch and OC 24 Squadron's briefing to us all on current and future events planned for the Squadron.

Post meeting note:- With the move of the Squadron from its previous location to its present modern more spacious building, a dedicated room has been set aside to display aspects of its history. The offer is open for any Association Member to assist with the cataloguing and archiving of these valuable and unique set of records. Please contact initially the Squadron Adjutant on 01249

897167, or write to XXIV Sqn Adj, RAF Lyneham, Chippenham, Wilts, SN15 4PZ to arrange access.

Secretary's Note :- Would anybody with an e-mail address who has not already done so, please send a brief message to:-

24sqnassociation@royalairforce.net

This will allow us to compile an electronic address book and distribute minutes, notices etc electronically.

Bookmark this site, its the Association Web Page on the Internet

<http://www.24sqnassociation.royalairforce.net>

PLEASE NOTE, PROVISIONAL DATE OF NEXT AGM & 88th ANNIVERSARY REUNION - 3/4th OCTOBER 2003.