



# XXIV SQUADRON ASSOCIATION ROYAL AIR FORCE

President: Air Vice Marshal J F H Tetley CB CVO  
Chairman: Group Captain K Chapman MPhil BA

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT RAF LYNEHAM 4 OCTOBER 2003.

**Members attending:** Messrs K Chapman (Chairman) C Harley (Deputy Chair) K Rayner (Treasurer) D. R. Burgin (Secretary)

S. Batchelor, R. Bates, G. Bell, P. Benning, G. Burchell, M. Coumbe, M Davis, R. Dew, P. Elliot, G. Gair, L. Hagon, M. Hills, G. Jones, P. Keeble, P. Mansbridge, J. Martin, P. Martin, D. Parkinson, T. Paterson, R. Payne, M. Phillips, A. Pickering, C. Regan, D. Smith, B. Spurway, C. Townsend, A. Turner M. Watkins, S. Wright (33 in total)

The Chairman extended a warm welcome all members present with a special mention to the new faces at this year's AGM and Reunion events.

### **Item 1/2003 Apologies for Absence**

The Secretary had received 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. The latter included a gift of £300 from Mrs Betty Archbell, recent widow of Wg Cdr Tempest Archbell, ex-South African Air Force and a former OC of XXIV Sqn. Other apologies included those from our President AVM John Tetley, ACM Sir John Cheshire, various former OCs XXIV Sqn, Geoff Moss (+ donation) and Martin Stringer.

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:-

M. Bailey, K. Bossey, R. Brawn (+ donation), D. Carter (+ donation), T. Clack, B. Cowin, G. Donald, W. Francis, A. Galea (+ donation), D. Goodman, C. Harvey, J. Hannah, R. Hastings (+ donation), V. Hemmings, R. Jay, D. Keogh (+ donation), M. Lythgoe, J. McWicker (+ donation), C. Pritchard, K. Reynolds, J. Smither (+ donation), T. Southgate, R. Stewart (+ donation), P. Tootal, M. Trowell, L. Warrington, R. Watson, S. Wheeler, C. Williams.

### **Item 1.1 In Memorium**

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

Wg Cdr Tempest Archbell, Flt Lt Cyril Jones, Ch Tech Joe Millar, M Eng Bert Millicant, MALM Cy Squire, Sqn Ldr Bill Wixon. (For more details, see Issue No.10 of Association Newsletter)

### **Item 2/2003 Minutes of the previous AGM**

No observations were raised against the accuracy of the 2002 Minutes, which were duly accepted as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed by Trevor Patterson, seconded by Brian Spurway, passed by all.

**Item 3/2003 Matters Arising**

Two actions were left outstanding from the 2002 AGM for the Committee to address:

- Item 8/2002 - Future Social Events. The Secretary was tasked to arrange a visit to the War Cabinet Rooms and RAF Club on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2003.
- Item 9/2002 - Treasurer to arrange for donation to Burton Hill House.

**All Complete.**

**Item 4/2003 Chairman's Report**

The Chairman had been absent from the UK for several months during the year on duty with the UN in the Middle East and extended his thanks to the Secretary and Treasurer for all their hard work in keeping the Association straight and level.

Now that he had more time to devote to Association matters, he wished to stimulate a debate about how the Association might make additional efforts to increase membership and participation in annual Reunions and other social events. (See Items 6, 8 and 9 below).

He also expressed appreciation to OC XXIV Sqn and for the considerable efforts of the Squadron liaison team (especially Flt Lt Phil Whitworth), which continue to make the Association weekend a most enjoyable and well-organised occasion.

**Item 5/2003 Treasurer's Report**

An Income and Expenditure Sheet and Balance Sheet for the Year ending 31 October 2002 was presented to the AGM.

As with the current Chancellor of the Exchequer, prudence remains the buzzword with the last financial year showing our Income had increased £230 over Expenditure, leaving a £2,400 balance of cash reserves. Reunion and Social events continue to be self-financing from those attending.

Generous donations from members continue to give the funds a welcome (though un-budgeted) boost, for which the Association is very grateful.

## **Item 6/2003 Secretary's Report**

### **Item 6.1 Membership**

The Association has only barely grown with 6 additional members this year - which is down on the previous year's 12 new members. This is despite advertising through some dozen outlets.

This area is within the control of the committee and renewed efforts are to be made to monitor progress over the next 12 months. The following list of outlets is to be approached on a quarterly basis:- Air Britain, Aircraft Illustrated, Aircrew Association, Air Mail - RAFA, BA 25 Year Club, BALPA- The Log, Cross and Cockade, Duxford Museum, Fly Past, Friends Reunited, Lyneham Globe, RAeS, RAF Club, RAF News, Royal British Legion, Service Pals, SSAFA, Teletext.

**Action on Secretary**

### **Item 6.2 Attendance**

This year's Ladies Guest Night on Friday 3 October in the Officers' Mess attracted only 37 Association members and guests (excluding serving members of XXIV Sqn) vis-à-vis 49 for the equivalent event in 2002. Whilst it is normal for these figures to fluctuate from year to year, this drop in attendance gives cause for concern and lends added emphasis to the debate on measures to increase participation (see Item 9). The Saturday programme, including AGM and a buffet lunch at the Sqn HQ, attracted 58 members and guests, vis-à-vis 60 in 2002.

### **Item 6.3 Newsletter**

This year's Newsletter (Issue No. 10) eventually turned into a 28-page bumper edition, despite early misgivings about the quantity of material submitted for inclusion. Feedback from readers was both positive and complimentary. The search for a new printer caused some concern to the Editor in meeting publishing dates but the end result and price per copy were comparable to previous issues.

The MAILBOX section proved very popular judging from responses received during the Reunion. The request for a fresh Editor to bring a new look has failed to draw any response. As a result, expectations of maintaining the current high standard in future issues cannot be guaranteed due to the Editor's other commitments.

The plea is therefore once again for plenty of material – ideally submitted in soft copy - 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 at each Reunion. Note also that Issues 5 - 10 are available on the Web Site for reference.

### **Item 6.4 Summer Social**

This year's event was held on 7<sup>th</sup> June in London with a visit to the War Cabinet Rooms followed by lunch at the RAF Club. The event once more proved to be both interesting and enjoyable but suffered from lack of real support from the membership with only 8 persons in total attending.

#### **Item 6.5 Website**

Our presence is well registered with the most popular search engines on the Internet, and has now moved to a slightly more memorable address <http://www.24sqnassociation.royalairforce.net> with links to many other similar organisations.

#### **Item 6.6 Sqn Support**

The Secretary added his thanks for all the support and help received from the XXIV Squadron liaison team who do so much to make each year's Reunion the success it surely is.

#### **Item 7/2003 Annual Election of Officers**

**Items 7.1 - 7.4** The present Committee confirmed that they are all willing to serve for another term but, as required by the constitution, offered themselves up to the AGM for re-election.

It was proposed by Roger Payne and seconded by Mike Phillips, with full endorsement by all, that the current team remain in place.

Accordingly, the Committee structure for 2003/04 is:-

<b>Chairman</b>	Keith Chapman	<b>Deputy Chairman</b>	Clive Harley
<b>Treasurer</b>	Keith Rayner	<b>Secretary</b>	David Burgin

**Item 7.5** The Chairman informed the AGM that our President, AVM John Tetley, had recently indicated that he wished to hand over this role as soon as a successor could be found. After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Keith Rayner and seconded by Pete Benning that the Chairman should approach Air Chief Marshal Sir John Cheshire, currently Governor General of Jersey, to see if he would be willing to take over the Presidency of the Association. This proposal was endorsed by all present. Meanwhile, AVM Tetley has kindly agreed to remain in post.

#### **Action on Chairman**

#### **Item 8/2003 Future Social Events**

The Chairman asked the floor for suggestions, venues and format for the 2004 Summer Social. As usual, many ideas were forthcoming, including visits to Bibury Court, Kemble Museum, Duxford Museum, RR Engine Assembly area, and WWI sites in France.

As it is difficult to achieve consensus on a venue or format for such events, it was agreed that the views of the wider membership should be canvassed via a questionnaire to be distributed with these minutes. (See Item 9).

***Post meeting note:-***

Should feedback from the questionnaire prove inconclusive, the Committee believe it is necessary to have a fallback plan. Accordingly, they have proposed, outside the AGM, a provisional summer event comprising an optional morning visit to the excellent air museum at Kemble followed by a late lunch at the popular central location of **Bibury Court** in the Cotswolds. This event is provisionally planned for **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> June**. Similarly, the date of the next AGM and 89<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion is provisionally planned for the weekend of 1 and 2 October 2004. Please make a note in your diaries!

**Action on Committee**

**Item 9/2003 Any other Business**

**Item 9.1 Reunion attendance figures**

A great deal of healthy debate took place on the Chairman's proposal for a fresh look on how we organise our annual Reunions with the emphasis on making it a more inclusive occasion. All aspects were up for review, including the time of year, format and cost.

The Lyneham Old Boys' Association, which has grown to 700 members in only five years, was held up as a good example of the how an organisation can quickly develop into a well-supported organisation. With regard to the issues that face this Association, it was agreed that a questionnaire would be sent to all members with these minutes to gather views on a range of topics including:

- Establishment of Hardship Fund to assist members whose financial circumstances precluded attendance at Association events.
- Timing of Reunions and other events
- Cost of Social events
- Format of Reunions and other events
- Venues for summer events

**Action on Committee**

Additionally, an updated GEOGRAPHIC membership list sorted by postcode and Country to identify near neighbours would be included with the minutes along with a blank membership application form. These forms can be distributed to friends who are not currently members of our Association, in line with our aim of increasing membership and attendance figures.

**Action on Secretary**

**Item 9.2 Raffle**

Mike Phillips announced that he would run a raffle during the day to raise funds for the Association. This raised £86. Well done, Mike!

**Item 9.3 Donation to Sqn Charity**

It was proposed by Trevor Paterson and seconded by all present that the Association should make its customary donation to Burton Hill House at Malmesbury, the Squadron's nominated charity. It was unanimously agreed that the amount donated this year should be £88, the number of years that the Squadron had been operational.

**Action on Treasurer**

After a lively debate on the above issues, the 2003 AGM closed at 12:10hrs in anticipation of OC XXIV Sqn's briefing on current and future events involving both the Squadron and Station.

*Secretary's Note :-* Would anybody with an e-mail address who has not already done so, or changed address please send a brief message to:-  
**the24secretary at royalairforce dot net** (see also web site).  
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 & 89th ANNIVERSARY REUNION - 1/2<sup>nd</sup> OCTOBER 2004.**