



XXIV SQUADRON ASSOCIATION ROYAL AIR FORCE

President: Air Commodore Richard Gould CBE MA BSc FRAeS
Chairman: Group Captain Keith Chapman MPhil BA

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN STATION CONFERENCE ROOM AT RAF LYNEHAM - 3 OCTOBER 2009

Members attending: Messrs R H Gould (President), K Chapman (Chairman), S Wright (Deputy Chair), K Rayner (Treasurer), D R Burgin (Secretary).

R Bates, J Brittain, C Carrington, N Cooper, B Cowin, R Hale, C Harley, J Harris, M Hills, W Holden, G Jones, W Lowe, J Martin, T Norcross, G Norton, T Paterson, R Payne, D Stewart, A Turner, A Wilson, N Yerbury. (26 in total)

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to all who had travelled to this year's AGM, which coincides with the Squadron's 94th Anniversary. The Station Conference room had been provided this year both for the AGM and also to host guests and friends for the day's events. Immediately after the AGM, OC XXIV Sqn (Wg Cdr Andy Bacon) and members of the Sqn gave presentations to members and guests in the Station Briefing Room. Wg Cdr Chris Carrington then gave an illuminating talk about his tour as OC XXIV Sqn in the 1980s.

Item 1/2009 Apologies for Absence

The Secretary had received various apologies of absence by letter, phone, electronic mail and word of mouth, along with several generous donations to Association funds amounting to more than £150. We make special mention from this list of AVM John Tetley (previous President), Air Cdre John Mitchell and Gp Capt Mike Davis.

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:

Brian Baker (+ donation), Dickie Brawn, Graham Clarke, Mike Davis (+ donation), Graeme Donald (attended dinner but not AGM), Bill Francis (+ donation), Dave Goodman, Kevin Groves, Norma Hagon (+ Raffle Prize), Phil Hall, Ron Hastings, Vince Hemmings (+ donation), Rusty Ironside (+ donation), Tony Johnson, Colin Joyner, Graham Jones, Mike Long, Henry Luxton, Mike Lythgoe, Len Marshall, John Mitchell (+ donation), Ian Nelson, Len Poll, Derek Smith, John Smither (+ donation), John Tetley (+ donation), Patrick Tootal, Lionel Warrington, Colin Williams, Ron Wright (+ donation).

Item 1.1/2009 In Memoriam

It was with great regret that the Secretary had to report that the Association had lost three Association Members during the past year. Those present stood in silence in remembrance of the following comrades:

Sqn Ldr Peter Forester – Pilot (Hastings); Sgt Len Hagon – Air Eng (Hastings); SAC Jimmy Ingle – Survival Equipment, RAF Lyneham.

Details of the events surrounding the loss of some of these comrades were posted on the Association web log and a more detailed obituary will be published in the 2010 Newsletter/Magazine.

Item 2/2009 Minutes of the previous AGM

No observations were raised against the accuracy of the 2008 Minutes, which were duly accepted as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed by Bill Lowe, Seconded by Clive Harley, Passed unanimously.

Item 3/2009 Matters Arising

The following actions were left outstanding from the 2008 AGM for the Committee to address:

- Item 5/2008 – Treasurer to confirm donation of £93 to Squadron nominated charity CALM.
Complete
- Item 6.1/2008 – Secretary to emphasise FREE Membership on advertising, Association Website and usual outlets.
Complete
- Item 8b/2008 – Secretary and Deputy Chairman to coordinate booking of Officers' Mess, Coach and Music for 2009 Reunion weekend.
Complete
- Item 10.3/2008 – Secretary to contact AQM/ALM Association re clash of Reunion dates. The AQM/ALM Association is holding its 2009 Reunion on the weekend of 9/11 Oct at Marsh Farm, Wootton Bassett. Contact made and awaiting feedback. Tom Norcross informed the AGM that the Argosy Association usually holds its annual reunion on the first Friday of October and that it is considering whether to change this scheduling in order to de-conflict with other reunions.
Part Complete.

Item 4/2009 Chairman's Report

The Chairman said that the retiring XXIV Sqn Standard had been laid up in Italy on Sunday 9 November 2008 as part of a special Service of Commemoration in the Chapel of the 187th Folgore Parachute Regiment at their barracks in Livorno. This unprecedented gesture had further cemented the enduring bond between the two units. Gp Capts Richard Bates (OC XXIV Sqn at the time of the Pisa accident) and Keith Chapman represented the Association at the ceremonies and wreath-laying in Livorno. Relatives of some of the XXIV Sqn aircrew killed at Pisa also attended. Reporting of this event was a special feature of the 2009 Newsletter/Magazine, which the Editor had appropriately called "The Livorno Issue".

The Chairman said that the six Italian soldiers killed in Kabul on 20 Sep 09 had all been members of 187 Parachute Regt, elements of which had been serving in Afghanistan since Spring 2009. At the request of the Committee, the subsequent letter of condolence sent to OC 187 Regt by OC XXIV Sqn had been written on behalf of both the Association and the Sqn. The text of this letter will be published in the 2010 Newsletter/Magazine.

Finally, the Chairman expressed appreciation to OC XXIV Sqn and the Squadron liaison team especially Flt Lt Donny Walker (our new liaison officer) for all their efforts to ensure the success of today's Reunion, despite ever more demanding operational constraints. The Chairman also thanked his fellow committee members for their cooperation and invaluable contributions to the Association during the past year.

Item 5/2009 Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer distributed a full set of accounts outlining Income and Expenditure for the year ending 31 Mar 09. Exceptionally, this covers an extended financial year of about 18 months. This change has permitted all significant income and expenditure events (eg Summer Social and Reunion Weekend) to fall henceforth within the same period of 12 months. The closing balance at 31 Mar 09 was about £1,200.

A copy of the accounts is included with these minutes. (Note typing error on page 3 of hard copy handed out at AGM – balance b/d should be £5,012.36)

The Centenary Fund remains on course to achieve its target of £1,000 by 2015. This fund, which is increasing at £100 per annum, currently has a balance of £413.24.

Item 6/2009 Donation to Squadron Charity

The AGM approved a donation of £94 to the [Children's Cancer & Leukaemia Movement](#) (CALM), XXIV Squadron's nominated charity. Proposed by Richard Bates, Seconded by Chris Carrington, Passed unanimously.

Action on Treasurer

Item 7/2009 One-Off Voluntary Donation to Association Fund

The Treasurer said that reserves in the Association Fund were running low, a situation that needed to be addressed. At present, fixed annual outgoings are about £3800, which includes our donation to the Sqn charity, the cost of printing the magazine in colour, postage, provision of a coach on the night of the reunion and paying for music at the dinner, as well as the cost of the dinner itself. Income derives solely from the money paid by members to attend the dinner, voluntary donations and the annual raffle held at the reunion. The gap between income and expenditure could not be sustained indefinitely.

The Treasurer noted that generous voluntary donations from members continue to give the Association fund a welcome (if un-budgeted) boost, for which we are all very grateful. In the current year, such donations amounted to more

than £150. However, as the Association does not levy either joining or annual subscription fees, he concluded that the time had come to appeal to all members for a modest one-off “top up” contribution, an event that last occurred some **10 years ago** in 1999. Such donations would be entirely voluntary. No specific amount per member was being suggested.

A wide range of views and ideas, ALL positive and productive, were expressed by those present. Some members were in favour of making regular, voluntary donations by Standing Order. Our President asked if it could be verified whether the Association qualified for charitable status. He also suggested that, if the financial position failed to improve, we might have to re-consider previous decisions to provide free coach travel, music at Dinners and colour versions of the Newsletter. The Treasurer reassured the AGM that the Association Fund was still solvent and said that, based on the generous response to our previous appeal for one-off donations, he fully expected this measure to restore our depleted reserves to a satisfactory level.

Action on Treasurer to check Charitable Status

The Chairman summarised the action to be taken as follows:-

- **ALL members would be asked to consider making a one-off VOLUNTARY donation (according to individual means) in the current financial year.**
- **The Secretary would issue a special appeal for donations with the Minutes, enclosing a payment slip and pre-addressed envelope. This payment slip would give members the option either to make a one-off payment by cheque or to set up a Bank Standing Order to make regular annual donations.**
- **Subsequent to the AGM, the Chairman asked the Treasurer to update the Committee at the end of 2009 on the response to the appeal so far and the state of the Association Fund.**

Action on Secretary & Treasurer

Item 8/2009 Donation to Squadron History Project

Under current plans, XXIV Sqn will re-deploy permanently to RAF Brize Norton by September 2011 prior to the closure of RAF Lyneham by the end of 2012. Against this background, the Chairman said that the Sqn had recently embarked on a concerted effort to collate, catalogue and re-organise its valuable and unique collection of documents, photographs, silver and other memorabilia. Leadership of this long-overdue project, which includes an upgrade of the Sqn History Room, had been delegated to Major Shugart, a USAF pilot who had recently joined XXIV Sqn on exchange.

The Chairman said that the Sqn had approached the Association several months ago to seek a contribution of £140 towards the purchase of a high quality album in which a decade’s worth of important photos and documents would be archived, thus safeguarding an important component of the Sqn’s history. The Committee had been generally sympathetic to this request but felt this was a matter that required the approval of the AGM. To assist the AGM in reaching its decision, he had asked OC XXIV Sqn to nominate an officer to attend this agenda item to brief on the background and answer any questions.

In the absence of Maj Shugart, Sqn Ldr Al Tano (Flt Cdr Exec) carried out this briefing, explaining that the requested contribution of £140 would sponsor one of three new beautifully crafted photo albums, along the lines of others already on display. He said that the Sqn itself would be spending some £500 on various aspects of this important up-grade.

Sqn Ldr Tano's briefing was well received. After he had withdrawn from the room, the request was discussed and strongly supported in principle. However, given the Treasurer's earlier concerns about pressure on Association resources, the AGM agreed that a contribution could not be afforded unless covered by voluntary donations given specifically for this purpose - as distinct from the wider appeal for donations recorded at Item 7 above. With a view to resolving this matter as quickly as possible, it was agreed that the Treasurer would collect voluntary donations in cash from those present immediately after the AGM. This impromptu appeal resulted in the rapid donation of sufficient money to fund the entire required donation of £140.

After Note: The Chairman presented OC XXIV Sqn with a cheque for £140 at that evening's dinner. The cheque was provided by the Treasurer and drawn on the Association Fund but was fully covered by cash collected after the AGM.

Item 9/2009 Secretary's Report

Item 9.1 Membership

The Secretary was able to report a respectable year for recruiting with a net increase of nine new members. This was achieved by continued advertising that had emphasised that membership was absolutely free, with no joining or annual fees. Earlier this year, OC XXIV - who was keen to raise the profile of the Association among Sqn personnel - had written to many former OCs and other ex-XXIV Sqn personnel urging them to consider joining the Association. This commendable initiative had produced 6 of our nine new members.

Sadly, the Secretary also had to report the loss of three existing members (see Item 1/2009). However, the Association will continue to advertise for new members through a variety of outlets, including the Aircrew Association, Air Mail, RAFA, BA 25 Year Club, RAF Club, RAF News, Teletext etc.

Members are also asked to help by promoting the Association among friends and colleagues whenever possible. Applications forms are available from the Secretary or can be downloaded from the Association Website.

Item 9.2 Attendance

Attendance at the AGM and Reunion Lunch this year was 57 as opposed to 58 in 2008. The Association Ladies' Guest night in the Sergeants' Mess on 4 Oct 08 attracted 57 members and guests against 50 at this year's event in the Officers' Mess. These attendance figures are fairly stable but could be improved upon. The Committee hopes and believes that next year's Reunion and Dinner will attract a larger number of attendees than ever, given that it is

likely to be the last such event held at RAF Lyneham. Nevertheless, future AGMs might need to review whether or not the extra cost involved in providing music and coach transfers are paying dividends in terms of attracting greater attendance. Meanwhile, the Secretary was particularly grateful to Sam Wright (Deputy Chairman) for taking on the time-consuming tasks of liaising with the Mess Manager over the seating plan and menus, engaging musicians, negotiating special rates at hotels in Swindon and arranging transport between those hotels and RAF Lyneham.

Item 9.3 Newsletter/Magazine

The Summer 2009 edition of the Association Newsletter/Magazine (Issue No. 16) was the second to be printed in 24-page **COLOUR** format. The part colour version produced this year cost around £2.00 per copy, with full colour working out at almost £3.00 per copy. Whether to continue with part colour, switch to full colour, or even revert to black & white format as a significant cost-saving measure, will be kept under review depending on affordability and content submitted for final publication.

Meanwhile, feedback from readers continued to be highly complimentary. It is clear that the Newsletter/Magazine is highly regarded as a means of keeping ALL members up to date and in touch with the Association.

The Editor has given notice of his intention to make Issue 17 (Summer 2010) his last. It is essential that a new Editor for the Newsletter/Magazine be identified as a matter of urgency. As the existing Editor pointed out, a replacement was vital to bring a fresh look and feel to this integral component of what the Association is all about. The present Editor has now produced 16 consecutive issues and rightly feels that the time has come for someone else to take on this important task.

Action on Membership for volunteer

Members are asked to continue submitting articles, stories, anecdotes or photos, as such contributions also help maintain a living archive of the Sqn's history. Any material such as photos or original documents could either be passed on to the new History Room or returned to the contributor if so desired.

Members were reminded that Issues 5 - 16 are available on the Website for reference in **Portable Document File (PDF)** format, which mirrors the look and layout of the original document, with the added benefit of a FULL colour format.

Item 9.4 Summer Social

The 2009 Summer Lunch was held on Wed 3 June at the home of Sam and Sue Wright followed by lunch at La Flambé Restaurant, Sutton Benger. The event was a great success with around 30 Association members, guests and Squadron personnel attending.

This format is proving very popular and will be repeated in Summer 2010. (See Item 11a/2009 below).

Item 9.5 Website

The Secretary reminded the AGM that the Association website is the place to visit to check the Diary of Events, Minutes of Meetings, Newsletter articles and links to many other related organisations. Suggestions for new LINKS (or information on any that may have ceased) are most welcome. (See email address on website).

The **Blog Book** or on-line diary created in 2007 has yet to be fully utilised by members but still provides an ideal medium in which to post instant news, pictures and comments, aside from the main website. Via this medium, information, gossip or more serious issues are quickly available to one and all. Any comments or feedback are more than welcome.

A longer-term aim is to transfer some of the material now on display in the Sqn History Room onto the website as a joint effort with the Sqn.

Meanwhile, the Association's presence is well registered with the most popular search engines on the Internet and our website has a reasonably memorable address www.24sqnassociation.royalairforce.net .

Item 9.6 Sqn Support

The Secretary added his warmest thanks for all the support and help received from the XXIV Sqn Liaison Team, especially during a year when the Sqn had been so heavily engaged on operations in Afghanistan. He was particularly grateful to Flt Lt Donny Walker and all other Squadron personnel and family members who had given up some of their precious free time to make an invaluable contribution to this year's Reunion events.

Special thanks were also due to Sam Wright (Deputy Chairman) not only for his role in the tasks mentioned above but also for his ingenuity in organising an eleventh hour fund-raising raffle, which raised a tidy sum for Association funds, and in finding a last-minute replacement for the booked musical quartet who cried off due to illness only four hours before the dinner was due to begin!

Item 10/2009 Annual Election of Officers

All members of the existing Committee confirmed that they were willing to serve another term but, as required by the constitution, offered themselves up to the AGM for re-election.

Proposed by Tom Norcross and seconded by Roger Payne, a motion to re-elect the existing Committee for a further year was unanimously endorsed by the AGM.

Accordingly, the Committee structure for 2009/10 is:-

Chairman	Keith Chapman	Deputy Chairman	Sam Wright
Treasurer	Keith Rayner	Secretary	David Burgin

Item 11/2009 Future Association Events inc Venues & Dates

The Chairman confirmed that the Association would continue with the tried and tested format whereby the entire reunion programme takes place on the first Saturday in October. Members would still be able to meet informally in a local pub or hotel on the Friday evening, if they so wish.

Looking ahead to 2010, the AGM agreed the following:-

Item 11a/2009 - Summer Social & Lunch 2010

Wednesday 2 June 2010. Pre-lunch drinks will be hosted by Penny and Roger Payne at their home, Common Farm, Braydon, Swindon, Wilts, SN5 0AA, after which we will adjourn for lunch at a nearby venue. (Venue to be confirmed but within 5 mile radius)

**Action on Roger Payne to confirm & book lunch venue
Members attending to notify Secretary by 20 May 10**

Details and logistics will be posted on the Association website but are repeated below for those without Internet access.

SUMMER SOCIAL INVITATION

Penny and Roger Payne cordially invite members and guests of XXIV Squadron Association to join them for drinks at their home at Common Farm, Braydon, Swindon, Wilts, SN5 0AA [Telephone 07768 223288] at **1100-1130** on **Wednesday 2 June 2010**

Common Farm is situated just off the B4696 about 6 miles from Junction 16 of the M4. Take the A3102 towards Wotton Bassett, crossing 2 roundabouts. At the second roundabout take the B4042 towards Brinkworth, (this road goes UNDER M4), after 1.2 miles turn RIGHT onto B4696 for 2 miles. At Braydon crossroads, turn right towards Purton for 0.5 mile. Your waypoint is a bungalow on your left, turn right here and follow the gravel drive which is opposite and leads to Common Farm. Ample parking is available on site.

Lunch will follow at a nearby hostelry (to be advised).
Timings: 11:00 – 11:30 arrive at Common Farm; 12:15 depart for lunch; 12:45 sit down to lunch.

Post Lunch - Free to tour local area.

Item 11b/2009 Reunion weekend 2010

Friday 1 October 2010 - evening casual “meet and greet” at Hilton Hotel, Swindon.

Saturday 2 October 2010 - AGM, Reunion lunch, informal afternoon programme & Ladies’ Guest Night in Sergeants’ Mess, RAF Lyneham

Action on Secretary to book Sgts Mess

The Deputy Chairman kindly agreed once again to liaise with the Mess Manager, arrange suitable music for the dinner, organise coach transfers and hotel discounts and coordinate with Sqn Liaison regarding Point of Entry and Security Passes.

Action on Deputy Chairman

Special request to Members! Please ensure that the hotel of your choice is clearly annotated on the form confirming your attendance, as this will be your pick up point for the coach transfer to Lyneham.

Item 12/2009 President's Remarks

The President, Air Cdre Richard Gould, expressed his thanks for the extremely hard work and behind-the-scenes effort that the Committee and Sqn Liaison team had put into making this Reunion weekend such a success.

Item 13/2009 Any Other Business

Four announcements were made, with no additional items from the floor.

- A photo session was planned prior to lunch.
- Members and guests were reminded of the need to adhere to the Mess dress code and etiquette for the Ladies Guest Night.
- Cash donations for the History Room album were to be handed to the Treasurer immediately after the AGM.
- A bottle of champagne kindly donated by Mrs Norma Hagon would be raffled by Sam Wright straight after the briefings.

The meeting closed at 12:05 hrs, in time for guests to join members for a series of briefings by Wg Cdr Andy Bacon, Sqn Ldrs Edmondson and Tano and Wg Cdr Chris Carrington of the Association.

Secretary's Note: - Anybody with an e-mail address who has not already notified me of that address or who has **changed address** please send a brief message to:-

the24secretary@royalairforce.net (see also website) to keep membership details up to date.

Bookmark this site; it's the Association Web Page on the Internet

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

PLEASE NOTE! DATE OF NEXT AGM & 95th ANNIVERSARY REUNION: SATURDAY 2 OCTOBER 2010. THIS IS CERTAIN TO BE ANOTHER HIGHLY ENJOYABLE OCCASION, WITH FREE EVENING TRANSPORT BETWEEN SWINDON HOTELS AND THE SERGEANTS' MESS, AND LIVE MUSIC. DRESS CODE FOR DINNER: DJ OR MESS KIT. YOUR COMMITTEE AND COLLEAGUES LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE FOR WHAT MAY BE OUR FINAL REUNION AT RAF LYNEHAM. PUT THE DATE IN YOUR DIARY NOW!

No. 24 Squadron Association
Balance Sheet Year ended 31st Mar 2009

	2009	2007
Assets		£
Barclays Bank	182.55	3,068.38
Cheltenham & Gloucester	977.35	1,943.98
Total	1,159.90	5,012.36
Members Funds		
Opening balance	5,012.36	2,804.35
Surplus/deficit for the year	-3,852.46	2,208.01
Closing Balance	1,159.90	5,012.36
 <u>Bank statement reconciliation</u>		
Bank statement balance		182.55
Less outstanding cheques		0.00
Reconciled balance		182.55
Cheltenham & Gloucester account		977.35
Barclays Centenary Fund	413.24	
Closing balance		1,159.90
Balance b/d	5,012.36	8,169.83
+ receipts	4,317.37	1,159.90
	9,329.73	9,329.73
 <u>Income & Expenditure</u>		
	2009	2007
Income	£	£
Reunion	2,562.00	3,127.00
Membership	80.00	0.00
Interest	33.37	25.97
Donations	492.00	-
Donation for Plaque	150.00	0.00
Raffle	-	170.00
From C & G acct	1,000.00	-
	4,317.37	3,322.97
Expenditure		
Reunion	4,853.89	-
Printing & Postage	893.73	519.96
Secretarial Expenses	104.98	-
Book Keeping Expenses	60.00	50.00
Centenary Fund	200.00	-
Lunch	246.75	-
Hatts Coaches	264.00	235.00
Band	200.00	260.00
RAF Benevolent Fund (M. Watkins)	-	50.00
Beer & AGM	11.48	-
Shaftesbury Society	92.00	-
Brass Palque Livorno	150.00	-
CALM Donation	93.00	-
From C & G Acct	1,000.00	-
	8,169.83	1,114.96
Net surplus/deficit for the year	-3,852.46	2,208.01