



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 XXIV SQN HQ BRIEFING ROOM AT RAF LYNEHAM - 2 OCTOBER 2010

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

K Bossy, C Carrington, G Clarke, M Coumbe, N Cooper, B Cowin, M Fentum, C Furlong, K Groves, R Hale, P Hall, C Harley, G Harradine, W Holden, G Jones, B Kingscote, H Luxton, L Marshall, J Martin, T Norcross, G Norton, D Parkinson, T Paterson, R Payne, P Sharman, D Stewart, P Tootal, A Turner, L Warrington, C Whitaker, N Yerbury. (35 in total)

Prior to the AGM starting, the Committee was introduced to the new OC XXIV Squadron, Wg Cdr Pete (Cockers) Cochrane, who will be taking over in November 2010. The Chairman extended a warm welcome to all who had travelled to this year's AGM, which coincides with the Squadron's 95th Anniversary. It seemed fitting that, as this would be the final Reunion to be held at RAF Lyneham, the Squadron HQ and crew room had been provided as the venue for this year's AGM, briefings, buffet lunch and general hosting of Members and guests.

Item 1/2010 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 around £90. We make special mention from this list of Air Cdre John Mitchell, Mrs Betty Archbell and Air Cdre Dick Gould (AGM)

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:

Mrs B Archbell (+ donation), R Bates (AGM), P Plake, R Brawn (+ donation), A Clack, J Clark (+ donation), J Davies (+ donation), M C A Davis (AGM), G Donald, G Gair (AGM), R Gould (AGM), Mrs N Hagon, J Harris, V Hemmings, J Hobbs, A Johnson, C Joyner, D Marney, J McArthur, J Mitchell (+ donation of print), H Nickson, M Sawbridge, J Smither (+ donation) S Webb (+ donation), C Williams, R Wright. (25 in total)

Item 1.1/2010 In Memoriam

With great regret the Secretary reported that the Association had lost three Association Members during the past year. Those present stood in silence in remembrance of the following comrades, some of whom were not members of the Association:

Flt Lt Harry Harvey, Nav, Hastings; Sgt John Heaney, Flt Eng, Hastings; Flt Lt Jim Hobbs, Pilot, Hercules; Sgt Bob Lickley, Fitter, Hendon; MALM Bob Stewart, ALM, Hercules; Sqn Ldr Alec Wickes, Pilot, York; Flt Lt Mike Wood, Pilot, Hercules.

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 2011 Newsletter.

Item 2/2010 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 Roger Payne, Seconded by Chris Carrington, Passed unanimously.

Item 3/2010 Matters Arising

The following actions remained outstanding from the 2009 AGM for the Committee to address:

- Item 10.3/2008 – AQM/ALM Association, clash of reunion dates. ALM Association have now moved their reunion back to the end of October, eg 2009 Oct 8/9th; 2010 Oct 29/30th.
Complete
- Item 6/2009 – Treasurer to confirm donation of £94 to Squadron nominated charity CALM.
Complete
- Item 7.1/2009 – Treasurer to check eligibility for charitable Status; outcome –we do not qualify.
Complete
- Item 7.2/2009 – Treasurer & Secretary to arrange Special Appeal for Donations from Membership.
Complete (see also Treasurer's Report)
- Item 9.3/2009 – Volunteer wanted as Newsletter Editor. No nominations.
Action Outstanding
- Item 11a/2009 – Summer Social Lunch Venue – Roger Payne to book Pear Tree Hotel, Purton.
Complete
- Item 11b/2009 – Secretary and Deputy Chairman to coordinate booking of Sergeant' Mess, Point of Entry, Coach and Music for 2010 Reunion weekend.
Complete

Item 4/2010 Chairman's Report

The Chairman congratulated and thanked the Secretary for having once again produced an excellent Newsletter/Magazine, his 17th consecutive edition. He also paid tribute to the President and other members of the Committee for their

diligence behind the scenes during the past twelve months to safeguard the financial stability of the Association. The Committee had felt it was its duty to implement a number of pro-active economy measures that couldn't wait until the AGM. Specifically, the Committee had acted to reduce Newsletter printing and distribution costs, to introduce a nominal charge for coach travel to and from Reunion Dinners and to scale back on the cost of providing music at these dinners. The full text of the Chairman's Report explaining the rationale for these measures appears on page 5 in the 2010 Newsletter (Issue 17).

The Chairman also expressed appreciation to OC XXIV Sqn and the Squadron liaison team especially Flt Lt Donny Walker (our liaison officer) for all their efforts to ensure the success of today's Reunion, despite ever more demanding operational constraints.

Item 5/2010 Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer distributed a full set of accounts outlining Income and Expenditure for the year ending 31 Mar 10. A copy is attached to these Minutes.

He was delighted to report that last year's appeal to Members for voluntary donations – the first for 10 years - had been a great success, yielding over £2000 in total. This injection of capital, coupled with the economy measures to which the Chairman had already referred, meant that the Association Fund was once again in a healthy position going forward.

The Committee's three key financial recommendations [reduce cost of printing Newsletter/Magazine by ceasing production of hard copy colour version; introduce charge of £5 per head for coach travel to/from Dinners; and hire more affordable musicians at Dinners] were all unanimously accepted by the AGM. The Treasurer estimated that in aggregate these measures would yield savings of at least £500 per annum, thus helping the Association to rebuild its balance sheet. With a view to making further economies in printing, distribution and postage costs, the AGM also unanimously agreed that, as a default position, documents such as the Newsletter, AGM Minutes and Special Notices would henceforth be distributed electronically (eg by promulgation on the Association website or by email). Printed copies of these documents would only be sent to Members who had positively opted IN for hard copy material.

The Treasurer confirmed that the Centenary Fund remains on course to achieve its target of £1,000 by 2015. This Fund, which continues to increase by £100 per annum, currently has a balance of £527.47.

Item 6/2010 Hawker VC Memorial Project

This special item was included in the Agenda at the request of the Chairman who opened the discussion by referring to the informal briefing by the Project Officer (Flt Lt Phil Mobbs) at the Summer Social & Lunch in June. OC XXIV Sqn had appointed Flt Lt Mobbs to oversee the erection of a memorial to the Squadron's first commanding officer, Major Hawker VC DSO. Flt Lt Mobbs had explained that this memorial was to be built near the village of Ligny-

Thilloy (L-T) on the Somme in northern France where Hawker been shot down and killed in November 1916. He had also said that the Squadron would shortly be appealing for donations towards the cost.

The Chairman outlined the guarded reaction of the President and Committee to this initial appeal and invited the AGM to support their view that, having just imposed a range of austerity measures, the Association could not afford an official donation. The Association had made a substantial donation last year to enable the Squadron to buy a high quality album for the upgraded history room but on this occasion the Committee felt that the appropriate response would be for individual Members to make private, voluntary contributions as they saw fit. The AGM unanimously agreed.

Chas Whitaker made an extremely helpful intervention in which he told the AGM that he had recently made a private recce of the proposed memorial site. He had met the Mayor of L-T who favoured placing the proposed Hawker Memorial adjacent to the existing WW1 Memorial in the centre of L-T. He was strongly opposed to erecting the memorial alongside a road at the edge of an exposed field about one kilometre from the village, as proposed by Flt Lt Mobbs. During the ensuing discussion, a consensus emerged that the Mayor's views should definitely be heeded. The Chairman summed up by thanking Chas and reminding the AGM that, although the Association had a legitimate interest in this project, especially as Members were being asked for donations, this was essentially a Squadron initiative. He also said that Flt Lt Mobbs would be giving an up-date during the open briefings that would follow the AGM.

Meanwhile, the Secretary confirmed that any news of further developments would be posted on the Association Blog Book and in next year's Newsletter.

Action on Chairman & Secretary

As to the mechanism for making private donations to the Hawker Project, the Treasurer confirmed that he would be happy to receive individual cheques from Members. He would then aggregate these donations into a total amount to be sent to the Squadron as one consolidated cheque from the Association Fund, together with a list of donors' names if those concerned so wished.

Chairman's After Note.

During the series of briefings that followed the AGM, Flt Lt Mobbs gave an up-date on the Hawker Project, after which he distributed copies of a proforma to be used for individual donations. This proforma requires cheques to be made payable to "24 Squadron Fund – Hawker Memorial Project." and sent to the Squadron adjutant. However, the President and Committee take the view that, in order to retain some measure of control and influence over the project, it would be preferable for members to channel donations through the Treasurer as described above. The Secretary will promulgate this advice on the Association website and blog as soon as possible.

Action on Secretary

On 7 Oct 2010, the Chairman wrote to OC XXIV Sqn to request that the Association's views be taken fully into account before any final decisions are made about the precise site of the memorial and date of inauguration. Specifically, he strongly recommended that the Hawker Memorial should be erected in the village of L-T adjacent to the existing WW1 Memorial, as recommended by the Mayor. He also suggested that the inauguration ceremony should be held on Friday 11 November 2011 (which is Remembrance Day and a Public Holiday in France) not Wednesday 23 November 2011 as proposed by Flt Lt Mobbs. Wg Cdr Bacon replied on 11 Oct to say he personally agreed with these recommendations but would have to refer them for the attention of his successor Wg Cdr Cochrane, who is scheduled to take over command of the Squadron in mid-November 2010.

Item 7/2010 Donation to Squadron Charity

The AGM approved a donation of £95 to the [Children's Cancer & Leukaemia Movement](#) (CALM), XXIV Squadron's nominated charity. Proposed by Len Marshall, Seconded by Kevin Groves, Passed unanimously.

Action on Treasurer

Item 8/2010 Secretary's Report

Item8.1 Membership

The Secretary reported a respectable year for recruiting with 15 new Members. This had been achieved by continued advertising, emphasising that membership was absolutely free with no joining or annual fees. OC XXIV Squadron has also been keen to raise the profile of the Association among Sqn personnel and set a fine personal example by becoming a Member on the eve of his departure from the Squadron. (He hands over command in mid-Nov 2010).

Sadly, the Secretary also had to report the loss of seven existing members (see Item 1/2010). 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.

Feedback from completed applications forms suggests that current Members are helping recruitment by promoting the Association among friends and colleagues. Applications forms are available from the Secretary or can be downloaded from the Association Website.

Item 8.2 Attendance

Attendance at the AGM and Reunion Lunch this year was 73 members and guests compared with 57 in 2009. The Association Ladies' Guest night in the Officers' Mess on 3 Oct 09 attracted 50 Members and guests against an impressive 76 at this year's event in the Sergeants' Mess. The Committee's prediction that the 2010 Reunion and Dinner would attract a larger number of attendees than ever, with it being the last such event to be held at RAF

Lyneham, has come true. The Secretary was particularly grateful to Sam Wright (Deputy Chairman) for taking on the time-consuming tasks of liaising with the Mess Manager over seating plan and menus, engaging musicians, contacting hotels, arranging evening transport between hotels and RAF Lyneham and dealing with point of entry issues. The AGM heartily concurred.

Item 8.3 Newsletter/Magazine

The Secretary/Editor explained that the printed version of the Summer 2010 edition of the Association Newsletter (Issue No. 17) had reverted to Black and White format as part of our cost-savings measures. However, a version in a 24-page **COLOUR** format had also been published on line. These measures had reduced printing costs by about 50% to approximately £1 per copy.

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.

Unfortunately, despite the Editor giving ample notice of his intention to make Issue 17 (Summer 2010) his last, no volunteer to replace him had yet come forward. The present Editor has now produced 17 consecutive issues and rightly feels the time has come for someone else to take on this important task.

Nevertheless, in order not to let down all those Association Members who cannot attend each year, he will continue to produce a Newsletter, even if it is more limited in scope and not quite as rich in content as previously.

Action STILL on Membership for Volunteer Editor

Members are asked to continue submitting articles, stories, anecdotes or photos because such contributions 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.

The Secretary/Editor again reminded Members that Newsletter Issues 5 - 17 are available for reference on the Website in **Portable Document File (PDF)** format, which mirrors the look and layout of the original document, with the added benefit of full COLOUR format.

Item 8.4 2010 Summer Social

The 2010 Summer Social was held on a sunny Wednesday 2nd June starting with drinks at the delightful home of Penny and Roger Payne in Braydon and followed by lunch at The Pear Tree Hotel at Purton. The event was a great success. A total of 40 Association Members, guests and Squadron personnel sat down to lunch. This was the maximum number that the Pear Tree could accommodate, so unfortunately some late applicants were unable to get places.

The tradition of this very popular event will be repeated in June 2011. (See Item 10a/2010 below).

Item 8.5 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, Notices and links to many other related organisations. Suggestions for new LINKS to other similar organisations (or information on any that may have ceased) are most welcome. (See email address on website).

The linked “**Blog Book**”, in effect an 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, alongside 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. Members with an email address are encouraged to sign up for automatic notification of new web postings. That way, the postman delivers straight to your inbox!

A longer-term aim is to transfer some of the material now on display in the Sqn History Room onto the Association 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 8.6 Sqn Support

The Secretary added his thanks for all the support and help received from the XXIV Sqn Liaison Team during the past year, especially at a time when the Sqn had continued to be 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.

Next year’s move to Brize Norton not only imposes an extra workload on the Squadron but also poses new challenges for the Association Committee, which will do its best to ensure that Reunions at Brize will be just as enjoyable as they have always been at Lyneham. The Committee is liaising with other Squadron Associations (particularly that of 10 Sqn – special thanks to Len Marshall and Trevor Paterson) in order to benefit from their experience of holding reunions at Brize. The Deputy Chairman and Secretary have arranged to visit Brize in late October for preliminary discussions with the Manager of the Officers’ Mess, with a view to making a booking for our 2011 Reunion.

Item 9/2010 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 John Martin and seconded by Trevor Paterson, the motion to re-elect the existing Committee for a further year was unanimously endorsed by the AGM.

Accordingly, the Committee structure for 2010/11 is:-

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

Item 10/2010 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 (subject to availability of Mess at Brize Norton). 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 new pastures in 2011, the AGM agreed the following:-

Item 10a/2010 - Summer Social & Lunch 2011

Wednesday 8 June 2011 (outside school holidays). Morning coffee (optional) and buffet lunch at the **Bibury Court Hotel, Bibury, Glos** (Venue provisionally booked for 8th June 2011)

**Action on Secretary to confirm & book lunch venue
Members attending to notify Secretary by 25 May 10**

Full details and logistics will be posted on the Association website but are summarised below for those without Internet access.

SUMMER SOCIAL INVITATION

The XXIV Squadron Association Committee cordially invites members and guests to come along to the 2011 Summer Social & Buffet Lunch at the Bibury Court Hotel, Bibury, Cirencester, GL7 5NT. Tel 01285 740337 at **12:00 for 12:30** on **Wednesday 8 June 2011**

Arriving By Car – The hotel is less than two hours drive from London. Turn off the M4 at Junction 15. Follow the A419 towards Cirencester. From Cirencester take the B4425 towards Burford. Continue for 7 miles to Bibury. Once in the village take the third turning on the right and Bibury Court Hotel will be found straight ahead.

Timings: Arrival from 11:00 onwards for private morning tea/coffee or apéritifs. Those coming only for lunch should arrive about 12:00. We plan to start our informal buffet-style lunch at 12:30.

Finances: Buffet lunch expected to be around £17/head. Cash bar for drinks and wine for personal purchase. Association pays hotel in total for food only. Members pay Association individually – once notified attending, refunds not available.

Post Lunch - Free to tour local area.

Item 10b/2010 - Reunion weekend 2011

Friday 30 September 2011 - Evening casual "meet and greet" at Burford House Hotel, 99 High Street, Burford, Oxfordshire, OX18 4QA.

Saturday 1 October 2011 - AGM, Reunion lunch, informal afternoon programme & Ladies' Guest Night in Officers' Mess, RAF Brize Norton

Action on Secretary to book Mess

The Deputy Chairman kindly agreed once again to liaise with the Mess Manager, arrange suitable and affordable 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 your chosen hotel is clearly annotated on the Form confirming your attendance, as this will be your pick up point for the coach transfer to Brize. The plan is for one coach to pick up Members and guests in Burford High Street and at other Hotels en route. It will follow the same route in reverse after the Dinner departing the Officers' Mess at midnight. All details will be finalised by the time the Reunion pack is sent out in July 2011.

Item 11/2010 President's Remarks

Our President, Air Cdre Richard Gould, sent his apologies for not being able to attend the AGM but asked for the following text to be read out on his behalf.

"This has been a very successful year for the Association and I would like to thank the membership for their enthusiastic support of both the Summer Social and the Annual Reunion, in addition to their generous response to the appeal for funds. I believe we can face the next few years with considerable confidence and would like to thank the committee for all their hard work this year in helping to bring this situation about."

Item 12/2010 Any Other Business

The Deputy Chairman raised the following points under AOB:

Item 12.1 – Association Guests. A recent incident involving an Association Member who had invited several guests to the 2010 Reunion without intending to be present himself had prompted the Deputy Chairman to decline to authorise the attendance of these guests. He had written to the Member in question to remind him of the Association's policy that all Members should take personal responsibility for the hosting of their guests at Reunion events.

Item 12.2 – Security of Squadron Property & Memorabilia. The Deputy Chairman said he had recently become aware that certain other Unit Associations were now in the embarrassing position of being unable to identify the whereabouts of various items of great historical significance, including high value solid silver replicas of aircraft. All too many of these valuable items had apparently disappeared without trace. Other Members

recounted similar anecdotal tales of silver and other items going AWOL. The Deputy Chairman's personal experience of this problem led him to recommend that the XXIV Sqn Association should seek assurances from the current Squadron Historian that the same fate would not befall any items in XXIV Squadron's large inventory of valuable silver and other property, especially when the Squadron re-deploys to Brize Norton, where its new HQ will apparently be far more limited in size than its current HQ at Lyneham. The AGM shared these concerns and took note.

Post-AGM Note:- Major Todd Shugart (Squadron Historian) confirmed that cataloguing of Squadron property had already been started by him and two other helpers. The entire collection would be retained and any items that could not be displayed in the new Squadron HQ would be securely stored. There would be a rotation policy with a view to displaying as much Squadron property and memorabilia as possible in the limited space available.

The meeting closed at 12:10 hrs, in time for members to rejoin the guests for a series of excellent briefings by Wg Cdr Andy Bacon (Current Ops), Flt Lt Phil Mobbs (Hawker Memorial Project) Clive Harley (Association Member on "RAF Lyneham, The Early Years") and Major Todd Shugart (Sqn History).

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 & 96th ANNIVERSARY REUNION: SATURDAY 1 OCTOBER 2011. THIS IS CERTAIN TO BE ANOTHER HIGHLY ENJOYABLE OCCASION, WITH TRANSPORT BETWEEN BURFORD HOTELS AND THE MESS, AND LIVE MUSIC. DRESS CODE FOR DINNER: DJ OR MESS KIT. YOUR COMMITTEE AND COLLEAGUES LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE FOR OUR FIRST REUNION AT RAF BRIZE NORTON. PUT THE DATE IN YOUR DIARY NOW!

No. 24 Squadron Association
Balance Sheet Year ended 31st Mar 2010

	2010	2009
Assets		£
Barclays Bank	2,260.85	182.55
Cheltenham & Gloucester	86.25	977.35
Total	2,347.10	1,159.90
Members Funds		
Opening balance	1,159.90	5,012.36
Surplus/deficit for the year	1,187.20	-3,852.46
Closing Balance	2,347.10	1,159.90

Bank statement reconciliation

Bank statement balance		2,260.85
Less outstanding cheques		0.00
Reconciled balance		2,260.85
Cheltenham & Gloucester account		86.25
Barclays Centenary Fund	527.47 (£413.24 in 2009)	
Closing balance		2,347.10
Balance b/d	1,159.90	Payments 5,178.61
+ receipts	6,365.81	Balance 2,347.10
	7,525.71	7,525.71

Income & Expenditure

	2009	2007
Income	£	£
Reunion	2,628.00	2,562.00
Membership	10.00	80.00
Interest	8.90	33.37
Donations	2,776.91	492.00
Donation for Plaque	-	150.00
Raffle	42.00	0.00
From C & G acct	900.00	1,000.00
	6,365.81	4,317.37
Expenditure		
Reunion	2,236.85	4,853.89
Printing & Postage	1,094.08	893.73
Secretarial Expenses	55.18	104.98
Book Keeping Expenses	50.00	60.00
Centenary Fund	100.00	200.00
Lunch	261.50	246.75
Hatts Coaches	277.00	264.00
Band	100.00	200.00
Misc	-	-
Beer & AGM	-	11.48
Shaftesbury Society	-	92.00
Brass Palque Livorno	-	150.00
CALM Donation	104.00	93.00
From C & G Acct	900.00	1,000.00
	5,178.61	8,169.83
Net surplus/deficit for the year	1,187.20	-3,852.46