

ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION – GLOUCESTER
BRANCH
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – SATURDAY 9th APRIL 2016
MINUTES

Present:

8 Life Members

11 Annual/Associated Members

1 Prospective Member

1 Guest – Ian Campbell Branch Support Officer (BSO)

Current Committee

Eric Ede – President

Noel Phillips – Acting Chairman

Ian Beaton – Chairman Elect

Chris Hill – Treasurer

Ray Bunnage – Honorary Welfare Officer/Website Manager/Social Events Manager

Sally Dixon – Honorary Welfare Officer

Pam Blackhall – Social Events Sub-committee

Ruth Aldridge - Social Events Sub-committee

Lorraine Wilson – Honorary Secretary

1. Opening and Dedication.

The meeting was called to order at 1240 hrs by the President, Mr. Eric Ede and the Dedication was observed.

2. Apologies.

Miss Sue Bennison

Mr Clifford Fuller

Mr Charlie Hammis

Mr Martin Henshaw

Mr Roly Bell

Mr Ian Batchelor

Mr Dave Johnson

Mr John Lawrence

Mr K. McCormick

Mr Bob Hewings (Branch Standard bearer)

Sqn Ldr Simon Cannon

3. Introductions

The President, Eric Ede introduced himself and the current committee to the meeting and invited all present to introduce themselves to the meeting.

4. President's Opening Remarks.

The President thanked the committee for their hard work and dedication over the past year and praised the progress that had been made in revitalising the Branch. The President then handed over to Chris Hill, representing the acting Chairman, for the remainder of the meeting.

5. Minutes of the AGM 2015

The minutes of the AGM held on Saturday 7th March 2015 were presented by the Secretary. It was proposed by Chris Hill and seconded by Phillip Tagg that they represented a true record of the meeting. Carried.

6. Branch Chairman's Report.

The acting Chairman had nothing further to add to the comments already made by the President.

7. Branch Treasurer's Report.

The Treasurer, Chris Hill, produced a statement of account for the year ending 31st December 2015. For details of the statement of accounts please contact the branch secretary. It was proposed by Lorraine Wilson and seconded by Pam Blackhall that these represented a true record of account. Carried.

8. Honorary Welfare Officer's Report.

The HWO, Ray Bunnage, reported that:

- a. In 2015 he and Sally Dixon, HWO, had made 64 welfare visits covering a distance of 1257 miles and making 237 contacts by telephone and/or email.
- b. A total of £4979.00 was secured in grants from the RAF Benevolent Fund to help those members in need of financial support and £249.99 was paid out from the Branch Welfare account to cover more immediate needs.
- c. 5 Wings breaks were arranged to Flowerdown House for those members whose stay was supplemented through welfare grants.
- d. The "tea and chat" team (officially referred to as "Bartenders") consisted of 2 volunteers in 2015 who carried out 13 visits. The volunteer team has now increased to 6 which should mean more members can benefit from a visit. A survey carried out by the Royal British Legion found that loneliness and isolation is particularly acute with the ex-military community, with one in six individuals reporting relationship/isolation issues which highlights how valuable our tea and chat team is in helping to achieve our welfare support objectives. On behalf of the membership, Ray wished to thank Peter, Ruth, Eric, Eve, Dave and Michael for volunteering for this important role.

9. Honorary Wings Appeal Organiser's Report.

Lorraine gave a breakdown of the collection total for the Wings Appeal 2015 as follows:

Gloucester City Centre 12th September 2015

Teri Ogden	£ 6.16
Chris Hill	£83.34
Eric Ede	£57.14
Stacey Mitchell	£44.83
Pam Blackhall	£ 3.73
Bob Hewings	£15.73
Lorraine Wilson	<u>£37.56</u>
Total	£248.49

Tesco 5th & 6th September 2015

ATC Cadets

George Grigg	£ 57.17
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Nathan Jefferies	£152.15
James Faulkner	£114.64
Zoe White	£ 48.47
Claudia Phelps	£ 52.84
Jed Hughes	£ 19.75
Harry Webster	£ 13.53
Thomas Corder	£ 22.49
Tim Mock	£ 13.90
Jack Webster	<u>£ 19.48</u>
Total	<u>£514.42</u>

Other collectors

Lorraine Wilson	£84.04
Pam Blackhall	£62.55
Duncan Hutchins	£25.04
Connie Seccombe	£33.37
John Seccombe	<u>£30.62</u>
Total collected by them	<u>£235.62</u>

Total collected by St John's Church, Churchdown (Through Chris Hill)
£55.84

Total collected by Ray Bunnage at Jet Age Museum
£15.75

Collected by Hereford Branch 4/11/15 **£377.00**
This brings the total collections for 2015 to **£1447.12**

20% of the total (£289.42) will be given as a rebate to the Welfare account.

b. Lorraine further informed the meeting that this total represented an increase of £1189.73 (462%) on the previous year's collections which earned the Branch the trophy for the most improved collections for Wings appeal which was presented at the Area Conference in March and was displayed at the Branch AGM.

c. Lorraine appealed for volunteers to collect at Tesco St Oswalds on Saturday 14th May 2016.

10. Social Events 2015/2016.

Ray Bunnage, Social Events Coordinator, gave a breakdown of social events for 2015.

a. The first coffee morning/lunch at the Portivo Lounge took place on 29th Jul and has continued every month since with average attendances of 15 members.

b. On 11th Jun three members attended the "Not Forgotten" tea party at Buckingham Palace. David Downey's account of the event can be found on the Branch website.

c. On 27th Jun, 32 members attended a parade at the Jet Age museum followed by lunch at the Aviator restaurant, marking Armed Forces Day.

d. On 25th Aug Branch member Martin Henshaw conducted a guided tour of Gloucester Cathedral for 8 Branch members.

e. On 5th Sep ten members enjoyed a trip along the Gloucester/Sharpness canal with the Willow Trust. It had been hoped that this could be repeated in 2016 but, unfortunately all sailings are already fully booked.

f. On 13th Sep the Jet Age museum hosted a commemoration of the Battle of Britain followed by Sunday lunch at the Aviator. This included an opportunity for the 15 Branch members who attended to meet and chat with members of 501 (County of Gloucestershire) Sqn Royal Auxiliary Air Force..

g. On 29th Nov a mini bus was laid on for some Branch members to attend the Birmingham Tattoo. Bob Hewings, the Branch Standard bearer, attended both days taking part in the impressive parade of Standards.

h. The year was rounded off with Christmas lunch at Bill's restaurant in the Quays attended by 16 members.

Ray informed the meeting that he had formed a social events sub committee comprising himself, Pam Blackhall and Ruth Aldridge. He invited ideas from all members on possible future events for the sub committee to consider. So far the following plans are being implemented:

May – a visit to the Medal Office (MODMO) at Imjin Barracks (formerly RAF Innsworth).

25th Jun Armed Forces Day parade at the Jet Age museum followed by lunch at the Aviator with a choice of 3 menus at a cost of £10 per head.

!6th Jul a trip to attend Pre War Prescott, a rally of vintage cars in Gotherington, Gloucester. This year is unique in that a grand vintage tour of over 40 aircraft will be flying over the area on the same day.

Aug – A visit to the Owl Trust.

Sep – A tour of Staverton airport.

Oct – A visit to Cosford museum.

27th Nov Birmingham Air Tattoo for the afternoon display commencing 1400 hrs.

6th Dec Christmas lunch at a local venue. This will replace the usual monthly coffee morning/lunch at the Portivo Lounge.

11. 181 (City of Gloucester) Sqn ATC.

Ray informed the meeting that, during 2014 the Branch had established closer ties with 181 (City of Gloucester) Sqn ATC and that he represents RAFA Gloucester Branch on their civilian committee. Since then the Squadron has supported the Branch in various ways, providing an escort to our Standard at the 75th Anniversary presentation, undertaking a gardening project for one of our members and assisting with the Branch Wings appeal collections. Certificates designed and printed by Branch committee member, Pam Blackhall, were presented to the individuals by way of a “thank you” for their efforts. These also provided the cadets with evidence of charitable collections and helping others and can be used towards their Duke of Edinburgh awards. Ray further informed the meeting that the Branch committee had voted in favour of funding a potential cadet where financial hardship would exclude the individual from joining the ATC.

12. Website Report and Update.

Ray informed the meeting that, as a result of the subject of websites, presented at the Area conference in March this year in which St Mawgan Branch website was promoted as being a good example of a Branch website, he had carried out a survey of internet users within the Branch to establish their opinions. He highlighted several of the responses and concluded that, taking into consideration their remarks and the number of visits to the site, Gloucester Branch website is popular and informative as it stands. Acting on further suggestions from members he will be adding a history of RAF Innsworth, RAF Quedgeley and Brockworth and improving the social events

page. With a valuable contribution from the Branch Treasurer, Chris Hill, he had already added a page “Money Matters” and he invited input from all members regarding companies who may offer discounts to military veterans.

13. Resolutions

The Branch delegate at the Area Conference in March was Ray Bunnage. He raised concerns with the Branch Treasurer, Chris Hill, about one item within the Review of the Royal Charter, Rules & Byelaws, specifically the wording of Rule 31 Branches – Property and Assets paragraph 2.

Chris took legal advice before discussing the matter with Nick Bunting, Secretary General of the Royal Air Forces Association who agreed to incorporate the revised amendment which will be included in the resolutions at the RAFA Conference in May. Chris will be attending as the Gloucester Branch delegate.

Rule 31 as it currently stands:

“(1) Subject to paragraph 2 of this rule the Chairman, Officers and other members of the Branch Committee shall be collectively responsible for the funds and other property or assets of the Branch and its liabilities. They shall also be responsible, in the case the Branch shall cease to exist or be closed for:

- a. Realising the value of an property or assets;
- b. Satisfying any proper debts or liabilities;
- c. Forwarding within the period prescribed by the Byelaws, any remaining funds or assets together with an audited statement of account and all the records of the Branch, to the Secretary General.

(2) The Council may at any time require that the property or asset of a Branch shall be vested or transferred to the Association, or such other persons as the Council may from time to time approve or require on trust for the Branch.”

Proposed amendment being raised at the Annual Conference.

“(2) Should any Branch not fully follow the procedures laid down in paragraph (1) or in any other way be responsible for a Branch not being in conformity with the Charities Act or other Legislation or Regulation or being mismanaged, the Council may at any time require that the property or asset of a Branch shall be vested or transferred to the Association, or such other persons as the Council may from time to time approve or require on trust for the Branch.”

It was proposed by Chris Hill and seconded by Ray Bunnage that this amendment be promulgated. Carried.

14. Election of Officers.

Ian Beaton volunteered to fill the post of Chairman with Noel Phillips agreeing to become Vice Chairman. There being no further new volunteers for Committee posts it was proposed by Peter Canning and seconded by John Seccombe that the current committee be re-elected en block. Carried

15. Election of Auditors

It was proposed by Chris Hill that an auditor be elected at Branch Committee level as and when required. Seconded by Lorraine Wilson. Carried.

16. Any Other Business.

a. Chris invited Ian Campbell, Branch Support Officer (BSO), to address the meeting. Ian outlined his area of responsibility and gave a brief description of his role. He

offered his assistance in any area required, for example promoting Wings Appeal. He offered the use of his exhibition trailer for fundraising events or helping to raise the Branch's profile but explained that prior booking was essential.

b. Tom Fitch, Branch member and Standard bearer for Hereford area, who was instrumental in donating Hereford's "In Friendship" Club's Wings collections to Gloucester Branch in 2015 reported that his committee had agreed to continue to do this in the future. Lorraine proposed a vote of thanks which was carried unanimously..

c. The President thanked the Members present for their attendance and input. He closed the meeting at 1330 hrs.

Minutes submitted by: Lorraine Wilson (Secretary)

Approved by:

Eric Ede (President)