

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
609 (WEST RIDING) SQUADRON ASSOCIATION**

24 JUNE 2017

The Elvington Room

YORKSHIRE AIR MUSEUM

ELVINGTON

PRESENT:

Wg Cdr J. Metcalfe, Sqn Ldr M. Ashe, Mr M. Foster, Mr G. Carroll, Mr D. Fielding, Mr D. Robinson, Ms T. Haswell, Ms D. Gillott, Mr A. Marsh, LCpl P. Meakin, Mr D. Webster, Mr K. Hobbs, Mrs J. Hobbs, Miss C. Atkinson, Mr D. Weatherill, Miss A. Hudson, Mr T. Overton, Mr M. Briggs, Mr P. Proudley, Mr J. Mately, Miss U. Granahan, Mrs M. Gadd, Mrs J. Graham, Mrs J Gallagher, Mr P. Gallagher, Mr P. McVittie, Mr J. O'Hare, Mr H. Mulligan, Mr D. Darley, Mrs R. Darley, Mrs S. Milligan, Mr A. Harper.

APOLOGIES.

AVM S. Hunter, Air Cdre S. Bostock, Sqn Ldr B. Waite. Cpl A. Hayman, Mr A. Parkes, Mr P. Wilson, Mr M. Voase, Mrs S. Judd, Mr G. Garriock, Mrs D. Marshall, LCpl Carruthers.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 1101 and gave a short reminder of the Health and Safety requirements for this venue. He thanked all those who had made a long journey and welcomed all new members attending, he then introduced to the meeting 609 (WR) Squadron's new OC Sqn Ldr Merv Ashe.

The Chairman then requested a minute's silence to remember absent friends including Dr Claude Sharp who had been the Squadron's Medical Officer in the post-war years, who sadly passed away this year.

The Chairman then went on to thank all those who had attended the evening gathering at the Parsonage at Escrick, it had been a good night and enjoyed by all who had attended. He reminded everyone that it was Armed Forces Day today and this accounted for some of our missing members who are on duty

with the Squadron in various locations and that he would have to ensure that next year's date did not clash with a working weekend for the Squadron.

The Secretary then moved on to the AGM minutes of the previous meeting held in 609 Squadron's crew-room at RAF Leeming on 18 June 2016. There were no matters arising from these minutes, Miss C. Atkinson pointed out that her name was missing from the list of attendees, the Secretary apologised and the point was noted. The Secretary then requested that they be recorded as a true record.

Proposed: Mr M. Foster.

Seconded: Mr D. Weatherill.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

The Chairman began his report by recalling his words from last year and he felt that perhaps he had painted a gloomy picture. On reflection, our Association is moving in the right direction and spoke of the success of the new digital Newsletter and the move towards a social media informed membership. He acknowledged that we had a cost for the new Newsletter and quoted a figure around £400.00 but this included the set-up costs and the fact that the publisher did not charge us for his time. Further Newsletters would incur less outlay as the framework for future Newsletters is complete. He thanked the publisher, Neil Shaefer, for his time and generosity.

The Chairman then reminded everyone that Adele our Newsletter Editor, needed any item for publication submitted in a timely manner to ensure inclusion in the next edition. Our digital improvements also include a new look to our Webpage, once again a cost was incurred but a reasonable expense coming in about £90.00. The new site has more features and meets our changing needs with membership and standing order forms online which will make payment and membership quicker.

Other costs this year included a 'Marketing Leaflet' which will be sent to all members to pass onto anyone who would qualify for membership, it will also be available at the Squadron and a version is visible on line.

We have also now got a growing Facebook page with members of the Squadron and previous members now able to talk to each other and to be informed of the Squadron Association plans and activities. It is a closed site

and you must be admitted by request the numbers now regularly viewing are in excess of 120 and it has the potential to grow further to meet our needs.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Our Secretary SAC Sarah McGhin has been posted to the Falklands for 6 months so I have volunteered to look after her duties until her return in December.

Once again, the majority of the workload on a yearly basis is dealing with the requests of members and the public. Examples of which I have prepared for you are on the table for your perusal. Briefly our most recent requests revolved around an enquiry on a wartime Spitfire. We were able to verify that yes indeed the aircraft did briefly arrive on the Squadron and we signposted various other avenues of enquiry that our correspondent could try to follow its wartime service. Which he did successfully complete.

Our next example was from the family of a Canadian Pilot known as Moose Evans. We sent the family a collection of pictures, many of which they had never seen and we provided them details of his career, they thanked our Association for our time and effort, an invitation to attend a dinner in Amsterdam with this family sadly had to be declined.

Of course, the Secretary is the first person involved but we must thank Mr Mark Crame for his assistance in all these enquires and of course David and Jeff for their own oracle memories and resources.

Hugh Mulligan

Temp Secretary

609 (West Riding) Squadron Association.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

It was quiet on the financial front for the Association during 2016 with the expenditure being for 'Run and Maintain' purposes e.g. postage and stationery. The Association broke even on the cost of the Friday night gathering at the Allerton Court Hotel but provided a subsidy of £152.69 for the AGM Lunch at RAF Leeming. We were also required to provide a deposit of £223.60 to YAMCo Elvington for the lunch following the AGM today.

Income decreased by £125.00 from that received in 2015. Expenditure increased by £442.72 over 2015.

No donations were made by the Association.

The financial details for the year are as follows and are as at 31 December 2016.

Total Income £1,747.50

Expenditure £1,559.74

Cash at Bank £8,567.17

Rosemary Darley

Honorary Treasurer

609 (WR) Squadron Association.

BELGIAN REPORT.

See Annex A.

Our Chairman commented on the news from Belgium on the proposed recovery of a 609 Squadron Typhoon and he felt sure that this recovery will take place and he hoped that some of our Association could be present.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The Secretary informed the members that it was our custom to invite the OC of 609 (West Riding) Squadron to be elected onto our Committee. Squadron Leader Ashe accepted our invitation and was duly elected onto our Committee unanimously by the members.

There are no nominations for any post and all existing Officers are willing to continue to serve therefore all stand until next AGM.

Proposed:

Mr M. Foster.

Seconded:

Mr A. Marsh.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

The meeting continued with a presentation of a framed 609 print signed by members to Wg Cdr Jeff Metcalfe to recognise his tenure of 609 (West Riding) Squadron. Wg Cdr Metcalfe thanked Association members for their kind gift and support during his tenure.

Our Chairman then spoke of the Army Air Corps Museum being refurbished at Middle Wallop, a small section of which is dedicated to 609 Squadron. As our President has already been involved in this project, he then invited Mr David Darley to speak on this subject.

David outlined the history and our connection with this former station, he then spoke of the aspirations of the new museum. To this end the museum is looking for items of interest to expand and engage interest of the public to inform and educate generations to follow. David emphasized that this will be a private venture and any financial contributions will be voluntary.

David at this point suggested that the wartime 609 pennant that originated at Middle Wallop might be considered. It presently hangs securely and safely in the OC's office at 609 (WR) Squadron. Its future safety was then discussed as were other items, presently displayed in the Memorial Room at Elvington, which need either better security or a safer home.

Possible funding is being applied for from the Heritage Lottery fund of which some proportion would support the 609 elements at this new museum. David then spoke about the location of the Esher Trophy and our connection with it and his desire that it should return to a more appropriate location. This discussion and its future implications with the approval of the floor will be decided by the Committee who in turn will report back in due course.

Unanimous agreement from the floor.

The Chairman now spoke on the 609 Room at Elvington. He informed the members that he had met two designers in our room. Both these designers are also involved with Middle Wallop and have previous experience in other similar projects. Heritage Lottery Funding may also be available for the proposed improvements in our room. The costs are quite prohibitive and beyond our present means. However, with self-help, lottery funding and assistance from Elvington it may be possible to make some improvement. Once

again, the need to educate the Youth and public of today and the future will be our remit and rational for requesting funding.

The Chairman now moved onto the need to examine and clarify our membership levels. It was suggested that we have two forms of membership, full and associate the salient point being of course the ability to vote. The discussion was clouded with many variables and it was agreed to park this topic and that the Chairman will write to all members with his suggestions to seek the acceptance of his proposals or guidance on this matter.

This was put to the floor and was accepted.

It was also agreed that over 75's would continue to receive half-price membership.

Proposal:

Wg Cdr J. Metcalfe

Seconded:

Mr G. Carroll.

The Chairman now moved onto what interest might be found from the membership for organizing trips at home and further afield. To this end he discussed the possibility of using the Community Mini-bus at RAF Leeming. Trips suggested included Duxford, Cosford and the National Arboretum.

David was now asked to speak on the future of the Stoop. David began with a reminder to all of how the Stoop came about and how it had previously been run and when and where. It was historically always held on the first Monday in October but attendees had dropped to ten people. It was suggested that Monday being a working date would preclude anyone who still works attending so moving to a Saturday was proposed. David will inform the members of this will go ahead and of the future date in due course.

The meeting closed at 1240hrs.

AGM Date for 2018 TBA.

Annex A. Belgian Report.