



Newsletter - AGM Report

Welcome to this special edition of our newsletter, bringing you details of what happened at our Annual General Meeting, held on Saturday October 10th at the de Havilland Aircraft Museum at Salisbury Hall.



Our report below follows the flow of the meeting, which started at 2pm. We are particularly grateful to the Museum staff, who had ensured this business meeting complied with all the necessary regulations due to COVID-19. 19 members attended, as well as 15 following the meeting on Zoom.

If you want to comment on any of the matters below, then please feel free to contact me [HERE](#) or post to the [AGM](#) thread on the Message Board

Malcolm Fillmore
Chairman

The meeting commenced with the formal business of the AGM, where the following resolutions were voted on. All were voted by show of hands at the meeting, plus 54 proxies received by the Company Secretary.

- 1 To receive the audited accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2020, and the Auditors' reports thereon.
- 2 To reappoint Carter Nicholls Limited as auditors of the Company, to hold office until next general meeting when the accounts are laid before the Company.
- 3 To authorise the directors to determine the remuneration of the auditors.

All three resolutions were passed by the meeting.

Directors of The Air-Britain Trust Ltd are required to stand for re-election on a rotating basis. There were four existing directors willing to stand for re-election and as they were the only candidates for the four vacancies, the election was by a show of hands. The following were therefore re-elected

- Dennis Anthony Clement
- Paul Andrew Jackson
- Philip Derek Kemp
- Roderick Wykeham Simpson

ANNUAL AWARDS

Following the formal part of the meeting, we were pleased to recognise a number of our members through the annual awards. These awards are made at the 2020 AGM, based on calendar year 2019 activities

Our thanks to the Awards Committee, consisting of four Air-Britain members chaired by Chris Chatfield.

The Charles W Cain Air Writer's Trophy - Civil-based article in Aviation World

Masters of the Autogyro, awarded to **Robert Swan** for the Summer 2019 issue

The James J Halley Award - Military-based article in Aviation World

Twin-Tail Tales (Vampire and Venom Flying in the RAF)

awarded to **Steve Bond** for the Autumn and Winter 2019 issues

The Don Hannah Award for the best non-annual Air-Britain book published in 2019

Awarded to **Bob Ogden** for his Aviation Museums and Collections of the Rest of the World

The H B Gwyther Memorial Cup for unstinting backroom work for Air-Britain

Awarded to **Bernard Martin** who for over fifty years has provided all manner of information on UK civil matters

The American Aviation Historical Society (AAHS) Trophy for US civil aviation

Awarded to **Tony Pither** for long-term Boeing-based contributions for our Airliner annuals

The Founder's Award for long-term outstanding service to Air-Britain in many roles

Awarded to **Rod Simpson**, a former Chairman of Air-Britain (Historians), current Vice-Chairman of The Air-Britain Trust and editor of Air-Britain Digest from 1997-2003 and Aviation World from its inception in 2003-2019

Honorary Life Membership

For his long-term work on AB-IX and ABPIC, awarded to **Simon Wills**

The Chairman's Award

Awarded to **John Henderson**, our Distribution Manager responsible for running the Sales and Distribution Team for several years (see comments in the Chairman's report)

Chairman's Report to AGM – October 10th 2020

Welcome to our somewhat extraordinary Annual General Meeting where, given the present circumstances, we are able to welcome only a few of you here in person today while a number of others are able, I hope, to join the proceedings via Zoom.

For those of you physically here, I hope that you took the opportunity to take a good look around the de Havilland Museum and, in particular, this new hangar and the magnificent range of aircraft exhibited here.



Because of the constraints we are under, I anticipate that we will probably have a somewhat shorter meeting than perhaps we have had in earlier years – but I do want to make it clear that there will be a full opportunity for both those present and those on Zoom to raise and discuss any issues that you want and we will endeavour to deal with them.

The Chairman's Award

Air-Britain survives financially through the sale of our new and second-hand books.

This operation is run from our warehouse in Tonbridge in Kent and I know only too well the day to day issues that they have to cope with – from delays in delivery of books, to the frequent failures of the Sellerdeck secure payment system, to the regrettable inability of a small number of purchasers to get their card details or even their addresses right. And, with the additional burdens brought about by COVID, the efforts have been made by John Henderson and his small team of helpers are supreme. Hence, I have no hesitation in this year, presenting the Chairman's Award to John Henderson in recognition and profound thanks for his services which are well over what he thought he was taking on when he took on the post.

We sent out, with the AGM notice, a comprehensive update of all our various activities. Obviously, in this calendar year, we have suffered the major constraints brought on by COVID and which has seriously limited our personal enjoyment of our hobby and interests. It is still impossible to predict when things will revert to normal.

Indeed, one cannot even predict what the new normal will be – but one can but hope.

As I outlined in the Annual Report, we are re-organising our internal management so as to ensure that you, our members, both existing and future, receive what you want.

Particularly, in support of what we print and publish, it is evident that we need to increase our digital presence. A lot of work is going on in the background and we recognise that there is still much to do to ensure that existing and potential members are attracted to Air-Britain and see that they get value for money in an age where so much is available for free on the net.

Speaking personally, as many of you may know, we are just about to publish a full and detailed history of every Auster built. I found the material available on the net in some cases extremely useful but in many other cases it was simply wrong! Over the years, we have lived on the fact that our network of writers, researchers and editors dig deeply into matters thoroughly so as to obtain a high level of factual accuracy. It is one of our core selling lines and one we will be particularly promoting when we finalise the re-vamp of our website. To attract future members, some material will be free to view by all but some will be available to members only.

One of the constraints we, like so many volunteer membership organisations suffer from, is that we never have enough people offering their skills and expertise to help us deliver. It is a simple fact that most people don't like putting themselves forward but on those occasions when we find someone and invite them to help, generally both they and we find this rewarding. So we shall be re-doubling our efforts to focus on where we need help and hope that we can attract and persuade a few of you to take up the challenges.

In this context, I can also announce that we are very shortly to launch a membership survey – both to find out what you think of Air-Britain and to help us to identify the ways forward. (see separate section below)

The Chairman invited members of the Executive Management Team (EMT) to share on some of their operational functions.

Nigel Dingley, who previously headed our Book Publishing Committee, has now extended his role to encompass all publishing as well as the oversight of the sales and distribution at Tonbridge. Nigel shared details of our forthcoming books, starting with "**Auster- Production Histories**" due later in October, to be followed by "**Bristol Fighter**" before the end of 2020, "**The Bristol Beaufighter**" and "**VC10**" in early

2021 and "**British Aircraft Specifications volume 2**" and "**Jet Airliners - volume 3 Other Companies**" to follow, as well as our normal range of annuals in 2021.

May I also add to what Nigel has said to make a brief further mention of our operations at Tonbridge and with particular reference to second-hand stock. The day to day processing of orders has until recently been handled by Roger Birchall. However, for personal reasons, he has now had to step down and we would like to thank him for all of his efforts. The service is now fully back up and running – although we would benefit from some further helpers to manage the orders and picking the stock. So, if you live within reach of Tonbridge and would like to help on, usually, Monday mornings, please don't hesitate in coming forward.

We are also making second-hand sales more professional – a few days ago, we launched the October sales lists and updated lists will now be published at the beginning of each month. To see an advance copy of the sales lists, you will need to visit the Air-Britain Message Board where they will appear perhaps a week or so before being uploaded on the website. Several hundred books are added to the list each month, as we obtain and sort donated collections and we can say with some certainty that our lists are the most extensive lists of aviation books and magazines anywhere. So help Air-Britain by filling the gaps in your collection.

Leaving aside the important area which raises funds for Air-Britain to move forward, we must not forget that Air-Britain has charitable status and thus we have an obligation to ensure that we keep this at the forefront of our minds.

Phil Kemp shared details of the revised Management structure, with the EMT providing a clearer delineation between the role of the Trustees, in overseeing the charitable objectives, and the operational teams, in ensuring those objectives are met. The EMT meets fortnightly, ensuring that necessary matters are dealt with promptly, a big improvement on the previous quarterly meetings of the old Executive Committee. Phil also shared details of the slow, but steady, progress on Archive matters, where there is a balance to be struck between what we want to achieve and what is possible with the resources available to us.

We are also moving to make access to the various parts of Air-Britain on the web simpler, with a change in e-mail structure and moves to reduce the number of different

sign-ons and passwords across our web sites. Mention was also made of the activities to consolidate the various files into one Digital Archive structure.

Steve Mitchell shared that The Air-Britain Trust is now fully registered to take advantage of the UK Government Gift-Aid scheme, whereby donations by current UK tax-payers are eligible for a reclaim of the equivalent tax by our charity. For further details please contact [Steve](#).

COVID has also had a profound effect on two of our other activities – Air-Britain Travel and the Fly-In. In regard to the latter, we were optimistic in the light of our successful move to Turweston in 2019 that the 2020 event would be even better. Alas, it was not to be but Phil Kemp and his team are starting to plan for 2021 – so let us hope. Dates have been reserved for the third week-end of June, returning to Turweston.

As regards Travel, again this year's programme was wrecked but we were able to recover much of the expenditure on deposits etc. But, as for 2021, it seems highly unlikely as matters stand that we will be organising anything - not only because of the general uncertainties but the inevitable and unknown restrictions that are likely to impact any overseas travel and events.

I would also like to thank Dennis Clement and Phil Kemp for organising this venue for the AGM and to Sean Meagher for setting up the technology for the Zoom element.

So, that's a brief update and I would now like to hand over to the Floor or Zoom for any questions. Even though I may know you, could I please ask you to state your name for everyone's benefit?

The final section was to throw the meeting open to a Question and Answer session, where those attending could raise subjects of interest to them regarding the direction that Air-Britain is taking.

Subjects included -

Photo Archives

Rod Simpson, who co-ordinates the activities of the various Photo Archivists, mentioned that Air-Britain are now beginning to receive digital images. We therefore are looking for a volunteer to act as Archivist for these, ensuring that we know what we hold and that a catalogue is kept up to date.

Following on from this, Mike Draper asked if, when photo collections are donated, they are kept intact. This is current practice and effective cataloguing should help ensure this in future.

Bill Teasdale (*) asked how this fits together with the current ABPic images (currently over 650,000 and looking for continued growth moving forward) and why donated images could not be kept within ABPic. This area will be referred to the Archive group for consideration.

Copyright for photos within ABPic remains with the photographer, but we have still been able to get permission to use a number of images within our publications, both books and magazines.

Army Air Corps

Mike Draper is working on a future publication covering the Army Air Corps and is looking for others who can help with this. If you can help then please contact the Chairman, who will pass on your details to Mike.

Charitable Awards

Dave Welch asked if there has been any progress on offering award or grants towards research on aviation history. This is being looked at as part of the Trust's Charitable Objectives.

Martin Powell (*) expressed his thanks from the many (members) to the few (those contributing to the running of Air-Britain).

(Problems with the sound meant questions from Zoom participants were not always clear - where these were clarified subsequently they are marked *)

MEMBERS SURVEY 2020

As mentioned in the Chairman's report, we have launched a survey of members, to find out various elements to help us shape the directions that Air-Britain moves in going forward.

You can find the electronic survey [here](#). The survey will be active up to December 31st 2020 and we will pick an entry at random to receive an Air-Britain publication of their choice from our current Sales List.

Please contribute - the more results we get the better understanding we will have.

MEMBERSHIP RATES 2020

The UK rates for membership of Air-Britain in 2021 will be

Category A - Air-Britain News £43

Category B - Aviation World £34

Category C - both magazines - £75

Details of the non-UK rates and two-year subscriptions will be included within the renewal notices to be sent out with the next round of magazines and on-line from early November. We encourage you to renew on-line and to pay by debit / credit card wherever possible.

Prices for eABN will remain the same for 2021.

This newsletter is just one element of Air-Britain's presence on the web.

Most can be accessed from our [Main Website](#) which includes links to

- our secure [Sales site](#), where all our current Air-Britain publications and many third-party books can be ordered.

- Second-Hand Books and Magazines - we have an extensive range of second-hand books for sale. The current lists can be found [HERE](#) or send an e-mail to the [second-hand sales team](#).
- [ABPic](#) - Air-Britain's online photo gallery with well over 500,000 images. Open to members and non-members, all images are screened prior to acceptance. A great way of showing and sharing your images. You, the photographer, retain all ownership rights. Members are frequently asked to share their images with others.
- The [Air-Britain Message Board](#) where members can share on a range of subjects and where we will announce new publications and other news of the organisation, often in advance of the printed magazines. A guide on how to register can be found [HERE](#)
- Members Area - containing various files, including registers and listings previously published in Archive and Aeromilitaria only available to members. You can register to access these files [HERE](#).

In addition we have

- [AB-IX](#) - Open to members only, AB-IX is run as part of Groups.IO. It is an online discussion forum for aviation research topics only. Members can set their own message preferences (single or daily digest) within Groups.IO. For more details contact the [group owner](#).
- eABN - an electronic version of Air-Britain News, available days before the printed version. Available in single issue or on subscription via [Pocketmags](#).
- The [Air-Britain Facebook](#) page - where we share details of Air-Britain happenings, as well as other selected items related to aviation.

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