



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 2nd at the de Havilland Aircraft Museum at Salisbury Hall.



Our report below follows the flow of the meeting, which started at 1:30pm. We are particularly grateful to the Museum staff, who had ensured this business meeting complied with all the necessary regulations due to COVID-19 and provided excellent refreshments. A bonus was that the meeting room was also home to a number of displays celebrating 40 years for the British Aerospace 146, including a number of models. 25 members attended, as well as 7 following the meeting on Zoom. 43 proxies had also been received prior to the meeting, along with 5 formal apologies.

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 xx proxies received by the Company Secretary.

1 To receive the audited accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2021, 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 two existing directors willing to stand for re-election and one new person standing. As there were only three candidates for the four vacancies, the election was by a show of hands. The following were therefore elected and re-elected

- Peter Davison (elected)
- Susan Jayne Earle (re-elected)
- Anthony Charles Merton Jones (re-elected)

All three were elected to serve on the Trust Board.

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 2021 AGM, based on calendar year 2020 activities

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

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

For articles on the Cessna 140 and the Fouga Magister, and his contributions to our house magazine

from 1997-2019, the Air Writer's Trophy is awarded to **Rod Simpson**

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

Articles on the Chengdu J-20 and the Sukhoi Su-35 and in the Summer edition, an article on Operation Grapple, the tri-service operation in the Pacific Ocean leading to the UK's hydrogen bomb test in the Pacific Ocean, were all written by **Paul Jackson**, who receives the James J Halley Award

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

For Under B Conditions, the markings applied since 1929 to British aircraft used for experimental purposes and test flying, researched and written by **Doug Revell**

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

Awarded to **Sean Meagher**, for his many behind-the-scenes roles in IT, publications support and organisational activity in the 21st century

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

Awarded to **Graham Salt** for his three-part (and on-going) Aviation World series on Republic Aviation

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

For his long-term work on the production of our house magazine and a large proportion of our

A4 hard-cover non-annual books this century, awarded to **Howard Marks**

Honorary Life Membership

In recognition of his work on the Around & About section of Air-Britain News for over

ten years

and on the UK Registers section of ABN and the team involved with our annual Civil Aircraft Registers of the British Isles for even longer, Honorary Life Membership is awarded to **Stuart McDiarmid**

The Chairman's Award

For his outstanding efforts in running Air-Britain Travel for over 30 years (putting into practice so many memorable itineraries all over Europe as well as the USA, South Africa and Australia), combined with his leadership of the Membership Services Committee for many years, this year's Chairman's Award goes to **Dennis Clement**

Chairman's Report to AGM – October 2nd 2021

The Air-Britain Trust

Chairman's Report to the Annual General Meeting – 2 October 2021

Welcome to Air-Britain's Annual General Meeting – an event which combines our statutory obligations under company and charitable law with an occasion for social gathering with our members and for you to interact with our management board. All the more necessary as the pandemic has reduced our ability to get out and about. Indeed the current fuel crisis has also inevitably reduced the numbers able to attend today which is of course regrettable. But hopefully the various crises we have faced over the last 12 to 18 months will lift and we will be able to get out and meet members more over the next twelve months.

Within the formal Annual Report sent out with the accounts etc, I outlined both our ongoing successes in what we provide to you, our members, and our challenges.

Today, I will expand a little on these and also give an opportunity for others in our management team to provide further presentations on the various works in progress. It is also an opportunity for you here today to ask questions or raise matters that we can address.

Obviously COVID has had a major impact on all of us over the last 18 months and continues to do so though hopefully to an ever lessening extent. Our not being able to physically get together and having to resort to Zoom meetings etc has inevitably slowed a lot of our plans down. This has, for example, led to delays in some of our book production where the author/compiler needs to access externally held records to progress what is always a lengthy process in ensuring that all relevant material is obtained. There are then issues with involving those members of our publishing committee in meeting up with the author to review progress and then properly going through the essential editing process. One result is that we now have an ever-stronger pipeline of future reference books – Nigel Dingley will provide more information on. Nigel is, regrettably, stepping down as chairman of the Publishing Committee at the end of this year and we are therefore looking at how we should spread his workload among the members of that committee. I would like to thank Nigel for all the hard work he has put in over the years.

In 2023, we will be celebrating our 75th anniversary and thus in advance of that occasion, we are reflecting on the challenges that we face with what is a fairly mature organisation. Maturity sometimes leads to a degree of complacency but in this rapidly changing world, we have to ensure that we are meeting the needs not only of our present members but also of future members. Further, with our decision taken some years back to convert ourselves into a charitable body, we are mindful of the fact that we are essentially part of the heritage industry and have duties to contribute to the preservation and accessibility of aviation history for the benefit of posterity.

We need increasingly to focus of making the material that we hold – both within the association and separately amongst our members – making it accessible both

currently and to future generations. So much we have collectively is unique and needs to be preserved. As briefly mentioned in my Chairman's Report with the AGM papers, we are an active member of the relatively recently formed Aviation and Aerospace Archive Initiative. Membership of this body includes those from within the aerospace industry and major aviation museums and is under the umbrella of The National Archives. It is still early days but Tim Powell of The National Archives has recently circulated a draft mission statement to help focus on ensuring that aviation archives and research material, large and small, and be they in the hands of individuals or organisations, both commercial and academic in the widest possible sense, are properly identified, documented and preserved and, more importantly, that arrangements be put in place to make them accessible.

In parallel with and in support of this initiative, we are actively collecting in donated material, to include individuals' researches and photos as well as material which might not be collected elsewhere such as official registers, production data and, just as important, enthusiast and limited circulation magazines and publications, all of which are likely to contain information no longer available elsewhere. I cannot over-emphasise the importance that if we do not collect such material, their existence and the information held therein may be lost forever. I may have mentioned before that, as an example, on the initiative of one of our members, some years ago we were able to rescue many of the original official registers and CofA ledgers being disposed of by the CAA who saw no commercial need for their retention. The data held therein is now gradually being digitised for publication on our website.

Making this growing collection of material accessible is, of course, of vital importance and is equally one which is difficult to crack. We have active plans in progress to digitise and put more and more archival material up on our website – some of which will be accessible by the general public, in order to promote Air-Britain, but a lot will be for membership access only. The future is undoubtedly to make as much material digital as we can but scanning such material can be an arduous task and it is an area where we really do need more help. So we are actively seeking volunteers to help us on chipping away at the process. Phil Kemp heads our Archive

Committee and he will speak further on this topic shortly.

Air-Britain has always been a leader in publishing detailed current information and Air-Britain News is, of course, the front runner in this and I am grateful for the supreme efforts put in by the various section editors and their feeders. In particular, I must single out the efforts over many years of Ian Burnett who acts as editor of the overseas register section and express my amazement at just what we are able to publish. Then there are our annual registers, fleets and QRs which are important not just for the enthusiasts, spotters and photographers but, since today is tomorrow's history, they provide the material for future researchers and writers. And, with the growing trend towards data restrictions, with GDPR and the like, it is becoming ever more difficult to get access to official data. Hence, it is vital that we continue to gather in and record material from everywhere and anywhere so as to ensure its availability to posterity. Again, if we don't do it, who will? I would thus like to encourage all of our members to actively participate in Air-Britain – to plagiarise President Kennedy "Ask not what Air-Britain can do for you – ask what you can do for Air-Britain"!



Malcolm then passed over to the three members of the Executive Management Team (EMT), to share what is happening in their areas.

Nigel Dingley – Chair of the Publications Committee

This is the last time that I will be presenting at the Air-Britain AGM as Chair of the Publishing Committee. I have been in the role for ten years or so and I think it may

be right to share my thoughts on the challenges facing whoever takes on the role. The spotting community is not growing. There are a variety of reasons for this.

- Age – As is apparent by the attendees and indeed the Board of Trustees, none of us are in the first flush of youth.
- Attraction of the hobby – When Air-Britain started in the late 1940s aviation was perceived as being exciting and attractive. Boys and young men wanted to get out and be involved with aeroplanes. This is no longer the case. To be involved in aviation or aerospace now effectively means you have to have a strong engineering bent. No youngster wants to go and list registrations or constructors' numbers or serial numbers in small notebooks. Only old men want to do that now. Teenagers are more interested in getting onto TikTok.
- Availability of data – As our Chair said, Air-Britain News leads in hard copy data, but, in reality, most people can find what they want with a few clicks on their tablet or phone.
- 'Nerdhood' – If you don't get nerds interested as teenagers, it is very difficult to get middle aged men interested.
- Gender – Overwhelmingly the hobby is inhabited by men. There has never been any drive by to attract girls or women to the hobby. So, when a potential middle-aged nerd might consider spotting as a hobby, there is nothing absolutely nothing to attract the distaff side of the household and so our potential member goes off with his family to a theme park for a day. The closest to spotting will be a day at one of Duxford's flying days.

So, what are the implications for Air-Britain? For a start there will be fewer volunteers to collect the data, fewer volunteers to collate the data, and more importantly fewer people to subscribe to the magazine or buy the books.

The new Chair of the Publications Committee will have to deal with these challenges and explore new ways of sharing the data. This does not mean that Air-Britain will stop publishing its range of annual books any time soon, but at some point in the future, the economic imperative will mean that this will have to be addressed.

Looking at the other arm of the publishing programme, our 'historical' books, we have no shortage of potential titles. However, the market for these is not growing. Whereas before, typical print runs were 750 to 1,000, now we look at 500 to 750 with some at print runs of 350. We may look at more of the soft-back books as these have been successful.

In terms of what the Chair of the Publications Committee does, the production of books is a largely process driven operation, responding to an approach by an author, getting him to scope the book, making sure it isn't going to be his PhD Thesis, but a marketable product. Getting the Publications Committee to approve the principle of the book, securing an editor/project manager to shepherd the writing of the book, working with the author to secure a good range of photos, appointing a technical artist to do the three view line drawings and colour side views, appointing an originator to lay the book out and fit the text around the pictures, arrange for a proof reader to go through the book, obtain competitive print quotations, ensure that the upcoming book is marketed through to the aviation magazines, prepare an approval form that sets the print run and price for the book that is approved by the Publications Committee, liaise with the team at Tonbridge to take delivery and send out the copies to buyers. The role also prepares the quarterly sales catalogue to go out with the magazines.

I don't feel despondent looking forward, but do believe that there will have to be changes in Air-Britain that members will have to accept, if it is to survive for another 75 years.

Phil Kemp - Chair of the EMT and of the Archive Committee

One of the new things we have introduced this year (after come technical and COVID challenges) is the Digital Archive on our website. For many years members have shared files, ranging from production lists to aircraft registers and airfield histories, but these have been spread across a number of different digital locations. The Digital Archive is bringing these files into one central location with seven

categories – Aircraft Production Lists, Airlines and their fleets, Airports and Airfields, Civil Aircraft Registers, Military Aviation, Museums Wrecks and Relics, and (Air-Britain) Publications.

The files in the Digital Archive are the first step in that consolidation and we will continue to build the material progressively going forward. As well as existing files, we welcome new items to improve this resource. Honourable mention must be made to Geoff Negus for his excellent scans of Archive and Aeromilitaria magazines, which are now available in full in the Digital Archive.

Contact details for each section are on the website and we are grateful to Andy Marden, Brian Matthews, Robert Swan and Paul Reynolds for looking after the various sections. We do still need somebody to look after the Airlines section, so please contact Steve Mitchell if you feel you can help.

Thanks also go to Steve Mitchell for his management role on helping bring this to fruition.

The physical archive at Lambourn is next on our radar to develop. Its current location is not conducive to maximising the opportunity it brings and a move cannot be discounted when our lease expires. The Lambourn archive currently hold collections from the late Jack Meaden and Jenny Gradidge along with other materials. We have an ongoing task to firstly digitally index the material held and then preserve appropriately. This is no small task, but thanks to Dave Welch leading a small number of volunteers inroads are being made on some indexing.

Finally on the archive we must not overlook the vast array of photo images we have with our four collections run by Peter Dance, Alex Travers, Graham Salt and Andy Stephens and overseen by Rod Simpson, for which thanks go to all. The volumes being added to these collections and the work required to index them can be daunting. We are starting to consider how we support and help those aforementioned to avoid them being inundated. One aspect of the image archive that we are increasingly being asked to deal with digital images and this is potentially something which by the sheer volume of digital images being taken now will require even more resources than we use for all the other types of images together. We desperately need a team to start looking at both how we might manage this

challenge and then address the growing collection we already have. As has already been highlighted by Malcolm, we can only progress such activities if we have the resources to do it.

Other aspects of the services we provide are subject to ongoing assessments. Travel, the Fly-In, Information Services, ABPic and branch activities by our Services Committee.

Travel has been hit badly by COVID and the future is still uncertain with related requirements such as health, international restrictions and cost. There will be no travel in 2022 and we will look at the options as we move through the year to consider future option.

The Fly-In is also not without its challenges, shortage of volunteers, suitable locations and closer scrutiny by the authorities to name three. As of today, I can announce that we cannot return to Turweston in 2022 as the space required for car parking is simply not available when required. A new location will be required. Turweston are keen to have us there and a return cannot be ruled out in the future. The Information Services “family” of subject matter experts continue to be a much-under-utilised resource, so please use this. Thanks to John Fisher in managing this activity.

ABPic, under the leadership of Simon Wills continues to be our flagship photo offering on the web. With over 650,000 images now hosted and growing we are looking to see how best we can exploit this for the benefit of Air-Britain, but again we need some more volunteers to help with this.

Finally, during this year, I have handed over the reins as Branch Coordinator after 20 years to Paul Rushton who is looking at how we can build on our Branch network. Some of our Branches moved on-line during Covid but are now starting to meet again. They need all the support they can get so please if you have a local branch go alone and see what they have to offer.

Steve Mitchell – Company Secretary and Chair of the Finance & Business Committee

Much of the work that I carry out, alongside my team, is behind-the-scenes and not

visible to the general membership, but is still important to ensure we meet our corporate and charity responsibilities.

As Company Secretary, I arrange the various Trust Board meetings and ensure that Trustee details are kept up to date. I also need to ensure accounts and reports are filed on time with Companies House and the Charity Commissioners. Another hat is that of Data Protection Officer, making sure we comply with the requirements of the Information Commissioner's Office and GDPR. While this may seem an admin burden, it is important that Air-Britain complies with legislation. Looking after personal data means co-ordinating members' details when registering for AB-IX, the Message Board and the website and I am thankful to the various moderation teams for their help.

The other main part of my role is as Finance and Business Director, making sure that the accounts and money of Air-Britain is properly accounted for, which can be complex with the four different companies we have for our various activities.

I would like to thank Chris, Mike, Maria, Ian and John for their inputs through the Finance and Business Committee, which meets regularly to oversee all these aspects of Air-Britain. Ian would like to step down from his role overseeing the Air-Britain website and updates to that, so if you would like to find out if you can help in that area, please let me know.



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.

Three questions had been submitted prior to the meeting

- As Scramble magazine moves to a digital-only version, does Air-Britain have any similar proposals? Sue Bushell, editor of Air-Britain News acknowledged that our on-line offering, eABN via PocketMags, was not completely satisfactory, mainly because it is not searchable. We will be monitoring what Scramble do, to see if we can learn from that. However we do not envisage going all digital in the foreseeable future.
- Would it be possible to sell the European Registers Handbook CD version separately, especially with the environmental awareness. Nigel Dingley shared that, while it can be considered, it is important to weigh the cost implications of a lower print run on selling prices of the hard copy version. In fact the print runs for ERH are already getting to low levels and we need to look at all aspects.
- Are there any plans for further magazine CDs to be produced? Again Nigel responded, saying that the possibility is being investigated. However, sales of CDs covering more recent years have been lower than the older issues, so production runs would need to be lower, with a higher cost resulting.

Further discussions from the floor included

- Was a new edition of Turboprop Airliners of the World planned? Nigel shared that this was in the later stages of preparation and it was hoped it would be available before next March. Nigel also shared some of the other projects in our publishing programme, apart from the annuals. Expected before Christmas are books on the Bristol Beaufighter and the VC10, followed by books covering Hendy Aircraft, British Aircraft Specifications volume 2, a fourth volume on Miles, the Douglas DC-4, a fully revised edition

of General Aviation Handbook and a history of the Army Air Corps.

Regarding the last title, author Michael Draper is still looking for those last pieces of information to complete the picture.

- As part of Air-Britain's conversion to a charity, members were encouraged to donate to Air-Britain material and resources relevant to our aims of preserving aviation history. Our archive collection policy is shared on our website [HERE](#) and, as already mentioned, we struggle to find adequate resources to look after these items. We are also able to accept donations of book collections, where we can then raise funds by selling on often hard-to-find books through our second-hand sales operation on the [website](#). Separately Malcolm Fillmore, our chairman, has amassed a collection of thousands of aviation related books and magazines. He does hope that at some time these can form an accessible library, perhaps in conjunction with another body with similar aims to Air-Britain.

The meeting was then closed at 15:30

MEMBERSHIP RATES 2022

As is customary at this time of year, we can announce the rates for membership of Air-Britain in 2022 which will be

	UK	Europe	Rest of the World
Category A	£45	£63	£72
Category B	£36	£43	£50
Category C	£80	£105	£120

We recognise that many of our members will have seen increases in their outgoings in the past year and have tried to keep the rises in membership rates to a minimum, but we have seen substantial escalation in both printing costs and postal charges,

with the potential of further growth in these costs to come in the membership period. We will continue to look at our related costs to get the best deals available whilst maintaining quality.

Membership of Air-Britain also includes, in addition to the magazines,

- Big discounts on Air-Britain publications
- Access to extensive photo archives, documentation & digital archives
- Leading subject specialists
- On-line research and discussion groups

Details of how to renew will be coming out with the November issue of Air-Britain News and the Winter edition of Aviation World. Renewals should then be made via our on-line process, as this reduces the workload on our membership secretary. If you do not have internet access, then please use the renewal form included with your magazine. All payments should be made with a debit or credit card as we no longer accept cheques or cash.

We look forward to having you as part of Air-Britain for another year and will continue to strive to provide the same high-quality magazines and other services that you have seen in the past.

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.