

Air-Britain Annual General Meeting 2023

This is the report of the 2023 Air-Britain Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at London Oxford Airport, KIDLINGTON, on Saturday 7th October 2023 starting at 1330.



This report follows the flow of the meeting and as before, we are grateful to the airport staff for facilitating the meeting in The Pitcher Auditorium and for allowing Air-Britain to conduct hangar tours for five groups of Air-Britain members ahead of the meeting, ably led by James (Oxford Airport's Head of Business Development) and Jim (Property and Facilities Manager) and administered by Dennis Clement.

52 Air-Britain members signed in to attend the meeting, including the Trustees and other Air-Britain members providing support to the meeting. One member attended remotely via Zoom and there were seven apologies. Finally, there were 36 proxy votes for the resolutions to be formally made during the meeting.

There is an [AGM thread](#) on the Air-Britain Message Board where you can leave comments regarding this year's AGM.

The Air-Britain Trust

Annual General Meeting – 7th October 2023

Welcome and introduction.

The meeting was opened by Phil Kemp due to the absence of Sue Bushell who is currently acting Chairperson but unfortunately could not attend due to Covid. She has sent a Trustee Review on the latest activities of Air-Britain's Publishing Committee which is included in this report.

Resolutions.

Phil outlined the purpose of the meeting and the four resolutions to be voted upon as follows:
To receive the audited accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2023, and the Directors' and Auditors' reports thereon.

To reappoint Carter Nicholls Limited as auditors of the Company, to hold office until the conclusion of the next AGM when the accounts are laid before the Company.

To authorise the Directors to determine the remuneration of the auditors.

To re-elect three Directors of the Air-Britain Trust.

All the resolutions were proposed and seconded by Air-Britain members in attendance and all were passed. The three Directors re-elected were:

Dennis Anthony Clement

Paul Andrew Jackson

Philip Derek Kemp

There remain three vacancies for Directors out of a total of twelve, but no names were proposed.

ANNUAL AWARDS

Following the formal part of the meeting, we were pleased to recognise a number of our members through the annual awards. The Awards Committee, consisting of two Air-Britain members chaired by Nigel Dingley, made the following recommendations for approval by the Trust Board, for awards to be made at the 2023 AGM, based on calendar year 2022 activities. The following are the award citations that were read out by Nigel at the AGM.

The Charles W Cain Air Writer's Trophy – best Civil-based article in *Aviation World* in 2022

*Awarded to **Tony Merton Jones** for his articles entitled *Channel's Jet Adventure* that appeared in the Spring and Summer 2022 issues.*

Tony has been long accepted as having an encyclopaedic knowledge of UK airline operators and their aircraft and he demonstrated this in marvellous detail in these two articles. Tony explains the acquisition of a BAC 111 in 1967, two Hawker Siddeley (de Havilland) Tridents in 1968 and five de Havilland Comet 4Bs in 1970. He examines their operation and the financial difficulties that led to Channel going into receivership in early 1972.

The James J Halley Trophy – best Military-based article in *Aviation World* in 2022

*Awarded to **John Roach** for his article entitled *Death on the Rock* that appeared in the Winter 2022 issue.*

One of Air-Britain's great strengths is the knowledge of its members in examining those obscure nooks and crannies of aviation history. John Roach's detailed examination of the crash in 1943 in which the Polish Prime Minister in exile died and the various investigations into this incident up into the 21st century is a great example of this.

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

*Awarded to **Geoff Negus**.*

Geoff has been a member of Air-Britain for as far back as many of us here today can remember. He has been active in the publishing side of the organisation and served as Chair of Air-Britain. He continues to work away quietly in the background scanning magazines for our archive. This is a time-consuming activity, especially to the high standard that he sets himself. He

continues to support the publishing programme and a recent example of this was his contribution to the Bristol Beaufighter book.

The American Aviation Historical Society (AAHS) Trophy for contributions to US aviation history

*Awarded to **Peter Marson** for his article entitled *The Douglas DC-6 Enters Service* that appeared in the Spring 2022 issue of *Aviation World*.*

Peter, like Tony Merton Jones is one of a few world-leading aeronautical historians whose deep wisdom of airliners and airline operations in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s is demonstrated in the article on the introduction into service of this arguably iconic airliner. In this article Peter takes us through the development of the DC-6, and its entry into service in April 1947. With excellent photographs, some in colour, this gives a marvellously nostalgic appreciation of the aircraft and its operators. Our relationship with researchers and enthusiasts in America is of importance and articles such as Peter's most certainly helps maintain this.

The Don Hannah Award for the best non-annual Air-Britain book published in 2021

*Awarded to **Chris Hobson** for his book on the *Handley Page Hastings*.*

Chris has rapidly established himself as a published authority on British post-war 'unglamorous' aircraft. First with his book on the Pioneer and Twin Pioneer and now with this detailed examination of the Handley Page Hastings. Not a particularly well-known aircraft, Chris details its development and service demonstrating the valuable contribution it made to the RAF. The fine range of photos and drawings gives the reader a real insight into the period and RAF operations.

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



*Awarded to **Dave Partington**.*

Dave's contribution to Air-Britain over several decades has been tremendous. Over many years he edited the *Air-Britain Archive Magazine*, focusing on civil aviation topics and over a similar timeframe he edited, and continues to edit the annual *European Registers handbook*, and he edits the *Overseas Registers* section of the monthly *Air-Britain News*. Aside from these editorial activities, he was instrumental in establishing and curating the Jack Meaden archive.

Air-Britain Board's Award *(formerly the Chairman's Award)*



*Awarded to **Malcolm Fillmore**.*

Malcolm has been an immensely influential member of Air-Britain over a huge number of years. His contribution and support of the publishing programme working with both authors and editors has helped drive the quality of our books to be what they are today: that is, hugely respected around the world. His knowledge of all things de Havilland Moth is wide-ranging and all-encompassing. He was one of the small team of Directors who secured Charitable Status for Air-Britain. He has served as Chair of the Board twice, leading Air-Britain in a dynamic way.

External Awards

While normally only considering internal awards, occasionally Air-Britain is asked to nominate individuals for awards given by external bodies. This year Aviation Heritage UK (AHUK) has asked if Air-Britain might nominate someone for a Lifetime Achievement Award.



The Awards Committee considered that Rod Simpson would be a proper candidate. Rod Simpson has been an active member of Air-Britain for over fifty years. In that time, he has been both a Trustee and Director of the organisation, Chair of Air-Britain, member of the Publications Committee and editor of Aviation World. In addition to his activities within Air-Britain, he is a prolific and well-respected author. His main interest has been and continues to be General Aviation being the author of all four editions of 'The General Aviation Handbook' (1st and 2nd with Airlife, 3rd with Midland Publishing and 4th with Air-Britain). He has also been the author or editor of several books on aeronautical historical subjects including Percival and Hunting aircraft, Auster aircraft, and in conjunction with Doug Revell, B Conditions Registrations.

I'm happy to say that AHUK has awarded Rod a Lifetime Achievement Award and that he will be presented with this at the AHUK AGM at Old Sarum on 21 October. Please join me in congratulating Rod on this award.

Trustees' Reports

The first of two Trustee reports was from Phil whose key message was that Air-Britain could do a lot more if more resources was available in terms of people to conduct various activities. Air-Britain relies on volunteers for the majority of its activities so Phil's plea was for more volunteers to step forward to fill the ever-increasing gaps in the organisation. As previously mentioned there remain three vacancies for Directors. Other gaps remaining to be filled are support for Air-Britain News, technical support for ABPic and the digital image and document archives, someone to organize the Air-Britain Fly-In, a role that Phil held previously for 23 years and is happy to mentor any new volunteers. Volunteers for the Air-Britain sales stand at various events and proof readers, originators and editors for the Book Publishing Committee are also required. The need for more volunteers for various roles was a common theme throughout the AGM.

The second Trustee report was from Sue Bushell on the activities of the Air-Britain Publishing Committee. Her report is included below in full:

Hello everyone. I am sorry not to be joining you, but I am sure you would all rather I kept my blast of Covid to myself ...

The publishing arm of Air-Britain continues to flourish. To bring you all up to date, in the calendar year 2023 we have so far published seven books – three quick-reference softbacks, three more detailed hardback volumes and the newly-delivered Hawker 125 book which is for sale at the AGM, so if you haven't already done so, pop by Malcolm's stand and purchase it.

In the pipeline are the long-awaited companion volume on British Aircraft Specifications covering the period 1950 to 1976, when the specification system was phased out. The book will be sent out to the printer in the next week or so and we will announce its arrival in the Sales Department Warehouse on our Facebook page, the Message Board and by email via the Mailchimp system, which reaches around 75 per cent of the membership. It will also be covered in our winter sales catalogue which will be posted with your winter Aviation World and November issue of Air-Britain News. This title will likely prove popular so be sure to place your order promptly.

The Bristol M1 softback book is progressing well and the VC10 is also nearing publication. For the production list aficionados among you, we are close to the completion of our Turboprop Airliner production list and are hoping to get the third edition of the Jet Airliners of the World series, covering all the other manufacturers apart from Airbus and Boeing, ready for you to purchase in the spring. There will also be the biennial Military Transports Quick Reference volume over the winter months.

It is a slightly different tale with *Air-Britain News*. As I am sure you are all aware, we are greatly missing the huge contribution that Ian Burnett made to the magazine over a long time, including the collation of the Overseas Register section. Since Ian's death, Dave Partington and Barrie Towey have both done sterling work trying to keep the column's head 'above water' but they cannot do it without more help. As Air-Britain is a society, it is only as strong as its membership. So if you the members cannot help us out, the section will suffer as Dave and Barrie both have their own books and columns to produce. We have advertised for volunteers to assist and we are very grateful to one member who has stepped forward to help but these pleas have fallen in the main on deaf ears. **PLEASE** think about what you can do to help. Can you help by covering a country (or a group of countries), or a continent? Don't wait for someone else to volunteer! Go on, roll your sleeves up and get stuck in. You could be pleasantly surprised!

At the moment we also have the same issue with Display Diary though to a slightly lesser extent. Richard Peckham needs to receive reports from members about airshows and fly-ins they have attended as he can't be everywhere! Every little piece of information helps. Perhaps those who attended the LAA event at Popham in mid-August could raise their hands. And how many of you have sent reports to Richard?

I'd like to end this interlude by thanking all of you who do volunteer as it is your contribution that makes our society great. And I would also like to put my thanks on record to the Sales Department who go out of their way to be extra helpful and make sure that you get your books at the right time.
Sue Bushell

Questions, answers and comments

There were no questions posed before the meeting.

The following questions were asked by members during the meeting:

Could the Air-Britain Board reconstitute the Archive Committee?

Elements of the Air-Britain archive are currently dispersed and held by numerous Air-Britain members and this is added to by frequent donations that require assessment and cataloguing. This all requires archiving correctly in a single location to ensure future availability to researchers otherwise it will be lost. Malcolm Fillmore supported the request and outlined some areas he considered where action was required. Phil Kemp agreed that the subject will be included in the agenda of the next Air-Britain Trust meeting.

Can the Air-Britain Trust have a permanent Chairman to act as a ‘figurehead’?

Phil outlined the reasons for the current position, explaining that it was both constitutional and personal choice of the potential candidates and none are prepared to stand in that role. Air-Britain Trust board meetings have a rotating Chairperson as does the subordinate Air-Britain Publishing Committee that works well for these meetings. Phil noted that a permanent Air-Britain Trust Chairperson will be considered if and when circumstances allow.

Can a single point of contact be set up for potential volunteers to offer their services to?

A dedicated email address can be set up and will be communicated to members in due course.

Can more trips to UK aviation-related sites be organised?

In the past the organisation of UK trips was problematic as the logistics of setting a single start point suitable to the many members who wanted to participate on a trip could not be satisfactorily achieved. It is not practical to pick up members on the way to a location as this would add time and mileage and would minimise time on site. As the locations were then mostly military in nature security is now an issue. Security issues are now more apparent on civil locations too now. It was agreed that UK trips will be looked into again in the coming months.

The questioner also thanked all in Air-Britain who work in the background for all they do on behalf of members.

The following comments and requests were made by members during the meeting:

A request for computer literate member volunteers was made. It was noted that the age demographic is against Air-Britain and there has been a drop in member numbers of approximately 5% every year for the last 12 years or so. However, more reliance on IT is likely going forward, so the need for IT literate volunteers, even with the most basic IT skills, would be helpful.

A similar request was made for volunteers to help with the overseas registers with the possibility of templates being provided to any potential volunteers that can then be filled in relatively simply and returned.

Closing update

To finish, Simon Wills was invited by Phil Kemp to give a brief on ABPic activities. There is a lot going on behind the scenes as usual. The system was updated three or four years ago and is quite stable with Amazon Web Services hosting the ABPic databases. How is Air-Britain to work towards the future? There are a vast amount of images that Air-Britain holds in its dispersed archive as well as the images submitted by members. As the theme of this AGM indicates, volunteers are required to assist with cataloguing and scanning as the backlog will only increase. Simon gave his thanks to contributors and users alike.

The meeting was formally closed at 1448.

The key message of this AGM was:

Air-Britain needs help from its members

MEMBERSHIP RATES 2024

As is customary at this time of year, we can announce the rates for membership of Air-Britain in 2024 which will be

	UK	Europe	Rest of the World
Category A	£52	£70	£92
Category B	£42	£49	£56
Category C	£94	£119	£148

We recognise the increased pressures on our money in the current economic climate, and Air-Britain is not immune to these pressures. The last year has seen further above-inflation rises in printing and paper costs, as well as postage and overseas distribution costs, as well as power and other items.

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, **neither can we accept renewals by phone or e-mail**.

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.