

FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION

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National Committee Meeting held at Court Barn Conservative Club, Court Barn Lane, Broom Way, Lee- on-Solent PO13 9NZ on Saturday 29th October 2022 Commencing at 1100

Minutes

Attendees: Jim Moulson Peter Murray
 Alan Key Mike Foote
 Bob Ridout Mick Wyatt
 Dave Fairley Arnold Thompson
 Ben Worship

Apologies: Brian Bingham Bob Hayden Carole Sharpe
 Jeff Cook Gerry Jackson Dave Smith

Visitors: Doug Carrington
 George Payne
 Les Stevenson

With six members of the Executive Committee in attendance, the Secretary declared the meeting quorate.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 1100. A minutes' silence was observed in Remembrance of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and of Members who had Crossed the Bar since the last meeting:

Gordon Appleby and Bill Rampton

Item 1. Minutes of the Meeting AGM 2022

Matters arising:

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- 1) Item 2.1f of the Constitution to be revised to ensure continuity of the position of Chairman should the position of Vice Chairman not be filled.
The Chairman produced and read out to the meeting a draft change to Item 2.1f which covers this eventuality. The Constitution will be updated accordingly.
This situation is caused by the lack of members volunteering to stand for office.
- 2) The Chairman reminded the meeting that the Secretary will not be standing for re-election and a volunteer for this position is also needed.

Item 2. Officers Reports

Chairman:

There was very little to report on over the period from the AGM to 28 October;

I attended the funeral of Gordon Appleby, at Woking on Friday 08 July, also in attendance was Mick Wyatt with the Standard, Fred Wadley, Terry Lowden and Gerry Jackson.

I was unable to attend the TAGA Memorial weekend at Lee-on-the-Solent in May due to a family commitment abroad.

Although HMS Sultan held ceremonial divisions in August, there was no Association involvement with regards to the Dr Rotman trophy for the best AET M and Avionics. There had been a complete changeover of staff at the AES and during Covid most of the training had been carried out on-line, and very few records were kept of ratings achievements in the field during that time. To ensure the relationship between Sultan and the Association continues, I will be meeting with a Staff Officer, Lt Murray Jones on 08 November.

The Association had also had an invite for 3 members to attend an Affiliates Day at HMS Sultan on 15 September, Dave Smith, Vice Chairman, was to attend in my place due to a holiday abroad. This was however cancelled due to the death of QE II. It will now be held in January 2023 and the Association should be getting invited to this event, which will include an invite to a Wardroom mess dinner in the evening.

I have spoken to Sarah Fletcher, SF Events, this morning to confirm the booking and the itinerary, she will be sending me a draft booking form by the end of the week. The £500 deposit is paid to the hotel by her company and will only be required to be paid to the company if we default on the booking, all that will be detailed in the T&C along with the booking form.

Secretary:

The Secretary attended the FAA (ex TAGs) Memorial Parade and Lunch on Sunday 15th May. The lunch held at Lee on Solent golf club was somewhat unique this year as there were two TAGS Bert Churchill and Alan Kershaw, both of whom flew in World War 2. There were also three Flag Officers. The Association Patron, Vice Admiral Sir Adrian Johns, The Association President, Rear Admiral Tom Cunningham and Commodore Bill Covington representing Navy Wings.

This is a most enjoyable lunch, followed by the Parade. This event is an important event for the Association and all members are requested to attend and give their support.

Treasurer:

Current account £729

Welfare Account £10,935

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Main Account £41,815

Alan confirmed that the Nationwide account would be discontinued and there will only be two banks used by the Association. These are, HSBC which will be considered a working current account and the NatWest which will hold the main deposit account and the Welfare fund.

Due to the success of Jeff Cook's recruiting of the Weymouth Branch, slop sales have surpassed all previous orders. Every month a substantial order for slops arrives from Weymouth and Portland Branch.

RBL and Cenotaph Marshal:

Jeff Cook sent in his report in his absence:

FAAA Weymouth Branch Report October 2022

Please accept my apologies for not being able to attend in person.

A positive 4th year this far for the Branch with the membership now totalling 57. We have been meeting regularly and supporting local events.

The Branch was well supported at the Armed Forces Weekend in June in Weymouth with the Association leading the march along the promenade with the Falkland's Veterans.

The Branch was also invited, by the Mayor of Weymouth to attend the lighting of the beacon to celebrate the Queens Jubilee at the Nothe Fort. We also attended, with Standard, the Weymouth Queens Memorial Service.

The Branch held a ramble, treasure hunt, buffet and skittles night which was supported by approx. 30 members - a great event thanks to our Social Sec, Jim Mussenden.

We shall be holding an AGM in December, at which we will be looking to vote in Officers and new Committee Members. I shall update the National Committee with the Weymouth Branch Committee Membership following the AGM. We will also be holding the now annual Branch Christmas curry evening the following week.

One of our members, who is a Falklands Veteran, was fortunate enough to win in the ballot with SAMA 82 to fly to the Falklands for the 40th Anniversary of the conflict. He will be laying a FAA Association Wreath in Stanley on Remembrance Sunday in remembrance of the 19 members of the FAA and 239 British Army, RAF and Civilian personnel who gave their lives. I have requested photographs if possible.

FAAA Cenotaph Marshall Report October 2022

Applications have been made and accepted for 14 members of the Association to attend this year and we are awaiting our tickets from the RBL. Information regarding the Association has been passed to the BBC and we are hopeful that we will get a mention.

It is still to be confirmed where in the parade we will be. I understand the FNF has, unfortunately, been split up despite requests from the Federation for us to all parade together. Perhaps it is to stop us all marching off parade together, as we have done previously, to go to the FAA memorial instead of reforming with everyone else on Horse Guards!!! We had planned to rendezvous at the Admiralty Pub after the event as we did last year. However, following a fire earlier this year the pub is still closed.

I shall provide a brief to the Committee following the Remembrance Weekend.

Item 3 Welfare Fund Activity

The Treasurer reported that since the last meeting there have been two claims on the Welfare Fund. One of £100 and one of £250.

Mike Foote pointed out that there was an anomaly in the Welfare Fund Policy regarding eligibility to claim. The Chairman will amend the Policy accordingly, so that item 1 and item 7 refer also to immediate family.

The meeting was advised that the new policy revision 7, allowing for exceptional claims of up to £1,000 had been distributed to all branches.

Item 4 2023 Reunion Status

The weekend of 13th May is the date for the 2023 AGM/Reunion. Jim has decided to use Sarah Fletcher as Events Organiser, in place of IOW Tours. She has organised a number of

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Reunions for Naval Associations with very successful feedback. Jim and Sarah have proposed for our 2023 AGM that we use Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Coventry. The 3 night price is £310 per person which is very competitive and only £19 more than last year. The single or two night prices will be available later. A general discussion took place and it was agreed that this proposal be accepted. It was agreed that the entertainment for Saturday evening, coach outings and single room supplement (estimate £20 per night) would be subsidised in full by the Association. There will be a shuttle service to Coventry city centre and Midland Air Museum (coach only, entrance fee to Museum to be paid by individuals) on the Saturday. On Sunday a visit to the National Arboretum Memorial. A £500 deposit is paid to the hotel by her company and will only be required to be paid to the company if we default on the booking (See Chairman's note last paragraph). Sarah, the Reunion Organiser, will soon produce an information leaflet giving full details to include application form. This will be distributed to all Branch Secretaries and all Daedalus branch members.

Post meeting note; Entertainment has been provisionally booked at a cost of £240, Dell Entertainments.

These arrangements will be reviewed at the Committee Meeting in January and if progress is satisfactory with the organiser, we will approach her for ideas for our 2024 reunion.

Item 5 Website Status – Webmaster Situation

Due to illness of Ray Day our Webmaster, he was unable to continue to host and left it in suspense. He did not pass on any passwords or access codes, we were essentially with a dead website which he removed from the Internet. Alan Key managed to restore the site but it was still not accessible for any change or updating. We then approached an IT expert, Chris, who said the only solution was to reconstruct the website and transfer the contents to another hosting service. It was a key requirement that we retain ownership of the domain name. We now own the domain name with Alan Key being the nominee on behalf of the Association and the Website has been transferred to a new hosting service and will be accessible in the next few days.

Dave Smith has volunteered to be the new Webmaster and we will also have some “deputy webmasters” who will be able to update the website. By doing this we will ensure that we are never in the same situation again.

Chris will be arranging some training so that the Webmaster and his deputies will be able to manage the website inhouse.

Facebook – The FAAA has a Facebook site which is administered by an unidentified person. It is important that we establish this person to ensure that we have some control over the material that is posted on Facebook.

Item 6 Remembrance Sunday Parades

Cenotaph, Whitehall. Geoff Cook will be parading as FAAA with 14 members, this is the most we have ever had. Well done Geoff.

Jim Moulson will be parading with the Armourers Association and he expects around 15 members.

Lee on Solent FAA Memorial Parade. Jim explained to the meeting how difficult it has been to arrange this parade. There have been a number of problems funding road closures which was finally solved by an ex Lt Cdr who is a member of Gosport Council. Difficulties were also compounded by the fact that the Executive Officer of HMS Sultan did not fully comprehend the situation. The result is that there will be a parade with road closures, a guard from Sultan and a band plus a platoon from Solent Branch and any members of other Associations of the FNF, unfortunately Solent Standard Bearer will not be available due to prior commitments.

Mick Wyatt will be attending as the Association Standard Bearer. Jim thanked Mick for his efforts to travel from Luton.

Jim mentioned that the Memorial site required some work to smarten it up. He contacted the War Graves commission and work has been carried out accordingly. There are also two six-

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seater benches which have fallen into disrepair with the wood having rotted in places, particularly the joints on the arms.. Ownership of these benches, they could have been placed there by the War Graves Commission, HMS Daedalus, the local Council or indeed an unknown benefactor. Suffice it to say ownership is not known. In the meantime, Jim has organised a couple of Solent members to do some emergency repairs.

As this is a Fleet Air Arm memorial, Jim proposed that we consider a grant of £2,000 to help replace these benches. This would not cover the full costs and Jim will approach both the Officers Association and the Fly Navy Federation for their assistance in raising the final sum. It was agreed that the £2,000 would be provided by the FAAA.

Post meeting note; Apparently there has been a meeting between the Daedalus Development Group and the War Graves Commission the topic of the discussions has not been released as yet. An update will be provided in due course.

FAA/TAGS Memorial Parade

This parade will take place on the third Sunday of May, 21st 2023. This will be organised by Arnold Thompson and Val Sayer, further details will be given at the January meeting but Arnold said the set up would be the usual Saturday evening and Sunday lunch at the Golf Club and St Faith's for the service.

Item 7 – AOB

Dave Fairley asked for confirmation that he can continue to lay Wreaths on behalf of the FAAA despite the Branch having been dissolved. The answer was yes, for as long as you are capable of doing it.

Dave Fairley donated a ship's decanter engraved with the FAAA logo to be raffled off at the AGM in May. The Chairman thanked Dave very much for this gesture, and would like to record a vote of thanks to Dave and Billie for their dedication in the past for keeping Telford & Wrekin Branch airborne over the years.

Alan Key had two thank you letters for donations, one from the Xmas Box appeal and one from Navy Wings for the money raised at AGM Reunion.

Mick Wyatt. Mick received the following e-mail from Captain Chris Pack RN Rtd regarding the funeral of an ex FA pilot, Ivor Faulconer, who was 101years old requesting Standards at his memorial service.

:" I write to advise you of the death of Ivor Faulconer, aged 101, on 1st October this year. He had a distinguished career in the FAA during the 2nd World War, flying Walrus's off the battleship KG V during Arctic convoys, and later flying Fulmars off Victorious. He went on later in peace time to be a founder member of the Air Squadron, flying his own Tiger Moth float plane. There is to be a memorial service on 25 November at 1200 in St Marys Church in Sturminster Newton, and it might be seen as appropriate for the Yeovilton Branch of the Association to be represented, perhaps with a Standard. It would be good if you were able to contact the appropriate people and set in motion any arrangements. Please let me know if there is anything else you need to know."

Mick passed this information on to the Officer's Association, Jeff Cook and Bob Ridout. Jeff Cook will be attending together with the Weymouth Branch Standard and it is hoped that Bob Ridout will be able to get the Yeovil Branch Standard paraded.

Jim Moulson informed the meeting that Admiral Jellicoe House is now open and currently has 25 residents. The feedback has been very good and there is a waiting list which far exceeds capacity.

Alan Key informed the meeting that £39 was raised towards the cost of the lunch.

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Date of Next Meeting - Saturday 28th January 2023 at 10.30. – Same venue/location.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 14.10 and thanked everyone for attending.

Peter Murray
National Secretary
9th November 2022