

## Mildenhall Register – AGM Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2011

**Present:** John Gentleman, Geoff Reynolds, Smiley Mildwater and 49 members

John Gentleman thanked everyone for coming and introduced himself to new members.

1. **Apologies from:** Alan Fraser, Sam Mealing-Mills and Swifty Swallow
2. **Minutes of the last AGM held on 14/5/10** – Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Martyn Ford-Jones and seconded by Tom Payne.
3. Matters arising – No contact from Don & Win Clarke, the Committee will keep trying. Howard's book is due out soon.
4. **Chairman's report** – Following last AGM, JG investigated the possibility of membership for all those squadrons who served at Mildenhall and also to invite them to our reunions. Only 75 NZ Squadron replied, there will be 30 of them at the dinner on Saturday night. Faculty for the memorial plaque has taken ages. The PCC were in favour of it from the start but the Church of England were slow to approve; didn't understand why a plaque was needed as there were war graves there, thought the plaque was too big, they didn't like the wording or the position on the Church wall. Eventually all agreed and JG received confirmation last week! Service being taken by Flt LT Padre Richard Clements from Honington. Bomber Command standard, RAFA union flag and Squadron Colours with an armed guard will all be present along with Air Attaché Reps from New Zealand, Australia and Canada. Also the Base Commander from Mildenhall. Local papers and BBC Look East team have been invited. The service will be fairly short followed by the memorial dedication outside on the north wall. There will be approx 100 people at the Church. Refreshments will be provided by the ladies of the Church and the local WI afterwards in the Church Hall. Clare More proposed thanks to JG for all his hard work in organising this, everyone agreed. JG thanked the committee: Geoff Reynolds, Smiley Mildwater, Clare More & Jim Coman. He also thanked the historians; Martyn Ford-Jones, Howard Sandall, Sam Mealing-Mills and Alan Fraser for all their hard work. Fred Coney died in August 2010; he is buried at Beck Row. JG mentioned there were some errors in the magazine and that we would try harder next year. There were no questions.
5. **Acting Secretary's report** – see attached
6. **Treasurer's report** - £8600 in bank. Outstanding amounts to pay are £3600 to Galaxy Club, £2000 for the memorial plaque and £500 in expenses. This will leave about £2000 in bank account. If there had been no memorial plaque expenses, the bank account would have remained roughly at its same position as last year. John Cox queried the amount paid to the Galaxy Club. JG & SM explained that we had been subsidised for many years and now that had stopped we were being charged the correct amount. Thanks were given to Smiley.
7. **Election of Officers** –
  - a. Elizabeth Cox proposed JG to continue as Chairman, this was seconded by George Thomson. All agreed.
  - b. It was decided to do a block vote for the positions of Secretary, Treasurer and 2 committee members. Geoff Reynolds as Secretary, Smiley Mildwater as Treasurer and Clare More & Jim Coman as Committee Members was proposed by Gehard Lechnitz and seconded by Tony Atkinson. All agreed.
  - c. Auditor – All agreed Robert Oakley should carry on as auditor. This was proposed by Smiley Mildwater and seconded by Geoff Reynolds.
8. **Web site update** – web site doing well, lots of hits. We still rely on members for stories as we like to keep the web site fresh. Alan Fraser looks after it and is happy to carry on. A huge thanks from everyone to Alan Fraser.
9. **The future** – Committee are happy to run the Register as it is with no formal subs. We will rely on donations to cover running costs. The form that goes out with the newsletter will have a donation section on it next time. Next year's reunion – We might visit the Dad's Army museum at Thetford. A list of hotels and B&Bs will be published in the magazine and we will

encourage people to book early. John Cox told us about the Bomber Command Memorial in Green Park in London opposite the RAF Club. John & Elizabeth went to see the foundation stone laid. It is hoped that the memorial will be ready by 8/5/2012. Bomber Command Association were the prime movers in getting the memorial done. JG invited everyone to join.

10. **Next year's reunion** will be on 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> May subject to the Base Commander's confirmation.
11. **AOB** - George Thomson will be bringing a picture along called Incident Over Mannheim 12/9/1944 to be raffled separately with proceeds going to Bomber Command Association. Need to raise min £100 to cover cost of print and framing. Signed by 2 crew members (one of whom was George Thomson) and the artist. MFJ took 2 XV Squadron veterans to Lossiemouth where they reported for duty for the first time in 66 years! SM laid some more wreaths in France at graves in St Nazaire and Caen last year. He is going to Normandy and wanted to lay some more, everyone agreed. Alan Fraser knows an artist who will paint any Lancasters or Stirlings for sale. Elizabeth Cox mentioned an art display near Buckingham Palace for 1 week in July which would be very good. MFJ told us about the XV Squadron hanger from WW2 that was being demolished. He was taken out there to see it but not allowed inside. He had an extended tour of the airfield which has changed a lot. An article entitled 'It's Mildenhall but not as we know it' will be in the next magazine. Clare More said something should be put in the magazine about relatives being able to wear medals. She get's a great feeling of pride wearing her husband's.
12. **Thanks were said and the meeting closed at 21.30.** John Cox led the thanks to the committee and everyone applauded.