

Minutes of the AGM of the Mildenhall Register held on 16th May 2008 in Middleton Hall, RAF Mildenhall

1. **Present:** Fred Coney Chairman
John Gentleman Vice Chairman
Don Clarke Secretary
plus 37 members and friends.
2. **Apologies:** John Swallow, Bernard Mildwater
3. **Minutes of the last AGM:** The meeting unanimously approved the minutes.
4. **Matters arising:** These would be covered in the main agenda.
5. **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman welcomed all members and friends to the meeting. Colonel Eden Murrie, USAF was now the Base Commander and Sqn Ldr Rick Fryer, RAF, the current RAF Commander and he had welcomed them to their positions on behalf of the Register. There was to be a Service on Saturday 17th May 2008 at St Leonards Parish Church Mundford where the Bishop of Kings Lynn would dedicate a plaque in memory of the XV Sqn crew, captained by WO F Newton, which crashed after take off from Mildenhall near the village. Group Captain Norford, RAAF would attend the service and two members of XV(R) Sqn would represent the RAF. The RAFA and Royal British Legion Standards would be on parade and medals should be worn. The media had indicated that they would cover the event. Geoff Reynolds had offered to escort members to the crash site after the service. The Register were very grateful to Mrs Pat Tuck and her husband Robin for organising the ceremony and offering refreshments at their home after the service; the Chairman was pleased that they would be attending all the events of the weekend. Thanks were also due to Geoff Reynolds for his work in organising the event.
6. **Vice Chairman Report:** The Vice Chairman had received a message from Wg Cdr Mike Saunders, Officer Commanding No XV(R) Sqn. The OC had sent the Squadron's best wishes to the Register's members, apologised that due to operational pressures the Sqn would be unable to attend this year's reunion and gave a summary of the Sqn's demanding tasking over the past year which had included service in Iraq and the training of all Tornado GR4 pilots and navigators. A copy of the OC's message is attached to the minutes.
7. **Secretary Report:** The Secretary had undertaken this role for 32 years and felt that the time had now come to retire. (The meeting reluctantly accepted this decision. Many tributes were made from the floor to Don's enormous work over many years; the members were very grateful for his selfish dedication and commitment to the register of which he had been the backbone for so long.
8. **Treasurers Report:** The Vice-Chairman presented the Treasurer's report. The current balance was £4,984.78 and the Register's finances remained in a healthy state. Donations had been received from two ladies, Beryl Parrington of Dayton, Ohio who asked that her Husband's death (Sqn Ldr Ed Partington, 90 Sqn) be recorded by the Register. The other lady was Iris Hillman who had spent time at Mildenhall as a Signals officer. Iris is now unfortunately suffering from blindness and lives in

Australia. The Treasurer would write to both ladies thank them for their donations. The Charitable status of the Register had been investigated and neither of the criteria under the Charitable Headings nor the requirements for Public Benefits applied to the Register's activities. (A record of the Treasurers report and the bank balances are attached to these minutes.)

9. Election of Officers:

- a. **President.** The Chairman suggested that the retiring Secretary, Don Clark be appointed Life President of the Register. This was proposed by John Cox, Seconded by Jim Coman and agreed unanimously by the Members.
- b. **Chairman.** Current Chairman Fred Coney proposed by Jim Hammond, seconded by Fred Shepherd and agreed unanimously by the Members.
- c. **Vice Chairman.** Current Vice-Chairman John Gentleman proposed by Fred Coney, seconded by Jim Coman and agreed unanimously by the Members.
- d. **Secretary.** In view of Don Clark's retired a new Secretary was required, The Vice Chairman had been "head hunting" and Andrew Bridgwater and Geoff Reynolds had indicated their willingness to undertake the role. Andrew Bridgwater was proposed by Geoff Reynolds and seconded by Fred Shepherd and agreed unanimously by the Members. Geoff would assist Andrew in undertaking this task.
- e. **Treasurer.** Current Treasurer Bernard Mildwater proposed by Fred Shepherd, seconded by Geoff Reynolds and agreed unanimously by the Members.
- f. **Auditor.** For the past financial year the register had employed a professional auditor to audit the books at a cost of £100 per annum; the meeting thought this to be an unnecessary expense and agreed that an honorary auditor should be appointed for coming years. At the meeting's request the Vice-Chairman undertook to approach a friend, Mr Robert G Oakley to undertake the task. Mr Oakley was a Churchwarden of Freckenham, a near-by parish and an ex-deputy head master of a large London comprehensive school. It was proposed by John Cox and seconded by Jim Coman Harry was not simply hiding while in France- during the last month Harry took part in Resistance 'activities' and wore this hand made identity arm band.

that subject to Mr Oakley's agreement he be appointed and agreed unanimously by the Members. (*Vice Chairman's Note: Mr Oakley has agreed to undertake this task*)

- e. **Committee members.** The current committee members, Douglas Kebbell and Jim Hammond were proposed by Fred Coney, seconded by Geoff Reynolds and agreed unanimously by the Members. In addition

Geoff Reynolds was proposed by John Gentleman, seconded by Albert Jackson and agreed unanimously by the Members.

10. **Next Reunion.** The weekend of the 15/17 May 2009 was agreed as the dates for the next reunion.
11. **AOB.**
 - a. **Six two two Squadron Historian.** Both the Chairman and Secretary had received letters proposing that Howard Sandall, (a Nephew of John Gray who flew with Tom Maxwell in Richard Allen's crew) be co-opted to the Committee as the member responsible for writing the history of Six Two Two Sqn. Tom Maxwell made the proposal by letter and it was seconded by John Cox and agreed unanimously by the Members.
 - b. **90 Squadron celebration.** The annual event would be at Methwold Church on Saturday 17th May at 11.00.
 - c. **Future re-union dinner.** Geoff Reynolds proposed that in future years notaries such as Air Attaches of allied nations be invited to the annual dinner as a guest of Honour. The Vice-Chairman proposed that as Geoff was now a committee member he could undertake this task in co-operation with the committee. The Members agreed this unanimously.
 - d. **Votes of Thanks.** The meeting agreed that votes of thanks to the following:
 - i. Col Murrie and her staff for entertaining the Register over the weekend at RAF Mildenhall and making its members so welcome.
 - ii. Pat and Robin Tuck for their hard work and dedication to the memory of the Mundford crash crew.
 - iii. Fred Coney for his continuing work in running the register at the ripe old age of 91!
 - iv. Don Clark (see Para 7) for his tremendous dedication and devotion to the Register. Members look forward to seeing him for many years to come at Reunions where his cheerfulness and humour is always much appreciated. The members also noted the great support Don's Wife has given to him over the years and in turn to the Register. A big thanks is also due to Winifred.
12. **Final remarks.** The Chairman closing the meeting thanked all for coming and wished all a happy and enjoyable weekend.

JOHN GENTLEMAN
VICE CHAIRMAN
MILDENHALL REGISTER

