



General Meeting: Saturday 21 February 2015

Minutes

Venue: Roseville Memorial Club Function Room 2

Chairman: Gareth Morgan

Commenced: 1:40 PM

Apologies: Peter Chapman (NZ), Michael Garside (Europe), Adrian Hellwig (QLD)

1. **Attendance:** 20 members as per attendance book
2. **Minutes:** The Minutes of the General Meeting of 15 November 2014 were confirmed.

Accepted: (m) Stephen Drew

(s) Gordon Lasslett

3. Formal vote to elect treasurer/membership secretary

By a unanimous vote Gordon Lasslett (who has generously volunteered to take on this role in addition to that of Librarian – formally nominated by Des Sheehan) was voted as the treasurer/membership secretary.

4. Business arising/discussion points

a) Journal matters

Gareth Morgan provided a summary of Peter Chapman's report as follows:

The journal for May is in good heart, in fact excellent heart as I have a working complete version already, with a number of articles spare for the next issue. The May issue will be either 64 (my preferred option, as it will weigh less and therefore be slightly less expensive to post) or 68 pages, and has a range of subjects this time.

Most recently, I received via our web site (thanks Andrew!) an e-mail from Peter Elliott in France, with a short but interesting article giving details of the French spy who ended up behind German lines with 2Lt Claude Ridley of 3 Squadron RFC in 1916. You may recall that John Barfoot in the U.K. wrote an article on Claude Ridley for our journal, and in this he said that the Frenchman's fate remains a mystery. Well, this short article explains what happened to him. Peter is the author of a well-written article on Claude Ridley's adventures in Hunland, which appeared more recently in the Cross and Cockade

International journal. Even better, Peter sent in an excellent painting (by Howard Gerrard) relevant to the subject with his article, and at my request has obtained permission for us to use the latter on this issue's front cover.

Besides putting the journal together, I've also been investigating the costs involved in having the journal printed here in New Zealand, as our postal service, as bad as it is these days (they've just announced mail deliveries will drop to just three days a week from July 2015) is still less expensive than Australia Post. Unfortunately, to date indications are that our deal with Canprint is still better, even given the hassles we had with them last November. The one confirmed quote I've had locally is significantly more expensive (by about \$300 once GST is factored in) and this didn't include freight, which the Canprint one does. Most other printers have just ignored my request for information, although I will continue to pursue other avenues. We may have to go back to Canprint in May, not only for cost reasons but also as I am going to the U.K. for a month on the 15th of May and will need the journal to be long since printed and distributed before that date.

Peter and Gareth are checking, and it may yet prove to be more cost effective to post from NZ, even with the bigger quote, if we save enough on postage. I already know we can do so with overseas member journals as I can post them from here for NZ\$3.60 plus the envelope and in Australia it costs over A\$10.

I'll finish with another note of caution, and that is our small pool of authors. Gareth and I appear to be doing the lion's share of writing, and we have less than a handful of other regulars. Although I'm sure I speak for Gareth as well as myself when I say this is not a burden as we both enjoy research and writing, If anyone else is working on an article, I'd love to hear from them.

b) The Newsletter

Des Sheehan on behalf of Newsletter editor Adrian Hellwig reported as follows:

The newsletter is again 14 pages and the editor is grateful for the 11 book reviews submitted by members

Adrian would appreciate profiles of individual members in the newsletter so that the society members are aware of the wide variety and interests of other members.

The committee compliments Adrian on production of another excellent newsletter with many illustrations, interesting articles, information and links to other websites.

c) Library matters

Librarian of the Peter Williams Memorial Library Gordon Lasslett reported that, as noted in the newsletter, there have been 9 new books purchased/donated, including a donation by the author Trevor Henshaw (an Australian who lives in the UK) of his most recent book, "*The Sky Their Battlefield II*". 5 Magazines/datafiles have also been received.

The holes in the society's magazine collection have now largely been filled. He is still looking for back issues of our own Journal, particularly any pre 1986 journals, and any member who might have spare copies of (the very rare) issues 1 and 2 of Windsock International.

27 books and magazines are currently out on loan to 7 members.

Despite the temporary venue Gordon provided a selection of books and magazines for members present to view and if required take out on loan. However because of the temporary venue books for sale could not be brought along this time.

Email for Gordon Lasslett is glaslett@bigpond.net.au and phone 02 9416 7603.

d) John Goble

Mike Crisp reported that he has now visited our esteemed member John Goble, who is in good spirits and now residing at the Luke Centre (Room No 9872), Wesley Gardens, Belrose. Mike said that John would always appreciate a visit from members but it would be wise to check beforehand to see if he is in, as he goes out on a number of outings with family and others.

Andrew Smith nominated John Goble for Life Membership of the Society, and this was seconded by Mark Dawson, and passed unanimously by acclamation at the meeting.

e) Membership/recruitment/finances

Gordon Lasslett reported:

Membership - We have 137 current members at present, and payment of current fees continues to come in. A reminder is to be sent at end of February. Membership records are being updated and more details will be available at the next meeting, Gordon only having now taken over this task.

A full report on the accounts will also, in view of the above, be available only for the next meeting, but as noted previously, the accounts previously oversights by Alex Stewart are in good shape. Funds currently held are \$6625.12.

f) Barry Videon Database

Gareth Morgan reported as follows:

David Perkins, long term society member and holder of the Barry Videon database, has indicated to Gareth Morgan that he is considering the AWM and the NAA establish a direct link to the full database. The current restrictions on such access require persons

seeking access, other than to simply obtain a name, to join the society and then approach David for a password to the database.

Considering that over a number of years only 25 members have joined this way it is thought that having such restrictions may be counter-productive to the society, and that having free links from those bodies to our website, to then have free access to the database, might ultimately be of greater benefit (ie: much greater exposure). David is looking at the options, and the committee has discussed the best way to obtain something from the AWM in return for such access. As the society is the publisher of the database, all texts and photos have the societys watermark or acknowledgement on them already.

Ultimately the decision is Davids but the committee will consider further and discuss further with him.

g) Speakers/venues for meetings outside Sydney

Gareth Morgan reported:

An outing is planned to see the upgraded AWM galleries in Canberra (AWM), to be guided by arrangement by a friend (soon to be society member) of Gareth Morgan, employed as a volunteer by the AWM. Members will be advised by email, and/or letter if no email, of a planned Saturday date to meet on steps of AWM at 11am. At this general meeting Saturday 21 March was proposed.

[Addendum – it has since been ascertained that a large ex-service march and ceremony will take place at the AWM on 21 March. Due to other weekends being taken up with Easter and NSW elections (where absentee voting has been made much more difficult) a new date of Saturday 11 April has been fixed and members notified]

Interested members should contact Gareth at president@ww1aero.org.au or by telephone at 02 9885 7092.

h) Coming and future events

Michael Garside's talk on events and contacts in the Somme and other areas in France has been deferred to possibly May 2015. Andrew Smith has offered a talk on Australians in the Royal Naval Air Service for February or later. Mark Lax will be approached for a talk on number 1 Squadron AFC.

The biennial modelling competition is under consideration for the August meeting, with members to be notified in the newsletter.

Any suggestions from members welcome.

i) Society assets at the Australian Aviation Museum (Bankstown) (AAM) and loan agreement

Des Sheehan reported that he has examined the agreement and provided an updated advice to the committee and other interested members, who have provided input. The committee has accepted that advice, with the addition of a 30 day notice clause, if the agreement is to be terminated by consent of both parties.

Amended clauses will be provided by Des Sheehan to the Australian Aviation Museum in March, as well as in person discussions to finalise the agreement.

j) Society engine restoration project for 2015 (Clerget 9b and OX-5 engines)

Alex Stewart the co-ordinator for this project reported as follows:

The Australian Aviation Museum has returned the carburettor and magneto held by the museum.

The cam gear from the Clerget has now been removed after some difficulty, finding the internals rust free, but covered with a hard film of very old castor oil. The internal area was however in excellent condition, considering its age. The castor oil is being gradually and carefully soaked away.

As mentioned at the last meeting, the oil pump was loaned to the restorer in Western Australia, who needed to examine it to assist with a different restoration being carried out there. That restorer has now returned the pump, which he has voluntarily completely cleaned and refurbished, so that it now as good as new (photos shown during Alex's talk below). Restoration work is continuing from the next Sunday.

Members interested in participating in this project are encouraged to contact Alex Stewart Tel 0410 575 494 or email now at alex.m.stewart@gmail.com

The committee is continuing to look into the possibility of grants for such restoration. Alex has written to CAMS at Omaka and Adrian Hellwig is in contact with TVAL. Contact is also being made with the AWM concerning their previous Albatros restoration. This is an ongoing enquiry and any members should contact Alex as co-ordinator.

k) Other projects for WW1 commemoration – Recognition of those Australians who died serving in other allied air forces in WW1

As part of the commemoration of the War's centenary, Gareth Morgan has commenced a project to mark the sacrifice of the Australians who served in the RFC, RNAS and RAF. He reported to this meeting:

The database is slowly being expanded, as details of more and more Australians who served in the British services emerge. However, as noted in the previous report, it not easy to determine the actual personnel, and their origins.

An excellent database in addition to the Barry Videon database has been recognised, <http://www.airhistory.org.uk>, also mentioned in the newsletter.

Members interested in assisting in this project, or who have ideas regarding a monument, should contact Gareth Morgan as set out below. The erection of plaques was discussed.

Members are also asked for other ideas for later in the following three years.

Gareth can be contacted at president@ww1aero.org.au or by telephone at 02 9885 7092.

l) Australian Business Number for Society - Taxation exemption for donations to Society

The need for an ABN is still under investigation, and will be advised to the committee prior to the next meeting.

In relation to the proposed tax deductible status for donations Des Sheehan will follow this up by examining the Aviation Historical Society (Aust) constitution to ascertain eligibility for listing on the Register of Cultural Organisations, part of the Federal Attorney General's Department (Ministry for the Arts). The principal purpose of an organisation must be the promotion of a cultural activity, theirs being the history of aviation. It seems likely that the society's promotion of the history of World War I aviation could well be a similar activity, but the Constitution will need to be slightly amended.

Des Sheehan will then report further to the committee.

Des Sheehan can be contacted on this issue at dessheehan@optusnet.com.au and tel 0415 207 730.

m) The Pat Moy Shield

Warren Evans, recipient of the award for 2014, was formally presented with the Shield (now with his name thereon).

n) The Mark Lax Award

Gareth Morgan announced that the committee has decided that the award for the 2014 journals should be presented to Derek White for his excellent colour illustrated article on aircraft recognition. Derek was not present but is now aware of his receipt of the award.

o) Members access to membership database

A privacy release clause for members to sign/tick on renewal will be drawn up by Des Sheehan and sent out to members, so that members can have access to other members' contact details, arising out of common interests.

4. Correspondence and Reports.

a) Correspondence:

Andrew Smith provided the correspondence from Jim Dale of the Harry Hawker Society, who approached the society via the website, as they were doing research on friends and associates of Harry Hawker. They came across information which they will provide on Capt Andrew Lang of 4 AFC.

Gordon Lasslett provided correspondence from Trevor Henshaw, author of "*The Sky Their Battlefield II*", in which he made a number of generous offers expanded upon in Gareth Morgan's report on this to the general meeting.

Gareth Morgan provided the most recent publications kindly forwarded by the Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW), and Aerolegacy and Aerolog from NZ.

b) Reports:

i) President (Gareth Morgan):

Gareth visited the Aviation Heritage Museum at Omaka in January, and reported favourably on its enormous and detailed exhibits. See post meeting talks below.

Gareth also provided a copy of a poster advertising the society, which he has arranged to have displayed at the Aviation Heritage Museum at Omaka

He has arranged for the AWM visit noted above.

Gareth also reported that Trevor Henshaw has (in addition to supplying the library) very kindly arranged to supply members who attended this meeting with a discounted copy of his book "*The Sky Their Battlefield II*", at a discount in the region of 12 UK pounds (or almost A\$24.00)

Members who were present should contact Gareth at president@ww1aero.org.au or by telephone at 02 9885 7092, for costings and he will then provide Trevor's email for the member to forward members details and the funds direct to Trevor so that the book can then be sent direct to the member.

Peter Chapman will continue explore options for a printer in New Zealand, as well as committee members in Australia looking at options in Australia. Postage from NZ as opposed to from Australia is also being explored due to the increasing cost of posting within and overseas from Australia.

ii) Vice President (Mike Garside)

Vice president Mike Garside is continuing in his task to lobby for an appropriate patron for the society. He will be in France over the Anzac period in 2015 and will take steps to interest a likely captive audience in the work of the society. (Our man on the Western Front?)

iii) Webmaster (Andrew Smith)

Webmaster Andrew Smith continues to upgrade the members' website to include links to the library catalogue, as well as other links.

He has now loaded up 12 of the society's 21 photo collections to the website.

On the Society's Facebook page "Like's" are up 7%. One entry, a photo of A Flight 3 Squadron AFC had 3683 views, an increase of nearly 4000%, with 446 of those views coming from the Cross and Cockade Facebook page.

iv) Treasurer/Membership Secretary (Gordon Lasslett)

Report above at 3 (e).

v) Journal Editor

Report above at 3 (a).

vi) Newsletter editor

Report above at 3 (b).

vii) Liaison Co-ordinator (Greg Mullens)

Greg reported that a number of members enjoyed the yum cha meal with him on the Sunday after the last meeting, and has arranged for a further booking for interested members on the Sunday after the May meeting, that is, at 11am on 17 May 2015 at the New Tai Yuen Restaurant Chinatown. Greg can be best contacted at Tel 0401 639 494 or AH 02 8095 8059.

(viii) Librarian

As above 3 (c). Gordon can be contacted for loans, returns etc. The Peter Williams Memorial Library is situated at 38 Woodlands Road, East Lindfield NSW 2070 – Librarian Gordon Lasslett Tel 02 9416 7603 (H) glaslett@bigpond.com

ix) Secretary (Des Sheehan)

Tasks and report noted above at 3 (i), and (l) and (o).

Acceptance of Reports: (m) Alan Kitchen (s) Greg Mullens

5) General Business and items of interest:

Stephen Drew brought to members attention that an exhibition from the UK Imperial War Museum on World War 1 aviation (Baron M Von R artefacts etc) will commence from this Anzac day at the Melbourne Museum (Victoria).

It was mentioned that society member Michael Molquentin's brand-new book "*Australia and the War in the Air- Volume 1* " Oxford Press \$49.90 online, has now been favourably reviewed in the February newsletter. A talk from Michael is looked forward to at a future meeting in 2015.

6) Raffle Draw

Random numbers were drawn by Alex Stewart, via the relevant app (!) on his portable phone.

First Prize = won by Mick Galston in Wales, and it is *Nieuport 11/16 v Fokker Eindexker*

Second Prize = won by Andrew Pittaway in Western Australia, and it is *Sopwith Camel v Fokker Dr.1.*

8) Next Meeting

Venue: To be advised in newsletter, but Roseville Memorial Club is still the likely venue.

Date: Saturday 16 May 2015

Time: 1:30 PM

8) Formal meeting close: 2:45 PM

Report on the remainder of the meeting

Alex Stewart provided an illustrated update on the engines on the wide TV screen provided, with current detailed photographs of the disassembled engine, the restored oil pump and parts.

Gareth Morgan gave an illustrated talk on the major WW1 aviation publication just received, Trevor Henshaws self published "*The Sky Their Battlefield II – Air Fighting and Air Casualties of the Great War 1912 - 1919*".

This publication is an even more extensive and much larger edition of his first book published on this subject in the mid 1990s, listing the air activity on all fronts on every day of WW1. Trevor has spent the last 20 years adding to his first work (which contained details on 10,800 personnel) increasing it now to almost 17,000.

The book provides individual detail now about every British, Australian and other Commonwealth and American air fighting casualty of the war, and also links almost 3,300 German records to all these events.

It now also includes air personnel casualties on the ground, and a new Accidents Addendum for all the active fronts. Gareth showed some of Trevors tables which are clearly very extensive. Trevors website for the book is www.theskythebattlefield2.com

Members will already be familiar with the extensive collection of flying and restored WW1 aircraft at that museum, so Gareth also showed instead photos of some of the interior exhibits and displays at Omaka, including very realistic mock ups of the crashed red Fokker Dr1, an RE 8 being loaded up, and large cabinet displays of French, British, US and German, original (some famous) uniforms, medals and artefacts.

Finally members viewed a DVD showing (provided by Adrian Hellwig) of the British documentary *World War I Top Gun* (one of the participant historians being one Trevor Henshaw).