



## Australian Society of World War I Aero Historians Inc

# Annual General Meeting: Saturday 16 November 2013

## Minutes

**Venue:** Building 96, Victoria Barracks, Paddington

**Chairman:** Gareth Morgan

**Commenced:** 1:35 PM

**Apologies:** Mike Abbott, Peter Chapman, John Davis, Adrian Hellwig, Greg Mullens, Eric Peterson, Bill Renfrew, Margaret Travers, Jerry Weingarth

Meeting video recorded by Steve Drew

**1. Attendance:** 23 members as per attendance book

**2. Minutes:** The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 17 November 2012 were confirmed.

**Accepted: (m)** Mike Garside      **(s)** Mike Crisp

The Minutes of the General Meeting of 17 August 2013 were confirmed.

**Accepted: (m)** Mike Garside      **(s)** Pauline Bell

### 3. Business arising from the Minutes

#### a) Journal matters

The decision to go to two Journals per year has been well received, and reviews in our peer publications have been most favourable. It is a testament to our success that an additional short print run was needed after all copies of the May Journal were distributed. The print run for the November Journal was increased.

Peter Chapman has advised that there is sufficient content for the May 2014 Journal, but more is required if we are to maintain our high standard.

The May Journal has been very favourably reviewed in Windsock Worldwide, where Peter Williams' passing was noted with sadness.

## **b) Newsletter**

Peter Chapman has done a great job as Newsletter editor, as well as his demanding role as Journal Editor. Gareth Morgan informed the membership that Adrian Hellwig in Queensland has kindly volunteered to take over the Newsletter editorship.

We will all do our best to assist Adrian as he slots into the position.

## **c) Library matters**

Gordon Lasslett reported that the Peter Williams Memorial Library is fully up and running and mentioned that members are now welcome to contact him for loans or visits to the library. A range of publications were available to peruse and/or for loan at the meeting (including a range of Society DVDs brought along by Stephen McMahon).

Gordon was congratulated for his extensive catalogue preparation including new books mentioned in the last newsletter.

## **d) Membership/recruitment/finances**

Three former members have rejoined, but four have passed away and some others have not renewed. Alex Stewart reports that there have been 20 new members since January, and generally membership remains static, at 139 financial and honorary members currently.

Alex Stewart further reports that an updated balance sheet has been prepared, showing a surplus to 30 June 2013 of \$880.62, with next journal expenses to still come. Income over the past financial year was approximately \$5,500.00 and expenses approximately \$4,900.00. The overall publication costs of the journals and newsletter have generally evened out, as postage costs of the newsletter are less due to emailing. Bulk Australia post arrangements for posting (arranged by Gareth Morgan) have significantly reduced the internal Australian postage expenses (despite the efforts of Australia Post). Overseas posting costs have however significantly increased (see membership fees below).

Cross & Cockade have kindly given the society free advertisements in their Journals, which has led to an increase in overseas membership.

## **e) Barry Videon Database**

Gareth Morgan reported that the database has proved an exceptional resource which can at present be accessed by members through the website. Currently there are 6500 names and detailed information and names are still being added by David Perkins.

## **f) February General Meeting**

The Mark Lax Award will be announced at the February meeting, for works in either 2013 Journal.

Peter Williams has donated his large collection of WW1 aviation material to the library. Peter's wishes were that excess items/books were to be sold for the benefit of the society, with members having first opportunity to buy.

Lists of items excess to the library (a number of books on WW II subjects and models) and incomplete WW1 models (as well as many pristine model kits and magazines) will be sent out to members through the newsletter and the website, and be available at the February meeting, with members able to purchase up to the May meeting. It is planned for the sale of the remainder at the May meeting.

The webmaster will open an EBay account so that members can pay prior to or separately at the May meeting.

Keith Keohane's proposals for the sale of his library (see general business below) will also be advised prior to the meeting, and will be available at the February meeting

The Committee is working on a program of activities for future meetings; information will be in the next Newsletter.

#### **g) Coming events**

Andrew Smith reported that unfortunately the New Zealand trip was unable to proceed, as ultimately only one member's booking was confirmed. There were apparently difficulties in contacting the travel agent which may have contributed to the lack of confirmations. Andrew Smith will examine the possibility of another trip using a more specialised travel agent.

Other planned excursions will be advised in the newsletter, and see Presidents report below.

#### **h) Membership fees for 2014.**

Postage costs of the journal from Australia to overseas and the northern hemisphere have increased significantly. Members voted to keep domestic membership fees at \$40.00 per annum, but increase fees to \$46.00 pa for New Zealand and the Pacific, and \$60.00 pa for other overseas destinations including the northern hemisphere.

The webmaster has received many enquiries from possible members who would like to join and receive all publications electronically, but for whom the fees have posed a problem. There is a significant saving on costs for these proposed members, and it was recommended and passed that members who request "electronic membership" be

required to pay membership fees of \$25.00 pa. These are the same fees as student membership, which have never been utilised, and has become redundant.

**i) Constitutional changes**

The following motions were voted and passed by all 23 members present (75% of those present being required to change the constitution).

The roles of treasurer and membership secretary are split in the constitution, which has resulted in problems in co-ordinating membership fees with enrolments. Joining these roles, as is currently operating, was recommended and passed.

Thus the amendment is as follows:

Delete clause 23 and add clause 24 e. as follows:

“The Treasurer shall maintain accurate and up-to-date records of the Society membership, applications for membership, etc, and carry out all duties in the constitution and rules designated to be carried out by the Membership Secretary.”

The description of the webmaster co-ordinating “the forum” has proved redundant. Thus reference to that has been deleted, as follows:

“Clause 25b is deleted”.

**4. Correspondence and Reports.**

**a) Correspondence:**

No correspondence other than in below reports.

**b) Reports:**

**i) President (Gareth Morgan):**

The most significant event of the year was probably the discovery of artefacts relating to Capt R A Little, Australia’s greatest fighter pilot, on a tip in Queensland. The Society played a part in having the items donated to the FAA Museum at Nowra, where the most significant are now on display. We hope to organise a Society outing to Nowra in 2014, and we are promised that the full collection will be available to us.

The Society’s collection of Great War aviation items is presently stored at the Australian Aviation Museum at Bankstown, and I will be sign a formal Loan Agreement there in two weeks. The Museum may then put some of the items on display.

Two weeks ago, Gordon Lasslett and I manned a table at the Sydney Scale Model Show at Parramatta. We recruited three new members and sold some old Journals, so it was a worthwhile exercise.

**ii) Vice President (Mike Garside)**

Arranged for Michael Molquentin to give the Eric Watson address for the AGM.

**iii) Webmaster (Andrew Smith)**

There has been a 42% increase in traffic on the society's website in the past 12 months. The band width has been increased, and more members are signing up and paying membership fees electronically.

Webmaster is looking into changing the website design to an information based website, however with the members section remaining the same. Currently the site still arguably provides the best information and access.

Has been in touch with Google to have Society's profile higher on WW1 aviation search engine (to assist with possible new members).

The society's Facebook page is working well, with feedback about the journal. There is a section on centenary celebrations and if persons wish to donate artefacts.

It was noted that the finder of the Capt R A Little artefacts contacted the president via information on the website.

**iii) Treasurer/Membership Secretary (Alex Stewart)**

General report set out at 3 (d) above. Member Philip Townsend contacted and has kindly donated all his past newsletters to the library. Webmaster is currently digitising them for the website.

More remarkably Philip Townsend also has donated a German propeller from an 180hp Argus engine to the society (more details and photo in the November newsletter). Currently detailed measurements and photographs being taken and enquiries will be made of members and texts to identify the aircraft it came from. In due course the propeller will be placed with the society's artefacts at Bankstown. The library has also just received a number of volumes of texts concerning propeller identification.

**iv) Liaison Co-ordinator (Greg Mullens)**

Des Sheehan reported that Greg Mullens is unfortunately back in hospital but recovering. Warren Evans advised that Greg is slowly getting better and should be able ultimately to resume duties. We wish him a swift recovery.

**v) Librarian (Gordon Lasslett)**

As reported above, but can now be contacted for loans, returns etc. The library is now situated at 38 Woodlands Road, East Lindfield NSW 2070 – Librarian Gordon Lasslett  
Tel 02 9416 7603 (H) [glasslett@bigpond.com](mailto:glasslett@bigpond.com)

**vi) Journal and Newsletter Editor (Peter Chapman)**

As reported above.

**vii) Secretary (Des Sheehan)**

Society subscription magazines have been followed up. Nothing to report otherwise than as covered above.

**Acceptance of Reports:** (m) Mike Crisp (s) Stephen Drew

**5) General Business:**

The President announced that the Pat Moy Shield for exceptional service to the Society in 2013 has been awarded to David Perkins for his work on the Barry Videon Database. The shield has been inscribed accordingly.

Mark Lax noted that the society will have to register in due course with the Australian Charities Not for Profit Commission (ACNC), a newly created federal charities register, as all “not for profit incorporated associations” will eventually need to register. The committee will action this.

Stephen Drew noted that last year’s Eric Watson address was recorded on video by him and is now with the library (and he recorded today’s which will also be provided to the library after editing). They will also be available in the members’ area of the website.

Mark Lax, Michael Molkentin and Gareth Morgan gave interesting addresses at the “By the Seat of their Pants” forum held at Point Cook.

Derek White reported on his plans for re-organising the system for future raffle draws. All financial members will continue to be in the draw, and do not have to purchase tickets etc.

Keith Keohane announced that he has decided to dispose of his extensive library of 160 books on WW1 subjects, with members (and the library) having the first opportunity to purchase at a discount. Keith will liaise with the committee, and it is planned that prior to the February meeting Keith will provide a catalogue, with possible purchases to take place at the February meeting. Further details in the upcoming newsletter and on the website for members.

## 6) Election of 2014 office bearers.

The President stood down and Mark Lax took over the chair to conduct the election of the 2014 office bearers. The nominations are as set out in the Agenda for this meeting. There were no later nominations, nor any from the floor. The following members were elected unanimously to the executive committee.

President	Gareth Morgan
Journal Editor	Peter Chapman
Liaison Co-ordinator	Greg Mullens
Librarian	Gordon Lasslett
Newsletter Editor	Adrian Hellwig
Secretary	Des Sheehan
Treasurer/Membership Secretary	Alex Stewart
Vice President	Michael Garside
Webmaster	Andrew Smith

## 6) Raffle Draw

Two raffles today, as there wasn't a raffle at the August meeting at Newcastle Airport;

First Prizes = *Mount of Aces* by Paul Hare  
Second Prizes = *Aces Falling* by Peter Hart

Derek White conducted the raffle, winners drawn by guest speaker Michael Mol Kentin. The results were:

First prizes: First draw Heather Ford, second draw Jerry Weingarh.

Second prizes: First draw Russell Guest, second draw Charles Schaedel.

## 7) Next Meeting:

**Venue:** Building 96, Victoria Barracks, Oxford Street, Paddington NSW

**Date:** Saturday 15 February 2014

**Time:** 1:30 PM

**8) Formal meeting close:** 2:30 PM

## Report on the remainder of the meeting – The Eric Watson Address

Michael Mol Kentin (author of *Fire in the Sky*, second edition to come) gave an interesting talk on his upcoming work for his thesis (and also book) on the Australians who volunteered for service with the Royal Flying Corps.

He pointed out how difficult it was first to identify and further, define, who were actually the Australian volunteers, as, for a start, there was no separate Australian citizenship until WW 11. Identification of these in the Barry Videon database was discussed.

On current information, somewhat remarkably, it may well be that the number of pilots and observers who served with the RFC may exceed those in all squadrons of the AFC.

Another remarkable fact was that, at one stage, the majority of commanders of RFC squadrons appeared to be Australian.

Despite extensive research over three years, he found much less information in the British records on members of the RFC, than was recorded on members of the AFC, in either the Australian archives, or the AFC records.

Michael gave as an example of one flyer who, however, had extensive records, Eric Conran (born in Queensland), and took us through his remarkable RFC history, both pre and post war, as well as mentioning some other flyers.

Members present enjoyed a fascinating address. Good luck to Michael in his continuing endeavours.