



## General Meeting, Saturday 20 February 2016

# Minutes

**Venue: Roseville Memorial Club**      **Chairman:** Des Sheehan (in absence of Gareth Morgan)

64 Pacific Hwy Roseville NSW 2069  
Tel 9419 6849

**Commence:** 1.45 pm

**Apologies:** Peter Chapman (in NZ), Adrian Hellwig (Qld), Keith Keohane, Gareth Morgan, Alex Stewart, Michael Garside, Gerry Weingarth (in Germany).

### 1. Attendance:

**2. Minutes:** The Minutes of the General Meeting of 21 November 2015 were confirmed.

**Accepted:** (M) Steve Drew      (S) Warren Evans

### 3. Discussion Points:

#### a) *Journal matters*

Members present applauded the November Journal as an excellent read, and with great artwork and illustrations.

Editor Peter Chapman reports that the May Journal has enough material, and he has also recently received a large article from Gareth Morgan. More articles from a wider range of members are however sought.

#### b) *Mark Lax Award*

Announcement and presentation deferred to May meeting.

#### c) *Newsletter*

Members present applauded that the February Newsletter was an excellent read, with illustrations and links terrific. Noted it is very informative, with 14 pages of articles and reviews. Editor Adrian Hellwig invites members to always submit interesting items to him for the Newsletter. Photographs of models are always appreciated with articles on models.

#### d) *Matters arising from committee meeting*

##### Liaison with the AHSA

Society member Paul Ewoldt, the secretary of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) Inc (referred to as AHSA), has been invited to assist the committee as a liaison with the AHSA, in view of the common interests of members of both societies.

It was unanimously agreed by the members at the committee meeting (and supported by Gareth Morgan) that Paul should carry out this role until the next AGM, or later if agreed. It is intended that he assist the committee with advice concerning future activities, visits and tours, and advise AHSA members on any of those, so that members of that society can also attend. Conversely our society will be advised of AHSA events which society members may attend.

This role was seen as a way of gaining new members, for both societies, and also facilitating society events and planning.

Paul (and Christine) Ewoldt have also assisted considerably with the engine restoration, and will continue to play a role and advise in that area as well.

Paul advised the committee that the AHSA committee had already approved his proposed role with our society.

Des Sheehan as Secretary advised that such a role, decided by the committee, could be carried out under clause 27 (d) of the Constitution.

Members present supported the appointment of Paul Ewoldt to this role, by acclamation.

#### Society's collection formerly at the Australian Aviation Museum

Des Sheehan reported that, at the request of the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown (AAM) the society's assets held by the Museum were removed, pending the Museum vacating their Bankstown premises in March 2016. In excess of 105 assets temporarily stored at Gordon Lasslett's premises, pending assessment and valuation by Mark Lax and Gareth Morgan.

Consideration should be given later to restoration of these, and a permanent venue to store/display. In addition to the generator referred to above, Des Sheehan mentioned Gordon's restoration of Lt Lord's swagger stick (using traditional shellac polish preserving methods).

#### e) *Library matters*

Gordon Lasslett referred to the Library report in the February Newsletter (referring to four new books), and mentioned that he and Alex Stewart have obtained and donated to the library original WW1 manuals for the Clerget 9B and Curtiss OX5 engines. The small manual on the installation, adjustment and maintenance of the Clerget is however in technical French! It would be appreciated if a willing member could translate the manual, including the extra (handwritten in pencil) practical notes in the appendix pages (also in French). Members volunteered Michael Garside, whom it is believed is a French speaker.

Gordon also mentioned that in two of the four new magazines in the library, members Gary Sunderland and Colin Owers have interesting articles (Colin in two).

Gordon also brought to the meeting a small generator which was part of the society's collection, previously stored at Bankstown. John Davis has restored the generator to its original (black!) outer surface, polished the brass nameplate, and has cleaned and oiled the working parts so that it now turns easily. Attached to it now is its wooden propeller, also part of the collection,

which has been restored by Gordon. Linking the two parts was an experiment but they are clearly from the same source. The propeller shaft simply now needs a small key piece to fasten it to the propeller.

f) *Website matters*

Andrew Smith reports that the website is going well, and he is currently working on the time consuming task of adding the oral recordings of veterans to the website, which now has five digital recordings, including those recorded by early members of the society, such as James Lee Smith. The website server has been changed so it has far more capacity.

Andrew has today provided to the library the very good models kindly donated by former member Ken Gyford, as well as original artillery spotting documents, and books for the library.

The website password for members for 2016 will be changed and advised to paid up members next week (delay caused by late NBN cabling to Andrew's place). At time of meeting last year's password still valid.

Andrew also reports that the society's Facebook page now has 995 followers, almost as many as Cross and Cockade.

g) *Barry Videon Database*

David Perkins reported there are now 5852 names entered on the database, which contains 16 GB of data.

Mark Lax has provided the names of 50 more men who joined the RFC and RNAS from the AIF, and all of those who joined from the AIF are now indexed.

The AWM has linked the database with the National Library Pandora Archive, which provides access to Australia's documentary heritage (according to the website). David mentioned that the Pandora archive does not itself contain content, but in view of the value of the BV Database they are considering adding the content to their site.

h) *Speakers for 2016 meetings (ACM Mark Binskin – invitation to AHSA members to attend)*

Possible presentation by our patron, with members of AHSA (NSW) to be invited.

Michael Garside will give a presentation on WW1 Commemorations and Museums in Europe (and his meetings with curators and others) when he is able to be off duty, [possibly May?](#)

[Model show, exhibition and auction of models \(possible auctioneer Andrew Smith\) pencilled in for August meeting.](#)

i) *Coming and future event (ACM Mephisto Tank/RAAF Museum Point Cook/members suggestions)*

Visit to the AWM Canberra and the Mephisto tank now planned for say October, date may be advised at May meeting. Committee will liaise with Mark Lax. Members of AHSA will be invited to attend.

Consideration will be given to holding society meetings in Canberra and Melbourne in conjunction with visits to the AWM and the RAAF Museum Point Cook.

Point Cook tour planned once their new RE8 is repainted in 3 Squadron colours (believed to be off display till that completed).

AHSA members will be invited to attend Canberra and Point Cook visits. Depending on confirmed numbers, bus transport may be offered.

Concern was expressed about whether access to Oakey Aviation Museum (which has a number of interesting WW1 exhibits,) was restricted, now that access to all Commonwealth Defence Property is severely restricted. Mark Lax however advised that the Oakey Museum was excised from Defence property and is still fully accessible. Thus an Oakey visit and Queensland meeting should still be considered, committee to liaise with Adrian Hellwig. No date planned at this point.

j) *Society restoration project for 2016 (Clerget 9b and OX-5 engines)*

Gordon Lasslett referred members to the detailed full page report on this by Alex Stewart in the February Newsletter.

Members are needed to help clean the dismantled parts, and also members with welding skills to construct engine mountings.

Last week Gordon and Des Sheehan attended machinist company MotorRetro at Seven Hills, who now have the OX5 exhausts found and donated by Gordon, to add a missing end to the starboard exhaust. They are also looking into making two water inlet manifolds for the OX5 using two badly rusted examples obtained from a specialist supplier in the US as patterns.

k) *Other projects/appearances for WW1 commemoration –*

- i. Recognition of Australian Airmen who died/served with the RFC and the RNAS by the Australian War Memorial  
See President's report.
- ii. Society's involvement in WW1 centenary commemorations –  
Commemoration of opening of NSW Aviation School at Richmond – Progress funding/plaque etc  
See President's report. Des Sheehan has prepared the application for funding the plaque from the Saluting Their Service, which still requires council consent.
- iii. Involvement and meetings re documentary on AFC  
Refer detailed summary in minutes for November 2015 committee.  
Producers to continue to liaise with Michael Garside.

- iv. Display for ANZAC Day 2016 - The manager of the High Flyer Hotel near Bankstown Airport has asked Andrew Smith if the society could provide a display for ANZAC Day 2016 at the hotel

Andrew and Des have visited the hotel and selected a site. Secure display cabinets are able to be loaned by the AAM, and a way of securing the Von Richthofen wall displays will be investigated. Des Sheehan and Andrew will follow up with AAB and Nathan.

Possible artefacts for display were discussed at the meeting. The restored generator on display at the meeting was considered. Andrew records that Nathan has offered to meet expenses such as transport of cabinet up to \$400.00. Will also look into hotel's insurance for display.

Derek White offered to loan a copy of his most recent painting for the display. Derek will write a caption and a brief history of the incident for printing in the display.

1) *Pat Moy Award*

Announcement by President deferred to May meeting.

**4. Correspondence:**

Secretary notified Registrar of Incorporated Associations of Constitutional changes.  
Correspondence from Dr Andrew Kilsby, Military History and Heritage Victoria Inc.  
Correspondence from Charles Davis co-vice chairman Western Front Assn (Australia)

**5. Reports**

i) President: Gareth Morgan

There hasn't been any progress with respect to commemorating the centenary of the founding of the NSW State School of Aviation in 1916; this is partly due to waiting to see how some local government reorganisation works out, and then determining which Council is now responsible for the land opposite RAAF Richmond, where we hope to install a commemorative memorial. Action by Des and myself will continue in the near future, including applying for a grant from the Commonwealth Government.

Research into former AIF men who died while serving with the RFC or RAF (and RNAS) is complete, and an article documenting them has been submitted to Peter Chapman for publication in a forthcoming Journal. When Peter has tidied up the raw material, it could form the basis for an approach to the War Memorial with a view towards some form of commemoration.

The editor of the UK-based Western Front Association's online magazine has been kind enough to allow me a monthly space to include articles (autobiographies of airmen) published in our Journal, with a link to the Society website.

A copy of the valuable research DVD-ROM *Airmen Died in the Great War* is on its way from the UK. On arrival, it'll be available for members in the library.

I look forward to catching up in May.

ii) Vice President: Mike Garside - away so deferred to May meeting.

iii) Webmaster and Membership Secretary: Andrew Smith - Report as per 3 f. above.

iv) Treasurer and Librarian: Gordon Lasslett - Library Report as per 3 e. above. The Treasurer provided a financial statement for 12 months to 31 December 2015, and reported that the society's total income for that period was a remarkable \$8402.40, which was boosted by the prudent sales of excess (and duplicate) magazines etc from the collection, some to overseas purchasers. Total expenses for that period were \$4924.98. Total funds held at December 2015 were \$9310.76, and thus the society is in a very sound financial position. Future expenses for the next two society journals of about \$1500.00 each will however eat into that balance, plus change of server outlays (around \$400.00).

Gordon also mentioned that the members' register shows 131 members.

v) Journal Editor: Peter Chapman – Report as per 3 a. above.

(vi) Newsletter Editor: Adrian Hellwig – As per 3 c. above.

vii) Liaison Co-ordinator: Greg Mullens – Greg mentions that he has not been well for a period since the last meeting and thus has been unable to carry out liaison for that time. He will however follow up how John Goble is travelling at the Glenaeon Village and report.

He will also check whether John might be eligible for the Legion d'Honneur already granted by the French Govt to the Australian veterans who were involved with D Day (John was in charge of a landing craft that blew up hitting a shell on the beach).

viii) Secretary: Des Sheehan – Preparing submission for funding the plaque from the DVA funding *Saluting Their Service*, which requires council consent. In addition to the tasks noted above, is photographing more of the society's artefacts for a full inventory, and updating their descriptions.

#### **Acceptance of Reports:**

(M) Mark Lax

(S) Steve Drew

#### **5) General Business:**

Des Sheehan referred members to the very large article (57 pages with 28 footnotes and source links) by member Bernard de Broglio recently published in the Mosman Council history project "*Behind the Lines*" on Lt Eric Dibbs (from the Mosman area) titled "*Lucky 13: Dibbs at the Front*". It can be viewed online through the Mosman Council website, via the link to Mosman Library. Bernard explained what the project, called "*Doing Their Bit*", involved, and that he had drawn on an interview with Eric

Dibbs in an early Journal article (properly credited) as the basis of the article, and from research with the family and Eric Dibbs extensive collection of papers with the State Library. Gareth Morgan had assisted with advice. Dibbs served with 11 Squadron RFC and then Nos 3 and 2 Squadrons AFC, surviving 13 crashes.

Bernard also mentioned that his friend Darragh Christie (also present) was currently completing an article on the Battle of Central Station, and the part Lt P. G. (Gordon) Taylor (later of 66 Squadron RFC) didn't play in it. Des Sheehan (and Gareth Morgan through Des) urged Bernard to also submit his article to Peter Chapman for the Journal.

**6) Raffle Draw** – Numbers sourced publicly by Gordon Lasslett from the random number generator program on his 1970s programmable calculator.

First Prize: No 67 Alan Kitchen of Blakehurst (NSW)

Second Prize: Dr Susan Johnston of Hawthorn (Vic)

Gareth Morgan has selected prizes that members can choose from (selected from Osprey Books) as follows:

Nieuport 11/16 Bebe v Fokker Eindexer  
DH2 v Albatros D.I/D.II  
FE2b/d v Albatros Scouts  
SPAD VII v Albatros D.III  
SE5a v Albatros D.V  
Sopwith Camel v Fokker Dr.I  
SPAD XIII v Fokker D.VII

#### **7) Next Meeting:**

**Venue:** Roseville Memorial Club. **Date:** 21 May 2016

**Time:** 13:30

**8) Close formal meeting:** 2.50pm

#### **Post Meeting**

Andrew Smith gave a presentation, supported by screened photos, on Australians in the RNAS, from his forthcoming book titled "*Sons of the Southern Cross*", including updated research by Andrew from various libraries and sources including the subjects families.

He also discussed the difficulties in defining an Australian for the purposes of this research, and explained the definition he had used.

The remarkable histories expanded on included the following:

Stan Dallas  
Bert Hinkler  
Sydney Cotton

Stan Goble (life member John Goble's father)

Capt A R Little

Lt Jardine

Edward Boyd

Harold Berryman

Andrew's talk was so well received he was asked to continue for another half hour over the scheduled period of one hour.