

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF NO 201 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION HELD AT
THE LEA MARSTON HOTEL, SUTTON COLDFIELD, ON 30 SEPT 2023**

ATTENDEES

The following association members attended the 2023 Annual General Meeting:

Andrew Stewart (Chairman)	Chris Birks (Chairman Desig)	Joe Kennedy (Sec)	Rosie Hall (FB)
Sir Geoffrey Rowland	Lady Diana Rowland	AVM Andrew Roberts	Air Cdre Dick Gould
Air Cdre Pete Stean	Gp Capt Min Larkin	Gp Capt Chris Moore	Wg Cdr Adam Smolak (OC201)
Keith Girdwood	Michael Buehner-Coldrey	Mike Hill	John Green
Bob Hall	Jim Reid	Pat Reid	Margaret Stewart
Dorothy Birks	Sheena Baker	Beverlie Blee	Jackie Gould
Phill Basey	Jane Basey	Eddie Pritchard	Martin Coales
Harry Nockolds	Hector Hillman	Alan Anderson	Colin Pomeroy
Ivor Gibbs	Phil Hoole	Brian Quintin-Baxendale	Martin Coales

Ser	Lead	Item	Comments	Actions
1	Chair/Sec (AS/JK)	Welcome. Apologies	The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the members. Apologies had been received from the following members: Neil Campbell (C – Treasurer), Paul Warrener (C – Historian), Paul Stitson (C- IT), Andrew & Jinty Wight-Boycott, Nick Coley, Tony Graves, Ross McDermid, Stephen Oglesby, Justin Morris, Joe Arands, Richie Williams, Mike Fisher, Mike Beane, John Bussey, Geoff Hanson, Terry Wassel, Paddy Padmore	
2	Chair/Sec (AS/JK)	Minutes of Previous Meeting	The Chairman advised that the minutes of the previous meeting had been distributed by email and asked for corrections.	
3	Chair (AS)	Chairman's Update	Chairman reported that he had attended the ceremony to recover the Sqn standard, sword and silver from Guernsey. He paid tribute to the Association historian, Paul Warrener, who was doing an excellent job and is the single point of contact for members requiring a historical perspective for 201 Sqn. The historian is likely to develop closer ties to the Sqn in future. The state of the Assoc IT was discussed and suggestions were made as to how the website and Facebook page could be improved to refresh the output from both. AS stated that this was an issue that the new Chairman could address.	
4	Sec (JK)	Sec's Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership total 354 Lost Track (emails etc) 23 JK reported that work to update contact details of members who had fallen through the gaps was a priority, together with ensuring that applicants to the Facebook page were also captured as members of the Association. 9 new members since June 2023 Off Task – 3 notified. 'Jacko' Jackson 	<p>JK to liaise with RH for FB page applicants.</p> <p>JK to identify members whose details were incorrect</p>

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			Jock Wingate Ron Powers	
5	Treasurer (NC)	Treasurer Report	AS delivered overview of accounts as Treasurer (NC) was travelling and caught in traffic. Accounts approved - Dick Gould (P) / Bob Hall (S)	
6	Facebook Coord (RH)	FB Update	RH stated the Assoc FB page had 484 members. The page was active with many interesting and detailed historical contributions by PW as well as ad hoc posts and pictures by other members which often generate lively responses and help to drive the overall aims of the Assoc by fostering fellowship amongst the membership. Attendees discussed the overall communication strategy of the Association and the relationship between the FB page and website. A straw poll was held which overwhelmingly identified that members would like to see the website improved.	
7	Chairman (AS)	Committee Appointments	AS advised he was retiring as Chairman. Sole volunteer for the post was Chris Birks. AS thanked the membership for being hugely supportive during his tenure as Chairman, as well as committee members through the years. He also made a point that the Association was run by a volunteer committee and requested that members should assist with the day to day running of the Association by volunteering when necessary eg visiting prospective event venues or suggestions for improvements. Chris Birks was proposed as 201 Sqn Association Chairman with acclamation. Unanimously approved Sir Geoffrey Rowland (P) / Rosie Hall (S). Andy Stewart handed over Chairmanship of 201 Sqn Association to Chris Birks and wished him luck.	
7a	Chairman (CB)	Valedictory for outgoing Chairman	The outstanding contribution of Andrew Stewart to the 201 Sqn Association over 25 years was outlined by the new Chairman Chris Birks. His exemplary leadership, energy and vision was key to keeping the spirit of the Sqn alive through the Association, especially during the years from 2011 when it was inactive. He also nurtured and maintained the links with Guernsey, so that when the Sqn was reformed, the official connections were quickly re-established. Andrew was an outstanding and much-loved leader during his RAF career, and this followed through to his Chairmanship of the Association. He was a true gentleman, who had never sought self-recognition for his achievements. Thanks were also offered to Margaret Stewart, who had always been a strong advocate and supporter both of the Association and Sqn. Andrew Roberts also paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman, saying that he was a very tough act to follow. In recognition of his esteemed service to the Association, Chris Birks invited an attendee to propose Andy Stewart as Honorary Vice President. Min Larkin (P) / Ivor Gibbs (S) – the appointment was approved unanimously	
8	Chairman (CB)	Future Direction	CB outlined how the Association belonged to the members and that he intended to lead it in the same manner as AS. The aim is to make the Association an organisation that people are keen to join and engage with on a regular basis. CB stated that he had a	

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			<p>number of ideas but opened it to the floor to make other suggestions. OC201 (Wg Cdr Ads Smolak) suggested that as the Sqn had recently stood up as a front-line unit, this was the ideal time to develop and re-invigorate the links between the Sqn and Association. CB offered to attend the Sqn and deliver a presentation about Sqn history and ethos of the Association. RH asked OC201 if it was possible to establish a post of Association Liaison Officer. OC201 stated that this had already been done – Flt Lt Dave Miles was the new incumbent. Phill Basey suggested that the Association membership was currently missing a whole generation and asked how this gap could be closed and how the Association could engage with this generation. Jane Basey suggested that social events involving Association members, former 201 Sqn people (non-Association members) and current Sqn members could be organised (outside formal Association reunions) to encourage fellowship and engagement. Attendees discussed various issues around identifying members who had not updated their contact details as well as reaching out to those who had been on the Sqn but failed to consider joining the Association for whatever reason. Adverts to capture former Sqn members or ‘lost track’ Association members could be considered eg RAF News and other maritime fellowship organisations. CB summarised the discussions and suggestions and stated that an Association communication strategy was required. Volunteers were requested to help form a sub-committee and produce a strategy Dick Gould volunteered to assist with the website *Action*</p>	<p>CB to create a subcommittee to develop an Association Communications Strategy tying in elements of FB, website and other potential channels.</p>
9	Chairman (CB)	Reunions	<p>CB discussed the geographical challenges of organising reunions and ensuring that all members had an equal opportunity to attend them if they chose. He proposed that future annual events should rotate around three regions, namely Guernsey, Lossiemouth (Moray) and Central England. For the next reunion (2024), CB stated that as it was 201 Sqn’s 110th Anniversary (1914) as well as the 85th Anniversary (1939) of the Sqn’s link with the island of Guernsey, he proposed that Guernsey would be the most appropriate location. Sir Geoffrey Rowland provided an update about the fundraising effort which had been ongoing in Guernsey to support the Sqn’s attendance in Sept 2024 (Battle of Britain Day) to exercise the Privilege of Guernsey, and 2024 was the 30th anniversary of the award of the Privilege to 201 Sqn. Sir Geoffrey suggested that an Association reunion in Guernsey over the Liberation Day (May 9th 2024) celebrations, would be the most appropriate period to deconflict from the attendance of the Sqn in September. Attendees discussed the confictions between other maritime Associations for events in May; however, a show of hands indicated majority support from attendees for a Guernsey reunion in that month. Other suggestions for future reunions included the Queen’s Hotel in Bournemouth which had hosted the 203 Sqn Association and the RAF Club in London.</p>	<p>CB/JK to produce and circulate a letter and survey to members with options and preferences for the next reunion.</p>

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10	Chairman (CB)	AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CB advised that the Morayvia museum at Kinloss had acquired a Shackleton aircraft to display, and they intended to name it after AVM George Chesworth 'Uncle George'. • Phill Basey enquired about the possibility of the Association having complementary products for ladies alongside the ties for gentlemen which are already available. Suggestions for products included scarves and brooches. • In Aug 2023, a P8A Poseidon captained by OC201, Wg Cdr Adam Smolak, released the ashes of former 201Sqn member Wg Cdr Jeff Baker over the Moray Firth, according to his wishes. Mrs Sheena Baker attended RAF Lossiemouth to watch the P8 get airborne. • CB wanted the AGM minutes to reflect that Sheena had very generously funded the procurement of 201 Sqn Association ties, as a gesture of gratitude to the Association for helping to facilitate the flight to release Jeff's ashes over the Moray Firth. Additionally, since the 2023 AGM, Sheena has also funded the procurement of Association ladies neck scarves, and this generosity is also reflected in these minutes. • Suggestion that future events should be a joint Association / Sqn occasion 	<p>Phill and Jane Basey offered to form a sub-committee with Dorothy Birks and Sqn reps, to research and procure suitable products for ladies to complement ties.</p> <p>CB to discuss with OC201</p>