

**Minutes of the 201 Squadron 'Guernsey's Own' Association
Committee Meeting Held 8th April 2024
At The Railway House, Nairn/Zoom**

Present:	Chris Birks	CB	Chairman
	Neil Campbell	NC	Treasurer
	Dick Gould	DG	IT Rep (Zoom)
	Rosie Hall	RH	FB Rep (Zoom)
	Justin Morris	JM	201 Sqn
	Paul Warrener	PW	Historian
	Joe Kennedy	JK	Secretary (Zoom)

Introduction

1. CB thanked all for attending and stated the main aim of the meeting was to discuss the refreshed Association Charter and update on the upcoming reunion in Guernsey.

Apologies

2. Flt Lt Dave Miles and Sgt Kerri Madle-Simpson (201 Sqn LOs) sent their apologies as they were unable to attend for operational reasons.

Notes of Last Meeting

3. The Notes of the last Meeting held on the 29th January 2024 were approved.

Actions Arising

4. CB proposed that actions from the previous meeting would be covered under agenda items for this meeting and this was approved.

Finance

5. NC reported that the Association account currently stood at £3,500. Association ties retail at £20 and it is anticipated that the new ladies' scarves will be a comparable price point. NC stated that he and JK would be liaising in the near future to confirm numbers of new members and fees paid to ensure a statement of accounts was available for the AGM. CB asked about progress on the action to include CB and JK as signatories to the Association account. NC stated that no progress had been made so far with Bank of Scotland. CB advised that a similar request for a different charitable organisation was expedited smoothly and swiftly, and he offered to assist NC with this task.

ACTION: NC and CB to consult with BoS to expedite the addition of signatories onto the Association accounts.

ACTION: NC to ensure a statement of accounts was available to report at the AGM.

Charter

6. CB updated on the Charter refresh. After a number of attempts to amend the existing Charter, it was decided a complete re-write was required, and a draft had been completed and circulated to the committee. The draft was amended slightly to reflect comments made by committee members, particularly around the Association membership criteria and widening the scope to include relatives eg grandchildren of former Sqn members. The Charter also outlined that the Aim of the Association was for members to meet and retain contact with each other. It also clarified that the Association should be the focal point for any 201 Sqn related activity or communication if the active Sqn should be disbanded in the future. Additionally, the Charter clarified the committee core officials who should be proposed and voted in by Associated members but added the flexibility for the committee to propose and ratify volunteers to other non-core roles as required. The new Charter version was approved for consideration and ratification by the Association membership at the AGM.

ACTION: DG to add the new Charter onto the Association website.

Squadron Liaison

7. CB stated that OC201 had invited him to an informal lunch at the Officers Mess, RAF Lossiemouth on 11th April, together with a number of Association members. Wills Metcalfe and Shane Crawford were able to attend, and PW was also invited. In the absence of the Sqn LOs who were on detachment, JM was facilitating the visit.
8. CB asked JM about the Sqn representation in Guernsey for the Liberation Day celebrations. JM would speak to the newly appointed GLO, Flt Lt Alex Connor and request he consult with CB to outline numbers attending, accommodation and itinerary.

Facebook

9. RH said that the admin of the page was working well, and she was consulting with JK regularly to ascertain the Association membership status of new applicants.

Reunion

10. CB updated that, to date, there are 39 Association members plus partners (non-Guernsey residents) attending, and of these, 37 are staying at the St Pierre Park Hotel. As well as the current and two former Bailiffs, there are a number of RAFA members attending the reception. Currently 58 people are expected at the reception, or 68 if the Sqn members arrive in time. For the dinner, 59 people are expected, or 69 if the Sqn also attends.
11. CB also reported that additional events had been offered to Association members who were arriving on or before the 7th May. CB had been consulting with the 201 Sqn Museum on Guernsey as Sheena Baker wished to donate her late husband's logbook and other items to the Museum following his final flight in a P8 Poseidon in July 2023. The Museum has agreed to open early on the 8th May to facilitate this presentation and for Association members to attend if desired.

12. CB updated on the formal events on the 9th May i.e. Liberation Day Church service, AGM and dinner.
13. CB updated on the reunion financial element and outlined that the Lt Governor was hosting a Reception on the evening of the 8th May, which would constitute the reunion Meet & Greet. The hotel is charging £460 for a banqueting room for the dinner but are providing a room for the AGM at no cost. Transport has been arranged (43-seater bus) to take members to and from the hotel (SPP) to the reception on 8th May and the Church Service on 9th May. The negotiated price for transport is £583 – currently it is expected that 39 people will use the bus service equating to a per head cost of £15. Total admin charges for Association members resident at the SPP and using the arranged transport will be £25 per head to be paid in advance of the reunion. CB to consult with NC to arrange this. Additional costs have been incurred for the framing of a picture of a flight of 201 Sqn Southampton aircraft. This picture was drawn and donated by PW and will be presented to the Lt Governor. The picture and frame had also been embellished with an information plaque in sterling silver. Total costs for the framing and silver plaque were £197.50 and CB suggested that this should be taken out of the Association accounts. CB stated that the current Bailiff was attending the dinner, and it was thought appropriate to gift him an Association tie and a bottle of Sqn whisky. As it was unknown what the Sqn's plans were for the visit, JM offered to speak to the GLO and report back.

ACTION: JM to speak to 201 Sqn GLO about Sqn gifts to Guernsey and report back to CB.

14. CB showed committee members the first example of the Association ladies' scarf which had been researched and procured to complement the Association ties. The cost of the scarves has been generously gifted by Sheena Baker as a gesture of thanks to the Sqn and Association for the scattering of Jeff Baker's ashes over the Moray Firth from a Poseidon aircraft flown by 201 Sqn. Sheena's wishes were for this scarf to be presented to Sarah Utting, wife of the current Sqn WO, MACR Mark Utting, who had facilitated the ashes drop. CB requested that JM give the scarf to MACR Utting for his wife.

ACTION: CB and NC to arrange payment of reunion admin charge by Association attendees prior to the reunion.

15. Discussion about name badges for reunion attendees was inconclusive. CB will advise in final reunion update that members may wish to wear a badge at their own discretion, otherwise the place names around the dining tables would suffice, together with a final list of attendees provided with the final letter.

Website

16. CB thanked DG for all his work to rejuvenate the website. DG reported that there had been recent problem with the website when it had been inundated with about 800 spurious requests to register by a bot. That had now been resolved but there appeared to have been other problems with website access. DG was collaborating with the webmaster to fix this issue. DG expected that the website would be fully operational in the near future.. CB asked about the merchandise, and DG stated that this facility was up and running and a few items had already been purchased.

17. RH outlined that the Facebook page was becoming more active with most historical content submitted by PW, but new Association members whose relatives had been wartime Sqn members were also contributing interesting and relevant material.

HISTORY

18. PW stated that the historical input was running smoothly, and he had recently gained access to old line books from which he was able to extract material for the Facebook page. CB thanked PW for all his continuing work.

AOB

19. CB updated the committee on recent passing of two Sqn and Nimrod people which had been notified to the Association. He was going to send condolences to the families of both Flt Lt Andrew Gill (Gilly) and former AEO George Woodhouse.
20. CB mentioned the 2024 AGM and requested that the minutes (when completed and approved) be placed on the website and notified to the membership.

ACTION: JK to complete the minutes and forward to CB for review. When approved, DG to publish them on the website.

Date of Next Meeting

21. Post AGM, there would be a committee meeting to conduct a reunion debrief (Date /time TBN). The next annual reunion is planned for October 2025 in the Lossiemouth area, and this would be discussed at the AGM to establish members preferences for potential dates and accommodation.