

AIRSHIP HERITAGE TRUST

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD REMOTELY ON TEAMS SATURDAY, 17 June 2023 AT 2:00 PM

The Chairman welcomed members joining the annual general meeting and informed them that the meeting would be recorded.

The Chairman welcomed Paul Ross, President of the Airship Heritage Trust and asked him to open the meeting.

The President welcomed members from near and far and thanked all the trustees for all the hard work they had done in the last year, he then handed over to the Chairman to begin the business of the day.

Item 1: Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from John Baker, Francisco Gonzalez Ronaldo, Pam Millis, Paul Macey, Ken Everett, Barry Walker, Jimmy Royer, Stephan Neimeyer and Peter Davison.

Item 2: Approve the Minutes of the 2022 AGM

It was proposed by Martin Penn that the minutes be approved as a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by Chis Angell and the minutes were accepted by consensus.

3. Receive the Chairman's report

The Chairman thanked all for joining the Annual General Meeting and hoped it wasn't too difficult to log in. He then reminded those members who had joined that we will be recording the AGM and that the talk to be given by long time AHT member and supporter Terry Heyward would instead be presented and read by AHT vice-Chairman, Brian Harrison, as Terry was unable to join us today.

To commence the meeting, the Chairman introduced the Trust's President, Paul Ross. Paul, as some of you would have been aware, had kindly accepted the position of President in August 2022. Paul has been a longstanding and hardworking member, and former Chairman of the Trust, and is welcome to this meeting.

The Chairman noted that as we entered 2022, we were still living with the effects, regulations and restrictions of the covid-19 pandemic. The new year celebrations were cancelled in London, and we still had the wearing of

facemasks in schools and on public transport. It wasn't until March that we were finally free of restrictions. So how did that affect us, he asked?

He was pleased to say that your trustees were able to regularly meet virtually and keep things going and adapting to the ever-changing rules of that year. Remember how difficult it was? Some people found it easy, such as Boris Johnson.

One long planned event was the partnership with the Bedford Creative Arts team, along with the Higgins Museum, and saw the opening of the "*Airship Dreams: Escaping Gravity*" event which finally drew to a close at the end of March. Along with an excellent story, and items on display, the centrepiece of this was a very accurate and realistic re-creation of Den Burchmore's "collection and study". It was so accurate a recreation that the Chairman could hardly tell the difference from his many visits to this amazing collection. He was pleased to say that the feedback from the event was very good and that we built up extremely good relationships with the Higgins Museum. The Chairman then thanked everyone involved in these events as it was quite an achievement to put on and arrange during the pandemic.

In March he was invited to attend a Community Curatorial event to show some airship artefacts and share stories with a selection of members of the local community about their connections with airships, hosted by Lydia Saul, Keeper of Social History at the Higgins.

As you know, the AHT has been pretty much "homeless" since 2006 and running on the good grace of its Trustees and friends to hold materials in their various lofts. Thankfully Roger Allton took on the task of finding a suitable and economical space for storage and research. In March, he was able to secure an excellent office for research and digitisation, along with storage of AHT items. As you would have seen in the latest newsletters, it's available for visits and even small meetings.

The Chairman thanked Roger for his time and effort in setting up and managing the office, and Andy Millington for taking days off in helping him with the cataloguing and serialisation system that was put in place for tracking the research books and collection. The library and collection are looking really good, and Roger is doing a fantastic job with scanning and cataloguing items. More items are being donated by members families and if you are in the area, pleased do pop in and see Roger at the office.

With our primary objective "*to promote the study of airships and present them to the public*", in May 2022 we added to our YouTube channel. If you haven't seen our video "*How to moor a Rigid Airship*", please do as it's been created after many hours by the artistic talents of new member Stephan Nieyemer along with Roger Allton's excellent historical research. Since going live in May 2022, that one video has been viewed over 18,000 times and generated nearly 800 likes, with 170 comments. This shows the power of

YouTube and online content reaching a wider global and often very much younger audience.

The Chairman then thanked another AHT member, Rod Burgess, who was interviewed and gave an excellent account of his experience with Airship Industries and Skyships.

Over the autumn months, Stephan and the Chairman produced a series of eight “*video podcasts*”. Please do take a look at these as they are short—up to 15 minutes each, but Rod’s stories are completely fascinating, we were able to match with photos and Stephan was able to create some stunning 3D visualisations to go with them. In the Chairman’s opinion, the best story is episode 8, so if you haven’t seen them, please do.

Thanks were also given to longstanding member Kathleen Thurnham for volunteering to be interviewed for an “*Airships Unboxing*” video and to record her story about her uncle William King, and his career on rigid airships. Again, a fascinating personal insight recorded and shared with a wider audience.

September saw the publication of Brian Turpin’s 4 volume series of books on British Naval Airships. For those who don’t know, our member, Brian Turpin has been working on the history of British Naval Airships for some 20 years now. As you would have read, we published these as an initial limited run of 50 editions at a price of £150 plus postage. We are pleased to say that these sold very well, and we only have a few sets left, so if you haven’t got your set, then please do put your order in soon. Brian is working on a 5th Volume to compliment the set.

The Chairman stated that the Trust were able to undertake a number of talks for communities online, and also returned to presenting talks in person. The Trust has therefore performed in a hybrid world to fulfil our objectives of promoting airships to the public.

Finally, the Chairman welcomed new members who had joined the Trust, in 2022 we had 10 new members. The Chairman then personally thanked the other members of the board of Trustees, who are his friends—Roger Allton for his hard work at the office, Martin Penn for managing our legal responsibilities as a Trust and Charity. Brian Harrison for recording, logging, and typing up our meeting minutes, Giles Camplin for keeping production of *Dirigible* going, and Chris Angell with the headache of all our banking and treasurer duties, John Baker and Nigel Hills who met regularly virtually, and continued the work and supported the Trust. He then also thanked our President, Paul Ross for his help, his many words of wisdom, support, guidance and encouragement to the Chairman while also enjoying a pint.

Item 4 - Receive the Report and Accounts for the Trustees.
All were available to download online from the website.

Chris Angell stated that the Trust had a stable financial year, with some £212,591 in funds with a deficit of £12,585, mainly down to the formation of the new office. The accounts had been certified by Collett Hulance, the Trust's accountants and were available on the Trust's website. The accounts were unanimously approved by the membership.

Item 5- Election of Trustees

In accordance with the articles of association, we re-elect 1/3 of the Trustees each year. Those up for election this year were Chris Angell, John Baker, Nigel Hills and Alastair Lawson. All agreed to stand again. This was proposed by Martin Penn and seconded by Roger Allton.

This was carried unanimously.

Item 6- Appoint Collet Hulance as Certified Accountants

Proposer: Roger Allton
Secunder: Martin Penn

That Collett Hulance be appointed as the Reporting Accountants for the coming year was formally approved and carried unanimously.

Item 7 – Transact Any Other business

The Chairman was informed by the membership secretary that no other business had been advised in writing by the due date, but he invited questions from the floor.

Roger Allton informed the AGM that since Brexit there had been some extra bureaucracy to deal with and cost rises, especially postal charges of the journal overseas. The Chairman asked if perhaps we should increase the price of overseas membership to cover this? A figure of £40 was suggested.

Our overseas members who were present stated they were happy to pay more and were aware of postage costs doubling.

It was then put to a vote and agreed by the membership that the new membership fees should be £30 for UK and £40 for Overseas.

Roger Allton then informed the membership that there had been some drop off in numbers but overall, the membership figures were steady. He than thanked Babs and Sarah for their assistance with communications at Flixton.

Item 8 – Closure of meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 14.36 and thanked everyone for their attendance.

BH: 30/6/2023