

AIRSHIP HERITAGE TRUST

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD REMOTELY ON TEAMS SATURDAY, 16 JULY 2022 AT 2:00 PM

The Chairman welcomed members joining the annual general meeting and informed them that the meeting would be recorded and that after the formal AGM there would be a talk given by trustee and membership secretary Roger Allton, on the subject of: *“The development of the construction of the R 100 airship—How Barnes Wallis’ ideas became reality”*

The Chairman reminded attendees that all lines were muted, and when it came to proposing actions and voting, they should please raise their hand or use the reactions icon in the Teams window.

There was now a moment of reflection on the recent passing of a longstanding member and trustee:

Derek Millis had passed away in October last year. Derek had a successful career with Airship Industries and joined the AHT council in January 2004. Derek would be remembered for the successful arrangements of the trips to Friedrichshafen and Allone and for attending and supporting the AHT at talks and events for nearly 20 years. He kindly took on the role of vice-president when he and Pam moved to Storrington to be closer to their children. Derek will be missed by many as a good friend.

Item 1: Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Chris Angell, Paul Ross, Pam Millis and Richard Van Treuren.

Item 2: Approve the Minutes of the 2021 AGM

It was proposed by Roger Allton that the minutes be approved as a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by Anthony Francis and the minutes were accepted by consensus.

3. Receive the Chairman’s report

Chairman Report 2022

The Chairman stated that when looking back at his comments for 2020, he didn’t realise at the time that 2021 would be quite another rollercoaster year. After the 2020 start of the pandemic, on January 6 2021 we entered

our third national lockdown, which was the longest and lasted to 29 March when we could finally “go outside” and the reopening of public buildings began later in April. The general thinking was that we would be returning to normal but by September we were back under “plan B” rules and restrictions in place again.

So how did that affect the Trust? The Chairman 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.

Bedford Creative Arts Event – Airship Dreams Escaping Gravity.

One long planned event was the partnership with the Bedford Creative Arts team and the Higgins Museum, which saw the opening of the “Airship Dreams: Escaping Gravity” event. After much stop, starts and false starts due to the restrictions, in June 2021 it finally opened. The Trust was able to help the Higgins Museum put on a community curated display of airship related items from members in the local area to be shown in the Connections gallery. Along with an excellent story and items on display, the centrepiece of the installation was a very accurate and realistic re-creation of “Den Burchmore’s collection and study”. It was so accurate a recreation that one could hardly tell the difference from the original collection.

There was also an interactive artwork named “Escaping Gravity” situated in the Sir William Harpur gallery. Again, it was something worth viewing as one could be “immersed” in the artwork as if on board the R101.

A small book was also produced for the collection which the Chairman contributed, telling the history of the AHT. It was now available from the Higgins Museum. The installation was dedicated to Den Burchmore, who was the inspiration to the artist Mike Stubbs for the artwork. Feedback from the event was very good and the Trust built up extremely good relationships with the Higgins Museum for the future.

The Chairman thanked everyone involved in the event as it was quite an achievement to put on and arrange during the pandemic.

The artwork is now doing a tour of Britain and is currently in Sheffield. You can also see a 3D visual tour of the curatorial artefacts online with a link on our website.

Talks

The Trust were able to undertake a number of talks for communities online, and special thanks were given to Roger for providing talks to the Royal Aeronautical Society—in person and also online.

The Chairman was also able to give a number of talks to the Colchester Archaeological Group, which should have been in person, but due to restrictions, ended up being held online. The benefit of this was that we were able to stay on much longer than planned—2 hours in fact—and members were able to ask a lot more questions and it even turned into a “show and tell”

event. There were also several follow up meetings with their “airship specialist” and questions from the group. This meant that a hybrid space was created in which to fulfil one of our objectives in promoting airships to the public.

New office

It was decided that due to the number of donations to the Trust, and that for the last 15 years we have been effectively homeless since the closure of the AHT office in Shuttleworth in 2005, some office space was required. The Trust had been running on the good grace and favour of the Trustees to store items in their lofts etc. and were running out of space. This of course has its complications, especially with access. So, it was decided that enough was enough and we needed to find more storage space. Roger Allton took on the task for finding a suitable, economical space for storage and research. Despite many failures and frustrations, we are pleased to say that in March this year he was able to secure an excellent office, research, and digitisation area with storage space for AHT items. As you would have read in the latest newsletter, it's available for visits and small meetings. Please do pay a visit and have a coffee with Roger.

New video channel

With covid restrictions locking everyone down, we had to look at new ways to “promote the study of airships” and present them to the public. With that in mind we have added to our You Tube channel, and more content is on the way. If you haven't seen our latest video, please do as it's been created after many hours of work by the artistic talents of new member Stephan Nieyemer along with Roger Allton's excellent historical interpretations.

The Chairman then thanked Rod Burgess who had been interviewed and would be producing a series of "Skyship Stories" telling of his fascinating time flying Skyships in the 1980s. Please like and subscribe to the channel to be notified of new content.

Despite multiple members of the team getting covid at various times, we got through the year.

Postal covers and making friends

The Trust continues to produce commemorative postal covers, marking key events in UK airship history with the help of Buckingham Covers, who produced covers to mark both the R36 and R38 100th anniversaries.

Building relationships with other organisations holding a common interest, the Trust maintained links with the Yorkshire Air Museum and has also supported the Short Brothers Commemoration Society with a grant

towards reinstating the Hampstead Cemetery graves of Horace and Eustace Short.

British Naval Airships – Brian Turpin

The Chairman was pleased to inform members of the impending 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 and has the final proofs ready for publication. Brian was unable to present them at the AGM, but they have been viewed by the Chairman and deemed excellent. They are a 4-volume hardback, A4 size series, detailing the history of British Naval airships. These are illustrated with over 1,200 photos. We are looking to publish a limited run of 50 editions. More details will follow on how to order your copies.

Finally, the Chairman wished to welcome new members who joined the Trust in 2021. We had a record 22 new joining members.

The Chairman then personally thanked the other members of the board of Trustees, who are also his friends, Roger Allton, Martin Penn, Brian Harrison, Giles Camplin for keeping production of *Dirigible* going, Chris Angell sorting out financial matters, John Baker and Nigel Hills who met regularly virtually, and continued the work of the Trust in very challenging times.

Item 4 - Receive the Report and Accounts for the Trustees.

All were available to download online from the website.

Chris Angell being unable to attend and sending his apologies the report and accounts were summarised by Company Secretary Martin Penn. The accounts had been certified by Collett Hulance, the Trust's accountants and were available on the Trust's website. The Company Secretary pointed out that the Trust was spending more than its income, but this was sustainable in the short term and would be reviewed in the future as costs rose.

Item 5- Election of Trustees

Accordance with the articles of association, we re-elect 1/3 of the Trustees each year. I'm pleased to say that Roger Allton, Martin Penn and Brian Harrison have agreed to stand again. This was proposed by John Baker and seconded by Babs and Sara.

This was carried unanimously.

Item 6- Appoint Collet Hulance as Certified Accountants

Proposer: Brian Harrison

Secunder: Nigel Hills

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.

Anthony Francis stated that the AHT was not the only organization that was running at a loss and many similar charities were also suffering during these times.

Roger Allton informed the meeting that an engine telegraph which could have belonged to the R-100 was located at the Norfolk and Suffolk Aviation Museum at Flixton. A visit to the museum should confirm this.

Item 8 – Closure of meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 2:45 pm and thanked everyone for their attendance.

BH: 20/07/2022