

DEC 1996



656 Squadron Army Air Corps  
9 Regiment Army Air Corps  
Dishforth Air field THIRSK  
North Yorkshire  
YO7 3EZ  
(01748) 874 553  
Catterick Military 4553

656/AAC/36/2(ASSOC)

02 December, 1996

**656 SQUADRON ARMY AIR CORPS - CHRISTMAS WISHES TO ALL OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The end of the year is finally upon us and with it a time to pause and reflect on the past while at the same time looking forward to the future and all the promise that it holds. This past year has been a busy one for the Squadron, the most significant event of course being OP RESOLUTE, the NATO led peace implementation force (IFOR) in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia. Since the Squadron's return in the summer, there has been a chance to reconstitute the Squadron as a single unit, with several exercises in the autumn, including an exercise with 5 Airborne Brigade and a Lynx Flight deployment to Italy, which, sadly the weather did not allow the Italians to reciprocate.

The most recent significant operational development has been the Government's announcement concerning the creation of the Joint Rapid Deployment Force or JRDF, of which 656 Squadron Army Air Corps is the lead aviation Squadron. What this has meant to the Squadron is that several vehicles are packed and ready to go, while members' interest in the news and in particular foreign affairs has been very keen. With each flare up of violence somewhere in the world the possibility of having to deploy as a part of a British response has become very real. These are undoubtedly feelings that many of you have experienced over the years as you watched your country's response to world affairs and indeed became a part of that response.

As well as commanding Squadron's training and operations, the Officer Commanding, Major Steven Marshall continues to place a high priority on improvements to the Squadron lines and the refurbishment and distribution of Squadron property. It is in rehanging and repairing the many pictures, trophies and presentations that this unit's proud history is revisited by the present serving members. In the new year there will be a full Squadron Newsletter announcing the date for a Squadron Open Day, when hopefully many of you will be able to visit the Squadron and see much of your and our history on display.

On behalf of the Officer Commanding and all ranks of 656 Squadron Army Air Corps I would like to wish all of you the very best of holiday seasons and a prosperous and Happy New Year!

JT Braithwaite  
Captain  
210 656 Squadron Army Air Corps

**MINUTES OF THE 656 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,  
16 JUNE 1996.**

1. The meeting opened at 1500 hrs. Those in attendance were:

Capt Maaten-Jones	Temporary Chairman	Mr V Weaver
Mr H C Clark	Treasurer / Membership Secretary	Mr T J Davies
Mr J Bennett		Mr J Hallam
Mr L Rogers		Mr J C Dandy
Mr A Flint		Mr A G Maycroft
Mr R Drummer		Mr P Andrews
Mr L Barker		Mr D R O Walker Secretary

Apologies:

Maj Marshall	Chairman	Mr H Blunden
Capt T Brathwaite	Sqn Liaison Officer	Maj (Retd) F J McMath
Mr N From		Maj (Retd) J Dickson
Lt Col (Retd) R Notage		Mr R Pett

2. Prior to proceeding further, those present were informed of the absence on duty of the Chairman and the need to select a person to take the chair for the meeting to proceed. Capt Maaten-Jones was selected.

3. The meeting then continued with the Secretary reading out details of a report received from the Squadron Liaison Officer, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

4. A copy of the previous minutes was circulated and accepted by those present.

Proposer: Mr H C Clark  
Secoeder: Mr V Weaver

**5. Matters Arising:**

There were no matters arising which are not covered by reports to come or A O B.

**6. Secretary's Report:**

The Secretary indicated that he had received a number of telephone calls in response to the Newsletter distribution, with address list changes these have been passed to the Membership Secretary.

The central location for a hotel reception requested last year by members was investigated and the Chesford Orange Hotel, Warwick recommended. In short, the cost would have ranged from £16.25o / head for dinner, one night £42 / pers inc B&B or £57 with the dinner. Two nights at £30 / pers B&B or £44 / pers with dinner. The combinations needing to be assessed in the time available (16 July) for planning purposes was not possible. Therefore it was decided not to go ahead with this event this year, but to canvas the membership first. Mr Clark then suggested an alternative. See AOB.

The secretary then read out a message of thanks from Mrs Coyle for the Squadron Association's donation to SSAFA in memory of her late husband, the President.

An address change for Col Bradbrook and a possible new recruit, Maj G C Refoy was mentioned. The return of mail from Mr K E Bush's last known address was also noted.

The recently introduced Association Lapel Badges, already had sales of 53 items. 61 members had signed in at the reception area during the weekend.

**7. Treasurer / Membership Secretary's Report:**

There have been 25 new members in 1995, with the loss of 26 members overall since inception. A further eleven members had enrolled over the weekend. The membership now stood at 372.

The following personnel attended the funeral of the late president, Brig Coyle:  
Mr Clark, Capt Maaten-Jones, Maj McMath, Mr W Pears, Mr J Dickson.

Maj Peter Kingston also passed away in April after a number of years suffering with MS. Mr Clark attended the funeral and made a donation from the Association to the MS Society of £25. Mr Roy Hartwell died in the year too, a letter of condolence will be sent to Mrs Hartwell.

**Balance Sheet:**

The Balance Sheet for the past year was presented to the committee and explained in detail by the Treasurer, who thanked Mr Pett in his absence for auditing the same. A copy is attached. The buy out of 656 Sqn stock at £312.89 was to ensure availability during the squadron's absence, of various items. The Balance Sheet was accepted by all those present and agreed.

Proposer: Mr A Maycroft  
Secoeder: Mr L Rogers.

**General:**

Mr Clark mentioned recent knowledge of a 'Malayan / Borneo Association', having formed and stated that membership was available at £6 joining fee and a £2 annual subscription. It was noted that Mr Ray Pett was a member and further details could be obtained from him.

**8. Election of Officers:**

President: A proposal was put forward by Mr Clark and seconded by Mr V Weaver, that Maj McMath be elected as the next President of the Association, due to his close and long association with the Squadron over the years. This was agreed and accepted by all those present.

Vice President: With the election of Maj McMath to President, this left a vacancy at Vice President. Normally it has been practice to nominate the outgoing Sgt Commandeer to this appointment and Mr Clark, unseconded, nominated Lt Col G Coward AAC, to this appointment. It was felt in some quarters that this was not fair or representative of the overall membership whom were open for election. It would also result in only young serving officers holding these appointments, even though they had all given sterling support to the Squadron / Association. A further suggestion, that the number of vacancies be increased, was not generally favoured. Finally it was proposed by Mr L Rogers and Seconded by Mr J Bennett, that Col R M Begbie, late AAC, becomes the fourth Association Vice President. This was accepted and agreed by all present.

Mr J Dandy proposed that the other officers of the committee be re elected in their post. This was seconded by Mr L Rogers and agreed and accepted by all those present.

There followed a vote of thanks from the chair for the committee's endeavours through the past year and the wish that this would continue.

#### 9 Any Other Business:

##### Medals:

Mr Jack Hallam raised the point about the South East Asia medal (WW2) being received by Army personnel whom had served there, but to date R A F personnel had received nothing. A member present (RAF) stated he had obtained his medal recently, but had much difficulty in obtaining proof of his service in the area as many records had been destroyed or simply not kept in those days or Theatres. It would appear that individual applications were necessary to R A F in which, should members wish to pursue this matter further.

##### Squadron Museum, Dishforth:

In response to detail in the last Newsletter members had been invited to visit Dishforth to view the museum at any time, but were refused entry to the airfield camp. They wondered if this was policy, or if the MGS being unaware of the standing invite. The Secretary stated he would take this up with the LO.

Mr A Flint and Mr R Drummer requested that the Association AGM be held at 1100 hrs on the Sunday of any IAS. There was discussion to and fro, and it was agreed this would be so. Also that the AGM would be held in intervening years at any suitable major AAC function being held at Middle Wallop, such as Challenge or Family Days.

This was seconded by Mr J Bennett and fully agreed and accepted by all present.

##### Letter Pages:

Mr Rogers stated he had received only one letter so far in response to his article in last years Newsletter, but felt it was worth continuing with. So come along all you members interested in passing on your war stories, write to Les!

##### Squadron Research:

This continues here at the Museum of Army Flying by Les Rogers and his colleagues, Don Powley, Len Hedgecock and Bill Dick, and a chronicle is being compiled. However there are so many documents and items to wade through to establish the background story, a problem compounded by the inability to remove items from the museum for perusal, that the work could take forever. A discussion took place on the merits of copying over scanning over audio taping the work for further external perusal and it was decided to invest in a small hand held tape recorder to speed up and retain material for processing. A sum upto £50 from the Association Funds was proposed by Mr J Dandy and Seconded by Mr A Flint, being agreed and accepted by all present, to support this venture, with a progress report at the next AGM.

Overall it was felt that anyone with first hand knowledge of any specific areas of campaigns, incidents or operations, might wish to be coopted to one of the investigating teams to steer or assist them, or relate their story in detail to them for recording.

##### Association Dinner:

Further to paragraph 6, Mr Clark informed those attending that he had recently spoken to a colleague whose Association had lunched in a London Hotel for £15 / head, £5 being subsidised by the Association. This had resulted in a good gathering at a modest price and the ability to return home the same evening, from quite reasonable distances, via coach or rail. This it was felt would suit those getting on in years not wishing to remain in town on such an occasion, whilst others may wish to stay in suitable accommodation or Club. To enable the committee to get some idea of preference and possible attendance a questionnaire is attached on which your thoughts on the matter can be expressed. Completed proforma should be returned to myself or Nobby so they can be analysed to gain a core reaction. Thankyou.

10. There being no more business to discuss, the meeting closed at 1603 hrs.

D R O Walker  
Hon Sec.

656 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION.


Statement of Income and Expenditure for Year Ended 31st Dec 1995.

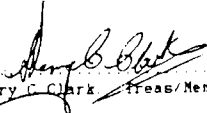
<u>Income.</u>		<u>Expenditure.</u>	
Subscriptions	576.00.	Photocopies	38.36.
Sale: Tie/Plaque	21.50	Postage	301.91.
Donations.	6.00.	Telephone	27.15.
Sale of Inss Cards.	32.00.	PcV Expenses.	17.67.
Interest on Deposit A/C	<u>18.99.</u>	Stationery.	37.60.
Sub Total	654.49.	Squadron Tie/Plaque.	21.75.
		Wreath	15.00.
		Donation (SSAPA)	25.00.
		Reimbursement overpaid subs.	<u>2.00</u>
		Total General Expenditure	486.44
		Excess Income over Expenditure.	<u>168.05</u>
	<u>654.49.</u>		<u>654.49.</u>
.....			
Sales of Squadron Goods	<u>nil.</u>	Sqdn Ties/Plaques/Badges.	312.89.
Goods in Stock.	312.89		
.....			

BALANCE SHEET

<u>Current Assets.</u>	1995	1994
Stock	312.89.	nil
Current A/c	95.36	428.37
Deposit/Reserve A/c	216.99	12.99
	<u>627.24.</u>	<u>441.36</u>
<u>Current Liabilities</u>		
Unpresented Cheques.	27.00.	9.17
	<u>27.00.</u>	<u>9.17</u>
<u>Net Assets</u>	600.24	432.19

The Account books and relevant vouchers have been examined and the Financial Statement of Income and Expenditure give a true and fair view of the Association affairs at 31st Dec 1995.

Signed  .....  
Raymond G Pett. Auditor.

Signed  .....  
Henry C Clark Treas/Membership Sec