



SMSA AGM Minutes 2008

Introduction

The 2008 AGM was held at The Shakespeare Inn Harbury on Monday 8th December. The meeting started at 7:30pm with a brief introduction and the recording of any formal apologies. There were 26 members in attendance and 3 committee members.

Reports

The Chairman's Report by Matthew Bennett (Due to a bereavement Matthew was unable to attend the meeting, in his absence David Hill read out his report)

This will be my last chairman's report and I must start by thanking the key people who have kept the club running over the past year. Thanks to Dave, who despite severe pressures at work has continued to communicate with you all and keeping the membership up to date. Also, my thanks to John who's had the thankless job of keeping us all safe. Outside of the committee, I suspect none of you realise the hassle he has had to endure, but more about that later. I would also like to thank Mark for keeping the books in order and finally Brett, who has ensured the website, has been up to date and topical at all times.

Over the last 2 years there have been some big changes for the association and I suspect there are more to come. This year the committee has once again been involved in discussions with Upton Estates at Edge Hill. I am sure this evening will once again see lots of debate about it and I would urge any of you who are passionate about this subject to stand for a place on the committee, may be as chairman or safety officer.

Talking of Edge Hill, it has once again been challenging and sometimes frustrating. Most of the members who fly there do so without any issues, but a small number either don't want to or aren't able to. Unfortunately as a committee we have had to deal with a small number of instances where the rules have not been followed, either by choice or in error. The owners of Edge Hill, Upton Estates, have been and continue to be very understanding, but that will not continue for much longer. They have always been keen to allow our flying to continue and do not want any form of payment for the use of their land. However, if the issues continue, they will decide to stop our enjoyment. Personally I would be devastated if we lost this great flying site, but we won't if we remember the rules – stay off the crop and conservation areas, keep away from the stables and be courteous to all you meet.

As a committee, we have been committed to keeping the slopes open, and if you could do anything to help, it would be to tell them every time you have been unable to keep to the rules or had any conversation with the riding stables. It will be much easier for the next committee to keep the slopes open if they will be able to contact Upton Estates before they get called.

Outside of Edge Hill, the committee have implemented a new member's induction where every new member is met at the slopes and shown the parking, flying and landing areas. This has and will continue to help ensure that all members fly safely. Thanks to Mark and Dave for their efforts in doing this. Finally, I would once again like to take this opportunity to thank Mark, Dave, John and Brett, without whom, the association would not have functioned. Hopefully, family, work and weather permitting, I will see you all on the slopes in the coming 12 months.

The Secretaries Report by David Hill. Our membership numbers grew once again this year up from 65 in 2006 to 80 in 2007 and now 105 for 2008, with members again from a very wide area of the Midlands area. The increase in membership follows the increase in membership within the BMFA over the last 3 years. BMFA numbers for 2008 were up again at 32,000 members.

This improvement in SMSA membership was in part because of better communications. We said we would we put membership forms on the web site and we did. We said we would have membership forms available on the slopes available from our frequent flying members, to hand out to interested individuals. (Thank you for your help Dave Green & Mike Stanley)

Membership cards for the coming year will have a new design to signify the new year using what I think is a nice silhouette of the Dassett, a smaller version of the heading of these minutes.

The Treasures Report by Mark Freeman. The clubs opening bank balance was £546.82 with expenditure for the year being £905.20 and income of £1,160. The clubs bank balance to be carried in to 2009 will be £801.62.

Discussion was had around zero fees for the year given the clubs bank balance, the meeting agreed that a healthy fund to support any issues the club may face was important. The issue to be discussed again when funds exceed £1,000.

In line with the clubs aims to promote and protect slope soaring, the committee agreed to sponsor Graham Reed one of our club members this year with £50 to support him in his gliding world championship bid. This did prompt some debate on sponsorship and members being able to vote on key topics. The points were well made on both sides and the committee will continue to balance being proactive in the roles you have voted them in to, whilst ensuring the membership still have the ability to have their say.

The Safety Officers Report by John Neal included the following key point; members must report any issues and incidents immediately. Discussions with the Upton House Estate management were again severally hampered through lack of integrity by some members in not owning up to their mistakes.

During the meeting the name of Fred Salvin was mentioned by some individuals with regard some of the issues raised, since the meeting Fred has been in contact and claims not to have been involved in any reportable safety incidents.

The meeting went on to discuss powered gliders, electric, IC, rocket and bungee start. The challenge like all problems was in defining what would and would not be acceptable. Internally combustion power was ruled out straight away. However electric in a controlled way, to gain height in difficult situations was debated. Then there's the bungee and the safety issues it could present to

the public. The topic went to the vote and the membership voted that all forms powered flight were banned.

The Web Site Administrators Report, by Brett Sirrell. Brett was unable to join the AGM due to illness and work commitments however David passed on the following message.

The web site continues to be very popular, with the weather page receiving the most hits. Brett welcomes all contributions so as to keep the site fresh and up to date with what's happening on the slope. Almost everybody today has a digital camera and many of us probably have camera with video capabilities on our mobile phones. With this in mind all are asked to take photos from the slopes or new models and email them to him. Alternatively if you don't have photos maybe email me if you find an interesting link or relevant You Tube video and I will add it to the site.

Subscription Fees

BMFA Membership for 2009 was held at £28 for Seniors. The SMSA AGM agreed to hold membership at £5 for 2009.

Club Constitution revisions and updates

The meeting supported the updates and changes to the clubs constitution. Including the proposal that "New members who apply from October 1st each year get membership for 15 months rather than just 3 months". This being off set by not giving reduced fees to those who want to join from January through September. The revised constitution will be available on the web site early in the new year.

Election of Officers

All committee members stood down at the AGM as required by the constitution. The meeting asked if anyone wished to stand for a position on the committee.

Nick Heart –	Was elected as new Chairman
Dave Hill –	Was re-elected as Secretary
Mark Freeman –	Was re-elected as Treasure
Brett Sirrell –	Was re-elected as lead on Web Communications
Tom Satinet -	Was elected in the absence of any other nominations.

(Tom had put himself forward prior to the meeting and was unable to attend on the night. Tom brings to the role a broad level of experience and is a keen frequent flyer.)

Next AGM

The meeting concluded with coffee and traditional mince-pies after agreeing to Monday December 7th 2009 as being the date for next years AGM.



Happy Christmas and a safe flying New Year from your committee.