



1996 Annual General Meeting of the BHPA

Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 8 December 1996 at the Telford Exhibition Centre, Telford, commencing at 11.00am.

These minutes are not to be taken as a true record without referring to the minutes of the Executive Council meeting at which they were approved.

Present:

Marc Asquith
John Clarke
Chris Jones
Dick Long
Walter Neumark
Angus Pinkerton
Merv Turner
Mark Woodhams

In attendance:

Tom Beardsley
Jennie Burdett
Mark Dale
Clive Robinson
Joe Schofield
Dave Thompson
Ann Welch

67 Voting members
of the Association

The Chairman welcomed everyone and said that as usual there would be two parts to the meeting, the first part being the formal business of BHPA Limited and the second part being Officers' reports and questions from the floor.

ITEM 1: MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Copies of the minutes of the 1995 AGM, held on 10 December at Telford, were available for members.

ITEM 2: CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman's written report (copy attached) to the AGM was included in the AGM folder with reports from other officers.

ITEM 3: TREASURER'S REPORT

Dick Long reported that following a resolution to the dispute with the Inland Revenue over Airsports Insurance Bureau, there had been a change to the accounts printed in the November issue of Skywings. The tax exemption for Airsports had been withdrawn and tax would now have to be paid. Therefore, £31,000 had been transferred from Airsports to BHPA and a note to this effect was shown in the accounts. The result of all this was that Airsports was now able to trade with non-members as it no longer had a mutual trading tax exemption.

Dick also said that the position following the reorganisation of the Sports Council was not yet clear and it was possible that BHPA could lose its grant.

ITEM 4: RESOLUTIONS

4.1 That the Accounts and Report of the Executive Council for the year ended 31 March 1996 be approved.

The Accounts were presented to the meeting and the resolution was approved.

4.2 That the following members be elected to the Executive Council: M Asquith, H Blackshaw, J Harrison, C Jones, A Pinkerton.

All five candidates were elected.

4.3 That Ernst & Young be reappointed as auditors and the Executive Council be authorised to fix their remuneration.

The resolution was approved.

The Chairman said that the formal part of the meeting required by the Companies Act was now concluded.

ITEM 5: REPORTS

5.1 President's Address

Ann Welch addressed the meeting and said that through articles in Skywings she had been reminded just how far hang gliding had advanced in 25 years. This had been faster than in any other air sport and Ann suggested that this progress now needed to be watched very carefully. Ann went on to speak of environmental issues including the use of solar energy and how well birds and hang gliders get on. Ann felt that efforts should be made to get articles published in other magazines to show that our sport was environmentally friendly.

Regarding the Wings Over A Cloud Award for the best article in Skywings, Ann said that although she thought it would take a few hours to choose a winner, it had in fact taken several days as the articles were so good. It had been a difficult decision but Ann finally chose Bill Williamson's article "Fan gu ard ag i teallach an Alba", though assistance was sought from Dick Long in actually pronouncing the title!

Ann then thanked the BHPA Chairman, Marc Asquith, for all his hard work during the year.

The following trophies were then presented:

British Paragliding Cup

Dave Snowden

Apco Aviation XC Cup

Peter Nelson

British Paragliding Nationals Best Newcomer Trophy

Innes Powell

The President's Trophy

Walter Neumark for services to the sport.

The Hang Gliding XC Individual Trophy

Chris Ashman

The Hang Gliding XC Club Trophy

Notts Aerotow Club

The Ralph Bygot Trophy

Chris Ashman

The Dave Loxley Trophy

Edmund Potter

The Alvin Russell Trophy

Gordon Rigg

The Hang Gliding Winter XC Individual Trophy

Stuart Reid

The Hang Gliding Winter XC Club Trophy

Lanarkshire & Lothian Soaring Club

FAI Awards

Ian Lewis - Silver Badge

Robbie Whittall - Diamond Badge

Kat Thurston - 3 World Record Certificates plus Gold and Diamond Badges.

Richard & Guy Westgate - 2 World Record Certificate.

5.2 FSC Report

Angus Pinkerton, Chairman FSC, presented his written report, copy attached. Angus drew attention to the taking on of two new members of the technical staff during the year. He then introduced Dave Thompson, who would be out and about and Clive Robinson who was now the technical man based at the office.

Angus then went on to say how upset he had felt at the recent fatality which had been a mid-air collision and therefore avoidable. He asked pilots to make sure that their reserve parachutes were going to work if needed and said he hoped to be able to report to next year's AGM that there had been no further fatal accidents.

5.3 Insurance Marc Asquith's written report is attached.

5.4 Skywings

Mark Woodham's written report is attached. Mark thanked the Skywings team - Joe Schofield, Colin Fargher, Newman Thompson and Page Fast - for all their hard work. He also thanked Dan Petty and Falmouth College of Art for work on the BHPA web site.

Mark reminded members to keep sending their contributions to Skywings, which he felt was the number one hang gliding and paragliding magazine in the world.

Michel Carnet asked Mark what effect Sports in the Sky magazine was having on advertising in Skywings. Mark replied that there was not a problem as Skywings was aimed at people who were already in the sport and Sports in the Sky was for those who had not yet tried it. Mark said this worked very well and although he was obviously disappointed that it was not Skywings on the newsstands, Sports in the Sky was getting to the people who we had hoped to reach and he felt that the magazine would benefit the whole flying fraternity.

Michel then suggested that the BHPA should have a large ad in Sports in the Sky every month as some people looked at the FFP ad and thought that they were the governing body of hang gliding and paragliding. Marc Asquith said he and Simon Todd were working on this.

Mark Woodhams was then asked by a member if there could be some way to distinguish paragliding articles from hang gliding articles. Pilots would not then start to read articles which turned out to be about hang gliders when they only flew paragliders, or vice versa. Bill Morris spoke against this request and said that the articles were of interest whatever glider you flew and there should definitely be no segregation.

5.5 Admin

Andrew Wakelin's written report is attached.

5.6 Clubs/Sites

John Clarke's written report is attached. John said that there were problems with the National Trust in that they were very regional so that if you local agent did not like you there was little chance of getting on their sites. John was therefore going to approach the National Trust at national level but stressed that clubs would be consulted before any agreements were made.

Michel Carnet said that in the last year the BGA had been very successful in getting money for their clubs to get sites etc. and asked if BHPA were doing anything similar. John replied that Tom Beardsley was working on a fact sheet of places to approach for funding and this would be available from the office shortly.

5.7 Club Liaison

Chris Jones said he needed information from clubs on what they wanted him to do. He asked members to go back and consult club members then give him some feed back.

5.8 Events

Merv Turner's written report is attached.

ITEM 6: MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Michel Carnet referred to minutes of a recent Exec Meeting where Jim Bowyer had said that BHPA may have enough members already. Michel was informed that Jim had been acting as 'devil's advocate' on that occasion and that it was not the general view of the Exec.

Pete Douglas asked if there was any chance of having paragliding/hang gliding at the Olympic Games. Howard Travers said that the FAI had made strong representations to the Olympic Committee but without success. There would therefore be the World Air Games in September 1997 which would be the Olympic equivalent. Noel Whittall added that the Olympics was such a remote possibility that we might as well forget it but there was a chance that speed gliding could get into the Winter Olympics, which would increase our sports visibility.

The Chairman was asked whether BHPA had applied for Lottery or Millennium funds. He replied that BHPA would be seeking funds for the National Centre. Joe Schofield pointed out that North Norfolk had received funding from the Lottery and any club could apply, if they were not sure how to go about it then they could ask North Norfolk how they did it.

In regard to the BHPA loan scheme, Bill Morris asked if there was insurance for non-payment and whether BHPA would sue anyone who defaulted. He felt that there should be a payment protection plan. Dick Long replied that BHPA would pursue repayment by whatever means necessary and if this meant suing a member then that is what would happen. Dick said it was up to the individual members to seek insurance protection, although he felt that this was an un-insurable risk.

Gareth Buckley raised the subject of PPGs, he did not feel BHPA should be involved because of the noise factor which could result in sites being lost. In response Marc Asquith said that Exec felt that the best way forward was to be involved. We did not know whether there would be 10 or 1,000 of them, at the moment there were only 10. The current view of the Exec was that we should be fully involved to keep out the cowboy element. Jolyon Harrison commented that the type of people who buy PPGs are very busy and do not have time to drive for an hour or so then sit on a windy hill all day. He made the point that PPGs do not need hills and are more likely to be used on flat land. Jolyon said he had actually been asked by some farmers to look out for poachers and this had resulted in a poacher being caught.

The discussion PPGs and possible problems continued. It was felt that whether PPGs were within BHPA or not, any bad publicity which they received would inevitably reflect on the sport as a whole. Bertie Kennedy asked how the BHPA planned to control PPGs if anyone could buy one and take off from their own back garden. Marc Asquith said there must be peer pressure to encourage our members to behave properly.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 1pm.