

From: **Squadron Leader Richard Doyle BEng IEng MIMechE**  
Vice Chairman and Secretary

4  
Feb  
20



**Royal Air Force Theatrical Association**

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Registered Charity No 1142

Patrons: Stephen Daldry CBE  
Gillian Plowman  
Ben Humphrey BA ALAM FRSA

"Improving Theatre  
in the Royal Air Force"

To all RAFTA members

**MINUTES OF THE 45<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE THEATRICAL ASSOCIATION HELD AT THE JURY'S INN, GODSTOW ROAD, OXFORD ON 18 JANUARY 2020**

Present	Master Aircrew Rich Bratley Mrs Kirstie Lilleystone Mr Daryl Bennett Mr Michael Caffrey Mrs Karrie Breen Mr Nigel Skull Mrs Gillian Plowman Plus 4 Fellows, 26 Members of the Association Squadron Leader Richard Doyle	Elected Chairman of the meeting Membership Secretary Newsletter Manager Adjudication Coordinator 200 Club Officer External Communications Patron  Vice Chair and Secretary	Chair       Sec
Apologies	Lieutenant Colonel Mitch Wilcox – Treasurer 4 Members passed their apologies		

**Action**

**Item 1 – Welcome**

1. The Vice Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the good attendance.

**Item 2 – Election of the Chairman of the meeting**

2. Due to the passing of the Chairman of RAFTA during the previous 12 months as per the constitution there was a requirement to nominate the Chairman for the meeting. The Vice Chairman proposed that MACR Bratley be the Chairman of the meeting which was seconded By Mr D Bennett.

3. **Decision.** MAcr Bratley was elected unanimously to be the chairman of the meeting.

### **Item 3 – Minutes of the Last Meeting**

4. The minutes of the last AGM were proposed to be accepted by the secretary which was seconded by Mr M Caffrey. They were unanimously accepted by the meeting.

### **Item 4 – Matters arising from the last meeting**

There were no matters arising from the last meeting.

### **Item 5 – Vice Chairman's report**

5. The Vice Chairman began by explaining that last year the OAPF we held with great success at RAF Brize Norton and thanked all involved with the success of that. Then due to the passing of the RAFTA chairman Sqn Ldr Gaz Stevens, in July he described that this had a large impact on RAFTA including the committee. The challenges over this past year have been to get control of the main account of RAFTA in order to ensure open accounting for scrutiny and to enable RAFTA to get past the disagreements of the recent past. His viewpoint was that RAFTA members needed to work together to support one another in a climate of reduction within the RAF and the minimal number of clubs that are still successfully running. Without RAFTA supporting each other RAFTA would not be in a strong position for the future and could "die".

6. The future of RAFTA depended on ensuring that all processes were correct and that RAFTA was financially stable to enable a new Chairman to lead RAFTA into a better future.

### **Item 6 – Treasurer's report**

7. The Chairman covered the treasurer's report due to his apologies.

8. It was reported that an audit was due to be taken; however, the current lack of access to the mandate through Holts Bank, this has not yet occurred.

9. The Chairman stated that upon the vote of a new Chairman one of their priorities would be to gain access to the mandate. There is a prospective new Treasurer however, there will be a gap in the vote for Treasurer as until the account is sorted it is up to the current treasurer to ensure a correct handover. An EGM will be held later in the year once this can occur.

10. It was briefed that the RAFTA account should have approximately £7300 which is an estimated increase of £2666. Approximately £1500 was taken from the One Act Play Festival (OAPF) which gave a £800 profit which was better than the previous year.

**Sec Note: Not Presented at the AGM the balance sheet is at Annex A.**

**RAFTA  
Chairman**

## **Item 7 - Membership Secretary's report**

11. Membership of the Association stood at 369 Life Members, 6 Honorary Members, 3 Patrons and 8 Fellows.

12. In 2019 changes in the membership were 2 new members, 5 were sadly taken from us. RAFTA Clubs stand at 10 Full clubs and 3 affiliated clubs.

## **Item 7 - Adjudication Coordinator's report**

**Adjudication  
Coordinator**

13. From the competition year which was at the end of 2019 there were 14 adjudicators of which 4 adjudicated. 4 Adjudicators have decided to retire.

**Action – Notes of thanks to be penned for RAFTAs thanks.**

14. Of the 10 remaining, there is a realistic number of 7 with W Cdr Mitchell not available for the next 3 years due to an overseas tour. Of note, in 2019 only pantomimes were adjudicated with no plays being put forward.

## **Item 8 – Report on 200 Club**

15. The 200 Club Coordinator thanked everyone who continues to pay, with £620 put towards RAFTA and informed the meeting that 157 numbers were currently owned by RAFTA members. She encouraged RAFTA members to apply for a number to achieve a full 200 Club.

16. It was reported that the 200 Club account had been utilised for main RAFTA funds due to the lack of access on the account and that winners were not being announced due to privacy requirements.

Following a draw, the new owner of number 200 for the next year was announced as Sally Collis.

## **Item 10 - Festival, courses and workshops**

17. **OAPF.**

a. OAPF 2019 was very successful and well attended; and thanks was given to RAF Brize Norton Theatre Club and Station with particular thanks to Pat and Brian Cullum. 6 Clubs entered with 9 plays. 147 people attended the event and there was a real positivity around this success.

b. Thanks, were given to the military personnel who provided the escort around the unit.

c. One Incident in a borrowed accommodation block has meant that for next year's event, accommodation will not be available on the unit.

d. The 40<sup>th</sup> OAPF would be on 22 – 23 May 2020 with Ben Humphrey returning to adjudicate.

18. **Courses and workshops.**

19. It was reported that RAFTA held no courses or workshops last year.

**Item 13 - Election of 2019/20 Trustees and Officers**

20. The Board of Trustees (BoT) and Officers for 2019/20 was to be elected.

21. The structure of the proposed BoT and Officers was presented; no posts were contested. The Committee included Trustees and Officers.

a. As Trustees of the Charity:

- (1) Chairman – Master Aircrew Rich Bratley.
- (2) Vice Chairman – Squadron Leader Richard Doyle.
- (3) Treasurer – Lieutenant Colonel Mitch Wilcox (Until suitable handover point).
- (4) Secretary – Squadron Leader Richard Doyle.
- (5) Membership Secretary – Mrs Kirstie Lilleystone.
- (6) Communication Manager – Mr Nigel Skull.
- (7) Adjudication Coordinator – Mr Michael Caffrey.
- (8) 200 Club Officer – Mrs Karrie Breen.

b. As Officers of the Charity:

- (1) OAPF Co-ordinator – Mr Daryl Bennett.

22. **Decision.** The Committee was proposed by Mrs Alex Stroud and seconded by Mrs Karrie Breen. The 2019/20 BoT and Officers were unanimously elected.

**Item 12 – Committee Objectives**

23. The New Chairman had reflected on the previous year and highlighted the following objectives for the committee:

- a. 40<sup>th</sup> OAPF to be held at RAF Brize Norton.
- b. Review RAFTA Project as a concept.
- c. Modernise digital communications.
- d. Move banks to avoid a repeat of current failings.
- e. Try to continue to be 'More Awesome'.

### Item 13 – Financial Plan

24. In order to fund the objectives, the following announcements were made as part of the financial plan:

- a. Fees and costs to remain at current levels.
- b. Costs are to be minimised for OAPF in order to achieve at least the same profit as the last competition.
- c. Fees as follows:
  - (1) Life membership costs - £25
  - (2) Club membership - £50
  - (3) Additional OAPF Entry - £30
  - (4) OAPF Entry fee (Member) - £12
  - (5) OAPF Entry fee (Non-Member) - £16
- d. Adjudicators fees to remain at current costs.

25. **Decision.** Acceptance of the financial plan was proposed by Wg Cdr Andy Mitchell and seconded by Mr Martin Truss. It was unanimously accepted by the meeting.

### Item 14 – RAFTA Project

26. As per the objectives, it was discussed that the purpose of RAFTA project needed to match the RAFTA line of “promotion of theatre in the RAF”. As per the above the committee would look into the rules around RAFTA Project and report back on options to ensure that this requirement was met.

### Item 15 – Any Other Business

27. **Children at Festivals.** The topic of children’s attendance and performance at festivals was raised by members due to the behaviour and question over appropriateness of judging adults and children in the same competition. The committee took away the requirement to gain council on any adjudication issues with children in plays with GODA. The committee also stated that it would be proposed that 50% of the performers in any of the plays at the OAPF were to be adults as the festival was an adult festival and not designed for children-only entries. A discussion was held on the possibility of a section for children’s groups to enter at an annual competition.

28. **Action.** The committee would look into the costs of fees for children and the possibility of a children’s section in the OAPF this will be based upon the response to invitations around February time.

Chair

Committee

29. The Chairman reiterated that all under 16s are to have a nominated chaperone and that for the next OAPF ushers would be nominated to try to remove any issues around behaviour at the OAPF. Food would be banned from the auditorium and that lessons were learnt following the previous OAPF to help with the next event.

30. The Chairman reiterated that the OAPF needs to be enjoyable for everyone who attends and that safeguards need to be in place.

31. **Questions raised.** Question were raised on the following subjects:

- a. **What is the level of support that clubs require and does RAFTA need to adjust its current ways?** The Chairman agreed that RAFTA is there to support clubs and that if there were any particular needs of a club then they should raise it to the committee to enable any changes to be made.
- b. **Does anyone know the location of the young performers cup?** The membership at the time did not know the location of the young performers cup the Adjudication co-ordinator would need to investigate further.
- c. **It was highlighted to the membership that Cranwell club had recently had an issue with flooding.** The Chairman took note.

#### **Item 15 - Arrangements for 46<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting 2020**

32. **Date.** November 2020 TBC.

33. **Venue.** TBC.

#### **Item 16 - RAFTA Annual Awards**

34. **Fellow Nomination.** The Chairman invited Mr Martin Truss to accept nomination as a Fellow of RAFTA. Mr Truss gladly accepted, thanked the committee for this honour and spoke highly of RAFTA the great things that it had achieved.

35. The following awards were presented:

a. **RAFTA Playwriting Award.**

No entries this year.

b. **The Triplar Trophy for the Best Pantomime Stage Presentation.**

(1) **Runner up.** Halton Amateur Theatrical Society for 'Puss in Boots'.

(2) **Winner.** RAF Brize Norton Theatre Club for 'Puss in Boots'.

c. **The Theatre 101 Trophy for Best Pantomime.**

(1) **Runner up.** RAF Brize Norton Theatre Club for 'Puss in Boots'.

- (2) **Winner.** Halton Amateur Theatrical Society for 'Puss in Boots'.
- d. **12 Month Play festival – Best Play Stage Presentation**
- (1) **Runner up.** Not awarded.
- (2) **Winner.** Not awarded.
- e. **12 Month Play Festival – Best Play**
- (1) Not awarded. Entries this year will be carried forward to next year.
- f. **The RAFTA Premier Trophy.**
- (1) **Runner up.** Henlow Amateur Theatrical Society.
- (2) **Winner.** RAF Brize Norton Theatre Club.
- g. **The Freddie Westcott Award for Endeavour.** Not Awarded.
- h. **The Glynn Leaney Award for Commitment.** Mr Ray Wood. See Annex B for citation.

R Doyle  
Squadron Leader  
RAFTA Secretary

Annexes:

- A. RAFTA Balance Sheet for FY2018/19.  
B. Glynn Leaney Award Citation.

**RAFTA BALANCE SHEET FOR FY 2018/19**

Income Details      2018/19

Description	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	A
Adjudication											

200 Club											
Windfall											
Interest	0.78	0.73	0.74	0.74	0.67	0.68	0.75	0.70	0.91	1.06	
Club Affiliation	50.00							229.00			
Life Membership	1.00		1.00	1.00				1.00			
Annual Membership											
Playwriting Comp											
MacBeth											
One Act Festival									1995.0		
Transfer Investments									0		
Charity Money (process)											
Donations											
	51.78	0.73	1.74	1.74	0.67	0.68	0.75	230.70	1995.9	1	1.06

Expenditure Details

2018/19

Description	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19
Adjudications		98.10			91.80		200.80				
Project 19											
AGM											
Website/Information		50.24									
NFPA Subs											
Float Adjustment											
NFPA Membership											
NFPA Insurance									473.00		
Refunds											
One Act Festival											
Postage, Stationery, Mileage		39.60									
Course 1 (Fight)											
Play Writing Comp.											
Course 2											
RAFTA Social											
200 Club											

	0.00	187.9 4	0.00	0.00	91.80	0.00	200.8 0	0.00	473.00	0.00	0.00
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**Glynn Leaney Award for Commitment** is awarded to an individual who has demonstrated commitment or dedication of the utmost calibre within RAFTA or its Clubs. This could also be under challenging circumstances or as recognition of continual commitment in a particular arena.

The recipient of this year's Award **Ray Wood**.

Mr Ray Wood has been a member of RAFTA for many a long year. Having been involved in Theatre in nearly all of his military postings, he has used his engineering background to tremendous effect with the creation of sound & lights and stage design. As if back stage technical skills were not enough, Ray has also impressed on stage as an actor with a plethora of roles from Pantomime Dame to a dodderly old army major. Always committed, he has brought flair, humour and experience to enhance the team in any given production.

Over the last 20 years, Ray has been instrumental in the development of drama productions at Henlow Theatre. With the demolition of the Henlow Cinema in about 2000, a new venue for drama had to be found which turned out to be the old NAAFI shop. Ray and a team of specialists set about converting a shop into a 100-seater auditorium with stage, bar, foyer, sound & lights, generic set design, changing rooms, toilets, storage and workshop. The enterprise took the team about 18 months to complete and all on a minimal budget. The years passed at Henlow and Ray maintained his energy by leading and tutoring many individuals in the wide array of skills required to put a drama production on stage. He could be found in the technical box showing interested personnel their way around a sound and lighting desk. He was hands-on with the creativity and design required to build sets for any given production. He directed plays and elicited some notable performances from the actors involved. At times Officer In Charge and Chairman, an all-rounder and master of all he purveyed.

More recently, Henlow Amateur Theatrical Society (HATS) was informed that the Station was closing and that the Theatre would also be closing in due course. The membership set about seeking out a new venue from which to operate. Eventually, the New Meppershall Village Hall was chosen and it was planned to have continuous service from HATS membership, now re-branded as HATS Drama Group. Thus, after the final performance at Henlow Theatre in May 2019, it was necessary to set about works to ensure a performance at Meppershall could be achieved in Autumn 2019. Ray Wood headed up the team to ensure that the necessary works could be achieved. Working tirelessly for months, Ray and fellow colleagues were instrumental in moving sound and lights from Henlow and installing them at Meppershall. No mean feat. Along the way, professional electricians were seconded to approve the works that Ray and the others had completed. Rest assured, all the sound and lights were serviceable and the play went ahead. By the way, Ray had to build and design the set for the Autumn production as well.

Next on the agenda will be the creation of a suitable stage arena at Meppershall. Already, Ray has commenced his planning to move scaffolding, wings, curtains, rails and flats from Henlow to enhance the bland Meppershall Stage. Hopeful that works could be suitably in place for the January 2020 Pantomime, Ray has not ceased in his endeavours to provide high quality drama with a professional quality to the set.

In sum, Ray Wood has enhanced drama throughout all aspects of a production, backstage to onstage. His commitment is second to none, his drive is empowering and his camaraderie is engaging.