

MANAGING TRUSTEE'S REPORT FOR THE

GLOUCESTERSHIRE AVIATION COLLECTION AGM - JUNE 2021

1. Thank you very much Tony. I'll now focus Museum operations on a day-to-day basis in the FY 19/20 (to end August 2020), and bring you up to date on some aspects of the last 9 months too.

2. We are in our 8th year operating from the Phase 1 building since we opened in August 2013, and 21 months into use of the still to be completed Phase 2 extension. Although the Museum welcomed more visitors and generated more income than expected in the 6-months from September 2019 to March 2020, the pandemic and HMG COVID 19 Security measures, including lock downs when of course the Museum was closed, has had a devastating effect on footfall.

3. To illustrate the impact, our visitor numbers averaged 24,406 every year since we opened. In FY 18/19, we had 24,924 visitors, compared with 24,887 in the previous year. Footfall in total for FY 19/20 was only 13,501, but 10,912 of these visitors came before the March 2020 lockdown. We were clearly on track to beat the earlier FY totals - but it was not to be. So far this FY, with closure imposed for much of the last 9 months, the figures are well below the achievements of previous years.

4. I personally missed much of 2020 at the Museum, as I was recalled to the RAF to support the Service's mobilisation to assist HMG's response to the pandemic. In my absence, I must pay tribute to the work of the Trustee led Coronavirus Response Team, chaired by Mick Goodband, which initially undertook caretaking duties at the Museum during the first lockdown, but soon became embroiled in regenerating the

Museum so that visitors could return in a COVID Secure way once Lockdown 1 was over. A significant amount of time was spent wading through HMG generated instructions and guidance and then revisiting an increasing amount of updated guidance following HMG policy changes. More effort was required to design COVID Security measures for the Museum including a one-way system, control of entry, NHS Test and Trace data collection, changes to the café and reception and toilet access. All had to be trialled before we reopened to the public, and then modified in the light of experience and changing HMG instructions. This work continues and will probably go on until at least 19 July.

5. Many others have contributed to keeping the Museum going during the pandemic, not only when open to the public, but also on-line. We now have on-line educational tours of the Museum (see the link on website), we have had a series of Zoom talks on aviation and other subjects for volunteers, and of course the Facilities maintenance team, the Engineers' workshop, Collections and Display, Publicity and Marketing, Finance, Volunteer Co-ordination and the Visitor Services team have all continued to beaver away.

6. Volunteer numbers to support Museum opening fell over the last 18 months due COVID shielding and for other reasons. Many volunteers have returned to the fold, but we need many more to allow us to return to pre-pandemic levels of activity. We do have several potential volunteers waiting for induction courses which should restart when we hopefully return to 'normal' after mid-July. But for the time being, the Museum will have to focus on normal opening days. Until we are ready with more duty managers and volunteer guides, formal private group visits will not be

available - but we will do our best to restart these as soon as possible. If you can, please volunteer to become a Duty Manager and encourage as many friends as you can to join us so we can do more sooner!

7. We remain the only visitor attraction in the Gloucester area to achieve a 5-star rating on Trip Advisor, year on year since the Museum opened in 2013. During the pandemic, we have remained the No 2 visitor attraction behind the Cathedral - but of course they do have a 1,000-year head start on us! Recent Trip Advisor and Google reviews have been very complementary of our COVID Security measures and as many of you will know, our 2nd Visit England Visitor Attraction Inspection happen recently. We achieved improved scores in all areas – most notably Customer Service, scoring 95%, and grounds and facilities' appearance and cleanliness scoring 100%!!!!

8. All our hard work has allowed the Museum to survive an incredibly difficult period for everyone. Our survival has been based on the good will and generosity of the public and GAC members and the hard work of all volunteers. Thank you one and all for your continued support.

9. Finally, on a lighter note. Some of you will know that the Cheltenham based band, 'The Strays', recently recorded material at the Museum for their new single with the catchy title 'Cool Your Jets'. The band announced last Sunday that the video had been released on U-Tube. Watch out for a nod to the film Top Gun, the E28/39, a Vulcan cameo, and Meteors plus lots and lots of wing walking – not at JAM I hasten to add!