

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT OWNERS CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Saturday 3rd July 2010
at Beggarlee Wharf, Horsley Woodhouse, Derbyshire
starting at 11.00 am

Committee members present were: Phil Prettyman (Chairman), Matt Beamish (from item 4.3), Richard Booth, Mike Harrison, David Lowe, Iain MacTavish, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Rupert Smedley and Alison Smedley.

Margaret Booth and Clair Butler were in attendance.

1. Apologies

George Boyle, Sue Cawson, David Daines, Richard Frost, Sandra Green, Steve Harmer and Martin Jiggins.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on 23rd May 2010 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

3. Chairman's Report

- 3.1 Phil noted that people who had commented on the Marsworth plans had been sent a letter from BW advising them of revised proposals. Richard reported that the new planning application had been submitted about a week ago but details were not yet publicly available. Richard noted there had been no feedback from the 2 consultation meetings. If the application is along the lines of what was last seen, Phil doesn't think there is anything for the Club to object to. The only concern is people buying the properties complaining, eg about the self pump out, proximity of moored boats to the houses, etc.
- 3.2 Phil has also been receiving information from BW about other projects on historic sites. Other historic sites that are currently being redeveloped include Marple – seems to be quite reasonable, buildings are being preserved (warehouse is listed). Minor issues re location of water point. Burscough (where BW sold the land some time ago, so lost control of what happens on the site); Finsley Gate (old maintenance yard, Phil has seen plans - open space of wharf will be retained, feel of buildings looks good); Wakefield water mill (BW trying to prevent it from being demolished).
- 3.3 Yesterday there was news of a breach at Minworth on the Birmingham & Fazeley caused by vandalism, which has resulted in BW closing several other lock flights on the BCN (Curdworth, Perry Barr, Saltley and Aston). The whole of the long pound above Minworth is almost empty. Stoppage notices have been published for Perry Barr Top Lock to Salford Bridge, Aston Top Lock to Curdworth Bottom Lock and Saltley Top Lock to Saltley Bottom Lock, all closed until further notice.

4. Secretary's Report

- 4.1 Letter from IWA advising of the winding up of Hertfordshire Branch (to which the Club's membership is assigned) and asking which branch we would like to belong to instead. After discussion it was agreed that the Club should request to be assigned to Birmingham, Black Country & Worcester Branch.
- 4.2 Alison reported that the Coventry Easter Gathering plaques were now available. Orders had been taken for 23 including 1 complimentary for Coventry Canal Society. Money taken was therefore 22 x £5 = £110. 25 plaques had been made at a cost of £75 which leaves £35 to cover postage and 2 plaques left over (one for archive and one for display). Some plaques were distributed by hand at Braunston, some given out at committee meeting (and for onward delivery via committee members) leaving 9 to be posted. The idea of a display of club rally plaques fixed on a board was discussed. Richard has some plaques that were donated by Chris Clegg. Richard will work out which ones are missing.

4.3 Stoppage consultation process – second phase of process now out for consultation, along with comments from the first phase. Sue Cawson to be asked to have a look at it to see if the Club should be submitting any comments on this stage.

5. Treasurer's Report

5.1 Matt had circulated a report by email on 2nd July. The cash book balances are as follows:

Current A/c statement balance (Nat West) as at 31/05/2010	£1,082.54
<i>Direct Debit errors</i>	£45.76
<i>Uncleared cheques</i>	£372.63
Savings A/c (Alliance & Leicester) (0.1% interest) as at 01/06/2010	£12,397.96
Total funds at bank	£13,153.63

5.2 Following concern from Clair, Matt arranged for the insured stock cover to be increased with IWA insurance from £525 to £1250 22/5/2010.

5.3 NINF subscription paid 22/5/2010.

5.4 Heritage Afloat Subscription Paid 20/6/2010.

5.5 Some changes to account terms have been issued by Santander (who now have Alliance and Leicester's business) and therefore hold our deposit account. These are unlikely to affect us as our account was opened before a certain date, and there is usually one transaction per year showing the account to not be dormant.

5.6 Phil had spoken to David Blagrove who is on the curatorial committee for *Sculptor* about the top planks in memory of Dave Prior and has agreed the process. The Club has commissioned Peter Boyce to make the set of planks. The Club will then present the planks to *Sculptor*. Wording "In Memory of Dave Prior" to be carved into one of the plaques.

5.7 Matt had spent hours on the phone this week regarding the direct debit errors, with no real resolution offered from Natwest. Attempts to sort this out back in January have obviously failed. Matt will write a letter to be signed by the signatory holders to the branch where the Club's account is held (Aylesbury). Richard offered to go in to the branch in Aylesbury to follow this up. It was suggested that the letter should be copied to Vince Cable MP.

6. Membership Secretary's Report

6.1 David Daines had emailed a report. Total membership currently stands at 440 (compared to 434 at last meeting), including 4 Exchange & 2 Honorary. Of paying members 275 are non SO and 159 are paid by SO. The following new members were approved:

Dave Wright	Lupin	1218
Kevan Manley	Buckingham & Siberia	1600
Daniel Mawdsley	`N/A	1601
Robbie & Sue Barrett	[Cornmill]	1602
Andrew & Linda Kemp	[Sarah Kate]	1603

6.2 David has sent out the renewal invitation letters (115) for the 1st July renewals, as agreed at the last meeting, and has so far (2 July) received 76 renewals leaving 39 outstanding.

6.3 Tim Collier, who sent a letter in January saying why he was resigning from the Club, has now sent in his renewal for 2010!!!

6.4 In his emailed report, David had raised the previously made suggestion that the Club should have a 'register' of members' abilities and specialities. The committee agreed that this is still a good idea and wondered if, in the short term at least, this is something that David could add to the database? It was also suggested that perhaps David could include a request on the renewal letter to start to collect the information.

6.5 There was discussion, following a comment from a member, about the confidentiality aspect of the membership listing. Are members advised that the information they supply will be published to other members in a printed form? (ie when

David sends out the letter welcoming them as members?) Next time we print the membership form we should consider adding something along the lines of “your contact details will be circulated to members for private use only” on the membership form.

7. Newsletter Editor's Report

- 7.1 Val reported that the newsletter (with 4 extra pages as agreed at last meeting) was ready to go the printers on Monday, other than lack of information about the September and November meetings which were discussed.
- 7.2 The venue for the 18th September meeting was agreed as the London Canal Museum (following discussions with Tim Lewis, a trustee at the museum, who has arranged a price of £50 instead of the £90 originally quoted.) There is wheelchair access to the meeting room.
- 7.3 13th November members meeting at Braunston was also discussed, and a phone call to Bob May confirmed that he was able to give an illustrated talk that afternoon. Matt will book Braunston Memorial Hall for that day.
- 7.4 Harry Arnold and Jim Macdonald were suggested as future speakers.

8. Archivist's Report

- 8.1 Richard had received an enquiry from someone trying to find out where *Cleopatra* is? Originally a butty, it was cut down to a 60ft motor boat and last known of in 2000.

9. Website

- 9.1 Ros had circulated figures of number of visitors to the website. Numbers have gone down a bit since the last meeting. Average duration of visits has also gone down from about 10 minutes to 3.5 minutes and average number of pages looked at has gone down from 14 to 7.
- 9.2 Clair suggested having a flyer on the club stand to let people know about the website, although it was noted that the website address is on the membership form.
- 9.3 Ros appealed for photos of historic boats for the website.

10. Club Shop

- 10.1 Clair reported that £1006.87 was taken at the Braunston rally last weekend (lots of Christmas card sales, £440 of books, £25 donations, 2 new members and 2 renewals). £272 was taken at Stoke Bruerne earlier in June. Clair thanked David and Sue Daines for helping out at Stoke Bruerne and Mike, Val and Alison for helping out at Braunston.
- 10.2 Clair will be stocking up on books before the National Festival. To get 33% discount with Belmont Press the books have to be collected (David Daines collected them last time) although Clair and Iain have come to an arrangement with the people from Audlem Mill who can collect the Club's order at the same time as collecting their own.
- 10.3 The requirement for new display boards (agreed a couple of years ago) is now urgent. Agreed that Iain and Clair would investigate and purchase. Alison to send link to one IWA is considering.
- 10.4 IWA National Waterways Festival, Beale Park, August Bank Holiday. Iain and Clair will be there but will need help on the stand. Phil and Ros will be there for some of it, Alison offered to do a stint on the stand each day. Clair to draw up a rota. Discussion about how the tent and stock will get there. Iain and Clair will take some stock, rest will go with Mike and Val. Tent to be collected by Ros and Phil from I&C and they will deliver it to *Skylark* at Cropredy during 2nd week of August.
- 10.5 The old gazebo which is currently still with Mike and Val is broken in about six places. It was agreed to donate it to *Saturn* as they have similar broken gazebo and might be able to make one whole one!
- 10.6 David Daines had emailed a suggestion for a notice board for members to advertise car shuffles, boats wanted, etc, at events. It was felt that this was a good idea and could perhaps be tried out at the national using a white board or

clipboard. Phil has an old clipboard he will bring for this purpose. It was suggested that there could also be a notice board area on the website for the same sort of request.

11. Area Representative Reports

11.1 East Midlands

Mike reported that he has set up a meeting with Sean McGinley about the Chesterfield Canal locks at 10.30 am on Monday 12th July at Stret Lock. Phil will also attend and David Turner will be invited. David Lowe will attend if needed. Phil felt that the Club needs to take the view that this is a serious problem for modern and historic boats, we understand that BW have limited funding, but need to look at the options. Need to try to get agreement for the lock to be drained down early in the winter so that a good look can be had to see what needs to be done. Offer volunteer input to minimize the cost of the repair. Make sure that BW are aware of the bad reputation the canal now has because of the narrow locks. Stret Lock is acknowledged to be the narrowest lock on the system. They will make sure Sean is aware that the Chesterfield Canal Society are planning a rally at Retford in August next year, at which historic boats will be encouraged to attempt to go further up the canal to get more of a feel for how many boats don't fit up Morse and/or Stret locks.

11.2 Kennet & Avon

No report/no area rep (waiting to hear whether Sue has been successful in talking to Julia and Pete Ivermee).

11.3 London

Sandra had emailed Jon Guest twice to ask for more information about the towpath improvements being carried out by Transport for London, and for details of the railings on the River Lee, but he hasn't responded. Sandra has also emailed Kim the moorings lady about the moorings assignability proposal but she hasn't responded either. Sandra will resend emails and then start calling them on the phone.

11.4 Manchester & Pennine

No report in the absence of George Boyle.

11.5 North East

David Lowe reported that water shortages are getting worse, with tight restrictions on the Leeds and Liverpool. There were major problems at Wigan recently but this has been overcome by pumping. Restrictions have been announced on the Rochdale (2 boats a day in each direction over the summit).

11.6 North Wales & Border

Iain reported that the Llangollen is running short of water. There was further discussion on the Hurleston locks issue. Members are to be encouraged to try to get into Hurleston Lock on their way to/from Ellesmere Port next Easter. Iain will write an item for the next newsletter. Ros will talk to Steve Wood about getting a page on the website for people to report places they have got stuck.

Iain reported that John and Sue Yates have been unsuccessful in their bid for Taylors Yard, Chester. No info available yet about who has got it.

11.7 North West

No report.

11.8 South East

No report. The committee felt that it is important to get Jeff Whyatt (BW Waterway Manager) out on a boat. A possibility might be on the forthcoming gravel run of 7 boats including *Themis*, *Callisto*, *Victoria*, *Archimedes* and *Ara*. Steve Harmer and Mike Askin to be contacted about this.

11.9 South Wales & Severn

Richard Frost had reported by email that it had been very quiet in the SW region since the last meeting and he had nothing to report. David Lowe had heard that there were restrictions at Gloucester Lock for non commercial traffic due to water shortages.

11.10 West Midlands

More water shortage issues. Works have not yet started on Chasewater Reservoir, despite it having been drained a while back, as the tenders came in too high and it is being re-tendered. Lichfield Council haven't got the money to pay for the work. Even when repairs are finished it will take 2 to 3 years to fill so water supply is going to be an issue for some time on the BCN.

The vandalism at Minworth that led to a breach (see 3.3 above) was discussed. The committee has two questions that we would like Steve H to raise with BW: 1. Anti vandal locks are fitted to the paddles on these locks, so how did the vandals manage to drain the pound? 2. Why weren't BW alerted sooner to the movement of water, which might have prevented the loss of quite so much water from that pound?

11.11 Central Shires

Rupert reported that the repairs to the Leek Arm Breach have overrun. The canal was re-watered but it leaked, with water coming out under the piling on the offside. The offside has now been re-piled, a liner put in and more clay. A lot of work has also been carried out to Hollinay embankment (the other side of Leek tunnel) where they have relined 300 yards of canal. The canal should be reopening next week. The contractors have had to bear the cost of pipes and pumps through the breach site as the works had over run. 9 million litres a day being pumped from Rudyard to reach the T&M.

Rupert took Waterway Manager Darren Green for a day on *Skylark* from Rugeley to Hopwas, Unfortunately no problems were experienced while he was on board, other than getting stuck in the trees a few times.

Darren Green is keen to do the Ashby Canal on a working boat - David Lowe will contact him.

Skylark pulled *Towcester* through Bridge 13 on the Coventry. Rupert noted that there was a wooden boat sunk at Shadehouse Lock above Fradley, which he thinks is a pleasure boat made out of half a joey. The name on the side was *Fiddlers Dream*.

Phil noted that at a recent WUSIG meeting Vince Moran stated that all towpaths were mown to the edge at least once a year because otherwise trees would start to grow. He was shocked when he was then shown photos of trees growing up on towpath edges on various canals and he agreed that it was unacceptable. Phil asked for any photos of examples of where this is happening to be sent to him.

11.12 Fens Rep

Vacant. Clair suggested Jim Cook as a possibility for Fens Rep. Alison to email him to see if he would be interested.

12. Boating/Navigation Issues

Nothing in addition to above.

13. Any Other Business

13.1 David Daines had received an email from ECOTEC Research and Consulting who have been commissioned by the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities (AINA), sponsored by DEFRA, to undertake research into volunteering and inland waterways, specifically in relation to gathering numbers to gain an insight into the extent and value of volunteering amongst its members. This was discussed, and it was observed that as well as the campaigning carried out by the Club, attending user group and other meetings, monitoring heritage etc, there were also other important aspects

that could be seen as volunteering – the presence of historic boats at waterway events, and also the restoration and maintenance of historic boats which are all being preserved for the future by our members. Phil will contact ECOTEC and will let David Daines know that he is following it up.

- 13.2 Rallies. Agreed that next Easter we would support a gathering at Ellesmere Port. David Lowe had recently been on a Mersey Crossing of 29 boats and suggested that HNBOC should organise something similar after Easter. Easter is very late next year – Easter Sunday is 24th April. From Ellesmere Port boats could do the Mersey crossing perhaps the following weekend (which will be the May Bank Holiday weekend), with a gathering of historic boats in Liverpool. Then up the Leeds and Liverpool Canal with perhaps another gathering at Wigan following weekend. David Lowe will follow this up with IWA's Mike Carter and get the ball rolling. David Lowe will take the lead on behalf of the Club.
- 13.3 Fradley Junction. Michael Fabricant (local MP for the area) recently presented a petition to a local councillor on behalf of local residents and people on narrow boats objecting to the idea of quarrying in the area and also to carrying on the canal. This is apparently because they think the locks are too small and it would be detrimental to tourism. The committee felt that since any quarry traffic would be unlikely to run at weekends or bank hols that these arguments are weak and that the proposed freight should be supported. However, it was not known at this stage where the traffic would be to or from. More info is needed. David Lowe will find out what he can and Phil will talk to Michael Fabricant.
- 13.4 Some discussion about the Google committee list and missing emails. Matt will try to make the list accessible by everyone. Ros will see if this can be done through the website.

15. Dates and Venues of Next Meetings

Saturday 18th September 2010 – 11am at London Canal Museum , 12-13 New Wharf Road, London, N1 9RT.

Saturday 20th November 2010 (not 13th as originally arranged) – Braunston Memorial Hall 10.00 committee meeting with members meeting in the afternoon at 2.30 pm, an illustrated talk by Bob May.

Saturday 8th January 2011 at Tamworth

Saturday 5th March 2011 AGM, Braunston.

The meeting closed at 4.31 pm.

Alison Smedley
Secretary