

**HISTORIC NARROW BOAT OWNERS CLUB**  
**Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2011**  
**at 9 Chandlers Drive, Amington, Tamworth, B77 4NY starting at 11.00 am**

Committee members present were: Phil Prettyman (Chairman), Richard Booth, Sue Cawson, David Daines, Sandra Green, Steve Harmer, Mike Harrison, David Lowe, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Viv Scragg, Alison Smedley and Rupert Smedley.

Margaret Booth, Simon Bamford and Roger Fuller were in attendance.

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Matt Beamish, Jim Cook, Martin Jiggins, Iain MacTavish, George Boyle and from Clair Butler who would have been in attendance.

Richard Frost had sent an email to Phil and Alison resigning from the committee. The committee expressed their regret at this, and it was agreed that Phil should contact Richard to see if he would be happy to continue attending the local user group meetings and reporting by back to the committee by email, at least until such time as another area rep could be found.

**2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

8.2 should be "The Industrial Railway Society" not "Railway and Canal Historical Society".

13.1 Engineering works. Should be "present" not presents

13.7 3rd line – fortune not "fortunate".

13.8 Dudley Canal Trust had in fact won the lottery funding for towpath improvements.

With the above corrections the minutes of the committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2010 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

**3. Chairman's Report**

Phil had attended the BW Annual Meeting at which the Club were thanked for their help during the year in Tony Hales' address.

**4. Secretary's Report**

4.1 Weil's Disease Leaflet – thanks to Sarah Hale for writing and sending out a press release. It appears in Canal Boat February issue and likely to also be in Waterways World. Val had arranged printing of 1000 copies of the card and brought them to the meeting. Distribution via BW user group meetings/area reps was agreed. Val will post some to area reps who weren't present. Robin Smithett (hotel boats) had asked Val if he could use the text for his own use. Val will let him know that it should be credited to HNB OC. David Lowe had arranged a link on the CBOA website.

4.2 Defra announced in December that its grant to British Waterways next year will be £41.5m. This is a reduction of £9.8m (or 19%) from the 2010/11 baseline grant of £51.3m. Whilst this is disappointing it was felt that it could have been a lot worse.

4.3 BW's proposed changes to boat licencing/terms and conditions were discussed. Brian McGuigan had prepared a spreadsheet with comments which had been circulated and which prompted discussion. Comparing like with like there will be £150 increase for a historic working boat which is a significant impact on a few Club members who sell a small quantity of coal. David Lowe reported that CBOA has been in negotiation with BW about this and that all the arguments have been included in discussions. In particular, the proposed operator fee was reduced to £130 for a pair of boats (from £150 per boat) during these negotiations. BW is being told by their legal department that they have to monitor the activities of trading boats. BW claims that operators will be given extra support with the new system, eg authority to stop longer on moorings. Alison will submit a response on behalf of the Club to reflect the above comments as well as the fact that it only affects a small part of our membership. Whilst licence increases are a fact of life, there will be a big impact for some of our members who work commercially and operate on tiny profit margins. If these people give up as a result there will be less variety and less colour on the waterways.

## 5. Treasurer's Report

5.1 Matt had circulated a report by email stating that the cash book balances are as follows:

Current A/c statement balance (Nat West) as at:	30/11/2010*	£3,350.62
Allowance for uncleared cheques		
Expenses and hall hire		£489.75
IWA insurance		£394.38
Shop purchases		£921.27
Newsletter 2010/4		£1,204.86
		<b>£3,010.26</b>
Allowance for Shop credits	Dec-10	91.43
Current A/C balance		£431.79
Savings A/c (Santander) (0.1% interest) as at	01/12/2010*	£12,404.20

**Total funds at bank** **£12,835.99**

\* Bank statements for December not yet received.

- 5.2 The promised increased level of interest on Deposit account has not been delivered and Matt will chase Santander.  
5.3 Errors/Fraud. All outstanding errors have now been reimbursed. No new errors in November.  
5.4 Matt has now started the account preparation for 2009/10.  
5.5 IWA insurance premium for 2011 now paid.  
5.2 Two possible candidates for Treasurer came forward at the November meeting - Laura Sturrock and John Carter.  
5.3 The committee thank Matt for his diligence as Treasurer over the last few years.

## 6. AGM Arrangements

- 6.1 The following posts will be due for election: Treasurer, Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Fens Rep, Kennet & Avon Rep, West Midlands Rep, Boating Issues Co-ordinator and Assistant Archivist. The election for Treasurer will be for one year under Rule 6d. The election for Boating Issues Co-ordinator and Assistant Archivist are for one year only under Rule 6f. All other posts are for 3 years.
- 6.2 Malcolm Braine has agreed to speak after the AGM about "Boats and Boatbuilding around the Black Country". Roger Fuller will ask him if he is happy for it to be videoed and if he is will arrange the videoing equipment. It was agreed to have the AGM, the Awards, then straight into Malcolm's talk (Malcolm to be asked to talk for about an hour) with refreshments (tea/cake) served afterwards.
- 6.3 Phil will contact Jim Macdonald to ask if he would give a talk at the November members meeting, perhaps about boating in unusual places. 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup> November are possible dates for the November members meeting.
- 6.4 There was some discussion about changing the venue for the November and March meetings as with well over 100 people turning out on a regular basis Braunston is getting a bit small. Napton Village Hall had been suggested by David Gunby. Richard will find out details and costs. The Blue Lias at Long Itchington was also suggested, which has a marquee which seats 200 people. Steve Harmer will find out costs and availability for those dates.

## 7. Keay and Hemelryk Awards

There were two nominations for the Keay Award – *Linnet* and *Mimas* and three nominations for the Hemelryk Award – *Stanton*, *Swan* and *Emu*. After going through the scoring criteria the committee agreed that *Mimas* should be awarded the Keay Award and the Hemelryk Award should go to *Swan*. The retrieval of the awards was discussed – Mike Harrison will have a word with Paul Barber. Stewart Shuttleworth is sending the Keay Award to Alison. Alison to contact Mary Gibby (*Swan*) and Chris Collins/Steve (*Mimas*) to ensure they will be at AGM.

## 8. Possible new HNBOC Award

Phil had at a previous meeting proposed that the committee should consider a new Club Award to recognise cargoes carried. After some discussion it was decided not to create a new HNBOC award but to ask IWA if the wording of the Alfred Ritchie Cockerel could be looked at again to put more emphasis on loads carried in the previous 12 months. This is already part of the wording, but could have more emphasis put on it. It was noted that Peter Bolt won't be awards officer next year and it will be worth having a word with the new awards officer when known.

## **9. Easter Gatherings**

- 9.1 Easter 2011 – Ellesmere Port** - Phil and Sue are attending a planning meeting next week. Easter is late so should get plenty of boats. BMS are keen to make it fun and eventful.
- 9.2 Easter 2012** - It was agreed that the Club would organise a boat gathering for Easter 2012. Phil will mention to members at the AGM and ask for suggestions as to location, with a decision to be made after that. Aylesbury, Stourport, Langley Mill, Little Venice, Froghall, Droitwich were all suggested by those present. Of these, Droitwich was felt to be particularly appropriate as the Junction Canal should be open later in 2011.
- 9.3 Easter 2013** - Easter 2013 will mark the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Stoke Bruerne Museum and David Blagrove has suggested an event to commemorate this. It was agreed that the Club would support such an event. Alison will reply to David Blagrove's email to let him know that the Club will support an event and that Phil will be the Club representative on any organising committee.

## **10. Liverpool Boat Show and Mersey Convoys**

David Lowe attended a meeting which discussed logistics. There are 3 convoys across the Mersey planned. There is room for more boats who want to go socially rather than for display. 20 historic narrow boats are booked to go (owners should all have received an email from Mike Carter), with 10 to go on display at each time. Crossings will be subject to weather conditions. The advice of Mike Carter will be taken and the fallback is to travel up the Ship Canal via Manchester (30 hours boating to get to Liverpool). David is arranging for other historic craft to attend (eg Leeds & Liverpool short boat). There will be moorings available, through BW, in the marina, for visiting boats. Boats that leave Liverpool on the 3<sup>rd</sup> will go up the link and congregate at Burscough. Rest of the boats will join them there after the 8<sup>th</sup> May, with a second, more informal gathering at Wigan 14/15<sup>th</sup> May. David had investigated the Liverpool Link logistics with the BW operations man to try to get to the bottom of why it needs 3 men for a particular bridge (apparently it's because the bridge is unreliable). There was a suggestion to get BW personnel out on a working boat while lots are in the area.

## **11. Roger Fuller's book proposal**

Roger Fuller circulated a paper with his initial thoughts on a book about historic narrow boat ownership. The aim would be to give owners or prospective owners a full picture, information and best practice. There was much discussion and additional ideas given. It was agreed that it would be a Club publication with Roger to be "editor in chief". It could possibly be published in parts. Roger to think about structure, think about what bits he wants to do and what bits other people should be asked to do. It is to be entertaining as well as informative, with personal stories and good illustrations. It should appeal to historic boat owners, prospective owners, people just interested or thinking about it. *Saturn* could be case study for wooden boat. A section on boat safety scheme to be written by Rupert. Jim Macdonald to be asked to write about surveys. Cartoons – Sue Yates or Simon Wain to be asked.

## **12. Weaver Collection**

- 12.1** Regarding the storage of the original material, it was agreed that Ellesmere Port Boat Museum is the best place, providing we retain ownership and copyright. Phil will make contact with Peter Collins, Collections Manager Ellesmere Port to progress this.
- 12.2** The idea of a book was discussed. Agreed that it should have about 200 photos of the BCN with good captions. Mike and Val were asked to choose possible photographs and once these were identified a publication team meeting should take place at Mike and Val's house to progress it. Other issues were discussed including the financial implications, format, sheet size, etc. An introduction will need to be written and it could also include the article that Mr Weaver wrote for the newsletter.

### 13. Membership Secretary's Report

- 13.1 As at 6<sup>th</sup> January, 446, including 5 Exchange & 2 Honorary. At time of last meeting 441 inclusive. Of paying members 282 are non SO and 157 are paid by SO. As at 6<sup>th</sup> Jan, there are 64 non SO January renewals yet to be received.
- 13.2 The following new members were approved:
- |                         |         |      |
|-------------------------|---------|------|
| Iain MacTavish          | Plover  | 1616 |
| Judd & Michelle Vedmore | Phobos  | 1617 |
| Mark & Debbie Reynolds  | Carnaby | 1618 |
| Jim Evans               | n/a     | 1619 |
| Nick Barker             | Yeo     | 1620 |
- 13.3 David noted the number of comments he gets on renewals saying “wonderful magazine, thanks to Val” or similar.
- 13.4 David had created the boat and members’ lists as at 1<sup>st</sup> January for distribution to members which he passed to Val for distribution with the newsletter.

### 14. Newsletter Editor's Report

- 14.1 Everyone agreed that the latest bumper newsletter was excellent. Val was disappointed with the photographic reproduction and has had a word with the printer!
- 14.2 Press date for 2011/1 is 9<sup>th</sup> Feb. Val would like to include review of “Conserving Heritage Craft”. This was held over from last issue. Val reminded the newer committee members that she still wants profiles from each of them along with a photograph to go in the magazine.
- 14.3 Stamps are due to rise from 32p to 36p in April so it was agreed that Val should get 2000 2<sup>nd</sup> class stamps.

### 15. Archivist's Report

- 15.1 Richard reported that he has had some feedback from his latest article. In particular he has got to the bottom of the chopping up of *Clypeus* (it was chopped in half to re-bottom it as shed wasn't long enough. Re-bottomed in two halves and put back together as 70ft instead of 71'6”).
- 15.2 *Sculptor* had been taken to Brink low for re-bottoming in wood. Some of the funding has now been lost and certain people are now pushing for it to be re-bottomed in steel. At Ellesmere Port there is sufficient timber for two more boat bottoms unallocated which could be used and replaced in future if necessary. Richard suggested making representations to Stoke Bruerne that as this boat is part of the national historic boat collection it should be kept as authentic as possible. Phil and Sue will have a word with Dave Linney at Ellesmere Port next week about the wood.

### 16. Website

Ros had emailed a report giving website stats for the period 15 Nov 2010 to 2 Jan 2011. Numbers holding up pretty well. 1,929 visits by 1,253 visitors, spending an average of 4:28 mins on site. The top content was: FMC (436 pageviews), Iceboats and tugs (287), British Waterways Carrying Fleet (252) and GUCCC (215). Keyword search terms were: hnboc (146), historic narrowboat owners (58), historic narrowboats (27), narrowboat stoves (19), narrowboat christmas cards (11). Visits were from: UK (1,723), USA (73) Netherlands (17), Australia (14), France (12), Canada (11), Italy (8), Germany (5), Poland (5), New Zealand (5)

### 17. Club Shop

- 17.1 Clair had emailed a report. Cards sales this year total 583. There are 129 packs of cards left (77 Grimsby, 46 Thea and 6 Grindley Brook) so no cards from previous years. At the members meeting at Braunston £1052.20 was taken: £195 cards, £21 Clegg 2 hr maps, £771.33 books, £24 clothing, £12 new member, £29.02 donations, second hand books plus £10 from refreshments. The books sold include 39 FMC, 11 Following the Trade, 8 BCN Through time canal navigations. Sales in December and January including postal sales: £87 packs cards, £213 for Clothing orders, £8.99 Following the trade, £6.99 Jess Carter & the oil boat, £44.95 FMC, £5 + £1 P&P Boaters guide to

boating, £53.94 – 6 copies FMC, £4.99 George & Mary, £3.99 Number Ones, £8.99 Following the trade, £ 9.21 postage for above. One postal order came from a non member who was very impressed with the website. There is enough stock for the AGM as Clair and Iain collected more stock from Belmont just before Christmas.

- 17.2 The committee expressed their appreciation of Clair and Iain's efforts in rejuvenating the Club Shop.
- 17.3 Val had brought possible Christmas card designs which were circulated and voted on accordingly. Val reported that Friends of the Cromford Canal will be happy with one design this year, which means the Club can have 3. The 10,000 print option (ie 750 packs for us and 250 for them) will bring the print cost down to same as last year. It was agreed to go for 3 designs, with the final decision on which designs to use to be left to Val and Clair.

## **18. Boating Issues**

- 18.1 At the November Members' Meeting, Ed Mortimer passed to Richard Booth two copies of Pennine Link from 2005 which contain articles he had written about the width limitations on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. 2011 is the bicentenary of the opening throughout of the Canal, and Ed asked us to consider whether it is a suitable opportunity to start campaigning for something to be done about this. It is also ten years since the reopening. Phil suggested encouraging boats to use the Huddersfield Narrow after the Liverpool/Wigan events to see who gets stuck where. Upper Mill is the first narrow lock.
- 18.2 There was concern about a Restriction Notice put out by BW advising that craft breaking ice should be aware of damage to moored craft. This is worrying as the status quo should be that commercial craft do and can break ice and owners of wooden or fibreglass boats should protect their craft.

## **19. Area Representative Reports**

### **19.1 Manchester & Pennine**

No report in the absence of George Boyle. A planning application for railings on an aqueduct at Hebden Bridge had been brought to the committee's attention. Although the deadline for comments was passed it was agreed that it would still be worth responding and Richard offered to do this if the information was copied to him.

- 19.2 **North East** - David Lowe had nothing further to report.

### **19.3 North Wales & Border**

Iain MacTavish reported by email that the winter stoppage programme includes work on the Northgate staircase locks at Chester. On 29 January BW are arranging an 'Open Day' to interpret this work for the public. HNBOC along with local canal related groups has been invited to attend with displays etc. Iain and Clair attended a similar day at Anderton in November which was interesting and useful in terms of extending the Club's profile. Iain and Clair will be away at this time but the invitation still stands for the Club. Provisionally it was agreed that Sue and/or Ros and Phil may attend and will contact Iain and Clair about the display boards.

- 19.4 **North West** - No report.

- 19.5 **South East** - No report.

- 19.6 **South Wales & Severn** - No report.

### **19.7 West Midlands**

The timber boards being fitted to gates on the Hatton flight (and further down the GU) were discussed. Sue has visited Hatton and taken photos. Steve will go and have a look and will follow up with BW.

### **19.8 Central Shires**

Rupert reported that there was currently an emergency stoppage on the Caldon Canal following a near-breach in November between Bedford St and Planet Lock on the Caldon when developers of a towpath side site dug away at

the towpath foundations. Works have overrun (as with other stoppages in the area) due to the bad weather and it is due to reopen on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January.

### **19.9 East Midlands**

Mike reported that he had not heard anything from Sean McGinley following the meeting about Stret Lock so he emailed him recently to follow it up. Sean replied that BW are definitely going to have stoppage at Stret Lock in March to pump out the chamber and measure it with laser equipment and they would see what happened after that (ie they weren't planning on doing anything else at the same time). It is important that someone from the Club is present to observe. Mike will keep on the case and will let Ros and Phil know the dates.

### **19.10 Fens**

Jim Cook had emailed a report. Rivers Nene, Great Ouse and tributaries – Jim has tried to make contact with EA user forums and/or similar 'unofficial' groups. He has spoken with River supervisor for Upper Nene who is one of the 'good guys' and who has promised some information for Jim.

River Cam - Jim has contacted James Tidy and Amy Tillson, who have recently joined the Camboaters Committee. They are resident at Midsomer Common, Cambridge and are very active in Young Narrowboaters Society. They are both very keen and very articulate and will keep their ears to the ground to provide news and info both for the Cam and the Ouse below St Ives although they have already said that not much happens down there.

Middle Level - Following on from Jim's comment at the last meeting re dredging at Salters Lode, this may well not be happening as The Middle Level Commissioners are in dire financial straits (or so it is alleged). This follows the building of their new offices which are both considerably over time and budget. There has apparently been discussions regarding raising revenue via licences for boats but it was discovered that they had no legal powers to raise funds in this way and it would take a Private Bill (very expensive) to establish suitable legal authority. It was also true that if this happened, the Commissioners would also be expected to provide facilities which they are very opposed to doing as the Commissioners feel that it would be at the expense of their current stakeholders - mainly farmers.

**19.11 Kennet & Avon - No report.**

**19.12 London - Sandra Green had nothing to report.**

### **20. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings not already covered**

20.1 Sue mentioned that a volunteer is required to run the boaters games at the Ellesmere Port Easter Gathering. Roger Fuller was volunteered and agreed to do it!

**21. Any Other Business - there was no other business.**

### **22. Date and Venue of Next Committee Meetings**

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2011 10am committee meeting and 2.30pm AGM, Braunston.

Proposed dates for rest of 2011:

- 14<sup>th</sup> May at Wigan – David Lowe to research possible venues
- 16<sup>th</sup> July – Hazelhurst Cottage, Denford, near Leek
- 17<sup>th</sup> September – Horsley Woodhouse, Derbyshire
- 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup> November at new venue to be agreed (10am with members meeting pm)

The meeting closed at 17.10.

Alison Smedley  
Secretary