

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT OWNERS CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Saturday 19th November 2011
in the Library Room, Braunston Memorial Hall, Braunston
starting at 10.00 am

PRESENT WERE: Phil Prettyman (Chairman), Richard Booth, George Boyle, Sue Cawson, Jim Cook (from item 3.3), David Daines, Rebekah Fuller, Sandra Green, Mike Harrison, Martin Jiggins, Iain MacTavish, Norman Mitchell, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Alison Smedley, Rupert Smedley and Laura Sturrock.

Margaret Booth and Clair Butler were in attendance, along with Sarah Hale (from item 3.3) and Bernard Hales (from item 6.5)

1. Apologies and Welcome

Apologies had been received from Steve Harmer, David Lowe and Viv Scragg.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Item 12.2 should refer to the River Trent not the River Derwent. With this correction, the minutes of the committee meeting held on 17th September 2011 were accepted as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

3. Chairman's Report

3.1 Phil attended BW's Annual Meeting on 13th October. The name for the new waterway charity, the Canal and River Trust, and its logo, had been announced a few days earlier. In terms of funding for the new charity there is clearly a strenuous battle going on with DEFRA. Although it sounds as if some more money might be made available, the pension liabilities will be transferred as otherwise this will set a precedent. The newly appointed National Fundraiser was introduced. They are not looking at a membership scheme but will be looking for corporate sponsorship. At the meeting Phil met Pam Davey, a Droitwich Councillor who offered to help with arrangements for the Easter Gathering.

3.2 Phil attended a BWAf meeting. Again the main topic was the new charity. Phil noted a concern about lack of representation from boaters on heritage and environmental groups. David Daines drew attention to the Boaters Manifesto drawn up by a Facebook group, parts of which he felt were very good but he had reservations over some elements. John Dodwell's comments on it are interesting. A post meeting without the BW people present was a bit gloomy. Phil remains optimistic over the funding issues and noted that it is important to maintain a presence and ensure our voice is heard.

3.3 Phil attended a BW Heritage Meeting – the heritage group have been given info on developments that are in the offing, including a development at Icknield Port Loop where a lot of buildings will be demolished. 2 of the 3 historic buildings are being kept. The one that is being lost is an art deco concrete building which is in too poor a state to be kept. A spreadsheet of BW buildings at risk was mentioned and Phil will chase Nigel Crowe for a copy of this. The role of the Partnerships will be important. – Vaughan Welch has said that heritage features highly on the West Midlands Partnership's agenda. Phil, Mike Turpin and Bernard Hales are likely to be consulted regarding disposal of *Grenville*.

3.4 Phil attended a WUSIG meeting. Six club members were present wearing different hats! There was quite a bit of discussion about dredging. BW seem to be admitting that they haven't done enough dredging in recent years. Noted that future representation at these meetings should be Sue for navigation and Phil for heritage.

4. Secretary's Report

4.1 Alison had submitted the required details to IWA for the insurance renewal. 2 issues of IWA *Waterways* magazine were passed on.

- 4.2 Alison reported that she had received one nomination so far for the Keay Award and one for the Hemelryk and asked Phil to remind people this afternoon to get their nominations in by end December.
- 4.3 Historic Boat Talks – Alison had given her Historic Narrow Boat illustrated talk to IWA Lichfield Branch recently, and had bookings from IWA Birmingham Branch, Trent and Mersey Canal Society and the Worcester/Birmingham/Droitwich Canal Society. She had also had a request from the London Canal Museum for Monday 7th February 2013. It was agreed that she would reply to Roger Squires to say that HNBOC would definitely supply a speaker, which would probably be Alison but to be confirmed nearer the time.
- 4.4 Sarah Hale had circulated a press officer's report which was discussed. It was felt that Sarah had done a great job so far and that the role of press officer was going to be even more important in the future. Opportunities coming up for publicity include The Easter Gathering at Droitwich (after the event) and the presentation of the two awards at the AGM in March. It was agreed that the Club needs to have a strategy on publicity and that a meeting should be arranged between Sarah, Phil and Alison to discuss a strategy for publicity and press stories going forward.

5. Treasurer's Report

- 5.1 Laura reported that the account balances stood as follows:

Natwest	£3,745
Santander	£12,538
Total	£16,283

- 5.2 Laura reported that the accounts year end is now 30 November and she asked all committee members to let her have any outstanding expenses claims by then as she would like to pay these before the year end.
- 5.3 Laura plans to get the accounts prepared and sent to the examiner before Christmas so that he has plenty of time to examine them before the AGM.
- 5.4 Laura had reviewed the Club accounts for the last ten years and noted that every year shows a surplus. Given this history, and the level of the Club's bank balance, she recommended that the subscription for individuals is retained at the same rate of £12 per year.
- 5.5 Laura had received notification that Heritage Afloat is merging with the Maritime Trust to become the Maritime Heritage Trust. They will deal with coastal and seagoing craft as well as inland waterways craft. It was agreed that we should pay the £60 membership subscription. Val mentioned that the Heritage Afloat logo is in the newsletter and she will need an electronic version of the new logo once it is available.
- 5.6. Jim Cook asked what the purpose of the funds was. It was explained that in addition to the general running costs of the Club, there have been occasional donations to waterway schemes in the past (eg Droitwich Barge Lock, Ribble Link, Anderton Lift). Jim noted that there could be some expenses involved in a press and publicity campaign.

6. Proposed Constitution Amendments

- 6.1 A successful meeting had been held on 12th November at Marsworth, where Richard, Phil, Laura, David, Mike, Val and Alison went through the Constitution and drew up various amendments to be put to the AGM in March. Alison had subsequently circulated notes from the meeting, a marked up copy of the current constitution, showing the proposed changes we agreed, and a version of the constitution showing the changes. The committee agreed that the proposed changes were along the right lines and everyone was asked to email Alison with any suggestions or further proposed alterations by 12th December. This will allow time for any email discussion on further changes and for the final version to be drawn up and emailed out to the committee in advance of the January committee meeting, where it will need to be approved.
- 6.2 It was agreed that very clear explanation is required when putting these proposed changes to the membership. Phil will mention it in his chairman's notes in the next newsletter and it was agreed that the detailed changes will be sent out as a separate mailing (the cost of which was approved).

- 6.3 Jim Cook said that we need to think about what the point of the constitution is, and how the governance function is seen in the relation with other organisations, eg partnerships – Jim will forward advice regarding the legal forms that are available to us given that we are currently nothing more than a group of individuals.
- 6.4 Ros Prettyman thought that the revised version is clearer and in plain English, but noted that by taking out the constraints of needing to own a historic boat in order to vote on the constitution, this has removed any definition of what is a historic boat. It was agreed that the previous definition of what is a historic boat should be put back in, for the purposes of identifying whether a boat should be added to the website or be included in the archive. Alison will incorporate this into the next draught. Any other changes to Alison by 12th December.
- 6.5 The proposal to change the name of the Club to the Historic Narrow Boat Club was discussed. Those present agreed that the time was now right to propose a change of name. This change can only help the seriousness with which the Club is regarded at a national level, which is more important now than ever with the current changes going on with the formation of the Canal and River Trust. An explanation for the reasons behind the change of name will be put clearly to the members in advance as well as at the AGM. An added advantage of losing the word “owners” is that the Club Logo, which hasn’t been updated since the word “Historic” was added, can remain the same with the initials HNBC instead of NBOC.
- 6.6 The proposal to have a joint membership category was discussed. This would be 2 adults living at the same address. They would only receive one newsletter but would be given a membership number each and would be entitled to 2 votes at a general meeting. There will be no obligation for anyone (either a couple currently having an individual membership, or couples currently paying 2 subscriptions as individual members) to change. If people do gradually take up this new membership category it will significantly increase the number of members, and therefore the campaigning power of the Club.

7. 2012 AGM Arrangements

- 7.1 AGM arrangements, including how to handle the voting and the proposed constitution changes, will be discussed at the January committee meeting. John Dodwell had confirmed that he and another transitional trustee, Jane Cotton, will be available to talk to the members at the AGM and answer questions. He has asked whether a trip on a boat could be arranged and Laura and Peter have offered use of *Stanton* for this. It was agreed that Laura, Peter and Ros should be on the boat, even if it means they miss the committee meeting in the morning. The start time will be brought forward to 2pm, with the transitional trustees to talk for 30 minutes then 30 minutes for questions. Then tea break (45 mins), then AGM at 3.45, followed by an interesting film to keep people there. Val will put these details in the newsletter.

8. Easter Gatherings and other events

- 8.1 Easter Gathering, Droitwich - 6th to 9th April 2012. Ros, Phil, Mike, Val and Sue are going on a site visit on Tuesday. The local canal trust are keen to have us. Phil has contacted BW events manager (Gloucester office). Pam Davey, of the local canal trust and a County Councillor, will meet them on Tuesday. The Community Hall has been reserved which seems to have the facilities we need but will be a short walk from where the boats are. These things will be considered on Tuesday. Also a pub available nearby at a cost of £125 for an evening. The event will be similar in format to the Coventry event. Other possible entertainments include a talk from someone about the Droitwich restoration, a guided walk around Droitwich, and a quiz by Peter Oates.
- 8.2 Phil reported that the launch of Canal and River Trust will take place later in April with events to be held in various locations. As soon as the details are known it will be important for the Club to ensure historic boats are present at all events.

9. Newsletter Editor's Report

- 9.1 Val had circulated a report. The copy date for the next issue is tomorrow. This issue will include AGM notice. Directions needed to Napton Village Hall - Ros to supply. It was agreed to mention “pubs nearby” without mentioning specific pubs.
- 9.2 Val requested some more ‘Know Your Committee’ articles. Laura has emailed hers this morning. Other peoples still to be featured are: Steve Harmer, Norman Mitchell, Sandra Green, Jim Cook and Sarah Hale.

9.3 Val reported that Chris Clegg has demonstrated an idea that he has for preserving and showing historic pictures from various sources, and grouping them. He wonders if the Club is interested in taking this idea forward. It was agreed that Val should encourage him to carry on with the idea and invite him to attend either the May or July committee meetings to discuss. [Post meeting note: Chris will attend the July meeting in Farnham].

10. Membership Secretary's Report

10.1 David Daines had emailed a report. As at 17th November the Club had 468 members, including 5 Exchange & 2 Honorary. This compares to 467 inclusive at the last meeting. Of paying members 296 are non-standing order and 164 are paid by standing order.

10.2 The following new members were approved:

Bob and Ellen Tidy	Battersea	1649
Christopher Jones	N/A	1650
Richard Alderman	[Magic]	1651
Nick Holt	Eileen	1652
Peter & Maureen Munt	N/A	1653
Jim Storey	[Lynx]	1309
James Amos	Bramble	1654
Daniel Hutchinson	[Emilyanne]	1581

10.3 Sandra Green has paid 11/12 twice, once by cash to David on 25 June, and also by standing order (which did not pay last year, so it was assumed that it was 'lost', but it has now paid out from her bank account). It was agreed that Laura should refund £12 by cheque.

10.4 David reported that 7 members have 'lapsed' as from 1 Oct:

Mr & Mrs P Ballinger.	N/A
Mr A Franses.	Orianne
Mr P J Harrison.	N/A
Mr S Robinson.	Argo
Mr S A Smith.	N/A
Mr M Williams.	N/A
Mr D A Wright.	Lupin

10.5 David represented the Club at the National Historic Ships presentation for photographs on the HMS Belfast. He was the only person there who owned a boat and what came out of discussions was that it is not common amongst ships for them to be owned by individuals who do all the work on them themselves.

11. Archivist's Report

11.1 Richard had nothing to report.

12. Website

12. Ros had circulated a spreadsheet showing the month-by-month data. Visitor numbers are very steady. Ros had also circulated the full data sheets for September and October for further information. Ros suggested talking to Steve Wood about potential domain name changes should the change of name be passed at the AGM, and it was agreed that this was a sensible idea.

13. Club Shop

13.1 Claire had emailed a report outlining sales at the recent Whitchurch Boat Rally and some subsequent sales.

13.2 Claire noted that not as many cards have sold this year compared to previous years. The mixed packs have been most popular. So far this year (excluding sales at this afternoon's members meeting) 293 packs have sold. This compares with 584 packs in 2010, 466 packs in 2009, 462 packs in 2008, 302 packs in 2007, 322 packs in 2006.

Clair said it was good to have 5 different designs to make up the mixed packs. A decision on whether a further order needs to be placed for selling next year will be made based on sales at the afternoon meeting.

- 13.3 Rupert delivered the 25 plaques at a cost of £5 each. Invoice passed to Laura.
- 13.4 Val asked if there had been any progress with the “On the Cut” recordings. Alison and Rupert were able to report that Steve Wood has been talking to Ray Johnson about working with Staffordshire Archive using the original source tapes rather than the broadcast versions to avoid copyright issues. Ray Johnson also has some more material from John Abberley. It was agreed that we would leave Steve to pursue this, and in the meantime mention to members via the newsletter that the recordings are now available on the BBC website.
- 13.5 Further to the suggestion at the last meeting that the Club Shop should stock charts for the Trent, it was agreed not to pursue this.
- 14. Area Representative Reports**
- 14.1 Central Shires** – Rupert Smedley had emailed a report.
- 14.2 East Midlands** – Mike Harrison reported that the user group meeting at West Bridgford was entirely dominated by anglers and nothing of consequence was said. BW didn’t even have time to give a maintenance update. The proposed hydro electric power scheme at Sawley is going ahead, with similar schemes proposed at Holme Lock and Gunthorpe. There is concern as to whether it will affect water levels but BW say not. Chesterfield Canal – Sean McGinley had confirmed to Mike that he has received from Phil the report and photos of boats stuck in locks following the recent gathering.
- 14.3 Fens** – Jim Cook had nothing to report. The Fens authority has no interest in navigation. Jim will make contact with GOBA.
- 14.4 Kennet & Avon** – no report as no area rep at the current time.
- 14.5 London** – Sandra Green had emailed a report. She had attended a user group meeting, where the main discussion was mainly around moorings and the Olympics. Sally Ash was there and announced that they will bring out a new licence for continuous cruisers/moorers that will mean they don’t need to go very far.
- 14.6 Manchester & Pennine** – George Boyle had emailed a report.
- 14.7 North East** – no report in the absence of David Lowe.
- 14.8 North Wales & Border** – Iain MacTavish had emailed a report.
- 14.9 North West** – Rebekah Fuller had emailed a report.
- 14.10 South East** – Club member Jim Hutchinson went to the South East Local User Group meeting and reported back that BW Manager Jeff Whyatt said, in connection with water shortages, that if shortages occur next year he would try to reduce attendance at the Braunston Show by encouraging boats not to attend! It was suggested that somebody should bring this to the attention of Tim Coghlan. Neither Richard Booth or Martin Jiggins had received notification of this user group meeting. Martin will follow this up with BW. Martin Jiggins reported that the Aylesbury Arm is being dredged at the moment. David Daines reported that Cowroast lock is now being locked from 4.30pm each day due to Tring Summit being 18” down.
- 14.11 South Wales & Severn** – Norman Mitchell had emailed a report.
- 14.12 West Midlands** – no report
- 15. Boating/Navigation Issues**
- 15.1 Sue Cawson reported that the Shroppie is being dredged from Adderley to the top of Audlem, following BW’s recent trip on *Plover*.

- 15.2 John Jackson has offered to take David Baldacchino (Manchester and Pennines) from Anderton to Dutton in January.
- 15.3 Bernard Hales reported that the Narrow Boat Trust recently wrote up a report of a trip from Warwick to Oxford where the total time lost 40 hours due to the continued deterioration of the system. A similar report expected from Birmingham to Knowle.

16. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

- 16.1 There was nothing arising from the previous minutes not already covered.

17. Any Other Business

- 17.1 Bernard mentioned the formation of the Maritime Heritage Trust (as reported under item 5.5 above). Bernard will arrange for Val to have the new logo once it is available.

18. Dates and Venues of Next Meetings

Dates were confirmed for 2012 meetings:

- 7th January – 11am – Tamworth
- 3rd March – 10am and 2pm AGM – Napton Village Hall
- 12th May – 11am – Hazelhurst Cottage, Denford
- 14th July – 11am – Farnham
- 15th September – 11am – Horsley Woodhouse
- 17th November – 10am – Napton or Braunston? Both to be provisionally booked, Laura to book Braunston and to contact David Gunby about booking Napton. Decision to be made after the AGM as to which venue to go for, other booking to be cancelled. [Post meeting note: Napton not available for 17th November. Laura has booked Braunston for 17 November and asked David Gunby to book Napton for 3 November 2012 – a decision on date and venue to be made following the AGM].

The meeting closed at 12.21pm.

Alison Smedley
Secretary