

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Saturday 15 September 2012
at Beggarlee Wharf, Horsley Woodhouse at 11.00 am

PRESENT: Phil Prettyman (Chairman), Richard Booth, Sue Cawson, Jim Cook, Sandra Green, Sarah Hale, Mike Harrison, Paul Hunter, David Lowe, Norman Mitchell, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Rupert Smedley, Laura Sturrock.

1. Apologies and welcome

Apologies had been received from George Boyle, Clair Butler, David Daines, Rebekah Fuller, Bernard Hales, Tom Judd, Iain MacTavish, Alison Smedley and Amy-Alys Tilson,

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

After correction of *Cauldon* to *Caldon* (item 14.12), the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2012 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Chairman

- 3.1 **Co-options.** Phil welcomed Jim Cook and Paul Hunter to the meeting. Co-options to the Committee were agreed: Paul Hunter (Secretary), Jim Cook (Events & Awards), Rebekah Fuller (West Mids rep), Tom Judd (K&A rep), Alison Smedley (IWA Liaison). Jim agreed also to lead on funding applications and sources. Paul to liaise with Alison re AGM elections.
- 3.2 **Historic boat discount scheme** Following Phil's email to David Viner and Nigel Crowe, a meeting was planned for early November (Phil, David D, Bernard, John Yates, Mike Turpin invited, with David V, Nigel C and Susie Mercer from CRT). Points raised in committee discussion were: total current budget probably about £14K (200 historic boats @ £100) and not likely to be increased; although not a large amount/boat, it was a recognition of value/cost of preservation; proposed free licences for charity boats may put more money into the pot; some doubt that CRT know enough as some modern boats appear to be getting discount; not just narrow boats that get the discount. Two alternatives to hold in reserve: forego discount in favour of putting £14K to a waterway project (eg Hurlleston); use money to establish dedicated moorings/harbours for historic boats on their way to rallies. Noted that the butty discount was a separate issue.
- 3.3 **BWAF Heritage Group and CRT Heritage Advisory Panel** Phil still waiting to hear from Sir Neil Cossons about date of meeting. There appeared to be some difficulty with his email system. Phil would contact him again by post. The latest minutes of the Heritage Panel were quite positive.
- 3.4 **Health & Safety paper** Following publication of Sarah's article in 2012/3 newsletter, "Towpath Talk" had contacted Phil to express admiration for an excellent article (see also Press Officer report item 12.3). Sarah would re-draft the article into a more formal Position Paper and would circulate it.

4. Secretary (written report from Alison as outgoing Secretary)

- 4.1 Alison had sent the Secretary's files to the meeting via Rupert and congratulated Paul on his co-option.
- 4.2 She would advise IWA head office of the change so that Paul would receive correspondence.
- 4.3 CRT would also need to be advised of the change of personnel.
- 4.4 Correspondence in since last meeting – IWA's Waterways magazine.
- 4.5 Weil's Disease cards – WRG had had an extra 25 cards. Alison was happy to hold the club's stock of cards.
- 4.6 Committee expressed their grateful thanks to Alison for her hard work for the committee.
- 4.7 It was agreed that committee agendas and minutes should be available on the members' area of the website.

5. Treasurer

5.1 Laura had circulated a summary of the cash book showing detailed receipts and payments since 12 December 2011 and reported that the account balances stood as follows:

£12,642.94	Santander
£ 4,588.68	Natwest Current account
£ 4.06	Cash
£17,235.68	Total

A query on £30 paid in on 30 August was resolved as having come from Val.

5.2 Laura was pleased to report that HMRC had agreed with her argument about not having to submit a return for the club. Decision should remain valid for next 5 years.

5.3 Charity status for the club? Laura commented that from an accounts point of view, a charity was beholden to the wider world, not just its members, and that it at least doubled the complexity for the Treasurer. Sarah commented that we should remember our status as a campaigning organisation for our members' interests. Phil wondered if the club might establish a charity just for fund raising purposes.

6. Membership Secretary (emailed report from David Daines)

6.1 As at 13th September, the club had 524 members (last meeting 514) including 5 Exchange & 2 Honorary. There are currently 58 Joint members (ie 29 'pairs').. Of paying members 327 are non-SO and 173 are paid by SO.

The following new members were approved (I = Individual, A = Association or Business, J = Joint)

Karen Parrott	N/A	1684 – I
Toby Ombler	Gorse/Water Lupin	1685 – I
Gareth Jones & Frances Cavanagh	N/A	1686 – J
Philip Featherstone	N/A	1687 – I
Michael Freeman	N/A	1688 – I

More members were switching to 'Joint' although David thought some members had not understood that the change would mean the loss of mention of spouse/partner in 'Individual' membership. He would reiterate this in newsletter 2012/4. Not all transitions to 'Joint' had worked correctly. As anticipated, some SOs had not been upgraded to £15. He had re-written the 'Invitation to Renew' letters for the January renewals, and also taken a similar action regarding Standing Order memberships, and would send out SO check forms, as before, making this clear.

At the time of writing, 35 members had yet to renew from 1 July and will expire on 1 October. David had provided a list. Committee noted that some owners had sold their boats. It was agreed to remind defaulters that historic boat ownership was no longer a requirement for membership.

6.2 **Boat and Address Lists** uploaded to the web site by David, thanks extended to Ros for her help. David pleased to be in control of keeping web lists up-to-date and correct and had already been able to correct an error quickly. David had reminded members in 2012/3 that they could obtain paper copies of the Lists on provision of an SAE.

6.3 **Membership Form**

- Print version agreed for printing as re-drafted by Val and endorsed by David.
- VAT on printing cost of form. Laura reported that VAT had to be paid, by printer, if 25% of total area was to be filled in and returned. Agreed to wait and see if printer asked for reimbursement.
- Up-to-date download version also on the website. Ros to double check that it was available on public side as well as members' area.
- Paul asked whether on-line application was possible, with payment by eg PayPal.

6.4 **Microsoft Access** David had purchased the software and an instruction manual for it. He has been able to import all the data from Approach into Access, and was learning about methods of working and the formulation of calculations and macros. It was agreed to reimburse David for the cost of the instruction manual (>£100).

7. Newsletter Editor

- 7.1 **Issue 2012/4** Press date 16 Nov 2012. AGM notice to go out with it. Print run 700 copies.
- 7.2 **Bumper Issue 2012/3** Print run 700 copies – 32 pages £583, 24 extra pages £336 = £919 total. Additional postage £328. Bulk postings to CRT h/o, IWA h/o and CRT Fazeley cost £17.60 (previously £46.20).
- 7.3 **Mailing Comps list** (107 names) Individual postings to CRT staff had produced responses. Concern whether bulk postings reach intended recipients. IWA vice presidents not yet on the list – Phil to check if their private addresses could be found via 192 online search. Agreed to ask Alison's advice on both points.
- 7.4 **Anonymous letter of complaint** received about report on Bidford Bridge, River Avon (p 31 of 2012/3). Noted, but agreed that no further action could be taken as the writer had remained anonymous.
- 7.5 **Reports of Gatherings.** Sarah will send write-up and photos for Alvecote. Sue will provide boat list for Alvecote and a write-up and boat list for Shackerstone.
- 7.6 **Know your Committee articles.** Norman Mitchell agreed to provide the next one. Sandra Green, Sarah Hale, Sue Cawson, Bernard Hales, Amy Tillson, Paul Hunter and Tom Judd on the list for future editions.
- 7.7 **Overseas members' postage.** It was agreed to continue to send newsletters by surface mail to Australia and to absorb the cost of this (1 member) and of European (4 members) postage.

8. Archivist

- 8.1 Richard was continuing to work on the boat list, David W was still sending him photos, although not all boats had yet been photographed recently. All asked to send Richard any relevant photos. Eventually, the list would be made available via the website.
- 8.2 **Chris Clegg's proposal** to begin systematic cataloguing and digitising of photographic collection. Sue had emailed Cath Turpin at Ellesmere Port, and Norman had found contact details for Kim Chester at Gloucester. Jim explained that for any funding application to succeed, a financially responsible organisation had to be named to which the funds would be allocated, so partnership with museums was an obvious way to go. Jim would enquire about a meeting with Chris Clegg and museums' rep to discuss the way forward. It was also suggested that it might be worth approaching west midlands universities (eg Prof Carl Chinn at Birmingham had a well known interest in local history). Jim to investigate.
- 8.3 **Malc Slater collection** Scanning of the photos would be a winter's job (Val & Mike). It was agreed that scans from the collection would be free to members but prints would be charged at cost, plus postage.

9. Club Events

- 9.1 **November social 2012** – Tony Gregory confirmed as speaker and publicised in 2012/3 newsletter. Mike to send contact details to Phil who will check technical equipment needed. Val will run shop (critical times 40 mins prior to meeting and during tea break) with help from Laura, Richard and Sarah. Jim and Sarah will liaise with Clair about stock collection. Ros will purchase refreshments, investigate purchase of urn and ask volunteers for help in kitchen. [Post meeting note of email discussion – cheap urn at Aldi underpowered, agreed to bring extra kettles instead and review after Napton meeting]
- 9.2 **AGM 2013** – Tony Stammers, CRT Head of Health & Safety, confirmed as speaker. Notice of meeting to go in 2012/4 newsletter, together with 75 words from co-optees Paul, Jim and Tom (see 3.1 above) not already in the recently issued Who's Who leaflet. Val already had Jim's photo but needed mugshots of Paul and Tom. Paul to liaise with Alison on posts up for re-election and on AGM Agenda .
- 9.3 **Easter 2013 at The Port** – Sue to email organisers to remind them to invite us to planning meetings. Jim and Phil to attend.
- 9.4 **November social 2013** – Laura reported that Napton hall only available on 30 November. Committee room booked for club, Laura to double check that main hall also still available.
- 9.5 **Easter 2014** (18 April) – Norman gave contact details of RN gathering organiser to Jim, who would liaise with Sandra re venue. Plenty of moorings for boats but need indoor venue to accommodate 80 seated and Tat auction.

10. Navigation Officer

- 10.1 **Audlem Book** Sue reported that a book of sketches and paintings of boats at the recent gathering had been published.
- 10.2 **Canal pinch points** Sue had been receiving more and more reports of problem areas – Bridge 58 (Stratford) narrow for high riding boats; Wilmecote top lock (Stratford) boat jammed on wing wall; Gailey lock (S&W) an historic tug couldn't get out even with a flush as it had done in past; 2nd lock at Napton, loaded boat stuck; Hurleston lock (Welsh) many historic boats reporting becoming stuck 2/3 way in when had gone through successfully in previous years. Sue was keeping detailed records and emailing local waterways managers as appropriate.
- 10.3 **Netherton tunnel.** The information about engineering works did not seem to have been widely shared. Sue would email local waterways manager, Dean Davies, for an update.
- 10.4 **Reporting problems** A general concern was expressed that reports of waterway problem spots did not seem to be co-ordinated by CRT and sometimes waterways managers appeared not to know about the problem. An acknowledgement by CRT would reassure licence payers. Ros mentioned a new App for smart phones developed by CRT to log/report wildlife sightings, and wondered if something similar could be developed for reporting pinch points, damage, low levels etc. Sue to raise at CRT Navigation Advisory Group if appropriate.
- 10.5 **Trentham lock (T&M).** Norman shared a report from an IOSH qualified member (Institute of Occupational Safety and Health), suggesting a risk assessment be carried out from boaters' perspective and asking for a better reporting system. Committee disagreed with part of the report that suggested closing off the steps.

11. Club Shop (emailed report from Clair)

- 11.1 **Sales** at Maesbury totalled £289.36, of which £233.36 was from stock, and £56 from donated second hand books. Also orders received by post for The Other Sixty Miles, and A Horse, A Boat and You.
- 11.2 **New book in stock** West Midlands Canals Through Time by Ray Shill, £14.99, published August 2012.
- 11.3 **Banners.** Iain had obtained several quotes, had circulated them by email and would be in touch with Sandra re logo for printing.
- 11.4 **Ken Keay Book.** Believed that Laurence Hogg had put it on DVD, Colin Siddaway had had permission to reprint but did not go ahead because of DVD. Bernard believed it was the most important book on construction/repair of wooden historic boats and Paul thought there might be more drawings than were originally published. Sue agreed to liaise with Bernard to ask Ken Keay's daughter, Judith Ann Cooper, to whom the original book was dedicated, for permission to reprint. Bernard thought that copyright might reside with Ken Keay and Black Country Museum. Agreed club to fund reprinting when permission given. Some doubt about quality of scans (from original art work or the book?) and Sue would contact Tony Lewery for advice.
- 11.5 **Notelets or blank cards** It was agreed to try a print run of blank cards, similar in size and presentation to the club's Christmas cards but not to produce notelets as they were thought slow to sell. [Post meeting note: Val obtained quotes and circulated mock-ups. A cover price of £1 each was thought competitive with those on sale from charity shops.]
- 11.6 **Postage on books** Clair reported that the present charge of £1 was insufficient. It was agreed to increase our standard postage to £1.50 and to send items out by second class post. Ros to update website.
- 11.7 **Logo for clothing.** Having agreed at the previous meeting to have the logo on the left hand side in a 'chunky' style, with the teardrop and the words Historic (line 1) Narrow Boat (line 2) and Club (line 3), it was further agreed that any boat name would be centred under the block. Sandra and Clair to liaise.
- 11.8 **Club plaques** It was agreed that Rupert would investigate production of a new plaque, similar to the old HNBOC one in weight and style, but with amended lettering for HNBC.

12. Press Officer

- 12.1 **Newsletter articles** Sarah had written a report of the Braunston gathering for the Club Newsletter, and adapted her piece on health and safety for inclusion in the Newsletter as a starting point for discussion within the Club as the first stage in developing a Club policy position on this issue.

- 12.2 **Alvecote gathering.** Another attendee (Polly Player, associated with *Reginald*) had been commissioned to write a report for *Waterways World* and Sarah had been able to provide her with information for this. She had also sent a photo direct to *WW* of Malcolm Edge (*Darley*) with the Lapworth award. She would also write this up for the Club newsletter if wished (it was a super photo!).
- 12.3 **Publisher requests** Sarah was contacted by Bob Clarke who writes for both *Canals and Rivers* magazine and *Towpath Talk* (see item 3.4 above). He wanted to use extended extracts from her Newsletter piece, along with a piece written by Vaughan Welch in the West Midlands IWA Bulletin, in an article on health and safety. She was rather wary of this given that she would have no control over the outcome, and did impress on him that the Newsletter is for circulation amongst Club members and did not constitute a publication in the public domain, and thus was not actually fair game for quotation, but weighing this against the opportunity of greater coverage and maintaining good relations she did not press this too hard.
- 12.4 **More stories** Sarah appealed for more stories that she could place in other publications.

13. Website

Ros had circulated two analytic reports for July and August prior to the meeting. Numbers were holding up well, with little change from previous months, unique visitors being 1,289 and 1,144 respectively. She was aware that some tidying up was necessary on the site to make sure that HNBOC had been changed to HNBC throughout.

14 Area Representatives

- 14.1 **Central Shires** User group dates were 11 October and 17 October 2012.
- 14.2 **East Midlands** Mike reported that:
- Plans were progressing well to widen Stret Lock on the Chesterfield. HNBC would be invited to open day at Stret during the stoppage.
 - The Chesterfield had a very bad weed problem.
 - Trent Lane Depot in Nottingham was under threat of imminent demolition. Mike to circulate details of petition to get it listed by English Heritage.
- 14.3 **Fens** Amy had emailed a report:
- Heavy silting at Denver Lock caused by the recent floods was now being cleared away by the Environment Agency. Previously, it had been extremely difficult for boats to cross between Denver and Salters Lode, and several boats were grounded on the silt and had to wait for the tide to refloat.
 - Northampton Arm Stoppage. The Fens are to be cut off again - from **10/09/2012** to **05/10/2012** The Northampton Arm will be closed between Monday 10th September 2012 and Friday 5th October 2012. This stoppage is to allow essential brickwork repairs and gate relining to take place.
 - The Cam Conservators have unsurprisingly not had a very big uptake of visitor licences for the new scheme whereby it costs an additional 10% of a standard Environment Agency Licence if you want to visit the Cam. Next year (from January) Gold licence holders will no longer be able to visit without buying an additional licence either. Visitor numbers have been lower this year but she expected that they will be even lower next year.
 - Amy had joined the local IWA branch - had previously thought it had disbanded but it had simply changed its name from Cambridge IWA to Great Ouse IWA and had not publicised this very well!
 - She had also applied to stand as one of the Conservators of the River Cam, in response to the City Council asking for volunteers.
- 14.4 **Kennet & Avon** Tom had sent his apologies and hoped to be able to attend the meeting prior to the November social.
- 14.5 **London** No user group meetings as yet. Sandra reported that a local independent group, Friends of Regents Canal, was very hot on opposing changes to the canal, eg the narrowing of canal bridges.
- 14.6 **Manchester and Pennine** No report.
- 14.7 **North East** next User Group would be held on 10 October 2012.
- 14.8 **North Wales & Border** Iain reported by email that:
- The planned meeting with Wendy Capelle, local waterways manager, to discuss Hurleston locks was set for 10 October. Iain, Phil and Sue would attend.

- Three autumn local boat rallies, Maesbury (Saturn, Plover & Buckden), Ellesmere (Saturn) and Whitchurch (Plover & Saturn).
- The historic yard at Ellesmere had been open to visitors with forging demonstrations, displays of old photos and local CRT personnel in attendance.
- User group meeting in October 2012.

14.9 **North West** No report

14.10 **South East** Bernard had emailed a report that:

- The R.Thames User Groups were mustering forces to resist the ultimate takeover of the EA navigations by CRT
- The Basingstoke Canal had been subject to 'fly tipping' of stone filled gabions at lock landings by the Authority's contractors, so beware any plastic or wooden hulled boats. It may not now be possible to enter locks so treated with a breasted-up pair. The intention was to prevent erosion and create better landing opportunities! He found it hard to understand how such a gross engineering blunder could comply with either English Heritage or Natural England stipulations.
- The Metropolitan Waterboard Railway Society had completed the 2' gauge 'Hounslow Loop' at Kempton and should be carrying fare-paying passengers around Easter next year.

14.11 **South Wales & Severn** Norman reported that although the user group dates had not yet been announced, he would attend both Worcester and Gloucester user group meetings in future as they appeared to have separate agendas.

14.12 **West Midlands** No report

15. Reports from External organisations

Phil had attended Central Shires Partnership workshop to set up working groups, which was positive. David L was impressed with members on North West Partnership board. Sue would attend first meeting of Navigation Advisory Board at the end of the week.

16. Matters arising

Droitwich plaque Rupert would bring the plaques to the November Social for distribution.

17. Any Other Business

David D asked in his emailed report whether any progress had been made with the labels that were to be put on Sculptor in memory of Dave Prior.

18. Date and Venue of Next Committee Meetings

- 3 November 2012 – 10.00 am - Napton followed by members' meeting at 2.30 pm
- 12 January 2013 – 11.00 am – Tamworth
- 2 March 2013 – 10.00 am before the AGM - Napton

The meeting closed at 5.10 pm.

Phil Prettyman
Chairman

Date