

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Saturday 03 November 2012
at Napton Village Hall, Napton, Warwicks at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Phil Prettyman (Chairman), Richard Booth, George Boyle, Sue Cawson, Jim Cook, David Daines, Sandra Green, Sarah Hale, Bernard Hales, Mike Harrison, Paul Hunter, Tom Judd, David Lowe, Norman Mitchell, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Rupert Smedley, Laura Sturrock, Amy-Alys Tillson. In attendance: James Tidy.

1. Apologies and welcome

Apologies had been received from Clair Butler, Rebekah Fuller, Iain MacTavish. Phil welcomed Tom Judd to the committee as K&A Rep.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Ros had already corrected the date of the March meeting from 3 to 2 March 2013 (item 18), so the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2012 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Chairman (Phil Prettyman)

3.1 **Historic boat discount** – A meeting had been arranged for Nov 8th and David D, Bernard, Mike Turpin and Phil had been invited, with David Viner, Nigel Crowe and Susie Mercer from CRT and John Yates wearing his CRT heritage hat. John had raised (in advance) the suggestion that a concession over moorings would be of greater assistance to owners of historic boats than just licences.

3.2 **CRT Heritage group** – After considerable difficulty Phil had secured a meeting (11am on Tuesday 20 November 2012 in Birmingham) with Sir Neil Cossons for a discussion about the aims of this group. As background Phil had emailed a copy of a paper prepared by some members of the old BWAf heritage group in June – but the principles (and our concerns) remained the same.

3.3 **Hurleston** – Iain, Sue and Phil had attended a meeting at Northwich to discuss this issue. The details were contained in Iain's North Wales and Border report. Phil thought that it was a very constructive meeting and that the response from the engineer from central engineering was helpful and encouraging.

4. Secretary (Paul Hunter)

4.1 **Correspondence** Paul had received 2 e-Bulletins from the IWA but no actual literature from IWA or CaRT until their mailing lists were updated. He had received a copy of Navigation, the IWA West Midlands Region magazine, perhaps better sent to the West Midland Rep direct.

4.2 AGM March 2013

Committee posts due for election by the 3-year rule:

Chairman	Membership Secretary	Central Shires
Man & Pennines	N Wales & Borders	East Midlands
London	North West (presently vacant)	

Co-opted posts for election

Secretary (for one year only under rule 4.2(a) rotation)		
Minutes Secretary	West Midlands	East (formerly Fens)
K&A	IWA Liaison	Events & Awards

At the 2012 AGM, 2 posts were filled under the previous Constitution for 1 year only:

Navigation	Press Officer
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Paul and Richard felt that as the New Constitution was adopted later at the same AGM then it could reasonably be assumed that it was the will of the membership that these posts are considered as 3 year posts. **AGREED**

Notice of meeting Paul would liaise with Val to produce the AGM Notice for Newsletter 2012/4. He proposed setting a deadline of 2 weeks before the AGM for nominations to posts, and the day before the next committee meeting for motions for the AGM. Start time 2.30pm. Val would include additional information (75 words) from co-optees (Paul, Jim and Tom) not already in the recently issued Who's Who leaflet. **AGREED**

5. **Treasurer** (Laura Sturrock)

5.1 The account balances stood as follows as at 31 October 2012:

£12,653.30 Santander £2,122.10 Natwest £16.06 Cash **£14,791.46 Total**

5.2 The Committee passed a resolution to add Paul Hunter (Secretary) and to remove Alison Smedley (retiring Secretary) as a signatory on the Club's bank accounts. **AGREED**

5.3 Laura reminded members that the Club's year-end was 30 November and that expenses claims should to be submitted as soon as possible.

6. **Membership Secretary** (David Daines)

6.1 **Membership** As at 31st October, the club had 503 members (last meeting 524) including 5 Exchange & 2 Honorary. There are currently 64 Joint members (ie 32 'pairs'). Of paying members 317 are non-SO and 179 are paid by SO.

The following 4 new members were **APPROVED** (I = Individual, A = Association or Business, J = Joint)

*Sue Harman	Assoc. with Saturn	1689 - I
*Sidonie & Graham Puddephatt	N/A	1690 - J
*Christopher Price	N/A	1691 - I

'**Last Chance Plea**' to those who expired on 1 October triggered a response from 3 members, leaving 26 'Lapsed', more than ever before. One of the 26 had indicated he intended to pay up. David customarily sent out green Invitation to Renew letters with the Newsletter, red individually posted second reminders and a final Last Chance letter. It was suggested that as the membership grew, the percentage attrition rate might also grow, perhaps especially among non-owning members.

Joint memberships. More couples had taken up this new status. All renewal letters had emphasised that old practice of recording two names against an Individual membership would cease on 1st January 2013. Standing Order members had also been informed by letter.

6.2 **Complimentary Newsletters** A bulk posting had gone to IWA head office for onward forwarding to IWA V-Ps, resulting in two sets of postage costs when IWA invoice received. At the end of October, Val had included a note and SAE with V-Ps' copies, asking if they would like to continue to receive an individual copy. Committee members were asked to enquire informally if IWA/CRT addressees did receive copies of Newsletter. Inevitably some duplication as some V-Ps already received copies wearing 'other hats'. It was emphasised that the purpose of sending complimentary copies was to raise our profile with persons of influence and we would continue to post to IWA officers. V-Ps would get occasional mailing of bumper issues via IWA head office. It was not thought cost-effective to use a franked mail system because of the high volume required. **AGREED**

Val reported that the other bulk postings had produced savings:

26 copies to CRT head office cost £8.80 (previously £28.60)
10 to IWA head office for IWA officers cost £5.30 (previously £11.00)
6 to CRT Fazeley office cost £3.50 (previously £6.60)

6.3 **Boat and Address Lists** uploaded to the web site by David.

6.4 **Membership Form** Bulk copies printed and available at the meeting. Thanks extended to Val and David.

7. **Newsletter Editor** (Val Roberts)

7.1 **Issue 2012/4** Press date 16 Nov 2012. Paul would liaise with Val on AGM notice for it (see 4.2 above). Val would include Who's Who update (75 words).

7.2 **Reports of Gatherings.** Sue to provide a report on Shackerstone, Laura to ask for a photo of SB Village at War.

7.3 **Know your Committee articles.** Norman and Sarah had provided articles. Paul, Sandra, Sue, Bernard, Amy and Tom on the list for future editions, together with quirky photos. Paul's bio to go in 2013/1.

7.4 **Blank General Purpose Cards** – Printed and available at the meeting in singles (£1) and packs of 4 (£3.50). Thanks extended to Val and Mike for a quality product.

8. Archivist

8.1 Richard was continuing to work on the boat list but had nothing further to report.

8.2 **Cataloguing and digitising photographic collections.** Jim had nothing further to report as yet.

9. Club Events

9.1 **November social 2012** – Laura to check Tony Gregory's expenses, Phil to introduce and thank him. [Post meeting note – Tony Gregory wanted no expenses but had asked instead for opportunity to sell old Grand Junction distance tables to raise money for Alzheimer's Society - £219 raised, with which he was delighted.]

9.2 **AGM 2013** - Ros to confirm Tony Stammers' job title to Val for the Newsletter. Laura will chase key-holders immediately before next meeting to ensure Hall is open on time and parking barrier raised. (See also 4.2 above.)

9.3 **Easter 2013 at The Port** – neither Sue, Phil nor Jim had heard anything about any planning meeting, usually held in January in previous years. Jim to seek opportunity to speak to Mike or Cath Turpin at the afternoon Social.

9.4 **November social 2013** – Laura reported that Napton hall booked and paid for all day on 30 November. Phil to ask members at the afternoon Social for suggestions for speakers. Suggestion: Tony Hales, who by then will have stood down from CRT, to speak on what the Trust had learned in its first year. Agenda item for January 2013.

9.5 **Easter 2014** (18 April) – Jim reported that he had had feedback from Russell Newbery Register (RNR) and Iain had done some research on Three Mills. It appeared to be very expensive, the meeting rooms too small, and no decent pub nearby. Agreed that river navigations unreliable at that time of year, and Gold Licences might increase cost to unacceptable level. Phil reiterated principle of a southern-based meeting to include southern members and suggested starting as far south as possible, London area, and work way north until something suitable found – River Lee (ask Michael Pinnock), Olympics site, West India Dock (contact Kevin McNiff of RNR), Royal Docks, Brentford Docks, River Wey, St Pancras Cruising Club, Marsworth. Jim asked to be copied in on any further thoughts/research.

10. Navigation Officer (Sue Cawson)

10.1 **Hurleston** As reported by Iain (see 14.8) they had had a very useful meeting, but no quick fix in sight. CRT recognised there was an issue on width that may be getting worse. Sue believed it was important that our members still tried to use the Llangollen Canal, particularly if they have been up before, and people should note any changes.

Generally we must encourage our members to report problems that they experience, particularly if they are new problems with depth or structures and if anyone feels that a lock structure is tighter than in the past and there has been no change to their craft.

10.2 **Southern Stratford at lock 40** After several e-mails, Sue had had a long chat with Dean Davies who had admitted there was a problem on the bottom end wing wall, they will be monitoring it and it will be attended to, but not this winter. If it does start causing even more problems it may be done as an emergency. This problem at lock 40 was identified by two of our members. Dean assured Sue that there was no intention of creating another pinch point, the identified pinch points on the Southern Stratford were locks 44, 47 and 50. Members should be encouraged to use the canal and if they do encounter more issues than in the past, they must report them. Dean was going to keep Sue informed.

10.3 **Netherton tunnel** Sue also spoke to Dean about Netherton, this stoppage was going ahead as detailed to us this winter. The repair does not make the navigation channel any narrower, it does reduce the towpath width and they may need to adjust the handrails. Sue asked Dean about the invert and the fact that several boats do bottom in the tunnel, he was going to get Ian Lane to e-mail her a report.

10.4 **Northern Stratford** There is a planned spot dredge. Bernard had done survey en route to Brinklow and would send it to Dean. He noted that the same journey had taken him 7 hours in 2010, but 1.75 hours longer this week despite higher water levels. Section travelled was feeder for much of BCN system so capacity important.

11. Club Shop (emailed report from Clair)

11.1 **Sales at Whitchurch** totalled £211:39 : £162.36 for stock goods, £59 from donated second hand books and £12 one new member. Postal orders for Chris Clegg Time map/ Boaters Guide to Boating/ Waterways Journal no 14 / Following the Trade/ 3 packs cards.

Chas Harden (boat hire company based at Beeston, SU & member with nb Dorset) collected 18 packs cards to send to their customers.

11.2 **Banners** – Iain had emailed illustrations of new logotype for different sizes of banner. Not discussed at meeting, but approved by email correspondence, post-meeting.

12. Press Officer (Sarah Hale)

- 12.1 Some press coverage of historic boats because of Chertsey's involvement in Mike Webb's funeral. Sarah had liaised with Harry Arnold to arrange this and had developed a good working relationship.
- 12.2 Bernard reported that he had attended CRT's annual meeting with boats, had managed to get a photo opportunity and there had been a good article in Towpath Talk.
- 12.3 Phil mentioned CRT Open Days – he would appeal to members to take their boats to Open Days if at all possible.
- 12.4 Jim believed that the Club needed a better communications strategy rather than the current ad hoc approach. Agenda item for next meeting.

13. Website (Ros Prettyman)

- 13.1 **Usage Stats** - Ros had circulated two analytic reports for September and October prior to the meeting. Numbers had remained fairly constant from month to month throughout 2012.
- 13.2 **Additional material on the website** Ros had added Minutes of Committee meetings for 2010, 2011 and 2012 to the Members' Area of the website, as well as AGM Minutes for 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011 and 2012. AGM 2009 would be added shortly
- 13.3 **Know Your Committee** - the sets of 75 words, supplied by Committee members for the Who's Who leaflet, had been added to "profile" information to the Committee page. The Committee Minutes, AGM Minutes and Committee members' profiles are all on the password-protected area of the website and were not available to the general public.
- 13.4 **Shop** - list of books on the Shop area had been completely updated with prices, postage and photos of book covers, supplied by Clair and Iain.
- 13.5 **Contacts via the website** - several enquiries received in September and October via the Contact form on the website to which she had replied, and had forwarded same to Richard, Val, the Committee or the Yahoo Groups list as appropriate for comment or information. Boats mentioned were St Tudno, Pensax, Ben & Antares (which may have resulted in a new member joining), Dorset (a dry dock booking) and Lion/The North. There was an enquiry about family history research, a request to run a boat gathering at Droitwich, a request for information on how to buy a first boat and notification of a probable boat gathering at Lymm.

14 Area Representatives – summaries only here, see appendix for detailed reports

- 14.1 **Central Shires – Rupert Smedley:** incident with Spey; Rugeley aqueduct; scanty information in stoppage reports; HS2 at Wood End lock.
- 14.2 **East Midlands – Mike Harrison:** serious pollution on the Erewash Canal; Cromwell weir inspection; weed eating weevils on the Chesterfield Canal; Stret Lock stoppage and open day 25 November 2012.
- 14.3 **Fens – Amy-Alys Tillson:** appointment as River Cam Conservator; dredging at Denver Sluice; problems at Salter's Lode; stoppages on R Nene; gold licences on the Cam; Parliamentary Waterways Group.
- 14.4 **Kennet & Avon – Tom Judd:** water levels low at western end; problems with live-aboards; 14day cruising zones; Bath redevelopment on river.
- 14.5 **London – Sandra Green:** canal narrowing under bridges; new Granary Square development; lack of consultation.
- 14.6 **Manchester and Pennine - George Boyle:** twin breaches at Croxton and Dutton on the Trent & Mersey; a new pontoon blocking the winding hole at Bollington Wharf; underwater rubble from collapsed wash wall at Whaley Bridge visitor moorings. Will write to local Waterways Manager to follow up.
- 14.7 **North East - David Lowe:** poorly attended User Group meeting; long stoppages at Bulhome, nr Castleford; public open day and separate open day event for freight operators; lack of consultation.
- 14.8 **North Wales & Border - Iain MacTavish** (by email): Hurlston bottom lock, meeting with Wendy Capelle and engineers, next meeting January 2013 to review dimensional data; User Group meeting 11 October 2012 covering T&M breaches, Welshpool lock open day 17 November, volunteers, stoppages programme, Sutton Weaver bridge repairs.
- 14.9 **North West** (vacancy)
- 14.10 **South East & Thames – Bernard Hales:** consultation meeting on future of Bulbourne yard; local volunteers & training; poetry on lock beams. User Group - Tring water shortages, continuous moorers.
- 14.11 **South Wales & Severn - Norman Mitchell:** plan to dredge Gloucester Docks using a Land & Water suction dredger; restricted opening times on the G&S from 1 November 2012 to 24 March 2013.

- 14.12 **West Midlands – Rebekah Fuller:** no report and apologies sent that had not been able to attend User Group
- 14.15 **General themes arising from Area Reps’ Reports** – lack of consultation before changes were implemented (eg Bollington Wharf), ignorance of historic implications (lock beam poetry), lack of expertise in trainers of volunteers. For further discussion a future meeting.
- 15. Reports from External organisations**
- 15.1 **Central Shires Partnership Board** – Phil Prettyman
Had attended a series of workshops as well as full board meetings. Generally positive, although he would like to see outcomes rather than it being a talking shop.
- 15.2 **North East Partnership Board** – David Lowe
Echoed Phil’s comments, but feeling quite positive. NE had set up a Freight Sub-Group. David had been asked to join CRT’s Freight Advisory Group, chaired by Dr David Quarmby, CBE.
- 15.3 **Navigation Advisory Group** – Sue Cawson
Another NAG meeting on 28 November by video link. Sue feeling very positive about the change to CRT and had found that the staff she had needed to contact recently had been very keen on working together with issues.
- 15.4 **South Wales & Severn** – Norman Mitchell
SW&S were seeking 2 more representatives and Norman was submitting an application based on his business experience.
- 15.5 **Heritage Audit** Laura reported hearing that one of the Partnership Boards was setting up a heritage recording plan/audit. If possible, she would send details to Phil and David L for ideas for their areas.
- 16. Any Other Business**
- 16.1 **Web Forum** – Paul outlined a strategy to raise the Club’s profile, and thereby increase membership and lobbying power, by aiming to make an on-line forum on the website the premier venue for lively discussions, information and expertise on historic boats and historic waterways aspects. Club’s current Yahoo Groups take-up only 116 out of total membership of c500, and AGMs/Socials attended by c110. He suggested perhaps 6 or 10 sub-groups within the forum, each with a Moderator, with posting and searching rights for members but read-only access for non-members, similar to that run by Dutch Barge Association (2,300 users) accessible by email or web-based. Consider open source forum software, phpBB. Ros to ask Steve Wood about feasibility, his costs and time-scale. **AGREED**
- 16.2 **CRT Licences** – Rupert had noticed that discount had been given as 6.5% instead of 10%. Noted for Phil’s meeting on 8 November 2012 (see 3.1 above).
- 16.3 **Keay & Hemelryk awards** – Phil to remind members at Social that closing date was 16 November 2012. One entry received to date. Sue to speak to a member to encourage nomination of wooden boat. Future agenda item, to consider rules of entry and eligibility.
- 16.4 **Anglers on moorings** – David D reported instance of CRT suggesting first-come-first-served policy, at odds with published leaflet, The Waterways Code for Anglers. May be an ad hoc reaction. Phil to discuss with David Kent (CRT Council and board member of Angling Trust).
- 16.5 **Historic expertise/consultants** – Bernard cited instance of 2 boats at Gloucester not being granted HLF funding because of apparent lack of need. A worry that outside bid consultants were insufficiently knowledgeable. Possibly set up a panel of experts to be available to consultants. Norman raised a similar worry that historic items were being removed from part (previously Coots café and blacksmith’s shop) of Gloucester Museum on its potential conversion to a Wetherspoons pub. To email details to Phil in time for Sir Neil Cossons meetings on 20/11/12.
- 17. Matters arising**
- 17.1 **Droitwich plaque** - Rupert had the plaques for distribution at the afternoon Social. Phil to announce it.
- 17.2 **Action List from last meeting** – Ros to update and circulate with draft Minutes.
- 18. Dates and Venues of Next Committee Meetings**
- 12 January 2013 – 11.00 am – Tamworth
 - 2 March 2013 – 10.00 am before the AGM - Napton

The meeting closed at 1.10 pm.

Signed 12 January 2013
Phil Prettyman Chairman