

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Saturday 5 October 2013
at Hazelhurst Cottage, Denford, Leek at 11.00 am

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

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Clair Butler, David Daines, Richard Booth, George Boyle, Jim Cook, Bernard Hales, Tom Judd, Iain MacTavish, Daniel Mawdsley, Amy-Alys Tillson.

2 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Having changed item 7.6 to read *November Social '14* instead of *November Social '13*, the minutes of the meeting held on 5 August 2013 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 **Membership Secretary – David Daines**

David wished to resign as Membership Secretary, but was willing to continue in post until after the AGM 2014 if necessary. The Committee expressed their heartfelt thanks for his many years of tireless and painstaking work in keeping the membership database up-to-date, chasing and recording subscriptions, supplying accurate newsletter address labels and welcoming new members to the club. Paul volunteered to take over as Membership Secretary, relinquishing his post as Secretary to Sarah, who was willing to combine this with her current role as Press Officer. All posts would have to be confirmed at the AGM in March 2014.

3.2 **Events and Awards Officer – Jim Cook**

Jim was relocating to the south coast and felt that the travelling distance would make it difficult for him to continue as Events & Awards Officer. Phil expressed his appreciation for the invaluable background work and research that Jim had done towards organising Foxton 2014, but the committee felt that it was not necessary to search for a successor immediately, as a working group would be set up to continue the work on Foxton.

3.3 **Manchester and Pennine Area Rep – George Boyle**

George had expressed his concern that he was not able to attend all committee meetings and had said he was willing to stand down. The committee felt that George made a valuable contribution by his local knowledge and his regular written reports and that it was not necessary for Area Reps to attend more than one or two committee meetings a year. They hoped he would be willing to continue.

Phil was asked to contact all three committee members, above, with this information.

4 **EVENTS**

4.1 **Meetings**

a) **November Social 2013, Napton**

- Sue would arrange a lift for Roger Wickson from Audlem to Napton.
- Paul reported that the Ken Keay book (see 5.1 below) should be printed and ready for launch at the Social. Tony Lewery would like to introduce the book, which would mean a slightly later start for Roger Wickson's talk.
- Laura would arrange to collect the keys to the hall so that the Shop could be set up from 10am onwards.

4.2 **Gatherings**

a) **Easter at Foxton, 18-21 April 2014** (see Phil's report in appendix, item 7.1)

- Dates and times – Laura confirmed that the small hall had been booked for the Thursday evening in order to give access to the kitchen so that the bar could be set up. The rest of the Village Hall had been booked for Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday at a cost approximately £860, as recorded in Minute 3.2(a), 3 August 2013. Tony Matts's staff (Bridge 61 pub) would set up on Thursday and strike the bar at close on Sunday evening, so Laura was asked to amend the booking for Monday to morning only, for cleaning purposes.
- Drinks - as the Village Hall is licensed, it was agreed to take up Tony Matts' offer to supply real ale @ £2/pint wholesale and to run the bar ourselves. Phil had suggested 3 barrels of each of Adnam's Bitter and Langton

Brewery's Inclined Plane. Tony Matts could supply additional beer at fairly short notice on a sale/return basis. An appeal for volunteers to staff it on rota would be made on the booking form and in the newsletter. Tea, coffee, soft drinks and wine (boxes) would be purchased separately. A suggested selling price of £2.50/pint would still be cheap for members and would offset the cost of hiring the Hall. Laura to organise a float for change. Phil to confirm options and dates with Tony Matts.

- Food – it was agreed that a barbecue on the Saturday evening, and filled rolls available at other times, would be a good idea. Working party to investigate further and confirm with caterer.
- Engraved glasses – it was agreed that Alison would investigate costs and quantities (100-200) of commemorative club glasses. Members could buy a glass, bring their own, or be given a plastic one – all would eliminate the need for washing up. Suggested designs included club logo alone, club logo plus HNBC Gathering/Easter Gathering, with a view to selling any remaining items through the Shop.
- Plaques - Mike would liaise with Bernard to investigate production and design.
- Moorings – Sue and Mike agreed to be harbourmasters for the event.
- Sanitary station and Water point – both available at the junction, so it would not be necessary to organise sewage disposal as at Droitwich. To avoid a long trek, boats with large capacity water tanks could offer fill-up facilities for members using water cans.
- Booking form – Ros to amend the Droitwich one, draft new details and send to Val for newsletter 2013/4.
- Programme of events (draft):
 - Friday evening - Talk. Suggested topics – Inclined Plane, Old Union Line. Alison to send Ros contact details for Richard Thomas. Alternative suggestions were David Blagrove, a speaker from IWA Leicester or from FIPT if this did not conflict with guided tour.
 - Saturday afternoon – Guided tour(s) of FIPT Museum, local walks (Phil to prepare route leaflet), films in the Hall.
 - Saturday evening - Music. Phil to contact James Woolcock to confirm that the amateur musicians who had played in The Rising Sun at Shackerstone would be willing to lead a come-all-ye. Numbers needed.
 - Sunday afternoon – Tat Auction. Suggested timings: 10am deposit of items, 1pm viewing, 2pm start.
 - Sunday evening – Quiz. Laura confirmed that Peter Oates would organise this.
 - Monday morning – Organ Recital. David L would liaise with Jim to contact local vicar via Mary Matts.
 - Other activities – bell ringing (Alison to check), boat parade from Junction to winding hole (45 mins each way). It was agreed that, because of transport difficulties, we would not organise a trip to the local microbrewery 6 miles away. Liaison with FIPT was needed to check what independent events they intended to hold.
- Working party - Mike, Val, Sue, Laura, Phil and Ros volunteered to assist Jim with site visit(s) and other arrangements detailed above.
- b) **Club's 50th Anniversary 2016** – It was agreed that, in order to gauge the membership's likely support for the venue, Phil would mention Basingstoke as a probable location in his Chairman's Notes in the next newsletter and at the November Social.
- c) **Chesterfield Canal** – Mike had ascertained that the only events to be organised by the canal society in 2014 were on the isolated section of the canal.

5 PUBLICATIONS

5.1 Ken Keay Sketchbook - reprint

Paul reported that he had arranged for the drawings to be scanned at 600dpi and would send other slides to Val for scanning. He had visited Ken Keay's daughter, Judith Ann Cooper, who had given him audiotapes of an interview with Jack Haddock and some slides. He had obtained her written permission regarding copyright, and had passed the other data to Sarah.

Sarah had produced a first draft of the new introduction, was awaiting further information from Bernard but would welcome an expert to check the draft's accuracy. Tony Lewery had expressed a wish to read, or contribute to, the introduction before the book was re-published. Sarah had also prepared a press release.

The print deadline was 24 October 2013, in order for the book to be available at the November Social. It was agreed that Sarah would contact Bernard and Tony Lewery with a cut-off date for their contributions. Sue to supply Tony Lewery's contact details.

5.2 **Boat Spotters' book** – see appendix for outline plan drawn up at Alvecote gathering

Following the August meeting, item 7.6, Phil had written to David Williams who, in his further reply, seemed keen on producing a very comprehensive book aimed at adult spotters, rather than the children's book the committee had in mind.

Sue, Rebekah, Phil and Ros had had an informal meeting at the Alvecote gathering and had produced a draft outline of a Spotters' book. The outline was accepted by the committee. It was agreed that the target age range would be 9-13 year-olds rather than adults, that the optimum size was probably A6 (pocket sized), and that the content should be an introduction with a labelled drawing of a working narrow boat, followed by photographs of distinguishing parts of various fleets of boats, together with common parts of all working boats, finally a list of extant boats listed by original carrier and class.

Alison would contact Trevor Yorke, who lived locally, to ask for permission to use one of his illustrations from the book "English Canals Explained". Ros would liaise with Richard to use the list of extant boats he had compiled with David Williams. Rebekah had produced a mock-up of a possible layout and agreed to co-ordinate the collection of suitable photographs – all to email her with possible photos. Rebekah, Sue, Ros, Phil and Sandra would form a small working party and Paul would be available to advise on printing at a later stage.

5.3 **Other publication information/ideas**

Paul had purchased 10 x ISBNs for the club at a cost of £126.

Other publishing ideas in the pipeline – Weaver Collection, Weaver Collection Then and Now, Roger Fuller's proposal for a Boat Restoration Handbook. It was agreed to reconsider some of these when the Ken Keay book and the Boat Spotter's guide had been finished.

For the Weaver Collection, it was suggested that Val and Mike bring sample book formats to the January meeting.

6 **HNBC SPEAKERS & AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIAL**

6.1 **Speakers**

Val reminded the meeting that IWA Leicester branch were still awaiting confirmation that an HNBC speaker would be available to give them a talk in either April or October 2014. Alison confirmed that she was willing to do the talk, and would contact the Leicester branch. She had had a similar request from the IWA Avon & Wilts branch in Bristol, which Norman was prepared to do if necessary and more convenient. Alison had a ready-prepared PowerPoint presentation that she was happy to share. It was suggested that interested members (Alison, Norman, Phil, David D?) get together to go through Alison's material, to make sure everyone delivered a similar presentation.

Phil and Ros held the club's projector – Alison would liaise with them when she needed it for an external presentation.

6.2 **Audio-visual material** – see appendix for report of informal meeting

Sue, David L, Phil and Ros had had an informal meeting with Blossom Edge at the Alvecote gathering, and had drawn up a strategy and proposed framework. The committee approved the framework and it was agreed that a small working party (David L, Rebekah, Norman and Sue, with Ros as note-taker) would meet to take the proposal forward, in discussions with Mike Askin. Norman volunteered the use of Arthur as a modern boat, and Phil suggested maybe Canal Cruising would let us use one of their hire boats, to show that good techniques were important for all boats, not just historic.

7 **WRITTEN REPORTS had been submitted from the following committee members, and are contained in the Appendix to these Minutes. These were taken as read; the topics covered are listed below, with any decisions or further discussion topics shown as bullet points.**

7.1 **Chairman** (Phil Prettyman) – Foxton 2014 information, Basingstoke 2016, old BW artefacts and correspondence with Nigel Crowe.

7.2 **Secretary** (Paul Hunter) – obtaining Fertan at a discount; EP asked to archive club newsletters; Morris Lubricants error on discount code corrected.

- Paul had received no correspondence, apart from IWA publications.

- He had followed up a lead from the website and had been to visit a very old prototype ice boat, the Fir Cone, made in 1860 for the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway. He had purchased it to save it from destruction. It would be craned out in November and taken to Stowe Hill. Newsletter article to follow.
- He had also contacted the present occupiers of the site of a small museum run by the late Alan Picken, but unfortunately the museum contents had been mixed in with personal effects in 3 containers and all had been destroyed.
- Judith Ann Cooper had handed over to Paul for safekeeping on behalf of the club, or for fundraising, 2 large original LMS maps and a BCN map. Paul would arrange for them to be scanned. No decision was taken on their disposal.

7.3 **Treasurer** (Laura Sturrock) – bank balances; year-end accounts.

- Laura had been told by Lloyds TSB that they had not received the authenticated ID documents that she had sent them in order to set up the internet-based bank account. Unfortunately it would be necessary for signatories to provide the documents again. Laure would email them instructions on what was required.
- She asked members to submit expenses claims for 2012-13 by the end of October in order to meet the year-end deadline.
- Laura had purchased a new First Aid Kit. Sarah would pass it on to Jim as our designated first aider at Foxton.

7.4 **Membership Secretary** (David Daines) – membership numbers; approve 6 memberships; lapsed members; resignation; stock of newsletters.

- The new memberships were approved.
- Resignation – see 3.1 above.
- One lapsed member had been under the impression that his non-historic boat could not be taken to club events. Phil to contact David to arrange who should speak to this member to clarify the issue. [Post-meeting note: David had already done this, re-assured the member that club events did not discriminate, and had secured the subscription.]
- Newsletters – Val would send a supply to David on her return home from boating.

7.5 **Archivist** (Richard Booth) – no report

7.6 **Newsletter Editor** (Val Roberts) – press date 4 November 2013; Foxton info required; Know your Committee; use of Weaver high-resolution photos; Weaver book; IWA Leicester branch speaker required.

- Foxton 2014 – see 4.2 (a) above.
- Rebekah and Sandra will send Know Your Committee articles to Val
- IWA Leicester speaker – see 6.1 above.
- Weaver book – see 5.3 above.

7.7 **Club Shop** (Clair Butler) – takings at Audlem and Whitchurch; postal business; water cans

- David L would ask Clair how many Malc Slater books to bring for the shop.

7.8 **Navigation Officer** (Sue Cawson) – see also 7.12 below, Navigation Advisory Group.

- Norman reported that he had emphasised the problem of intrusive offside vegetation during a conversation with Tony Hales, Rupert commented that a hirer, viewing the Leek arm from the bridge, had thought it was derelict. Rupert would email Darren Green at Central Shires accordingly.
- Sue reiterated how important it was to email or phone the local waterways offices with problems, as without a logged call CRT had no way of quantifying the problem. Boaters did not seem to be using the contact number that was printed on the back of licences. Ros would draft, for Sue's comment/approval, a list of phone and email contact addresses for each waterway, with a view to putting them in the newsletter and/or as a download from the website.
- Coir bundles were being used to introduce reeds to canal banks, often funded initially as part of a "greening" scheme, but not maintained thereafter. The coir bundles, when floating semi submerged and loose, became a navigation hazard. Alison requested photos in order to take up on behalf of IWA. Ros to forward them to her.

7.9 **Press Officer** (Sarah Hale)

- Sarah reported that she had completed the draft introduction to the Ken Keay book and had sent it to Paul (see 5.1 above).
- After some discussion, it was agreed that a suitable topic for the next club column in Narrow Boat would be Hazards to Navigation (see 7.8 above). Sarah would liaise with Sue on the text (500 words). Ros would send Sarah some recent photos of encroaching reeds/trees to illustrate the article.

7.10 **Events & Awards**

- Phil reported that he had already received one nomination, for the Dart. Closing date for further nominations was 7 December 2013 after the November Social, when Phil would remind members.
- In December, Alison would retrieve the Keay award, for refurbishment, from the Wooden Boat Society.

7.11 **Website** (Ros Prettyman) – web server upgrade; website re-design; contacts via website

- Ros apologised to Alison for the delay in adding IWA work party dates to the calendar. Alison would send further dates as they became available.
- Ros asked that dates of 2014 meetings and gatherings be sent to her as soon as possible for the website calendar, so that it continued to be the go-to place for dates.
- Phil asked whether it was possible to find out how many members used the website, as opposed to the general public. Ros to check with Steve.

7.12 **External organisations:**

Navigation Advisory Group (Sue Cawson) - ladder survey; presentation on strong stream warnings; new vegetation contract awarded; pinch point group.

Local Waterway Partnerships – many Partnerships had now produced Strategic Plans, which were published on CRT web site for comment.

7.13 **Area Reps**

Central Shires (Rupert Smedley) – next User Group to be held at Rugeley on Wednesday 9 October 2013.

- Alison asked if IWA/CUCT raffle tickets could be sent out with the newsletter some time in 2014, the raffle to raise funds for the restoration of strapping posts. The committee felt this was a cause worth supporting and agreed to bear any additional postage costs for the newsletter in due course, as well as selling them at the AGM in March 2014.
- Rupert reported that a campaign to restore the gauging dock at Etruria as a dry dock was being led by Andrew Watts. The local subsidence now caused flooding problems when the dock was used.

East (Amy-Alys Tillson) – gold licence holders on the Cam; Willow's travels.

East Midlands (Mike Harrison)

- The DVD of the Birdswood being craned into position at Cromford Wharf would be quite a long while in production and was unlikely to be available to show at the AGM 2014.
- David L reported that CRT was due to announce a large dredging project for the River Trent.

Kenet & Avon (Tom Judd) – the first User Group meeting for a year will be on 28 November 2013.

London (Sandra Green)

- User Group meeting due to be held in 2 weeks.

Manchester & Pennine (George Boyle) – Upper Peak Forest collapsed wash walls rebuilt; possible resignation

- Resignation – see 3.3 above

North East (David Lowe) - high court action re Leeds wharves; Lafarge-Tarmac aggregate traffic; visitor moorings in Leeds.

- Customer meeting in 2 weeks' time to be led by David on behalf of local Partnership.

North Wales & Borders (Iain MacTavish) – NW&B Partnership Annual meeting report; 10 year strategic plan available for viewing.

North West (Daniel Mawdsley) – sink holes and embankment collapse near Blackburn; awaiting minutes of User Group meeting; club Christmas cards selling well.

South Wales & Severn (Norman Mitchell)

- It was thought that the Surgeries, that had replaced the former User Groups, had not been particularly successful and might be phased out in favour of User Groups again. Surgery notes were now available on the website. Annual meeting date announced for 23 October 2013.
- Norman reported on worries locally that artefacts were being cleared out of the warehouse buildings at Gloucester museum, and that “CRT Trading” was not subject to the same limits as imposed on the Trust as a charity and might be pursuing a more aggressive commercial letting policy.
- Historic boats Wye, Oak and Northwich were deteriorating and in need of a full survey. Sue suggested he contact Mike Carter (surveyor).
- Phil asked Norman to contact Nigel Crowe for clarification, and to copy him in on the emails.
- Sue asked Norman for an update on pontoons on the River Severn.

West Midlands (Rebekah Fuller) – Wolverhampton flight re-opened; Netherton tunnel depth problems; no news on Broad St basin; boat stuck in Aston flight.

- User Group to be held in 2 weeks’ time.
- Lapal canal – contrary to expectations, the developers’ planning application did not include restoration.
- Alison reported that WRG had been asked to rebuild the wing wall of Wilmecote Lock on the Stratford.

8 MATTERS ARISING

8.1 The Action List from 5 August 2013 was updated.

8.2 Minute 7.6 August 2013 – Indexing - Laura had obtained some details from Peter Oates about the options for indexing club records (details in appendix). Steve Wood had commented that documents to be indexed had to be scanned into a text format (ie by OCR) or be in digital format already such as recent newsletters and minutes. Older documents/newsletters scanned as JPGs could not be indexed by software. Further investigations were necessary to confirm their format before proceeding.

8.3 Minute 9.2 August 2013 - Tall ship Astrid – Annie Jenner (Eli) had emailed links to newspaper articles showing the Astrid being raised. Ros would forward the details to the rest of the committee.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Alison reported that the Government had postponed indefinitely plans to consider the merger of EA with CRT. IWA was asking branches to write to MPs to ask for the merger to be re-instated into current policy or to be included in manifestos. It was felt that some pressure groups exerted undue influence due to their geographical location in the constituencies of certain MPs and that other groups such as IWA had to ‘shout louder’ in order to be heard. Alison would forward details to Paul and ask him to write a sample letter that all committee members could use as a base for letters to their own individual MPs.

9.2 Ros reported that a new group, the Association of Continuous Cruisers, had been launched on 27 September 2013.

9.3 Norman reported the date for a talk on Gloucester Docks at Hempstead Village Hall on 22 October 2013.

9.4 Mike commented on the work being carried out by Adie Polglase on the Dane on the bank at Alvecote. Sue supplied information about the Heritage Foundation that had set up a project to fund and restore wooden boats, with a view to the boat being crewed by young boaters.

10 DATES AND PLACES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Saturday 30 November 2013	11.00am	short meeting at Napton, prior to Social
Saturday 11 January 2014	11.00am	meeting date to be agreed, suggested after the end of the meeting

The meeting closed at 5.50pm with thanks to Alison and Rupert Smedley for hosting the meeting.

Phil Prettyman
Chairman