

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT OWNERS CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Saturday 16th July 2011
at Hazelhurst Cottage, Denford, Staffordshire
starting at 11.00 am

PRESENT WERE: Phil Prettyman (Chairman), Richard Booth, George Boyle, David Daines, Mike Harrison, Martin Jiggins, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Alison Smedley, Rupert Smedley and Laura Sturrock.

Margaret Booth and Peter Oates were in attendance. Colin Jenner was in attendance from item 11 onwards.

1. Apologies and Welcome

Apologies had been received from Sue Cawson, Jim Cook, Sandra Green, Steve Harmer, David Lowe, Norman Mitchell, Viv Scragg, Iain MacTavish and Clair Butler.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on 14th May 2011 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

3. Chairman's Report

3.1 Phil reported that his application to be on the West Midland Local Partnership Board had not been successful but he had been told that it was more important for him to be involved nationally.

3.2 Olympics 2012 – Phil had contacted Tony Hales regarding the suggestion that there should be a representation of historic narrow boats at the Olympics and was waiting to hear back from him.

3.3 Since the last meeting, the Trustees for the New Waterway Charity have been announced. Most relevant to the Club is John Dodwell, former CBOA chairman.

4. Secretary's Report

4.1 Alison had submitted the Club's comments on the DEFRA consultation on the New Waterway Charity, following the circulation of two drafts and incorporating everyone's comments. Final draft to be copied to Phil for him to write a précis for the newsletter.

4.2 Weil's Disease Leaflets – Val had arranged the reprinting of 3000 copies of the card at a cost of £182. Alison had contacted IWA Festivals and WRG and both been very pleased to accept the offer of Weil's Disease cards for boaters at the Festival at Burton (300 copies) and volunteers on canal camps (400 copies) respectively. Val arranged delivery of both batches by post. Alison had received one request for a card to be sent out, from a Muriel Griffiths of Liverpool.

4.3 The Club had been sent a copy of a revised Operator Agreement for "Low Risk Roving Traders" applying to traders carrying less than 1 tonne of stock. Alison to forward email to David Lowe, Bernhard Hales and Phil Prettyman for them to consider with reference to the previous meetings that have been had with BW on the operator agreements. George asked for the position of tug operators/towage to be considered in any discussions with BW.

5. Treasurer's Report

5.1 Laura reported that Club funds stood at £14868 (Santander £12495.81 and Natwest £2373.14).

5.2 Laura recently had a meeting with Matt Beamish for him to hand over all the Club's accounting records. Laura will look at shop profits, particularly looking at sales to members versus the public and will bring figures to the next meeting.

- 5.3 The talk given by Ray Buss at Chester on Mandy Thursday was very well received. A donation had been discussed but not yet sent. It was agreed Laura should send a donation of £50 to the Chester Canal Heritage Trust. It was agreed that £50 should be a standard amount for such an event.
- 5.4 Laura reported ongoing problems with fraudulent transactions on the Natwest account. Laura had two suggestions to get around the problem - one was to open a new account (still with Natwest, but with a new account number), and the other was to ask Natwest to never allow any direct debits out of the account. Matt had previously been told that they couldn't (or wouldn't) do this, however. It was therefore agreed that Laura should arrange with Natwest for the account to be changed to one with a new number.
- 5.5 David Daines asked whether it was possible for he and Laura to have online access to the bank account, in David's case for him to check whether standing orders for membership have been paid. However, it was agreed not to pursue this as anyone with online access would also be able to spend money without a second signatory.

6. Easter Gathering 2012

- 6.1 Droitwich had been suggested as a venue and after discussion it was agreed to pursue this. Phil will contact Gwilym Jones as he has local contacts. Phil said that it will be important for the Club to have a presence at any events planned to celebrate the launch of the new waterways charity in early April 2012. Phil will ask Simon Salem if there is anything planned. 1st April is the launch date of the new charity, Easter Sunday is 8th April 2012.
- 6.2 Easter 2013 and the proposed event at Stoke Bruerne was discussed. Laura said that the Stoke Bruerne event plan is to feature boats throughout the ages, so not just historic boats. Laura will find out which specific boats they would like to attend and be moored in the museum pound, with any others who turn up mooring further down the locks. It was agreed that the Club should support both Stoke Bruerne and Ellesmere Port in 2013. Easter Sunday is 31st March 2013.

7. Weaver Collection

- 7.1 Val had heard that BCNS has been given a set of slides described as the "Weaver Collection" from the Railway and Canal Historical Society, who had previously told the Club that they didn't it. It is not known whether it's a duplicate set of the slides, or whether it is a different set. Mike & Val and/or Phil will talk to Hugh Potter about this and try to get an introduction to Ray Shill (BCNS and RCHS) to try to ascertain whether they are the same or different and to agree a way of sharing the information.
- 7.2 Phil's meeting to follow up the suggestion that the Weaver Collection owned by the Club should be stored in the Archive at Ellesmere Port was postponed due to the Mersey crossing being brought forward. This still needs following up. The future of the waterways archive is currently up for discussion so agreed Mike and Val should continue to store the originals for the time being until the situation becomes clearer.

8. Membership Secretary's Report

- 8.1 David Daines had emailed a report. As at 13th July membership stood at 463, including 5 Exchange & 2 Honorary. This compares to 452 inclusive at time of last meeting. Of paying members 293 are non SO and 163 are paid by SO.

- 8.2 The following new and re-joined members were approved:

Martin Jiggins	<i>Denebola</i>	467 Re-joined
Chris Williams	[<i>Chug</i>] & [<i>GoGo</i>]	1637*
Michael & Penelope Bryant	[<i>Aldebaran</i>]	1638
Andrew Elliott & Janet Campbell	<i>Bison</i>	1639
Kate Greaves	<i>Stratford</i>	1640
Tony Hales	N/A	1641
Dave Davies	Assoc. with <i>Nuneaton & Brighton</i>	1517 Re-joined
Andrew Freer	<i>Lily</i>	1397 Re-joined
Simon Freedman	Tasmania	1642
Jeff Parrott	N/A	1643
John Pomfret	N/A	1644

- 8.3 *Chris was the partner of member 1296 Marie Sumpter. They have parted and Chris has now joined in his own right. *Chug* is a modern boat, but *GoGo* is a 1930 riveted ex RAF tender, now configured as a wide boat tug. It was agreed this should still be in square brackets as it is not a narrow boat.
- 8.4 Tony Hales's membership. David took the decision to exclude Tony's details from the boat and address list and advised Tony of this in his welcome letter and invited him to e-mail if he wished otherwise.
- 8.5 The processing of renewal payments was discussed. Agreed further discussion required and this will be considered along with changes to membership categories to be discussed later in the year.

9. Newsletter Editor's Report

- 9.1 Val had circulated a report. The revised press date for 2011/3 is 5th Sept.
- 9.2 Val is awaiting a payment of £20.00 from Narrow Boat magazine for use of a Weaver Pic. Val has been letting members have pics of their own boats when they have asked, but suggested that we should have a strategy for other enquiries. It was agreed that individual photographs in the Weaver Collection would be free to members for private use. Non-members private use £5 per photo (not for publication) and commercial use (ie publication) £20 per photo. In special circumstances they would be made available free to non-members, eg to old boaters or descendants of old boaters in the photographs. Not to be encouraged, but if anyone wanted a print, the charge would be £10.
- 9.3 Val will re-send to Phil the email from Martin O'Keefe with a query about the Industrial Railway Society for Phil to action.
- 9.4 Val had been contacted by Patrick Crecraft of the Foxton Inclined Plane Trust (FIPT) who are planning an event at Foxton in 2014, to celebrate the opening of what is now known as the 'Leicester summit' - as this line opened in 1814. They anticipate a 2 day event with boats moored above and below Foxton Locks. At this stage they are after advice as to the timing of such an event in 2014. Val to reply with list of what the current regular events are that our members tend to attend, with the proviso that they may change. Val will also suggest that it could be a possible venue for the Club's Easter Gathering that year as May, June July tend to be very busy. Easter Sunday that year is 20th April 2014. Otherwise August is probably the best month for the event.

10. Archivist's Report

- 10.1 Richard Booth reported that the boat list was still not quite yet in a form to go on a website.
- 10.2 Alison had received an email from Gillian Bolt of IWA about a boat spotting book idea. Alison to forward email to Richard to follow up.

11. Area Representative Reports

- 11.1 **East Midlands** – Mike had circulated an email from Sean McGinley stating dimensions for the locks on the Chesterfield as 6'10½ plus 1" clearance either side. The data from the recent survey hasn't been made available although Sean said it would be. Consideration is being given to rebuilding one side. It will be interesting to see what happens in September when a number of historic boats will attempt to go up the flight following the boat gathering.
- 11.2 **Fens** – Jim Cook had submitted a report in his absence: The Middle Level Commissioners have noted a large increase (from a very low base) in the amount of boats visiting the Middle Levels as well as greater boat movements internally. Jim gets the impression that they are somewhat alarmed by this as it might mean that they will have to review, along with other interested parties, the provision of more and better facilities. Jim noted that the Middle Levels are almost exclusively a drainage and irrigation system and they see more visitors as being in conflict with these legal responsibilities. The Middle Level Commissioners have also taken a strong line with regard individual fisherman. They have noted that individuals and small 'unofficial groups' regularly cut back vegetation, dig away reed beds and cut steps and make platforms utilising old chairs and pallets. This is causing the Commissioners considerable problems regarding fulfilling their legal obligations by for instance blocking up their pumps and making their locks malfunction. They are looking into charging official clubs that use their waters with the responsibility of policing all their waters with the bonus of some funding to help with this. It should be noted that almost all the banks are privately owned by individual landowners with no tow paths (haling ways).

- 11.3 Kennet & Avon** – no report as no area rep at the current time.
- 11.4 London** – no report in absence of Sandra Green. Martin Jiggins reported that the sanitary station at Little Venice has been out of use for some time and there is concern that it might not get repaired. There is weed in the basin at Little Venice.
- 11.5 Manchester & Pennine** – George Boyle reported that the sanitary station at Whaley Bridge has been closed until further notice at the insistence of water utility company apparently due to excessive amounts of blue chemical finding its way to the sewage works. Water levels on the summit of the Macclesfield and Peak Forest have been down by 6” recently, apparently due to BW keeping it down by 2” to avoid high level leakages. This makes it difficult for deep draughted boats. George will raise this at the next user group meeting. It was noted that water levels are low generally due to the low rainfall in the spring. Rupert commented on the poor maintenance on the Marple flight. George said it had gone downhill over last 12 months. BW are apparently not greasing paddles as much as they have done previously due to oil ending up in water.
- 11.6 North East** – David Lowe reported by email that the North East waterway manager (Jon Horsfall) recently gathered together a group of 'stakeholders' including himself for a strategy meeting where they were asked to identify the present challenges, and present a vision for 2025. George Boyle reported that he had noticed an issue on narrowboatworld.com regarding the Stainforth & Keadby where the canal bank has had notches cut into it so fisherman can fish down at waterlevel. Phil will raise with David Kent, BW’s fishing person.
- 11.7 North Wales & Border** – no report from Iain MacTavish. Martin Jiggins asked what progress was being made concerning Hurlston – Iain was collating the information from club members. He was then going to pass this on to Wendy Capelle. Her response was so far as been positive and she has been keeping a log as well. The two logs need collating and once this is done then a meeting will be arranged with BW.
- 11.8 North West** – nothing from Rebekah Fuller this time.
- 11.9 South East** – Aylesbury Canal Society start building work on their new premises in August. The Slough Arm is to be dredged, along with the long pound on the Aylesbury Arm.
- 11.10 South Wales & Severn** – no report in the absence of Norman Mitchell.
- 11.11 West Midlands** – no report in the absence of Steve Harmer. Recent emails concerning water levels on the BCN were noted. The West Midlands Local Partnership Board has been set up. Vaughan Welch and Ivor Caplan of IWA have been appointed to this pilot board which has good representation from waterways and boating interests.
- 11.12 Central Shires** – Rupert had nothing to report.

12. Boating Issues

Sue has been following up various issues relating to bridge holes. A few pinchpoint questionnaires have been received and responded to by Sue.

13. Website

- 13.1 Ros had circulated an email showing usage analysis of the website. The number of visitors to the website has increased in the last two months (average 285 per week in May and 329 in June) but other numbers have remained about the same since April 2010 (roughly 3 minutes per visit with 6 or 7 pages being viewed). Boat pages continue to be of high interest and it appears that the Recent Posts facility is well used.
- 13.2 A website registered in the USA (<http://clamn.com>) has lifted over 30 photographs from the Club’s website (some, watermarked, are from our old site, some are more recent) and although the club is acknowledged as the source, no permission was sought. Steve Wood has contacted the site to ask for the photos to be removed, but has had no reply yet. The issue was brought to our attention by Derek Reynolds following a discussion on the Canal World Forum about the inaccuracy of the Clamn site and issues concerning copyright.
- 13.3 Following the investigations into the copyright issues of the membership list, it was agreed that the membership list should now be made available on the Members Only section of the website. If people want a printed copy they can send SAE to David who will send a copy.

- 13.4 Post meeting note – Steve Wood has moved the Club’s website to a new server following several incidents of hacking with the old server.

14. Club Shop

- 14.1 Clair had emailed a report. At Braunston boat rally £1027.29 was taken, made up of £629.77 in book (& 2 plaque) sales, £249 card sales, £127 membership subscriptions (including 3 renewals plus extra postage for 2 overseas members) and £21.52 in donations including old magazines sold. Clair thanked Laura, Alison and especially Mike and Val for all the help over the weekend. One of the real benefits of the stand is the interest from the public and the help the Club can give to people who are trying to trace boats, especially to the children of ex boaters.
- 14.2 Card sales this year, based on the first three major events of the year (Braunston AGM, Easter gathering, Braunston boat show) are down: In 2009 we sold 191. In 2010 we sold 190. In 2011 we have sold 154. If any committee members are going to any events where they could sell christmas cards it would be appreciated.
- 14.3 Clair reports that there are only 2 plaques left. She has the pattern. The last batch were made by John Sutton (Rupert’s contact at Stoke-on-Trent Boat Club. Rupert to arrange an order of a further 30 (post meeting note: Clair suggested 25). It was suggested that a new logo and/or plaque could be considered for the Club’s 50th anniversary in 2016. Another idea suggested for that anniversary was having some ribbon plates made.
- 14.4 The committee noted that the Club shop is doing extremely well and the committee thanked Iain and Clair for all their hard work.

15. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings not already covered

- 15.1 Val had arranged for Keith Lodge to receive his newsletter by email but has not heard whether this was successful or not.
- 15.2 Hi viz clothing issue (14.1 in May meeting minutes). It was agreed that this was part of a much larger issue and the proposed letter would not be sent at the present time as the whole health and safety subject needs to be tackled through BAAF. Phil will talk to David Lowe.

16. Any Other Business

- 16.1 IWA National Festival at Burton on Trent – Phil had received an invitation to attend the Chairman’s Reception on the Friday. Phil might be able to attend. Alison will be attending wearing another hat.
- 16.2 Alfred Ritchie Cockerel at the IWA Burton on Trent National - Alison will email the awards officer and ask what arrangements have been made for judging and offer our services if required.
- 16.3 On 12th November there will be a meeting to look at possible changes to the Club’s constitution. Alison will produce a list of the issues to be considered (having referred to the last couple of year’s worth of minutes) and will circulate this a few weeks before the meeting. Issues will include joint membership, committee membership particularly annual appointments, how to go about the voting for 2012 AGM, voting in future (change to constitution to make this easier). It was felt that the Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and Richard Booth should all attend the meeting, along with any other committee member who feels they have an interest. The outcome of the meeting on 12th November will then be circulated with a view to being approved at the committee meeting on 19th November. Proposed changes would need to go in the December newsletter.
- 16.4 A venue for the 2012 AGM was discussed. Village halls in Napton, Harbury, Willoughby and Long Itchington were all suggested and Phil & Ros will co-ordinate a day out (Mike & Val, Laura & Peter and Iain & Clair all to be invited) in August to look at them.

17. Dates and Venues of Next Meetings

- 17th September – Horsley Woodhouse, Derbyshire, 11am
- 12th November – 1 Vicarage Road, Marsworth, 11am - special meeting to discuss the Constitution
- 19th November – Braunston Memorial Hall (10am with members meeting 2.30pm)

The meeting closed at 4.30pm

Alison Smedley
Secretary