

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 11.00 am on Saturday 10 January 2015
at The School Room, Stoke Breurne Museum, Stoke Bruerne, Northants

PRESENT: Phil Prettyman (Chairman), Richard Booth, Clair Butler, Sue Cawson, David Daines, Sarah Edgson, Nick Grundy, Bernard Hales, Mike Harrison, Paul Hunter, David Lowe, Iain MacTavish, Norman Mitchell, Michael Pinnock, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Alison Smedley, Rupert Smedley, Laura Sturrock, Amy-Alys Tillson.
In attendance: Kathryn Dodington (morning), James Tidy

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from George Boyle, Sarah Hale, Daniel Mawdsley,

2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2014 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 DATES FOR MEETINGS 2015

It was agreed that as the committee now numbered 24 members, it would be more sensible to seek suitably sized meeting rooms rather than ask committee members to host them in their own homes. Sue had checked CRT Hatton's offices but they were not suitable. The following dates were listed with some new venues to be investigated:

- 7 March – AGM at Lapworth. Already booked and advertised.
- 9 May – Stafford Boat Club (Sue to check), Hazelhurst Cottage as standby.
- ~~8 August~~ – Aylesbury Canal Society HQ (David D to check), Beggarlee Wharf as standby.
- 2 August – Sunday meeting at Aylesbury [confirmed post meeting].
- 3 October – Gloucester Museum (Norman to check).
- 28 November – Social at Lapworth, already booked. Dr Della Sadler-Moore had indicated she was willing to present a talk on “Care on the Cut”, based on research for a book co-written with Lorna York from Stoke Bruerne, and Norman was asked to confirm this. Phil to contact Lorna. [Post meeting note – Dr Sadler-Moore and Lorna York both accepted the invitations.]

4 AGM 7 March 2015 at Lapworth

4.1 Nominations for Committee Posts Ten committee posts were due for election at the AGM. The closing date for nominations was 20 February 2015. Paul explained that he wished to resign as Membership Secretary but would be willing to stand as Secretary. Kathryn offered her help on a short term basis with the Membership role, but Sarah E was willing to stand for the post. Paul agreed to continue as Membership Secretary until the AGM, operating both old and new membership databases while the new one was bedded in. Sarah would work on the new version with Paul and with help from Steve (webmaster). Sarah agreed to continue as West Mids Rep as well for the time being.

Ian Lauder (Badsey & Angel) had spoken to Phil about the Press Officer post at the November Social and had emailed Sarah H for details immediately afterwards, but it was not known if he had submitted a nomination form, Phil to check with Sarah H after the meeting.

The following members proposed and seconded the candidates:

Post	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
Secretary	Paul Hunter	Laura Sturrock	Alison Smedley
Treasurer	Laura Sturrock	Phil Prettyman	Clair Butler
Archivist	Richard Booth	David Daines	Nick Grundy
Membership Sec	Sarah Edgson	Laura Sturrock	Clair Butler
Press Officer	Amy-Alys Tillson	Richard Booth	Mike Harrison
Navigation	Sue Cawson	Alison Smedley	Mike Harrison
Shop	Clair Butler	Sue Cawson	Ros Prettyman
K&A Rep	Nick Grundy	Val Roberts	David Lowe
N E Rep	David Lowe	Norman Mitchell	Rupert Smedley
West Mids Rep	Sarah Edgson	Laura Sturrock	Iain MacTavish

4.2 Motions The deadline for their receipt had been 9 January 2015. Phil to check with Sarah H if any had been submitted. [Post meeting note – none had been received.]

- 4.3 **Agenda for AGM** The draft agenda had been circulated prior to the meeting. The timings were approved, some further detail was added to the description of the speaker's topic, and the order of the committee post elections was amended to reflect the order above. The agenda would be circulated with newsletter 2015/1.
- 4.4 **Examiner of Accounts** – Laura would check if Dave Turner was willing to continue as examiner.
- 4.4 **Probable dates for AGM 2016** - 5 or 12 March 2016.
- 5 **KEYAY AND HEMELRYK AWARDS** – Confidential item until the presentations at the AGM
- Only one nomination had been received for each Award but each was scrutinised and scored against the standard scoring criteria to ensure that the boats were worthy winners.
- 5.1 **Hemelryk Award** was given to the Clover, owned by Michael Pinnock, nominated by Sarah Edgson
- 5.2 **Keay Award** was given to the Birchills, owned by Black Country Living Museum, nominated by Ade Polglase.
- 5.3 **Trophies** - Clair would contact the museum at Ellesmere Port to arrange for the return of the Keay rose bowl. David D had brought the Hemelryk cabin block to the meeting, Ros would arrange for a further small plaque on its base to be engraved with the winner's details.
- 5.4 **Presentation at the AGM** – Sarah E would invite the team from Norton Canes, Bernard would invite the BCLM's Director of Collections together with the team who had carried out the work (Ade Polglase, Andy Cox, Ian Riley).
- 5.5 **Visuals at the AGM** - Paul would prepare a PowerPoint show of the work that had been done. This was important in the case of the Clover which had looked superficially good beforehand but had had to have extensive renovation to deal with underlying problems.

6 **PUBLICATIONS** – Confidential item, commercial sensitivity

7 **ANNIVERSARY GATHERING AUGUST 2016 – BASINGSTOKE?**

Phil explained that Anniversary gatherings were held at the start of August as the club had been founded on the Bank Holiday weekend which was then on the first weekend of the month. He was disappointed that only 24 boat names had been put forward and was worried that the location was excluding many club members from attending the celebrations. Local canal societies were eager for the club to attend, 2016 also being the 50th anniversary of the Basingstoke Canal Society. Alison wondered if the canal might itself limit the number of boats that could be accommodated because of water restrictions, but Phil replied that the tentative location at Brookwood was on a section of the canal that was back-pumped anyway, so should not present a problem. Iain pointed out that the membership at large had not responded, the number of 24 had been by a show of hands at the November Social. Mike had received 4 or 5 positive responses but was not sure if they were from some of the hand-raisers at the meeting so could not be added to the overall total. Rupert reminded the meeting that the proposal to go to Basingstoke had been in order to facilitate attendance by southern-based boats. Nick added that the campaigning aspect should be emphasised.

It was agreed that there should be a final push to find out if a viable number of boats would attend – Phil to ask in the Chairman’s Notes in the newsletter, a separate panel with details also in the newsletter, also website, FaceBook – all replies to go to Mike.

In the meantime, Alison would send Phil the contact details of Gareth Jones (IWA Guildford and Reading Branch Chairman) who would be able to advise on contacts. Contact details for Philip Riley (Chairman, BCS) were also to hand. Phil pointed out the chicken-and-egg aspect of contacting navigation authorities to try for a special deal on licences, only to find that insufficient numbers of boats would attend. He was wary of committing the committee to a lot of time spent preparing (licences, marquee, beer, quiz, H&S, permissions) and organising an event that failed to materialise due to lack of support.

Suggested back-up locations were Pelsall, Bugsworth, Aldermaston or Newbury.

8 AUCTION OF CANAL ANTIQUES AT WESTON VILLAGE HALL, 21 MARCH 2015

Jobs to be done – Ros had circulated a draft list before the meeting. Committee members volunteered for various roles, an updated version would be circulated after the meeting.

Hire of Weston Hall – already booked 5-10pm Friday and all day Saturday. There was no other evening event arranged for the hall on the Saturday. Clair and Iain were asked to change the Friday booking to 3pm instead of 5pm start.

Catalogue – Phil would send a copy of the final version to the vendors. More information had been supplied for the entry on lot 038 (Swingle Tree). The catalogue would be available as a download from the website, also to view on-line, and printed A4 stapled copies would be supplied by Mike and Val on request. The cost of the printed version would be £5 to cover printing, packing and postage, to be paid in advance by cheque or PayPal.

Refreshments – Clair and Iain would contact Grant Thomson to see if he could arrange the bar, but tea/coffee/cake/crisps would be supplied/organised by the committee as it did for the AGM and November Social.

Payment – Paul reported that the club now had a PayPal account that could be used for paying for Shop orders, membership etc. He was in the process of negotiating a more favourable rate of 1.4% + 20p per transaction which he hoped would be settled by the end of the following week. He had also investigated the PayPal Here system of PDQ (process data quickly) devices to take payment by credit/debit cards. The cost was £69.99 plus 2.5% per transaction. Transactions of up to £2,000 per day were processed immediately, but if more than £2,000 was taken it was kept in a 30-day holding account before payment was made – this was to do with money laundering protection. The system had to be linked to a designated smart phone and would need a good internet signal in order to work quickly enough. It was agreed that Paul should sign the club up for PayPal Here, it could be tested at the AGM and would be useful for the Shop at various locations.

Internet connection at Weston – Clair advised there was no Wi-Fi in the hall, nor a telephone landline. The best signal was obtained in the entrance doorway through a BT Wi-Fi signal. Alison and Rupert would call in on their way home to check the signal. Clair would ask Grant Thomson about the signal locally. Amy would find out about signal boosters from a contact who regularly used them.

Publicity – newsletter (Val), Facebook (Amy), website and Yahoo Groups list (Ros). It was suggested that emails about the new website and auction details be sent to Stafford Boat Club, BMS, Canal Junction, Wolverhampton Boat Club, BCNS Boundary Post editor, IWA Bulletin, Guild of Waterway Artists.

Transport – it had been agreed that the vendors would take the valuable/painted ware in their van to Weston Hall, but the bulky items were originally to have been taken by Laura and Peter on Stanton. This was now proving difficult, so Norman agreed to arrange for a flat-bed truck, tarpaulins and sack trucks to take the goods instead. Ros to email directions to Norman.

Accommodation – Clair and Iain had ascertained that it was permitted to leave one campervan for one night in the car park of Weston Hall.

Setting up the auction in the Hall – Iain would source some cheap cardboard or plastic sheeting to protect the newly refurbished hall floor from heavy/grubby Lots. There were 24 tables in the Hall that would need covering as well, some could be covered by the Shop tablecloths, others in cardboard or plastic sheeting. Sarah E would send Clair a cross-referenced list of photograph and lot numbers, this would be necessary when setting out the lots on the Friday evening. Ros would obtain cloakroom tickets (1-200) to affix to the Lots. Iain and Clair would check if we could borrow staging from the local school as there was none in the Hall.

Bidding – Laura would allocate bidding numbers and maintain the list of registered bidders, Amy would order bidding cards (501-700) to be handed out to registered bidders at the door.

Phil thanked the team for their efforts in setting up the auction.

- 9 **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.
- 9.1 **Chairman** (Phil Prettyman) – no written report
- **NINF** - Phil reported that he had attended a NINF meeting where there had been little criticism of CRT, largely, he thought, because of the positive effect that CEO Richard Parry was having on waterway users. The discussions centred on problems associated with mooring and there seemed to be general goodwill to help CRT solve the problems. Next meeting would be on 21 February 2015.
 - **NBTA** (National Bargee Traveller's Association) was a national organisation but currently with a London focus, very vocal and well organised.
 - Michael commented that wide beam boats were being used for residential use but had no official moorings so became in effect 'continuous cruisers'. Some boats were being offered for rent privately, he doubted whether they had insurance cover or Boat Safety Scheme certificates, which was grossly unfair when legitimate local boat businesses were inspected rigorously. CRT was being asked to install mooring rings, which would result in the London waterway becoming virtually a linear mooring throughout its length. Moorings had been lost from the Olympics site and new ones were not being established. CRT was moving boaters on, but not providing other moorings for them to go to. David D commented that it was a social housing problem that had landed on the waterways – lack of affordable housing meant people were seeking cheap alternatives. Generally, it seemed that CRT was making serious efforts to deal with the mooring problems (see also Nick's Report on the situation on the K&A) but the cost of licensing for wide beam boats remained an issue, as did newly arrived local residents complaining about boat engine noise and range fires.
- 9.2 **Treasurer** (Laura Sturrock) – 2014 accounts with Examiner; year-end accounts show surplus, inflated by change in accounting policy; subscriptions do not cover running costs.
- Laura commented that the healthy bank balance (£19,391) was generated by profits from the Shop and that subscriptions and other income did not cover the costs of running the club. Laura would mention this fact in her presentation of the accounts at the AGM and suggest a review in 2016.
 - It was acceptable to HMRC that shop profit was used in this way. Subscriptions were last raised about 10 years ago and if they were raised again now, there would have to be a very good reason for sitting on nearly £20,000 of reserves. It was suggested that we look into making donations to waterways good causes
- 9.3 **Membership Secretary** (Paul Hunter) – membership numbers; approve 6 new memberships; old style windlasses; Willow Wren, 2nd part of autobiography (see 6.1 above).
- New members were approved: John Churchman & Bridget Murray, Robert Lear, Tim Barrett, Michael & Avis Forbes.
 - Paul commented that new members sometimes sent photos of their non-historic replica boat to accompany their membership forms. Phil reminded the committee of the desirability of using the National Historic Ships UK register to define historic/non-historic boats, thereby removing the onus from the club. He would contact CRT's Nigel Crowe to get the process moving again. Bernard to send Phil some new guidelines.
 - Paul would follow David D's practice of writing to membership defaulters individually rather than via the newsletter.
 - Paul commented that it was becoming very urgent to have the on-line new membership database available (see 4.1 above) so that he and Sarah E could work on it together. Ros reported that the updated website was due to go live the following weekend in order to carry the auction details and hopefully the membership Db soon after that. Paul pointed out that it was important to get it running for testing during February so that it could be launched at the AGM with members able to pay by PayPal – this would be a trial run for the auction two weeks later.
 - There was some discussion on whether a posted Welcome Pack was needed, and it was agreed that this was a most important part of making new members feel that they were welcome and getting value for money. A rapid response to membership queries was also essential.
- 9.4 **Archivist** (Richard Booth)
- Richard showed a sample folder of the data he had been collecting and re-ordering for ease of future access. A time consuming job but it would eventually become a definitive list of extant historic narrow boats.
- 9.5 **Newsletter Editor** (Val Roberts) – press date 2 February 2015; Know your Committee text urgently required; dressed and undressed boats; committee activities need publicising, lack of minutes on the website.

- An email discussion had discounted the idea of publishing Area Reps' reports and Val was asked to continue her practice of adding snippets from them on particularly interesting topics.
- Ros had updated the new website with committee and AGM minutes.
- Paul suggested removing the QR code from the front cover of the magazine as he felt this was old and now little used technology.
- David L commended Sue's suggestion of an article on how to "dress" a boat correctly, although this would be fraught with contradictions from various regions and companies of the waterways.
- Agenda item for May 2015 – to discuss an electronic version of the Newsletter.

9.6 **Club Shop** (Clair Butler) – takings at Lapworth Social; purchase of box of books; new design Christmas cards; number of packs sold 2011, 2012 and 2013.

- It was agreed that Clair should go ahead with the purchase of the large box of books from Chas Hardern.
- Christmas card design – suggested contacts for photos of boats in the snow were Lawrence Williams or Sarah Parrott (Kangaroo), or any of the boats that had spent Christmas on the Ashby.
- Although the illustrations were excellent, it was thought that the paper used for last year's Christmas cards was more slippery and felt cheaper than the quality used for previous issues.

9.7 **Navigation** (Sue Cawson) – NAG meeting at Anderton; towpath consultation completed; speeding cyclists; improving facilities; off-side vegetation; minimum safety standards; spindles and pawls; tunnel signs; winding holes.

9.8 **Website** – see 9.3 above

9.9 **External organisations**

- Phil reported that he had resigned from the Central Shires Partnership Board now that he no longer lived in its area.
- Norman reported that CRT Museums & Attractions had become Museums Partnership and a new Head of Museums post had been advertised. Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant had been spent mostly on buildings refurbishment with a little on boats.
- YWBS - James commented that it had been wound down as the need for it had largely disappeared now that CRT's Canal & River Explorers had been set up and was running successfully.

9.10 **Area Reps**

Central Shires (Rupert Smedley) – nothing to report

East (Amy-Alys Tillson) – Northampton arm stoppage ended; significant stoppages on Middle Levels; Salters Lode lock gates problematic; dredging works on Well Creek; friends of the R Nene group, new official moorings; Thrapston footbridge headroom; cost of Cam Conservancy visitor mooring.

East Midlands (Mike Harrison) – new wooden jib for old crane at Shardlow moved by Bath; ████████ book progress.

Kennet & Avon (Nick Grundy) – K&A User Group, new personnel; list of major stoppage works; back pumping costs; dredging programme; moorings plan and challenges to it; at risk aqueducts identified; reed growth problems.

- Nick reported that he was particularly pleased that CRT has dealt with the bump over the cill at Bulls Lock.

London (Michael Pinnock) – increasing activity by NBTA

- See 9.1 for discussion notes

Manchester & Pennine (George Boyle) – consultation on fencing on Marple Aqueduct.

- The committee agreed with the points raised in George's report about the proposal to erect fencing on the off-side of Marple aqueduct, and with his sentiments that it posed a threat to other aqueducts. Phil reminded members about the Club's position paper on Health & Safety, written by Sarah Hale and agreed at the September 2012 committee meeting. He was asked to respond to the consultation accordingly. It was suggested he copy the response to Tony Stammers, referring him to his talk to the club at the AGM, March 2013. Sue mentioned that the consultation re Marple was on the agenda for the next CRT NAG meeting in March '15.

North East (David Lowe) – planning application for Stourton freight site to be developed as aggregate wharf; CRT improvements to ease operation of some Calder & Hebble locks; visitor moorings Leeds now taken over by CRT; business vs private licence for Swallow as it attends rallies as a display boat.

- A meeting had been arranged for 24 January to discuss the business licence.

North Wales & Borders (Iain MacTavish) – verbal report at meeting

- Hurleston bottom lock, more work had been done and yet more planned before the end of the month. He reported that the Prince encountered more problems, as had the Mountbatten even with a beam of 6'10" (although Michael believed the extra plating on the Mountbatten may have contributed). The Bath had gone up the lock easily but had had to wind and go down backwards, as had the Cetus.
- It was pleasing to note that CRT CEO Richard Parry on his FaceBook session had confirmed importance of the work on Hurleston, advised the problem was being addressed and had given credit to HNBC.

South East & Thames (David Daines) – leave-lock-empty notices on southern GU; water levels on the summit more stable; PLA intending to ban hire boats from the area they control, danger of ban extending to private boats as well.

- David reported that he had asked for a list of locks where the leave-lock-empty signs were affixed. Some locks carried unofficial signs. Richard commented that he had noticed similar signs on locks to the north of Tring. David would chase up.

South Wales & Severn (Norman Mitchell) – poorly advertised & attended Business Meeting instead of User Group; successful HLF bid £1.4m to refurbish parts of museum and barge Sabrina 5.

- Vociferous and inappropriate input at the meeting from a representative from the Bargee group, echoed Michael's comment (9.1) about the growing confidence of the group.

West Midlands (Sarah Edgson) – Sampson Road re-development; CRT restoration of 13 cast iron bridges; plans for mixed-use development at Icknield Port Loop; low pounds Wolverhampton flight; underwater obstruction below Camp Hill; majority of catalogue complete and ready for review.

10 **MATTERS ARISING** (previous minutes date and number in brackets)

- 10.1 **Small Windlasses** – Paul given go-ahead to order a quantity at his discretion. (Nov 2014, 6.1)
- 10.2 **“Measham” teapot** – Clair reported that Evelyn Booth estimated its worth about £40 as such teapots were not popular at the moment, this one was not personalised and was damaged. It was, however, old and an original not a reproduction. It was agreed to raffle it at the AGM. Iain would send Val a photograph for the newsletter, Ros would bring cloakroom tickets to use as raffle tickets. (Oct '14, 6.7)
- 10.3 **Boat Museum Archive** – it was thought best to wait for the new Head of Museums to be in place before making formal contact. It might be useful to set up a meeting at the Port at Easter to talk to Ian Eastby and the person in charge of the photograph digitising process. (Oct '14, 7.4)
- 10.4 **All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Waterways** – it appears that the newly formed group no longer had Associate members. Phil to email its Chairman to find out if the club could attend its meeting. (Oct '14, 8.4)
- 10.5 **Volunteers** – Iain and Clair had obtained information about CRT's training and would circulate it to the committee. IWA had no particular issue with volunteers, but Alison offered to forward the club's concerns to IWA at its quarterly meeting. Chris Deuchar's book A Boater's Guide to Boating was available through the shop so there was no need to approach him about re-printing it. (Oct '14, 9.4)
- 10.6 **LMS Maps** – Sue said she believed that CRT Fazeley office could scan large sizes. (May '14, 7.3)

11 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 11.1 **Winding Hole Survey** – Sue expressed her disappointment in the survey report (see report in 9.7) and Phil said it was embarrassing that only 4 HNBC members had responded. Of great worry was the fact that CRT did not have a definitive list of winding holes, this was important as they have to dredge their official ones. It was suggested that new marinas be designed to permit winding in their entrances. Phil to write to Ian Fletcher to thank him and ask for further analysis of the data in due course. Sue would raise the topic at the next CRT NAG meeting (see 9.7).
- 11.2 **Mersey Ship Canal convoy** – Nick reported that Mike Askin was organising MSC and Mersey crossing convoy to coincide with the gathering at the Port at Easter.

The meeting closed at 5.55pm.

Phil Prettyman
Chairman