

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SWAN (RADCOT) CRUISER CLUB HELD ON
SATURDAY, 11th SEPTEMBER 2010 at THE FERRYMAN, BABLOCKHYTHE**

**PRESENT: Dennis Hill, Commodore
Dave Hansell, Vice Commodore
George Jarman, Treasurer
Alan Hill, Acting Secretary
Gillian Hill, Minutes Secretary
Roger Bazzoni
Geoffrey Dickinson
John Douse
Paul Hayes
Helen Ward**

The Commodore opened the Meeting and 4.35 p.m, thanked everybody for attending and went on to explain that we had hoped to have Gail Bradstock from the EA as guest speaker but she, unfortunately, had a prior engagement as did Adrian Swift who was to be her replacement.

1) Apologies for Absence had been received from: Mike and Anita Buckwell (Sheer Luxury), Keith and Margaret Broadberry (Ella May II), Steve and Claire Hobbs (Skye Mist), Kevin and Heather Matthews (Badger VIII), John and Jean Birkett (Oriana) and Ian and Sue Harrison (Sue-et-Pud).

2) Minutes of the Last AGM: Acceptance of the Minutes for the AGM held in September 2009 was proposed by Joan Hayes (Mr. Pimms), seconded by Ted Strange and carried unanimously.

3) Treasurer's Report: Everybody had been given a copy of the Income and Expenditure Statement and George explained some of the entries in more detail, following which acceptance of the Accounts was proposed by Pat Mathews (Sandy Dee), seconded by Phil Brown (Oceans Eleven) and carried unanimously.

4) Entertainments Officer's Report: Exmouth Weekend in February had a very good turnout for the time of year and distance for some people to drive. The Hotel was good for the most part, except for some minor hiccups, and is booked again for next year's opening event. Hopefully their resident bingo caller will be there to add to the entertainment.

New Members Night in April has become a very well supported night and is, I'm convinced, the ideal start to any new members introduction to our Club and its "characters".

Quiz Night, April 24th – moving this event to the beginning of the season appears to have been a good move judging by the attendance, with new members involved in the team taking the honours, even if Kevin was with them!!

Skills & Frills Weekend – end of May Bank Holiday: The pork roast and indoor games were a great success on the Saturday and worked very well even though we made it up as we went along! (and will probably be done again next year). Sunday mornings Boat Handling went well, although enthusiasm for this event is a little laboured and maybe needs a re-vamp to make it more attractive to members, or maybe it had something to do with Geoff's MANKINI (not a pretty sight!). The "posh do" on Sunday night seemed to stumble a little this year which was a great shame considering that even with all their troubles, Bob and Helen Ward were still organising everything down to the last detail for this! Numbers were down and I don't think the band was as enthusiastic as they have been before, so things dragged a little. Maybe time to look at a different format for next year.

Medieval Night in June was, I think, the premier event again this year with the decorated hall, multitude of costumes and even stocks! It never ceases to amaze me the lengths our members will go to get the right outfit for the theme – monks, knights, King Henry, ladies, crusaders and SHREK(?!). A wonderful night and really well presented by the organisers – Geoff (Aquacadabra) and the rest of the "young ones".

Fun Day in July I was unable to attend this year but I'm told it went off really well considering the change of venue and modifications to some of the games. Again, numbers were down but those attending enjoyed it as usual. The night was finished off by "Groovy Grace's Disco! Fun Day next year will probably return to the field at Radcot.

August Bank Holiday Events (ATYC Rally at Kingston and the return of the Oxford Treasure Hunt). 9 boats attended the ATYC Rally and our entrants for the boat handling competition once again walked away with an armful of trophies!

14 boat crews took part in the Oxford Treasure Hunt. This was done slightly differently this year with teams not only having to try and work out which route round Oxford had been selected while answering the usual cryptic clues, but also collecting a variety of foliage and testing the old grey matter with some bonus general knowledge questions as well. Everyone met back at the Head of the River by 2.30 where answer sheets and a sorry collection of leaves were handed in for marking. It is a good theory that by holding this event in August there is a good chance of the whole trip staying dry and warm. BUT this IS the Treasure Hunt and, sure enough, just as food orders were being brought out to the patio area, the monsoon season started. Most people found shelter under the large umbrellas to eat and hear the results announced. The winning team was Team Amelia, made up of the crews from Amelia May, Captain Toad and ex-Tampico..

5) Proposals: Alan Hill reported that he had received only one proposal, this being from Dennis Hill and seconded by Gillian Hill. The proposal was that Alan Mitchell, previous Landlord of the Swan at Radcot, be removed from the position of Vice President of the Club and that said position should remain vacant for the time being. This was carried unanimously.

6) Club Award Presentations: The following Awards were presented:

Eddy Maisey Memorial Shield for the Boat Handling Competition – No More Bets- skippered by Roger Bazzoni and crewed by Joanne Bazzoni and Dave Hansell.)

Heclantis Plate for the Fun Day Boat Race – Geoff (Aquacadabra) and Steve (Escapology).

Commodore's Shield for the Treasure Hunt – Amelia May, Captain Toad and ex-Tampico. (The winners are asked to do the clues for next year's Treasure Hunt).

7) Election of Committee: All the Committee indicated their agreement to stand again except for Helen Ward. She was, however, still willing to help with the Dinner/Dance and any other catering etc. Only one new volunteer had come forward – Olivia Stanton (Anatolia). She was nominated by Alan (Sea Chimes), seconded by Val Bullock (Escapology), and carried unanimously. Ollie was invited to join the rest of the Committee and duly took her seat at the table.

8) Election of Officers: Since the sad death of Bob Ward, the post of Secretary had been temporarily taken over by Alan Hill (Sea Chimes) and he had indicated his willingness to continue. Alan was proposed by Allan Cox (Little Wizard), seconded by Joan Hayes (Mr. Pimms) and was voted in unanimously.

Vice Commodore: 2 nominations had been received – Alan Hill (Sea Chimes) and Roger Bazzoni (No More Bets) plus one spoilt nomination (the person nominated had not been approached by the nominee and was, in fact, unwilling to stand). After a secret ballot, Alan Hill was elected as Vice, proposed by Olivia Stanton (Anatolia), seconded by Helen Ward (John Bishop).

Commodore: Only 1 nomination had been received for this position:- Dave Hansell (Moppett II) the present Vice Commodore. Dave was proposed by Dennis Hill, seconded by Darrell Fowler (Sark Point) and carried unanimously.

9) Commodore's Resignation Speech:

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen and welcome to another AGM

For those that don't know me, my name is Dennis Hill and I am your Commodore.

Unfortunately radiotherapy is starting to affect my voice now so I'll apologise if it starts to fail before I finish speaking.

Well, I think it's been another successful year for our Club, although in many ways a sad one. The loss of Iris Strange earlier in the year. Iris was almost one of our original members I think, and of course, my good friend Bob Ward who worked so hard for this club as Secretary and whose presence on this committee is still sorely missed (My thanks to Alan for picking up the secretarial reins so well in such a short time), and of course there's my own little Cancer problem.

On that subject I would like to say a big thank you to all of you who sent me get well cards, good luck messages and made offers of help including accommodation close to the JR for Jill while I was in hospital.

It means a great deal to have so many good friends.

As you will all know by now I have decided the time has come to step down as your Commodore.

Having served 3 years as Vice Commodore under Chris Winter, another 3 years as Vice to the late Eddie Maisey and had the privilege and honour of serving as your Commodore for the last 6 years, I think it's time to step aside and let some fresh blood take over the reins.

I think most of you know how much this boat club has come to mean to me since I joined in 1992. When I think back to those days... there was no newsletter, no website, few events and those that we did have were made up of 'home entertainment'... Chris Winter and Sue on their guitars leading a sing-along in an old scout tent!! The AGM was held in a small marquee on the side of the Swan.

Good days but we've come a long way since then. We now keep in touch with the membership via a regular news letter which I started back in 1996 and a website which doesn't get updated as much as I would like. We hold regular events throughout the year which, on the whole, are extremely well attended; the fancy dress night in particular, seems to get better and better!

We have organised trips to the River Medway for tidal novices and taken 20 boats all the way down to West India Dock for the ATYC Rally and managed to walk away from their boat handling competition with arms full of prizes... not once but twice!! We entered again this year and once again walked off with 7 awards including.... A Best Lady Skipper award which was won by Grace Cameron ably assisted by her crew of Brenda and Karen. I'm not sure if the words 'Stroppy Cow' embroidered on their caps influenced the judges at all! Stand up and take a bow girls.

Unfortunately we just missed first place for the best team award but did manage second. Thames Motor Yacht Club are happier now though as they won it! AGAIN

On the subject of the Rally.. next year will be at West India Dock again. Hopefully we will be able to organise another club tidal trip if there is enough interest.

That same weekend saw the Oxford Treasure Hunt re-instated. I would like to thank Nigel & Ollie for volunteering to organise it. I understand 15 boats attended.. Well done and thanks again Nigel and Ollie.

Alan, who is your ATYC re, and I have represented our club at all the meetings of the ATYC this year and I can assure you that we have not been slow to air your complaints. They are listened to and they are put forward by the ATYC to the relevant EA departments. Such 'dredging' or *re-profiling* as the EA prefer to call it, that HAS been done was as a result of

ATYC pressure as was the 50% discount on your dinghy licence fee and the reduction of the pump out fee from £9:50 to £8.

So I hope that close contact with the ATYC will be continued. They are the only body that can represent us where it matters.

Some of you may know that I am part of a small team that is trying to set up a training scheme for the River Thames under the umbrella of the ATYC. It will be known as the Thames Boating Certificate. It's something I've felt strongly about for a long time. A club as big as ours should be able to offer proper training especially to new boaters and this scheme, when we get it off the ground, fits the bill perfectly. We are now at the stage of looking for suitable trainers and there is a meeting scheduled for 24th October for prospective volunteers. If anyone with the experience and aptitude to become a club trainer is interested please let me know after the meeting.

This club is now well known along the whole length of the river and it has an excellent reputation among EA staff and other boat clubs. The burgee is recognised up and down the river so continue to fly it with pride. I was talking to a lock keeper on the way down to the ATYC rally about some of the stupid things boaters do in and around locks. I said "*I hope that doesn't apply to boats flying the SRCC Burgee*" She said. And I quote... "*Radcot Boat Club ! I love 'em! They nearly always help with the lock are always cheerful and friendly. When I see that flag I can relax*"! I felt very proud to hear that..... keep it up.

So I think you'll agree that the club has gone from strength to strength. That's due partly to the efforts of my various committees over the past 6 years but as I have said many times before, mainly due to you, the members, who make this club what it is and you should all be very proud of what this club has become because of your efforts.

Keep it up, attend events, support your new officers, help them, give them suggestions as to how to do things differently if necessary, in a constructive not negative way, remembering always that they are doing their best all the time for you.

This is obviously a very sad time for me. This club has been such a big part of my life for many years now, but, if your new Commodore invites me, I will still sit on the committee for a year to give a bit of continuity and offer my help if required, especially as we are now missing Bob Ward with all his experience and knowledge of the running of the club.

Before I go I need to thank a lot of people who have helped me over the years, starting with my wife and head nurse.

As Minutes Secretary, Jill has taken the minutes not only at AGM's but at all of our committee meetings for the last 14 plus years.. With your committee's average age being what it is and with the consequent loss of memory cells... those minutes are very important. They are a permanent record of decisions made etc which can be referred to by future committees.

On a personal level, without her prompting, reminding me of things I'm supposed to do, I'm sure I couldn't have done the job as well and this club would not have been as well organised!

Not only that but she has just helped to nurse me through my recent operation. It remains to be seen if she can cope with me during the next 6 weeks or more of radiotherapy when I'm told I may get just a little grumpy!!

I may end up with my throat cut again (not professionally this time though)

I'm not going to mention individuals by name as I'm bound to forget someone but I have to thank everyone who has served on my various committees over the years.

When all goes well the Commodore gets the credit but much of the credit should go to those who do so much work in the background on your behalf.

Well before anybody goes to sleep I must finish but I will take this opportunity to pass on to your new Commodore his Commodore's Burgee and his 'badge of office'

and to wish him and his new Vice the very best of luck in their new roles

Thank you again for all your support over the last 6 years

It has been a privilege and one I shall never forget.

Thank You.

At this point the entire membership gave a standing ovation.

10) New Commodore's Acceptance Speech: "As you can probably tell from my gibbering and shaking, I'm not used to public speaking, but I would like to say that I am very honoured to have been elected Commodore of this great boat club.

"We all know that Dennis has problems with his throat and we wish him good health soon. I too have a problem with my throat – Steve and Geoff said if I ramble on and waste their drinking time, they would cut it!

"I have been in this Club now for about 10 years with Chris Winter, Eddie Maisey and Dennis as Commodores, and I've seen it grow into a great Club where people help each other and have functions that get better every year. Dennis introduced us to the ATYC and some of us have attended their Rallies and won major prizes in their Boat Handling Competitions, and some members have been judges and timekeepers for them. This has helped make us a respected Club up and down the Thames.

"I will try very hard to follow on from Dennis and continue to keep the Club moving forward and fun to be in. I would also like to thank the Committee for all their hard work, but it is you – the Members – that make all the hard work the Committee put in over the year worthwhile. At this point I would like to ask Dennis and Jill officially if they would stay on the Committee for another year to give us a smooth transition.

"Thank you Den and Jill for the fantastic job you have both done over the last 6 years and more, and if you would like to stand up, we have a small token of our appreciation of all the hard work and dedication you have given to the Club in the past and in the future.

At this point a presentation of a cut glass decanter and glasses was made. The decanter is inscribed with the Cruiser Club's logo and the words 'Dennis Hill, Commodore 2004 – 2010. A large bouquet of flowers was presented to Jill

Any Other Business:

a) Fancy Dress 2011: Geoff (Aquacadabra) asked for suggestions from the floor for the theme of next year's Fancy Dress. Forthcoming suggestions included the 1940's, Christmas Party in June, Arabs, St. Trinians. It was decided that this would be discussed by the Committee at their next Meeting.

b) Boat Safety Certificate: Members were reminded that anyone who needs a Boat Safety Certificate for next year should get in touch with Dave (Moppett II).

c) Booking forms: Alan (Sea Chimes) made a request that booking forms for meals be filled in and sent to him promptly and not left until the day before the event

d) Dennis informed the Meeting that Peter and Wendy Kelland (Landlord of the Ferryman) wish to donate a cup in memory of the late Bob Ward. The Committee were all in favour of this but feel that it needs to be presented each year for a specific reason. Suggestions were asked for and Best Fancy Dress and Most Helpful Club Member (non-Committee) were both put forward. Some discussion took place but no final decision was made. (NOTE: If any member has any suggestions, would they please let a member of the Committee know as soon as possible).

e) Newsletters: A lot of people who have their Newsletters by E-mail say that they haven't received them or haven't seen a particular item. It is very easy to forget things if they are just read on the screen. Dennis suggested that people should print their Newsletters so that they have a copy to hand to remind them of what is going on. Also, on many occasions, people have not received their Newsletters because they have not let him know of changes to their e-mail addresses.

f) Crane Our: This year, with more and more bigger boats being bought, it has been a struggle to fit them all in. It is possible that some people may not be able to have their preferred position and some may not be able to come out at all. It is imperative that Application Forms be in on time and it is reaching the stage where latecomers will have to be refused.

g) Cock up of theYear: Some embarrassing moments were related and the eventual winner of this award was John Douse (Stealer) for displaying his precision skill in welding an exhaust elbow and flange to an absolutely perfect fit. The only problem with it was that he must have welded it using a mirror as it was back to front!!

The new Commodore thanked everyone for attending the Meeting and hoped that they would enjoy the food and entertainment which would follow. The Meeting was closed at 5.45 p.m.