

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SWAN (RADCOT)
CRUISER CLUB HELD ON SATURDAY, 12th SEPTEMBER 2009 at THE FERRYMAN,
BABLOCKHYTHE**

**PRESENT: Dennis Hill, Commodore
Dave Hansell, Vice-Commodore
Bob Ward, Secretary
George Jarman, Treasurer
Jill Hill, Minutes Secretary
Roger Bazzoni
Geoff Dickinson
John Douse
Alan Hill
Helen Ward**

Apologies for absence were received from Paul Hayes

The Commodore opened the Meeting at 4.35 p.m and introduced Gail Bradstock of the EA who was to be the guest speaker. The Chair was then handed to Bob Ward.

Apologies for absence were received from: Roy & Sue Farman (Baglady), Tony Sava (Our Unity), Norman & Diane Allum (Spring Morning), Phil & Ann Brown (Oceans Eleven), Paul & Pauline Downton (Raffles), Brian & Joan Robinson (non-boating member), Martin Webb & Lesley Campbell (Tampico), Peter & Elizabeth Payne (Atlantia), Chris & Janice Humphreys (Andrasta), Kevin & Heather Matthews (Badger VIII), Ian Quint (Sheer Elegance), Bill & Ro Order (Juslovitt).

Minutes of the last AGM: There were no matters arising. Acceptance of last year's Minutes as a true and accurate record was proposed by Alan Cox (Little Wizard), seconded by Chris Kenrick (Polonaise) and was carried unanimously.

Commodore's Address:

Good evening ladies and gentlemen and welcome to another AGM. A special welcome to all our new members and any prospective members who may be here tonight.. For the benefit of those of you who I haven't had the pleasure of meeting my name is Dennis Hill and I am your Commodore.

First of all I'd like to introduce you to our guest speaker for tonight.... Gail Bradstock. Gail is the Environment Agency West Area Manager and she has kindly agreed to come along and speak to you later and I'm sure she will answer any questions you may have regarding the river.

Well we're nearly at the end of another season already. I hope you all made the best of the 'barbeque summer'. I think as far as the club goes it's been another successful year

Crane In: Once again a pretty unremarkable day. We seem to get better and better each year. While I'm on the subject... remember those of you who are craning out this year that we have new rules in place regarding hard standing for boats over 23 feet. If anyone still isn't sure come and see either me or Bob after the meeting.

We started the year with New Members Evening:

Once again an excellent turnout by members old and new. It was good to see some of those new members at the various events during the year.

Then on to the Lechlade Race night: This one almost turned into a disaster but despite the many problems we had with the CD player, we finally managed to run all the races thanks to Roy Francis of 'High & Wild' who kindly went home and brought back his own CD player. In the end thanks to your generosity we managed to add some £160 to the club coffers.

Skills & Frills Weekend: Saturday afternoon and Alan and I were still trying to finalise the exercises for the boat handling competition. We weren't even sure if we had any competitors at that stage!! Anyway after a few demonstration runs by Dave and Alan, a few brave souls were persuaded to put their names down for the Sunday morning competition.

The Saturday night ended with a free pork roast supper and music and dancing with 'Big Girls Blouse' who, you may remember donate their fee to the charity 'See Saw'. Thanks to your generosity we added another £100 making a total donation of £251. Thanks go to Helen Ward and her band of helpers for organising the salad and Tracy Newman and Paul Hayes for their excellent carving.

Sunday morning arrives and we have 10 'willing' volunteers for the boat handling competition. The wind had dropped and the sun came out for what turned out to be a very close run competition. With a mere 6 points separating the top 4 places. Fourth: Joanne B, Third: Sea Chimes, Second: John Bishop and in First place by 1 point was Black Sapphire! All in all a successful day I think.

The weekend ended with The Dinner/Dance on Sunday evening. It seems to be the norm for us to hold this on the hottest day of the year!! Although attendance was a bit down once again it turned out to be an excellent evening with good food and entertainment by Seventh Avenue Express Jazz Band and the dance floor packed all night! Once again thanks to Bob and Helen for all their efforts.

Pirates Night: Saturday 13th June saw this hall turned into something resembling a Caribbean beach complete with a chest full of treasure!! I have to admit I wasn't too sure that this would be a popular theme for a fancy dress.... but how wrong can you be?? I think this was one of the best 'dos' ever with everyone making an effort and wearing some great outfits courtesy of Matellan and Ebay etc. I must also mention the fantastic decorations provided by our committee member responsible for inflatable toys!!! Geoffrey!

Fun Day: Unfortunately I wasn't at this year's Fun Day due to our expedition across the Channel but I'm told that although the attendance was a bit low again, those that did attend had a very enjoyable day with the now traditional silly games including Alan's water pouring game and caterpillar walking! Having looked at all the pictures that were sent to me, in every one everybody seems to be having a great time.

The round the island race I understand was a close run thing between Dave & Grace, Geoff & Karen and Shane Malpass & Kelly. Geoff, I know was disappointed at not winning for a THIRD time.... but at least you didn't let Dave beat you!! The winners, Shane and Kelly, I'm told, were chased all the way round the island by someone on the bank shouting threats (I mean encouraging words) like '*Forget the pain Son*', '*Work through the pain*', '*Keep Going*! It turned out to be John, Shane's Dad

The evening attendance in the marquee was very low but again it seems that everyone there was determined to have a good time! The entertainment provided by John Hill with lots of help from Grace! My thanks go to Dave for standing in for me and especially to Alan for his efforts not only in organising things but also carting all the equipment from home to Radcot and back home again but also to all of you that made the effort to turn up and make it all worthwhile.

A.T.Y.C Rally: Now we come to the ATYC Rally held over the August bank holiday.

On the table you can see the medals and awards which we won last year together with this year's medals! We had 12 boats that made the journey down to Henley to witness another success for the club.

As you probably know Dave & Grace on Moppett II, Alan & Jill on Sea Chimes and Jill and I on Black Sapphire managed to come away with not only 6th place in the individual entries with Alan & I tied for 3rd place, tied first in the family category and last but certainly not least, the prize I really wanted....., The Best Club Team award once again!

The home page of the ATYC web site says it all... It says Swan Radcot Cruiser Club win AGAIN

I can't stress enough how really great it is to have the support from those members who attended. It can be quite nerve wracking doing these boat handling exercises and to hear the applause and cheers at the end of each one is really appreciated.

The evening entertainment was once again livened up by our '*Jolly Bunch*' as we were referred to by one ATYC committee member, including our Elvis's (Darrell) sing off against the Windsor Boat Club's Elvis! Which I think ended in a draw! I'm not sure that getting the DJ to play '*We are the champions*' went down too well though!

Although, obviously, I feel it's a great personal achievement to win these awards: it is an even greater satisfaction to me as your Commodore, to know that by doing so, the name of the Swan Radcot Cruiser Club is now recognised and respected over the whole of the River from Lechlade down to Teddington.

Up until last year when we took 20 boats to the West India Dock Rally, and came back with five of the top awards, the rest of the down river clubs didn't know we even existed! They certainly do now!!! I also have to congratulate Paul Hayes who has put in a lot of time and effort attending various training sessions and is now firmly established as a qualified ATYC Competition Judge. Unfortunately Judges don't get any medals but his presence on the Judges panel helps to establish this club's standing amongst the rest.

All this means that when Alan, our ATYC rep, attends the ATYC meetings where things which affect us as a club and our end of the river are discussed he is able to put questions and comments and be listened to with respect by the rest of the so called '*big clubs*' down river. We now have a voice which is listened to.

What I'm trying to say is that we have achieved this recognition due not only to those of us who enter the boat handling competition and volunteer to judge it but to all of you who give up some of your holiday time and make the effort to attend the Rallies. I thank you all for that and I hope you all feel as proud as I do with what we have achieved.

I hope that in years to come others will come forward and keep up the good work that's been started!

Well we still have the Quiz night to look forward to and the winter break at Exmouth. By the way, we have filled the complete hotel with only some single rooms left. Those of you who have booked please send in the balance of the money as soon as possible and in any case before 30th November.

Before I sit down I must thank everyone up here for their support and assistance over the last year. They all work extremely hard on your behalf. In the morning we will be holding another committee meeting to plan next year's events. I have heard rumours that some of you think that the events have become a bit stale. Maybe that's why the attendance at fun day was so low. Well, all I can say is that we try very hard to come up with new ideas but if anyone has any suggestions for something different then please, please, come and talk to us.

Finally.....

I say it every year but I'll say it again.... This is the friendliest, most active club on the river Most of the events which your committee organise are really well supported. In any club to get around 50% of the membership to turn up is a good result.

Your committee can organise the events but their success or otherwise is down to those of you who turn out time after time, in the pouring rain or sweltering heat, make the effort to dress up in fancy dress.. Get stuck in helping with crane out and crane in... Help with erections on the field (*with marquees I mean*).

It's you, the members, who make this club as good as it is.
So I say a big Thank You to you all.

THANK YOU

Treasurer's Report: George gave a breakdown of the accounts for the year. Once again we had made a good profit on Crane Out mainly due to the new bridge over the culvert being completed which meant we no longer needed to pay for bog mats. George also thanked Members for supporting the raffles as the profits made helped to subsidise some of the events. Acceptance of the Financial Statement was proposed by Ollie Stanton (Anatolia), seconded by Roger Bateman (ex-Pollensa Sunrise) and carried unanimously. A copy of the Accounts is attached.

Vice Commodore' Report: Dave said he was very happy supporting and helping Dennis and one of his duties was arranging for boats to have their tests for the Boat Safely Certificate. The Club uses the services of Joe Whitby who gives us a reduction if we can arrange for a group of boats to be tested on the same day at Grafton. Dave asked that anyone requiring a Certificate next year should contact him as soon as possible so the necessary arrangements can be made. On a personal note, Dave thanked all those who had taken the time to come to Henley to support us at the ATYC Rally. It was very much appreciated.

Re-election of Officers & Committee: Both Bob and George were due to stand down but both had said they were willing to serve for a further 3 years. Their re-election was proposed by Pat Matthews (Sandy Dee), seconded by Jackie Taunt (Gipsy Princess) and carried unanimously.

All Committee Members were willing to stand again and were duly proposed by Alan Cox (Little Wizard), seconded by Keith Broadberry (Ella May II) and carried unanimously.

Proposals: No proposals had been received.

Any Other Business:

1)Ollie Stanton (Anatolia) suggested that moving the Skills & Frills to the early May Bank Holiday may result in an increase in numbers attending. After some debate it was thought that there were pros and cons for this suggestion and it would be discussed further at the next Committee Meeting when the dates for events for next year would be provisionally decided.¹

2)Alan Cox (Little Wizard) suggested the Club enlist the help of Ian Salisbury (the man who is demanding information from the EA under the freedom of information act concerning river levels in the Oxford reach) with our fight to get river levels improved in the upper reaches. It was decided this would best be discussed at the next Committee Meeting.²

1 At the Committee Meeting it was decided not to change the date of the Skills & Frills weekend.

2 At the Committee Meeting this matter was discussed but it was felt that it would be better not to get "outsiders" involved, particularly as his interests are not the same as ours.

3) Peter Bird (2nd Chance) suggested that a cut off date for major dry sanding jobs should be introduced prior to crane in to eliminate the risk of newly polished boats being covered in dust. This point would be discussed at the next Committee Meeting.³

4) Darrell Fowler (Sark Point) suggested dropping Quiz Night and making the last event of the season something with more of a party atmosphere. A lot of people said they enjoyed the Quiz Night and didn't want to lose it. Another suggestion was to swap the AGM with the Quiz Night, but as it was written in the Club Constitution that the AGM should be held in September each year, this would require a Resolution to be passed at next year's AGM. It was decided that the Committee should discuss further at their next Meeting.⁴

5) The membership were reminded that polo shirts bearing the Club logo were available in a variety of colours and sizes at a cost of £13.75 each. Anyone interested should contact Jill (Black Sapphire).

6) Keith Broadberry (Ella May II) said he would try and get an article together about his recent circular trip round the canals for inclusion in the Newsletter. (If anyone has any interesting stories to tell at any time, they can submit them to Dennis for inclusion in the Newsletter).

7) Members were reminded to inform Dennis of any changes of address, telephone/mobile numbers and e-mail addresses. Several people had told him they hadn't been receiving their Newsletters only to realise they had not let him know changes in their details. Members who do not as yet receive their Newsletter by e-mail were asked to let Dennis have their e-mail addresses as this saved a lot of money on postage.

8) Gail Bradstock of the Environment Agency was again introduced to the Meeting and thanked us for giving her the opportunity of getting to know what she felt was a "vibrant Club". Prior to joining the EA, Gail informed us that she was a Fitness Instructor then went into leisure management. Although she was looking forward to getting to know about navigation and its problems, she missed the day to day contact with customers that she had in her previous jobs. Her hobbies include dinghy sailing and has done rowing at Oxford. Responsible to her in the EA are 5 team leaders and 3 technical officers with one vacancy. She gave her assurance that the EA would continue to have resident lock keepers on every site. At the present time they are working very closely with the crime team and are pushing for enforcement particularly with regard to unregistered boats, overstaying on 24 hour EA moorings, speeding and excessive wash. In recent weeks 500 boats have been checked, 19 of which proved to be unlicensed. Prosecutions follow if payments are not made promptly. Mapping of the river bed has been carried out in the upper reaches, areas have been prioritised and a dredging programme has been put together. A tree cutting programme is also in place. Gail always finds it helpful if people let her know of any particular problems regarding navigation that they may come across. Dennis had spoken to her prior to the start of the Meeting regarding near misses with narrowboats in general and Anglo Welsh in particular, and she asked for Members to let him know of any incidents that occur so that those incidents could be collated and forwarded to her.⁵

Gail then took questions from the floor on a variety of subjects and most members appeared to be satisfied with her responses.

Dennis thanked Gail for taking the time to attend our AGM and also thanked the EA for

3 The Committee decided that Dennis should put an item in the Newsletter requesting that, as a matter of courtesy to other boaters, no major dry sanding work should be carried out during the 3 weeks prior to crane in.

4 After considerable discussion it was decided to swap Quiz Night with the Lechlade Village Hall event.

5 An incident form is enclosed with these minutes for your use.

finishing the work on Grafton Lock in time for our crane in, in spite of the hold ups caused by the weather.

9)Cock up of the Year Award was won by Darrell Fowler (Sark Point) who managed not only to ram an EA launch in the stern in Marsh Lock, but then went on to side swipe another one in Days Lock.

The Commodore thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 6.15 p.m.