

MINUTES OF THE 11th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of BOAT OWNERS, held on 23rd NOVEMBER 2002 at the BONDED WAREHOUSE, STOURBRIDGE

The meeting started 15 minutes late.

Present: James Mason, chairman, in the chair, Sue Burchett, vice chairman, Graham Freeman, general secretary, Andrew Sherry, treasurer, nine other Council members and 25 members.

James Mason, chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence: received from Penny Barber, Peter Foster, and Michelle Harris.

Minutes. The minutes of the 10th AGM held in 2001 were distributed. Proposed by Peter Lee, seconded by J. King, they were accepted as a true record.

Chairman's Report. James opened his address by saying that there are many ways to measure the success of NABO, such as its size, or standing. He felt that much has been achieved over the last two years. We are respected far in excess of the size of our membership, to the point where the powers-that-be come to us to discuss issues. He has aims to increase contact with members via the Regional Secretaries, plus by attending rallies and events, where we not only fly the flag, but give an opportunity for members to meet council and discuss their worries face to face. During the year, James has attended 68 User Group meetings, 15 national meetings, 8 council meetings, and 13 shows, apart from the others attended by Sue Burchett and Graham Freeman when he was unable to go. Council has operated at full strength from the word go this year, with three extra members being co-opted during the year. All are volunteers, unpaid, with only travelling expenses being paid. Council has moved into the 21st century with electronic communication, with most members being on-line, and Stuart Sampson has been actively improving our website.

NABO is now a shareholder, owning one share, of the "Boats on Show" event being organised by Pentland Hook Marina, which, he feels, will become *the* prestigious event on the Thames. The Environment Agency has asked NABO to organise a boat rally alongside this. For the first time, NABO has succeeded in obtaining a stand at the London Boat Show at Earl's Court, which, as it is the last time it will be held at this venue, will be a bumper event.

We have become involved in the production of a booklet: Exploring the Thames Ring, at no cost to NABO, which will be distributed to boaters free of charge.

With regard to the Boat Safety Scheme, five Council members sit on various committees. We are fighting from within, rather than being confrontational. The aim is to reduce the number of mandatory items, which will eventually lead to a re-writing of 'the book'. It has been a hard campaign. Relating to the moorings issues, the Office of Fair Trading has been consulted, and BW admit that they've got it wrong. Council feels that a regulator is needed (Offcut!). Our president, Bill O'Brien, has been consulted, and the battle is just beginning. Over the new licencing system, we have complained that they are going too far, too fast, but BW is determined to go ahead.

It has been a busy year, with more and more being asked of Council members' time. Finally, James thanked them all, especially Andrew Sherrey and Roger Davis, who are retiring after seven years. Appreciation for their hard work was shown by generous applause and the presentation of a commemorative plaque to each of them.

Financial statement. Andrew distributed the accounts. He looked back to when he first started as NABO treasurer seven years ago, when fees had just gone up by 25% (from £8 to £10), and just three members paid by standing order. Now there are over a thousand. He explained the accounts in detail. There were no questions, so proposed Peter Lee, seconded Sadie Dean, the accounts were accepted.

Annual subscriptions. Council proposed that basic and affiliated membership be increased from £10 to £15, with other family membership staying at £5 extra.

A member asked why we need to increase fees when there is £28,000 in the bank? James answered that we are already nibbling at our reserves, and more and more is being asked of Council members. We need a fighting fund, when in this day and age, the involvement of lawyers is increasingly expensive.

Another member commented that with the work involved in raising the fees, it was a process that wouldn't want to be done very often. Therefore, the increase is justified to save work, so that no further increase would be needed for some years.

Roger Davis pointed out that the proposed rise is only just above the retail price index increase for the last eight years.

A member felt that the volunteers who serve on Council must not be under-valued: expenses must be paid.

Stuart Sampson gave details of the survey about NABO which he has conducted via the website. No-one would resign with a £2.50 increase, 19% would resign with a £5 increase.

Sadie Dean voiced a vote of confidence in Council, and reckons she gets good value-for-money from NABO.

Peter Lee felt that Associate Members do not need, and therefore, receive, the same level of support from NABO, so proposed a smaller increase of £2.50 for this category. This was seconded by Caie Graham.

The Vote - 37 for, 2 against. The proposal was carried.

Change of Constitution. Paragraph 2a -for owners of vessels on Britain's inland waterways Substitute 'inland and coastal waters' for 'inland waterways'.

The chairman explained the need for change, that there are many boat owners in coastal marinas who are soon to face the BSS, who need NABO. Under the present wording, they would feel that we would not represent them.

Discussion followed.

A member felt that if we absorb coastal marina boaters, other Council Representatives would be needed, such as an English Channel rep, etc.. This would change the nature of NABO.

Caie Graham (London Secretary) spoke eloquently about the need for more members to cover ever-increasing expenses, and that the present constitution is not adequate.

Adrian Stott answered that the Thames and its estuary is classified as an inland waterway.

John Darlington raised two points. 1) Council would need much more expertise (e.g. coastal navigation and maritime law) which would place greater strain on our volunteers. The RYA already copes with this, and would react strongly at any interference from us.

2) The Constitution was formed so that NABO could not digress from its original purpose. he pointed out that we could not, therefore, change it via clauses 14 and 2. To make such a change, NABO would need to be wound up and start again.

James answered that the incorporation of such boaters would not split Council's

expertise (from a technical point of view).

Peter Lee expressed his concern over the care shown by Council towards the guarding of the Constitution. This matter has been handled wrongly. He was also concerned that Council is running over-strength: there can be sixteen people maximum. He suggested that a discussion take place now, publicise the proposed changes in the next NABO News, and then call an EGM with the correct procedure to discuss the matter and nothing else. He felt we are on shaky ground at present.

Election of Council Members. Sixteen people are standing for Council, namely, Sue Burchett, Peter Foster, Graham Freeman, Caie Graham, Michelle Harris, Paul Herbert, James Mason, Mark Northing, Stephen Peters, Gordon Reece, Trevor Rogers, Geoff Rogerson, Carole Sampson, Stuart Sampson, Adrian Stott, and Peter White.

As there was no need for an election, proposed Peter Lee, seconded John Darlington, and with all in favour, all were elected to Council for the year 2002-2003.

Appointment of Auditor. This had to be deferred until the next Council meeting, as the new treasurer would need to be consulted. This was agreed.

At this point, the new Council adjourned to elect its officers.

Introduction of new Officers. For the year 2002-2003,

Chairman	James Mason
Vice Chairman	Graham Freeman
General Secretary	Carole Sampson
Treasurer	David Harle, whose co-option should take place at the next Council meeting.

Policy for the next five years. Graham Freeman spoke about the advent of electronic communication, that NABO is the only organisation which concentrates / specialises solely on the needs and concerns of boaters, and the BW is currently reviewing their by-laws. These proposals have yet to be seen.

Questions from the floor.

1) Peter Lee commented upon earlier references to NABO becoming a plc. There is an alternative: the formation of a TRUST. A solicitor would need to be paid to draw this up. The NABO name would be protected, and it would enable us to enter into legal contracts.

2) Tony Hayes asked about increasing vandalism, viz. stone throwing, catapults, air guns. What can / is being done?

James answered that BW are accepting that a problem exists and moves are starting to be made to do something about it - "Towpath Awareness". Stephen Peters explained that representations were being made to Ordnance Survey about the possibility to include identification of bridges on maps, A member pointed out that there is a map available for Birmingham. Carole Sampson informed members that in the northeast, the idea of labelling bridges with Ordnance Survey grid references had been suggested. This was thought to be a good idea, but a member thought there might be a problem with listed bridges. Adrian Stott said that in London, the idea of painting the name of the road which crosses the bridge on the bridge was being considered.

3) Dredging. A member was concerned about the implication of the tightening of the rules for the disposal of dredgings meant that local budgets were soon being exhausted due to the

increased costs.

Finally, Roger Davis informed those present that Nabo membership is at an all-time high. For this year, the overall gain of members is also at an all-time high.

The chairman thanked everyone for coming. The meeting closed at 1.45p.m..

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

ACCOUNTS

31 MARCH 2002

**AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS
For the year ended 31 March 2002**

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We have examined the books and records of the Association and have verified that the Association's accounts are in accordance with them, and the information and explanations provided, and are free of material misstatement.

We have not carried out an audit as defined by the Auditing Practices Board of the Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies.

Tilman + Co
Chartered Accountants
19 November 2002

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
For the year ended 31 March 2002

	Note	31 3 02		31 3 01	
		£	£	£	£
INCOME					
Membership fees	1		17,217		16,393
Donations			1,448		1,318
Profit on merchandise sales			313		332
Advertising revenue			638		369
Deposit interest	3		531		693
TOTAL INCOME			<u>20,147</u>		<u>19,105</u>
LESS EXPENSES					
Printing & distribution of newsletter		6,776		7,561	
Rallies & marketing expenses		2,046		2,454	
Printing postage & stationery		2,016		1,778	
Telephone & office expenses		1,314		1,024	
Travelling & conference expenses		4,606		3,314	
Room hire & meeting expenses		1,447		174	
Subscriptions & donations		702		283	
Insurance		528		527	
Secretarial & computer support		195		216	
Storage costs		301		0	
Legal costs		874		0	
Web Site costs		69		123	
Sundry expenses		138		143	
Depreciation of fixed assets		546		677	
			<u>21,558</u>		<u>18,274</u>
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME			<u>(£1,411)</u>		<u>£831</u>

BALANCE SHEET
31 March 2002

	Note	31 3 02		31 3 01	
		£	£	£	£
TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	2		1,542		194
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stock - Merchandise		603		297	
- Promotional goods & stationery		995		1,755	
Debtors & prepayments		598		933	
Bank current account		1,864		2,571	
Cash on deposit		32,245		34,155	
		<u>36,305</u>		<u>39,711</u>	
CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Trade creditors		1,413		1,149	
Accruals		1,051		2,219	
Advance subscriptions		8,551		8,353	
Corporation tax	3	427		368	
Capital Gains tax		169		169	
		<u>11,611</u>		<u>12,258</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			24,694		27,453
TOTAL NET ASSETS			<u>£26,236</u>		<u>£27,647</u>
RESERVES					
Balance brought forward 31 March 2001			27,647		26,816
Excess of Expenditure over Income for the year			(1,411)		831
			<u>£26,236</u>		<u>£27,647</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

31 March 2002

1. MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees are shown net of a reserve for advance subscriptions. At any time the Association has a commitment to each member to provide a service for the length of time up to his or her renewal date. The reserve accounts for this commitment.

2. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Total	Office Equipment	Other Fixtures
Cost brought forward	4,606	3,861	745
Additions	1,894	1,871	23
Cost carried forward	<u>6,500</u>	<u>5,732</u>	<u>768</u>
Depreciation brought forward	4,412	3,667	745
Charge for the year	546	541	5
Depreciation carried forward	<u>4,958</u>	<u>4,208</u>	<u>750</u>
Net book value 31 March 2002	<u>£1,542</u>	<u>£1,524</u>	<u>£18</u>
Net book value 31 March 2001	<u>£194</u>	<u>£194</u>	<u>£0</u>

3. DEPOSIT INTEREST

Deposit interest is received gross. Provision for Corporation Tax has been made against this at 10% (2001 10%) and included under Current Liabilities.

4. BOOKS OF ACCOUNT

All members are welcome to inspect the Association's financial records at any time mutually convenient to the member and the Treasurer. Please contact the Treasurer if you wish to exercise this right.