

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 1993

NEWS FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING...

... held on 6th November, 1993 at Hockley Port on the Birmingham Canal Navigations.

The Council discussed the costs of using a commercial printer to produce the latest issue of the Boater. Although the additional cost was estimated to be about £70, it was agreed that this was worthwhile to save time and effort on the part of the Darlings. Once the blurring problem from the bubble jet printer has been sorted out, the results should be excellent.

Following the success of the NABO presence at various rallies this year, we decided that we should attend at least as many events next year. Waltham Abbey will soon be booked, and other possibilities are Nottingham, Braunston, Little Venice and Stourbridge.

Peter Lee reported on a recent meeting of the All Parties Waterways Group. It was well-attended by many waterways interests. The RYA gave a presentation about navigation on rivers; worrying developments involve the cost of boating and the possible introduction of a steerer's licence for all boats, including private and hire boats. This latter suggestion has resulted from the reports of safety committees set up after the Marchioness disaster.

The NABO Council is hoping to have a meeting with the Department of the Environment, where such issues can be discussed.

The results of the questionnaire were discussed by the Council. It was agreed that we should be careful to note co-operation with other organisations where appropriate, so that we do not receive more criticism in this area. It is sad that so many respondents aired grievances about other waterway users; NABO should certainly suggest that boaters slow down when passing moored boats. Many members are concerned about waterway restoration, but the Council felt that as other organisations, such as the IWA, do a good job in this area, there was no need for us to be directly involved. This does not mean that NABO is against restoration projects, but rather that it would prefer to concentrate on other issues more directly relevant to boat owners.

There is concern about moorings in Nottingham adjacent to the new Courthouse which is being built near the canal. BW assure us that 48 hour mooring will still be available in this prime spot for visitors to Nottingham.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NABO's 3rd AGM, held at Dr Johnson House, Bull Street, Birmingham on 27th November was attended by over 50 members from around the country. The Chairman's Report was given for the last time by Dave Green who announced his retirement as Chairman and as a Council member.

The Treasurers report was given by Penny Barber. The financial position of the Association being fairly sound, it was recommended that the membership fees remain the same for 1994.

The Council members were appointed on block. A discussion then arose as to whether they should be voted on individually.

You will see from the list of Council members on the back page, that one candidate in The Boater, David Horne, is missing. He unfortunately withdrew due to pressure of work, but has nevertheless offered to help where he can, for which we are grateful.

Amendments to both the proposed resolutions (detailed in the last Boater) were tabled, but after some discussion both resolutions were defeated. There will therefore be no discount for people paying by standing order, and there will not be a class of Associate member.

The Revd. Anthony Bedell FCA, being eligible and willing to stand, was reappointed as Auditor to the Association.

NEWS FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING...

... held on 4th December, 1993 at Hockley Port on the Birmingham Canal Navigations.

New Officers were appointed for the coming year, and it was agreed that the address of the Association should be moved to the new Chairman's house. You will see the Council members' names, addresses and responsibilities on the back of this newsletter.

It appears that NABO have been excluded from meetings of the Midlands Canal Forum, but are now to receive invitations to attend. The new regional representatives have been asked to be vigilant about user meetings, and to ensure that NABO is sent information and minutes, even if nobody is able to attend in person.

There is another meeting of the Parliamentary Waterways Group on 14th December, which Peter Lea will be attending. Harry Winter has two meetings in January, one on Boat Safety with BW, and the other with the PLA.

It was suggested that we should investigate the reasons why some members have not renewed their subscriptions. We will write to some lapsed members to try to find out.

Issues raised at the AGM were discussed by the Council. Postal votes were suggested for the election of the Council and for resolutions. The Council considered that this would be difficult to organise, and restrictive if amendments to resolutions were proposed at the meeting.

Following a request at the AGM, The Council will give consideration to organising an interim meeting of members. If you think it would be a good idea to meet other members (and the NABO Council), perhaps by boat, please let us know.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

It is with some trepidation that I take over from Dave Green in this difficult role. Dave's abilities made him an excellent Chairman and I am sorry we could not keep him on, but we do continue to have a strong Council with a vision for the future.

I believe NABO is as vital now as the day we started. There are the difficult issues which we are currently involved with, and other issues just round the corner which will be of central interest to boaters such as the proposal to change the terms and conditions of BW cruising licences and the proposal to change BW byelaws.

We are also making some internal changes in the way NABO operates. For example we are introducing improvements to our information gathering techniques and monitoring procedures so that we can identify and respond to problems more quickly.

During the coming year we will continue to seek a wider representation of Boaters on waterways with Navigation Authorities other than BW, but we will not stretch our resources beyond their capacity in order to do so.

Best wishes for the new year!

NABO PRESIDENT

On the 6th December The Council proposed to ask Dave Green if he would be willing to become President of the Association for the following year, in recognition of his excellent Chairmanship in first years of NABO. We are pleased to announce that Dave has agreed to our request.

The position of President is one written into the Constitution, which says that NABO may have a President who shall be invited by the Council to hold office for the following year.

The position of President has no responsibilities or duties attached to it, but even so, I am sure Dave will make a good job of it!

LICENSE REFUNDS - ERRATUM

In the last Boater we reported on the new system of refunds explained to us at a meeting we had with Jim Kelly and Ken Dodd shortly before we went to press.

What we were not aware of was that we had not understood the full implications of the system, and it was not until a later date that we obtained a list of the actual refund amounts.

These are as follows:

Months Left	% Refund	Months Left	% Refund
12	100	6	15
11	75	5	0
10	50	4	0
9	40	3	0
8	30	2	0
7	20	1	0

These refunds are clearly wholly unreasonable. Short of giving no refund at all for all 12 months, it is difficult to imagine a less

fair way of refunding licence fees. If you can think of one, please keep it to yourself!

The fact that this was introduced unilaterally without any consultation with users is another major point of contention. While BW now pay lip service to consultation, the corporate culture still seems to be one of introducing whatever measures they see fit.

The third aggravation about this episode is that we misunderstood the scheme because we were given no written details about it at the meeting. We have asked BW why the list of proposed refund amounts which we subsequently obtained was not given to us then. It would have prevented any possibility of a misunderstanding.

We have written a very strongly worded letter regarding this matter as well as the mooring refunds problem; the secrecy surrounding waterway standards; and the fact that waterway standards were introduced without any consultation; and the rejection of the Boater's Charter. We await their reply with interest.

INLAND REVENUE DEMAND DETAILS OF BOAT OWNERS FROM BW.

Under the provisions of the Taxes Management Act 1970, the Inland Revenue have requested of BW, and reluctantly been given, the following information about all owners who had a boat licensed in the tax year 1991/92:

The owner's name & address; craft name & index No.; length, beam and year of construction; licence type (hire, pleasure, houseboat); mooring location; licence fee paid; renewal date of licence.

Whilst every care is taken to ensure that the contents are factually correct, we accept no liability for any direct or consequential loss arising from any action taken by anyone as a result of reading anything contained in this publication. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Association.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

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Colours: - White, Red, Yellow, Navy, Black, Grey, Bottle green, Emerald, Teal.
Sizes:- Small (36"-38"), Medium (40"), Large (44"), X- Large (46"-48").

SWEATSHIRTS: in heavyweight polycotton, with either raglan or drop shoulder. (please specify) - only £ 12.50 each
Colours:- White, Red, Yellow, Navy, Black, Royal, Bottle Green, Emerald *, Teal *, Charcoal, Heather Grey.
* = Available as drop shoulder only.
Sizes:- Small (36"-38"), Medium (40"), Large (44"), X-large (48"-50").

LOGO: on both the Sweatshirts and T shirts is available in large full chest print or small pocket size print (on left). Black or White. Please state preference.

PENNANTS: With rope and toggle only £8.00
Pale blue with black logo.

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ORDER FORM:

Please return to: Penny Barber,

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

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QTY: ITEM : COLOUR :SIZE:LOGO: PRICE : TOTAL

TOTAL _____

Allow 28 days for despatch from receipt of order. Please make cheques payable to "National Association of Boat Owners"

NABO REPRESENTATIVES

NAME/POSITION

ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE

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(Treasurer)

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Stephen Peters.
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