



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

NEWSLETTER

October 1995

Editor's comment

The 1994/5 Council has had its last meeting, and now retires to wait for the AGM, wondering who is to win a place in the first ever election. Will this be the last Newsletter I ever edit, I ask myself?

But if you want to vote me (or anyone else) out of a job, you will have to turn up! And we want to hear your views on the year's activities, so do join us.

It is good to know that someone appreciates us, but I'm afraid that lovely letter will have to wait till next time.

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Published by

**National Association of
Boat Owners**

NEWSLETTER

Chairman's comment

You will see that this Newsletter is mainly given over to matters relating to the AGM. I am very pleased to see so many new people coming forward for the Council, and for the first time we are in danger of having an election. This is a healthy position for us to be in, and I would like to thank all those coming forward. Any candidate not elected onto the Council will still be very welcome to help NABO. There will still be plenty of work which will need to be done.

You will see elsewhere in this issue details of the new Boat Safety Certificate requirements which are being distributed to licensees at the moment. Also being distributed at the moment is the Waterways News including the winter stoppage programme. We are disappointed at the lateness of this document bearing in mind the stoppages are imminent, and in some cases are actually in place. We are taking this up with BW.

Also in Waterways News is an article "Countdown to safer boating" which gives the timetable for the introduction of boat safety standards and

compulsory insurance. It also states that the article gives licence holders formal notice of these events for the purposes of the 1995 Act. We feel that an article in a magazine does not really constitute "formal notice". Many people do not read magazines like this, and of course are not obliged to do so. You might think every boater would know about these issues, but there are quite a lot who either don't take Canal & Riverboat or Waterways World, and who are not members of the IWA, AWCC or NABO. Perhaps that's their own fault then, but some will be caught unawares.

Surely a formal notice should declare itself clearly in a prominent position. If the Waterways News stated on the front cover in reasonably bold letters "Important - this issue contains formal notice of the dates by which you need a boat safety certificate and third party insurance. See page 3." then this might have been sufficient.

Just to remind you of what the requirements are:

From 1 January 1997 onwards boats built in 1971 and after will

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Chairman's comment (continued)

need third party insurance and a boat safety certificate when renewing or taking out a new licence. From 1 January 1998 onwards boats built in 1970 and before will need third party insurance and a boat safety certificate when renewing or taking out a new licence.

These are the first 2 of 3 requirements introduced by s17 of the BW Act 1995. The third of the 3 requirements is that of having a mooring or a suitable place to leave the boat. This has not been settled yet and formal notice has not been given.

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View from the Council meeting held on 21st October, 1995

Moley is back! Last time I was on my way when I got tied up in a ploughing marathon in southern Warwickshire. Not a good place for moles, spent the entire 24 hours avoiding novice ploughmen so didn't get to the last meeting.

However this time the first few minutes were spent in a lovely domestic scene considering how the tables should be laid out. At least they didn't dislodge my bug.

There's going to be an election! There are 19 candidates for 16 places on Council so bring your pencils along to the AGM and vote! Somewhere else will be the details of the candidates, but you must turn up to vote.

Perhaps I shall have someone else to eavesdrop on next year.

They need a new membership secretary. Christine Potter who has done it so well, cannot continue and Melanie Darlington is filling the gap temporarily.

There was a long discussion on priorities for next year and this concentrated mainly on recruitment of new members. The bigger NABO is the better its voice will be received and a target of 2500 members by the AGM 1996 was set. All members will be asked if they can help in this and a survey form will be sent with the next Newsletter. Improvements in the running of

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View from the Council meeting (continued)

meetings to stop them discussion things of little importance, which I must say I find very boring, were agreed.

BW are doing something well! Some boaters got stuck at Keadby railway bridge because BR refused to open it. BW are claiming compensation from BR, which, if they get it, they will share with those boaters affected.

They also do some things badly! The stoppage list has only just been circulated, having been agreed in July, and is apparently out of date as well! The Waterways News accompanying it purports to give formal notice of the bringing into effect of parts of section 17 of the new Act. A pretty questionable way of doing so, as it is buried deep in an article about standards. Moley thinks it is of questionable legality as well as a pretty silly way of going about it.

They are also sending out the new Boat Safety Standards booklet without the list of surveyors. As a lot of the info you need is in a (yet to be available - surprise, surprise!) technical manual costing £40 and the

recommendations of their technical advisory committee seem to have been ignored in three crucial areas, you may agree with me that the whole thing is a bit of a mess - to use the polite language us moles are used to. This will run and run!

Off to the AGM next, I'll see you there, but you won't see me!

Moley.

The first meeting of the new Council after the AGM will be held on Saturday 9th December, 1995, starting at 10am. Venue: Friends Meeting House, Northfield, Birmingham.

Safer boating?

Look at your copy of "Waterways News", the one just sent out by BW. Under the title "Countdown to safer boating" is a lovely picture of two boats moored right up against a bridge hole, with ropes forming excellent tripwires right across the towpath.

And have those bicycles got towpath cycle permits? Can't see any!

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Update on the Boat Safety Scheme from Nigel Parkinson

Well, that seems to be the end of this round. BW have given NABO formal notice of the introduction of the ill named Boat Safety Scheme and provided a copy of the new Grey Book which purports to promulgate the Standards.

You should have received your copy, a list of Surveyors which might get longer in time and a copy of the Checklist by the time you read this. Please study them carefully. The new book only partly promulgates Standards, as the real rules in many areas are contained in the Technical Manual, aimed at Surveyors and Examiners. This has not yet been updated from the old User Manual version, so I'm not sure of the size, but should you wish to buy one you will be ripped off to the tune of £40 at least. (The existing book is about 0.5 in thick, including 5 Section dividers and comes in a black binder which could be bought in any stationers. Any advance on a direct production cost of about £5?) Someone once said something about leopards not changing their spots! The update service looks slightly

more realistically priced. NABO will obtain a copy of both when published so should you want a specific query tackled in advance of an examination, please contact Nigel who will gladly harass Mr Allison at BW. There will also be a series of Articles in the newsletter covering the various Standards and giving the User Manual interpretation.

The Standards themselves are flawed in many areas; sometimes no account has been taken of the benefits to be obtained, because it simply may not be possible to comply in an existing boat or merely because they are incorrectly worded. In all these cases or if in any disagreement at all with the Surveyor/Examiner you should immediately appeal regardless of what it says in the User Manual. BW will not refuse you a licence whilst the appeal is running. I also suspect that individual Waterway managers would sooner have the licence fee in their coffers than an unlicensed boat! In the event that you appeal, successfully or not, please let NIGEL PARKINSON have all the details so as to

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Update on the Boat Safety Scheme (continued)

establish a bank of case history which can be used as precedent. You should also appeal if 'Not installed to BS5482 Part 3' is given as a reason (Checklist page 19 item 7.1.1). This Standard was originally a Code of Practice and when converted was not re-phrased. As a result it does not prescribe, it advises, using the word 'should' rather than 'shall'. Other aficionados of British standards, EN standards and ISO Standards will already have worked out that compliance with things that say 'should' is optional, not mandatory!

There are 3 Standards which Council disagrees with entirely:

Standard 2.13

Standard 7.1

Standard 7.14.

Standard 2.13 has been amended since the previous Grey Book and no longer permits balance pipes between petrol tanks. This means that any one with more than one petrol tank has to remove tanks to eliminate the extras. That may not be possible without major dismantling. Leaving empty petrol tanks is more dangerous than

having them full. This Standard may not affect any members but the principle of practicality in existing boats is important.

Standard 7.1 has been amended to do away with the previous specific exemption from flue spillage tests. It is not yet clear whether the test will be included in the Gas Module of the examiners training, but in any case, the Standard should be clear and unambiguous. Council also does not accept that BW/NRA can withdraw an exemption against the disagreement of the User representatives or against the advice of the Technical Committee set up to advise on the content of the standards.

Standard 7.14 requires a gas test point. The purpose of the gas test point is to check the pressure in the system when all appliances are working at maximum gas consumption. A maximum pressure drop of 2.5mbar (about 1in water gauge) is permitted. There is however an exemption from pressure drop tests at Standard 7.1, the pressure being deemed acceptable if all the flames are

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Update on the Boat Safety Scheme (continued)

burning properly. The installation of a gas test point will therefore achieve nothing except to cause expense, disturb a gas system unnecessarily and introduce more joints as potential leaks.

Council has decided to invoke the complaints procedure. BW have responded to none of our letters during the 'consultation' procedure, has provided no explanation of the need for changing Standards 2.13 and 7.1 and is charging an unreasonable sum for the information necessary to determine if a boat is compliant before calling for an expensive examination. They

have also not given details of how the Appeals process will be run nor explained the constitution of the Appeals panel. It appears from the Grey Book that BW might put your case to the panel! The immediate way ahead for boaters is to appeal against any unreasonable refusal of a Safety Certificate. Please use Nigel to help. Only by doing this will you reduce unnecessary costs and bring home to BW and NRA that their joint scheme is well conceived but ill-thought out! There remains open the possibility of using the BW Act 1995 to seek a blanket exemption for a particular class of boat.

News from the North West: Neil Hutchinson

User Group meetings for the autumn have been announced by BW managers. Border Counties Forum was 18th October, 1995. New Manager, new format and a promised report to follow.

Lancashire Canals Forum is to be held in Blackburn on Tuesday 7th November. Pennine & Potteries meeting is to be held in Middlewich on 8th November, 1995. Leeds & Liverpool (East)

meeting is to be held on Thursday 30th November.

I have written to the Chairman of the Rochdale Canal Trust. No reply after some 6 weeks. Is there a member who knows the name and address of this person, and I will persist.

I also attended, as a visitor, on 14th October, the BW Dredging Conference at the National Indoor Arena.

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Stoppage windows: Use them or lose them?

In the National Stoppage Programme for 1995/6 we have been able to negotiate some periods when navigation will be possible (windows). It would make sense if boaters took advantage of this facility which is often only grudgingly given by some Waterway Managers. Unless otherwise indicated the Waterway is open over Christmas and New Year (16th Dec to 7th Jan).

Ashton canal: Clayton locks, window 25/26 Nov.

Llangollen canal: New Marton locks, window 25/26 Nov.

Shropshire Union canal: Tyrley locks, Adderley locks, Audlem locks, windows 25/26 Nov.

Trent & Mersey canal: Meaford locks, window 17/18 Feb.

Grand Union canal has four windows: Cape and Hatton locks 3/4 Feb; Hatton and Knowle locks 17/18 Feb; Lock 81 and Lock 73 are open 27Jan to 4 Feb; Lock 46 and Lock 48 are open 27/28 Jan.

The GU Leicester section (Watford locks) are open 17 & 18 Feb. This could need a 'friendly' phone call to confirm.

The Northampton arm is open 27 Jan to 18 Feb.

The Lee navigation is open 27 to 29 Jan.

The southern Oxford canal has windows 25/26 Nov 1995 and 2/3 Dec.

The Staffs & Worcester has a window 17/18 Feb.

Trent & Mersey is open 26 Jan to 12 Feb, Shardlow to Stoke.

The Caldon canal is open 25/26 Nov as well as 10/11 Feb.

The Macclesfield canal is open 10/11 Feb.

The Leeds & Liverpool has two windows 29 Jan to 11 Feb and 10/11 Feb for limited navigation.

That's the good news. However there are some major works so don't try to cruise the southern Stratford (except Xmas), Trent & Mersey (far east and west) and the Worcester-Birmingham (lock 23 to 58) this coming winter.

On the Ashby canal: don't get caught without access to facilities between 15 Jan and 23 Feb.

Oxford summit has two stoppages from 8 Jan to 15

NEWS

Stoppage windows (continued)

March, so again positioning may be important. Also Ansty embankment is closed before Christmas.

Braunston Puddle Banks are closed 8 Jan to 15 March, so don't leave yourself on the wrong side of this one.

The Christmas period at Wigan is shorter (23 Dec to 1 Jan).

Please let me know how you get on, E&OE, Neil Hutchinson, Navigation.

** Stoppage Programmes, disguised as "Waterways News" Autumn 1995, issue 7 should be available from your local Waterways office if they have not yet arrived in the post. **

BW Wardens: who are they? Penny Barber's findings

Apocryphal tales of both "Little Hitlers" and "Guardian Angels" acting variously as spies and saviours added to our existing concern about recruitment, selection and training for two categories of pseudo-employees i.e. wardens & security boats. Astonishing though it may seem that anyone would don trows in that particular shade of bright green WITHOUT being paid to do so, there are also rumours of a rather sad individual who impersonates a lock-keeper.

We wrote to Stewart Sim, BW's Midlands & South West Regional Manager as follows:-

" A number of our members have expressed concern about

the two categories of people who appear to be semi-employees of BW - wardens and security boats. They seem to be given authority to act on behalf of the Board in return for either a modest payment or some concession such as reduced licence or mooring fees.

We feel it is appropriate to ask for your response to the following questions about the procedures for the selection of these people and the subsequent control exercised over them. If any of your answers are negative, we would be grateful if you could comment on the reasons for the procedures etc. not being in place.

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BW Wardens (continued)

1. Are there national procedures for such staff?
2. Are there any local regulations?
3. Are such posts freely advertised?
4. Do job descriptions exist for these posts?
5. Are references requested?
6. Are references checked?
7. Are police checks carried out?
8. What training is given to the post holder?
9. Are the local managers trained and/or experienced in the management of volunteer staff?
10. Are appointments made on a permanent basis under similar terms and conditions to all other BW staff albeit with unusual remuneration arrangements? If not, do standard contracts of some sort exist?
11. Does the Board's public liability insurance cover losses arising from the actions or instructions of these people?
12. Are all such employees issued with proper identification?
13. Please could details of the id be made public?
14. Please could the remit of these staff be made public? Perhaps an outline of their responsibilities could be printed on the back of their identification card."

Stewart Sim's clear and candid reply for BW starts with the comment "Volunteer wardens is something we are approaching with trepidation". He goes on to remark that as these people are volunteers, no contract of employment exists and thus some of our questions cannot apply. Stewart states that "Volunteers are vetted and full briefing, induction, and in some cases, training is given to ensure that they are clear what the role entails".

Volunteers are being trialed in response to local demands and are more akin to the neighbourhood watch self-help philosophy than say to a National Park warden.

They have NO authority and are merely "eyes" and "ears". No formal ID is carried because they have no authority. However there is some form of identification, usually by a badge or through a tee-shirt or sweatshirt.

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BW Wardens (continued)

The role of security boats may vary from site to site with the general principle of their residential presence deterring theft and vandalism. Again, they carry no authority except to the extent that any local agreement exists to perform a specified amount of site maintenance.

So, now you know! Approach your local BW manager with all comments, requests and offers to volunteer.

Otters on the Stratford?

A boater recently reported to me that he had seen an otter on the northern Stratford canal.

"Are you sure it was an otter, not a mink?" I asked.

"Quite sure, you could tell from the way it was diving."

"But otters like quiet places," I protested.

"Yes, we saw it on a BW work boat!"

To place your advertisement in this Newsletter, contact Nikki Timbrell on Small ads are free for members.

New Crick Marina

A new Marina is being built for Canal Craft at Crick on the Grand Union Leicester section summit, big enough for 120 boats. Work has just started, and the development is scheduled to open in April next year, complete with two residential security boats and all facilities.

Did Simon Ainley (local BW Waterway manager) really say there was a moratorium on new moorings in this area?

Special advertisement slot

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We are always seeking quality narrowboats for brokerage, if you have a narrowboat to sell, give us a ring (free moorings are offered on the Southern Grand Union for suitable craft). We also purchase outright, quick decisions made.

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NABO BUSINESS

The 1995 Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held at the Friends Meeting House, Northfield, Birmingham at 2.00pm on Saturday 25th November 1995. A map is included in the centre of this issue.

If you are coming by car, there is plenty of parking near the Meeting House. Northfield station is not far away, and trains run frequently from Birmingham New Street. By boat the nearest points are Bourneville, Gas Street, or Alvechurch. All are a few stops from Northfield by train.

Agenda

1. To receive the Chairman's report.
2. To receive the audited financial statements for the year ended 31st March, 1995. These will be circulated at the meeting and printed in the next Newsletter.
3. To determine the annual subscription rates.
4. To elect the Council members.
5. To appoint an Auditor.

After the official business is concluded, an "open session" will be held at which members are invited to ask questions and make suggestions.

Nominations for the 1995/6 NABO Council

List of Nominees:

Penny Barber

Philip Bland

Christopher Boxall

Jon Darlington

John Glock

John Griffiths

Roger Hancock

Neil Hutchinson

Brian Kemp

Mij Lambert

Peter Lea

Alan Padwick

Nigel Parkinson

Stephen Peters

Andrew Sherrey

Denis Smith

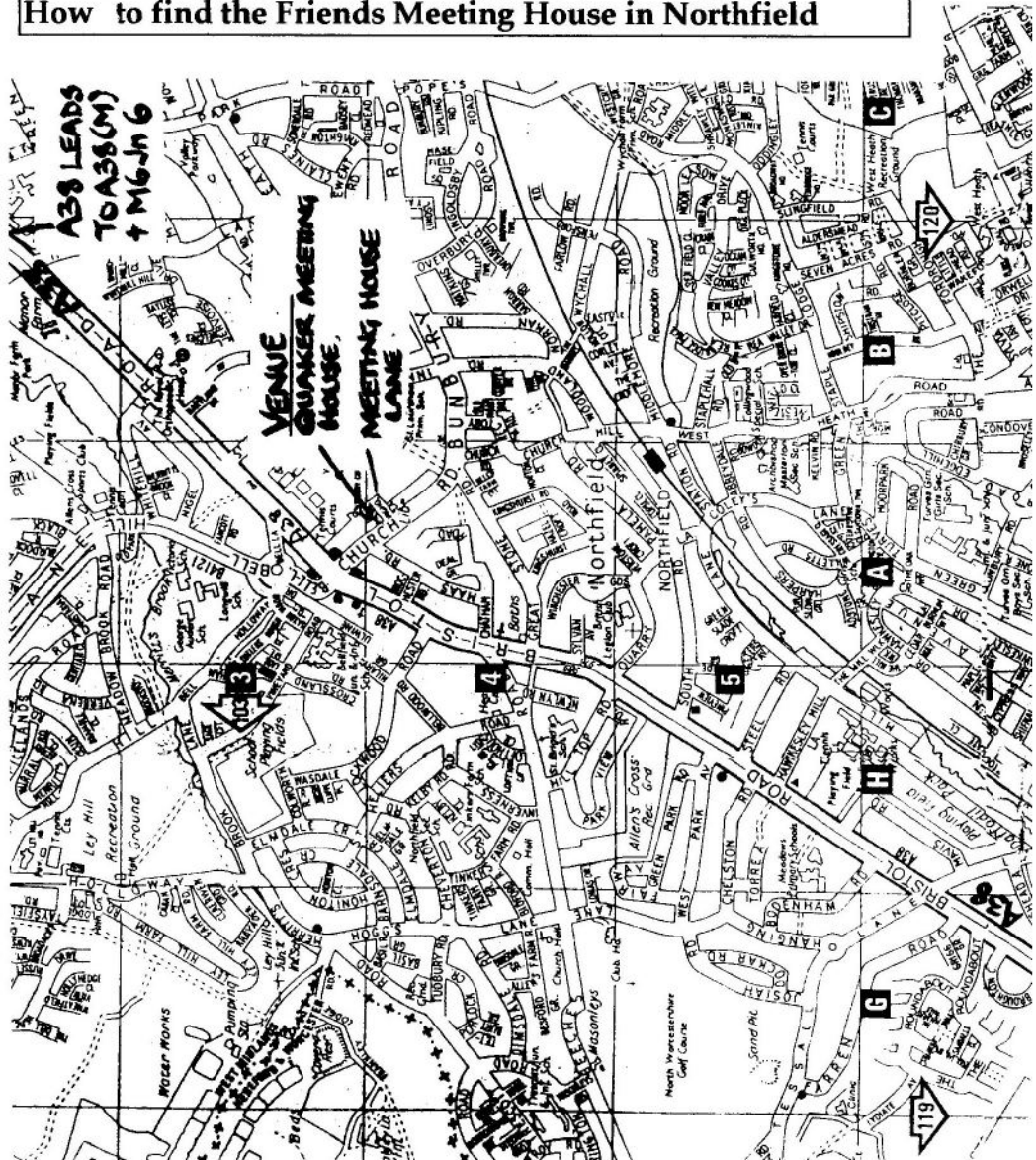
Peter Sterry

Nikki Timbrell

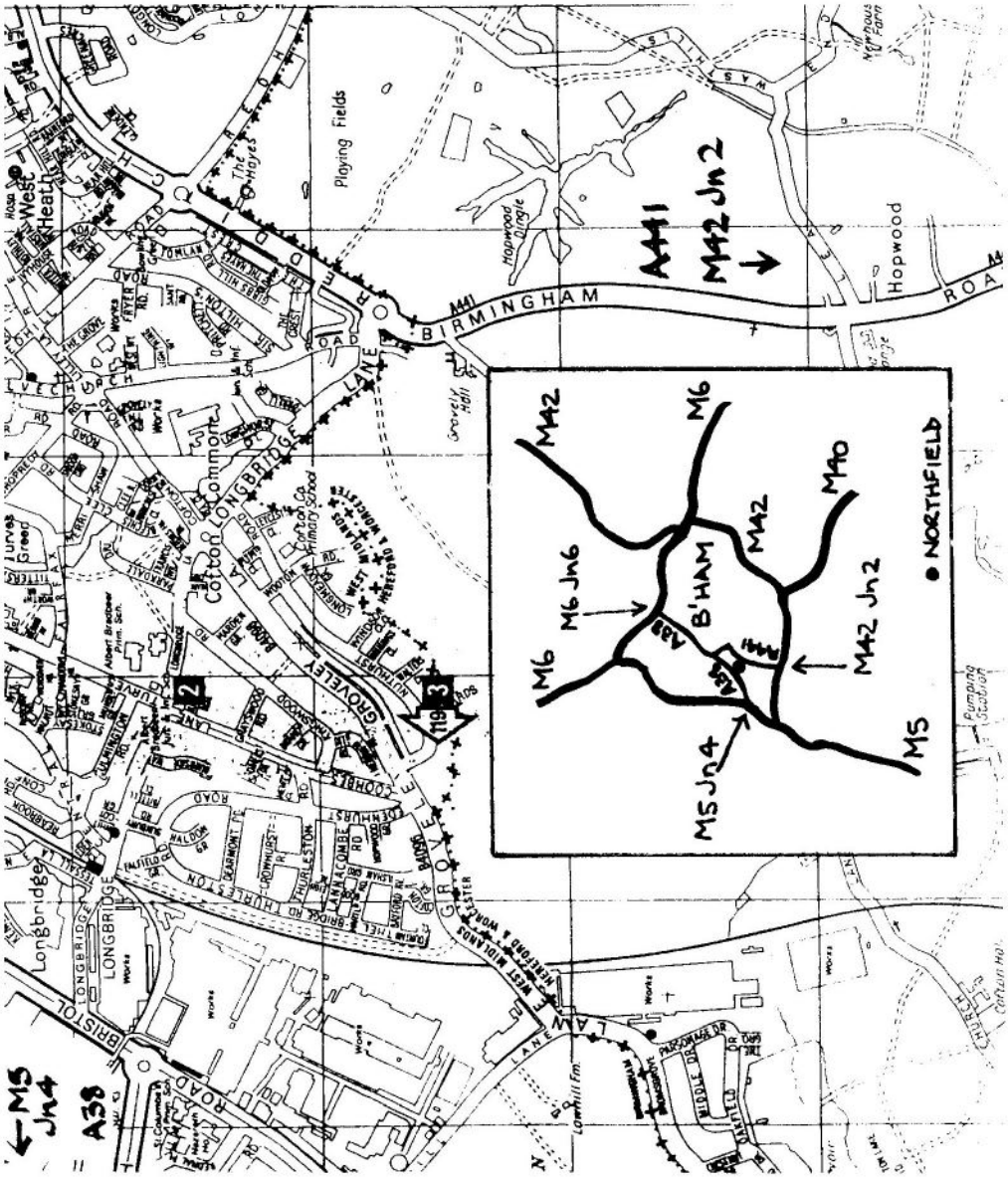
Neil Walker

NABO BUSINESS

How to find the Friends Meeting House in Northfield



NABO BUSINESS



NABO BUSINESS

Nominations for the 1995/6 NABO Council

Penelope Jane Barber of Hockley Port, Birmingham

I've owned & lived on a boat for 5.5 years so I'm still a beginner by my friends and NABO's standards!

I've served on NABO Council for 4 years and would like to continue to the extent work commitments and my knowledge and ability permit.

The more I see and learn the more I realise how wonderful the waterways could be if only the Authorities would do as we told them.

Declared interest: Vice Chair of RBOA, Hockley Port Moorers Rep.

Philip Bland of Wolverhampton

Founder member of NABO, served on the Council from the start.

Christopher Boxall of Solihull

I first discovered Britain's canals as a student in the late 60's. My early interest was as a member of the Dudley Tunnel Preservation Trust, the forerunner of the Black Country Museum and since then I have always had a canal boat.

Currently I have a Nauticus 27' fibreglass cruiser which has navigated canals as far afield as London, Tewkesbury, Cambridge, Manchester & Leeds.

I have frequently been as disappointed with the state of navigation on these cruises as I have with BW's replies to my complaints! With the power of NABO behind me I have used my first year on the NABO Council (Midlands Representative) to push for improvements in navigation. My specific interest is the navigability of the existing waterway network, including such characteristics as water availability, access restrictions, state of canal equipment & towpaths and fishermen. I ran the intimidation project this year and hope to bring water supplies into greater focus in 1996.

Jon Darlington of Birmingham

I was involved in the formation of NABO in 1991 and was vice chairman for its first two years of existence. I became chairman in 1993. Although we have seen improvements in certain aspects within BW, it is still their objective to maximise their income. To do this they will have to maximise

NABO BUSINESS

Nominations for the 1995/6 NABO Council (continued)

their control over boaters, something made easier by virtue of their monopoly position. This is a recipe for continuing tension in which a watchdog group like NABO is vital. I believe NABO should continue to provide this watchdog role, and indeed strengthen it.

John Glock, Leighton Buzzard

Willing to be membership officer.

John Eric Griffiths of Wolverhampton

I am 61, 26 years and 7 boats current experience. A few years prior to this I was sailing dingies with my first wife and was a sea scout with some canal experience a long time ago. I currently own a 56ft narrowboat and live alongside the Staffs & Worcester on a site leased from BW. I have tended to cruise further afield than most. I am computer literate and can wordprocess.

Roger Hancock of Stratford-Upon-Avon

I am a solicitor by training, although I have given up practice, and can bring my experience and analytical skills to bear on NABO's behalf. I have served on

the Committee as Secretary for the past two years. I have been a boater for over 20 years, having built my first boat, hired extensively and having just taken delivery of an inspection launch to replace my previous narrowboat. My technical skills are limited but my desire to keep the waterways open and properly maintained for boaters is unlimited. There is much to be done particularly in relation to water depth and dredging and improving the water available in drought conditions. I would like the opportunity to pursue these aspects by serving a further year on your Committee and am willing to act as Secretary again, if requested.

Neil Hutchinson of Coventry

4 years on Council. Member ACA, CCS, CCC, IWA

Brian Kemp

Worked for 20 years in industrial sales/marketing then taught for 9 years in a large comprehensive latterly as head of computing/information technology. Took early retirement and am now a part time consultant.

NABO BUSINESS

Nominations for the 1995/6 NABO Council (continued)

Have been a boater for 15 years, initially hiring, but 6 years ago was able to have my own boat built. Now boat most weekends from March to October and occasionally in winter months.

Although resident in Surrey, moor at Braunston as this gives more cruising options.

Although keen to encourage everyone to appreciate and use our canal system, believe strongly that the first priority should be to maintain them for their original purpose, viz. navigation.

Mij Lambert of Dadlington, Warwickshire

I am a retired teacher, and have experience both of the Norfolk Broads with a wooden Dolphin, and of the canals with our narrowboat. I volunteered for the Council at the last AGM, and have served NABO as Marketing Officer since then.

Peter Lea of Berkhamsted

I have been a boat owner for over 15 years. I owned a wooden butty, "Gertrude" for 6 years; I now own a 70' narrow boat "Wessex". I cruise the canals

extensively and belong to several canal societies.

I joined NABO Council in 1992, and took part in the negotiations over BW's Bill and the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. I have been Vice Chairman and Southern Region representative for two years, and have represented NABO at meetings of the Parliamentary Waterways Group, the National Inland Navigation Forum, the IWA's Navigation, Technical and Amenity Committee and at BW meetings at a national and regional level. I also ran NABO's stand at the Braunston Boat Show this summer. If I am re-elected I will:

1. Encourage BW to improve the Waterway Standards relating to the depth and width of the navigable channel;
2. Negotiate with BW and other bodies to ensure that our interests are fully taken into account when new regulations are introduced;
3. Endeavour to improve liason and co-operation with other bodies;
4. Work to improve NABO's profile on the waterways.

NABO BUSINESS

Nominations for the 1995/6 NABO Council (continued)

Commander Alan Padwick of Winchester

I retired from the RN as a Commander at the age of 53 in 1993. My last years in the service involved considerable committee work and staffing of paperwork. As Superintendent of Diving (Navy) I worked on safety of diving, including being Chairman of NATO working party on Diving in Brussels. I also spent 3 years in the MOD as Naval Advisor to the Admiralty Board on Minewarfare and Diving, an invaluable, if frustrating, insight into how to tangle with bureaucrats! My final three years were seagoing commanding the RNR training squadron of 11 minesweepers & numerous patrol craft. Since leaving the RN I have cruised nearly 4000 miles (2267 locks!) all over the canals & rivers of England & Wales. I would like to do something in return for all the pleasures I have had in doing my cruises.

Nigel Parkinson of Charlton Adam, Somerset

I am a Chartered Engineer and have been boating since 1974, buying our first boat in 1980. Our boating interests

include going a long way peacefully and getting to the dead ends of the system. I have served on Council for 12 months as the Engineering Officer, acting as your representative on the Boat Safety Scheme Advisory Group and leading for Council on this ill thought out scheme. I would be pleased to carry on in this role.

Stephen Richard Peters of Wythall, Birmingham

I am offering myself for re-election to Council so that I may continue to represent the interests of boat owners in general and those who navigate rivers in particular.

I am presently the NABO River Users' Co-ordinator which involves monitoring of the actions of navigation authorities and dealing with matters which relate to river boating activities. I have also produced a number of NABO publications as a service to our members.

I have had the privilege to serve on Council for a number of years during which I have strived to establish an efficient and streamlined structure within

NABO BUSINESS

Nominations for the 1995/6 NABO Council (continued)

which NABO can respond quickly to new developments as they arise. I am particularly keen to see Council devote more time to matters of direct relevance to boat owners rather than duplicating the activities of other special interest groups.

I consider the top priority for NABO in 1996 must be to increase membership so that it will become a respected, powerful organisation with real credibility. The second priority must be to continue to protect the interests of our members in a uniquely NABO way.

Andrew Sherrey

I am a Chartered Accountant in general practice working from home.

I have in conjunction with my wife Margaret been cruising the canals for the last 11 years firstly in hire boats and since 1992 in our own 20 year old 44 foot narrowboat "Magwitch" which we moor on linear moorings at Kinver on the Staffs. & Worcs. Canal.

We have been members of NABO since May 1993 and are also members of the

Staffordshire & Worcestershire canal Society.

My main purpose in standing as a prospective member of Council is to fill the post of Treasurer although I also have a keen interest in the imposition of the new matrix system and the fact that this is being imposed without consultation with the result that boaters are not aware what costs they are potentially letting themselves in for in the future.

Denis Smith of Stourport

A boatowner since 1986 I have lived on a 45 ft narrowboat for the past 4.5 years being moored at the southern end of the Staffs & Worcs canal. Having been a member of NABO for 3 years I applaud the work they undertake on behalf of boaters whether it be in national negotiations or by way of support given to members in addressing collective or individual grievances. I am in my late 50s and being a retired bank manager I have the time and maybe some experience to contribute to the aims of NABO. Having registered on the residential boaters moratorium I am particularly

NABO BUSINESS

Nominations for the 1995/6 NABO Council (continued)

interested in following through the inevitable difficulties which will emerge when it expires.

Peter Sterry of Spondon, Derby

My wife and I have spent holidays on the canals each year since 1978, and in 1980 we bought our own boat, a 22' Dawncraft. In 1986 we sold this, and bought our present boat, a 35' Mike Heywood/Stephen Goldsbrough narrowboat. I joined NABO at the inaugural meeting in Dudley, and have served on the Council ever since, being responsible for publicity for the Association, and also looking after the interests of our members in the North East.

Nikki Timbrell of Blisworth, Northants

It looks as though I have just volunteered for a fourth year on the NABO Council, subject to election, of course. It took me a year to wriggle out of the Secretary's job, since when I have been editor of the Newsletter.

My record of attendances at Council meetings has been appalling over the last two years, the excuse being that running a

hire boatyard takes up a lot of Saturdays. My record of publication is better: I've never missed a issue!

Neil Walker of Colchester

I am 60 years old and have recently taken early retirement after 28 years piloting ships on the Thames Estuary/River. In that time I have been Chairman of the UK Pilots' Association and also a Pilotage Commissioner engaged in the re-organisation of UK Pilotage.

My wife and I have enjoyed the canals for over 20 years on many hire boats and an elderly Dawncraft before our present 55ft narrowboat on which we now spend about 6 months each year.

I believe the future of the Canals faces a great challenge between preserving the attractions of peace and quiet whilst maintaining and improving accessibility. These may be seemingly irreconcilable aims and therefore our Association must continue to have a strong voice representing, as it does, one of the principal groups of Canal users.

NABO BUSINESS

Election of Council

As you will see from the details set out above there are 19 nominations for Council which is limited to 16 members only. Accordingly for the first time in NABO's history an election has to be held.

Only those present and voting at the meeting are entitled to vote under the Constitution. If you don't turn up you have no vote.

The voting system is as follows:

Two tellers will be appointed by the Meeting.

Each member will be given a ballot paper containing the names of all those nominated. They may vote by marking their paper with ticks or crosses for up to 16 of the candidates. 17 or more will invalidate the whole voting paper.

The tellers will count the votes and the 16 nominees with the most votes will be those elected. In the event of a tie for the last place or places on Council the tellers shall draw lots between those tying to decide.

Once the result has been announced the tellers will destroy the ballot papers.

Membership Secretary

We have had five people express an interest in becoming membership secretary in response to our request in the last newsletter.

A new membership secretary will shortly be chosen from these applicants, but in order that a back log of work does not arise in the meantime, and to ensure a smooth take over, it was agreed by Council that Melanie Darlington (who is the only Council member apart from Christine Potter who is familiar with the work of the membership secretary) should do the job during this period.

In appreciation of the extra work load this will create, on top of her other NABO duties and her having to earn a living, it was agreed that for the membership work only she should be paid at a rate of £5.00 per hour. Her other duties of Treasurer will still be done on a voluntary basis.

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REPORTS

Chesterfield Canal User Group meeting on 16 October 1995

The meeting opened with BW Manager, Richard Mercer, informing users about what is going on in his area. Salmon is being re-introduced into the River Trent by the NRA. Following a dispute with some moorers at Lincoln a questionnaire was sent out, the results of which showed that 89% of them were quite happy with their conditions at Lincoln. BW are seeking compensation from British Rail following their negligence in not operating Keadby rail bridge on one day in the summer, thus inconveniencing a number of boaters. British Rail have already refused to compensate individual boaters, but BW hope that they will be more successful, and if so, they will reimburse those boaters who have complained to them. A proposed stoppage at Torksey Lock has been postponed, as the NRA are carrying out flood-prevention work. Earlier on this year the Trent came within 6" of flooding at Torksey. BW are going to double the size of Torksey Lock.

On the Chesterfield Canal a considerable amount of bank protection is being carried out,

together with dredging. As there is an 11 mile SSI on this canal BW have to work very closely with English Heritage before any dredging can take place, but essential work has to be done. The Chesterfield Canal is a very attractive canal, but suffers from three major drawbacks. It is a 'dead-end' canal; it is entered from the tidal Trent; it is infested with a thick and persistent weed. BW have purchased a weed boat, and this has substantially helped to keep down the weed this year. Anglers on this canal are pleased to see boats, and the rule is that boats do NOT slow down for anglers, but proceed at a steady pace!

BW are carrying out restoration work at Worksop. Morse Lock is being restored, and it is expected that two miles of the canal will be restored by the end of next year, and that the stretch to Rotherham will be cleared in a further four years. BW hope to hold a rally each year to celebrate restoration of further stretches. In spite of the 11 mile SSSI BW are sure that there is no danger of another act of 'Basingstoke vandalism' by English Heritage.

REPORTS

Chesterfield User Group meeting (continued)

A new type of paddle gear has been devised, and BW will install and test this at Morse Lock. It is mechanical, not hydraulic, and is operated by a normal windlass. It is more expensive than the standard gear, and cannot be dropped in an emergency, but it is reckoned to be vandal-proof. The knowledgeable locals say that if it can survive there it can do so anywhere on the system!

Relations with anglers are generally pretty good, although a couple of problems were mentioned. Anglers catapulting ground-bait onto boats; report to the Angling Club concerned, if

possible quoting the number in the anglers passbook; and anglers seen urinating – report to the police, as this is an offence.

Richard Mercer, the BW Manager has a good relationship with his users, and seems to be winning the battle to make the Chesterfield Canal an attraction to boaters. Movements on the canal are increasing, and there is now a waiting list at some moorings. With the restoration schemes going on it is the ultimate long-term aim to join up with the River Don, and thus make the canal part of a ring.

Geoprojects Canal maps

Are you a fan of Geoprojects canal maps? Geoprojects are the latest cartographers to produce inland waterway guides, in the form of coloured flat maps of great clarity, with details not only of the waterway and its facilities, but also much more of the surrounding area than other guides. This, and the fact that the waterway is not always constrained to run up and down

the page, make it much easier to relate the canal or river to its surroundings.

Waterway facilities are marked using coloured symbols, as are tourist attractions. Tables list the services of boatyards and marinas, boat hire and trips. Roads and street plans make these maps particularly useful for locating a canal from your car. And the spaces are filled in with

REPORTS

Geoprojects canal maps (continued)

colour photos, background information and history.

Geoprojects has been producing quality mapping since 1965, and since 1982 has won eight British Cartographic Society awards for excellence. Their interests are diverse: from inland waterways of Britain to Arab World maps via specialist maps such as the Milton Keynes City map (without which you should

go nowhere near MK!).

The canal series so far comprises the Thames, Kennet & Avon, Basingstoke, Oxford and the recently published 4 maps of the Grand Union (including the Leicester section). Titles in preparation include the BCN, Llangollen, Norfolk Broads and Shropshire Union, as well as a route planning map. Time to start building a collection!

LETTERS

Single handed boating/windlasses

In the September Newsletter J B Weller mentioned a 'ladies windlass' or long throw windlass. The trouble with the latter is you can't use them on gate paddles because of the beam.

Our solution, as used by my wife for 10 years, is the double windlass. You take two standard windlasses, cut the handle off one and then weld its shank to the head of the other windlass. This allows the power of double leverage most of the time and a hand either end when the beam stops rotation of the long

windlass. Even on a beam you can still get about three-quarters of a turn and it is the first turn or two which is usually the problem. Only one paddle has ever beaten my wife (60+) and then she actually bent the shaft of the windlass!

Our windlass is much admired about the system but I hasten to add it is not my original idea although I cannot remember on which boat I first saw one.

Dereck J Dean

Rugby

NABO REPRESENTATIVES

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(Rally organiser)

Phil Bland

Chris Boxall
(Midlands rep)

Jon Darlington
(Chairman)

Melanie Darlington
(Treasurer)

Roger Hancock
(Secretary)

Neil Hutchinson
(Navigation Officer/NW Rep)

Mij Lambert
(Marketing Officer)

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