

MINUTES OF THE 37th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SWAN (RADCOT) CRUISER CLUB

Lechlade Memorial Hall on 10th September 2022

Present Committee:

Trevor Matthews – Commodore & Treasurer

Alan Hill – Secretary & Website

Dot Grafton – Event Secretary

Peter Bint - Event Support

The Commodore welcomed everyone to the meeting on what is a very sad time for the UK with the recent passing of Queen Elizabeth II. We all have grown up with her at the helm for most of our lives and I'm sure we all have fond memories of her various key celebrations. I remember our Club event to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee in 2012 at Eynsham. We were celebrating in a double marquee with torrential rain falling and waterfalls coming off the roof. At a gap in the weather, a flotilla of our Club boats flying Union Jacks and Club our burgees we cruised past The Ferryman Inn. At the same time our Commodore Denis Hill was cruising down the Thames tidal way in Black Sapphire as part of special flotilla to celebrate the jubilee.

As a mark of respect to Her Majesty I would like us to hold minutes silence when I tap this gavel (given to the Club by ex-Commodore Chris Winter around the time of the Golden Jubilee) to reflect on our former Queen.

The Commodore opened the meeting at 1745hrs.

1. Apologies

Tony Batty

Nick & Debbie Hunt

Ken Cattell

George & Julie Jarman

Trevor & Vicky Colegate

Royston Smith

Nick Dyer

Martyn Spence

Sue & Andrew Hiscock

2. Minutes of the Last AGM on 9th October 2021 at The Trout Lechlade

Acceptance of the Minutes was proposed by Frank Huddleston

seconded by John Raper

3. Matters Arising from Previous AGM Minutes

There were no matters arising.

4. Treasurer's Financial Report

The Treasurer thanked everyone for using bacs payment for all bookings. The days of passing cheques around has now been virtually eliminated. Even these can now be photographed and processed remotely.

Copies of the Club's Annual Statement were distributed to all Members via the website and hardcopies to those attending the AGM. The key points were explained:

- Our finances remain healthy with a current balance of £19017.32. Our reserves for emergencies are about £12.5k. We have monies collected for the next Crane out of £4.2k. We will continue to use some of these reserves by increasing subsidies of future events and towards any potential crane out deficits.
- Our membership income was £3100 (104 members – 90 boats) which funds our club activities and is mainly used for subsidising the entertainment for our various Club events.
- Crane out is planned to financially break even. Our last lift ran at a deficit of £1562 primarily due to increased King Lifting Hire costs. Crane out costs for this year's lift have increased by about 25% so we have had to increase our prices. We have investigated using another crane company, but prices are very similar.
- There was an unexpected profit of £749.45 on the Winter break at The Queens Hotel. This was associated with communications between Leisureplex central office and the hotel regarding the prices of the rooms with a sea view. We were quoted from head office and invoiced by the hotel. We queried the hotel invoice, but they were happy that they charged us the correct rates. The surplus was used to offset the crane out losses.
- We have started doing some free raffles during the year, in part due to the problems with handling money related to Covid. We also have sufficient funds, so I propose we continue it.
- We have made no donations to charity this year and we have the funds available to do it. I would propose the Club donate £250 to Cancer Research UK as we have lost several members to the disease and have a number currently undergoing treatment. The treasurer asked the attendees to endorse this proposal with a show of hands and it was unanimously carried.

Acceptance of the Treasurer's Report: Proposed by John Douse & Seconded: Fred Martin
The accounts were accepted.

5. Commodore's Review

1. Thanks to all the committee for their support throughout the season. We have now got used to communicating and doing most of the Club business by email with "face to face" meetings when it is convenient. It is not an onerous task being a committee member and I'm looking forward to having some new volunteers aboard.
2. Thanks to Alan for his continued efforts with the Club website without which the Club could not function. All our transactions and communications are driven by the website and Alan continues to make it easier to interact with the site. It has made the Treasurers role much easier. Anybody could do the Treasurers role now!

3. The highlight for the season was that it was almost business as usual as we started to recover from the trauma of Covid. We completed the full event calendar which must be deemed a success considering the Omicron variant appeared early into the season. We got off to a shaky start due to problems with the roof at The Ferryman meaning we had no choice but to amalgamate our AGM with the End of Season event at very short notice. I would like to thank the members who supported that late change and made the combined AGM & EOS successful.
4. I would like to thank Steve Grafton who coordinated our boat safety testing and certifications at Grafton field. We used Rob Lamden who is based in the Reading area. I'm pleased to say Sandy Dee came through with flying colours with no annoying small gas leaks gas to track down. I know some of our members weren't so lucky and ended up buying new cookers to cure their problems.
5. Our Winter break at Eastbourne was attended by 37 The weather was a little chilly but pretty good for the time of year. Hastings and Beachy Head were popular destinations. I don't think Pat has forgiven me for persuading her to cycle up the coast path to the top of Beachy Head – I do know it was a lot quicker cycling downhill back to the hotel! I would like to thank Carol Malpass for organising the weekend despite having the issues of Covid lurking in the background.
6. Crane out and in was a success. We safely lifted in and out 44 boats. I would like to thank everyone who made it happen with particular thanks to John Raper for his work preparing the plans and liaising with King Lifting. Also to those who worked all day on the chocking and slinging crews. We were rewarded with excellent weather and river conditions on both days. This seemed extra special when fresh in my memory was the cancellation of the previous crane out following the wettest ever winter on record. I would also like to thank Chrissie and Malcolm Robey (alias the Smurfs) for their exploits pressure washing our boats. They rapidly become covered head to toe in the blue antifoul residues, we are lucky to have their services.
7. Our new members evening at The Swan was attended by only a few New Members. I'm not sure why? It could have been Omicron fears? The trend continues that many new members are joining primarily for a cheap crane out rather than the social offerings of the Club. The Committee has decided to take this event out of next year's calendar.
8. The Summer Party was held for the first time at Lechlade Memorial / Village Hall. About 60 members attended our Platinum Jubilee party. This was our first attempt at using this venue together with using Monique's Catering. The Committee were concerned how it would work out but I'm sure most of you would agree that the facilities are great, and the quality of the food was excellent. We have a decision to make for the location for next year's event. We prefer a riverside location, but we can have that discussion later in the meeting.
9. The Club tidal rally was excellent apart from Jill Hill enacting Superwoman as she went flying horizontally off the deck of Sea Chimes attached to Lola the dog. The soft grass of the riverbank did reduce severity of the impact. Sadly, Jill had dislocated her shoulder. The benefit of having friends on the river was evident and thanks to Pete and Lynne of Serendipity and the help of the JR hospital her shoulder was soon put back in position, and in a sling within 3 hours. The remaining 3 boats making the trip enjoyed Mediterranean type weather throughout the trip and our cruise down the tidal way at dawn with the sun rising over London was superb. The return cruise back to Teddington was just as nice and there was very little "Rock and Roll" involved. We have decided to do another trip next year so if you have a reliable boat and are interested let me know.

10. Our quiz night in July was at The Swan in their new outside “cabin”. It was fun and 7 teams took part in a very entertaining quiz. There were several funny and dodgy answers being shared. It was won by Ship Faced comprising of crews from Juslovitt and Sueandbuoys. I would like to thank our quiz masters Helen and John Raper for preparing the questions and comparing an entertaining evening.
11. Our final event of the season at Kings Lock was attended by 11 boats enjoying the lovely island mooring and great weather. Numbers were down on previous years in part due to a combination of health and boat reliability issues. The marquee “team building” event went well and the marquees were up in no time and with very few swear words. The band “The Replays” were very good and games of Aunt Sally, Boules and badminton were good fun. Aunt Sally hotshot Jim Lovatt was beaten in the final shoot by young Abi, Alan Hill’s granddaughter.
12. I would like to thank Alan Hill for regularly attending the River Users Group (RUGS) meetings on behalf of the Club. The main issue throughout the season have been lack of manning at the locks. Lock keepers carried over much of their previous year’s holiday entitlement meaning most locks have been double manned. On the bright side we now have all the locks from Kings to St Johns with resident lock keepers.
13. Regarding people on the move I would like to update you on some recent membership changes:
Dave Hansell one of our former Commodores and ATYC boat handling champion has sold his boat, retired and moved to Norfolk.
Karen Dickinson has sold her boat as she found life on the river without husband Geoff (Our Club Jester and fundraising Committee member) no longer enjoyable without her skipper.
Sue Hiscock has sold her boat in favour of a narrowboat on the canals, so we have lost another Committee member responsible for doing our monthly account audit. I would like to thank her for all her work on the Committee.
14. The membership has remained quite stable at just over 100 members. About 90 are full boating members. We have an annual churn of around 10%. The biggest challenge facing the Club is that the membership age profile is increasing. Operating beam locks becomes more challenging as we get older. Over recent years the riverside venues at Eynsham, The Ferryman and The Swan Pub at Radcot have either become unusable or have restricted moorings giving fewer options for events. The net result is that we have all seen river traffic greatly reduced and our own membership using their boats less. We need new younger members who will use their boats rather have them as floating static caravans. The growth area on the river is paddle boards so hopefully this younger age group will make the transition to a boat.
15. In summary, we have had a great boating season achieving a full Club calendar and having had a fair bit of fun. We do need more committee members ideally to sustain the future of the Club.

6. Election of Officers, Committee & President

Sue Hiscock is standing down and I would like to thank her for all her efforts.

Current Committee for the 2021/2022 season was as follows:

President: George Jarman

Commodore & Treasurer: Trevor Matthews

Vice Commodore: Vacancy

Secretary & Website: Alan Hill

Event Secretary: Dot Grafton

Auditor: Sue Hiscock

Event Support: Peter Bint

We had a nomination of Ken Cattell for a Vice Commodore. The members voted in favour of accepting Ken as our new Vice Commodore.

Ideally, we would also like one or two more volunteers to join the committee.

The existing Committee will stand down at the 2024 AGM. Hopefully, we can find more Committee members in the meantime. We will do our best to sustain the future of the Club.

Thanks to John Raper our Crane out planner and Steve Grafton our Boat Safety Coordinator for working on our “sub Committee” and agreeing to continue with these roles.

7. Discussion on next year's Calendar

After some debate it was concluded that The Trout Lechlade is the preferred location for Club events. The riverside location outweighs the fact that it is much smaller than Lechlade Village.

The Club calendar for 2023 was agreed as follows:

Winter break	- Collingwood Hotel Bournemouth	10-13 th March
Crane in	- Grafton Field	1 st April
Summer Party	– Trout Lechlade	3 rd June
Tidal Rally	– Limehouse	16-18 th June
Fun day / Quiz? / Dance?	– Pidnell Farm field	25-27 August
AGM	- Trout Lechlade	9th September
End of Season –	Trout Lechlade	14 th October
Crane out		21 nd October

8. Proposals – Vote on updated constitution

Alan outlined the changes to the Club constitution relating to financial approvals, crane out qualification and charity donations in event of closure of the Club. These proposed changes were agreed. Proposed: John Douse & Seconded: John Raper

9. Any other business

The Club memorial seat has come out of storage following the removal of the Covid restrictions. The condition will be assessed and if possible, it will be restored. If not, the Club will purchase a maintenance free seat.
Steve Grafton / Alan Hill

Minutes written by Trevor Matthews