

**THE CONWAY CLUB 98th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE ADELPHI
HOTEL, LIVERPOOL ON 7th AUGUST 2009.**

Present:	A F Smith Esq	President
	T Mason Esq	Vice-President
	C B Smith Esq	Treasurer
	Mrs M S Hollinrake	Hon Secretary

and 190 members

Before proceeding the President, with great sadness, recorded the passing away of John Hughes who was current Vice President and was key in organising this weekend and, although determined to be here, is only with us in spirit. Also those other Conway's who have slipped their moorings in the last year. All stood for one minute's silence.

1 Apologies for Absence

K Huggins, J Aspin, J Gayler, M Hingston, I Major, G Hunt, S Martin, D T Smith (Patron), G Ogilvy, R Pritchard, M Rowe, R M Merry, D W Stewart, R Tattersall, D Callan, B Coles, D McGill, N Boland, G Moreland-Green, T Jones, A Hogg, S Firth-Bernard, A Burns, J Masters, A Ashton.

2 Minutes of 97th AGM held in Portsmouth on 11th October 2008

The Minutes had been circulated in the first newsletter following. These were put before the meeting for adoption.

Proposed by Steve Budd; seconded by Conrad Blakey. Adoption was agreed.

3 Matters arising

The Committee was to investigate the WWII memorial at Alrewas to see if any OC names were on it and if so whether we should lay a wreath there on Remembrance Day. The Vice-President, Tom Mason, was to represent the President at a service in Alrewas. The President asked Tom to give his report. He said that he was very pleased to attend the National Arboretum on behalf of the club. His visit was on the special occasion of the re-dedication of the Merchant Navy memorial which is an unusual formation of trees which is very impressive. There are memorials for individual shipping companies, individual ships and individual people including Ian Fraser and his crew. He concluded that there was an opportunity to lay a wreath there on Remembrance Day.

4 President's Report

The President, Archie Smith, gave his report:

'I am honoured to be in this chair and reporting to you in our 150th year and my fourth and final year in office. It has been a memorable period for me and as I look back I hope that you feel that the Committee and I have done something constructive for the Club. Personally I think we have achieved quite a bit and it is appropriate to use this report to do a short review.

We set out to ensure that the club achieved its objective of being a fraternity of old chums, regularly communicating with each other and taking the opportunity, whenever presented, of meeting up and socialising. Your club is a strong social group with a very lively network of branches throughout the world which is a very impressive for a school that closed 35 years ago. The branches provide a great focal point and manage to continue with a wide range of events that is difficult to keep up with. My wife and I set out to visit as many branches as we could and it is just about impossible to do justice to all the events in the UK let alone abroad. We did however enjoy Old Conway's hospitality as far away as New Zealand and Vancouver where it is very telling to see Old Conways take the lead in the Conway Worcester Pangbourne events, a real tribute to our staying power! The social events are typified by the Annual Reunion Dinners which still attract about 200 each year, a little more on this occasion!

Communication is equally strong and I am pleased that modern technology is playing its part in keeping us in touch as both the chat line and the web site go from strength to strength. The wonderful newly styled "Cadet" newsletter is a great read and a very welcome development bringing us news of old boys, interesting articles and a lot of contact information for all the different Conway interests.

Your Committee also has a stewardship role and accompanying this will be the reports from the Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary and the Chair of the Archive Committee. While we have suffered as everyone from the significant downturn in the market and the impact in our investments we are still solvent and have reserves, our membership is strong and we have our archives safe and well looked after. This weekend is an opportunity for you to see so much of this and to talk to committee members if you have any questions. I am confident that there are "no skeletons in the cupboard" and believe that I am handing over the club in a respectable state.

We have a number of affiliated and associated Conway interests and while this is a report on the Conway Club I do feel that they are worthy of mention. The Conway Trust provides support for Old Conways and their families in need and has funds available to disburse who need assistance. I urge club members to consider this and help us to help those who are often too proud to ask. The Friends of Conway does a great job in collecting and really using our memorabilia to keep the name of HMS Conway alive as anyone who has visited the chapel or the mast will know. We hope that they will also take custody of the silver which will then be displayed in the Chapel for everyone to enjoy. Last but not least the Conway web site is a magnificent piece of work and seems to grow every time I visit it. If you have not yet been onto it I urge you to do so.

All of this is a result of an amazing amount of hard work put in by different people and it would be wrong to single out anyone for a special mention. Suffice to say that everything I have mentioned takes time and effort for those who stood forward willingly and those on the committee who were 'volunteered'. I want to put on record my heartfelt thanks to them all, without them and their hard work my job would have been much harder. The best recognition they can give however is from you the membership and I urge you as we gather this weekend to get to know them all and let them know how much you appreciate it, be it when you visit the shop, see the photographic exhibits, visit the chapel or, most likely, in the bar!

Finally to what must be the highlight of my tenure and again I have to say what an honour it is to be the President of this great institution The Conway Club in the 150th year since cadets first stepped aboard. I believe we have put together a programme that you will find stimulating and entertaining with a lot going on; you will need the Conway stamina. Most of all I hope that you will enjoy the company of many old chums you might not have seen for many years and perhaps make new friends. Please enjoy

it and thank you for electing me as your President; and a final than you to all the members of the committee and officers of the club present and past that have given me such great support while I have had this honour. Sincerely, Archie Smith (64-66)

5 Hon Secretary's Report

The Hon Secretary, Margaret Hollinrake, reported that 12 new members have been enrolled this year and 10 'lost boys' have resurfaced. Sadly about 40 members have passed away. Approximately 1680 members are on the address list at present. There are still Old Conway's out there are not members of the Club so if you know of any please let me know. They are missing out on not reading the excellent 'Cadet' magazine for one thing.

Some of you may not know that an Annual Seafarers' Service is held at St Paul's Cathedral in October. If anyone feels that they would like to attend this beautiful service, I can get tickets.

As this is my last AGM I would like to say a few words about what it has meant to me to be the Honorary Secretary of the Conway Club.

A year after my husband, Michael, died in the year 2000 I was invited to the East Midlands branch Christmas dinner in Newark. I knew most of the people there, having attended previous dinners with my husband. I was talking to John Tubb when he suddenly said 'you could be the next Secretary of the Conway Club'. I was taken aback to say the least but next thing I know John Dickie, the then President, approached me and said 'I hear you are *interested* in the Secretary's job! Well, that is how it all started and I eventually took up the position in April 2001. The work helped me through those early years and apart from a few challenging times, it has never been a chore, more a labour of love. I have com to know so many of you and your wives and the interesting lives you have led, and I have made many friends. I have attended many enjoyable sociable events and I feel as if I belong to an extended family. In fact being a part of this amazing association has enriched my life and it has be a great privilege. But I do feel now that it is time for me to step down. My family keep me well occupied and I have many other interests, but as an Honorary Member I shall look forward to attending future Conway Club functions and so it will always be a part of my life. Thankyou.

The President asked for a vote of thanks and commendation for Margaret and said she has expressed her desire to stand down at the end of 2009 but is willing to extend for a little while. He added his own personal thanks and presented her with a special Honorary Secretary's badge engraved with her name on the back which was hers to keep for ever.

6 Hon Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report and Accounts had been circulated for members at the meeting.

Chris Smith, Honorary Treasurer, gave his report:

'On behalf of the Conway Club Committee, I am pleased to present the Treasurer's Report and Account for the year ended 31st December 2008.

First of all let me say it pains me to present such a dismal report on the Club's financial affairs, but better you are immediately aware of our financial position at the beginning in order I can make explanations, from which you will be aware that it is not quite as disastrous as it may appear on the

papers before you. Balance sheets in previous reports have historically shown the value of investments at cost, with the year end market value provided in a note to the accounts. At first glance this indicates the Club has a higher net worth than it actually has and could be misleading unless the note is read and a calculation made. Following the discussions with our Reporting Accountant and the Club officers, we have taken the decision to show the ACTUAL value of our investments in the balance sheet, together with the ACTUAL loss or gain compared to the previously reported market value – unfortunately a loss in this particular case. The accounts have therefore been prepared on this basis and the figures for 2007 restated so that a proper comparison can take place.

If you examine the figures before you, the first thing that will hit you is that the value of our shareholding at the end of 2008 was £29,763 against a value shown for 2007 of £53,997, a loss on paper of £25,150, after accounting for acquisitions in the year of £916. Further details of the investments held are shown in Note 6 to the accounts. The actual devaluation on our shareholding during 2008 was 46% which was in line with performance on the UK Stock Market. Our investment strategy has always been cautious, holding safe stock that provided good dividends, but who could have foreseen that even so called safe stock such as banks would prove so unstable, or that dividends would be hit so hard. The fact that our investment income actually rose in 2008 is testament to careful husbandry by your investment committee and on that note, I must pay my own tribute to our late Vice-President, John Hughes, whose patience and knowledge has greatly helped my induction into the role of Hon Treasurer and will be much missed in the future.

On a brighter note, the market is showing signs of resurgence and it is our intention to meet with our brokers in the Autumn to conduct a complete review of our holdings and see what beneficial changes can be made. In the meantime, the value of our holdings at the end of June 2009 remained stable.

One point to note on the Income and Expenditure account is that the deficit before realised gains and taxation reported for 2008, is increased over that of 2007. Costs are up, mainly due to the one off origination costs for the Cadet and I am sure you will agree, this cost was very well worth it. Shop profit was up thanks to David Hilton being very careful with stock control and margins. The two major functions both showed profit and our fund raising at these functions held up very well.

Notwithstanding the above comments, I am happy to report that in my opinion the Club that in my opinion the Club remains on a financially sound footing and that I hope to be able to report much better investment figures in the 2009 accounts.

The committee recommend these Accounts to the Members for their approval.

Haydn Lockwood proposed the adoption of the 2008 Accounts; seconded by John Sheldrake.
Approved

The President proposed a vote of thanks for the Hon Treasurer and the Auditor, Clive Plummer.

7 Report of the Archive Committee

The Chairman of the archive committee, David Owen, was called upon to give his report.

Before beginning, he gave thanks to the late Bert Singleton for the effort he had put into the Archives and John Dickie who was present.

David reported that the Conway silver cups had been displayed at the Plymouth Naval Museum for the last few years where they had been secure and no cost had been charged for holding them. Because the Museum was closing a new home had to be found for the silver. The Friends of Conway were willing to accept them for display in the Conway Chapel. They were at present on display in the hotel. Thanks were given to Ken Huggins for transporting the display cabinet up to Liverpool.

The President thanked David and his team for their work and time put in.

8 2009

The President told the meeting that nearly 800 people would be sitting down for Dinner that evening. It was expected that the Club would just break even on the weekend but not make money.

Members attending had arrived from 24 different countries. Greetings from members unable to attend were conveyed.

Thanks and appreciation were given to the Hon Dinner Secretary, Mim Smith, and Archie presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

9 Associate Members

The President asked John McCaughrean to speak.

He said that he had been present at committee meetings where the late John Hughes had advocated that the HMS Conway MN Trust should be allowed affiliate membership of the Club. It was never passed.

John said that the residue of monies accruing from the closure of HMS Conway School Ship led to the establishment of the HMS Conway Merchant Navy Trust. This Trust, whose membership includes a number of Old Conway's, makes grants to young men and women to assist in their ambitions to follow a career at sea as a Deck or Engineer Officer. In celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the foundation of HMS Conway, I would like to put the following proposal before you:

“IT IS PROPOSED that all recipients of HMS Conway Merchant Navy Trust grants, who have completed their training, leading to certification, become eligible for AFFILIATE membership of the Conway Club”.

Before a vote was taken, Don Houghton, Chairman of the HMS Conway Merchant Navy Trust, addressed the meeting:

He spoke of the achievements of some of recipients of the grants and propose an amendment to the Proposal that instead of being affiliate members, which he does not think is good enough, make them FULL members, they deserve it. It will ensure that the Conway Club lives on for another 100 years.

A lengthy discussion followed The President responded by saying that a proposal had been put before the meeting which needed to be voted on. Therefore he asked for a vote of hands on the proposal:

“IT IS PROPOSED that all recipients of HMS Conway Merchant Navy Trust grants, who have completed their training, leading to certification, become eligible for AFFILIATE

MEMBERSHIP of the Conway Club”. Proposed by John McCaughrean (50-51); Seconded by Matt Burrow (72-74). **CARRIED by a Majority vote.**

The President then asked for an informal vote of hands for the amendment The vote indicated that the members present were in favour of the amendments. He concluded that the issue would be discussed by the Committee.

10 Election of Officers and Election of Club Committee

The President has completed 4 years in office and wishes to stand down. We have sadly lose John Hughes and Tom Mason has come to the end of his tenure as Vice President. The Hon Treasurer and Hon Secretary are willing to continue. The Committee had considered the vacancies and recommends Tom Mason as a very suitable candidate for President. He has served the Club well as Vice-President and gone out of his way to attend as many functions as he can and he and his wife, Ann, are known in Australia and Canada as well as the East Midlands where he is branch secretary. The Committee also consider that John McCaughrean would be a good Vice President as he as also served the club well as Hon Treasurer for many years. The other Vice-President the Committee recommends is Alfie Windsor, the author of the splendid history of the Conway, the designer, producer and owner of the web site. There were no other

Brian McAree proposed that the recommendations of the Committee be taken; seconded by John Sheldrake. **Unanimously approved.**

The following committee members have stepped down this year: David Nutman, immediate Past President, Phil Van Bergen and Alex Saunders. Thanks were given to them for all the work they have done on the Committee.

There are vacancies but it is the committee feeling however that the group is a little large an unwieldy and as such is not actively seeking nominations to fill them. The balance of the existing committee are willing to stand for re-election.

As no other nominations were put forward, the President asked the members to agree to the appointments.

David Burdett propose that the members agree to the appointments; seconded by ?

Before going on to the next item the President recognised the Chaplain of the Conway Club, Simon Douglas-Lane by presenting him with a special badge.

11 Any Other Business

- a) Peter Granger (43-44) put forward that he wanted to open an amendment to the previous proposal in item 9 that had already been voted on and agreed, that we accept recipients of the HMS Conway Merchant Navy Trust grant should be accepted as Affiliate Members of the Conway Club; to read **“should become Full Members of the Conway Club”**. Seconded by Brian McCaree (42-44)

The President asked for a show of hands to vote on the amendment. After a count
For: 71; Against; 37. Carried

A change of rule would have to be made and the President said that the Committee would report back to the members.

- b) Geoff Topp (58-60) paid tribute to Alfie Windsor for writing such an excellent history of HMS Conway 1859 – 2009.
- c) Thanks were given to the President for his good work.
- d) Steve Budd (70-73) presented the Hon Secretary with a gift of a cheque from members.

12 DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT AGM

9th October at the Marriott Hotel, Waltham Abbey, Essex.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.55 hrs.

CONWAY CLUB OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2010

Tom Mason (56-59)	President
John McCaughrean (50-51)	Vice-President
Alfie W Windsor (64-68)	Vice-President
Chris B Smith (58-60)	Hon Treasurer
Mrs Margaret S Hollinrake (Hon Member)	Hon Secretary
Haydn Lockwood (46-47)	Hon Vice-President
Lt Cdr C Conrad Blakey OBE RD JP (56-59)	
Steve Budd (70-73)	
Captain Alan G Burns (48-50)	
Matt B Burrow (72-74)	
Geoff R Cowap (54-56)	
Lt Cdr John Heath RNR (44-45)	
Lt Col David G Hilton (56-58)	
Ken C Huggins (66-70)	
Captain David Owen (51-52)	
Captain Terry W Powell (50-51)	
Captain Michael M Reeves (56-59)	
John F Sheldrake JP (52-54)	
Archie F Smith (64-66)	
Rob B Tubb (67-70)	

