

THE CONWAY CLUB 103rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
HELD AT The High Cliff Marriott Hotel, Bournemouth  
AT 1600 hrs. ON SATURDAY 11<sup>th</sup> October 2014

Present:	Chris Smith	President
	Tom mason	Hon Secretary
	Brendan Kenny	Hon. Treasurer

Pus 37 other Members.

The President welcomed all members to the meeting and ensured that all present had copies of the Agenda and the accompanying papers.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

H. Lockwood, D. Fletcher Rogers, G. Cowap, B. McAree, R. Tubb, K. Huggins. Hopkinson, J. Wright, J. Ivey, C. Kelso.

2. MINUTES OF THE 102nd AGM Held at the Marriott Hotel Edinburgh on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2013

The members accepted the minutes as a true record of the meeting by a show of hands.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Archie Smith asked the President to remind members of the reasons behind the changes to the publication dates of the Cadet to January and July, as detailed under item (11a) of the minutes. The President listed a number of reasons for the changes as follows:-

- To bring the publication dates more in line with those of the magazines of the Worcester and Pangbourne associations, to facilitate coordination of joint events.
- To assist the Dinner Secretary with communications for the Annual Dinner event.
- To ensure Conway Club members received notification of matters to be discussed at the AGM in time to comply with the club rules.

In response, Archie Smith asked for assurances that the timely provision of information for the AGM will include the annual accounts.

4. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President opened his annual report by telling members that the Club committee had held three meetings during the year, all of which had been very productive in terms of business conducted.

He reported that a party of Conways had attended the Memorial Service for the Marquis of Anglesey, which was held in Bangor Cathedral, on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March. The party formed a guard of honour at the entrance to the service and the Conway Ensign was paraded. The current marquis took time to chat to the Conways and thank them for their presence.

He went on to congratulate the members of the Vancouver Conway Club branch, who hosted a highly successful and enjoyable reunion in their home city in June of 2014. This was followed by a cruise to Alaska, which was thoroughly enjoyed by 24 Conways and partners. He conceded that the Vancouver Branch had set the bar very high over the years for reunions of this type.

He then took the opportunity of reminding members of the Conway/Worcester/Pangbourne Reunion, to be held in October 2015 in Sydney. A good level of interest has been shown in this event and he encouraged U.K. based members to support it if possible. The President expressed his opinion that international reunions of this kind play a vital role in the continuing the process of maintaining closer relations with other pre sea schools associations.

Continuing on the theme of closer relations with the other Associations, he announced that a Conway/Worcester/Pangbourne event is to be held in the newly constructed reception area beneath the Cutty Sark in June 2015. The details will be in the next issue of the Cadet. The Conway Club, in the person of Matt Burrow has taken on the organising responsibility for this event and VIP guests are anticipated.

The President went on to appraise members of changes taking place at Kelly College. The college has recently announced its amalgamation with the Mount House School, to form a new entity, Mount Kelly. The President reported that he had written to the new headmaster, Mark Semmence to congratulate him on his appointment and to express the club's hope that the long association with Kelly will continue in the future.

The President then announced the setting up of a new web site for the Club, to be found at [www.theconwayclub.org](http://www.theconwayclub.org).

This site will contain the Conway Club content that has to date been found at [hmsconway.org](http://hmsconway.org). Alfie Windsor and other members of the committee, will be coordinating this project as the first stage in a program to improve member's access to Club information and future events

The development of the new site, from its current small beginnings, will be rolled out over the coming months. The President's final point concerned the dress code to be adopted at future AGM Dinners. The Dinner Secretary, who had been informed by a number of members that they didn't attend the AGM dinner because they did not wish to wear a dinner suite, had raised the subject.

To gain an informal opinion, from members present, on the matter the President invited members to show if they preferred the dress code at future AGM dinners to be lounge suits. A relatively small number of those present indicated assent to this idea.

A considerably larger proportion of those present indicated the preference to keep the code as at present, i.e. dinner suits.

Discussion then followed on options such as "dinner suits preferred" and "dinner suits optional" members did suggest that the wording of the code needed to emphasise what was acceptable as alternative wear to a dinner suit.

The President thanked members for their opinions and explained that the matter would be discussed by the committee and would be put before an AGM as a proposal, before any changes were made.

## 5 & 6. 2013 AUDITED ACCOUNTS & HON TREASURER'S REPORT.

The Hon Treasurer reported that 2013 had been a fairly ordinary year for the club with two major exceptions. The first was the staging of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the loss of the ship memorial weekend, which, in addition to being an outstanding success, raised the sum of £680 profit for the Club. The second was an enormous rise in

the valuation of the Club's investment portfolio from £43K to £51K, which resulted in the portfolio now showing a profit on book value. The Hon Treasurer welcomed these events but cautioned members not to lose sight of the fact that the Club operated at a loss on a day-to-day basis. The printing and distribution of the Cadet is currently costing the Club £6.5/£7 K per annum and income is not keeping pace with that.

He went on to urge members to increase the number of subscribers to the Teaser Club, to increase the income stream sufficiently to support the Club's costs He congratulated those on the committee responsible for the introduction of the Teaser Club as a means of financing the Club, but explained that at current subscriber levels, of around 120 people, after distribution of prize monies, it only netted the Club around £2200 per annum.

What is required he told the meeting, is an increase of around another 90 subscriptions or so, which would bring the income from the Teaser Club to a level that would support the costs of Cadet each year. This would then ensure the future of the magazine, whatever might happen to the value of the club's investments.

He also explained that a number of members pay their subs annually by cheque or transfer and fail to re subscribe each year, which aggravates the income shortfall.

The Hon Treasurer invited questions and Archie Smith drew attention to the write off of the value of a large quantity of prints held in the shop stock. The Hon Treasurer confirmed this was a one off occurrence and did agree with Archie's assertion that without the windfall of the increase in the valuation of the investments, the "trading" operations for the year showed a significant loss.

The President then announced that the 2013 accounts before the meeting had been adopted by the committee and commended them to the members.

The member's acceptance was proposed by Conrad Blakey, seconded by Matt Winter and approved by the meeting. There were two abstentions

## 7. HON SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Hon Sec opened his statement by advising members that the year had been fairly typical in terms of club membership, in that between 45 and 50 members had crossed the bar since the last AGM. Happily, this number has remained fairly constant over the past few years.

He went on to ask members to help maintain accurate membership records by advising him of the death of members. Timely notification of a death to the Hon Sec enabled a condolence card to be sent to the widow and family.

There was however, one highlight to announce which is the introduction of a new member! D.H.T. (Terry) Iles (63-64) had joined the membership and been welcomed back aboard.

The Hon Sec went on to inform members that a number of generous donations to Club funds had been received over the year, These included ones from J.C. Naylor (47-49), D. Beckett (39-41), T. Fagan (46-48) ,

M. Manning (62-64) and the South Australia Branch of the Club.

Josh Garner told the meeting that when he attended the funeral of the late "Dhobi" Clarke, a highly respected member of the Conway staff, he had been struck by how much the Club's condolence card had meant to the family. The Hon secretary observed that if members wished to add their own condolences to the club's card, which is sent out by Rob Tubb, they only had to Email their message to rob and it could be added to the card.

## 8. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The President took the opportunity to welcome Capt. Tony Braithwaite (47-49) OBE, RD as a newly appointed Honorary Vice President of the Club. He also extended the welcome to David Fletcher Rogers (44-45), who was unable to be present. The President explained the Honorary Vice Presidency had been awarded to both men in recognition of lifetime service to the Club.

The Hon Secretary reported that all elected members of the committee had expressed their willingness to serve again, with the exception of Ken Huggins, who wished to stand down.

The President explained that Ken was happy to continue his duties of updating the diary on the Club website.

The President then announced that there were accordingly, two vacancies on the committee. Two nominations had been received to fill the vacancies and these are Conrad Blakey (56-59) and David Fawcitt (67-69)

The president invited those present to affirm the existing committee members to continue and this was given, unanimously, by a show of hands.

Members were then invited to elect the two new members of the Committee, Conrad Blakey (56-59) and David Fawcitt (67-69), which they did unanimously.

## 9. 2015 AGM & DINNER ARRANGEMENTS

The president confirmed that the next AGM and Dinner would be held at the Victoria & Albert Marriott Hotel, Manchester, as detailed in the latest edition of the Cadet.

At this point he invited Mim Smith, the dinner secretary, to confirm arrangements.

The President did advise members that the committee had been giving consideration to how long the current format of the AGM and Dinner could be maintained in the face of declining numbers. The Committee had concluded that the present format should continue for a few years more.

John McCaughrean raised the question of availability of car parking at the Manchester venue.

Mim Smith responded that the hotel guaranteed car parking space and that access to the hotel by rail was very convenient.

John Collier (64-66) enquired whether the event needed to be held at a weekend in view of the fact that by far the majority of members were retired. The President conceded this was not a possibility that had been considered. Mim Smith felt it would need investigation as to whether a mid week function could lead to lower ticket prices. Peter Bobbin (50-51) commented that hotels now frequently charge business rates during the week, which are higher than weekend rates. The President confirmed he and the dinner secretary would consider the option for the 2016 event, which is currently in planning.

Mim then brought the meeting back to the topic of the dress code for future Dinners and emphasised he feeling that the stipulation of black tie was dissuading some members from attending

## 10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Archie Smith raised two points, the first being a vote of thanks to the Hon Treasurer and the Hon Secretary for their work during the year.

The second was a suggestion that the Committee consider presenting a Conway wall plaque to the Chief Executive of the RNLI who is the guest of honour at the AGM dinner.

The President and Committee supported the suggestion.

Mike Reeves (56-59) asked the meeting for help in contacting a total of 13 members who are now 'address unknown' the names were read and members asked for any help in locating them.

Nick Hambleton (63-66) reminded members that the copy date for the next issue of the cadet is December 1<sup>st</sup> he also encouraged members to submit individual experiences for inclusion in the next issue.

John Noble enquired of the meeting the cost, per copy of producing and distributing the Cadet. John amplified his question by pointing out the current costs per annum were large and he felt this might be reduced by producing the Cadet electronically and inviting those who wished to have a paper copy to pay for it.

The President responded by explaining that the Committee are actively considering ways to reduce the distribution costs of the magazine, which represent almost 50% of the total cost. The Committee have already considered an electronically produced magazine, but discarded the idea, as it would leave many members, who do not have computers or printers, at a disadvantage. Returning to the current consideration of reducing distribution costs, he went on to explain the problems which had been identified with options such as printing abroad etc.

John Noble then pressed the point and was assured by the president that the cadet would continue to be published in any eventuality.

Conrad Blakey (56-59) suggested it may be worthwhile to canvass members to consider leaving legacies to support the Cadet costs. Alfie Windsor (64-68) confirmed that a page already exists on the Website for members wishing to make legacy bequests.

Josh Garner (66-70) commented that his experience was that people did not read electronic publications in the same way as the printed word and he felt this would devalue the magazine.

Nick Hambleton (63-66) confirmed that by far the bulk of feedback he receives for the cadet is that people prefer a printed copy. He also went on to remind members that the cost of the Cadet should not be referred to as a "loss" but regarded as expenditure in no way regarded as a burden.

The President confirmed that the next committee meeting will be considering the results of an exercise, recently undertaken, to compare the current distribution costs with an alternative possibility of printing and distributing copies of the magazine to members living in Australasia in an effort to reduce costs. As a final point on the topic, Josh Garner (66-70) pointed out that, compared to other journals, the Cadet was a higher quality product than usually seen.

Nick Hambleton (63-66) explained that modern printing techniques ensured that illustrations did not add to the cost of the magazine in any way.

Winding up, the president confirmed to the members that the cadet would continue to be published whatever the circumstances of the Club as it is the only means of communicating with the majority of members.

The President announced that, during dinner, a silent auction would be held for a Conway counterpane, the proceeds to be for Club funds

#### 11. DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The Victoria & Albert Marriott Hotel, Manchester

Saturday October 10<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 1600hrs

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 17.06