

THE CONWAY CLUB 104th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD AT The Victoria & Albert Marriott Hotel, Manchester
AT 1600 hrs. ON SATURDAY 10th October 2015

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

Pus 27 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

D. Fletcher Rogers, G. R. Tubb, J. Wright, D. Fawcitt, G. Haskins, B. Bissell, J Southwood, C.C. Blakey, A. Smith.

2. MINUTES OF THE 103rd AGM Held at the High Cliff Marriott Hotel, Bournemouth on 11th October 2014

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

3. MATTERS ARISING

Under A.O.B. at the last AGM, the President had reported that the Committee would be examining the results of a thorough investigation undertaken into the alternative methods of distributing the Cadet abroad, to establish whether or not costs could be cut. He confirmed to the meeting that this investigation had concluded the present method of printing all copies in the U.K. and distributing them directly to members was the most cost effective method available at this time. He thanked Penny Reeves for her efforts in maintaining the overall costs of production and distribution at such a competitive level and the meeting proposed a vote of thanks to Penny for her continuing good work.

4. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President opened by reporting that the Club Committee had held three successful business meetings during the year and that, for the first time in some years, one of those had been in Liverpool. On that occasion, the committee had joined the North West Branch for one of their regular meetings and the exercise had bought some useful feed back he confirmed the exercise will be repeated in the future.

The Club also took part in the very successful joint reception on the Cutty Sark, attended by some 230 Conway, Worcester & Pangbourne members and their guests. The President went on to report that, although the development of closer relationships between the Training Ships had undergone something of a hiatus, due to the sad passing of the President of the Pangbourne Association, all parties were keen to develop the idea of closer ties. The next joint function under consideration may well be a luncheon at the National Arboretum at Rugeley, Staffordshire, followed by a service at the 5-Training Ship's War memorial.

The President then briefed the meeting on his visit to the Canadian Coastguard College, in Sydney, Nova Scotia, to represent the Conway Club at the college's 50th Annual Prize Giving events, held in June and to

present the Queens Conway Gold Medal. There will be a full report of the events in the next issue of the Cadet. The President went on to explain that the college are keen to maintain the new closeness in relations with the Club and that he will be inviting the Commandant and the Director of Ops to the AGM Dinner in Bournemouth in 2016.

The South West Branch Ladies Lunch, held at Mount Kelly College, Tavistock, provided members of the committee with an opportunity to meet the new Headmaster and the Chairman of the Governors and to discuss with them the ongoing relationship with the Conway Club. The future of the school is evolving, following the recent merger with The Mount House School and the President explained that work will be required from the Club to ensure the close relationship enjoyed with the school in the past is maintained in the school's new form. At this point, Alfie Windsor (64-68) suggested that a vote of thanks be expressed to Matt Burrow for his excellent work in the organisation of the very successful Conway/Worcester/Pangbourne event on the Cutty Sark.

The President echoed the sentiment, as did all members present.

5 & 6. 2014 AUDITED ACCOUNTS & HON TREASURER'S REPORT.

Brendan Kenny (72-74), the Hon. Treasurer, reported that the club finances had enjoyed a good solid year in 2014, as illustrated by the surplus of over £6K. , He however counselled caution in that some £k of this came from higher than usual donations for the year and the other £3k from a rise in the stock market valuation of the club's investments. He explained that neither of these two factors could be expected to occur annually, and thus caution was required to avoid being lulled into a false sense of financial security.

Brendan went on to remind members that, without the Teaser Club, the club's finances security would be in a parlous state.

He congratulated members who already contribute to the Teaser Club and asked those who as yet don't, to consider helping to share the burden of financing the club across the wider membership.

The President announced that the accounts had been adopted by the committee, and were being presented to members.

He went on to inform members that the accounts will be returned to the Club Website following their removal due to problems with the security of the "members Area" as the committee has decided that the accounts are not confidential and did not need to be placed a secure area of the site.

Brendan Kenny then announced that, with immediate effect, he was handing over the office of Hon. Treasurer to Matt Burrow (72-74)

The president thanked Brendan for his work over the past two years.

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,

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.

The Hon. Secretary announced that nine new life members had been added to the membership list during the year in addition to a number of existing members with whom the club had lost contact.

One of the new members had to be notified to the members, under the club rules {Rule 3.} This is Nick Dowden, who joined as an Affiliate member. Nick completed his maritime training as a cadet, sponsored by the Conway Merchant Navy Trust. He is now in business as a marine surveyor.

8. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Hon. Secretary informed the meeting that Chris Smith had completed the normal three-year period as President. However, the club rules do provide for this period to be extended for a further two years and the committee wish to take advantage of this and ask Chris Smith to serve as President for a further one year.

With regard to the two Vice Presidents, Matt Burrow has served the three year period and will be standing down.

Mike Reeves has only served two years, but wishes to stand down as there are two nominations for Vice President.

They two nominees are Neil Smith (63-65) and Conrad Blakey (56-59)

The President commended both nominees to the members and their election was proposed by Ian Hopkinson (54-56) and seconded by Mike Sanders (58-61)

The members voted their acceptance unanimously

The Hon. Secretary then went on to explain that all other full members of the Committee had agreed to serve again, as had the one co-opted member, Revd. Simon Douglas Lane.

Their re election was proposed by Haydn Lockwood (46-47) and seconded by Mike Sanders (58-61)

The members voted their acceptance unanimously.

9. 2016 AGM & DINNER ARRANGEMENTS

The President invited Mrs. Mim Smith to update members on the arrangements for the 2016 AGM dinner.

Mim informed members that Bournemouth had been chosen again for the venue for 2016 as a result of all the positive feedback, received from members, after the last occasion the dinner had been held there. She did confirm alternative venues in other locations had been considered but none could match Bournemouth on price and facilities.

Mim also advised members that she was planning a trip to the Mary Rose exhibition in Portsmouth and that all the details of the event will be published in the cadet early next year

Adrian Mitchell then proposed a vote of thanks to Mim for all her work in arranging the AGM Dinners over the years. This was met with applause from the members.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) The President announced he had it in mind to arrange a golfing function as a suggestion for a Conway / Worcester / Pangbourne event in 2016.

He invited John Morris (51-54) to brief members on the current arrangements for Conway golf events. John explained that a small number of Conway Club members did attend golf functions, in various parts of the country, generally staying at Marriott hotels and enjoying these social events John went on to say that new members were always welcome, be they Conways, wives or partners.

The President asked Nick Hambleton (63-66) to put an enquiry in the Cadet, inviting interested members to contact the Hon. Secretary.

Once an idea of numbers has been gained then it could be decided whether it should be amalgamated with the existing golfing fraternity of the Conway Club, or arranged as a stand alone event with the Worcester and Pangbourne clubs.

The President agreed to maintain contact with the Worcester and Pangbourne clubs on the matter.

b) Alfie Windsor (64-68) raised an enquiry about the current position of the Conway Merchant Navy Trust. His concerns had been initiated by rumours the the Trust is in difficulties and may amalgamate with another organisation or even, close down completely.

Alfie enquired whether Matt Burrow (72-74) would update members on the situation. Matt agreed to do this and reported that, from it's inception in 1976 until 1995, the Trust had used it's funds to provide nautical education or training to whoever applied and met the funding criteria.

In 1995, the British Merchant Navy was in dire straits and only 60 cadets were being trained each year!

The then Chairman of the Trust saw an opportunity to use the funds more successfully, by taking on cadets at the age of 16 and providing them with a good a "Conway" grounding as possible for a career at sea. The trust always sought out applicants who were expected to go far and graduate to become leaders in the industry, both ashore as well as afloat.

The strategy was very successful and some 23 cadets were successfully trained.

However, by now the situation had changed dramatically and 800 cadets were being trained each year and the CMNT contribution, of 1 or 2 cadets was becoming lost in the melee.

Last year the trust took on 4 cadets, rather than the normal 1 or 2 cadets per year. This change was introduced because with only 1 or 2 cadets under training, the Trust was experiencing a high drop out rate, because the cadets lacked a sense of belonging to a recognisable entity.

The 4 cadets taken on last year are doing well and enjoying a greater sense of belonging at college. However, the problem is funds do not permit the Trust to take on any cadets this year, or next year. Hence, why the CMNT website is down at present.

Currently a root and branch revue of the Trust's operations is under way to examine the use of the funds and to ensure they are used in the most effective manner. No decisions have been taken yet.

One dilemma is that to date we have been providing training to 16 year olds, whilst now we are training people with A levels to go to university. Is that strictly charity, as required by the trust deed, as of course University students can now get preferential loans.

All of these elements are being considered and the way to provide the best use of the funds for nautical education and training is being sought

11. DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETING,

The High63-66) Cliff Marriott Hotel, Bournemouth

Saturday October 14th 2016 at 1600hrs

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 16.58