

PORTSMOUTH RN&RMCAA AGM MINUTES – 19 JANUARY 2016

1. The Vice Chairman opened the meeting at 1930 and thanked everyone for attending (33 attendees). He mentioned the sad passing of 3 long term members: Dave Eastwood, Rab Butler and Ron Bowley.
2. The Convening Order was read out by the Secretary.

Apologies

3. Mr Nowosielski, Mr Redstone, Mr Davison and Mr Paul Hitchcock.

Minutes of Previous AGM

4. Approved.

Corrections.

5. Nil.

Chairman's Annual Address

6. Due to the Chairman's unfortunate absence the following was delivered on his behalf by the Vice Chairman.
7. Ladies and Gentlemen can I first thank you all for taking the time to attend this evening's meeting. I would also like to apologise for not being with you as a family diary error results in me being away on holiday at this time. Steve has very kindly agreed to deliver my Chairman's address which will again highlight activity within the Club since the last AGM.
8. During the last nine months our administrative focus has been on producing a new and more detailed club Constitution and finalising the Angling Licence agreements for our two waters. When Steve took over as Vice Chairman he was quick to highlight the paucity and lack of clarity of information within our current Constitution which had evolved over the years. It especially lacked information on the changing situation regarding angling agreements and water ownership. Steve volunteered to draft a new constitution for discussion, which, once complete, has been on the agenda of our monthly meetings resulting in the new Constitution document that was distributed to the membership for comment and adoption this evening. I strongly recommend this document to you.
9. At Southwick Park Lake we continue to receive excellent support from our Defence Estates Land Agent in approving our plans for work around the lake.

Unfortunately, Defence Estates themselves are in a severe moratorium and can only fund essential Health & Safety work and their obligations to weir and water inspections. Government pressure to save money has resulted in Defence Estates identifying land that could be disposed of and Southwick Estate continues to be a prime candidate, which will include the training establishment, golf course and lake. The previous owners of the site have indicated that they wish to exercise their right to first refusal to take over the site subject to negotiation on cost if and when a final decision is made to dispose of the site. It is therefore possible that we will have new landlords prior to the end of our current Licence in 2019. Rest assured that as soon as a final decision is made we will go into negotiation with whoever is going to be the new owner to continue the use of the lake for angling. One major element in our favour is that the fish stock belongs to the club.

10. At SULTAN although we now have an angling licence that runs until 2019 progress has been very slow with regard to our rent abatement application. It appears that full rent abatement was approved by Defence Estates finance department but only after it went to higher authority and we had produced a significant amount of additional paper work to support our application. Unfortunately, all rent abatement approvals are only valid for one year so SULTAN has agreed to submit a new application on our behalf this February.

11. With regard to water management we have made a conscious effort on both our waters to clear bank side vegetation and dead trees to allow more light to get to the water and encourage marginal plant growth not only does this stabilise the bank but also provide a safe haven for fry.

12. At Southwick Park Lake a dedicated team of helpers led by Ken Law has progressed work on the lake and has focussed on the north bank. First swim rebuilding has been completed and a shingle path constructed from the weir to the boathouse, which allows easy access especially in wet weather. Swim improvement has also taken place from Pinsley Bridge down to the boat house. This has resulted in all swims being rebuilt and reinforced with railway sleepers. Despite the lake being very shallow in this area catches from these swims have been very good. Other dead trees and foliage have also been removed from around the lake. During the summer and autumn the lake looked in fabulous condition; probably the best I have ever seen. The most pleasing fact is that the fishing has been excellent and it is noticeable that the fish stock continues to thrive and grow. Especially pleasing is that young juvenile carp are being caught by anglers fishing for roach and rudd. From catches Ken estimates that we now have at least four different year classes in the lake which bodes well for the future and I am sure it will not be long before a 30lb fish is caught. Ken will give an update later on his plans for work on the water this year.

13. Here at SULTAN our Water Manager, Ian Chisholm, and an even smaller team of dedicated workers have again improved swim access and removal of bank side trees and vegetation. Please take time the next time you visit SULTAN in the day time to look at the work carried adjacent to Car Park 3 which was the old publications stretch the transformation is quite remarkable. Our biggest problem at the moat continues to be the Nuttall's waterweed that has overtaken the water during

the last few years. After taking advice from the EA, and gaining approval from SULTAN, we started a 3 year programme to eradicate the weed by introducing a blue dye into the water which should cut out the sunlight that the weed needs to thrive. Unfortunately, our first application last year was introduced slightly later than planned, which allowed the weed to again establish itself. However, it was noticeable that the weed was weaker than in previous years which gives encouragement that the dye is having some effect. From this experience we have purchased an increased amount of the dye and will be applying it in higher quantity and earlier than last year. I will leave Iain to explain his plans for the forthcoming season.

14. I apologise in advance to those members attending this evening who support our working parties. But one of the biggest regrets in my time as Chairman is the limited membership support for our waters. We have two dedicated Water Managers who put in a significant amount of time and effort to care for and improve the waters and bank environs for all members' benefit. Without doubt significantly more progress could be achieved on both waters and especially at SULTAN if more members were willing to give up a small amount of time to assist with this important work. After a lively discussion on the Forum last year about the weed problem at SULTAN, and possible solutions, I suggested that the quickest and most economical way to remove some of the weed was to drag swims to allow angling to continue. I invited members who were willing to give up a day to work on removing the weed to contact Iain, typically no one forwarded their name.

15. This is just one example where members are quick to offer their opinion and ideas but are slow or unwilling to get involved. The Association can only continue to operate successfully if members are willing to offer help and support whether it be as part of the Committee or helpers at working parties.

16. Finally, as you may know, I am standing down from the Committee at this AGM after being involved in the Association in one guise or another for the last 35 years and the last three as Chairman. I feel it is time to step aside to allow someone else to bring new ideas to the table and take the Association forward. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee and membership for their support during my time in post and wish you all the very best for the future.

17. Happy New Year and hope to see you on the bank.

Vice Chairman's Address

18. My main concern is retention of our waters. As the retiring Chairman reported there are changes occurring which could affect our tenure of Southwick Park Lake and SULTAN Moat. The proposed Constitution includes a section on the dissolution of the Association should we lose access to the waters, however, my intention is to work with Defence Estates, Establishment staff, Commander Naval Sports and any future potential owners of Southwick Park to secure our future. If the disposal of Southwick Park happens then there is potential advantage of this occurring within the current 3-year licence so that the next owner could have at least 12 months'

experience working with us, on the estate, before making any decision on future leases. One of the reasons that I agreed to stand for Chairman is because I consider that being able to attend the negotiations as a serving officer (in uniform), knowing that the likely future owners are favourably disposed to the Royal Navy, could offer us an advantage.

19. The membership will see the 48 Hr Carp matches on Southwick Park Lake. I consider it important that we support Royal Navy and Royal Marine events whenever we can, both to demonstrate the Association's value to the Service, and in recognition that the future of the Association rests in bringing in new Service members which these events could attract.

Question from the floor

20. In the event of the loss of all Association waters, would we look for other waters or perhaps combine with another club.

Vice Chairman's Reply

21. The logistics of operating the water outside of our current secure sites would be challenging but that is not to say we wouldn't consider it. Should the situation arise the Committee would follow the guidance in the Constitution, but I can also assure you that if it happens whilst I am Chairman then I would call an EGM to explore all options with the membership.

Treasurer's Annual Report

22. Due to work commitments the Treasurer could not attend and the following was delivered on his behalf by the Vice Chairman.

23. Firstly, apologies for not being here in attendance, unfortunately work requires me to be in working in the depths of Cornwall this week. Usually this report would be delivered directly following the annual Fund Examiners audit and would feed back any observations and/or recommendations recorded. However, the AGM has now been brought forward whilst it was also decided to keep the finance checks aligned with the fiscal year and membership renewal time frame. Therefore, this report is delivered with the examiners check due at the beginning of Mar 16.

24. Overall the accounts remain on profile for anticipated income from membership fees and planned budget spends on both our waters, along with profiled general expenditure. As of Jan 16 the funds held in the bank are £8,349.76 with £46.10 held in the cash box. With profiled expenditure still planned for by the Water Managers, water rents and some general Association costs, the Committee and I are confident that our planned contingency funds level of £5,000, will not be breached.

25. Financial requirements are forecast as a 3-year plan for all anticipated expenditures, with particular focus on the upcoming year. This allows the Committee

to set annual budgets to the Water Managers, review possible large project requirements, allocate for any costly equipment purchase or replacement, and balance whether or not membership fees require adjusting. On the subject of membership fees, I briefed the membership last year that we planned to review fees on a biennial basis. That remains unchanged, there will be no increase for the upcoming year of Apr 16 – Mar 17 as the forecast income and expenditure has been controlled as expected. However, the costs for insurances, water rentals and general charges continue to rise in line with inflation. Therefore, I do currently expect to propose to the Committee, later in the year, a rise in membership costs as necessary to meet our anticipated expenditure. Any such change, agreed by the Committee, will be fully communicated and explained at next year's AGM.

26. As the audited accounts are usually available to the membership at the AGM, I am happy to provide such records following the next Fund Examiners audit in Mar. However, I would require any individual requiring a copy to provide a stamped addressed A5 envelope to me to post back, we are not provided with a soft copy. That said, the Jan 17 AGM will formally receive the audit report complete this March for 15/16, and so on thereafter.

27. Thank you all for your continued support to the Association.

Secretary's Report

28. The Club Administration continues to run smoothly largely due to the procedures put in place by previous Association Secretary, Terry Davison.

HMS SULTAN Fort Rowner Moat Water Manager's Report

29. 2015 was yet another interesting year on the Moat. After the previous year of weed infestation dye was used to, initially, good success; then the rains came through and, within a couple of couple of days, diluted the dye up towards peg 22. This allowed the weed to gain a hold and though it was weaker than previous years it still had an impact on fishing pleasure. This year a further, and much increased, application will commence. The dosage will be kept very high with extra applications after rainfall. As ever, watch this space.

30. The team of regular workers on the Moat, Mark, Ian, Paul, Dean, Alan, and the twins, kept up their hard work. In the last year, platforms have been installed, pegs repaired, steps replaced, grass cut, weeds uprooted, diseased and unsafe trees felled, along with tons of hard core and gravel moved. As ever, every Sunday on the Moat is a 'Working Party'; there will always be work needing a willing set of hands to address it. I invite every member to come lend a hand be it one Sunday, or every Sunday.

31. There have been several high points on the Moat this year with members achieving the personal best for different species; whilst the silvers have been shy again this year and never appearing in large numbers, the Carp, Bream, Tench and Crucians have rewarded those who made them their target.

32. The coming year comes, as always, with another list of wishes and desires. There is a major parcel of work to be completed alongside Car Park 3 (peg 45 down to the buttress) where the trees, most are unstable, diseased, damaged, or all three – are being removed to expose the bank which has been badly eroded due to the lack of marginal plants to break up wind driven waves. Once the bank has sunlight once more upon it, it is intended to transplant a Bur Reed native to Hampshire to protect the bank and allow it to repair itself. The removal of the trees will allow an increase of surface water movement that will increase the amount of oxygen being carried down to the lower water layers; it is expected that this will help hold fish in the stretch. Discussions are ongoing with another local club who are offering to supply the reeds and also their excess Rudd as they manage their own stocking density.

33. As the year progresses it is intended that more steps are replaced with concrete facings rather than wood as this should negate the need to repair them for a decade or two. More platforms will be introduced on the pegs that require major work as these will restore them to a fishable state with major savings in time and expense in the longer term.

34. From this AGM Mark Dawson is stepping up to the Water Manager role and I will become his assistant. Mark brings his own ideas to the position a fresh perspective of the Moat and its challenges.

Question from the floor

35. Are attempts to remove silt from certain areas of the Moat going to be made using lime?

Water Manager's Reply

36. Yes, it is going to be tried this year.

Southwick Park Lake Water Manager's Report

37. Mr Law thanked the committee for the support which has enabled him and his team of volunteers to do so much work, and then expressed his thanks to the regular members who turn up at the working parties and mid-week tasks.

38. The path had been completed from Pinsley bridge up to the weir on the north bank, and work had been completed installing railway sleepers in the pegs from the weir to Pinsley bridge.

39. Swims on the south bank from the weir to the footbridge with chestnut stake fronts will require attention next year; it is intended to use railway sleepers across the front of the current pegs and back fill the gaps. The margins between swims will be planted with irises to prevent bank erosion; these could also become fish holding areas and provide a habitat for the fry.

40. A meeting was held with the Environment Agency (EA) at the Golf Club with all parties having an interest in the River Wallington attending. The EA are monitoring the drainage problems with local area developments and are keen to receive reports on changes to the water and its environs. The Water Manager and Chairman will be involved in these ongoing discussions on management of the river through the next year.

41. More carp into double figures are now coming out with 24lb+ being caught. Fishing continues to be very good.

Question from the floor

42. Have the water lilies introduced into the lake, been a good idea?

Water Manager's Reply

43. Yes, they have definitely improved the areas in which they have been planted. Peg 32 is a classic example and large bags of fish are regularly taken from this swim whereas previously the fishing could be poor.

Proposals

44. Secretary read out:

a. The Committee proposes adoption of the new Constitution and Rules as promulgated.

Vote result: 33 for, Nil against

b. The Committee proposes a change to Rule 28, sub section (c) "fixed feeders are banned on all club waters" with "on Association waters, feeders and ledgered weights are to be free running and must not be stopped with float stops or on a tight swivel or similar. The only exception to this rule is that the Guru range of X-safe feeders are allowed which are proven to be safe for the fish"

Vote result: 33 for, Nil against

c. The Committee proposes the awarding of life membership to Mr Frank Nowosielski. The Vice Chairman spoke on the Committee's behalf: "It gives me great pleasure to propose that Frank Nowosielski MBE be awarded Life Membership of the Association. This membership category can only be awarded at AGM to a member who has contributed meritorious service to the Association. Frank joined the Association over 40 years ago, as it was first formed. He has served on the Committee for 28 years, 16 of which have been as Vice Chairman and latterly as Chairman. His counsel as Vice Chairman, and leadership as Chairman, have been outstanding; he has always steered the Committee down a sensible course. Throughout, he has worked tirelessly to represent members interest and in particular, as Chairman, successfully negotiated the new Southwick Park Lake Lease and also the significant discount to the SULTAN Moat lease. Both of these were vital to the continuation of the Association in its present form. I know that Frank continues to be passionate about the Association and its continued success and will undoubtedly be a point of advice over the coming months and years. He will be sorely missed by the Committee."

Vote result: 33 for, Nil against

d. The Committee proposes the awarding of life membership to Mr Kevin Garwood. Mr Ian Chisholm spoke on the Committee's behalf: "Kev Garwood has been a passionate advocate for the Portsmouth RN & RM CAA for

several decades. Initially as a team member representing the establishment/command in which he was serving, then joining the committee as an established representative. Upon leaving the RN, Kev then turned his attention to Fort Rowner Moat and, having taken on the role of Water Manager, threw himself into the role. Kev could be found at all times of the day and weekends addressing problems on the Moat and, over a period of years, led a team of willing volunteers to make huge improvement to the Moat. Balancing the needs of the anglers, the fish, the establishment and his family Kev kept the role until pressures of work intervened. The number of hours spent working, on behalf of the Club, on and around the moat and in the Committee, is immense and invaluable. Life Membership is being proposed now in recognition of those many years of service, but also in recognition of Kev's continued support and advice to the Association well beyond the norm since he left the Committee." Mr Chris Bailey, the Chairman during Kev's time on the Committee, endorsed the proposal enthusiastically.

Vote result: 32 for (Mr Garwood being unable to vote),
Nil against

Election of Club Trustees

45. Standing as Trustees for 3 year terms commencing with this AGM are:

Cdr Steve Mardlin RN – Chairman (currently Vice Chairman)

Mr Vic Woods – Vice Chairman

Mr Nick Bennett – Membership Secretary (in continuation, but with change in status of the post)

Mr Paul Redstone – Treasurer (in continuation)

Mr Alan Vanson – Secretary (in continuation)

Vote result: 33 for, Nil against

Address from New Trustees

46. Mr Vic Woods thanked the membership for electing him as the new Vice Chairman and said that he looked forward to joining the Committee and helping with the ongoing management of the Association and meeting the challenges ahead.

AOB

47. The new Chairman brought up the subject of improving Association information distribution. From his experience within other association administrations, the use of Facebook has proved most useful and the setting up of the same will be discussed at the next committee meeting. The idea was met with general approval from the floor.

The Meeting was Closed and moved onto the Prize giving.