

Nairn Coastal Rowing Club

Annual General Meeting

Minutes of AGM held in Nairn Bowling Club, Albert Street Nairn on the 11th of March 2023 at 10.05am

Attendees: Berny Welsh, Sally Moore, Tom Hodge, Mairi Ryan, Stella Mathieson, Valerie Wareham, Leah MacKay, Gillian Hodge, Lucy Gardiner, Neil Munro, Kay MacDonald, Ian Bochel, Sylvia Bochel, Pam Gordon, Robbie Gordon, Alison Simpson, Cleo Welsh, Sandra Gardner, Gail Duff, Ian Addison, Bill Wright, Martin Lugg, John Farquhar, Frances Farquhar, Andy Walker.

Apologies: Kristin Duncan, Bob Ferenth, Ian Ward, Heidi Ward, Dot Mechin, Catriona Dutton, Jimmy Young, Kay Young.

Last year's minutes approved, proposed by Robbie Gordon and seconded by Pam Gordon.

Chair's report:

Berny read the agenda. He missed last year's AGM due to Covid.

There have been 20 new members in the Club in the last twelve months. We now have 59 rowing members and 10 social members. Last year there were 311 rows with just under 1600 individual rows. The club took part in a lot of competitive rowing. Several members travelled to Holland to take part in The Skiffie Worlds and achieved a reasonable placing. A great week was had by all including the support team and it was found to be a wonderful experience all round (in spite of a poorly placed finishing line, recognised by the organisers). Over the Summer the Club took part in five other regattas and thanks went to Stella, John and Martin for organising and coaching. There was great camaraderie at these regattas with new members entering and being successful. A team took part in the Monster the Loch event and beat the previous year's NCRC record by 30 minutes. The Ladies' team was the fastest in the 5 Miles From Home row, a locally held time trial competing with others around the country. In June and July last year, women's and men's squads were formed, however Berny stressed that Open Rows continue to be important. These are arranged twice a week and are where new members can find their feet. Another great outing was to Sheildaig for a weekend of rowing in October with the local Coastal Rowing Club there; many thanks to Sandra for organising.

The coxes continue to be the backbone of the Club; their most important function is to keep the crew safe. A new cox training day was held last October. Coxes hold a position of great responsibility and a day was spent last month looking at various issues with a focus on safety. There are currently fewer coxes than we would like.

Wednesday club nights were held over the winter and weather, tides, CPR, rowing machines, and knots were covered. The next meeting will be about life jackets and their maintenance, including personal and all club jackets. Two new VHF radios were bought and these include a locator DSC function for emergency use.

Fund raising has been very successful this year. Kate Ashton organised a music and poetry evening which raised over £800. We also had a stall on Harbour Day and Wheels of Nairn and Sally Ward made and sold dog chews. Income details are on the Treasurer's report. The Social Committee were thanked for their hard work throughout the year and also for the welcome catering after both the Winter and Summer Solstice rows.

Berny next presented an update on the new Boat House. The erection of the steel building was completed last Thursday. The floor will be sealed once it has thoroughly dried out. Electrics, fire alarm system, and emergency safety bars are to be fitted on the doors. The completion certificate is likely to take at least two months. So far, we are under budget. Dealing with the council proved difficult sometimes, prices went through the roof and relationships were strained, but the club got through it. Praise was given to Bob (who is currently on holiday) for his leadership of the build, succeeding in getting grants, navigating the planning process and coordinating contractors. Berny next praised and thanked Bill Wright, his predecessor, for realising four years ago that the Club needed its own premises. Bill sought and identified the current site; dealt with the Common Good Land problems, including going to court to change its allowed use and having to pay for three different solicitors to arrange the lease from Highland Council and the Sailing Club. The Men's Shed have just completed making a workbench for the Boat House. The view from the Store Room over the Moray Firth is beautiful.

The Club still needs more coxes and younger members (under 60!) and another committee member/s.

Andy Walker has prepared a draft Code of Ethics which will be developed and members input sought. Many clubs and organisations now have similar codes of ethics.

Berny finished by saying he is looking forward to the new season, the grand opening of the Boat House and Nairn running its own regatta on the 16th September

Treasurer's Report

See separate sheet for details.

Sally M. stated that the accounts had been approved by the independent accountant. Grants of nearly £50,000 were awarded to the club and Bob has the master sheet with those donations. So far £33,000 has been paid out for the boat shed build. The club needs to honour its recognition of those who donated to the build under the Aviva scheme three years ago. We are currently in profit but this this will reduce as the Boat House is completed and some organisations who have given us grants may require repayment if there is a surplus. It was decided that there would be no need to pay £2 today as the AGM is a statutory meeting however the normal £2 rowing donation really helps our income. The buying process for the club kit breaks even. The monthly payment to the Viewfield Stables

has been stopped and soon we will no longer be making payments to the kayak club for the compound space. The club took a gamble in buying merchandise and it has been relatively successful especially the 'buffs'. Cash is available to those who tow the skiffs to events to cover their expenses. This is kept with the regatta book and held by Stella. As we are a charity, accounts will be sent to OSCR (the Scottish Charity Regulator) in Dundee. Sally will make a claim for Gift Aid and asked if anyone could help with this and club insurances to please contact her. Sally asked that when putting money into the club's bank account, it would be helpful if members labelled it appropriately, for example, club kit, rowing donation, membership etc.

Proposed by Gillian, seconded by Ian Addison.

Bill asked about signage for the Boat House. There will be a sign with the club name above the roller door and a board acknowledging financial contributors next to the entrance door of the store room. The addition of mandatory signage will be checked before the Boat House is in use eg fire escape.

The Committee

The whole committee stands down and all have said they are happy to continue if reselected. It was explained that committee members are also Trustees registered with OSCR. The seven committee members were voted back on in one block with a show of hands. The constitution is on the club website for all to see.

Andy asked if the minutes of all meetings could be put on the website as it was a long time since this had been done. Berny agreed to arrange this as it was felt members needed transparency. Sally M attends Social Committee meetings and feeds back to the main committee. Berny is planning to step down at the end of June. It was felt the main committee would benefit by the addition of a younger member and Leah was proposed by Lucy and seconded by Berny.

Honorary membership

Bill Wright was the chairman before Berny and as such put in a tremendous amount of work for the benefit of the Club. It was his inspiration and hard work that established the Club and started the process of the building of the Boat House. Bill was thanked for being so supportive to Berny. Mairi also reminded us that Bill was instrumental in the acquisition of Esther from the Ardersier Rowing Club. Bill was thanked for his services to the club and in recognition of this was awarded a Lifetime Membership.

Membership Fees

Currently £45.

It was voted by a majority to increase this to £50. Ian Addison voted against. Fees will be reduced for those joining mid-year. Paying monthly is possible if really needed but generally discouraged as it was felt to involve too much work for Mairi and Sally. The fact that some people may not be able to afford part, or even the whole membership was discussed, and it

will be made known that their situation could be explained to Mairi, (membership secretary) and a reduced fee or fee waiver arranged. We will be in a better position in twelve months time to know whether the membership fees need to be increased again. The final cost of the build and it's running will be known and also the cost of hosting our own regatta, which is to be on September 16th, if we get the appropriate permissions.

Sally will arrange insurance for the Boat House and asked if anyone had any appropriate knowledge concerning this. She will approach the Scottish Coastal Rowing Association and other rowing clubs. Gail gave Tom the details of a company to try, Keegan and Pennykids Insurance Broker for charities which he will pass on to Sally.

The meeting closed at 11:45am