

INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

LOUGH ERNE BRANCH

Minutes of Committee Meeting at 1100 hours on Tuesday 31 March 2015 held at the home of Ken and Jane Bell 49 Annareagh Road Richhill Co Armagh

PRESENT

Ken Bell, Jane Bell, Mike Kingston, Robert Navan, Mervyn Rolls, John Weir, Frank Woods

APOLOGIES

Alan Cousins, Jim Henning

PROCEEDINGS

Our chairman opened the meeting and it was asked had the Lough Erne Rally committee members paid their fees for Lough Erne Branch membership. Those that have not are to be reminded by letter - e-mails are considered to be non-effective. Frank Woods reported on his appraisal of the Gobbins Walk, recently revised near Whitehead, stating that it is very exposed to the weather, and there is a lot of climbing to do. So that possible event is put on the long finger.

Ken Bell proposed a visit to the Argory National Trust property for the Christmas Walk on 28 December 2015, which John Weir seconded. Ken is to check out availability and cost.

Our secretary referred to correspondence, and notice has been received from Waterways Ireland of a closure for a limited period of access to Lough Derg. This will be outside our proposed rally dates.

Changes to bye-laws are noted, as is the proposed IWAI membership fees increase from £33 to £36 in Northern Ireland. Mike Kingston stated that Brian Cassells, as an IWAI director, would like to see fees gift aided, which is under discussion. Under UK rules IWAI is classed as a non government body, and has not got charity status. It was agreed that this is a matter for Council to pursue, but it will be raised at the forthcoming AGM. John Weir suggested we should pay fees directly to IWAI in the Republic to gain charity status. A consensus is that we likely do not lose or gain with Waterways Ireland being a cross border body. IWAI in Northern Ireland is not recognised by the NI Assembly.

A trip to Dublin on 16 April 2015 is being organised by Newry Branch, including Dun Laoghaire. Frank Woods will circulate details.

The IWAI project involving Dunrovin and the RNLI is going ahead.

IWAI Executive now require notice from branches of forthcoming events using an event application form, but this is not required to have organiser's signatures.

Frank Woods had come across a past notice of 235 LEB members, which compares with our current membership of around 120. Two new members have recently been gained. It is now very difficult to

recruit new members, and we have lost events like the Dublin Boat Show where a stand would be erected to achieve that.

A letter has been received from Maurice Fisher regarding new bye-laws, and his objection regarding mooring at jetties and other stops. Matters such as this are to be raised at our meeting with WI. Mike Kingston suggested a combined response to the proposed bye-laws should come from Lough Erne and Belturbet Branches.

Some bye-laws require clarification. IWAI Members should be encouraged to use the waterways, and not be faced with restrictions. Overnight stays should also be encouraged. Too much restriction on offenders affects responsible members. When there is a speed limit, this should be to a maximum of 5 knots, with the boat in control up to that speed. It is understood WI wardens are to be equipped with radar speed detectors.

There is concern over boats moored up seemingly permanently which restricts short stay boaters. It is understood that WI authority is within the channel, but it has the authority to move offending boats to control areas.

Widely spaced power points can lead to problems, so why are there not more, when most moored boats would need a power supply?

We do thank Waterways Ireland for their continuing improvements, e.g. replacement and additional jetties.

The proposed Lough Oughter small boat rally has to be cancelled because sadly the main organiser, Freddie Gibson, is unwell, and would have required his specialised knowledge.

Organisation of the Erne Rally for 2015 is proceeding well, and we encourage all IWAI members to attend.

Cruise in Company for 02 May 2015 will be a repeat of the 2014 event, with 1100 hrs depart from the Ardhowen jetties, proceed to Lough Erne Yacht Club, where lunch will be provided by Rose. Other branches are invited, and Robert Navan has agreed to be Commodore.

A visit to Titanic Quarter for IWAI members is proposed.

Plans are afoot for the LEB Rally of Lough Derg, with all boats to join up at Terryglass on 20 June 2015. Then leave for the various harbours around the Lough. Do LEB want a re-run of the last LEB Rally to the Derg in 2012, or other options? Shall we visit Dromineer? How many boats wish to proceed to Killaloe and Limerick? There probably will not be enough golfers for a competition, but a visit to the Golf Club for a dinner would be very welcome. It is proposed to contact known members of Derg Branch for ideas for visits, and to ask about stop-off moorings, such as Gortmore where Les Saunders is the contact. The WI Warden is to be

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contacted. It was proposed the Rally finish on the Thursday evening, then all boats can proceed as they wish.

Family Fun Day - 22 August 2015 - propose to visit the Share Centre with 12 - 14 boats in to moor up.

CSIG - Robert Navan reported that Lough Erne is now mapped. LEB have two sets of charting equipment. Small boats, battery powered, are now required to complete shallow areas.

Newry Branch - they would appreciate more funding for signs on the lock-keepers cottage, a sum of £276. LEB could be provided with space for a display. Check out wording and content.

Robert Navan announced he wishes to stand down from the LEB committee at the time of the AGM.

The meeting concluded at 1300 hours. The next meeting is on 13 April 2015 at c.1630 hours at Waterways Ireland Sligo Road Enniskillen, on completion of our meeting with their officials.