

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NATIONAL SQUIB OWNERS ASSOCIATION HELD ON MONDAY
NOVEMBER 12th 2012 AT THE ROYAL NAVAL CLUB, LONDON**

<u>PRESENT</u>	Chairman	Jenny Riley
	Secretary	Chris Stonehouse
	Treasurer	Andrew Porteous
	Membership Secretary	Andrea Holland
	Irish Forum	Jill Fleming
	Editor of Squibble	Eddie Harper
	Lou Bibby	Fran Blackburn
	Malcolm Blackburn	Ricky East
	Duncan Grindley	Peter Marchant
	Brian Pettitt	Pete Richards
	Ian Waite	David Wines
	Paul Withers	

APOLOGIES Apologies were received from Sean Clarkson, Gerard Dyson, Tony Saltonstall, Steve Warren-Smith

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting and thanked them for their support. She then introduced three new representatives – Andrea Holland, who had taken over as Membership Secretary from Sally Everitt; Ricky East, from Waldringfield, successor to Mike Barsby as head of Publicity; and Duncan Grindley, the Burnham Fleet Captain, who would be attending meetings now that Peter Marchant had decided to stand down.

MINUTES OF MEETING MAY 8TH 2012

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted by the committee and signed by the Chairman as being a true record.

MATTERS ARISING

STROPS - Fran Blackburn, as chairman of the Championship sub-committee, reported that it had been agreed that host clubs were responsible for the provision strops for the Nationals and not the NSOA.

LOADCELL – Malcolm Blackburn, chairman of the Technical sub-committee, said that they had discussed the proposition of an additional loadcell, but felt that this might only add to the confusion. Problems at Dartmouth had been partly due to the appalling weather conditions. David Wines pointed out that re-

calibration immediately prior to the Nationals was essential and this had not been done for Plymouth. Malcolm agreed that the sub-committee would be responsible for this in future years.

SQUIB APP - This was still being progressed

CHAIRMANS REPORT

Welcome to you all and thank you for coming all the way to this committee meeting. It doesn't seem possible that I am now in my final year as the NSOA Chairman. The time has gone so quickly, in no small part because of the support and help from all of you on the committee, but also because it has been fun! There is still lots to do, but everything chunters along under its own inertia and one thing I have learnt is that you do not need to be in any hurry!

We have three new faces at our table today. Ricky is our new Publicity Officer, she sails at Waldringfield and has been very busy over the past year with our new website and other matters. Also Duncan Grindley who is taking over as the Burnham rep, and Andrea Holland from Abersoch, who replaces Sally Everitt as Membership Secretary. Welcome to the team and thank you for volunteering.

- *The Championship Week at Dartmouth was well supported, well run and enjoyed by most, despite the unseasonal weather. I wrote a letter on behalf of the Assoc thanking the Club and Squib Fleet for all their hard work in running such a successful event, but I would also like our thanks to be minuted from this meeting.*
- *The Inlands at Rutland Sailing Club was also well attended and again I wrote to Mike Barsby in appreciation of all their efforts.*
- *Andrea Holland has taken over from Sally as Membership Sec. and is already busy sorting things out and answering queries.*
- *Steve Warren Smith and Andrew Porteous represented the Squibs at the Royal Southern Day boat Seminar, and dazzled the delegates with their presentation, backed up by the Squib DVD and the website. This was my original "Roadshow" idea actually happening! I would be so pleased to see it repeated somewhere else!*
- *Since the AGM, we have held a Special General meeting at Rutland to discuss and vote upon a proposal to change the class rules regarding Keels. The meeting was very well attended and Malcolm will tell you more about the implications later in the meeting. The meeting itself ran smoothly, members seemed to have thought through all the information carefully and having heard Malcolm's thorough explanations, were ready to back the proposal. It was also explained that it could make a way forward to encourage more new boats to be built which people thought important. I was disappointed with the negative feelings from Ireland and I hope that their anxieties over the rule change will be put to rest quickly. The SGM also exposed some problems with our membership data base and possible misunderstandings in our Squib Rules for these occasions. It was a new experience for Chris and I, we would be wiser a second time around! The final figures for the voting were 85 votes in favour, 25 against, but some proxies were found to be sent by non members.*

Finally at the Rutland dinner I announced that Steve Warren Smith will be the new Squib Chairman from next years AGM. I am delighted that he has agreed to take over from me next summer and I wish him all the very best of luck.

TREASURERS REPORT

As always the first six months of the year were relatively quiet and Andrew Porteous reported that this year had followed the usual pattern with £4000 debited and only £1100 coming in. It was essentially a timing issue with subscriptions to balance the equation in the New Year. There had been no build fees, insurances to pay and fees relating to the Nationals.

Looking to the year end in April he anticipated a surplus of some £3500 and a cash flow surplus of around £1400. In view of these figures, he could just about recommend a one off advertisement in Yachts and Yachting, as had been muted by Publicity.

A large ongoing cost was the mailing of Squibble and the Handbook, with postage increasing considerably over the past year – the two publications sent together was currently costing £1.10 in the UK and £3.39 to Southern Ireland. There was no alternative to this it would seem, as a suggestion at the AGM that we substitute a digital version had not met with any approval or relish.

Pete Richards proposed that a batch be sent to Ireland, as had happened once previously, and distributed from there would represent a saving and Jill Fleming, Irish Forum representative, agreed to this suggestion. He went on to say that he felt that the Handbook was unnecessarily repetitive and there was scope to reduce the content. There were 30 pages of boat lists alone: possibly the Constitution might appear on the website. He and Eddie would review this, as well as considering the use of franked mail and the advertising revenue generated by the two publications. **ACTION PETE/EDDIE**

Returning to Andrew's report, he had noted that build fees were paid up the No 882 and Jenny reported that Tony Saltonstall had subsequently bought a a new mould. Overall the Treasurer was relatively happy with the state of the NSOA finances, although like all Treasurers a little more cash would always be welcome.

It would help if Fleet Captains were more pro-active in encouraging their sailors to join the Association, as well as urging payment of fees, and Duncan suggested that Squibbles and membership forms could be available to hand out at all clubs. **ACTION JENNY/FLEET CAPTAINS**

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARYS REPORT

Newcomer to the position, Andrea Holland said that she had found it initially a very stressful task owing to problems with a software system set up in 2000. However, with much help from Sally, everything was now up and running and she felt confident and was even enjoying the challenge.

Referring to problems encountered with the elderly software that she had inherited, Andrea suggested that a laptop might be provided for future secretaries, which would ease the passage of change over, as well as providing a portable machine that could be taken to events for on the spot checking of

membership status. The Committee agreed that this should be considered at a later date and the Treasurer made a note of possible expenditure.

Having been horrified herself by the cost of postage, she had decided to reduce the number of boat stickers printed from 600 to 500, as the basic price had risen by 2p per sticker – saving of £23.

Currently her records show that there are 413 Full Members, with 38 to pay, and 73 Associate members, with 12 to pay.

The SGM had highlighted various problems with the database, primarily the question of paid up co-owners, where they shared a single membership. It was the payee who was the first named co-owner on the database and the person entitled to vote at a meeting or have a proxy vote. This had not been understood in a few cases. Conversely, it is common practice that any co-owner of a group that has paid one membership, may helm at events, not just the payee. Again, where more than one co-owner is a full member, then each may vote, but no boat can attract more than two votes.

Jenny concluded that our rules were less than clear. We had a Constitution and Class Rules and she asked for a working party to review and make recommendations for the next Committee Meeting in March.

ACTION LOU (Chairman), JILL, ANDREW, PAUL (Consultant)

Subscriptions were another headache. By March 31st, the cut off date, it was reckoned that 85% had paid for the year, leaving some £1700 still outstanding. Members continued to pay up throughout the year, naturally some new ones joined, but inevitably the Handbook printed in April for May distribution with the Spring Squibble, could never be truly current. Various ways of naming and shaming unpaid members had been mooted previously, including a list of late payers in Squibble. Jill suggested they might possibly use an Access pdf for printing name, club and membership number, which would not infringe any privacy laws.

Andrea volunteered to print a list of members by Club which could be sent in January to all Fleet captains, as a reminder to nudge them into collecting subs from their members and to emphasise that they did have a responsibility to the Association too.

ACTION ANDREA

Fran, who had also been involved in helping sort out the database problems, emphasised that the current database would only run on out of date software and needed some radical attention and Jenny agreed that a second working party should be set up to investigate what the requirements of the database were, and how it might best be overhauled and upgraded. Paul Withers suggested that Ian Jones from Weymouth SC might also be able to help and he would contact him directly.

ACTION ANDREA/FRAN/PAUL

IRISH FORUM

Jill reported that the Rule Change regarding keels had caused some disquiet among her members, who supported a definitive keel measurement, but believed that the current proposal was not sufficiently watertight. Malcolm replied to their queries, confirming that the keel diagram would no longer be included in the rules, and that no decision, as yet, had been taken regarding whether Parkers would be permitted to grind new keels in future. Also there was never any implication that new boats were not

competitive and the Rule Change was based on measurement only not performance. There was no reason for anyone to feel that they would have to reduce their keels, as the perception that older boats are faster has never been proven. Nor is it necessary to spend a large amount of money to alter the keel – the hire of an angle grinder and a little time is all that is required and not beyond the capabilities of the average DIY sailor. To have it professionally done would probably be in the region of £1000.

The Forum also requested a copy of the Rule Change draft as issued to the RYA and a simple interpretation in plain English. This was agreed and Malcolm said that he was writing an article for the next Squibble.

ACTION MALCOLM

Jill pointed out that Squib sailors Marcus Hutchinson (naval architect), Derek Jago (architect) and Jack Anderson had offered to draw up a definitive keel drawing and help address the problems of the keel in its entirety, rather than just the trailing aft edge. They were not certain that the wording was sufficiently watertight and anxious to explore further the whole issue of keel measurements.

Malcolm replied that he had already spent a year working on just the trailing aft edge and that it would be extremely difficult to make templates with which to police the whole keel. Templates, as used for example by the J24 Class Association, were fine as theirs was a simple design. The Squib keel threw up many problems and was very complicated by comparison.

He went on to explain that the existing rules do not permit altering the keel. However, believing original keels to be faster, owners had broken the rules by grinding their keels. Again it was not possible to police any rule infringements without imposing a minimum aft measurement – one could not measure that which had been taken away. A simple check with a gauge could now be carried out in 20 seconds and, if the gauge did not fit correctly, the boat could be declared out of class and the owner forced to build up the keel to the correct measurement.

David felt it was time to move on. The Rule Change proposal had been voted in by NSOA members at the recent SGM and was now awaiting ratification by the RYA. Jenny thanked Jill for bringing the concerns of the Irish fleet to their attention and for their offer of technical help.

Jill continued that the Irish fleets had taken serious exception to the paragraph following the published SGM minutes that the Irish proxies were late and, by implication, that they could have been excluded. They also felt that on previous occasions some of the reporting had been biased against them, which surprised the Secretary Chris Stonehouse and she assured them that no slight had been intended.

Regarding the proxies, they had arrived on October 4th. It had been thought that these had not broken the rule regarding the cut off date of September 28th since they had named the Secretary as proxy in each case and were, therefore, adhering to the rule regarding 'handing to the Secretary not less than 30 minutes before the meeting'. Chris explained that the thirty minute rule was for those members present at the meeting who had been asked to stand as proxy. They were required to hand them to her in exchange for a proxy voting slip, once membership status of both parties involved had been confirmed. She apologised for any unintended ambiguity, but had understood that was the usual interpretation of a proxy form and doubtless the working party would include clarification of it in their

brief. Unfortunately, it had been impossible to verify full membership of some of those who had sent proxy forms to her, and that is why the final results of the vote had altered over the weekend.

ACTION WORKING PARTY (RULES)

Jenny continued that she had been most concerned that the views of all members be considered in the poll and she had decided earlier in the week to allow the inclusion of late entries. The Secretary added that the votes of all fully paid up NSOA members were counted.

On another point the Forum had been disappointed last year that a membership database had not been available to those running events to ensure that only NSOA members competed. It was difficult to confront a winner with a demand for subs.

ACTION WORKING PARTY (DATABASE)

Jill had also been asked to advise the Committee that the Irish fleets do not address membership issues until April, at the beginning of the sailing season, which meant that they could not be included in the Handbook. It was proposed that a separate list be included in Squibble.

On a very encouraging note for next season, Jill was able to announce the formation of a new fleet at Lough Derg, where they have two Squibs so far. Reggie Goodbody was the Fleet captain there, having swapped his Shannon One Design for a middle number Squib, and it was hoped that others might follow suit.

Jenny thanked Jill for all her input and asked that she should re-assure all the Irish members that they were very much part of the Squib team.

TECHNICAL SUB-COMMITTEE

A keel gauge that Malcolm had designed for measuring the aft trailing edge was handed round the committee, who were most impressed both with the quality and its simplicity, as well as the minimal cost involved. Some 40 templates were required at £4.23 + VAT, of which 20 would be sent to various Fleet captains, making a total expenditure of some £270. Details of the template would be included in his article for Squibble.

Andrew enquired whether the templates would be stamped as belonging to the NSOA, but this was not thought necessary and an unnecessary complication and expense.

Paul congratulated the Technical sub-committee on making the Class Rules robust enough to stand scrutiny and to allow rule breakers to be protested. Their work had resulted in proper measurement controls. Jenny also warmly thanked Malcolm and his team for all the time and effort he had put into the project.

There followed a discussion regarding the future of the keel pattern as held by Bruce Parker. Bryan Riley and Tony Saltonstall felt this needed refurbishing, as it was damaged and in poor repair. Malcolm thought that it was an opportunity to reduce the thickness of the aft edge, with Peter Marchant pointing out that the foundry would surely have its own pattern makers and would be able to do the necessary work. Malcolm then proposed that the keel pattern be changed to reflect the new dimensions. Carried by 12 votes for, 2 against.

Jenny then proposed that we ask the foundry to do the necessary work on the keel pattern. All in favour.

As a final comment Paul had noticed a typographical error in our Class Rules which should read "If it does not say you can, you can not" and needed changing to "cannot". ACTION MALCOLM

MARKETING AND PUBLICITY

Ricky had been in discussion with Sean about the website and he would be making some technical tweaks shortly. She had been greatly encouraged by the number of race reports that had been contributed by clubs over the past year, although some of the club websites were as dire as others were excellent – it did depend on the individual. David was concerned that the Forum had all but dried up and Ricky suggested that the Committee should 'seed' topics that would prompt discussion. Initially, the new website had required more stringent access criteria and this had now been scaled down.

Indeed, security and access to the site had caused irritation among some members. Membership numbers were often forgotten and, apart from being typed on the address labels of Squibble and Handbook envelopes, required contacting the membership secretary for the information. The Committee considered whether they wished to continue with this security and unanimously agreed that this requirement be removed. Ricky pointed out that the Forum and Boats for Sale should remain secure, otherwise unwelcome material could be posted. She would contact Sean accordingly. ACTION SEAN/RICKY

She was a great advocate of free publicity and was eternally grateful to members like Vincent Delany, who had fed Y&Y with numerous articles during the year. The coverage kept us in the public eye and the magazine was delighted with additional copy. Jill added that just by visiting other clubs was great exposure too and the nomads of the fleet were excellent ambassadors.

An advertisement in Y&Y to coincide with their Dinghy and Keelboat Review edition would cost £800 per page, £425 per half page and £250 per quarter page, all plus VAT. David felt it a modest investment as a one off and the treasurer had already agreed. As a rider Peter Marchant suggested to Ricky that it was worth trying to secure a half page at a reduced rate and she agreed to try. ACTION RICKY

Ricky also told the Committee about a possible invitation from the RYA to join a National Classes stand at Alexandra Palace on March 2nd/3rd next year. The Committee were happy to support the event, although not prepared to display a boat. Previous stands at the Dinghy Show had required an enormous amount of time and effort by a few members. This should be a rather more minimalist approach with banners, flags and brochures and Ricky would pursue the opportunity. Apart from anything else it would be a brilliant chance to promote the Nationals.

She had been delighted recently to unearth some 2000 brochures, now sitting in Abersoch, which was un fortunate as they had been at Rutland for some time before being moved! She was working on their redistribution, as well as the possible inclusion of flyers that could be cheaply produced and personalised for each fleet or event.

The Committee fully supported her enthusiasm for Squib logo clothing, which she had stipulated must be of good quality and initially limited to polo shirts and caps. She had been given various contacts by members of the Fleet, but in discussion it was agreed that it was essential for purchasers to deal directly with the supplier and not through a co-ordinator.

The jury was still out on Facebook. Although Lou and Duncan were particularly keen that we embrace this medium, with Duncan commenting that Burnham already had its own page, which he monitored. It had proved excellent for marrying crews and helms and it was suggested that we might instigate a page for the Nationals. Eddie expressed concern that we risked ending up with a load of rubbish and Jenny agreed that it would need policing regularly.

Ricky concluded by suggesting that a standard format for Club Taster Days and Teach In Sessions be put on hold for the time being as it was not urgent.

Jenny congratulated her on the progress she had made in such a short time in office and thanked her for her enthusiasm.

CHAMPIONSHIP SUB-COMMITTEE

Fran introduced Pete Richards as Championship Chairman for the Nationals at Abersoch next year and he was happy to tell the Committee that they already had excellent sponsorship – a major new company and Haulfryn Holiday Homes, as previously. The prizegiving dinner would be held at The Warren, Haulfryn's prestige site at Abersoch. The entry fee had been set at £200 per boat, with scrutineering and launching on Friday June 29 and Saturday June 30 at Phyllheli.

It had been agreed that the eight race format, as used experimentally at Dartmouth this year, would be adopted again, although Fran admitted that the sub-committee was not unanimous in this and a straw poll at the AGM in Dartmouth indicated 24 in favour of the schedule and 28 against. It had been felt that in order to assess the possible attraction of eight races to younger sailors, it should be utilised a second time to get any sort of conclusive result. David commented that helms had voted with their feet by not entering at Dartmouth. He still believed that a Squib was primarily a boat that sailors came to later in life and, by then, a less arduous programme could be preferable.

Reading race reports Ricky had noticed that there appeared to be a gradual transition to more races per day and Jill added that the ISAF world class youth events favour three. The race course at Abersoch was only half an hour from the moorings, unlike Dartmouth, where boats were leaving pontoons more than an hour before the start.

David accepted the thinking of the sub-committee, but asked about whether there would consecutive days on which two races might be held. Because of the unpredictability of the weather, Jenny said that this would have to be left to the discretion of the Championship committee, along with the final decision regarding discards. If analysed, the results from Dartmouth altered little whether one or two discards were permitted – consistency was the key to success.

Paul recommended that there should be less laps with races shortened at a buoy, not shorter legs, which was the format at Dartmouth.

Fran reported that the Dartmouth Nationals had been considered very successful, although some excellent racing had been somewhat offset by the lengthy sail to the start and the split venue. As yet there had been no feedback re profit from the host club.

The NSOA has accepted the invitation from Weymouth to hold the Nationals in 2016. This was a well tried and tested venue that was extremely popular with the Fleet. Other contenders had been Torbay, Phyllheli and Seaview, Isle of Wight. Paul was delighted that his own club had been chosen for the event and said that Peter Hopford, the previous organising chairman was already highly committed to running a successful repeat performance at Weymouth.

The date of the Southern Championships 2013 at Weymouth was confirmed as September 14/15th, with craning in on the 13th. Entries were restricted to 30 boats, although there could be a chance of using own sails on a local boat. Five races are planned, three on Sunday with last start at 1400, and members are invited to contact Mike Fenwick or Adrian Pattison for more details.

Jenny also announced that the East Coast championships at Lowestoft were scheduled for June 8/9th 2013 and thanked Fran for her report.

SQUIBBLE

Editor Eddie reported that the next publication was well on target and due to go to the printers at the beginning of December with a copy deadline of the 1st of the month. Currently it sat at 52 pages, but would probably increase to around 64, as he knew of some more articles still to arrive, and the edition included an update on the situation regarding measurers from Tony Saltonstall.

The Spring edition would require copy by end of March and be with the members by May, in plenty of time for material re the Nationals or AGM to be included.

Jenny said that as always she and the Committee were most appreciative of all his efforts and were looking forward to the latest edition.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A LETTER FOR CONSIDERATION - The Secretary had received a letter from Jennifer and Peter Greatrex of Waldringfield expressing their distaste and concern at the choice of jokes told after supper at the Inlands by Tony Saltonstall. They felt that these had been unnecessarily crude and had racist element. Jenny sympathised with their feelings and said that they were not alone, although Tony was extremely upset and sorry that his attempts at humour had caused such bad feeling. It was certainly not his intention to do so, nor was he the slightest bit racist, and Jenny emphasised that the private man was quite different - kind, caring and thoughtful and someone who had the best interests of the Squibs at heart. Mike Barsby, as organiser of the Inlands, had suggested at the Rutland Squib AGM, which the Secretary had attended, that Tony be asked to 'soft pedal' any future entertainments.

The committee all agreed that Jenny should pen a very sincere letter of apology from the NSOA, saying that they felt certain they would feel happier at future events and could enjoy a great season Squibbing next year. They looked forward to welcoming them. **ACTION JENNY**

PETER MARCHANT RETIRES - Peter was most upset to announce that he had decided the time had come for him to retire from the Committee. He had spent many enjoyable and challenging years, both as Committee member and as Chairman, but Duncan had now taken over as Fleet captain at Burnham and it seemed an opportune moment for him to stand down. He would much miss the camaraderie of meetings in London and après suppers and thanked everyone for their support and kindness.

Pete Richards proposed a vote of thanks to Peter and thanked him for his unstinting hard work and commitment to the NSOA for so many years. He would be much missed. The committee were unanimous and in total agreement and Jenny wished Pete all the very best in his 'retirement'.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

March 2nd 2013 at Dinghy Exhibition, Alexandra Palace, at 1400 – Lou to book room **ACTION LOU**

Monday May 13th 2013 at Royal Naval Club, London, at 1500

AGM Tuesday July 2013 at SCYC, Abersoch, at 1800 – to be confirmed

Monday November 11th 2013 at the Royal Naval Club, London

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 7 pm