

# TRANSCRIPT OF THE 4th COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE 'SRL'

**6 MARCH 1998**

## **The Stafford Branch Navigation Heritage Trust**

Steering Meeting No. 4, at Wolverhampton Boat Club, 6th March, 1998

**1. Present:** D.Jones (Chair), K.Boardman, R.Bowden (secretary), N.Cooper, R.Fisher, G.Walker.

**2. Apologies:** None

### **3. New member**

3.1 Ron Fisher was welcomed as a new member of the committee.

### **4. IWAAC Questionnaire**

4.1 KB read out the questions and after discussion each question was answered and written down in note form by RB, who will fill in the form and pass it to DJ for photocopying and distribution. (A photocopy is attached as part of these minutes).

### **5. Minutes of previous meeting**

5.1 Accepted as a true record. Proposed DJ seconded NC passed.

### **6. Matters Arising**

6.1 DJ and NC visited Gloucester Museum to meet with Mr. Roy Jamieson, who assisted them in their research about the history of the branch. Two Indentures (leases), with maps, dealing with the navigation, have been obtained as photocopies, and DJ has re-typed the wording to facilitate study. All members of the steering committee will have a copy of these documents.

6.2 DJ has produced a chronological outline of the history of the branch, including the activities of this steering committee, and has circulated this among members.

6.3 Roger Squires contacted by DJ regarding why S&WCS scheme in the mid-1970s to restore the branch, had been abandoned. Basically, Severn-Trent Water had had a grandiose scheme in mind at the time, designed to prevent periodic flooding, which included a provision for lowering the level of the River Sow, the effect of which would have made navigation impossible. Also the proposals at the same time for the Stafford Ring Road seemed to invalidate any scheme for the passage of boats into the town. S&SWS therefore decided to concentrate on the Stourbridge basin, and thought no more of re-opening the branch.

6.4 NC has purchased an AV system and will progress an AV presentation, hopefully this year.

6.5 DJ walked the branch on 17th February with a colleague, who took a video of various features, including evidence of rubbish and litter along the route. This could prove valuable in any future discussions about the impact of boats on the environment.

## **7. Secretary's Report**

7.1 Letter received from firm planning the new ASDA store at head of navigation, asking for details of expected level of boats visiting the town. RB wrote to BW and has received a reply from Mr. Glenn Millar, Research Manager at Watford, estimating that 8,000 boat-movements per year would be expected to pass the branch, on the S&W canal. RB has written to the firm with this information.

7.2 Consequent to a meeting of Stafford borough council, RB was contacted by Julie Curry, of Stafford Newsletter, and gave her some information about our project, and passed her over to KB for more information, which resulted in a front page article in that newspaper. Stoke local radio station picked up on the article and conducted an interview with KB about the project.

7.3 RB has been in touch with the editor of Waterways World and informed him of the progress of our project. The editor, Hugh Potter, has asked for full information. RB will consult with members about this.

## **8. The Way Forward**

8.1 KB reported on 7.2 above, and submitted a fax received from Julie Curry, stating that she had faxed her story to Mr. Mike Tappin, Euro MP for Stafford who had offered his full support to try and obtain European funding for the project. A meeting is to be arranged. KB also reported that Julie Curry wishes to produce a major 3-page article on the branch, and that she would need access to all the historical research material in due course. DJ will arrange for this when required.

8.2 RB reported on an item in IWA head office bulletin which indicated that groups such as ours can apply for a start-up grant of up to £250 from the IWA "Used Stamp Bank" account. Group agreed that RB should apply for this grant. Will need to wait for 8.3 below, for name of account.

8.3 DJ offered to research the opening of a bank account for the group, which may need to become properly formed, with a constitution, etc but not necessarily as a Trust at this time, which costs around £3,000 to set up.

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Transcribed by David Jones 2013