

30th anniversary 1990-2020



## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held via Zoom on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2020

### PRESENT

Peter Faulkner, Jude Pilgrim, Mark Dellar, Euan Raffel, Dylan Jones, Dave Purvis, Peter Stanyon, Gerwin and June Lewis, Terry Kenny, Raymond Green, Diana Hill, Thomas Hemmendinger, Rooster Fricke (joined meeting late)

### APOLOGIES

Malcolm and Julie Rees, Wendy Gee

### MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Agreed as a correct record. Proposed by Dave Purvis. Seconded by Peter Stanyon.

### MATTERS ARISING

JL enquired if there had been any further information on Pitchford Hall's proposal to build a collection of every British coracle type. No further information has been received.

ER mentioned the recent passing of the Society's founder, Sir Peter Badge. Covid meant that it was not possible to attend the funeral, but a condolence card was sent on behalf of the Society to Lady Mary Badge and the committee will make a donation in memory of Sir Peter to a charity of Lady Mary's choice.

### REPORTS

#### *Chairperson*

2020 has been a very difficult year with very little – if anything - happening due to the coronavirus pandemic. Expressed thanks to ER, DP and DJ for everything they do for the Society.

#### *Treasurer*

The 2019 accounts were presented for approval. Nothing much of note, balances are healthy. Donation was received from Rod Bowen, one of our vice presidents. Expenditure remains higher than in previous years, partly due to increased postage costs linked with GDPR and members not opting back in to receive correspondence by email.

MD asked that a reminder be put in the Journal encouraging members to opt back into email. ER agreed and noted that postal correspondence goes out with a reminder about opting in for email.

DP reminded members that they are eligible to use the Society's insurance if running an event on behalf of the Society, in exchange for a small contribution.

Proposer: Jude Pilgrim, Seconder: Peter Faulkner  
Accounts were accepted

### *Membership secretary*

99 members, down slightly from the previous year due to some members not renewing. 16 are joint/family/associate members. A handful of members who joined via a course took up the option of discounted first year of paid membership.

JP asked if we contacted members who have left to chase membership renewals. ER replied that yes, but not after their membership has lapsed due to GDPR – a number of emails are sent in the run up to expiry.

### *National Coracle Centre*

"I have used the enforced lockdown this year to re-vamp the exhibition. As the centre for the last twenty-nine years has relied heavily on attracting coach groups, schools, etc, now I have to cater for small parties and individuals on a by appointment basis. Next season I hope to have a new website and a Facebook page to start season thirty-one. This of course is entirely dependent on the health of the country."

It was noted that in recent years there has been concerns on the future of the National Coracle Centre, but the above report from Martin Fowler suggests there is a more positive future for the centre.

### *Netsmen's reports*

#### **Tywi - Carmarthen River Festival/Coracle Races:**

Sadly due to the current situation, the organisers made the decision to cancel the 2020 Carmarthen River Festival, which was due to take place on the 20th June.

Plans are now underway for 2021 to ensure it's another successful community event.

#### **Coracle Fishing Season:**

Following the change to the fishing by-law, this year's coracle season for the Towy commenced on the 1st May (usually 1st March) and ended as normal on the 31<sup>st</sup> July.

Due to illness and bereavement only 3 licences were taken this year out of a possible 8.

Sea Trout (sewin) numbers are still a cause for concern. However, the very dry period and increased numbers of predators (seals) did not help our cause.

I am pleased to report a significant increase in salmon stock and this continued into the autumn. I can only assume there must be some link between lockdown (no trawlers) and the apparent increase in numbers.

#### **Carmarthen Coracle Education Booklets:**

Carmarthen Coracle and Netsmen's Association have published an educational booklet on the Carmarthen Coracle.

We have been working with retired teacher and local story-teller, Mr Andy Edwards and with the backing of the Heritage Lottery Fund, we have been able to preserve and record the old stories of the River Towy.

The booklet has been distributed to local primary schools in the area. Teachers and members of the public will have access to our comprehensive research on the 'People's Collection Wales' website. Both the booklet and the online resource will be a beneficial tool for coracle history, Welsh heritage and river topics taught within schools.

With the recent rules on lockdown during the Covid 19 virus, we have been distributing the coracle booklets to local residential and care homes.

#### **Media:**

We've done several projects including a video for the Welsh Government and local magazines.

Teifi – net licence review being undertaken. Recent correspondence received is proposing more than doubling the cost of licences (not just coracle licences). Seems to be recouping administrative costs rather than increasing efforts to protect the environment and pricing fishermen off the waters.

This year's season with the new restrictions (catch and release salmon) has halved what can be caught. Sewin stocks good, though younger fish. Salmon stocks have been good, possibly due to less sea trawling. New season is now 3 months long (down from 5). We shall see if objections are heard and acted upon.

Otherwise things have been quiet. Mark has built two coracles, one of which was with his son as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award.

#### *Ironbridge Coracle Trust*

12-18 months ago we received a grant of £350,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and another for £150,000 from the Arts Council, to be used to restore and stabilise the old coracle shed on the Severn river bank in Ironbridge, build a new coracle shed at Green Wood Centre and create a trail through Ironbridge linking the two. This work is now mostly done, sculpture of Tommy Rogers at the centre point of the trail between the two sheds.

Not much activity this year – the regatta has been cancelled, but we were able to run 4-5 have a go session teaching local people how to use a coracle which was well received. Didn't charge, but may do so in the future.

Two years left on the grant, the project officer in place is managing the project for the ICT and doing lots of outreach work with schools etc.

Lady Mary Badge has passed on to ICT Sir Peter Badge's collection of documents, films and small objects. Trust is currently working through the collection and have found a number of interesting items, particularly film. It would be great to share these with The Coracle Society.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President: Peter Faulkner

Vice Presidents: Rod Bowen, John Davies, Martin Fowler, Terry Kenny

Proposed Jude Pilgrim; Seconded Dave Purvis

Carried and elected en-bloc, with the proviso that should Peter's health deteriorate, Terry Kenny will take over as President

Chairperson: Mark Dellar

Vice chairperson: Malcolm Rees

Proposed June Lewis; Seconded Bruce Watson

Carried and elected en-block

Secretary: Dylan Jones

Proposed Euan Raffel; Seconded Terry Kenny

Carried

Treasurer: Euan Raffel

Proposed Peter Stanyon; Seconded June Lewis

Carried

Committee: June Lewis, Jude Pilgrim, Dave Purvis, Julie Rees, Peter Stanyon, Bruce Watson  
Proposed Terry Kenny; Seconded Mark Dellar  
Carried and elected en-bloc

#### PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Thanked everyone for joining the meeting and thanked the officers of the Society for their work.

It was with deep sadness that I learnt of the death of our founder, Sir Peter Badge, who passed away on 29th October. I know that you will all join with me in extending our sympathy to Lady Badge and her family and that our thoughts and prayers are with them at this time.

Thirty years ago, the Society was in its infancy but the foundation stone had been laid on solid ground. Now, after some thirty years that foundation stands unshaken. The advance in technology has put us on the global map with a website second to none. Over the years many officers have loyally served the Society. Whilst our membership is not vast, we have maintained that feeling of 'family' throughout - long may it continue.

Peter led the Society through its formative years with vision and diplomacy. we owe him a great debt which can be repaid by simply working together for the good of our unique society. I give you the toast - Sir Peter Badge, Founder of The Coracle Society.