

**MINUTES OF LIGHTNING 368 CLASS ASSOCIATION AGM
HELD AT NORTHAMPTON SAILING CLUB
SATURDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2014**

Present:

Caroline Key, Wayne Jenner, Emma Dodd, Tony Jacks, Lee Bratley, Paul White, Charlie Whelan, Adam Styles, Bryan Westley, Tony Hodson, Margaret Clarke, Rupert Whelan, Andy Jukes, Richard Palmer, Hugh Spencer, John Claridge, Matt Hopkins, Luke Lazell, Jason Gallagher, Julie Archer, Simon Hopkins

Apologies for Absence:

Mark and Anne Giles, Chris Abela, Sue Thomas

Minutes of Last Meeting:

Copies of the minutes for the AGM held on 14 September 2013 were circulated. These were accepted as a true account of that meeting and duly signed by the Chairman Simon Hopkins.

Matters Arising:

No matters arising from the previous meeting.

Chairman's Report:

Firstly may I thank you for all coming to this AGM. So far it has been an interesting Nationals with 24 boats attending. Let's hope tomorrow will bring a bit more wind.

Reflecting on the last year I think it has been a one of consolidation for the Lightning class. We have had a few years of rule changes, upgrades, etc. This year has been about sailing the boats.

The association is creeping ever close to the 100 members barrier that we challenged ourselves to achieve by 2015. However we must continue to encourage Lightning sailors to join the association to support the Dinghy show and other promotional activities.

Disappointingly we have only had one new boat registered this year and I thank Nikky for making it such an interesting colour! The second hand boat market is still very active and we find more and more boats each month coming out of retirement to be seen actively sailing again. Depressingly we second hand prices still tend to be too low.

What is noticeable is the quality of the new helms arriving in the fleet. This reflects that as well as a friendly, social fleet we are being recognised as a place to come for close one design racing. This is what we set out to achieve when John took over and I thank John, the committee, past and present for doing a great job to make it happen.

On the travelers circuit we have seen numbers at most open meetings in double figures with a fantastic turnout at Oxford of 23 boats. The only event not to make double figures was Broxbourne, but I take responsibility for that as I had to work and that took 2 boats off the start line. Let's hope the rest of the season continues in the vein. Thanks once again to Paul for organising the series. He has 2015 in hand but for 2016 we will need a new sailing co-ordinator. If anyone wants to volunteer please make it known to the committee before the end of next year!

Finally I would like to thank Sue Thomas who has been Lightning Treasurer for as long as I have been around. I think you will all agree she has done a great job and assuming we have nobody jumping up to challenge Emma I am sure our accounts are in good hands. All I need now is a new Vice Chairman.

Secretary's Report:

The year started with our annual trip to the Dinghy Show at Alexandra Palace. Following the success of hiring the stand panels in 2013, it was decided to do the same this year. We again had the corner plot, so accessible from all directions. Thanks as always to the committee members who turned up early on Saturday to get the stand ready in time for the grand opening. Thanks also to John for the loan of a boat and donation towards the cost of the show.

The first sailing event of the year was a two day trip to Whitefriars in the Cotswolds. Day one being a training day, thanks go to Paul and Robbie for providing this. Was this to be the start of a sailing season of very windy weather!! Sadly not, the next few events at Oxford, Broxbourne, Manor Park, Cookham and Up River all proved to be very calm. With last races being abandoned due to too little wind. Up River also hosted the second training session, which was very different from last year's survival conditions. Next we travelled to Weston for the Sea Championships. Regrettably with the tail end of Hurricane Bertha reaching the south coast on Sunday, it was decided to abandon day two of the event. The next event after the Nationals is a trip to Bristol Avon, a new club to visit this year and after that the Inlands at Haversham and then the season finale Rum and Mince Pie at WOSC. All the events held this year have been very well supported, with some new faces taking part.

The sale of second hand boats is still happening, although boats are tending to be on the market quite a while, before they are eventually sold. John is also busy building new boats. One of the new boats on the water is Nikky's Cadbury's purple boat, over which there has been much discussion on the forum about. Earlier in the year the committee launched Lightning's Re-Loved, where the association purchases tired boats and John then tidies them up for onward sale. More about this will be mentioned later in the meeting.

On a final note I would just like to thank all the members for their donation at last year's Nationals for Sobell House following the sad loss of Martin Gibson. We raised £90. Thank you all donations are very much appreciated.

Treasurer's Report:

Sue was unable to attend the AGM due to holiday, but had provided copies of the accounts to Simon which were circulated at the meeting. These show that we had an income of £2327.46 in 2014, slightly down on 2013 (£2454.84) and expenses of £1890.90 which is less than 2013 (£2365) due to the fact that the invoice for the Nationals trophies had not been processed yet. Surplus in the bank £4506.46 (£4069.90 2013). No questions were raised regarding the accounts and these were accepted by the meeting.

Election of Chairman:

Simon Hopkins was happy to stay on as Chairman for the coming year. Everybody was all in favour of this.

Election of Officers and Committee Members:

Vice Chairman – Jason Gallagher – proposed by Wayne Jenner, seconded by Emma Dodd, all in favour.

Treasurer – Emma Dodd proposed by Matt Hopkins, seconded by Paul White, all in favour.

Secretary – Caroline Key, happy to continue, all in favour

Sailing Co-Ordinator – Paul White, happy to continue for a further year, but would like to step down next year, all in favour

Technical Officer – Clive Evans, proposed by Simon Hopkins, seconded by Rupert Whelan, all in favour

SW Representative - Simon Styles happy to continue)

SE Representative - Penny Yarwood happy to continue) all in favour

North Representative – Jason Gallagher happy to continue)

Dinghy Show / Website / Advertising:

Simon told the meeting that at this show it was the first time for a while that an order was taken for a brand new boat. (Thanks Nikky) John Claridge asked the meeting would it be possible to have two boats on the stand next year, one showing the full rig and the other the new SR rig. Matt suggested an old boat and a new boat for people to compare, but it was decided that two new boats would look better on the stand. Standard plot size is 4m x 4.5m costing £477.60. A larger plot would cost more and Caroline advised the meeting that it would cost an extra £49.95 per square metre. Simon suggested that as we have surplus funds in the bank and we were not doing any other advertising, we should look at a bigger stand. It was decided to place two lightnings side by side with room to move between the two and measure the size of the plot. **To be actioned by John Claridge, Simon Hopkins.**

Wayne Jenner advised the meeting that he is happy to stay on as the web master for the Lightning website. It was thought that the forum and face book would act against each other, but in reality they are complementing each other. The forum continues to be very busy with lots of useful information. The sale of second hand boats continues, but Wayne could not explain why some sold quickly, while others were on the site for a while, there was no pattern to this. Margaret Clarke commented that the website is the best way to advertise the class, it is very useful, dynamic and regularly updated unlike other websites she has visited.

Simon advised that we did not do any other advertising last year and it does not appear to have affected the class. Lee said that we did look into putting advertising into Yachts and Yachting last year, but it proved to be too expensive. The Y & Y Class Review is free of charge and Caroline has this in hand to complete, email reminder received yesterday. Hugh asked about car stickers advertising the class website. Wayne advised that he still has some available. Simon asked Rupert if he was prepared to put a year book together for early next year and he advised that if one was required, he would. It was suggested then that as people renew their membership, the annual membership pack would include the year book, membership card and car sticker.

Simon suggested that we continue with the website and face book and with our regular reports in Y&Y this was all the advertising the class required. Hugh also suggested that it would be a nice idea to present Northampton S.C with a plaque as a thank you for holding our event.

Class Rules / Technical Issues Clarification:

Rupert advised that he had had no technical issues to clarify and there had been no changes to class rules or any other issues raised.

Lightnings Re-Loved:

Simon told the meeting that 55 our first lightning re-loved was still for sale. When first put on the market, Wayne posted it on the front page of the website to bring this new initiative of rejuvenating new boats to everybody's attention. It was put on the market at £950 to try and force the price up on the sale of second hand boats, but this does not seem to be the case when there have been other boats which have been put on the market which the committee feel are far too low. If 55 was not sold at this price, the class would lose money as John would need to be reimbursed for materials and his time from the association. Tony suggested that posters were put up at people's clubs. Julie advised that price and location proved a big consideration when somebody was looking for a boat. It was suggested that the boat be moved to a more central location in the country where it could be more accessible, it was also suggested that it was used as a demo boat and taken to open meetings for people to look at and have a go. John seemed to think that it would be a good idea to move it to another location. Rupert suggested would it have been sold if it had a new rig, it has been decided that the boat could be sold with the option of purchasing a new rig if required. The committee is to consider where the boat could temporarily live, with the Association paying for its insurance. John also advised the meeting that any profit from 55's sale could be used towards the cost of next year's dinghy show.

Nationals and Open Meetings 2015:

Paul advised the meeting that he was half way through next year's sailing calendar. The first event is likely to be Up River. We would not be travelling to Haversham next year, mainly due to the fact that no one from the club supports other events, so the Inlands will need to be relocated. Paul is looking into moving the Sea Championships next year from Weston to Snettisham Beach. Snettisham is to be the first event of North Norfolk Sailing Week next year and Paul is liaising to see if it would be possible to hold our Sea Champs there. He is also contacting Hunts S.C to see if they would consider an event there. Paul is trying to keep 1 or 2 events floating each year to try out different locations/clubs. It has been suggested that we come to Northampton again next year for our Nationals as it is a mutual venue. Simon also said that he had had a request from the OK fleet, to see if we would like to double up with some of their events. Paul will look into this further. Hugh suggested we tag onto open regattas which various clubs around the country hold. This could be used as one of the floating weeks. Also events such as the Lord Birkett and Ulswater holiday week could be placed on the calendar, which are not specific open events, but which people may wish to travel to. Paul suggested that we continue to support the clubs such as Whitefriars, Manor Park, West Oxfordshire, where there are growing fleets to help the stability of the calendar. Simon puts his trust in Paul to put together the programme of events.

Any Other Business:

John proposed a vote of thanks to the committee and Lee thanked John for the polo shirts for the Nationals.

Simon thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 19.25.