

# Historic Narrow Boat Club



# newsletter

2015/4



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**FRONT COVER:** Boats gathered outside the former FMC warehouse in Nottingham

See page 26.

Photo: Vivienne Scragg

**BACK COVER:** Features the new HNBC publication



**Season's Greetings**  
**to all our Readers and a**  
**Good Road Ahead in 2016**



## FORE-END



Greetings once again from Beggarlee Wharf

As the Club's resources will be taken up planning and organising our Basingstoke Canal Gathering in August next year (have you booked in for our 50th Anniversary Gathering on the Basingstoke yet?) we would like to support the Easter Gathering at Ellesmere Port.

Then for 2017 your committee are considering having our biennial Easter Gathering possibly at Pelsall, but in any case somewhere on the BCN.

There is considerable concern among the membership about the neglected state of the Grand Union Canal. I've not been down there recently but I am told it is giving all the appearance of being derelict in the Marsworth area. See comments on page 32. Its not only us, I note that there is a long letter in *Navvies*, the WRG magazine, in a similar vein, lamenting the decrepit state of the Wolverhampton 21 among others. Morale of the staff on the ground would appear to be low.

Regarding advertising members' goods and chattels - or even boats! - for sale, I am very happy to do this free of charge as we advertise. BUT very few of you think to tell me if you have sold your whatever. In view of this I have adopted a policy of putting any ad in twice. So if you want it to remain in for longer or you don't want to be inundated with enquiries about an item you have already sold, you need to tell me - I'm not psychic, which is a pity really. :-)

As well as the two weddings reported on page 11, we extend congratulations and best wishes to Rosie Braine and Jim Taylor, and Mary Gibby and Janis Antonovics who married in June.

Errata: Caption to Weaver Collection No 48, page 24 in the last issue should read Lock No 6 Walsall Flight. It is not Walsall Bottom Lock. Lock 6 is the only one on the flight with double bottom gates. My fault, thanks to Chris Clegg for pointing this out. Sack the Editor!!

Felicitations of the coming season to you all, and I look forward to seeing many of you in November at Lapworth - see below

Val

**PRESS DATE for 2016/1 is 1st February 2016**

### **THE NOVEMBER SOCIAL MEETING 2015**

**is to be held at Lapworth Village Hall B94 6LD**

**on Saturday 28th November 2015 commencing at 2.00 pm**

**The guest speakers will be our members**

**Dr Della Sadler-Moore, Lorna York and Chris Jones**

**who will talk about the**

**Life of Sister Mary Ward - Nurse to the Boat People**

**They have recently launched their book about the life of Sister Mary**

**There may even be time for some films!**

Light refreshments will be served during the interval while you are all chatting and perusing the new delights that Clair has on the shop stand where

**THE NEW HNBC PUBLICATION WILL BE LAUNCHED**



## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES



**Phil Prettyman  
writes**

Plans for our 50th Anniversary Gathering on the Basingstoke Canal are now well advanced and the Town Council is keen to help. The date is confirmed as 6th and 7th August and the location is Brookhouse Common close to the centre of Woking.

I have been trying to establish the costs to members for attending this event as it involves three other navigation authorities in addition to CRT. It appears that a short transit licence is available on the Thames for a one way passage from Brentford to the River Wey for £10 and similarly the River Wey offers a transit licence to the Basingstoke Canal for £7. If members wish to explore these rivers further then the normal appropriate licences will apply and costs can be found on their web-sites. The Basingstoke Canal Authority have offered us a 50% discount on their normal rates and will charge £20 for boats attending the rally and £20 for each further week boats wish to cruise on the canal. Members will need to purchase the River licences themselves but the Basingstoke Canal licence will form part of the booking process through the Club - details of which will be announced later.

On a completely different matter, I have been disturbed to hear that we have lost at least one member due to their perception that, when cruising in their modern boat, they have been 'cold shouldered' by other members in historic boats. It is worth remembering that in the working days of the sixties and seventies boatmen were very often courteous and helpful to other boaters - a fact many of us greatly appreciated at the time. If we are to carry the influence and seek the improvements in the system that we want then we have to be seen to be positive and friendly at all times. This issue was reinforced by an incident coming back from Audlem this year. As we passed moored boats on our approach to a lock (at a speed that was not excessive) a boater shouted at us to slow down and added "you lot think you own the canal just because you have a big boat". I fear that this individual is not alone in holding this view!

And finally, I am standing for election to the CRT Council this month. Voting is open between 13th November and 11th December and can be accessed through the CRT website [canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk) and typing elections in the search box. If you wish the Club's voice to be formally heard on the council then please vote for me and get as many other boaters to vote for me as well. I am standing in the private boating category and can only be supported by people with a private boater's licence. If you hold another type of CRT licence or are a volunteer, you should vote in one of the other appropriate categories.

Phil

David Daines notes that the Byfleet Boating Club would like to offer some facilities to any boats visiting the River Wey on the way to or from the Basingstoke Gathering next year. Maybe a pre-gathering gathering, barbecue or just a safe place to moor.

The man to contact is Rodney Wardle Tel: 01932 346165 Mob: 07887 552922

### **MARINE ENGINE SERVICES LTD.**

Peter Thompson wishes to correct the announcement in the last edition which stated that Marine Engine Services had been taken over by Sue and Richard Powell of Primrose Engineering. In fact the sectors of the business covering Lister-Petter Spares, Engines and related items have been sold to Marine Engine Services (Midlands) which is run by Sue, with technical back-up by Peter. Other sectors including Isuzu, Canaline and Canalube Oils have been taken over by Uxbridge Boat Centre, contact details 01895-252019 & [ubc1976@outlook.com](mailto:ubc1976@outlook.com) For the meantime Peter is still running Marine Engine Services Ltd which remains in Uxbridge although the activities are now mainly with electrical items and installation components. He may be contacted on 01895-236246 or [peter@marineengine.co.uk](mailto:peter@marineengine.co.uk) for technical or other assistance.



## SECRETARY'S NOTES

from Paul Hunter



For many years the Club has provided a list of contact details of other members for other members' personal use. Initially this was distributed annually with the newsletter and latterly, partly due to a large increase in members and therefore sheets of paper needed to accommodate them, as a download in the Members' Area of the website.

Unfortunately, due to the provisions of the Data Protection Act and privacy and security concerns we are no longer able to do this. You can read the Club's privacy policy by logging on to the website - going to Members Pages, then Downloads where you will find our Guidance on Sharing Information document.

However, all is not lost! We will continue to publish a list online cross-referencing boats names with owner names and I am happy as Secretary to forward messages to other members on your behalf. Emails (providing the recipient has an account) can be forwarded free of charge but a stamp will be appreciated if forwarding a letter.

The Members Discount Scheme which I initiated a few years ago has proven a great success with some members saving many times their membership fee on insurance and chandlery alone. I'd like to extend the scheme and welcome any suggestions for suitable businesses to approach. Unfortunately I don't think I'd be able to arrange anything with Wetherspoons - I'd best not tell you whose suggestion that was!

### WATERWAYS CAMPAIGNER RECEIVES NATIONAL IWA AWARD

Our North East Rep. has had decades of campaigning for freight traffic on the waterways recognised by a national charity, The Inland Waterways Association. The award, which is presented to members of the Association whose efforts and support are considered to have brought significant benefit to the waterways over a sustained period of time, was presented to David Lowe recently at the Association's National AGM.

David has spent many years campaigning for the retention and promotion of freight traffic on the northern waterway network, and has himself operated many commercial boats over the years, including passenger boats, restaurant boats, hire boats and freight carrying craft. David currently advises the industry and navigation authorities about freight carriage and is particularly active in promoting proposals to explore potential market demand, looking at how and where water can offer some competitive advantage, and to modernise and present waterborne freight as a serious mode of transport.

Les Etheridge, National Chairman of the IWA said "In presenting this award we recognise David's many years of campaigning for freight traffic on the inland waterways"



David with his award at the IWA National AGM



*This article is taken from Lock and Quay, the house magazine of the Docks and Inland Waterways Executive, issue No. 2 - October 1949.*

## Lock and Quay Encounters No. 1 Sister Mary

A picturesque though practical personality of our inland waterways is Sister Mary Ward of Stoke Bruerne, Northamptonshire. She is consultant Sister to the boat people carrying traffic between London and Birmingham in the South Eastern Division. Her spotless surgery is a nine roomed house by the canal side, not far from Blisworth Tunnel, and incidentally is the house where she was born.

Her cheery, bronzed face, sparkling eyes and neat figure, with white flowing veil and scarlet cloak, are a welcome sight to any sick boater in need of medical or surgical attention.

Her present job started this way. After employment as a nurse for twenty years abroad, in France, Belgium, Switzerland, America and on the high seas, she returned to work in England. Later she was called home to nurse her father and it was during his illness that she began attending to the boat people. The happy association thus started with them led to the Grand Union Canal Company engaging her permanently.

Sister Mary considers that her canal work has been the most romantic part of her 41 years' nursing career. She has a deep affection for the boat people. "They are brave and loveable folk." she says "Unusual in their outlook on life, but when understood, loyal and true friends - it is a joy to serve them.

*This likeness appears to have been sketched by one Kathleen Shackleton in 1947*

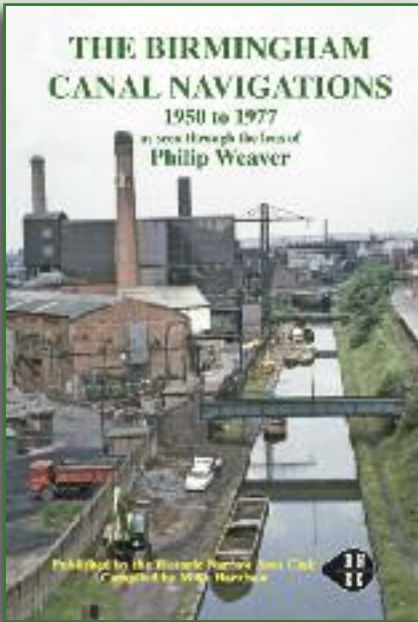
*I hope to be seeing many of you at our November meeting when we shall be hearing the full story of the career of Sister Mary.*

Val





## Recording the Decline of the BCN



The 3800 photographs and slides of the HNBC Weaver collection provide an invaluable record of the decline of Britain's canals after WWII. Mike Harrison has used 154 photos from this collection to tell the story of *The Birmingham Canal Navigations 1950-1977 as seen through the lens of Philip Weaver*. (ISBN 978-0-9927321-1-0)

The book is divided into 6 chapters, covering the New Main Line, the Old Main Line, the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal (including the Tame Valley Canal and the Birmingham part of the Grand Union), the Walsall Canals, the Dudley Canals and the Wyrley and Essington Canal. Each chapter starts with a map by Peter Oates that clearly shows the canal route and its associated branches. The location of each picture in that area is recorded on the map so that readers can quickly identify photographs of particular parts of the BCN. Because each chapter map and photographs have their own background colour, locating them on each map is very easy.

Tales are told in the form of a journey from the end of the canal nearest the centre of Birmingham. Each photograph has a caption which concisely describes its location and historical significance. In many cases there are sequences of photographs that show how a particular area changed over time. Of particular interest were the changes to the canal due to construction of the Galton Tunnel, the M5 and Spaghetti Junction. Here Philip Weaver was able to obtain access to sites not open to the public to take photographs of the impact of the development on the canal network.

As commercial use of the canals was rapidly declining in this period, only a few of the images include working boats, some horse drawn. There are a number of pictures showing derelict boats moored, or sunk, along the canal. Mike Harrison's detailed captions show which of these have been preserved.

Many of the photographs record parts of the network that are no longer accessible. This poignant reminder of our lost industrial heritage is, however, offset by those images which show how the state of some stretches has been improved by non-commercial use since the 1970s. This is particularly true of the pictures from the Dudley Canals.

Philip Weaver took special care to record the buildings associated with the canal, and particularly the stops, toll houses and lock keeper's cottages, many of which have since been demolished. Those interested in industrial archaeology will find the photos of former industrial sites and power stations of interest.

This book, modestly priced at £12, will make an ideal gift for any waterway enthusiast, and in itself would justify a visit to Lapworth for the November social meeting where it is to be launched. Alternatively you can order a copy from the Club shop at the cost of £13.50 including postage and packaging. Clair's contact details are inside the front cover.

Review by Martin Bryan. Friends of Gloucester Waterways Museum.

To be launched at the November Social Meeting at Lapworth  
November 28th - see you there.....Val





## 'Ow Things Was'.

By Blossom

A view of the canals, the cargoes and characters, as seen through the eyes of a young lad growing up in the Black Country and discovering the Birmingham Canal Navigations during the last decade of commercial carrying on this industrial and individual network.

Followed by a return four decades later.

The following chapters are dedicated to the memory of all those souls who scratched a living navigating the unique waterway systems of Britain.



### Chapter One. The Joys of Bonking!

Someone once said, "All actions are a direct re-action to other actions". Or if he didn't, perhaps he should have done, for as a result of several recent actions - one of moving house to a property with frontage on to the Trent & Mersey Canal in Rugeley, Staffordshire and a second, the appointment of a new member of staff at work who resides on what he calls a traditional style 60ft narrow boat. Both these actions combined have now resulted in a further re-action - that of being asked to write 'something' of interest. "But what?" I asked "You'll think of something Blossom" was the reply (more about Blossom later). But first a TEST-----

A test you must carry out, and one, which must be done under strict, Controlled Conditions --- Look deeply into your partners eyes (for those of you working boats single handed look into a mirror) and say out loud:

BONK -----BONK----- BONK-----BONK-----

BONK BONK BONK----- BONK

BONK BONK-----BONK BONK----- BONK-----BONK BONK BONK

Now wait for a reaction, long pause, if the result is "It's a bit early in the day, "or "what again?" or may be even "It's not Saturday is it?"-----Then do not bother reading any further, however, if the response is OK, yes very good, sounds like a 'Josher' or could be a 'Clayton's Tar boat' then read on. For you may possibly make some sense of what follows, even find interest, pleasure or even get a taste of my weird sense of humour---

#### Early Beginnings

I presume that as you are reading on, then you have recognised my attempt to reproduce that uneven but rhythmic beat of a Bolinder 'getting ahead'. As a child I was raised in a beautiful picturesque little hamlet at the heart of the Black Country called Tipton! Noted for being at the centre of our canal network in fact nicknamed the 'Venice of the Midlands'. Locals claiming that it had more miles of canal than its Italian twin. I don't know if this is true but what I do know is that even today it is impossible to get out of Tipton without going over or under a canal. Being surrounded as it is by the New and Old Main Lines and also the Gower Branch forming a square around Tipton, thus making it an island!

And so it was within this area that I first became absorbed into the world of canals living a matter of only 200 yards from the New Main Line and close to where a railway line looped round joining the LMS to the GWR. This created a long, amplifying bridge 'ole known as the "Sounding Bridge" from where the sound of Bolinders were easily heard even before the boat came into view. And so referring back to the Philosopher's view of 'action and re-action', it was only to be expected that it would not be long before canals had their effect or should I say re-action upon me...

'DUG A DUG'.

By eighteen months of age my favourite 'game' was playing with my favourite 'toy'--



a dugadug- "what's that?" I hear you ask. My mother used to occasionally get me a 'dugadug' from our local shop and weather permitting it would be positioned on our back yard, within earshot of the sounding bridge, and I would play for hours sitting in it mumbling "dugadug". The larger variety of 'dugadug' especially those advertising Omo soap powders or Craven A cigarettes were the best for creating my own 'virtual reality world'. If you now go back to the 'BONK' test but this time substituting the word DUGADUG without the gaps,

DUGADUGADUGADUG.....DUGADUGADUGADUG.

.....you might find a pretty good 'National' or 'Russell Newbury' twin cylinder and so to early beginnings. From this age to about eleven years of age contact with the canals was very limited apart from the occasional standing on turnover bridges with other young lads shouting "Gizza lift mate." Why we bothered I don't know, for the 'bargees' would not reply, not even raise their view to acknowledge our existence, just maintaining their 'ALL EYES AHEAD AND TRUST IN THE LORD' approach to 'driving the barge'.

However growing up at this time gave young lads a great opportunity to 'play' with the many sunken boats dotted around the BCN. Such as the two sunk in the basin next to Pudding Green junction or the old tar butty sunk in the disused arm just off the Gower Branch, this was one only for the big boys or the daring as it was quite a jump from the bank to reach its decked hold. It was in such places that gangs of lads would imagine they were either pirate boats or warships playing soldiers with one group being the 'Germans' and always losing of course.

There was another regular contact with the canal barges, or should I say the 'boat ossiz', for days would be spent armed with galvanized bucket and coal shovel collecting 'something for the rhubarb'. For even at this late stage (late fifties/early sixties) there was still lots of short haul traffic, mainly from the still thriving coal industry whose main motive power was still horses supplying the Power Generating Industry.

There were local power stations at Walsall, Ocker Hill and Wolverhampton, the latter known in the boating world as 'Ampton Light' which, when I first heard it referred to, I thought they were talking about a lighthouse in Wolverhampton for warning unwary boaters of hazards on the canal!!!! It was interesting that most boaters preferred horses for this type of work on the lock-strewn sections of the BCN, as unlike with tugs there was no need to double work the locks.

Eleven years of age was a very important stage in my life, things were to happen which would have a deep long term effect upon the rest of my life. I passed my eleven plus exam which meant I would be going to Tipton County Grammar School to further my education in such noble subjects as History, Geography and Latin? This was the high point in my parents life, I screamed for days and pleaded with them not to send me for what seemed to me two very justifiable reasons.....

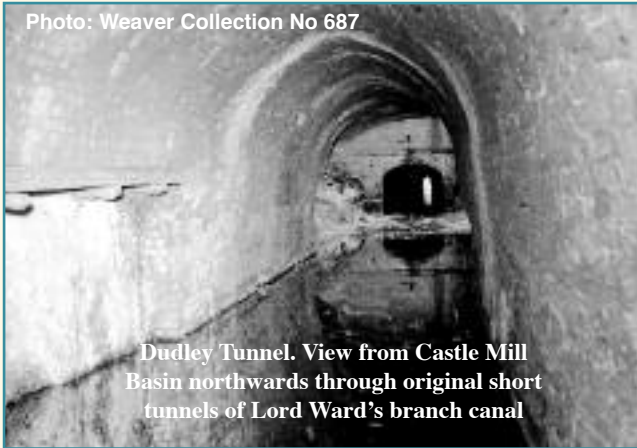
1... A Grammar school 'wimp' from Tipton was a target for every bullyboy to give you a good hiding for no reason

2... Every single friend I had was going to Park Lane, the 'tough guys' Secondary Modern-----so woe was me!!

In the first year at this school a field trip was arranged to assist students in their study of local history and geography. The trip was voluntary, paid for by parents and extra curriculum (which I found out meant in my own time!) and it consisted of a trip through Dudley Tunnel. Reluctantly I went along mumbling something like "OH THIS IS GOING TO BE REALLY EXCITING I DON'T THINK!" How wrong I was---I cannot even begin to describe the sheer thrill, excitement, interest, fear, and pure adrenaline rush. The experience left me a scarred man for even now, forty years later; I can still smell the dark damp tunnel air. Still hear the fading echoes" of voices singing "We're going through the tunnel, push boys push" and still feel the ache in my calf muscles from 'LEGGING'. For the next decade it was to be a two way trip every Saturday, a two way trip every Sunday and at least a one way trip of a weekday evening (as well as an empty return trip in the week to bring the boat back to Tipton).



Photo: Weaver Collection No 687



Dudley Tunnel. View from Castle Mill Basin northwards through original short tunnels of Lord Ward's branch canal

Something else that happened, (action -- reaction) was that I recognised the lad steering the 'barge' along the tunnel approach canal. He was a fifth former (16 years of age) from school by the name of Dave Apps. He not only had the 'all eyes ahead' look but also the style of dress I had seen many times before worn by the men working on the motorised 'barges' which were towing other 'barges', which up until now I had presumed that no doubt their

engines had broken down and were having to be towed! ----

The style of dress consisted of boots, bib and brace overalls, a wide leather belt decorated with brasses, and a 'lock key' tucked in the front. On his head was what I can only describe as a black peaked hat with the chin strap pulled tightly over the top of the hat pulling the sides down similar to those worn by German officers as seen in all the war films I had grown up on. It was several days later at school when I saw this lad and was able to question him about why he was there? what he was doing? and how could I get to have a go. He went on to explain about the Dudley Canal Tunnel Preservation Society (DCTPS) and their attempts to save the tunnel and canal from closure. The conversation ended with him saying "just turn up any Saturday morning and tell them you want to join and help crew the boat" and that was exactly what I did the very next Saturday. On arrival at Batson's wharf, the tunnel trip boat was tied up against the towpath and several bodies were busying themselves lighting tilley lamps and scooping water out of the hold with buckets. Upon asking who to see, I was directed to a large gent stood on the rear end of the barge. I later found out he was a rugby player and the 'canal manager' a fellow by the name of Derek Gittings. With introductions over, I was soon on the end of a long towline along with half a dozen others, pulling the barge up to the New Road bridge where we tied up ready for the trip party to turn up.

And so it started, I couldn't get enough of it --I scoured the local and school libraries looking for anything to do with canals---*Idle Women, Hold on a Minute, Narrow Boat, Rolt', 'Hadfield', etc, etc.* Spent all my spare time either as 'crew' for DCTPS or exploring the BCN by bicycle especially at those points where Boats were working, loading or unloading, etc. I soon became such a common site at 'Factory Three', 'Brades', 'The Graysey Ate', etc., that several of the local boatmen (not bargees!) began speaking "ow do" and no more, or even sometimes letting me open or close gates or help bowhaul loaded 'Joey' boats through.

My school days now had purpose, for my journey to school consisted of a half-hour bike ride along the towpath. Gradually as I began to know more and more of the local boaters I spent less and less time actually in school, for it got that as I cycled along if I met a boater that I knew then it meant no school that day! For I would cycle to the next bridge where the bike would be thrown on board and a days boating would be the order of the day. So as a result of those chance actions and reactions I was given the unique opportunity to sample just a taste of proper boating in the last twilight decade of trade on the BCN.

Perhaps in the following chapters I may react further and tell you some more of the Boats, Boaters, Company's, Cargos and 'Cockups' but till then -----

"DON'T BANG 'EM ABOUT"

BLOSSOM



## Stoke Bruerne, Village at War 1940 (2015)

From our War Correspondent David Daines

Another year at war in the village at Stoke Bruerne, and despite all the successes the wireless and the papers keep telling us of, the end of the conflict seems as far off as ever it was. Strange too that the personnel around the place at the gathering a few week-ends ago just don't appear to be any older! It must be a delusion brought on by the short rations we are all living on.



The War Cabinet Confers

Photos: Sue Daines



Perch arrives

As in previous years there were numbers of very shady characters nearby selling black market goods, I clearly saw many people devouring meaty goods that must have been 'Black Market'. (Very tasty they were too) Somehow a gathering of boat people managed again to be 'stopped up' with their craft, in order to take advantage of the apparent abundance of scarce food, to supplement their meagre rations. Amongst those observed 'Taking Advantage' were:- **Corona, Cyprus, Dodona, Dove, Flamingo, Perch, Seal, Sculptor, Sickle, Stanton, Trout, Victoria and William.**

HRH King George VI graciously paid a visit to the event, which was opened by the Right Honourable Mr Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister, attended by General Montgomery. Allied aircraft were seen keeping our skies clear of the enemy and Mr George Formby and Miss Lola Lamour kept us all cheerful and singing along.

Once more then, the message from Stoke Bruerne is, "Be like Dad, keep Mum", "We're all Tickyety-boo", "TTFN".

### Response to Mystery Pics

Chris Clegg writes:

Thanks for the new issue of the newsletter. I had a bit of luck with the mystery pics. I was looking through *West Midland Canals through Time* by Ray Shill, and on page 58 is a photo identified as RCHS Hugh Compton collection 65991; Birmingham Library Archives 824801. The location is Hanbury Wharf, Worcs & Birmingham Canal (the arm away from the main line) and it seems to fit Weaver Collection 1245. Then I looked through companion volume *Wilts & Berks through Time*, and a photo of the lock cottage at Crosslanes Lock on the North Wilts Canal seems to fit Weaver Collection 1944. The house is partly visible on Google Earth and, although altered, does seem to fit.

*What's happened to the rest of you experts? Only one response - I am disappointed!*



## Weddings of the Year

Photos: Teresa Fuller



### Rebekah and Matthew

A childhood love of historic boats led to true love for Rebekah Fuller and Matt Parrott, who celebrated their wedding in September.

After the ceremony at Christ Church in Stone, the



reception was held at Goldstone Hall Hotel, which is a short walk from the Shroppie, near Market Drayton.

The following morning there was frantic activity on Goldstone Wharf as friends and family decorated their joshier, **The King**, to surprise the newlyweds. The engine was started with a shower of confetti as they stepped aboard **The King** to lead a procession of boats old and new to The Anchor Inn at High Offley. Historic boats in the convoy were **Clematis**, **Ibex**, **Stafford**, **Stamford**, **Thea**, **Spey**, **Elizabeth**, **Beatty**, **Sweden**, and **Widgeon**, together with **Staverton** and **Cutter**. More friends arrived by car to enjoy real ale and fabulous refreshments supplied by Andrew and Elisabeth Watts, including Liz's legendary cakes, with profits going to the Etruria Boat Group. **Empress** and **Victoria** joined revellers at the pub, as the music and celebrations went on into the night. All agreed that it had been a canal wedding to remember.

### Mavis and John



Not wanting a fuss on the day, John Blunn and Mavis Waldron (**The North**) married quietly on August 14th in Tipton.

The absence of fuss was rectified in a celebration at Alvecote, where they provided boating friends with cake and an excuse - as if one were needed - to raise a glass to them.

The Club wishes them every happiness, full pounds, greasy paddles and a good road for the future





## The Do at the Black Country Living Museum

26-27 October

Our roving reporter Ray Butler sends some random thoughts:



Photo: Nick Wolfe

### Ladies of the HNBC plot revenge on Bill Walker!!

L-R: Allyson Jarvis (*Birmingham*), Heidi Yardley (*Bittell*), Teresa Fuller (*Clematis*), Jo Taylor (*Widgeon*), Andrea Hoyle (*Dove*), Kirsty Marshall (*Viceroy*), Maggie Young, (guest on *Aldegate*) Charlotte Seabrook (*Spey*).

It being an odd-numbered year, the Black Country Living Museum hosted the customary Working Boat Gathering. The sun shone on the righteous (and the rest of us), the crowds came in such droves both chip shops operated, and of course the crews joined in the spirit of the event, dressing in more or less appropriate costume for the age of their boats (Your correspondent was dressed as an authentic 1960s scruff-bag). Some of the ladies of the HNBC even sported visible ankles.

*Peacock* returned in some triumph from a docking and repaint on the Sunday, looking splendid in fresh FMC black & white - John Hemelryk would, I'm sure, have approved. Saturday was enlivened by a Bolinder duet between *Stour* and *Spey*, the engines beating together in counter-rhythms reminiscent of modern Jazz (More Bop-Bop then Be-Bop though).

The excellent Dr Busker entertained heroically with a repertoire from the sacred to the profane, covering all points between. He played round the site all Saturday afternoon, performed on the piano in the back room of the Pub until we were all thrown out, leading an informal session in the pub yard after (You haven't lived until you've seen the 1812 Overture played on the Piano Accordion with Blossom Edge providing the cannon effects with dustbin lids) then playing the organ in the Chapel on the Sunday morning.

All agreed that it had been the best BCLM event for many years, and huge thanks go to the Museum for their hospitality and to Steve Bingham & team for the organisation on the day.

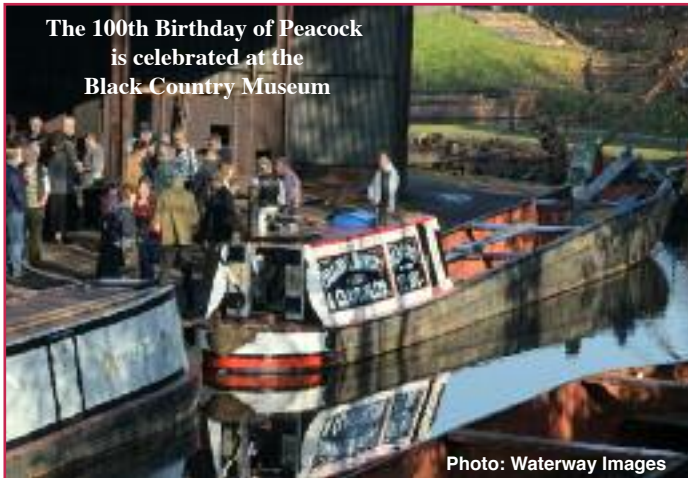
Boats visiting were:

*Aldgate, Atlas & Malus, Bellatrix, Bittell, Birmingham, Cassiopeia, Clematis, Clover* (loaded), *Corona, Coventry, Darley, Dove, Enterprise No.1, Governor, Jake, Lindsay, Marquis, Nansen, Nuneaton & Brighton, Owl, Peacock, Perch, President, Sagitta, Saltaire, Scarpio & Leo, Seal, Spey, Stour, Swallow, Swan, Stafford, Tardebigge, Trent 5, Viceroy, Victoria, Whitby, Widgeon* and the usual supporting cast of day boats.



## Narrow boat *Peacock* at 100 years old, and the John Hemelryk Award

by Irene de Boo, Curator, Transport and Industry, Black Country Living Museum



*Peacock* was built at the Birmingham Saltley boat dock of Fellows, Morton and Clayton and was registered on 2nd November 1915. The registration documents show she was built as a fly boat, working day and night carrying general goods, crewed by four men working in shifts. *Peacock* worked with FMC's northern fleet until nationalisation in 1948 and in 1952

British Waterways sold *Peacock* to John Hemelryk.

John Hemelryk looked after *Peacock* for over 40 years and repaired and maintained the boat to a very high standard without converting it. This was exceptional as in the 1960s and 1970s, boats were either scrapped or converted into leisure craft. As a result, *Peacock* is still close to its original form. The inside woodwork of the cabin is original and dates back to the early FMC years and the Bolinder engine - still in full working order - is also an early engine (c. 1935) installed by FMC.

John Hemelryk's novel approach to keeping a narrow boat, remaining close to its original design while at the same time maintaining it to a high standard, inspired many early historic narrow boat enthusiasts. The Historic Narrow Boat Club (established 1966) therefore created the John Hemelryk award for metal and composite boats in recognition of restoration efforts.

*Peacock* was in Hemelryk's possession until 1993 and was then sold to Birmingham Museums (Science Museum). As part of the sale, it was stipulated that the boat was to be displayed in the water and Birmingham Museums moored the boat in the Birmingham & Fazeley canal adjacent to the museum. From a large window in the museum the boat could be seen. When the Science Museum (Newhall Street) closed and collections moved to the ThinkTank, a canal location was no longer available and *Peacock* found alternative an mooring at the Black Country Living Museum.

Recent maintenance work (June/Sept 2015) consisted of repair to the gunnels; on portside the gunnel had rotted to such an extent that it needed to be part replaced, while on the starboard it required repair of bolt holes and shakes. The pigeon box, engine slide and cabin slide were repaired and cabin doors re-fixed. This work was completed by Rex Wain (Brinklow Boatyard). Paintwork was undertaken by Steve Priest, who stripped the paint from the external cabin and engine room and back deck. All was then sanded down and a protective paint film was built up using an epoxy primer, followed by conventional undercoat and finished in the FMC early colour scheme of black, white, red and red oxide. The work was paid for by Birmingham Museums, with financial assistance from PRISM and National Historic Ships.

Due to limited funding available, the brief did not include sign writing of cabin and engine room. This meant that the boat would return to the Black Country Living Museum without her Fellows, Morton & Clayton livery and thus would look unfinished. The lack of sign-writing



was much discussed among boat enthusiasts and the general feeling was that this should be avoided. After all, **Peacock** was once owned by John Hemelryk, who maintained her so well. As a result, several boat enthusiasts came together and paid privately for the sign writing which was beautifully executed by David Moore.

**Peacock** returned from Brinklow to BCLM under her own power; the original 1935 Bolinder running perfectly. Before setting off from Brinklow, James Booth - boater and Bolinder enthusiast, inspected the engine thoroughly, repaired parts and applied lots of TLC and oil. James and wife Amanda delivered **Peacock** safely to the Museum on Sunday 27th September during the BCLM boaters' gathering.

**Peacock** is now looking very well, however - as with all boats - maintenance will need to be ongoing. Further painting is required and funding will need to be raised for new bottom shutts, stands, planks and a top cloth. Most importantly, she will need to be lifted out of the water to check the bottom, most likely followed by some repair, caulking and blacking. Any contributions to this continuing work will be gratefully received, contact Irene de Boo or Bernard Hales.

Most of all she needs to be used, so expect to see **Peacock** on the local canal network in 2016.



Rex Wain and Irene de Boo display the 100th Birthday cake on the counter of **Peacock**

Photo: Waterway Images

### On the Cut

In 1985, BBC local radio broadcast a series called On The Cut, produced by Arthur Wood of BBC Radio Stoke, and featuring extracts from interviews with canal people from all over the country, remembering their experience of life working on the canals earlier in the 20th century. Such was the interest that the series was released on cassette tape soon after, and was even briefly available online on Radio Stoke's website a few years ago.

The family of the late Arthur Wood believe they have recently discovered over 70 of the original interview tapes from which the broadcast series was created, amongst a large collection of tapes of his Radio Stoke programmes from the 1970s and 80s.

A team are about to bid for funding for a project, Revealing Voices, to digitise and catalogue this extraordinary audio collection, and make it available for the public to hear. While most of the collection will be of relevance to Radio Stoke's North Staffordshire locality, the On The Cut interviews are likely to attract attention further afield. The team are keen to gauge just what interest there might be in these recordings. Not only will it strengthen their funding bid to be able to demonstrate evidence of interest, but it will also help them develop appropriate community engagement opportunities in response to people's appetite for the material.

If you would be interested in:

- hearing the On The Cut original unedited interviews (eventually!)
- getting involved with the project to listen to and catalogue the recordings
- suggesting links with other canal related projects or events
- receiving updates on how the "Revealing Voices" project progresses

**then please contact Jane Wood at: [jane@revealing-voices.org.uk](mailto:jane@revealing-voices.org.uk)**





## Celebrations at Hillmorton



Report and pictures from Ian Lauder

Saturday 15th August 2015 was the 175th Anniversary of Hillmorton Duplicate Locks and the 225th year of the Oxford Canal. In glorious weather local canal heritage group Old Mortonians launched their free community canal experience event named **DUPLICITY** featuring the many ways that people enjoy the canals. The event was free to the public thanks to a BIG lottery fund award and sponsorship from Urban & Civic plc. A packed programme started at 9.30am with a 7 mile ramble.

Duplicate steam-boats *Swallow* and *Laplander* (the only boat still afloat that passed through the duplicate locks when they opened in 1840) brought The Worshipful Mayor of Rugby, Councillor Richard Dodd to meet a local resident who uses the canal more than any other, Mrs Grace Shaw, celebrating her 90th birthday. As they jointly opened the show, steam-whistles, boat-hooters and Klaxons blasted. Bell ringers of St Johns Church (heard by the Navvies digging the canal when it first reached Morton in 1774) rang out a recital as Duplicate Vicars, Reverends Margaret Simmons, and Steve Gold, Blessed the Locks. Canal & River Trust Chief Executive Richard Parry graced the show and spoke some encouraging words to the crowd.

Non-stop entertainment was started by Hillmorton Community Choir singing canal shanties as Rugby Sea Cadets took to the canal in their Kayaks. The local fire brigade showed off their engine and advised on boat safety. Old Mortonians' members gave out bird-watching and duck-feeding advice to help families discover wildlife on the towing path. Music continued with Amie's Belladors and Tom Millett singing his Rat Pack Collection.



A variety of classic cars were augmented by a steam-car and a traction engine model giving rides to the public. Canal horse expert Kez Dainty demonstrated repairing historic tack for the full size replica canal horse entrusted to us by Stoke Bruerne Museum for refurbishment. Dunchurch Photographic Club put on a fine display and hosted a National Historic Ships photo competition. The Salvation Army Band played a medley of tunes, well known by the decade's canal boat community that they served so well, followed by songs from The Choral Belles, as



the steam boats performed again.

Families experienced 1930s working boat life by going aboard 2 historic boats moored outside canalchef café: Canal & River Trust Heritage Working Boats Group's **Swift** which also hosted the Handbell Recital players in its hold and Friends of Raymond's butty **Raymond**. Moored nearby was their motor **Nutfield** with the shortened Northwich **Purton** plus **Corona** and **Panther** with 1936 built boats **Slough, Badsey, Angel** and **Aldgate**. The most popular of the trading boats was *Sanity* The Fudge Boat.

DUPLICITY real ale specially brewed for the occasion by Church End Brewery was served in the canalchef café bar with a special Duplicity menu whilst outside Farriers Fayre offered their excellent food. In the marquee was a canalside development exhibition by event sponsors, Urban & Civic plc followed in the evening by a sell-out performance by the ever popular canal-based Mikron Theatre back at Hillmorton for the 7th time who gave an acting workshop and then performed *One of Each* - a saga of Fish & Chips. Finale to a great day was when the public joined with the boaters to great music of the 60s to noughties plus a little blues, from the band called *Banned*, who also arrived on a canal boat.

Old Mortonians Chairman, Ian Lauder said "It's been a great day - thanks go to the team, the majority of whom are volunteer lock-keepers, who spent a year organising it and of course, the BIG Lottery Fund and sponsors Radio Station Rugby. We are delighted that the excellent St John Ambulance crew had nothing to do but enjoy the event. We would definitely like to repeat it for the Hillmorton Duplicate Locks 200th Anniversary".

## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S NOTES

from Sarah Edgson



The committee is pleased to welcome the following new members to the Club:

Lee Wilshire and Natalie Simmons	<b>Barnet</b>	1801
Hugh Potter	<b>Birdswood</b>	1804
Graham and Paula Fuller	<i>Foxdale</i>	1805
Colin Bigmore	<i>Arabia</i>	1806
Martyn Webster	<i>n/a</i>	1807
Steve and Jane Beckett	<b>Greenlaw</b>	1808
Devon Shepherd	<i>William's Wish</i>	1809
Castle Quay Boats	<b>Vienna/Verbena</b>	1810

Club members can now use the website to view their membership information, update their contact details or renew at any time, as well as viewing the extra content pages that non-members cannot access. To date 121 members have requested a login for the website but in the past 3 months only 38 members have logged into the site. We prefer you to use the website to keep your details up to date and to renew your membership, as this is much easier for us than receiving updates by post or email. Renewals can be paid online using any credit or debit card. If you would like a login for the website send us a message via the online form at:

<http://hnbc.org.uk/contact>



## All Our Yesterdays



Here is the third in this new series

Mike Harrison has passed me this photo. It features his then boat **Colonel** (at that time she was known as **Mercury** - Ernie Thomas had changed the name when it was in his ownership) at the re-opening of Langley Bridge Lock on the Cromford Canal and the Great Northern Basin on the Nottingham Canal, in 1973.

This was before Mike and I became an item. I was rally secretary and had asked him if we could use his boat for the opening ceremony, it having a suitable long foredeck.

It was also well before anyone had thought of Health and Safety!

Come the day, the Long Eaton brass band was duly loaded on, some in the foredeck, more on the roof and the big drum in the galley - this somewhat to the consternation of Mrs Harrison, Mike's mother, who was inside and being deafened.

You will have registered by now that the boat was well down by the head, no fanhold, no chance of stopping! Mike entered the lock, very slowly and whistled along until coming to a stop with a gentle 'tonk' at the top cill when the band missed a beat as they lurched forward.

A rather younger Mike is at the tiller wearing a red shirt and a bowler hat, which didn't fit.

It was a great occasion and all went well. Surprisingly no one fell in!



**Know Your Committee**  
Membership Secretary and  
West Midlands Area rep.  
**Sarah Edgson**

In May last year the committee invited me to become the West Midlands Area Rep, a role which I was pleased to accept. It is an area which I have been brought up in and know reasonably well. I am deeply passionate about the Birmingham Canal Navigations, especially the northern BCN. Subsequently I also took on the role of Membership Secretary earlier this year.

Val has asked me to write a little about myself and I have been avoiding writing this article for months as it doesn't come too easily to me, so I hope I don't bore you too much.

Narrow boats and Canals are something that have always been a part of my life. In 1986 (when I was just a baby) my father Graham took over Norton Canes Docks on the Cannock Extension Canal at the current Northerly limit of the BCN, forming Norton Canes Boatbuilders. He took over the docks and the boatbuilding business from Malcolm Braine, who he had worked for, for many years. Malcolm had been producing fine looking craft and restoring historic narrow boats at Norton Canes since 1966 and Dad has continued the unbroken tradition of canal boat building on the site originally occupied by Yates Bros. since 1846.

I have many happy memories as a young child at 'The Yard'. Until 2000 and the

acquisition of a crane, each new build and rebuild (over 75 of them at that point) were launched by side slipping the completed shell into the canal. This was always quite a spectacle and the owners of the boats often brought along drinks, nibbles and cake to make even more of the occasion. These events were something that fascinated me and I always wanted to be in the thick of the action. Dad would often let me sit on his lap whilst he used his bright orange tractor to give the boat a nudge into the canal.

I would say that my first real introduction to the cut would have been at the yard at the age of three, when I fell in! My Dad decided to take me to the boatyard one day and I walked off the edge of the floating dock, straight into the canal. He tells me that he asked me not to tell my Nan about the incident, you can guess what I did next...told my Nan!

Our family have owned a number of boats over the years, but the one boat I have fondest memories of is a boat that Dad built called *The Prospect of Birmingham* or *The Trip Boat* as we all affectionately called it. The Trip Boat as you may have guessed was a passenger boat that was operated in Birmingham, we often used it for family occasions, filling the boat with family and friends in the large open social area. Thinking back it was an absolutely wonderful boat for us as children to go boating on. Of course, I was always keen to steer the boat. Dad used to stand me on the water can so I could see over the cabin top to steer. Interestingly the boat is now owned by the Pirate Castle in Camden Town and is named *The Pirate Viscount*.



**This is a picture of Sarah sitting on her father's lap in the cab of the machine which is nudging the boat along!**



It's lovely to see the boat when I am boating down in London, it always brings back great memories of those days.

At the age of 8 we moved to a house with a mooring next to the Wyrley and Essington Canal. Although the canal is little used, I always jumped up to look out of the window every time a boat came past. The BCN 24 hour challenge has always been a favourite event of mine and I used to spend many hours sitting in the garden waiting for boats to pass always hoping that one day I would be able to take part. I was delighted when the BCNS decided to re-launch the event and in 2014 and 2015 I was lucky enough to be part of the winning crew.

After the *The Prospect of Birmingham* we had a boat called *Tilbury*, which was the first boat that Dad built as Norton Canes Boatbuilders. It was a traditional boat with a back cabin and engine room and powered by a Kelvin J2. Probably my favourite place that we visited with *Tilbury* was York, I haven't been back since, but it's somewhere I would love to visit again by boat.

We then had *Resolute*, a boat which Dad co-owns with signwriter Dave Moore. *Resolute* is a Tug style boat that was built as a company demonstrator. Again it's a traditional boat, with a back cabin and engine room; and powered by a Kelvin J3. Interestingly, *Resolute* was the last boat to be side slipped at Norton Canes in 2000. I quickly claimed *Resolute's* back cabin as my own and as a teenager it was great to have my own space and I really enjoyed spending time in there, not that it had anything to do with the warmth from the Epping and the Playstation that I put in the table cupboard...

In 2009 I had the opportunity to buy *Vienna*. I had initially wanted to buy a motor, but *Vienna* was in generally sound condition and needed just cosmetic works. The deal was right and I purchased *Vienna*. We had a great trip towing *Vienna* back to Norton Canes from Northwich with *Resolute*. *Vienna* was a great boat, but I decided that I still wanted a motor, so took the difficult decision to sell her. I then found out that British Waterways were disposing of a number of their



Sarah steering  
*Lamprey* and *Vienna*  
at Braunston

work boats and put in a bid to buy *Ling*, a boat that I had always admired. My tender was successful and in 2010 I purchased *Ling*. I had great fun boating on *Ling*, she was a great boat to steer, I had intended to

undertake a full restoration but in 2012 the opportunity arose to purchase *Lamprey*, which has always been one of my favourite boats and it was an opportunity that I could not resist, so *Ling* was sold to help fund the purchase of *Lamprey*. *Lamprey* is now at Norton Canes and we are undertaking a considerable amount of restoration work.

Earlier this year the chance to take on Glascote Basin on the Coventry Canal came up. This was an opportunity that I grasped with both hands, giving up my job in marketing to take on the yard. I am now working hard to get the yard back up and running again, but I am thoroughly enjoying the challenge.



## Memories of an Idle Woman Jean Peters

### Part 4



Photo: Mike Constable

The height of the funnel was like nothing I had ever seen. A shining funnel of brick with a tiny brilliant patch of light at the top. The boats went technicolor as they passed through the daylight; and I was ever after glad that I looked then and my curiosity was settled, because I was blinded for about five minutes and that would have been difficult if I had been steering! There are seven airshafts in two miles of tunnel and it takes forty-five minutes to traverse. We looked back; the entrance to the tunnel was a tiny arc, an intense little picture that looked as if it had been taken with a sepia film. Gradually it lessened to a speck and vanished. Nothing but our swinging arcs of light and the roaring engine echoing from the shining walls. A tiny orange dot appeared in the distance, "Boats" said Kit "But they are a long way off yet." For sometime they stayed at the same size and then suddenly seemed to grow. Kay slows down to a crawl and bumps along the wall, I notice her chimney lays flat on her cabin roof and the water can is in the centre. Suddenly a counter throb fills the air; and the cratch and bows of the approaching boat slides into view past the motor, headlamp flaming. They have no electricity and are using the big heavy paraffin lamp supplied by the company. Kit steers her booty bows into the wall as they tend to be drawn towards the motor wash. The man on the motor visible for a moment against the light of his booty - shouts at Kit and we shout back that we have just left one ready. The engines roar again and soon we see another growing picture at the other end of the tunnel, just as it becomes appreciably larger and the colours become less intense, two tiny boats swim into view and like a silent picture we watch their silhouettes enter the tunnel and their tiny orange light slide towards us. The same procedure for passing; we suddenly find ourselves gliding into the light and the engine goes small and thin. Kay turns round and waves cheerfully; We switch our lights out and stretch realising with a shiver just how cold it had been. I take the booty off Kit. Miranda comes over to demand a needle; she has unwrapped the bandages and discovered the splinter still intact.

Buckby with its seven deep heavy locks and its series of friendly lock keepers. A good looking chap at the bottom has a scarf of red and purple silk that I envy, he walks between the locks talking earnestly to Kit. Norton Junction at the top and another Cut shop attached to a pub. We are gauged at the Norton fork and there are letters. Many for Kay and some from Jerome, she is pleased and radiant. Miranda has airmail from her husband in Italy and reads them steering the motor. There are some for me from home and one of all the tragedies slips out of my fingers and into the water, so near and yet so far, it slides past the booty and Kit grabs but its hopeless and I feel as if a major tragedy has occurred. Through Braunston tunnel, this has waves in the walls at one end, which makes for tricky steering. Down Braunston locks - the Oxford Canal a sharp turn to the left - devil of a turn I decided too late, hitting it with an almighty crash and seeing Kit's furious face!

The booty slaps the motor in the rear and we ricochet round uncomfortably, me having a nasty time trying to stop the short straps getting into the motor blades. On round ghastly bends, we get stuck more than once and have to shaft our heavily loaded boats off the mud. A backbreaking job, not to mention carrying a fourteen foot shaft down the sheeted top planks. I spent a lot of time with my heart in my mouth. Eventually we reach a very sharp bend where we leave the Oxford Canal for the Birmingham stretch. Itchington, Radford, Warwick, Hatton, the new locks. Built on an entirely new pattern and very quick filling, but with paddles covered in and exceptionally hard to lift. Also one had to watch anxiously at a small gap in their steel hat for a bronze ring to appear before one can be certain that they have dropped. That means running



round a lock every time to drop the damn things as one cannot see them. The gates are exceptionally heavy and by a system of wires, two open at once. (*I've never heard of this before...Ed*) Everything about them is white concrete or is painted white and one needs an enormous windlass. I take a firm dislike to them, which I never lose.

There is wild scrubland bordering the canal and a lot of sheep. In the distance the slagheaps of the mines rise skywards, a soft pink or a slate grey. Everything seems gold, white and blue. The locks are white with touches of black - the sky a vivid blue - the grass a dry rustling yellow by the lock sides and on the canal banks. The canal is extremely muddy and we crawl along churning up black sludge. North Country lock keepers now, taciturn mostly; down Itchington and Radford - Gawd help us. Long pound through Leamington Spa. It started to rain that morning and it rained solidly till eleven, when it drizzled and then cleared up. I went shopping and did a hair raising thing getting Kit's bike off the motor as we went through a bridge. This was Leamington Spa. I had always imagined a place of great beauty. The canal entrance is one of the most ugly and slurry possible, the squalor is revolting. Tiny houses below the level of the canal, filthy and ugly. Dirty children crawling and paddling in the mud on its banks. Corpses of small drowned things float past bloated and revolting. Railway lines overhead, a great tangle of sheds, where filthy and degenerate looking men and youths seem to be doing something with scrap metal. We pass an enormous gasworks where Italian prisoners and English workmen wave and yell indiscriminately, we wave back and go even slower - the mud being unbearable hereabouts. The towpath is worse - I got my shopping and heavily and unevenly balanced tore after the boats, tangled in my mac on that high Victorian sit up and beg bike. I wavered under narrow bridges, splashed through puddles and swept round hair raising holes in the path for two miles, the rain getting into every crack, my greasy hair plastered across my brow and my seat in an unbearably tender state! I eventually caught up with them at the next locks when they callously enquired "Why the hell were you so long?"

Words were beyond me and anyway we were about to be precipitated up Hatton's twenty-one consecutive locks so I ignored it. We ate a hasty meal and thereon went into a "Hatton coma". There is a rhythm about locks if you go on long enough, that one can't help in the course of twenty-one. You go singly up the first ten, and breasted up the 'thick uns' where lock follows lock almost at once. There is a pause near the top for oiling at Hatton works and we breathed deeply and wearily. At the lower half of Hatton, the canal runs past a vast lunatic asylum; but I can honestly say I simply didn't notice it that first trip. Behind you the view is glorious out over Warwick to a blue distance. Looking down, over the black and white locks and the burnt yellow grass, dark pines away to the left stretching away to the distance. It is very beautiful. Up the last five; we breasted again; then a three-hour pound to the 'Black Boy' where we were to tie for the night.

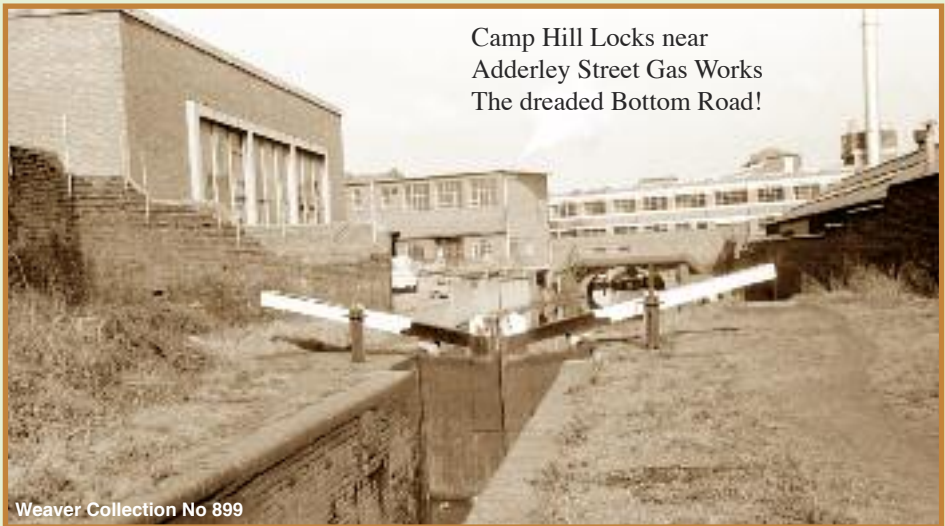
Anything after Hatton is a rest. We bought vegetables from the last lock keeper, bade him farewell and equipped with mugs of tea and bread and jam sailed off. Next day was Saturday, we came into Birmingham through woodlands after completing Knowle, the five heaviest locks on the Cut. The tall trees arched over the Cut in a stately green tunnel and we drifted through a green world. There are stretches of suburban houses but it's mostly trees till you suddenly swing under a bridge and there is the entrance to Tyseley Dock. A long straight wharf flanked by queues of boats loading and unloading, waiting or tipping under the cranes. To the right a muddy towpath, a corrugated iron fence and a factory, one can hear rather than see with a constant whirring and jarring series of sounds. There is much shouting, lorries backing, picking up steel in great stacks - stacks of aluminium and lead, the first silver the second a dull pink and the steel a dark orange with rust. The lorries take the steel off the dumps and the cranes pile it on from the boats. It is a hive of ceaseless activity and noise.

We were to be unloaded almost at once. The drizzling rain had started again - we reversed the process of our sheeting up at very great speed. Then as one boat was unloaded, we changed them over and swept the first clean. We got hot and wet with the rain and were



tired and irritable. The dockers here were more friendly and Kit went off to report our arrival with a cheery arm round her waist. In the afternoon boats were cleaned and tied up. We went into Birmingham, where there were wonderful Public Baths, very Victorian. You each had a cubicle, with a bench to put your clothes on and a huge white enamel bath. You filled it from the taps, hot and lovely, pure bliss, if the water began to cool, you shouted "Hot water for number four!" and a lady would bring an enamel jug full of hot water to top you up! We went to town after and saw Bing Crosby in a film about a priest. We sat in a packed cinema feeling clean, well washed and comparatively tidy, what a relief!

Sunday, we laid in late, and moved to Camp Hill late in the evening. Camp Hill is the top of the Bottom Road. Kay and I ate a large supper and had our first real heart to heart. Funnily enough on the subject of "Lesbians" a book Kay had recently read. It being the first time I had ever heard of them. I was very interested and curious and decided "there are more things in heaven and earth"! Next morning we woke to a driving cold wind, a low grey sky and rain spattering in the air. Kay went off lock wheeling. Single locks these; the motor goes down all six alone and waits for the butty at the bottom. The lock wheeler has a ghastly time, lock wheeling



for both boats, dashing about like an agitated wasp. The butty is towed by hand with a long cotton line attached to the mast and behaves like a young and unmanageable whale, which is very much what she looks like! Just as the butty was ready to enter the lock we observed a barge coming up, escorted by a crew of little old men in coats green with age and fantastic hats. "Dickens" they looked indeed - we gave them precedence. Get over to windward Missy we're pretty high!" shouted one and they all laughed heartily. We did, but only as the most ghastly stench filled the air - the boat rose slowly to the surface of the lock and was observed to be filled with entrails and bones! "Proper bad it took your young lady down there" chuckled another, "Fair turned 'er stomach it did" "H'up there"! and the decayed and ancient horse moved sadly on - the boat whistling off in fine fettle! Knowing Kay's tender heart where animals were concerned I could imagine her reaction. Poor Kay. We were glad to pull the butty after that and away we went into the blackest of Birmingham foundry districts.

The filthy smoke, the rain, the heavy pulling, the strange stunted creatures on the coal boats coming up. Whether they were young or old it was hard to tell. The roaring foundry entrances looking like entrances to hell. Tiny dark figures, against the light. The friendliness of people as filthy as their surroundings. The pall of yellow smoke like a mushroom over everything





and the chimneys of the Black Country. "Its impossible" I thought as we tramped bent double, the booty swinging to our steps and the rain trickling through the coal on our faces. "It isn't human" - the oil on the water, more tins and corpses, a deserted boat in a lock, half sunk, just dumped there. Coal boats just lie about there and drift halfway across the Cut till one's motor swings them right across and no one appears to own them or care. The oldness of everyone even the young was the worst thing and their thinness and obvious hunger, the scrawny horses plodding lifelessly. Kay's remark that morning was so apt. "Today is going to be so awful, it just isn't possible!" We went down Saltley, another six locks. Round a bend where you shaft like hell to get round and on - miles of railway lines, mud, rain, low bridges, echoing tunnels and slums.

Our cabin was hopeless, the stove was out, the floor was a pool and the head of Kay's bed was soaked. We mopped it up and made belated cocoa that was very good. We contemplated the fire, we had tried to light the fire on Sunday and had had a grim time as it smoked like hell. Kay had retired to the hatches in oilskins and pyjamas and streaming rain in order to breathe, while I lay on the floor proving the point about the regulation three inches! More locks and mud. The "Bottom Road", Camp Hill to Coventry is poorly dredged, empty boats having no weight to slide them into the shallow centre channel stick like blazes the moment they get off course. So we stuck and we shafted and we stuck again time after time, Kit dancing with rage. Kay and I gazed at a young bull on the towpath. "Christ I hope we don't stick here" and did promptly. The bull remained neutral and unmoved though we were so truly into the bank, that Kay had to leap off and push from there in imminent danger of not being able to get back in a hurry. More booty pulling down Curdworth, eleven strung out locks. Eventually, Coventry after Atherstone, Nuneaton and exhaustion.

We were loaded at Longford, a clean and excellent loading place, where Bill, a ponderous and kindly pale-faced countryman, talks weightily of his pigs, and loads our boats from a hand tip with beautiful precision. The lorries fill the tip with coal in an unending stream, from 8am till 3pm when loading stops and the collieries are rumoured to stop too. We were half sheeted for the return journey with a "broken back". The way a boat is sheeted, you can tell where it has been loaded. As the type of loading is altered by the method used. For instance at Longford, where they have to go under the tip; its impossible to put one's stands up straight and they lay sideways made firm by the "peas, nuts, or beans." The top planks are then laid on and the side sheets strapped over them, giving a rather graceful, broken line. At Bedworth, one is loaded from trucks and the coal is shovelled into one's boat by hand. So, before loading, you put up your stands and top planks in their normal position and the coal slides in underneath.

The only disadvantage of Longford as a loading place is the fact that you cannot wind or turn your boats where they are loaded and therefore have to wind them empty before you come to the last half mile arriving backwards. The best thing about Longford is a little fleet of snow white Aylesbury ducks that scuttle cheerfully around one's boats winter and summer alike. Also its proximity to Coventry the baths and the flicks.

Our home run was easy - there was however one glorious incident in Coventry, while we were waiting at Bedworth for orders. We spent the evening there and Kay went off for her customary beer saying cheerfully "I'll just nip over and get a pint" when there was a God Almighty splash and sounds like a whale blowing. I flew on deck and found poor Kay had definitely got her pint! We fished her out and the cabin turned into a welter of towels and water and hysterical laughter. The water here isn't very deep but is very muddy and neither of us liked to think what would have happened had she gone a little deeper, especially as neither of us could swim and we both detested water! She looked at me beaming "Of course you haven't been in yet have you!"

Kit was worried - we'd had a very good trip and very few accidents and none of us knew the correct procedure for accidents if and when they happened. We just thought we were good! Plans for the trip, when, magic words "We had our own boats" began to mature.

*To be continued in next issue*

© Jean Peters, WW2 People's War



## ALVECOTE IMPRESSIONS

Ray Butler writes:

Boats attending were:

*Adamant, Admiral, Aldgate, Atlantic, Auriga, Australia, Badger, Bream, Birmingham, Cassiopeia, Clematis, Clover, Darley, Elizabeth, Emu, Flamingo, France, Gilbert, Indus, Jaguar, Kangaroo, Laplander, Lyndsay, Lynx (GU), Marquis, Minnow, Monarch, Northolt, Norwind, Nutfield & Raymond, Nuneaton & Brighton, Olive, Otter, Owl, (Butler) Stafford, Star, Swan, Swift, Success, Telford, Tench, Thea, The North, Victoria, Warbler, Whitby.*

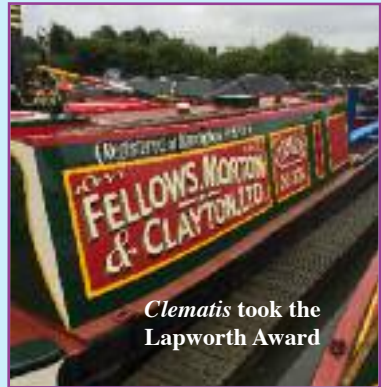


Alvecote is definitely snapping at the heels of Braunston in the premier league of Historic Boat events.

This year saw a magnificent turnout of magnificently turned out craft (making voting for the Lapworth award very difficult – Consensus was an 8 or 10 way tie, resolved by a pin in the list) and some superb boat handling, judged by ladies on the Barlow's Balcony like French Revolutionary Tricoteuses.

We were entertained by splendid music, entertaining commentary on Strictly Come Winding Colour and facts by Norman, Winding and style tips by Chris Grey, the Simon Cowell of the waterways and Chris proved that he could take it as well as give it out by swapping hats and places with Derek Jervis to wind Birmingham on the Sunday.

On the Saturday night the illuminated boat parade included fireworks from one craft, leading some spectators to believe that a gun-boat had been despatched from Braunston. The Snow Machine on *Auriga* (Part of their frozen themed illuminated boat display) failed to cause panic buying of coal. The Sunday repeat featured a certain marina proprietor in a cage on top of his boat. He either escaped or was



*Clematis* took the Lapworth Award



The Lapworth Award, a beautifully painted running block

released back into the custody of the bar.

The Les Lapworth Award for best turned out boat went to Martin, Roger & Teresa Fuller with *Clematis*, *Clover* was second and *Admiral* third. Paul Barber with *Whitby* won the boat handling and Rick Cooper and Linda Tigwell with *Auriga* the illuminated boat.

The Burge Family, Lawrence Williams and the Samuel Barlow/ Alvecote Marina staff received unanimous thanks and acclamation for hosting a brilliant event.



## HUDDLESFORD HERITAGE GATHERING 2015



Photos: Paul Marshall

### The Atmospheric Scene near Huddlesford Junction

Mike Harrison writes:

This biennial event, now held over two days, is going from strength to strength and was well attended this year and blessed with fine weather. The excellent site at Huddlesford Junction includes the interesting former toll cottages now used as a club house by the Lichfield Cruising Club who organise this event jointly with the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust, who were also celebrating their 25th anniversary this year.

The rally field is adjacent to the junction and had a good selection of stalls, vintage vehicles of all types, gypsy caravans, craft tent, live music, real ale, refreshments tent, dog agility display etc.

There was a good turnout of boats, stretching from Streethay to Whittington, with historic boats on both sides of the canal near the junction. Altogether a very pleasant event which provides useful income towards the restoration of what is now called the Lichfield Canal, but is really the Wyrley & Essington, from Huddlesford to Ogley Junction. This will eventually bring much needed extra life to the northern part of the BCN and is a cause well worth supporting.

Historic boats attending were:

- Auriga***
- Badger***
- Dove***
- Kew***
- Lyra***
- Minnow***
- Nutfield & Raymond***
- Panther***
- Perch***
- Seal***
- Skylark***
- Starling***
- Success***
- Swift***
- Trout***
- Victoria***
- Whitby***

*Kew looking at least 100 feet long!*





## Nottingham Canal Festival



Karen Wilson reports from this new venue:

This was a first event organised by C&RT outside the Nottingham Courthouse and opposite the former Fellows Morton and Clayton Nottingham Depot, warehouse and wharf.

There were various stalls, a couple of trip boats and a small spattering of cabin boats in attendance, together with Colin Paillin's barge *Anja*, and the CTS *Otter* with Eric and Janet McDowall. The 5 historic boats present were:

***Dove*, *Lynx*, *Trout* and *Whitby* paired with the FMC butty *Grimsby*.**

It was a nice event which C&RT hope to repeat next year.

*Interesting to conjecture when or if these 3 joshers last visited the FMC depot in anger - so to speak.*

*It was good to see **Grimsby** now painted in Threefellows Livery and paired with **Whitby**. Ed*





## Mystery Pics



Right then.....Two more of Mr Weaver's photographs for you to puzzle over.  
In the top pic - apart from where is it, as an extra challenge, name the boats.  
As to 883 - is that a canal bed? Which, where?  
They should keep you going over Christmas!





## What on earth is happening to the Grand Union?



*Referring to the notice on the left I personally take exception to the opening sentence which states "It is always best boating practice to close lock gates & paddles behind you". Best and most efficient safe boating practice is to leave exit gates open. Ed.*

This picture was circulated and here is a selection of responses received:

The first, repeated from a previous issue but equally applicable to this sign:

The canal system is a vital part of our transport heritage and any additions, such as signs or notices, be they permanent or

temporary, should be in keeping with the character of its industrial past. Our canals are not Disneyland or children's playgrounds, so would it not be better to have signage in a more adult idiom, rather than one which appears to have originated in a Rosie and Jim story, or an infant class.'

Just imagine if these started appearing all over the system!

The policy of closing gates came in in the 60s when a great number of the canals were in a very poor state. It was never applied to the GU below Cowroast or the Regents as they were generally in a better state and still being used commercially. I accept that there may be more of a need to close gates now because of the poor state of these canals and the inexperience of boaters using them. What is wrong with a more sensibly worded sign as we have had in the past on the beam, not a tacky in your face Disneyland style sign flapping about. I hope that these signs haven't crept out of London!

Not necessarily disagreeing with the message - although of course in an ideal world it would be best practice to leave gates open. However the tone seems unnecessarily rude and patronising at the same time. Attaching this loose notice to handrails stops people gripping them properly and looks - or soon will - very tatty. Why does it often seem like CRT is being run by kids on work experience?

We discussed at the committee meeting recently the fact that the southern GU is falling apart and this is worrying and depressing. Many pounds are short of water. It's quite normal for pounds to empty overnight. This is especially true of the short pound between Peter's Two and between Ivinghoe Locks. Also Marsworth is being filled everyday as the pounds leak off overnight. I was speaking to the chap on water control this morning and he had already filled the Aylesbury Arm, Marsworth and other places, he doesn't see it getting any better due to the lack of maintenance on that section. The pound below Gas Two was also low this morning and we had to flush the boats out the lock. I think that this section needs a big shake up as we regularly encounter problems.

I have no problem at all with the general wording of the notice which explains the need for closing paddles and gates quite clearly. I don't find it rude or patronising - but if I did it would be irrelevant as it's aimed at the general boating public, many of whom (including even some HNBC members) may be new to boating. The reference to a barn is an attempt at humour - maybe misplaced, but a bit more humour and a bit less angst wouldn't go amiss on the waterways.

It is 3 or 4 years since I went up the Southern G U. and was shocked then at the poor state and lack of obvious maintenance. The fact that everything seems to have continued to deteriorate since is really disheartening and I hope all these comments will reach 'certain ears'!



## NAVIGATION NOTES

from Sue Cawson



Thank you to everyone who responded to the 'paddles and paws' press release, your input was brilliant and made a real difference.

CRT hadn't taken into account the extra dangers that they were introducing and you all pointed them out very well and clearly. Mainly that there are occasions when a paddle needs to be dropped in a hurry and this is not always possible with stops in place. CRT have agreed that no more stops will be put onto paddle gearing. They will not go out specially to remove any that have been added, but interestingly very many have already disappeared! A small team from NAG and a CRT group are now working together to resolve some of the problems and issues going forward. One of the main problems is educating new and inexperienced boaters. You can help here if you see someone doing something that you believe is dangerous please do try and advise them. There have been numerous accidents with flying windlasses and this is where the whole saga started. CRT believed that putting stops on would manage some of these dangers. I believe that the main cause of flying windlasses is people using the large eye of a windlass on a tapered spindle. Another small thing that we can all do please, is to re-engage pawl catches after use, so it is ready and in place for the next user who may not check.

Please do carry on reporting issues and problems and make sure that the e-mails also go to the enquiries at the local CRT office (customer services) this way they do get logged. All the addresses are on the CRT website. Even if you report to the local manager, include customer services on the e-mail. That way it will go on the spread sheet. Complaints are all about numbers whether its dredging, narrow locks, vegetation etc. They are getting better at listening, funding is limited so we want to make sure that money is spent effectively.

You will be pleased to hear that Hurlston is on the 'Priority Projects' list (national). That said this is the evolving list for the next ten years. We need to make sure that Hurlston is kept active so we can get it towards the top of the list and it doesn't slip back. If you hear of anyone who has had an issue at Hurlston, whether it is an old or new boat, do get them to report it. Please also do keep trying the bottom lock as you go past, if you can go through the lock and notice it is getting tighter please feed that to CRT and myself. CRT know that there is an issue with the lock, but still are not sure what is causing it, they do need to establish the cause before they can develop a solution. The local CRT team and particularly the engineer have been listening and working with us. What has really helped the case is that there are numerous modern boats that also get stuck and boats that have been up in the past are failing now.

Iain MacTavish writes to record:

Thanks to the Aylesbury Canal Society for inviting the Club Shop to their Open Day on the weekend of 19/20 September, celebrating their move to new premises and the 200 year anniversary of the canal arm.

We had a lovely weekend in lots of sunshine meeting up with old friends from 'down south' (whets the appetite for Basingstoke next year!)

Special thanks to members - Mary & Barry Witts and Sue & Derek Harrison for much help manning the shop and providing transport. The Society's new premises at Circus Fields on the outskirts of Aylesbury are a truly amazing facility.

Historic boats present at the packed gathering were: **Brentford, Exe, Kalamaki and Seagull.**



## The Waterways Craft Guild - Why is it so important?

Jess Inglis, Guild Chairman writes:

The Guild was formed in 1997 by a group of waterways enthusiasts who were concerned that the traditional crafts of the waterways were in danger of being lost. After much debate the foundations of the Guild as we now know it were laid. The most contentious idea being that the Guild would shoulder the burden of accrediting suitably skilled practitioners of waterways related crafts. In short the Guild would emulate the Traditional Craft Guilds in that we would put in place a system of training, examination and support to enable members to progress from Apprentice to Journeyman and ultimately Master.

Some of the terms used in the old Guild system may not be familiar to everyone and deserve some explanation. An apprentice is a basic training grade. When a certain level of expertise is attained he or she would submit a 'Prentice piece This would be assessed and if found to be acceptable the status of Journeyman would be granted. Journeyman is a good commercial standard and most craftsmen would remain at this level for their entire careers. If a Journeyman aspired to higher levels and wished to teach he/she would at some point submit a Master piece for assessment. Nowadays the term Masterpiece has gradually come to mean something else entirely.

Our modern Guild operates on similar lines. Work is submitted, assessed and Accreditations at various levels awarded. Assessment is by the Guild committee advised by acknowledged experts in the various Guild crafts. We also require a knowledge of the canals and something of the history of the specific craft being assessed. Some of our experts are ex practitioners, some ex boatmen, some working craftsmen and others knowledgeable academics. It is not necessary to be able to paint or sculpt to be a respected art critic. To guard against standards slipping Accreditation lasts for three years and then work must be submitted again. This also allows the committee to monitor progress and award higher grades where appropriate.

The Guild offers Accreditation in the following crafts:

Boatbuilding	Coach painting	Decorative painting	Giftware painting
Signwriting	Traditional costume	Crochet and cabin lace	Rag rugging

Not all of the best practitioners of the traditional crafts are Guild members. There are many outstanding craftsmen and women who do not wish to join us for many reasons. They do an excellent job and some of them are actively involved in passing on their skills.

The strength of the Waterways Craft Guild is in numbers. We can call upon a considerable body of expertise that may not be available to individuals. If we do not know we know who to ask. The Guild is also very public and acts as a focal point for enquiries about waterways matters. The Guild is often asked to provide demonstrators at various events as well as television programmes (not always well interpreted). We receive many requests to identify artefacts and offer opinions on who made or decorated a particular item. Sometimes we can help and sometimes not - we always try.

Many Guild members are also members of other waterways organisations - The Horse boating Society, The Historic Narrow Boat Club, The Boat Museum Society, The Canal







and Rivers Trust, The Saturn Project and many others - all with the continuance of the Waterways and their traditions at heart.

We are a disparate group, spread over the entire country. Not all of us agree with all of the other members opinions. Some are ultra traditionalists, others take a more liberal approach and embrace modern techniques and materials. I was once reproached for cheating (using masking tape whilst signwriting). My reply was "If Frank Nurser had masking tape available - he would have used it!" Similarly, I suspect that if bungees had existed in the carrying days they would have been enthusiastically employed by the working boatmen when clothing up. Isiah Atkins was a great fan of Woolworths paint - not for him mixing white and red lead to mix pigments that took many hours to dry. We are all children of the 21st Century and we use those tools that are available to us now. The important thing is that what we do we do well!

The Waterways Craft Guild's stated mission is "Preserving Waterways Crafts and Knowledge" We have started well and will endeavour to continue to do this.



Jess confers with an apprentice

### Stour at Newbridge Wharf 1966



Another of Colin Scriveners pictures. He writes:

In June 1966 the Staffs & Worcs Canal Society held their annual rally at Newbridge Wharf, Tettenhall. We went in **Hazel**, our home at the time. Thomas Clayton had just stopped carrying due to their yard at Oldbury being closed for the construction of the M5. **Stour** and **Umea** were brought to the rally by their crews having just been made redundant.



Sight Seen Partnerships - Capturing waterways skills on film:

## THE LATEST SIGHT SEEN PARTNERSHIPS DVD

From Tony Gregory

We are pleased to announce the recent release of Sight Seen Partnerships' sixth DVD

### GUNNELS UNDER!

Re-floating a sunken narrow boat. Running time: 36 minutes



This photo of the sunken SUCCC fly boat is © Wolverhampton Archive Service, and the appropriate fee has been paid for use by Sight Seen Partnerships. Taken at Caponfield, Bilston on the Wednesbury Oak Loop Canal (now Bradley Arm), date unknown.

Narrow boats used on British canals from the 1800's to recent times regularly carried loads of up to 25 and 30 tons. It was not uncommon for boats to hit underwater obstacles and to be holed below the water line. With the load completely filling the boat's hold, it was impossible to locate or fix the leak, and the boat could quite quickly sink. If a boat sank between locks, the canal level could be lowered sufficiently to allow the boat to be pumped out and


moved out of the channel. Boats blocking the channel would delay other boats and cause the Canal Company to lose revenue from tolls. On canals or rivers with few or no locks (for instance, the Birmingham Canal Navigation is lock-free for some 40 miles) it was not practical to lower water levels. This is where boat raising tackle would be brought into use.

In June 1996, during the making of the film **Warehouse at Work** at Wolverhampton's Broad Street Warehouse, boat raising tackle was discovered in store, and may well have ended up on a tip as the building was about to undergo alterations to make it into a night club.

Sight Seen Partnership's chairman and ex B.W. manager Glyn Phillips arranged for the equipment to be taken to The National Waterways Museum at Ellesmere Port for safe keeping, and vowed that someday a film would be made to illustrate how to use it.

In May 2007, The Black Country Living Museum kindly allowed the Sight Seen team to sink their wooden Joey boat **Birchills** in a place where she would lie with her gunnels below the surface. Here was a chance to make use of the equipment, and with permission from the Waterways Museum's curatorial staff, the tackle was once more brought into use. Glyn was able to oversee the project and direct the film, as it is believed that he was the last person to use such equipment when he supervised the raising of a boat that sank in Netherton Tunnel during the major reconstruction work in the early 1980s.



So, here is an opportunity to watch and observe a technique that has disappeared from our waterways scene, but has been recorded for all to appreciate. Why not buy this DVD from Sight Seen Partnerships, just in case your boat ever goes 'Gunnels Under!' 



The current Partners are The Canal & River Trust (Encompassing the National Waterways Museum at Ellesmere Port, Gloucester and Stoke Bruerne), The Boat Museum Society, The Black Country Living Museum and The Historic Narrow Boat Club.

**Gunnels Under** and the 5 previous titles below are all available at £12.95 plus p&p:

**Warehouse at Work** - the operation of a Victorian Warehouse

**Towpath Encounter** - horse boating on the Worcester & Birmingham canal

**Last Coal Run from Anglesey** - a train of loaded coal boats travel from Cannock to Dudley

**A Tanner a Night** - a canal side stable comes back to life for a day

**Topcloth & Tippet** - how to cloth up a working narrow boat

For enquiries and sales, please contact volunteer Ian Goodier  
Tel: 07752 429739, or email [ian@igoodier.plus.com](mailto:ian@igoodier.plus.com)  
who will dispatch your choice of DVD with all haste.

## IWA Festival of Water

August Bank Holiday Event at Northampton



Photo: Rupert Smedley

A select (given other events going on the same weekend) six historic boats attended IWA's Festival of Water in Northampton over the Bank Holiday weekend. They were **Bletchley**, **Fulbourne**, **Sculptor**, **Southern Cross**, **Skylark** and **William**. **Bletchley** is based on the River Nene and headed upstream from Oundle for the event. **Skylark's** crew took up the half price EA licence offered as part of entry to the event and explored the River Nene and the Middle Level over the summer before returning to Northampton for the IWA event. The 100 or so boats at the event benefited from the presence of two trading boats (**Bletchley** and **Southern Cross**) for supplies of fuel. Four of the six historic boats took part in the boat handling competition, having been challenged to do so by Terry of TR Boat Handling, who offered a donation to charity if they did (the donation was split between the Friends of Stoke Bruerne and the Waterway Recovery Group Van Appeal). The Colonel Ritchie Cockerel was not awarded.

The event itself was very busy on the Saturday, and crowds gathered by the Town Lock for the official opening by actors Timothy West and Prunella Scales. It was raining on the Sunday and Monday which brought fewer people to the event, but that didn't spoil the atmosphere of a nice sized event with plenty going on.

Report from Alison Smedley



## Passing Traffic

On nb **Bath's** recent stay in Liverpool, although we had missed the visit of the "Three Queens" (Cunard liners) our last morning coincided with the arrival in the early hours of Queen Mary 2. It also coincided with low tides so before our departure I took some pics of her at her berth - it was weird to see so much sand and mud so very near to such a large ship! We also found that as we went through Prince's Lock that we could see her in the background and as we proceeded through I took advantage of being able to get both our "little" boat and the QM2 in one photograph.



Photos: Isobel Turner



Rather an unusual combination I thought - although as she's so big at a quick glance you can mistake her for another block of flats and she is also disguised by the coaches in front!

She was setting off that day to cross the Atlantic 175 years to the day since the Cunard

liner *Britannia* first did the trip to Halifax.

We would heartily recommend the trip to Liverpool. We were the only "long" narrow boat there, maybe it gets forgotten that the locks on this length of the L&L are actually full length. On the way in we had expected a dingy canal through bandit country - but that wasn't the case. The local pedestrians were friendly but the motorists at swing bridges less, so no matter how efficiently you went through!

There are nearly 50 places on pontoon moorings in Salthouse Dock - right next to Albert Dock, sadly alongside a fairly busy road and it's a city so it's not always quiet. The moorings are safe (people leave their boats) and with boater's access gates that don't need to be locked. For those of us who live in our back cabins it's best to moor with the fore-end to the dock wall then you don't get folk staring in and you also get a view of what's happening across the dock - although predictably the pontoons aren't long enough so it's more challenging getting off the boat. There is water and electricity on the pontoons and you can now boat down the docks and empty Elsie - a great relief!

There's lots to see and do, apart from the obvious museums, amongst other things (like the pubs...) we enjoyed the underground Old Dock tour, Williamson's Tunnels, Mersey Tunnel tour (we spent a quite a while underground!) and the cathedral tower tour - fantastic views on a clear day and we were lucky to be there on a bell ringing night.

Isobel Turner



## Tidal Level Gauge for River Dee

Following the 2014 IWA Campaign Festival in Chester the branch committee felt that it would be good to leave a permanent legacy of the event and what better than a bespoke Tidal Level Gauge at the River Lock where it meets the tidal River Dee. For many years boaters have left the safety of the lock without full information about the tide height. This situation was picked up during discussions for the 'Waterways Strategy', which IWA partnered, and is now part of the 'Chester One City Plan'.

Back in February this year IWA engaged the services of L P Archaeology of Chester who agreed to undertake a survey and spot in a Bench Mark on the side of the lock where IWA proposed to locate the gauge. With Mike Carter's assistance they located a position about a metre in front of the silt plate in an old groove which was heavily overgrown. They later found out, after removing the growth with one of the working parties, that the groove stopped about two metres from the top. CRT then suggested that they should locate the gauge in the recess which would be left when the bottom gates were removed along with the silt plate and traditional stop planks dropped in which would allow entry into the lock chamber without the use of the bottom lock gates.

The gauge needed to be robust and a backing plank of 'Ekki', was chosen. A hardwood timber extensively used both in and out of water and requires no preservative treatment. This was supplied by Meerdink Ltd. a specialist timber importers from Lincoln. The side reinforcing stainless steel angle came from Parker Steel and the purpose made gauge boards from Shelly Signs of Market Drayton. The overall weight was anticipated to be about 60 kg so the material was delivered to Taylor's Boat yard in Chester for Peter Askey to put together. A picture of the finished item standing up in the big shed at Taylor's Yard is shown (left) and above is the detail of the inscription at the top of the gauge. Like most tidal gauges the calibration is shown in metres AOD (Above Ordnance Datum).

CRT have advised that they have asked the EA to undertake the work involved with the removal of the gates and also install the Tidal Gauge and this should be done during August. Although this project has taken over a year I am pleased with the result and I am sure it will be of benefit to boaters in navigating the River Dee in the future. The partnership working with CRT, NRW and the EA on this project is very much appreciated.

In closing, I would like to say a big thank you to IWA Chiltern Branch, the Historic Narrow Boat Club and the late CW&C Councillor, Mr David Robinson, for supporting this project financially.

Peter Bolt  
Chairman  
IWA Chester and Merseyside Branch.





## LETTERS

Bryan Nicoll writes:

Morning Val, As ever a good read again. However, I see the 'shaft/pole' story continues with a quote in the first paragraph on Page 14 in which 'Miranda took one of the fourteen-foot shafts'. Presumably a foot shorter to avoid being wedged across a GU wide lock!!

On Page 15 I see Jean Peters' memory missed Albert's Two before the Park Bends – 'two hellish bends we didn't do too well' before Lady Capel's. Pleased to see the locks named as against being identified by number.

Interesting to see photo on Page 21 with horse Mary. Unfortunately I only went on the **Margaret** on the Staffs. & Worcester but at least I know what it is like to steer with a 'working horse' on part of the journey instead of the regular horse. We certainly went faster!

From John Wilkinson - (**Water Lily**, formerly the fore end of **Kestrel**)

The last edition of the newsletter kindled in me a wealth of memories all of which were pleasant! The article on Ike Argent, the piece on *Arthur/Bertha* and the bit about *Flower of Gloster* actually were quite firmly linked in my memory.

Let's start with Ken Ebblewhite, Ken was a true campaigner for waterways in the days when BW were very much "the enemy". He attended the Leicester IWA Rally in 1967 as you say Val, with *Bertha* (complete with caravan). He was tied up in the pool upstream of Belgrave (Swans Nest) Lock on the river inside Abbey Park with all of the "official" boats. With a mixture of Swarkestone, Soar Boating Club and Midlands IWA running the show. I was assistant harbour master and witnessed *Flower of Gloster* being steered by Chocolate Charlie take the turn above the weir to access the river making a total mess of it and ending up on the weir! Unfortunately the cameras were running to record the scene (with sound) and Charlie let fly a fair cross section of boatman's language which certainly would have interested the child audience for which the programme was intended. *Flower* had to be dragged back to do it again!

Ken had only one arm but could handle a boat like a pro. It would have been interesting to hear his views on the paddle ratchet argument. He was a keen shot, apart from his skills as a scraperboard artist (he also did a set of 4 for the opening of the Stratford in 64).

In February '65 when the Erewash was threatened with closure above Stanton, Ken took his narrow boat **Trent 5** up the canal to the winding hole below Langley Bridge with Margaret Clarke on **Sorceress (Mercury)** with Max and Suzy Ackerman on their cruiser *Soldanella* following behind. Both boats were loaded with "protestors" and when approaching the M1 bridge under construction, the lead boat stopped "dead". The piling of the abutments had vibrated the silt into the channel. With ropes on both banks and lots of grunt and rocking a channel was created. The worst job was hanging on to the lit barbecue in the hold (no risk assessments then).

At Shipley Lock the top balance beams were round tree trunks and were so bent that they were scraping along the ground. The top paddles couldn't be raised by more than an inch or two so Ike Argent (who shouldn't have been there at all as he was a BW employee) stood on the mitre post and hammered hardwood wedges between the top gates until a level was reached. The canal froze overnight so the following day the convoy was ice-breaking some of the way down to Trent Lock!

In Easter 1965 a protest cruise up the Ashby took place and Ken Ebblewhite took his other boat. This was **Ohio**, a cut down Clayton boat. Several other enthusiasts from Swarkestone and Soar Boat Clubs went and it resulted in the formation of the Ashby Canal Carrying Company to promote the coal trade. Roy Torrington, Tom Henshaw, Alwyn Davies and I think Russ Godwin were involved. (*Russ still owns a section of the Derby Canal from Swarkestone Junction. Ed.*) I remember it snowed quite a lot during the weekend.

**Ohio** had an interesting pedigree in its own right, originally a wooden butty it was Ken's third boat, it was bought from Thomas Clayton in August 1959 and cut in half with a new transom and swim at Davisons. (*Local boatyard, run by the 3 Davison brothers who were very pro the Canal.*)



It was fitted with a Fowler and test ran on 5th November 1959. In October 1960 at the "Save Dudley Tunnel" Rally it was the only converted boat to pass through the tunnel and in March '61 was the official Press Boat at the Derby Canal Protest Cruise. Later it figured in a Canadian documentary on the Staffs & Worcester, and entered the Cromford Canal before attending the IWA Rallies at Stratford, Blackburn and Leicester. We think that it was sold to Herbert and Betty Wood (of Threefellows) and subsequently to Tony Lander whose daughter Joan and son in law Arthur provided the information below from **Ohio's** scrapbook.

Ken Ebblewhite sold his business, his house by the Erewash and all of his boats and moved to Scotland to pursue his love of shooting and is rumoured to have bought his own trawler there!

Ohio

A 70'0" x 7'0" narrow Narrow Boat fuel tanker, was built by Hallie of Chelmsley in 1936 for Thomas Clayton & Sons Ltd. Home drawn, her original run was between Birmingham and Ellesmere Port on the Mersey, carrying diesel oil, later she carried tar locally in Birmingham covered mainly by Mr Ames Sharkleton and Mr J. M. Poole with 19.4 Tons.

The boat was purchased from Messrs Thomas Clayton on Aug 11<sup>th</sup> 1959 and transported to Trent dock along with sister boat "Hudson" August 16<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> 1959.

She was cut down to 61'0" in length, a transom and counter built in, cabin washed and a Fowler diesel engine installed. First test run 6<sup>th</sup> Nov 1959.

Rallies etc attended by Ohio

Oct 1960. "Save Dudley Tunnel" Rally  
Ohio was the only converted Narrow Boat to pass through the Tunnel.

Mar 1961. was official press boat at the Derby Canal protest cruise  
Description of Ohio was given on B.B.C. Radio

Aug 1961. was filmed on the Staffs & Worcester canal for a Canadian Documentary film

Sept 1961. Ohio entered the Cromford canal, and was the last boat to accomplish this.

July 1966. Attended I.W.A. Rally at Stratford on Avon.

Apr. 1966. Derby Canal protest Rally

July/Aug 1965. Blackburn Rally I.W.A.

July/Aug 1967. Leicester Rally I.W.A.

John also sent me a copy of a newspaper cutting which features this photograph of **Ohio** when it was in the ownership of Herbert and Betty Wood of Threefellows Carrying.

Its not reproduced very well, but you get the idea. Herbert is steering and Betty on the fore deck  
I doubt the boat is still extant - does anyone know better? Val





Peter Baldwin emailed:

I enjoyed particularly Beryl's piece in the latest Newsletter.

I try to keep the roof of the back cabin of *Saltaire* clear of clutter, particularly non-period clutter, when we are out on the water. Friends like to create Tracy Emin style installations with cameras, drinks cans and sandwich wrappers but I try to keep a tidy ship, although the occasional beer bottle is allowed! Some of my crew like to coil the back-end line in very neat concentric circles - no good if you need to grab it quickly. They also like to leave windlasses on the loosely coiled line, another hindrance to a quick grab.

I had understood that the chimney ropes were not for protection if the chimney fell, as Beryl suggests, although they can serve that purpose. There should, in fact, be three strings hanging here on the cabin side, one longer than the other two. The strings were used to loop a coiled line and hang it on that side of the back-cabin to dry out where there should be radiated heat from the range. I have not researched this point but think that it was a reliable source who told me but not sure who!

Beryl responded:

With regard to the chimney ropes, which Peter refers to, what I know as chimney ropes, or I call them strings, are like miniature can strings, made of a lighter weight cotton line, and fixed on the hook or clip below the brass bands, and hanging neatly 'astride' the brass chimney chain. They actually helped to stop the chain rattling.

I know a lot of modern strings have three 'ends', but it would be quite fiddly, I would have thought, to actually use such things to hold a wet line up for drying. Also, a wet tow-line would be likely to transfer mud, and possibly the odd drop of oil, onto what would have been scrubbed white cotton. As for drying ropes using the radiated the heat from the range, in my day - and I don't go back to horseboats, although I can remember seeing them working on the Shroppie! - this was particularly important in winter. We kept two sets of tow-lines, etc., so that when it was very cold, and you went out in the morning to untie your frozen ropes, you would take them off and replace them with the supple dry set from the engine-room, hanging the frozen ones (with which you could often do a parallel to the Indian rope trick) up to dry in the heat from the engine.

My view is that there were probably numerous variations, some of which may have been local to a specific area of the country, of what ropes, strings, etc. were used, and how this was done. Don't know whether you have seen the articles which are appearing every few weeks in CRT's Damian Kemp's Boaters Update, but they are reproduced from a series I am writing for the RBOA's "Soundings" magazine. My view of the impracticality of neatly coiled ropes when working a boat is something which upset one reader, who was also of the opinion that there was nothing wrong with hanging the stern line on the tiller pin. Maybe he also had one of those little brass padlocks through the base of the tiller pin, so that it didn't get whipped out if you grabbed the line in a hurry. If so, let's hope he never needs to take his tiller off in a hurry, and can't find the key to the padlock!

David Daines emailed to comment:

Page 7 at the bottom. Ref. 'Look at the Tube map' Upminster and Barking are not on the London Tube, they are on the Underground. Any railway aware person will confirm that the Tube and the Underground are very different and distinctive entities. Underground trains will certainly not fit into the Tube. Tube lines do not go to Barking or Upminster.

*I had to confess that I thought the Underground and the Tube were one and the same.....Val*

and David replied:

Aha! You have to speak to a railway nerd to know about railway matters, prepare to be bored! The first underground railway in the world was what is now the Metropolitan line, then the Metropolitan Railway. It was built by digging up the road into a big trench, then putting a roof on top. This is an Underground railway and is quite capable of taking full sized railway carriages and indeed locomotives, as it used to do. Now the Tube is quite different. These were (and are)





built by sinking a vertical shaft and then boring through the ground with a machine, much like a worm does. Much deeper down in the ground and also significantly much, much smaller tunnels. The trains are therefore also very much smaller, you could never get an Underground train into a Tube tunnel, it just wouldn't fit. The Metropolitan, District and Circle lines are underground, most of the rest are Tube. There, not too bad was it?

David followed this with another letter

Referring to Beryl's excellent item in the last Newsletter, regarding people standing in a dangerous place on the back of a boat in order to steer.

Some years ago I wrote a letter to Waterways World about this, and Hugh Potter, the then Editor, published it. The following month there were the anticipated letters telling me to 'mind my own business', and worse! Hugh, bless his boots, put in a strong footnote to these letters saying that I was quite right and reminding readers that not long previously a school teacher had been killed by being swept off the back of a boat and into the blades.

Anyway, back to standing out of the hatches to steer. What I find even more worrying now is the number of modern boats I see where there is NO safe place to steer the boat from. There is no steering step inside the back doors to stand on, in these cases a ladder leads straight down inside the cabin. Having been very critical in the past of some aspects of the Boat Safety Scheme, I really do think it is about time that the provision of a 'Safe Place to Stand' should be a requirement of the 'Scheme'. I would be interested in the responses of our members who are BSS Examiners.

and from Guy Page:

I write in response to Val and Beryl's pieces in Newsletter 2015/3 on the proper dressing of boats and I agree that standards are slipping.

Before I reflect on the problems I would like to acknowledge the fantastic work done by the HNBC and it's members ensuring that narrow boats remain and flourish on our canals. There are many wonderful examples of beautifully restored, maintained and presented boats floating about.

However, I frequently witness boats cruising about undressed, dressed boats with their fenders drooping, a wide variety of cans and dippers strewn anywhere on the roof, lines hanging over tiller pins, cutters at all sorts of angles and chimneys on backwards or sideways to mention just a few issues. My anxiety is that if these things are not corrected the proper way of doing things will be lost and just arranging a few bits of painted ware, brass and white line on your boat will become the accepted way. We are passionate about the brilliant and unique vessel that is the narrow boat and we should be just as enthusiastic and diligent about them being dressed when in use, and dressed right.

Like Beryl I was fortunate in growing up on the cut when a few boating families were still practising their trade, or was it an art? My recollection is also that they were pleased to help and advise and occasionally do such things as tweak the position of your can if it was not quite right to their eye.

I feel that Val and Beryl have given good explanations for where and why the chimney, can, side-strings and mop are placed where they are. I have some minor disagreements around side-strings, I agree that the can was tethered but my understanding of this was with a separate line or chain and often a small can string placed on the carrying handle of the can. I would echo the belief that nothing about, or on, a narrow boat is there by accident, but has evolved over two hundred years of operation to be the ideal vessel to navigate the narrow canals. I understand that many traditional decorations were from boating families history, being firstly horsemen and also from when competition forced them to give up their homes on the bank. I will endeavour to cover some, but I am sure not all, of the usual practices that Val and Beryl did not discuss.

Exhaust pipe 'cutters' are designed to cut the exhaust and reduce/eliminate soot and other debris being blasted from the roofs of bridges and tunnels, the cutter was always



aligned fore and aft, in my experience precisely and perfectly.

Motor boats usually had a small 'cabin shaft' on the cabin roof placed on the starboard side with the hook at the engine room end. The mop was a handcrafted tool capable of being spun, I believe the technical term is 'twingling'. Boating lines were always coiled and on the cabin roof when not in use, I prefer just forward of the can but I have seen evidence of them on the slide. I appreciate the argument has been made before, but my researches overwhelmingly show that motors only had one can and I follow that principle.

Where did the tradition of having bed-knobs in the hatches come from? I have always understood that when families left their homes on the bank they could not take the bed but the knobs fitted both in the space and with their love of decoration. Many adornments are old horse brass, the ring for the chimney chain is I believe a 'hames ring', the ring on the collar the reins went through, swingers appeared on pigeon boxes as did single horse brasses. I feel that boat people were practical, opportune yet decorative individuals who employed approaches to protect and enhance the beauty of their boats and equipment. Ash strips on slides and top bends protected the fancy paintwork, chimney strings possibly stopped scratches or rattles between chain and chimney. Chimney chains were often recycled gas-mask bag links, and when boaters found work in the car plants in the Coventry area their windlasses suddenly acquired chrome finishes. Where a piece of rope was needed to stop a butty helm from jumping out, it was fancied up and so the examples keep coming. However I don't feel that this adaptability gives us, modern boaters, carte blanche to play fast and loose with the narrow boat traditions.

I do respectfully disagree with Beryl in her argument that because a can is not used for domestic water that it is ok to be out of position. Is this not the nub of the issue? If we take that philosophy then slinging a few bits of 'canalia' around the boat makes it all ok and for me it doesn't.

Another argument for saying it does not matter will be that if narrow boats were in regular commercial use today they would be radically changed from the vessels we love. That is probably true, they may well be wheel steered, probably have all sorts of health and safety paraphernalia and bow-thrusters just to provide a few examples. But we love the traditions, the way things used to be and it is that which is being lost.

In the main we are all pleasure boaters, we use our traditional boats as cruisers, to see the canal with all its history and natural beauty, to meet our friends and part of the fun for some is exhibiting their pride and joy. I feel there is room for new boats, cabined boats, under cloth conversions or any other adaptations that people employ to make their boating more comfortable. But if they are endeavouring to be traditional then that is just what they should be, as the tradition was, not a loose interpretation.

A frequent new addition is the tassel hanging from the bottom of the tiller pin, I see this frequently on boats, I have never seen it in any historic photographs but it has taken hold. I am sure others can think of countless examples of other new variants and corruptions that are littering the cut. I have recently heard of a chain hook on a tall pipe, will a tall pipe chimney-chain follow? Again I have never seen this on any photographs, I accept its not frequent yet, but possibly will become so if not challenged.

I agree with Beryl that some new practices are dangerous, I share her concern when I see people steering standing on the counter and not in the slide hole or perhaps worse still a second person stood on the counter and not the gunwhale. I recall a fatality when someone was knocked off the counter by the tiller-bar, on a boat going astern and was drawn into the blades. Another dangerous practice is rigidly chaining fenders in place; front buttons are a particular risk. I regularly witness shackles and bottle screws from both above and below fenders, this stops them loosening or falling aside if the boat gets hung up, My tutors always told me to use a piece of line in the attachment, to act as a fail-safe and snap in the event of hanging up. On a recent trip up the Welsh cut, during my brief time on the canal three boats hung up on their fenders and sunk in locks! It amazes me that a requirement to have fenders properly attached with a fail-safe is not a boat safety issue, but its not.



My final point is about polishing, overall cleanliness and tidiness and I appreciate this might be seen as picky. My recollection of the majority of working boats was that they were immaculate all the time, even if their paintwork had a patina or scars from the nature of boating, brass gleamed, cabins and decks where mopped clean and cotton and ash scrubbed. Even carrying a filthy cargo such as loose coal that lavished black dust everywhere was no impediment, and it was not just on high-days and holidays but everyday. Again this is sometimes sadly lacking in general boating practice today.

I boat on a relatively new fully cabined boat, I much prefer getting clean after a great day's boating behind a tall pipe in a shower, my memories of doing the same in a hand bowl are not so fond. I know I don't know it all, never will, and many know more. However I am a proud pleasure cruiser of the canals; I cruise on a traditional boat, endeavouring to maintain the traditions of the boats and the people. I learned from the experienced, I study photographs, read books, watch films, talk to fellow enthusiasts and try my very best to be right in how I present my boat. However I am sorry to say that I do not always see this from owners of historic boats and as these are the real life reference newer boaters will take, I think it imperative that the Club and its members lead by example. I finish with a slightly altered quote from Mr. Blagrove that sometimes "my painted boat and polished brass does hide my breaking heart".

Ritchard Jukes emailed

Thought you might like to see a picture of **Rufford, Renton, Renfrew** and **Reading** which I have found in the Cheshire Image Bank. The picture was taken at the Yarwoods & Sons yard in Northwich just prior to hand over of the boats to GUCCC.

*Search the CIB for c06608 and c06986 - cracking pics Val*

Michael Woodhouse tells me he has now purchased **Caggy**

### Acton Bridge Steam Rally 3 - 4 October

Report from Reuben Carter

Thirteen historic boats attended the steam rally at the Leigh Arms, 10 of them being narrow boats along with at least 22 steam rollers and traction engines. Narrow boats attending were: **Acacia, Dory, Elizabeth, Empress, Greenlaw, Halsall, Kenilworth, Roach, Victoria** and **Victory**.

Wider boats were: **Loach**, loaded with 200 tons of Canadian wheat courtesy of Viaduct Shipping, **Parfield** and **Iris Abbott**.



Photo: Reuben Carter

Looking downstream from Acton Bridge on the River Weaver. The Leigh Arms is behind the camera.



## NBOC/HNBOC/HNBC Club Rallies

Richard Booth has supplied this list of Club Rallies from the Archive. I thought you may all find it of interest.

Note: Up to about 1990 the Club organised some very successful and well-attended rallies. However, after that time the Club's rallies became less well attended, partly because of increasing "competition" from other events.

Until 1987 the Club AGM was linked to the Easter Rally.

After 1994 the Club decided not to organise its own rallies but to encourage members to participate in events arranged by other organisations, especially those of a campaigning nature or where historic boats are particularly welcome. There have, however, been two exceptions.

In 2006 the Club held the first of the popular biennial events, the alternate years being to support the Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Easter</b>	<b>Christmas</b>
1966	n/a	Little Venice
1967	Stoke Bruerne	Little Venice
1968	Norbury Junction	Braunston
1969	Coventry Basin	Cheswardine
1970	Fradley Junction	Farmers Bridge
1971	Stone Cross (with IWA)	Farmers Bridge
1972	Snarestone	Farmers Bridge
1973	Park Head (with Dudley Canal Trust)	Fradley Junction
1974	Langley Mill	Titford Pool
1975	Aylesbury Basin	Bulbourne
1976	Stourbridge (with IWA)	Coventry Basin
1977	Consall Forge	Stoke Bruerne
1978	Barrow-upon-Soar	Little Venice
1979	Ellesmere Port	Braunston / Gt Linford
1980	Hillmorton	Stoke Bruerne / Blisworth
1981	Anglesey Basin	Banbury (nobody made it due to ice)
1982	Windmill End (Coombeswood C.T.)	Banbury (cancelled due to stoppages)
1983	Stoke Bruerne / Blisworth	Ware
1984	Oxford	Stockton
1985	Foxton	Cosgrove
1986	Hawne Basin (Spring B.H.)	Anderton (August B.H.) Long Buckby
1987	Pelsall (Spring B.H. with IWA)	Northampton
1988	Hopwas (May Day B.H.)	
1989	Coventry Basin (May Day B.H.)	Little Venice
1990	Ellesmere Port (with BMS gathering)	New Bradwell
1991	Leicester (only 1 boat attended)	Little Venice (New Year)
1992	Caldon Canal	Little Venice (New Year)
1993	Titford Canal (with Coombeswood C.T.)	
		Godalming (only 2 boats made it due to floods)
1994	Pelsall (Spring B.H. with IWA)	Marsworth
1999/2000	London Docklands (millennium gathering)	
2006	Bugsworth Basin (40th anniversary, August 5/6)	
2008	Stoke Bruerne	
2010	Coventry	
2012	Droitwich	
2014	Foxton	
2016	In planning: Basingstoke Canal at Woking (50th anniversary gathering)	



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## Looking forward to seeing many of you in November at Lapworth



## STERN-END

### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Members are reminded that all are welcome to attend committee meetings as observers. Please phone secretary to confirm date and venue as these meetings are projected a long way in advance

**Sat 28th Nov Winter Social Meeting at Lapworth Village Hall commencing at 2.00pm**

This will be preceded by the Committee Meeting starting at 11.00am

Sat 9th Jan at the Samuel Barlow Inn, Alvecote Marina, Tamworth B78 1AS, 11.00am

**PRESS DATE** for 2016/1 1st February 2016



## ADVERTISEMENTS

Members' private Sales and Wanted ads. are inserted here, free of charge.

Trade Advertisements, particularly from our own Members offering appropriate services, are welcome at the following rates which will be set against the cost of production. This currently runs to 700 copies per issue:

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Please remit cheques payable to HNBC with your copy to the Editor. Thank you.

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**Whale freshwater 'intelligent control' pump** – FW5082. Barely used, too powerful for our system (4.5 bar pressure relief needed on calorifier or water heater). £120. Delivery excluded. Can bring to Stockton Locks/Braunston area.

Contact: Paul Chanin on 01363 774072 or paul@chaninweb.co.uk

**For Sale: Wessex.** Unique and characterful 70ft steel tug-style built in famous Les Allen yard in 1979. Kelvin J2 (1946), rebuilt 2014, with electric start and spares. Carvings throughout boat interior by top silversmith Michael Lloyd and his wife. Oak work surfaces and table. Generous storage space. Hull survey 2015. BSS 2015. Hull blacked 2015. Paloma and Bubble diesel stove serviced 2015. Tug-style deck with storage beneath. Carpeted gentleman's club style saloon with desk, loose furniture, prints and carvings. Diesel stove feeds copper pipes running length of boat. Bathroom with three-quarter length bath, decorated hand-basin in oak surround, airing cupboard, Thetford cassette toilet, Paloma water heater. Kitchen with full sized Cannon stove, Electrolux 12v/230v/lpg fridge, oak draining board and shelves, carved chest. Dining area with table and bench seat, extensive hanging and shelf space. Double cross bed. Engine room. Traditional back cabin with boatman's stove, cross bed extendable to full double, fold-down table. Honda generator included. £50,000.

Contact: fwplea@gmail.com T: 07968 625701 Apollo Duck 419200

**For Sale: Effingham.** Admiral Class motor boat. New 10mm bottom, new footings and knees. Lister HR2 reconditioned, with new stainless steel stern shaft. Short extension cabin to fit profile of cloth hoops. Repainted in BW livery with sign writing. Requires interior cabin fit out. Offers in the region of £32,000. Available to view and dock for free at Langley Mill, Notts.

Contact: Pete Newman on 07831 235541 or cornwoodind@btconnect.com.

**For Sale: Satellite.** Small Woolwich Star Class Butty built 1935, iron sides, converted to motor and shortened to 59 foot by Malcolm Braine in 1973. Very spacious cabin with 6'9" headroom Mahogany beams and Parana Pine boards. Not a modern interior but loads of character. Boat man's cabin, engine room, huge bedroom / study area, bathroom with bath and shower, kitchen and lounge. Armstrong Siddeley 3 cylinder diesel with Parsons box, heating via Eberspacher and solid fuel, hot water via instantaneous water heater. New stern gear and steel bottom in 2009. BSS Cert to Oct 2016. Health forces sale to a new custodian. £40,000 Ono.

Contact: davidhumphreys@gmail.com or 07931 574007.

**For Sale: 70' Small Woolwich butty Hydrus.** Iron sides, elm bottom, Lister TS2 engine in 'back-cabin'. £8,000. Price negotiable if buyer wants restoration work to the hull to be carried out by Ivy Bridge Marine.

Contact Roger Farrington, Ivy Bridge Marine. M: 07976 309228 or H: 01327 704847.

#### **Narrow Boat Magazines:** The original 1984 production

All 13 copies of the original series of this publication have been donated to Club funds.

Best offer secures the lot. Bids to the Editor please

**For Sale: National 2DM Marine Engine,** Brunton gearbox, selection of spares, Was in running order when removed from the boat.

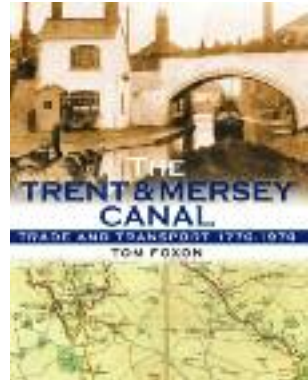
£7,000.00 - No Offers. Stourbridge area. Tel: 07826 715295



## The Trent & Mersey Canal : Trade and Transport 1770-1970

by Tom Foxon

196 pages. 275x215mm. Printed on gloss art paper,  
casebound with printed board covers. £25.00



A commercial history of the Trent & Mersey Canal has long been considered necessary but its writing has been obstructed by the fact that the canal company's records were destroyed in a fire at Stone in 1950. Now, however, canal historian and ex-T&M working boatman Tom Foxon, has managed to get around this sad fact by researching the working history of the waterway from the other direction, as it were, by looking at the transactions from the point of view of the canal's customers, carriers and users, and at the records of connecting waterways. In this way, he has managed to piece together a history of trade and traffic on this vital artery, which for 200 years linked the River Trent with the estuary of the River Mersey.

This detailed and extensively researched account covers the trades, along with the boatmen and carrying companies that transported them, the factories and works at which they called, the wharves and docks they served and the feeder canals they travelled along. Canal and industry historians, waterway enthusiasts and those with a strong interest in the local history of the hinterland served by the T&M Canal will all find much to enjoy here and indeed to inform. Tom Foxon's very readable text is heavily illustrated with a fine selection of historic maps and pictures.

A number of copies will be on the sales stand at the November meeting.



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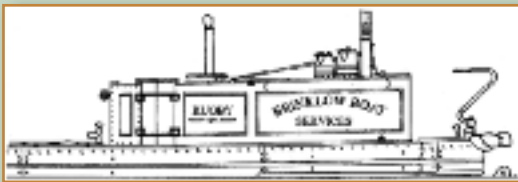
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## HNBC Christmas Cards

New designs for 2015 there a few packs remaining which will be at Lapworth

1. *Halsall Ice Breaking above Zouch Lock on the River Soar*

*Photo: Herbert Wood Collection*

2. *Kangaroo Approaching Consall Forge Caldon Canal - Christmas 2014*

*Photo: Lawrence Williams*



The greeting inside all cards is:

*With Best Wishes for  
Christmas and the New Year*

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Please add £1.20 p&p per pack

from the Shop Address or, save postage, from the sales stand at the various events

Please send cheque with order made payable to HNBC

## AIMS of the HISTORIC NARROW BOAT CLUB

To encourage the preservation, restoration and use of working and ex-working narrow boats.

To promote the maintenance of the waterways system to a standard suitable to facilitate the navigation of such boats throughout the year.

To represent the interests of the users of such boats in their dealings with all waterway authorities and other relevant organisations.

To promote awareness of historic narrow boats through an archive, website, newsletter and other activities.

To promote and campaign for the retention and/or reinstatement of appropriate traditional and historical waterway furniture, features and working practices.

In furtherance of these aims the Club has membership of:



Patron  
of the  
Anderton  
Boat Lift



Associate Member  
**PWG**  
Parliamentary  
Waterways Group



Maritime  
Heritage Trust  
Promoting and  
Preserving  
Maritime Traditions

Views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the HNBC, its Chairman or Committee. Publication is encouraged to raise points of interest and to invite comment



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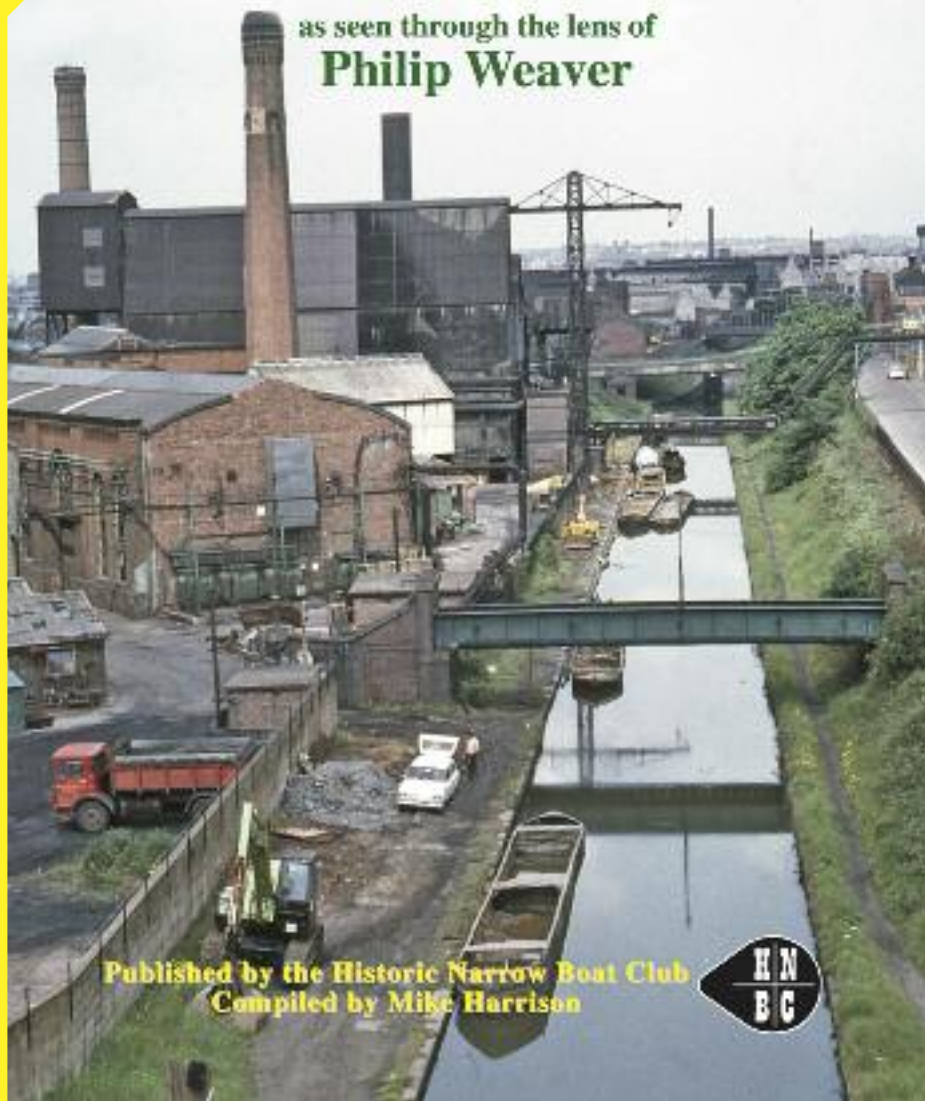
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— DISCOUNTED MOORINGS FOR HISTORIC CRAFT ON THE COVENTRY CANAL —

**New Publication by HNBC**  
Available at the November meeting - See page 6

# THE BIRMINGHAM CANAL NAVIGATIONS

1950 to 1977

as seen through the lens of  
**Philip Weaver**



Published by the Historic Narrow Boat Club  
Compiled by Mike Harrison

