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Issue No 13
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*The Magazine of the Lichfield & Hatherton
Canals Restoration Trust*



The Trust Stand at the National Waterways Festival Henley On Thames

THE TRUST

The Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust Limited was established in 1988 as a non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee (No. 2456172) and is registered as a charity (No. 702429).

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BIRMINGHAM NORTHERN RELIEF ROAD

The main news in this edition is the Government's decision to go ahead with the Birmingham Northern Relief Road (BNRR) without making adequate provision for our two canal restoration projects. Members will have received an information note in August, along with the AGM notice and the 1996 Accounts, setting out why we think they have made a serious error of judgement. We hope that as many as possible of our members and supporters will write in their own words and object, either directly to the Secretary of State (address at end) or through their local MP, sending us a copy of their letter and any response received.

The motorway has been given the go ahead to sever the route of both the Lichfield and the Hatherton canals

The motorway has been given the go ahead to sever the route of both the Lichfield and the Hatherton canals contrary to the recommendations of the Public Inquiry Inspector who expressed strong support for the restoration schemes and concluded that the necessary aqueduct and tunnels should be provided by the road developers at their expense. The decision letter says that only the foundations for the aqueduct and a water supply pipe will be included on the Lichfield Canal between Brownhills and Muckley Comer and makes no mention of the tunnels needed for the Hatherton Canal at Churchbridge near Cannock. Although no charge would be made for loss of toll income for later construction, these works would be at the Trust's expense and would not be practicable at Churchbridge. In effect they are permanently blocking the Hatherton Canal as a through route and adding significantly to the costs on the Lichfield Canal. The signals it gives that the Government cares little for waterways regeneration will also make raising further funding much more difficult, and who in the short term would grant us money to build an aqueduct that it has been clearly established is the responsibility of MEL to provide ?

The Trust and the Inland Waterways Association (IWA), who presented a joint case to the Public Inquiry in 1994-5, are outraged by this decision and the illogical reasons given. It runs counter to the new Government's intentions in combining Environment, Transport and the Regions and to their recent positive intervention to secure a navigable culvert at Latton. It also has serious implications for all other waterway restorations affected by new road schemes.

continued over

BIRMINGHAM NORTHERN RELIEF ROAD (continued)

We are determined to get this decision reversed and will use all avenues to convince the Minister, John Prescott that he has been very badly advised by his officials. Local MP's local authorities, BW and many individuals are already pledging support.

Clearly it will not be easy to persuade the Minister to change this decision, and we now need to mobilise public support to pressure him to review his hasty and misguided decision, but we believe we have reason and economics on our side, as well as the clearly expressed conclusions of the Inspector.

the Inspector recommended "that the Trust's objection be upheld, and that the BNRR project be required to incorporate alternative arrangements which will answer it".

In what is one of the most comprehensive and positive reports ever achieved for a waterway at Public inquiry, the Inspector recommended "that the Trust's objection be upheld, and that the BNRR project be required to incorporate alternative arrangements which will answer it". He recommends that almost all the requested structures "be incorporated in the BNRR scheme, for construction as part of the initial BNRR works or for whole or part deferment under a guarantee". This guarantee would be "a formal undertaking to carry out" the works when "the canal restoration has progressed to a point at which these works are warranted".

These recommendations follow from a careful consideration of all the evidence running to some 11 pages of his Report. The inspector stresses that substantial weight should be given to the Local Plan policies supporting the restoration and that there is no good or sufficient reason why the BNRR should be permitted to obstruct the restoration. He considers that the restoration project has a good and worthwhile prospect of success if it is not further obstructed. He agrees that the financial, leisure and heritage benefit of opening up the northern BCN will be substantial (this was not challenged by the Department). He dismisses the Department's legal argument that they do not have powers to carry out the works requested, and can see no reason why the works should need to be funded by the objector.

continued

BIRMINGHAM NORTHERN RELIEF ROAD (continued)

Despite such clearly expressed conclusions the Secretary of State disagrees and has decided that "it would not be appropriate". Although his letter says that "He accepts that it is incumbent on him to ensure that all feasible measures are taken to facilitate the future restoration of the canals", at a subsequent meeting with the Highways Agency (who were involved in writing his letter) the Project Manager has told the Trust that this assurance is meaningless, being invalidated by the subsequent reference in the same paragraph to only providing foundation works, a pipe and waiving loss of tolls !

the Inspector found that "there is no conflict of principle between the construction of the BNRR and the restoration of the canals".

The Government's decision letter claims that the motorway will not be an insuperable obstruction, yet the Inspector had accepted that it "would substantially prejudice the canal restoration" and that the later construction of the Churchbridge tunnels would be impracticably difficult. They also say that the BNRR should take precedence over the canals' restoration where conflict between the two arises, but the Inspector found that "there is no conflict of principle between the construction of the BNRR and the restoration of the canals".

As for the excuse that the canal restoration is a long term project, the BNRR scheme dates back to 1971 and will not be open before 2002 at the earliest. In saying that he does not consider the substantial expenditure is justified, the Minister ignores the Inspector's findings that the benefits are substantial and the costs "would not be disproportionately high in relation to the cost of the BNRR". Furthermore there is no cost to the public purse as the BNRR is to be privately financed by Midland Expressway Ltd. (MEL) who will recover their expenditure from 53 years of toll income.

The Inquiry established the engineering structures required to maintain the continuity of the canal routes. On the Lichfield canal the recommended Alternative 18 needs an aqueduct, two replacement locks and associated earthworks, and rebuilding of a culvert for the Crane Brook, total cost £1.8m.

continued over

BIRMINGHAM NORTHERN RELIEF ROAD (continued)

On the Hatherton canal the situation at Churchbridge is complicated and the recommended Alternative 77, Route 2 requires 2 box culvert tunnels under the main carriageways (240m long) and a roundabout (140m), 2 box culvert bridges under a sliproad and Walkmill Lane and an adjoining 100m section of concrete canal channel. The Inspector excluded the railway embankment tunnel. The Trust's engineers estimated these works at £1.4m whilst MEL's estimate was about £2.3m.

Whichever figures are accepted, these one-off costs (£3.2m-4.1m) would be vastly exceeded by the financial benefits to the Region from increased visitor expenditure, estimated at £2.8m along the canal routes themselves and at least as much again in the northern BCN area, for every year following completion of the restorations.

The Department has therefore advanced no credible reason for overturning the recommendations of its own Inspector.

The Department has therefore advanced no credible reason for overturning the recommendations of its own Inspector. This politically misguided decision can only be reversed by convincing the politicians that they are mistaken. The Trust and IWA hope that all their members and supporters will help put pressure on the Government by writing in their own words, either directly to **The Rt. Hon John Prescott MP, Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR**, or to their local MP. Please copy your correspondence to Phil Sharpe at 34 Old Eaton Road, Rugeley, Staffs. WS15 2EZ, who can also supply further information. The bottom line is simple, the Inspector's recommendations should be implemented in full and MEL should be directed to construct and pay for the necessary canal crossing structures at the appropriate time.

Philip Sharpe, Vice-Chairman

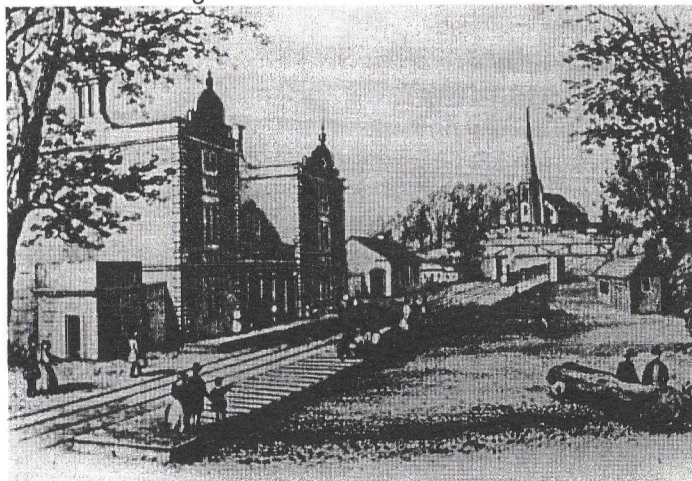
the Inspector's recommendations should be implemented in full and MEL should be directed to construct and pay for the necessary canal crossing structures at the appropriate time.

RYECROFT SHED WALSALL

FITTING STAFF 1930 - 1945, FITTER FRANK RIGBY

The late Frank Rigby passed away in 1979 after dedicating his life to the London Midland and Scottish Railway Company and later British Rail. Starting work as a fitter's apprentice in 1930 he graduated to senior fitter at Ryecroft Shed (3C) until 1946. He then served in a similar capacity at Monument Lane Shed, Birmingham (3E) until 1959 when he gained promotion to shedmaster at Bushbury Shed, Wolverhampton (3B). Bushbury closed to steam traction in 1963 and Frank became shedmaster at Aston Shed, Birmingham (3D) for a short while until closure in 1964. With the demise of steam traction in the Midland area, he then moved to Tyseley Shed, Birmingham as a fitter supervisor on the new mode of diesel traction. He retired due to ill health in 1976.

These notes relate to his Ryecroft days when the railway companies obtained maximum effort from its employees among the artisan staff for a wage that could be described as slightly above average for the working man during the Depression years. Frank soon became aware as he progressed with his fitter's practical education, that not only was a fitter required to maintain and repair steam locomotives, but had also to be available for servicing various shed installations. Beyond the shed, any installations within a given area, such as water columns and goods yard cranes, required the attention of Ryecroft fitters. However one such task allotted to Ryecroft Shed fitters required skills away from steam fitting duties.



an Early view
of Lichfield
City Station

contined over

RYECROFT SHED WALSALL (continued)

This unusual task was favourable in summer months but despised during winter. The LNWR many years ago installed water hydraulic lifts at Lichfield City and Lichfield Trent Valley Station. These lifts required constant maintenance with a weekly visit by a Ryecroft fitter, but on occasions fitters would be despatched to Lichfield. For these lifts to operate successfully the problem was made easy by the geology near Lichfield. Also very handily situated was the Ogley Hay to Huddlesford Canal at Pipe Hill approximately 1½ miles from Lichfield City Station. Pipe Hill being at some considerable height enabled water to flow via a pipeline situated alongside the railway line via Fosse Way level crossing. The sufficient pressure in this pipeline enabled lifts to operate successfully. The main problem regarding the malfunction of the lifts was lack of water pressure caused by blockage at the inlet grating, the chief culprit being weeds during the summer months plus various flotsam that found its way into a canal system. In severe winter conditions ice would be the problem. Near the water intake the railway company deposited a frogman's hat complete with a brazier. A daily visit by a permanent way lengthsman kept a check on this grating. One would be in temperatures below zero on permanent duty with a supply of coal, thus keeping the area free from ice.

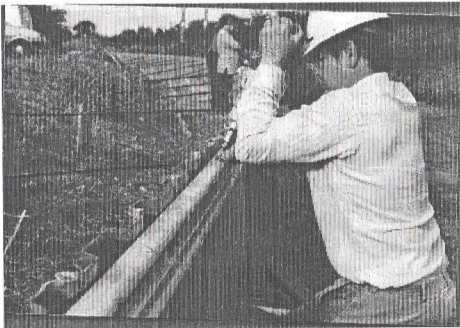
A fitter arriving at Pipe Hill Canal summit for the necessary maintenance procedure would board the footplate of a Bescot to Wichnor junction pick up freight that was allowed to stop in course by Ryecroft Shed, to be deposited at Pipe Hill, complete with his bag of required tools. On completion of the clearance of the inlet grating a mile walk along the tracks into Lichfield City Station where any maintenance such as fitting rubber washers to the cylinders holding the water pressure was required, thus enabling the lifts to function efficiently. This was completed about midday when lunch was taken in the station's staff mess-room. Another one mile march then took the fitter to Lichfield Trent Valley Station for similar duties to their lifts. Frank and other fitters would time this job to finish at Lichfield Trent Valley Station in time to return on the cushions on a later afternoon Derby local passenger to Walsall Station then to walk back to Ryecroft Shed. Then, as Frank Rigby related, a good job on a summer's day but in vile winter conditions an endurance much despised.

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Two at Once

July began with a visit by London wrg to Fosseway Lane where they installed the new head and sill beams - These mighty oaks cost £744 of which half is being granted by Lichfield DC Heritage Fund. After some struggling they fitted spot on and were secured by the original wrought iron bolts which had been re-threaded

A significant response to the dedicated Piling appeal allowed us to order a load of Mabey M7 piles in time for the main wrg work camp over the last two weeks of July. It takes quite a bit of skill and care to hold the piles upright (in both directions) and notwithstanding the noise the volunteers kept at it to the extent that some 70 metres of piles were installed altogether complete with the walling strip etc. and the dedication plaques for sponsors received up to early July. We now need more sponsors !



John Horton fixing the
'name' plates to the piling
that had been sponsored

Also at Darnford, the foundations for the lift bridge were dug out and concreted including those for the wing walls on the Huddlesford side and a start was made with the steel supports and brickwork up to bank level. Others painted the superstructure components in traditional black and white and also assisted two archivists for BW museum at Gloucester who came to recover a complete section of cast iron culvert redundant since the installation of the new one last summer. The old square headed nuts and bolts were good enough to unscrew but BW needed another visit in August to complete the removal which will then enable the foundations for the front wing wall to be concreted.

Meanwhile at Fosseway Lane yet more wrg volunteers (35 altogether in the second week) were ' getting Stuck into ' the silt exposed by draining the lock with a 4 inch centrifugal pump. They then pressure washed the invert from the head of the lock as far as the tail gate recess. It is now full of clear water.

Two at Once (continued)

A big thank you to our members who assisted with the plant and materials and also particular cakes and ice creams and other refreshment.



In addition Peter Mathews, assisted by some of our other regulars has put many Saturdays & Sundays over the summer on the bywash reconstruction on Lock 18. The tunnel portion is now covered over and landscaped so that only the new portal and the open channel is visible !

For the autumn our main focus will be the lift bridge at Darnford where we need to get the walls up to bank level before the superstructure can be erected.

We do have an outstanding commitment at Fosseway Lane which is the picnic table and stile included in the grant received from Conduit Lands Trust, we would be very pleased to hear from anyone able to assist with the supply and/or construction of these

John Horton

LICHFIELD AND HATHERTON CANALS RESTORATION TRUST LTD.

Registered Charity No. 702429

Principal Aims : To promote the restoration of the Wyrley and Essington Canal from Ogley Junction to Huddlesford Junction (the "Lichfield Canal"), and the Hatherton Branch of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal, and also the construction of a navigable link between the Hatherton Branch and the Cannock Extension Canal.

MARKETING REPORT

Since the successful Braunston Boat Show and Lichfield Bower Carnival over the Spring Bank Holiday last May, publicity and sales have continued throughout the summer, thanks to our willing volunteers manning the stands.

- 7 & 8 June Walsall Green Show & Rugeley Charter Fair
- 20 June Malthouse Midsummer Madness, Tipton
 (is it so called because the rain 'tipped down'?)
- 28 June Aldridge Fair & Bridge 21, Nuneaton
- 12 July Walsall Canal Boat Rally
- 2 & 3 August Birchills Canal Museum open week-end
- 16 August Internet Canal News U.K. Users Group, Hopwas
 - *see report below*
- 22-25 August National Waterways Festival, Henley-on-Thames
 - *see report on following pages*
- Anderton Boat Lift week-end
- 6 & 7 Sept. Shackerstone Steam and Canal week-end
 Tamworth Cruising Club open week-end
- 10 September Fradley Cruising Club
- 13 & 14 Sept. Lichfield Cruising Club open week-end, including
 celebrating the bi-centenary of opening the Ogley Section

INTERNET CANAL NEWS GROUP

One might think a request to give a talk at Hopwas Social Club (near Tamworth) would be a local affair, but far from it! Some members of the audience on 16th August came from as far away as Australia and California, joining their friends from all over the UK who 'talk' to each other about canals on computers through the Internet.

The 40 or so found they had picked one of the hottest week-ends of the summer to meet around an excellent barbecue! In the shade of the Clubhouse they enjoyed hearing about the history and state of restoration of the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals, especially seeing the variety of ground and aerial pictures in our archives. A generous donation of £72 was received with possibly more to come, and the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust Secretary asked us to visit them next Spring. Is our fame spreading?

Thanks go to organiser Sid Arkless of Whittington who has since become a Member and offers to help the Trust through the Internet. Anyone wanting more information should get in touch with me (see Page 2 for details).

Bob Williams

DEDICATED PILING APPEAL CONTRIBUTORS

(since last issue)

NAMES (alphabetical)	RESIDENTIAL AREA	INSCRIPTIONS ON PILES
Cooper, D & C	Norton Canes	THE COOPERS
		POLLY GARTER
Funnell, R & B	Chichester	R & B FUNNELL
		R & B FUNNELL
Henbury, J	Rugeley	JAMES HENBURY
Kenyon-Smith, Mrs J		MARCUS, HARRY, MEGAN
Nash & Partners Ltd	Chichester	NASH & PTNRS
Pattison, C	Lichfield	PATTISON
Pugson, M	Paignton	E PUGSON OBE
		MIKE PUGSON
		TOM PUGSON
		VIC PUGSON
Sayers, T	Leicester	ROSIE MADGE
Woodhouse, C & M	Guildford	WAIMARAMA

PILING SCHEME IS A GREAT SUCCESS!

Already, over £1,000 has been received from generous contributors towards the cost of installing the first run of piling on the Darnford Section of the Lichfield Canal. Many donations have come from non-members who are obviously keen to support our efforts. Thanks to everyone!

Dedications are for Grandchildren, Boats, Cats and Dogs, Clubs, Individuals and Family, past and present. One such is Mr Pugson, listed above who has since become a Member and to whom we are grateful for agreeing to an extract being quoted from one of his interesting letters.

'My Father [*E. Pugson OBE, died 1953*]. became the first Head of one of the biggest depts of B.R. after the same in L.M.S. He always wanted an integrated transport policy, including canals but he and his colleagues could get nowhere with the Politicians! It strikes me that your STEEL D.P. Appeal would be appropriate for him as STEEL was a large part of his life, being responsible for the first all-STEEL welded carriages (Liverpool - Southport, 1937) and then for the design and construction of the 16-ton all-STEEL mineral wagons.'

The Appeal Fund will remain open and all contributions will be gratefully received specifically towards the cost of continuing the piling work, acknowledged by the attachment of your inscription

Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust

PRODUCT ORDER FORM

Date _____

ITEM	DETAIL	PRICE	No.	TOTAL
Video, BCN Pt. 6	"THE LICHFIELD & HATHERTON CANALS"	£14.95		#£
T-Shirt	* Medium / Large / Extra Large	* Navy (M) / White	£10.00	#£
Sweatshirt	* Medium / Large / Extra Large	* Grey (M) / Navy	£16.50	#£
Ball-point pens	with L H C R T name	Bundle of 5	£2.50	£
Dedicated piling, Lichfield Canal (max.10 letters)	Inscription: _____ — (additional requests should be listed overleaf)	£15.00 each		£

* please indicate your choice
(subject to availability)

TOTAL COST

£

plus £1.50 P&P each item marked #

£

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES

PAYABLE TO: L.H.C.R.T.Ltd

I WISH TO MAKE A DONATION OF

£

TOTAL PAYMENT ENCLOSED

£

PLEASE COMPLETE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS OVERLEAF

NATIONAL WATERWAYS FESTIVAL, **HENLEY-ON-THAMES, 22 - 25 August 1997**

SUPPORT FROM TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES

Sponsored jointly by the Lichfield and the Burton-on-Trent Tourist Information Centres, the Trust was able to make a good showing at this year's National Waterways Festival at Henley. Sited on the busy Thames waterfront in the centre of a long linear site, our 4m-square marquee was visited by countless people who showed a keen interest in the T.I. literature and our restoration projects. Many had connections with the area, or certainly knew of it from cruising past the Junctions each end.

New displays with up to date photographs and a video-playing facility enabled us to explain the progress being made, bringing sympathetic support for reopening the northern BCN. A pleasing gain in membership and sales also added to our fund-raising, with special thanks to Laurence Hogg for donating profits of £75 on our recent sales of his range of popular canal video productions.

(continued overleaf)

Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust

PRODUCT ORDER FORM (see overleaf)

NAME:

ADDRESS:

POST CODE:

TELEPHONE:

Additional piling inscriptions: _____

Please send with payment to: BOB WILLIAMS, NORFOLK HOUSE,
29 HALL LANE, HAMMERWICH, BURNTWOOD, STAFFS. WS7 0JP

(continued from previous page)

The recent decision on the B.N.R.R. (see elsewhere in this issue) brought very many queries and expressions of concern as to how the Trust could be helped. Copies of the principal points were given to all Boaters, Campers and many visitors to the stand asking them to write to the Secretary of State to support our cause.

Thanks go to our Members who assisted in presenting a very good image of the Trust and in particular to the two Tourist Information Centres for enabling us to promote a wider view of canal-orientated Tourism in Lichfield and East Staffordshire.

AUTUMN CALENDAR

The show season continues with attendances at:-

18 & 19 Oct. Stourbridge Bonded Warehouse open week-end
1 November Galton Valley Bonfire Rally

If you're visiting, why not call in to see us?

Any Members wishing to help with developing Marketing plans for next year should please ring Bob Williams on 01543 671427.

HATHERTON HAPPENINGS

Over the past few months work has been concentrated on re-pointing, and replacing the missing parapets of Saredon Mill Bridge. The western parapet is now complete but for its copings and we shall have to cast these off site using the mould box manufactured for those laid at the Roman Way bridge. If any members have a few weekday hours spare to cast these in batches of four, the materials and mould are at Canal Transport Services boatyard where instructions encouragement and maybe even the odd cup of tea will be gladly provided in exchange for a little hard labour.

At our last work party attention was focused on the eastern parapet where a section of substandard brickwork laid about eighteen months ago by a work experience group, had to be demolished and the bricks cleaned for re-use. That particular group proved to be not Experienced, especially at bricklaying. September will see us reinstating their work and commencing work on the parapet, which is quite a substantial task. We shall need scaffold for this job, and I would be delighted to hear from anyone who may be able to loan or donate some putlog and tube or a couple of framed towers and some battens.

During the summer the wonderful weather encouraged the towpath weeds to grow at such a pace that walking some stretches has been difficult, this despite the use of a hired strimmer. However, thanks to the fund raising efforts of Mike Smith and the generosity of the Department of the Environment's Local Project fund, the Trust is now the possessor of it's very own heavy duty strimmer. This is a wheeled contraption with cutting cords so thick, and which rotate at such speed, that I'm sure they would take the leg off a dog. This ferocious machine has been put to good use at our last two work parties and on a number of mid week sorties, so the towpath can now be walked for almost all the length between the Roman Way and Oak Lane.

So, perhaps I should close this report with a newly received Health and Safety warning - " Volunteers are now requested not to sleep in the long grass adjacent to the work site, as the Trust cannot be held responsible for any appendages being accidentally cut off when the strimmer Beastie is in use "- Be Warned!

Thank you all for your efforts on site over the past months, do please keep coming

Dennis Cooper



Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust

DONATIONS (from 01/03/1997 to 01/09/1997)

G. Randle	5.00	Mr N. Blears ,	20.00
E. & M.H. Pringle	5.00	M. Cooper	5.00
J.E. & D.I. Wood	50.00	C.C. Maclean	5.00
Dr. Hollingworth	578.70	Miss M.R. Baker	10.00
D.A. Stevenson	5.00	I.D.E. de Hamel	5.00
W.A. Cadbury Trust	5,000.00	J.R. Wallis	30.00
L.C. & E.E. Owens	10.00	R.A. Bamberger	5.00
Tudor Cruising Club	10.00	J. Morris	5.00
Byfleet Boat Club	10.00	S.E. Attwood	10.00
Trent & Mersey Canal	20.00	A. Porter	5.00
Stoke on Trent Boat Club	25.00	R. Nicholls	10.00
Greyhound-Boat Club	25.00	J.C. Beaney	5.00
Clark Charitable Trust	200.00	B. Kingshott	5.00
M B & B Canal Society	4.00	M. Jelley	5.00
IWA - West Midlands Region	400.00	D.J Mills	15.00
IWA - Middlesex Branch	500.00	J.M. Watts	5.00
IWA - South London Branch	500.00	M.C. Crocket	5.00
IWA Lichfield Branch	500.00	C.A. Cork	5.00
IWA London Region	750.00	G. Devey	5.00
Lichfield District Council	278.00	A.E. Harman	5.00
Lichfield Conduit Lands Trust	3,400.00	P.G. Sharpe	100.00
Braunston Boat Show	500.00	J. & M. Phillips	40.00
Institute of Plant Engineers	50.00	Mr. Potts	5.00
D. Heath Eves Charitable Trust	75.00	Mr. Cole	5.00
Mr P Seagrave	190.00	M.H. Smith	5.00
Mr T Hollingworth	271.00	Mr. Cotton	50.00
Anonymous (via Charities Aid).	200.00		

Many thanks to these and to the many others who have contributed smaller amounts or donations in kind or supported our marketing activities



Mapping Lichfield & Hatherton history.

Among the many historic waterway documents I've acquired over the years (most to my wife's joy - having gone to museums) is a file of BCN maps. These were given to me by a friend who was a senior National Coal Board engineer in the Ashby/Leicestershire coal-field; having been found when clearing out a colliery office. (No - neither of us knows why a set of BCN maps should be at an Ashby colliery either!).

They are mostly of the whole BCN network, with some surrounding waterways shown but there are a number of larger scale maps of individual Districts: As you may know the BCN was divided into 'Districts' for administration. There is also a very detailed northern Grand Union main line map showing its BCN links. None are actually dated but the District maps - on linen - have an LNWR stamp so are pre.1923. The most modern are dyeline Docks & Inland Waterways Executive, South- Western Division prints. One showing most of the Midland canals and stamped 2/6d and the other in a 'London Underground' schematic style of just the BCN and its locks.

Apart from the general historic interest of all the maps - particularly the Districts - there are two that are especially fascinating. On one of the large-scale prints some clerk has been given the task of marking every private wharf on the system in an intricate spiders web of very small, but clear, pencil work. The other is one of the BTW schematics, which has all current traffics and annual tonnage's - including collieries and other sources - marked on in different coloured pencil.

The Lichfield section of the Wyrley & Essington Canal was part of BCN District No.5, which also included the Birmingham & Fazeley Canal downhill from Minworth Top Lock to Fazeley and the section of the Coventry Canal, built by that company and still administered by the BCN, to Whittington Brook. From Minworth Top Lock it was No.1 District and from Ogley Junction, No.4 District.

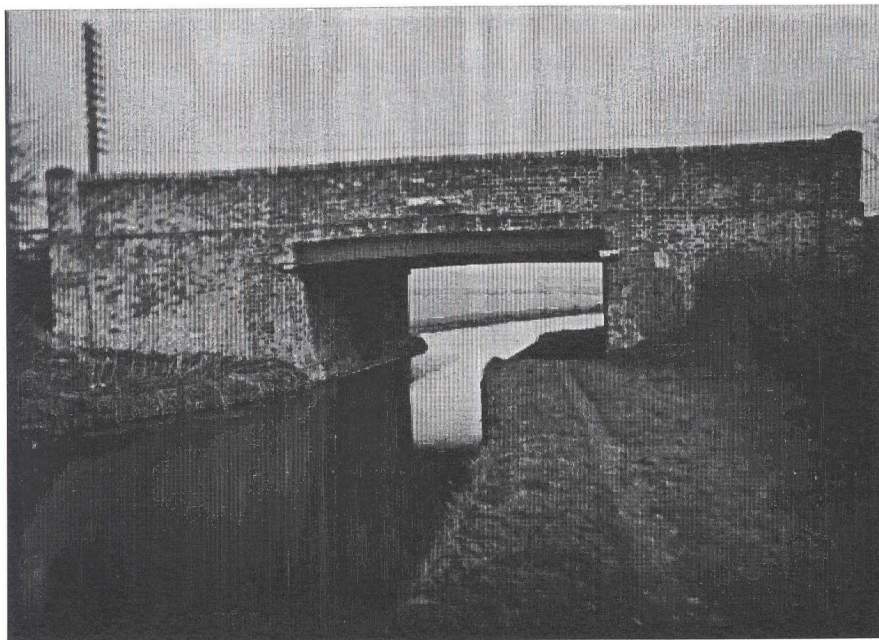
The maintenance of roadways over bridges is indicated and the BCN were responsible for all of these on this section except for Pipe Hill Bridge. Stop Plank Grooves were located at Boat, Wall Road, Pipe Hill, Shaws, Wall Lane, Sand Field and Watery Lane bridges. There is a valve shown above Cappers Bridge and a weir below the lock below Tamworth Road Bridge. Company wharves are shown between Boat and Wall Road bridges (Red Cap Wharf), above Pipe Hill Bridge (Pipe Hill Wharf),

continued over

Mapping Lichfield & Hatherton history (continued)

in Lichfield between Birmingham Road and the Railway bridges (Lichfield Wharf) and between the two locks between Cricket Lane and Freeford Farm bridges (Lock Wharf) and above Danford Road Bridge (Pepper Mill Wharf) (*Note: All spellings are as on the maps*). They are also all printed as company owned on the master of the map marked up with private wharves. Private wharves written in pencil are: Pipe Hill Water Works, above Pipe Hill Bridge, Sandfield Water Works, above Sandfield Bridge, and Lichfield Gas Works, next to Lichfield Wharf. Coming forward in time to the Docks & Inland Waterways Executive, South-Western Division, schematic traffic map; 5,000 tons of coal are shown as passing (presumably downhill) on the Lichfield section.

continued over



Freeford Canal Bridge around 1941
(prior to laying of 9inch main along Tamworth Road)

Mapping Lichfield & Hatherton history (continued)

Without straying too far away into the main BCN network it is worth noting that 10,000 tons were loaded on the Anglesey Branch from Cannock Chase Colliery, with half of that going the other way. So we can probably assume that it was that colliery's coal that came down to Lichfield. Looking at the Anglesey Branch on the 'wharf' map, there was a company wharf (Watling Street Wharf) above the A5 and private wharves at Cannock Chase, Yates' Sand Mine (quarry) and Brownhills Chemical Works. The Map also points out that Watling Street Wharf was the loading point for Park Lane Colliery. In the early days of a friendship with Jim Yates which lasted until his death, I recall that he was still quarrying sand in the early 60s but bringing it out by road.

As the Cannock Extension somewhat concerns us (the maps end at the bottom of the Churchbridge flight) it is worth looking at the wharves on that stretch. On the old map company wharves are marked as - Wyrley Grove Wharf, by the bridge of that name, Norton Green Wharf, Below Badgers Bridge, Sylvesters Wharf, above that bridge, and Hednesford Basins. Private wharves are Brownhills Colliery Basins and (?) W. Harrison Ltd, and Yates Brothers Dock (I'm sure that you know these locations), Conduit Colliery Wharf, in the arm by the railway near Hednesford Road Bridge, Coppice Colliery Basin, between Badgers and Sylvesters bridges, Cannock & Leacroft Colliery Basin, below High Bridge (junction at Churchbridge), and Mid Cannock Colliery Basin, below Rumer Hill Bridge. East Cannock and Cannock & Rugeley collieries are shown as using the west and east arms, respectively, of Hednesford Basins. There are wharves indicated vaguely on the Staffs & Worcester below Churchbridge named Old Coppice Colliery and T.A.Hawkins & Sons Ltd. Travelling forward again to the D&IWE schematic, all these collieries are still marked as sources of traffic except Coppice and Cannock & Leacroft. No less than 236,000 tons of coal are shown as being moved on the Cannock Extension; with again a note and an arrow pointing from the bottom of Churchbridge, saying Old Coppice 3/4 and 10,000 tons.

By kind permission of Harry Arnold
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Disclaimer

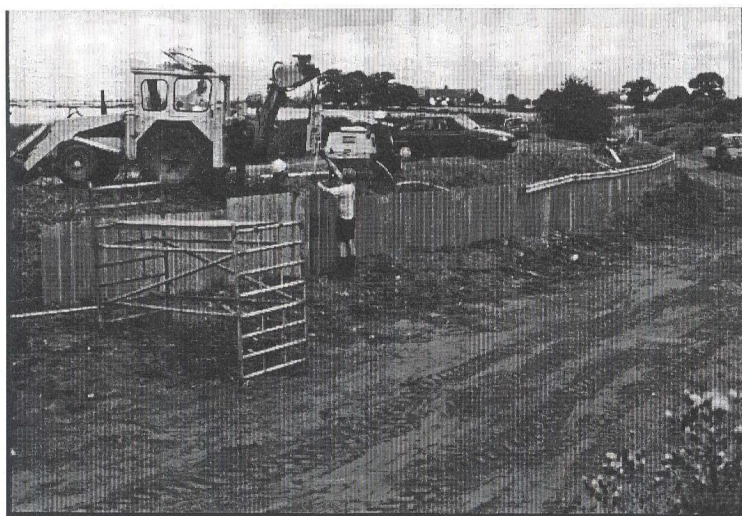
The opinions and views expressed in Cut Both Ways do not necessarily represent those of the *Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust*

waterway recovery group 2 week Work Camp in july

Wing walls and base for the lift bridge at Darnford



Installation of Piling at Darnford



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Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1997

The Trust's 7th AGM was held on Saturday 20th September at Whittington Village Hall. Some 33 members and guests were present and approved the previous minutes, the Directors' Report and Accounts for 1996, and elected officers and the auditors.

Our Chairman, Eric Wood gave a short report on the Trust's activities and plans and thanks to his enthusiastic team. Eric Wood, Denis Cooper and Philip Sharpe were then re-elected as Directors and the co-option of Stephen Pitt and Derek Beardsmore to the committee was confirmed.

After the formal business there were a series of presentations by Trust officers followed by questions and discussions. Mike Smith reported on fund-raising, which had already equalled last years total of £18,000, and on major bids now submitted. Marketing, established by Bob Williams less than a year ago has exceeded all expectations and contributed nearly £3,000 so far. Membership, dealt with by Trevor Morris has grown from 170 last year to 254 now. Hatherton Canal work parties led by Denis Cooper are concentrating on bridge repairs and towpath clearance. Lichfield Canal work under John Horton has made rapid progress with the lock at Fosseyway Lane and on piling and building a lift bridge at Darnford Lane. Publicity coverage in newspapers and at events has been excellent and our magazine has been rejuvenated under Steve Pitt's editorship. Only the Birmingham Northern Relief Road decision has been bad news, but the very favourable Inspector's report gives us encouragement to fight to get this reviewed.

Members then went on to visit the work sites at Darnford and Fosseyway to see the progress being made. This was followed by a most pleasant gathering and barbecue at the Chairman's house at Whittington Wharf.

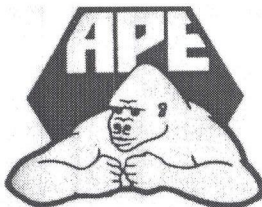
Copies of the full minutes of the AGM meeting are being sent to all those present and will be available at next years AGM. ,anyone else wanting a copy should send a stamped addressed envelope to Phil Sharpe. (address on page 2)

Philip Sharpe

new members up to 15/09/1997

Mr D C Cobb	Hinckley	Mr A R Nuttall	London
Mr P J Eldridge	Tamworth	Mrs J. Horton	Lichfield
Mr J Crawley	Lichfield	Mr J Lamming	M Rasen
Mr P Gwinnon	Alton Staffs	Wheelton Boat Club	Bolton
Mr S M Arkless	Whittington	Mr I Stevenson	Cannock
Mr P Lea	Berkhamsted	Mr P Jequier	Stone
Mr G Preece	Burntwood	Mr R E Funnell	Havant
Mr N C Mitchell	Gloucester	Mr P Wetherhill	Stafford
Mr R Hallam	Nottingham	Mr R Jones	Lichfield
Mr D Marshall	Abbots Langley	Mr B Gardner	Sheffield
Mr D Gittins	Amblecote	Mr R Hopkins	Slough
Mr M E Pugson	Paignton	Mr B Hales	Egham
Mr V Stanway	Burntwood	Mr H Arnold	Alrewas
Mr W A Sibley	Wells N T Sea	Mr B J Holloway	Chinnor
Mr D J Hoskison	Sutton Coldfield	Mrs S Kelleher	Maldon
Mr A Veness	Sutton Coldfield	Mr P Baker	Lichfield
Mr I H Caplan	Birmingham	Mr R Unitt	Walsall
Mr E Welford	Whittington	Mr S P Watts	London
Mr J W King	Walton On Thames	Mr M Wilson	Redditch
The Oli-Day Boat Company	Brownhills	Fradley Junction Cruising Club	Fradley
Middle Nene Cruising Club	Desborough		

Our thanks go to Aldridge Piling Equipment for the loan of equipment during the wrg Work Camp in July



Aldridge Piling Equipment (Hire) Company Limited

Conduit Road . Conduit Industrial Estate . Norton Canes . Cannock . Staffordshire . WS11 3TJ
Tel: 01543 277680 / 270090 Fax: 01543 270090

WORKING PARTIES: OCTOBER 1997- MARCH 1998

Working Parties are now held regularly on the first and third Sundays of each month, alternating between the two canals, as shown below. On the Lichfield Canal we are working on two sections of canal, at Darnford Lane south east of Lichfield and at Fosseway Lane south held west of the city. We may also do some work at Tamworth road. On the Hatherton we are working on 1½miles of canal south west of Cannock. Our varied programme of work includes scrub bashing, fencing, hedging, towpath levelling, mowing, reinstating the channel, piling, repairing and rebuilding bridges, excavating and repairing locks. There are a variety of tasks available for the fit and not so fit.

LICHFIELD CANAL

Dates:	Times
Sun 5th Oct.	10am - 4pm
Sun 2nd Nov.	10am - 3pm
Sun 7th Dec.	10am - 3pm
<u>1998</u>	
Sun 4th Jan.	10am - 3pm
Sun 1st Feb.	10am - 3pm
Sun 1st Mar.	10am - 4pm

HATHERTON CANAL

Dates:	Times:
Sun 19th Oct.	10am - 4pm
Sun 16th Nov.	10am - 3pm
Sun 21st Dec.	10am - 3pm
Sun 18th Jan.	10am - 3pm
Sun 15th Feb.	10am - 3pm
Sun 15th Mar.	10am - 4pm

Lichfield Canal work parties at Fosseway Lane are accessed by the railway level crossing between Pipehill and Sandfields, Lichfield (SK 101 079). To find the Darnford Lane site (SK 139 086) from Lichfield take the A51, cross over the A38 and turn left in front of the "Horse & Jockey" down the narrow lane to the junction with Darnford Lane.

Hatherton work parties will meet at Saredon Mill Bridge near Four Crosses (SJ 947 089). This is easy accessible off the A5 just west of Cannock.

However, alternative locations or additional dates may be arranged as required, particularly on the Lichfield canal. For confirmation of the meeting point or for other information contact Phil Sharpe at 34 Old Eaton Road, Rugeley, Staffordshire. WS15 2EZ. Tel. 01889-583330.

Or, you can contact our two local Working Party Organisers direct on:

Lichfield Canal	John Horton, 01543-262466 (home).
Hatherton Canal	Denis Cooper, 01543-374370 (work.)