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*The Magazine of the Lichfield & Hatherton
Canals Restoration Trust*



Little & large, the Trusts dumper dwarfed by the one of the 6 tonne dumpers hired for the visit of Navvies Anonymous . photo by J Horton

LICHFIELD AND HATHERTON CANALS RESTORATION TRUST LTD.

Registered Office 10 Bennetts Hill, Birmingham B2 5RS

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).

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.

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The views expressed in Cut Both Ways Do not necessarily represent those of the Trust or the Editor. They are however, published as being of interest to our readership.
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VICE-CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Phil Sharpe reports on anniversaries, BNRR, consultants, meetings, planning and publicity.

ANNIVERSARIES

July 13th will be the 10th Anniversary of the meeting in 1988 at which "after much discussion it was agreed to form a restoration group", to apply for charitable status and to call it "The Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust". This was at the 5th meeting of the "IWA West Midlands Restoration Group -BCN Initiative" and was held at Eric Wood's house in Whittington. In recalling the earlier meetings Eric reminds us that of his co-conspirators, Ken Goodwin, Stan Salmon and Ron Pritchard have all since sadly passed away and he is the only one left. But at least Eric plans to stick around a while yet ! The committee appointed in July 1988 has otherwise stood the test of time, with Eric as Chairman, Brian Kingshott Secretary, Nick Grazebrook Treasurer, and Denis Cooper and myself as members.

At first we were actually called the Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Society and it was some months later before the constitution was approved and the name Trust used in the Accounts (14/12/88). It was more than a year later before the Trust was incorporated as a Limited Company (29/12/89) and later still (25/10/90) before we formally started trading as LHCRT Ltd. So selecting one date to mark our origin is not that easy, but that meeting of 13th July 1988 was the crucial one and initiated the Society, and we intend the next edition of CBW to include a retrospective on what we have achieved since. However, if you want an excuse to celebrate then we can do it again on 29th December 1999 to mark 10 years since the Trust itself was incorporated, although I suspect that may be subsumed in some bigger celebrations which are rumoured to be likely around then !

BNRR CAMPAIGN

Another, less happy, anniversary is the first year since the Birmingham Northern Relief Road (BNRR) decision, on the 28th July 1997. What have we achieved since then ? On the face of it not very much, but we never imagined that it was going to be easy to change the Government's mind. At present our best hope is that the Anti-BNRR Alliance succeed with their legal actions to stop the whole motorway project.

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VICE-CHAIRMAN'S NOTES (continued)

They have won small victories in persuading the High Court to order the release of sections of the secret Concession Agreement and defeated the attempt by MEL to bring forward from October the date of their second action challenging the legality of the decision based on the apparent inclusion of punitive damage clauses. July should bring the full decision on the first action and establish the strength of their case. Whatever the final outcome, the delay from the legal actions is to our advantage in giving us more time to strengthen support, pressure the government, build up our membership and finances, and make more progress with physical restoration.

Following our meeting with MEL we have had a letter which says that they will undertake design work on the aqueduct foundations and will consider retention of the Crane Brook culvert, as requested. They admit that building the Churchbridge tunnel after opening would need contraflows for 4 months which would cost them about £4 million in lost toll income, vastly more than the cost of building the tunnels as part of the construction (our P.I. figure was £1.2 m for both main tunnels). They also admit that later construction would cost three or four times as much. Despite this they are not prepared to contribute any finance. This is the economics of the mad house.

We attended the Parliamentary Waterways Group meeting in April which was addressed by Richard Caborn MP, Minister for Regions, Regeneration and Planning. He was pressed to introduce stronger planning guidance for waterways and we had an opportunity to challenge him as to why DETR had not followed the existing guidance on avoiding severance of waterways when approving the BNRR. He invited us to write to him and promised to investigate. Our response makes the points that by ignoring their own advice in PPG13 the government are totally undermining the integrity of the planning system and that there need be no conflict between the BNRR and the canal restorations if the crossings are provided. We are still awaiting a reply to our earlier letter to him in October 1997 emphasising the economic regeneration benefits to the West Midlands amongst other things.

Valued support on this issue has also come from David Fletcher, Chief Executive of British Waterways, writing as Chairman of the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities on behalf of their 27 member navigation authorities, including BW, Environment Agency, Manchester Ship Canal Company and many more influential bodies. His letter refers to "a blatant breach of the planning policy guidelines" and asks for Mr. Caborn's personal intervention to stop the abuse of waterways by road developments. IWA have also supported us with a letter to the Minister.

VICE-CHAIRMAN'S NOTES (continued)

We have also challenged certain statements by Nick Peel, the faceless civil servant who currently sends out most of the standard replies which fail to answer any of the points raised in our supporters letters. He now says that there is a "general policy that provision would be made for disused waterways without navigation rights if there were reasonable prospects of success for the restoration project". Perhaps he should have told John Prescott about this !

Many more people have been made aware of the significance of our restorations to the northern BCN, and the importance of changing the BNRR decision, by the excellent Campaign Rally organised by IWA at Pelsall in May. The Trust featured prominently in the Rally Brochure and pre-printed post cards were included with which to lobby the Waterways Minister Angela Eagle. The VIP cruise provided an opportunity to get the message over to local politicians and Brian did a good PR job on the public address system.

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

We have been fortunate to be offered the assistance of management consultancy services at no cost to the Trust. John Meredith, a boat owner with project management and business consultancy expertise, and Phil Evans, with experience of major transport infrastructure projects, met us in December to discuss how they could help move our projects forward. Since then Phil Evans has had a series of meetings with officers of all 3 Districts and the County Council and asked them a range of probing questions to establish how they perceive our projects and where they can assist. He has produced comprehensive notes for us and a useful summary. Phil also accompanied us to the meeting with the Government Office for the West Midlands (see below). John and Phil have now combined with other professional colleagues under the title of Waterside Development Consultants and at a recent meeting we reviewed their findings so far and considered the way forward for the future.

WDC are prepared to continue working for us without remuneration with the first main objective of bringing together a partnership of funding bodies to commission a comprehensive Engineering and Economic Feasibility Study for the Hatherton Canal, which they would project manage on our behalf. This would be based on objectives and a specification proposed by the Trust in 1995 to Staffordshire County Council, which unfortunately was not proceeded with at that time due to the change of priorities in English Partnerships away from funding such studies. Possible alternative sources of funding have now been identified.

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VICE-CHAIRMAN'S NOTES (continued)

If successful, we would hope subsequently to do a similar study for the Lichfield canal but that is less pressing as we have already produced our own in-house Cost/Benefit Report.

GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS

It has taken a long time to get a meeting with the Government Office for the West Midlands but the pressure finally paid off after Eric made his dissatisfaction known to Baroness Hayman. GOWM appeared to expect us to be there only to complain about the BNRR, but the Trust went well prepared with a briefing document to explain the wider benefits of the restorations to the regional economy and environment. The general atmosphere was constructive and by the end of the meeting they said we had convinced them and offered to help us identify funding sources and to hold future meetings. At least they now know what we are about and we may have sowed the seeds of future assistance.

LICHFIELD SOUTHERN BY-PASS

The diversion route for the canal around the south-west corner of Lichfield is vital to the success of the whole scheme and we agreed the general alignment some years ago with Lichfield District Council to follow outside the proposed Southern By-pass, but they declined to show it on the Local Plan. With the final stages of the Plan's adoption giving the green light for major housing development there have been three recent planning applications for this area. The developers had tried to move the line of the road west to increase the housing area but not leaving enough room for the new canal line and we strongly objected to this. As a result the road is now back on the originally agreed line although we still have problems to resolve over headroom at the intersections with Fossey Lane and Birmingham road. It seems likely that the land required for the canal diversion will be provided by the developers, and we are trying to convince them that they should also include the basic earth moving along with the road construction.

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VICE-CHAIRMAN'S NOTES (continued)

PRESS & PUBLICITY

Press interest in our activities remains high, particularly around Lichfield, with our meeting with MEL being covered by the Lichfield Mercury ("Canal group in London talks with toll road chiefs"). The start of work on Lock 25 at Tamworth Road in April was extensively reported in the Express & Star ("Bid to unlock canal's glories") and the Lichfield Post ("Enthusiasts flock to lock"), with the Mercury including a colour picture of the lock being excavated by Navvies Anonymous ("Canal dig offers a glimpse into Lichfield's past"). In May the work of Newbury Working Party Group at Darnford Lane made the news in the E&S ("Navvies travel to help out"). Another opportunity for the headline writers saw "Water way to spend the day" as the banner to the Mercury's illustrated report on the Pelsall rally, which highlighted the Trust's fight against the BNRR decision, and pictured several Trust members in costume. In June, the Trust's AGM was previewed in the Post, twice over, and a week too early in the E&S. They don't get everything right!

The waterways press have also given us welcome support, and Canal & River-boat's May edition reported "Powerful backing for Lichfield & Hatherton as Trust meets Minister", whilst their Tribune columnist used "Cut Both Ways" as a headline to urge readers to write to John Prescott on our behalf. The same edition also launched the "Cut to Caernarfon" cruise by nb *Progress* to raise funds for LHCRT and WRG, with follow-up sponsorship forms in subsequent editions. Canal Boat & Inland Waterways in May showed a navigable culvert provided for the Neath Canal under the heading "Yes Minister ! It can be done", and the July edition urged readers to "Support the Lichfield & Hatherton canals with the *Progress* Appeal". Chris Coburn's enterprising campaigning for the Trust was also featured in Reflections in the July Waterways World, so there can be few waterways people who have not now heard about us. The value of all this publicity in increased membership and donations is considerable.

Finally, we should not forget Navvies, the entertaining newsletter of the Waterway Recovery Group. The cover for Feb/March showed our lift bridge being load tested by London and North East WRG navvies and included two reports on weekend work parties, and the April/May edition ended with a journalistic scoop about the "Lichfield Swing Aqueduct". Lawyers for Bill Blunte are investigating !

Philip Sharpe, Vice-Chairman, LHCRT

UP BEAT A.G.M.

All members of societies and clubs know what to expect from the Annual General Meeting and usually take swift avoiding action. Rather like the famous Max Boyce rugby song - They all had Doctor's Papers. Committees hit back with guarantees of brevity followed by an appealing social event but attendance remains agonisingly low. It was most encouraging to attend the Trust A.G.M. at Whittington on 20th June and find almost 40 people attending and looking keen to be there. Almost a dozen members of the general public turned up and there can be no other convincing, if surprising and encouraging, reason than that they were interested in what the Trust is doing.

The Chairman's report, delivered with Eric's usual panache, clearly showed what has been achieved in the year which ended last December and how many new ventures and initiatives are now under way. Obviously, there is strong disappointment surrounding the decision not to preserve the track through the BNRR but Eric made it clear just how much has been done and how much will still be done to make the point both to Government and to Midland Expressway. Later discussion in the open forum showed that everyone present supported the Trust's stance that the best approach remains to concede the building of the road while working to ensure that the canal route is safeguarded. Nobody thought that the Trust should join the Alliance which opposes the road in principle.

After the Chairman's report the formal business was swiftly concluded with all the retiring Directors and the co-opted Directors being confirmed by the meeting unanimously. Then followed reports from Marketing, Membership, Fund-Raising and the restoration directors on the two canals. All showed that considerable progress and enterprise is common-place in all the areas of the Trust's activities.

The meeting was followed by tea and biscuits which gave everyone a chance to meet and discuss the important issues. The impressive displays were there to be examined and, of course, the shop was fully staffed to ensure maximum sales and income. Members and guests were then given the opportunity to visit the work sites on the Lichfield Canal and then to meet again for a barbecue in the Chairman's garden.

Surely, members will actually look forward to the next A.G.M. Good news travels fast in every respect.

Brian Kingshott Company Secretary

Overview of the Lichfield Canal

PART 1 The Sites.

For the benefit of members who have recently joined The Trust or who may otherwise not be familiar with the details of the project, we reproduce the overall project plan of the Lichfield Canal. The length from Ogley Junction on the BCN to Huddlesford Junction on the Coventry Canal is just under 7 miles. The route is mostly original but contains three modifications in order to avoid developments erected since abandonment.

In order to start restoration one thinks of basic requirements of labour and materials, achievable via volunteers and donations/grants. However, more fundamental are possession of the site and planning permission. Thus it was, starting with nothing in 1991, that the Trust felt very grateful when Lichfield District Council agreed to our Chairman's request to allow us to begin work on the only site available at that time. It is about half a mile long and situated almost exactly half way from Ogley to Huddlesford at **Fosseway Lane**.

About one third of it had been filled in, including Lock 18, and the remainder drained dry and growing scrub. We have cut down the scrub, excavated the lock and repaired it, including the weir and by-wash, and thanks to the presence of a land drain it now contains water. Financial assistance from Lichfield District Council Heritage Fund and particularly the Conduit Lands Trust has assisted the work and the provision of a stile and picnic table for recreational use. Our next step here will be to re-establish the towpath along the bottom length as a footpath.

Our second site is at **Darnford** and actually comprises two sites joined together. The bottom part is some 250 yards of original canal which had been partly levelled and led to a very derelict lock, now occupied by a badger sett. This was purchased in 1993 by Lichfield District Council, financed by a Derelict Land Grant and licensed to the Trust. The nearer part is about 400 yards long and purchased by the Trust also in 1993, financed by a loan from IWA, of which the final instalment has just been repaid.

The Trust engaged contractors to excavate a rough channel along "our" part, joining into the original line with a new winding hole but it was not possible at the time to complete these earthworks because the lower part of the site was cut in two by Darnford Brook.

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Overview of the Lichfield Canal (continued)

In 1996, aided by finance from the Manifold Trust and labour from Waterway Recovery Group, a new culvert was installed to take the brook under the canal. Sections of the old cast iron culvert (which was fully silted up) were removed and donated to the Waterways Museum at Gloucester. Vehicle access is now available beyond the brook which has allowed us to erect the lift bridge. The purpose of the lift bridge is to transfer the towpath over to the Lichfield side avoiding the new "nature reserve" where deciduous saplings have been planted. Over 150 metres of sponsored piling have been installed at this site. Recently, land on both sides of "our" section has been leased for the construction of a golf course, so we are very fortunate to have gained possession of this strip when we did.

Our third site lies midway between the other two sites and at the present time consists of two lock sites adjacent to the **Tamworth Road**. This land is owned by the Lichfield City Council who have allowed the Darwin Trust to establish their Darwin Walk on part of it.

However, with the co-operation of the Darwin Trust and the District Council which is the planning authority, the City Council has licensed the Trust to excavated and refurbish these locks. We are conscious of being very much in the public eye here. A good performance will hopefully allow the Council to extend our license on their land which goes all the way from the A38 to Wordsworth Close.

Other relevant sites are Ogley Junction where a marina has recently been established between the junction and Lock 1 by our members Mr and Mrs Day. The Huddlesford Arm which is owned by British Waterways and leased to the Lichfield Cruising Club, runs from Huddlesford Junction to Capper's Lane and is fully navigable.

Whilst we would like to (and are occasionally asked when we expect to) complete restoration of one section, the Policy and Planning Committee feel that the acquisition of further sites, as and when opportunities arise, should be a higher priority at this stage. Whilst meanwhile continuing to beaver away as and when volunteers and resources permit, we are particularly grateful to Waterway's Recovery Group and our own volunteers for all their effort and the progress which has been made.

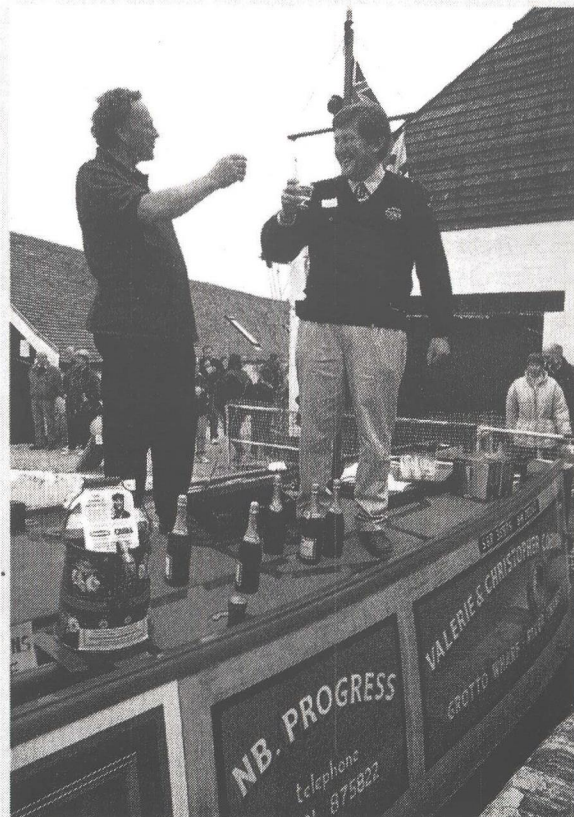
John Horton

CAMPAIGNING SPIRIT

Extract of a column from Waterways World by kind permission of Hugh Potter.

One of the important non-commercial events at the Braunston Boat Show was the launch of the Progress "Cut to Caernarfon" campaign cruise. This is in support of the Lichfield & Hatherton Canals restoration Trust's fight against the potential severing of those waterways by the Birmingham Northern Relief Road (BNRR). L&HCRT have never opposed the construction of this controversial privately funded-road, but have merely asked that its builders Midland Expressway LTD (MEL) offer facilities for the restored canals to cross it. Initial euphoria at the Public Inquiry Inspector's recommendation that MEL should build the canal crossings were dashed by the Secretary of State, John Prescott, over riding the Inspector's considered decision. He said that L&HCRT should pay for virtually all the extra cost that would become necessary as a result of MEL building the BNRR (October 1977 WW).

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Chris Coburn and Tim Coghlan launch the Cut to Caernarfon Cruise on Progress

CAMPAIGNING SPIRIT (continued)

When the new Government formed the Department of the Environment, Transport & the Regions, *Waterways World* felt that some kind of rationality might influence future decisions that had in the past involved two departments with, theoretically, very different objectives. DETR's decision to put a navigable culvert under Latton by pass to allow restoration of the Thames & Severn seemed to confirm this. John Prescott's more recent decision puts the Government's intentions in serious doubt.

So it falls to good old campaign cruising to gain funds and publicity to fight the Government and to make them see sense. This is just what Chris Coburn, on his well-traveled narrowboat *Progress* is doing on behalf of L&HCRT. The national publicity generated by his stranding on Constantine weir at Ipswich enabled Chris to raise over £1,800 for IWA at Henley last year. This year he plans from the outset to raise money for, and to publicise, the L&HCRT's campaign against the Government's decision on the BNRR.

After visiting Stoke-on-Trent on 16th June, Chris will head north for the open Weekend at Taylor's Dock at Chester, on 27th June. He will then travel down onto the Dee estuary, along the North Wales coast to Rhyl, Llandudno, Conway and Bangor, before passing through the Menai Straits. He will be accompanied by a Sea Otter trail boat to Caernarfon for rendezvous with the Manchester Ship Canal tug *Dido* which is coming round the coast from London. The return route will take *Progress* via Birkenhead, the Manchester Ship on Canal and Weaver (to publicise Anderton Lift) to the National Waterways Festival at Salford.

You can support the "Progress" and choose whether your sponsorship goes to L&HCRT or to Waterway Recovery Group, or equally to both. Whatever you choose, none actual goes towards the cost of the voyage itself or the appeal's administration, which are supported by commercial sponsorship.

You can obtain full details of sponsorship from Progress Appeal, Norfolk House, 29 Hall Lane, Burntwood, Staffs WS7 0JP (01543 671427); you can check the progress of Progress on the Information Hotline (01902 607009); and you can let the Secretary of State know your views at DETR, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1P 4DR. Who said the campaigning spirit was dead ?

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(Photo by Waterways World)

Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust

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ITEMS	DETAILS		PRICE	QTY	COST
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PLEASE COMPLETE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS OVERLEAF					

MARKETING REPORT

Spring Bank Holiday week proved to be very successful, thanks to the efforts of several teams who made it possible to bring the work of the Trust to the notice of thousands of visitors to Pelsall Boat Rally, Braunston Boat Show, Lichfield Bower Carnival and Streethay Wharf Barn Dance. Gross income from sales, fees and donations reached nearly £1,400 with another 10% increase in our membership to a new high of 400 - well on the way to this year's growth target in our campaign for 1,000 members by year 2000. It was a pleasure to meet many existing members at the shows, giving us a chance to say thanks for the support and encouragement that we get.

The eagle-eyed among you will have spotted a new entry in the product order form above. Where? you say. "S/s embroidered" is a new line which introduces the embroidered L & H Trust logo already used on the polo shirts to the sweat-shirts as an option instead of the established printed front and back. Using the familiar blue, green and white colours of our logo, surrounded by red lettering, the design is distinctive but discreet so you can pass among friends without being questioned about the current state of Restoration v. the BNRR!

Bob Williams. Director (Marketing)

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“PROGRESS APPEAL”

Following the announcement of this Appeal in the last edition, it must be said that Chris Coburn and NB “PROGRESS” have become prominent, not only in the waterway press, but in reports carried by many newspapers across England and Wales for the 1998 Spirit of Adventure Cruise. And it is not just words. A growing number of supporters - spread all over the country - have been prepared to back their belief with hard cash, the Appeal Fund now exceeding £4,500. Civic messages from Walsall, Stoke-on-Trent and Chester have been presented to the Mayor of Caernarfon with an exchange of symbolic gifts.

Better than all that, Chris is widely known and respected in a variety of leading national waterway circles where his influential pleas on behalf of the L & H in the BNRR issue have been heard. Strong letters have been issued by all the major powers in support of the cause against the Government continuing to authorise new roads without providing for navigable crossings, despite professed policies to the contrary. A change of heart is demanded before it is too late and the quality of life and the environment are irreparably damaged. Please read the Waterways World article reproduced elsewhere in this issue and add your support to the cause.

Bob Williams, Director (Marketing)

Sandfield Pumping Station.

by Midland Mills Group Chairman Davd Baddeley

Over 80 people visited the Sandfield Pumping Station on 1 June, to view the large 'Comish' type steam engine. They were able to look at it at close quarters and climb upto the 'beam-floor' if they so wished. There were representatives from four other steam museums who were able to answer any questions that visitors wished to ask. Mr. M. SWALLOW of South Staffs. Water, gave a brief talk on the history of the company and also said that they would preserve the engine and its house. Mr. D.E.BADDELEY then gave a brief talk in which he hoped that the engine would be not only preserved but opened to the public as a museum of some description, but the driving force must come from the people of LICHFIELD and not from others. He was sure that any help and advice which may be requested would be given by the other steam museums in the area.

Most people thought that it was a enjoyable and informative evening and it may lead to development of the site in the future. I would like to thank South Staffs. Water for opening up the site for this meeting and for the refreshments. Thanks should also be given to STAFFORDSHIRE INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY, for combining one of there 'summer visits' and this meeting.' For further information contact D.E.BADDELEY, 10 Avon Close, STAFFORD, ST16 3XB., Phone 01 785 253 734



The canal alongside the now demolished filtration plant and boiler house

Showers and Sunshine

April began with great hopes. On the first Sunday we were assisted by Paul Broome and his son who brought two tractors and trailers to Tamworth Road. We excavated the site of Freeford Farm Bridge situated immediately below Lock 25 and which had been demolished to ground level before the canal was filled in. The spoil was taken to Darnford Lane to backfill behind the left hand bridge abutment, thus achieving two tasks at the same time.

Mick Brown drove the JCB with skill to expose the footings of the bridge walls, the water channel and the big land drain in the bottom. A dozen loads (about 100 tonnes) had been taken before disaster overtook- large lumps of masonry in one side of the trailer got stuck causing it to empty lop-sided with the result that one wheel sank more into the soil than the other and the trailer slowly keeled over. It was recovered but that, and the wet weather, rather took the shine off the day.

Two weeks later, our old friends Navvies Anonymous came to tackle the lock itself using a 360° tracked excavator and two 6 tonne road registered dumpers. Their advanced group arrived on the Friday morning and began straight away. Knowing that the walls had been lowered by about two feet, part of the infill material was put on the far (towpath) side to make up the level whilst the remainder was taken to Darnford to backfill the other lift bridge abutment.

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Newbury Working Party Group Laying coping bricks at Darnford Lane

Showers and Sunshine (continued)

Regular progress from the tail towards the head of the lock was interrupted by a large brick chamber constructed inside the lock to allow the drain water to cascade from the upper to lower levels (about 7 feet drop) but excavations were resumed on the higher side continuing past the head of the lock and paddle shafts to follow the wing walls for a short distance. We stopped while the "towpath" was still wide enough to take vehicles because this may be our only future access.

As regards the condition of this lock, the invert has been cut through along most of its length to install the land drain, but the walls are generally in good condition with only isolated bad patches, as lock 18. Several massive coping stones were recovered, of which two have been identified. Our thanks to Paul Broome and also Mrs. Attwood.

Between times Peter and the Brown family have been working at Fosseway Lane on the stile and picnic table which are the last items outstanding from the Conduit Lands Trust Grant. Our June working party was subsequently able to complete the installation. Meanwhile in May we had three sites in operation simultaneously Phil, Trevor and Bill at Tamworth Road saving re-useable coping bricks, the Browns at Fosseway and a major effort at Darnford Lane where a three day visit from WRG Newbury working party took place over the Bank Holiday weekend. Three lots of 'brickies' laid calf-nosed coping bricks to wing walls of the lift bridge and their piling team took on the tricky section over the culvert and by-wash pipe to link up with the wing wall and then continued beyond the lift bridge on the right hand side. Assistance from Keith and yours truly. Grateful thanks to David Coley for the loan of the piling hammer and Marc Evans for the cement mixer.

In mid June we were asked to host another National WRG training weekend at Darnford which was attended by over eighty instructors and trainees with eight various machines, also surveying, first aid, bricklaying, scaffolding, pumps etc. The opportunity was taken to reclaim several coping stones from derelict lock 29 with the specialised machinery. The same weekend WRG North West came to begin repairs to lock 25 at Tamworth Road. A sizeable quantity of scaffold tubing has been purchased together with a cement mixer which is now installed at Tamworth Road. Between times Barry and Peter have been continuing with the coping bricks at Darnford, hoping to finish the lift bridge in July.

Much time is spent by all the committee in correspondence and meetings both internally and with outside bodies. These include successful liaison with Staffordshire Environmental Fund regarding final agreement of the lift bridge grant money and also a design by Ove Arup and Partners for the crossing under the A461 by the Boat Inn which they have carried out for the extremely lenient figure of £500.

John Horton

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO **THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING JUNE 20th 1998**

As we approach the 10th Anniversary of the Trust it is prudent that I look back and note with pride that we now have a society which is recognised by all the local Authorities and what is most important is now fully supported by them.

This was not always the case and even now after 10 years actively promoting the work of the Trust we are still not getting the financial support which we need to complete the Restoration. We have to continue pressure to achieve our goal.

No one told me that the restoration of this canal would be easy. In fact I had everyone saying that it would never be done. Well we still have a long way to go to completion, but we have started in earnest and with the continued support of the members, the public at large, and the financial resources we will eventually succeed. It is important for all to be aware that we do not intend to go away (MEL please note).

After every meeting, working party, letter received and dispatched; after each cheque is received by the treasurer; after each press release and report issued; after each individual activity in which our members are engaged; after each sponsorship we receive; with each new membership we attract; with each sweat shirt we sell; after each one, and much more, we are a step nearer our goal of the eventual completion of the restoration of the canals.

Following support given by Audrey Smith Chairman of IWA at the IWA National Boat Rally at Henley and the continual efforts of the Trust we can be assured that our name is on the lips of the many boating enthusiasts of the Country. Indeed we have received enquires and support from overseas too, as well as from MPs both local to the restoration and in the Birmingham area where the beneficial effects of the eventual restoration will be most apparent.

I must pay tribute to the work done on our behalf by all members of the Trust's Council and it would be imprudent to single out any one individual as the contribution and work done by every member has been outstanding.

Meetings with local authorities and with local Members of Parliament have born some fruit and the news has at last got as far as Westminster. A campaign to send letters to the DETR has been spearheaded by the Trust and although only standard responses have been sent in return the sheer weight of the correspondence must have some effect on the Ministers. We know that we have the support of many MPs who have been lobbying on our behalf, and questions have been asked in the House.

continued over

CHAIRMANS REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (continued)

The Trust is grateful to those who have supported us in this work to gain further concessions for the crossings over and under the BNRR.

Working parties have been most active and we can again say that with the help of WRG, our own members, and others considerable work has been completed on the ground. On the Lichfield Canal, Lock 18 has been almost fully restored and now needs only gates and paddles, and some minor works to be ready for use.

Further work in 1997 has seen the building of the Lift Bridge at Darnford and an initiation of the scheme to sponsor a pile. Considerable piling and brick work in the area of the culvert at Darnford has now been completed.

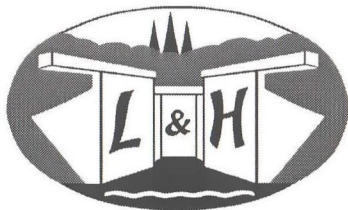
One other item worthy of note was the social event at the Boat Inn where to celebrate the 200th year of the construction of the canal a plaque has been fixed to the wall of the lounge for all to admire.

We are poised now to seek further funding and expand work, but our main effort should be directed into the purchase of the canal bed which was sold off in the 1960s and 70s by British Waterways. Pelsall rally has been a wonderful success and the thanks of the Trust goes out to the team who worked to bring this to fruition. The 25,000 visitors to the site must surely have supported the aims of the campaign to restore the canals and thus increase the use of the canals in that area.

The results of the survey of boating along the Coventry Canal completed during 1997 have revealed some outstanding results and Mike Smith will be able to bring you up to date on these matters.

This year promises to be a full and very active year for the Trust and one in which I hope every member will play his or her part.

J Eric Wood Chairman



Thank You

Derek Jones and his son Christopher for distributing Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust leaflets in the Boley park Area.



Mick Brown and Peter Mathews putting in the style at Fosseway (photo J Horton)

Donations received over £10.00

Civic Trust Community Action Network	£504.00	H F Truman Narrow-boat Committee	£10.00
Lichfield District Council	£371.00	H Pringle	£105.00
Jancraft toward set-up	£50.00	Dr Hollingworth	£652.00
Jancraft toward polo shirts	£23.50	R G Wilkinson	£500.00
BCNS Talk @ Galton valley	£25.00	NEC Show, various	£42.90
5 Counties advert in CBW	£50.00	The Boat Collections	£75.00
Tamworth CC by E Wood	£25.00	Mr Webber	£10.00
J J Wilcox for CBW 1-13	£20.00	Whittington 60+ Club	£15.00
Braunston Boat Show	£100.00	Ron Barnes	£28.00
D J Mills	£15.00	S M Arkless	£20.00
S Clive	£10.00	Mr S E Attwood	£10.00
Mrs Webber	£10.00	M A Walker	£10.00
Mrs D M Ashworth	£20.00	Mrs V Lee	£10.00
Mrs S J G Eliot	£15.00	M Jelley	£10.00
Mrs E Phillips	£12.50	Mrs J E Phillips	£12.50
J Morris	£10.00	AWCC	£25.00
S & M Beacroft	£30.00	J E Wood	£30.00
A J & A J Pilgrim	£40.00	Mr & Mrs Phillips	£10.00

Dedicated piling Appeal Contributors (since last Issue)

NAME	RESIDENTIAL AREA	INSCRIPTION
Mrs June Batchelor	Elford, Staffs.	JENNY B
Birmingham Canal Navigation.Society.	Birmingham	B.C.N.S (x 5)
Mrs Monica Bett	Sutton Coldfield	MON & PETE - DW
Mrs Kathleen Bird	Lichfield	KATHLEEN BIRD
Dr G B Carter	Lichfield	G B & P A CARTER
M C Crocker Family Trust	Tokoroa, New Zealand	CROCKER - N.Z.
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Dr John Milles	Sutton Coldfield	JOHN LOVES EILEEN 1998
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Railway & Canal Hist.Soc.	<i>throughout the UK</i>	RAILWAY & CANAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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F A Wilcox	Rugeley	FRANCES VANES 1914-93
Philip J Willmot	South Norwood	NICK BUCKLE

The Trust gratefully acknowledges the above donations, bringing the total fund to £3,528 over the first 12 months. * = Acknowledged by advertisement in this issue.

WRG Treats

Waterway Recovery Group will be holding Summer Camps again this summer on the Lichfield Canal. Camp 14 is from 1st August to Saturday 8th and Camp 17 from 8th August to 15th August. Unfortunately they will not be able to stay at the accommodation that they have enjoyed in the past, but will be able to stay at Hammerwich Youth and Community Centre.

There are usually about 20 to 30 `navvies` on each camp. The people on them vary considerably and come on the camp for all sorts of reasons. Some are `old hands` with many skills and much experience of canal restoration and perhaps taking a week of their holidays doing something different to their normal job and something they enjoy. At Summer Camps there are usually a number of Duke of Edinburgh Award Students who may not have had any experience of this type of work before (however some do in fact come back for more) and there are also a number of foreign students also, who may come to have a holiday with a difference and to learn the language. `Holiday`, in the normal sense of the word, it is certainly not as it is often hard work out in all weather, and they see very little apart from the canal bed and their own `bed` at accommodation.

However, anybody who has seen them at work on Summer Camp witnesses that they do seem to enjoy it. They make their own fun and each camp is different. They also do seem to enjoy coming to Lichfield Canal Camp and we are pleased to have them. This summer they will be constructing a towpath at Fosseyway , which will be beneficial. Last year they constructed lift bridge foundations and put in the first sponsored piling and during the 1996 Summer Camp they constructed the Darnford Culvert which was a major task and superbly organised.

As they burn up the calories, WRG workers do like goodies and treats, and Lichfield does seem to have a good reputation for these, so if anyone would like to donate a home-made cake or any specialty please contact me. I know that WRG would be pleased to meet you!

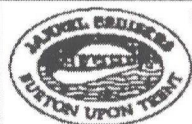
Janette Horton
01543 262466



LICHFIELD & HATHERTON CANALS RESTORATION TRUST

new members up to 15/06/1998

Mr D A Beard	Southend on Sea	Mr C Latimer	Burtonwood
Mr S Dean	Peterborough	Mr T Holford	Cannock
Mr P B Cook	Acton Trussell	Mrs J Holford	Cannock
Mr M A Walker	Sutton Coldfield	Mrs A Abbott	Blackburn
Mr C Coburn	Lower Basildon	Mr F Swam	Armitage
Mr J Fleming	Great Haywood	Mr J Y Pringle	Fareham
Mr I Dickens	Sutton Coldfield	Mr G Lewis	Rugeley
Mr J Wheatcroft	Hemel Hempstead	Mr J Denton	Atherstone
Mr A J Whitbrook	Walsall Wood	Mr T Stanier	Stoke
Mr E Rhodes	Stony Stratford	Mr G Turner	Handsacre
Mr D Townsend	Wednesfield	Mr S Altree	Hednesford
Mr A Hutchinson	Lichfield	Mr S Booth	Retford
Mrs D M Ashworth	Tamworth	Mr S Read	Lichfield
Tamworth Cruising Club	Tamworth	Mr K Field	Alridge
Dr J J Wilcox	Romford	Mr F Beechy	Lichfield
Mr N K Johnson	Walsall	Mr M Glover	Lichfield
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Mr D R Edwards	Lichfield	Mr J H Morgan	Rhymney
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Mr D Baldwin	Sutton Coldfield	Mr A Oakley	Pelsall
Mr A C Pegrum	Billericay	Mr D Jager	Elford
Mr W A Dumelow	Matlock	Mr C Webber	Reading
Mr M I Crompton	Kingsley, Cheshire	Mr M Pulford	Walsall
Mr M Dutton	Shrewsbury	Mr G Perry	Walsall
Dr A Hodgkinson	Preston	Dr J Stuart	Coleshill
Mr K Whapples	Tile cross, Birmingham	Mrs B Stuart	Coleshill
Ms J Lewis	Southampton	Mr M Bessey	Armitage
Mr J Stevens	Henley on Thames	Mr J R Faizey	Pelsall
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WORKING PARTIES : JULY - DECEMBER 1998

Working Parties are held regularly on the first and third Sundays of each month, alternating between our two canals, as below. On the Lichfield Canal we are working on three sections of canal around Lichfield, at Darnford Lane, Tamworth Road and Fossey Lane. On the Hatherton Canal we are working on 1½ miles of canal south west of Cannock. Our varied programme of work includes scrub bashing, fencing, hedging, towpath levelling, mowing, earth moving, piling, brick-laying, pointing, puddling, timber and steelwork.

<u>LICHFIELD CANAL</u>		<u>HATHERTON CANAL</u>	
Dates:	Times:	Dates:	Times:
Sunday 5th July	10am - 4pm	Sunday 19th July	10am - 4pm
<i>Sat. 1st to Sat 15th August</i>			
<i>WRG Canal Camps</i>			
Sunday 6th September	10am - 4pm	Sunday 16th August	10am - 4pm
Sunday 4th October	10am - 4pm	Sunday 20th September	10am - 4pm
Sunday 1st November	10am - 3pm	Sunday 18th October	10am - 4pm
Sunday 6th December	10am - 3pm	Sunday 15th November	10am - 3pm
		Sunday 20th December	10am - 3pm

Bring old clothes, stout footwear, work or gardening gloves, lunch and a drink. Basic working tools will be provided although you are welcome to bring your own.

For Lichfield Canal work parties at Tamworth Road (SK 129 083) take the A51 south out of Lichfield, the site is on the right past Cricket Lane. For Darnford Lane (SK 139 086) continue along 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. The Fossey Lane site is south west of the city by the railway level crossing between Pipehill and Sandfields (SK 101 079).

Hatherton Canal work parties meet at Saredon Mill Bridge near Four Crosses (SJ 947 089) which is on the south side of the A5 just west of Cannock.

However, alternative locations or additional dates may be arranged as required, particularly on the Lichfield Canal where we often have WRG groups visiting for weekends. For confirmation of the meeting point or for further information contact our two local Working Party Organisers direct on:

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

NARROWBOAT "PROGRESS"

BACKGROUND TO "THE BRITISH BOAT"

REKINDLING A "SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE"

The adventures of NB "Progress" have created more than just a passing interest since she took part in the 1990 50th commemoration of the British Forces evacuation from Dunkirk. Although "Progress" had tasted salt water on many occasions before, this was the first journey undertaken with a deliberate cause in mind, her voyages thereafter taking on a campaigning nature in the quest to raise the profile of many little-used or difficult to access waterways.

These voyages also became responsible for reinforcing the proof that a suitably prepared modern narrowboat could tackle coastal passages. "Progress" was involved in 1991 with two other boats on a campaign cruise up the tidal River Wye in Wales to Biggs Weir gaining valuable publicity for the threatened navigation rights of this scenic and spectacular river. There followed an unusual passage up the tidal River Severn to Gloucester "by-passing" the Gloucester Sharpness Canal and entering the City via the upstream tidal weir: not many boats do that! The summer of 1992 saw the same intrepid trio dried out on Roger Sands in the middle of The Wash on their way to the IWA Wakefield Festival, taking the chance while around the Humber to cruise the Rivers Ancholme and Hull.

The "Progress - Spirit of Adventure" voyages fell into public vision in 1995 when she visited the Lancaster Canal involving passages on the Mersey, Ribble and Lune estuaries, all linked by the Irish Sea, highlighting the need for the Ribble Link. The return to the IWA Chester Festival was made in one passage, "Progress" arriving via the Dee Locks, the only boat to do so, winning the prestigious IWA Robert Aickman Trophy! The cruise was also seen by many when the first video of her activities was released named "Carry On Up The Lune".

I / We wish to sponsor the "Progress Appeal" to the level shown below
and have also ticked the choice of beneficiary and method of payment.

<i>SUPPORTERS' REWARD LEVELS</i>		<i>INCREMENTAL REWARDS</i>	<i>Tick 1 box</i>
1	Raising £10, supporters receive.....	a photograph of "Progress" at an interesting location	
2	Raise £20 to receive level 1 & in addition	 a commemorative brass keyring	
3	Raise £50 to receive level 2 & in addition	 a "Spirit of Adventure Cruise" plaque	
4	Raise £100 to receive level 3 & in addition	 a polo shirt and a limited edition plaque	
5	Raise £250 to receive level 4 & in addition	 a limited edition video	
6	Raise £500 to receive level 5 & in addition	 a BCN brass cast map tableau of 9 segments	

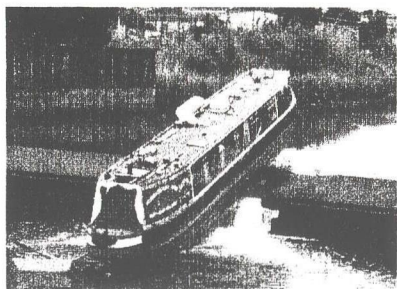
<i>Tick 1 box</i>	WATERWAY RECOVERY GROUP	or LICHFIELD & HATHERTON CANALS RESTORATION TRUST	or BOTH EQUALLY
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<i>Tick 1 box</i>	PAYABLE NOW BY ENCLOSED CHEQUE	or PAYABLE ON COMPLETION OF CRUISE - please make note to send in September 98.
------------------------------	---------------------------------------	--

Please make cheques payable to:-
"PROGRESS APPEAL"

Signature: _____ Date: _____

The 1996 cruise included the Bristol Channel and Severn Estuary attracting much attention on reaching Ilfracombe, returning by a 30-mile passage across to Swansea through a swell rolling in from the Atlantic (just a few miles west!). The next day saw her set a new head of navigation on the River Tawe. She later joined up with River Wye campaigner, Jim Simpson, who was showing V.I.P.s that the river is navigable and boats do use it! "Progress" reached the IWA Festival at Netherton, gaining extensive magazine coverage, the whole story being told in the very popular Laurence Hogg Productions video "A Canal Too Far".



It was conclusively demonstrated in 1997 how relatively little interest is shown until something goes wrong! A coastal passage of some 27 hours was made from The Wash to Great Yarmouth, before conducting a complete exploration of The Broads and other East Coast waterways. The planned photocall at the entrance of the little-known Ipswich and Stowmarket Navigation turned into a photographic coup as around nine million people learnt of the grounding on Constantine Weir in Ipswich. This tended to overshadow the overall East Coast voyage

which was an interesting achievement by narrowboat, captured in the sought-after video "Operation Wash and Go". At the following IWA Henley Festival, the "incident" led to Chris Coburn being able to raise in three days over £1,300 for Waterway Recovery Group.

Here was the seed for a new slant on the "Spirit of Adventure" voyages. Could it be possible that all this publicity may create a vehicle for raising both funds and highlighting the needs of some of our more important waterway restoration issues? 1998 will be an interesting year. Let us await what angle "Progress" will achieve on this basis, perhaps increasing the profile of our inland waterways to a new level.

Please keep this part as a record of your sponsorship choices.

SUPPORTERS' REWARD LEVELS		INCREMENTAL REWARDS		choice one
1	Raising £10, supporters receive	a photograph of "Progress" at an interesting location		
2	Raise £20 to receive level 1 & in addition	 a commemorative brass keyring		
3	Raise £50 to receive level 2 & in addition	 a "Spirit of Adventure Cruise" plaque		
4	Raise £100 to receive level 3 & in addition	 a polo shirt and a limited edition plaque		
5	Raise £250 to receive level 4 & in addition	 a limited edition video		
6	Raise £500 to receive level 5 & in addition	 a BCN brass cast map tableau of 9 segments		
choice two	WATERWAY RECOVERY GROUP	or LICHFIELD & HATHERTON CANALS RESTORATION TRUST	or BOTH EQUALLY	
choice three	PAYABLE NOW BY ENCLOSED CHEQUE	or PAYABLE ON COMPLETION OF CRUISE - please send the payment in September 98.		
PAY TO:	BOB WILLIAMS, NORFOLK HOUSE, 29 HALL LANE, HAMMERWICH, BURNWOOD, STAFFORDSHIRE. WS7 0JP [01543 671427]			

PROPOSED CRUISE ITINERARY

Funded by **LEE SANITATION LTD** and **LAURENCE HOGG PRODUCTIONS.**

Up-to-date Cruise information and the state of sponsorship monies can be obtained by calling the Progress Hotline on 01902 607009.

- Except where shown, dates for the following events will be available by recorded message on the Progress Hotline (see above).*

Dee Estuary passage and the coast to Rhyl.
Coastal passage via Llandudno to Conwy.
Coastal passage to Port Penrhyn, Bangor.

- Return together along the Straits and North Wales coast to Mersey Estuary.
Birkenhead Docks for photocall with U-Boat 534 and HMS Plymouth.
Warrington via Spike Island, returning to Manchester Ship Canal.
River Weaver. Weston Point to Anderton Boat Lift.

- Aug. 22 Anderton presentation, trip up the River Weaver and back to Northwich. Passage to Salford and onto the River Irwell to the old Manchester Salford Junction Canal.
- Aug. 23 Return to Salford Quays for the National Waterways Festival the following week-end and a "welcome arrival"**

1998 Spirit of Adventure Cruise by NB."PROGRESS"

"Cut to Caernarfon" Sponsorship

Please support Chris Coburn, Laurence Hogg and the crew by sponsoring them in an adventurous cruise in NB."PROGRESS" with two specific objectives:-

1. RAISING THE PROFILE OF WATERWAYS

- which are endangered, little-used, or difficult to access.

2. RAISING FUNDS TOWARDS

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and

waterway recovery group

supporting canal restoration groups across the country

NONE of the sponsorship monies go to run the cruise which is promoted by BARRUS DIESEL ENGINES and CANAL & RIVERBOAT MAGAZINE, and funded by LEE SANITATION LTD and LAURENCE HOGG PRODUCTIONS.

Please enter your details below and complete the parts overleaf,
then tear off this part and send it to the address below.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

POST CODE:

PHONE:

please leave for office use

Please send the completed form, and if opting to pay now,
enclose a cheque payable to "PROGRESS APPEAL" to:

**BOB WILLIAMS, NORFOLK HOUSE, 29 HALL LANE,
HAMMERWICK, BURNTWOOD, STAFFS. WS7 0JP [01543 671427]**