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



Lock 18 Fosseway Lane

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 Ogle 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.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Eric Wood	6 Swan Cottages, Burton Road, Whittington, Lichfield, Staffs. WS14 9NP.	01543 432231
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Internet website has now changed to **www.alma.co.uk/bps/lah**

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 council meetings, donations, accounts, the JCB, BNRR, and publicity.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Trust's monthly Council meetings have for some years been held in the boardroom at Peel's Wharf, Fazeley thanks to the generosity of British Waterways. It had been apparent for a while that, with the increasing level of Trust activities, the amount of essential business to be transacted often exceeded the two hours available. The instigation of separate Policy & Planning Group meetings just over a year ago, to consider more strategic issues at greater length, has helped to ease the pressure but the time available for the main meeting was clearly still insufficient. BW have now agreed to our extending the Council meetings by half an hour, and we are grateful to them for this continuing practical show of support.

DONATIONS

We would like to record our thanks to the many individuals and organisations making donations towards the work of the Trust. Amongst these have been a further £586 received from IWA's National Waterway Festivals. This represents the balance of the proceeds from the Pelsall Campaign Rally in May, making £2,586 in total, a most generous donation from a very hard working rally committee. In addition, part of the money they have donated to BCNS will be used to put up signposts at Ogley and Pelsall junctions pointing the way to our two canals. An application to IWA's Restoration Committee has produced a grant of £2,000 towards the costs of rebuilding Tamworth Road Lock 25. A sum of £400 has been received from the Phillips Charitable Trust. Even the Inland Revenue have chipped in with a £215 tax rebate on covenanted subscriptions ! Further substantial donations have also been received from the Progress Appeal and via our Marketing operations, reported elsewhere.

ACCOUNTS

Due to a change in the circumstances of our Treasurer, the Trust is faced with a substantial charge for future book-keeping and accountancy services. If any member can offer or suggest suitably qualified assistance at minimal cost it would help ensure that the Trust's income can continue to be almost entirely devoted to its campaigning and restoration activities.

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VICE-CHAIRMAN'S NOTES (continued)

JCB

Many of our members will be familiar with the JCB digger we have been using for some years and may have assumed that it was owned by the Trust. In fact we have only recently purchased it, and some explanation is perhaps due. Back in early 1996 the Trust realised that it needed its own plant to make faster progress with earthmoving on working parties. Having been donated several dumpers what we really needed was a digger, and a second hand JCB 3C was located along with a derelict machine for spare parts. As funds were low, a group of 8 members clubbed together to form "The JCB Group" to provide the £2,000 needed for purchase and essential repairs. Other members put in considerable time and labour to repair and repaint it. An agreement was drawn up whereby the machine would be made available to the Trust, who would use, maintain, tax and insure it, until such time as the Trust had the funding to pay back the JCB Group at the original price. In effect this was an interest-free loan for an indefinite period. Now that we have at last got sufficient funds that pledge has been redeemed and the Trust are now the true owners of the JCB. The Trust is very grateful to those members whose generosity and patience has enabled us to make significant progress with our restoration work.

BNRR UPDATE

The tree climbing and tunnelling activities of the roads protesters have achieved national coverage for the opponents of the Birmingham Northern Relief Road. Some members may also have read of the legal challenge being pursued by the Alliance Against The BNRR, a consortium of local councils, community and environmental groups. The interim ruling of the High Court in July to order release of parts of the Concession agreement gave hope, but the full judgement in October rejected the Alliance's arguments on all three counts. These were that John Prescott acted illegally in being influenced by excessive cancellation penalties in a contract he had already signed, that he wrongly failed to disclose the Concession agreement to the Public Inquiry, and a third point on toll charges. However, after some reflection, the Alliance believe they still have a good case and have decided to go to the Court of Appeal.

continued

If you would like to advertise in Cut Both Ways Contact Bob Williams on 01543 671427

VICE-CHAIRMAN'S NOTES (continued)

Although the Trust is not party to any of these actions we obviously have an interest in their success. No motorway would be better than one with no provision for our canal crossings. One effect of the legal delays is that the rumoured construction cost has steadily escalated from £400m at the time of the PI to £500m, then £600m and now £700m. This must cast doubt on whether MEL will ever raise the capital to build the road, even if they finally get legal clearance. Meanwhile the delays are to our advantage, and we eagerly await the government's promised, but much postponed, decision paper on the future of the waterways to see if it at last addresses the whole vexed question of roads conflicting with waterway restorations. A positive general commitment on resolving future conflicts would give us a strong lever to re-open the case against the BNRR decision.

PRESS & PUBLICITY

My last report on publicity mentioned the press coverage of the opening ceremony at Fossey Lane Lock 18 in September. This continued in October with a report in the Lichfield Chronicle ("Latest in history of canal is unveiled") accompanied by a picture of District Council Chairman Councillor Tony Brookes, Bob White of the Conduit Lands Trust and Eric Wood toasting the opening. The same picture, in colour this time, appeared in the Sutton Coldfield & Lichfield edition of Select magazine in October ("Hard work pays off").

The following month Select magazine carried yet another article and colour picture, this time of the Lift Bridge opening at Darnford Lane ("Another canal accomplishment"), the same picture as was on page 15 of CBW17. A similar picture was also published in the Lichfield Chronicle in October ("Restored canal bridge opened"), whilst the Lichfield Mercury had a different angle on the same event in November ("Bridge not too far for canal"). Meanwhile, the December edition of Waterways World carried a report headed "Lichfield Canal Lift Bridge Opened" by John Lower, who was responsible for rescuing the bridge from the Peak Forest canal, transporting it to the Chesterfield, and then for donating it for the Lichfield canal.

In the same edition of Waterways World Martin Ludgate reported in "BNRR Progress" that the court decision had gone against the Alliance, but that canal restoration work continues. Canal & Riverboat magazine in January covered the support for the Trust's position on the BNRR by David Fletcher, writing as chairman of the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities.

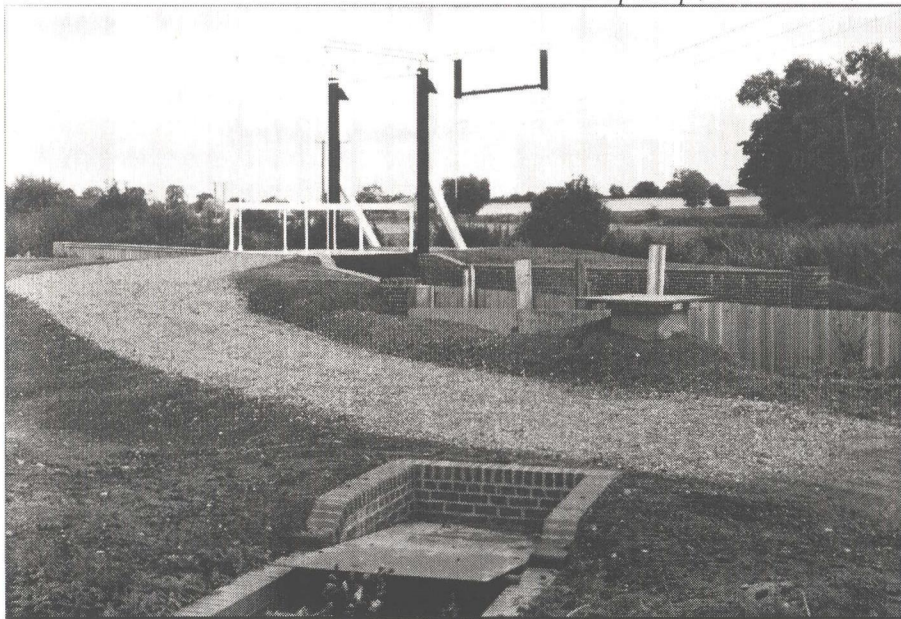
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VICE-CHAIRMAN'S NOTES (continued)

Martin Ludgate also edits 'Navvies', the Waterway Recovery Group magazine and the most entertaining of waterway magazines. The December-January edition (No. 172) includes a report by Helen Gardner on the London WRG weekend at Lichfield in October, a cover photo of positioning the quoin stone on Lock 25, and another photo of our dumper 'Muriel' in action. There is also a letter urging drivers to use the new A50 route between the M1 and M6, thus rendering the BNRR unnecessary, to which the editor responds with a plug for readers to join the Lichfield & Hatherton Trust - thanks Martin ! The accompanying Canal Camps 1999 brochure includes a page on the Lichfield Canal to tempt prospective navvies into signing up for our next Canal Camp (31st July to 7th August 1999), a bargain at only £35.

On the basis that one good plug deserves another; all serious navvies (not to mention all silly ones) really should read Navvies to keep up with restoration progress and plans, and all the working party in-jokes. Subscriptions from Sue Watts, 15 Eleanor Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 9FZ (minimum £1.50 for 6 issues, but please add a donation). For the Canal Camps booklet contact Neil Edwards, WRG Canal Camps, PO Box 114, Rickmansworth, WD3 1ZY.

Philip Sharpe, Vice-Chairman, LHCRT



Lift Bridge with new towpath, culvert and piling

WORKING PARTIES : **February 1999 - July 1999**



Working Parties are held on the first and third Sundays of each month as below. On the Lichfield Canal we are working on three sites, at Darnford Lane, Tamworth Road and Fosseway Lane. On the Hatherton Canal we are currently based at Saredon Mill Bridge. Work includes scrub bashing, fencing, hedging, towpath levelling, mowing, earth moving, piling, bricklaying, pointing, puddling, timber and steelwork.

<u>LICHFIELD CANAL</u>		<u>HATHERTON CANAL</u>	
Dates:	Times:	Dates:	Times:
Sunday 7th February	10am - 3pm	Sunday 21st February	10am - 3pm
Sunday 7th March	10am - 4pm	Sunday 21st March	10am - 4pm
Sunday 4th April	10am - 4pm	Sunday 18th April	10am - 4pm
Sunday 2nd May	10am - 4pm	Sunday 16th May	10am - 4pm
Sunday 6th June	10am - 4pm	Sunday 20th June	10am - 4pm
Sunday 4th July	10am - 4pm	Sunday 18th July	10am - 4pm

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 Fosseway Lane site is south west of the city by the railway level crossing between Pipehill and Sandfields (SK 101 079).

The Lichfield working party on 7th March will be a big scrub bash and bonfire at Fosseway Lane, everyone welcome.

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).

Notes from the Chairman

May I wish all members a happy and prosperous new year for 1999 in the hope that we all continue to work towards our common goal?

It would be wise to look back at 1998 and consider the past year which has been full of achievement and perhaps the most memorable part for me must have been the arrival at Caernarfon of Narrow Boat Progress, when to the sound of a silver band, Chris Coburn tied up at the quay side to be greeted by the Lord Mayor.

There had been other greetings by Mayors en route, all of whom had played their part in the ongoing celebrations. But to have arrived, after such an epic voyage on a narrow boat across the North Wales Coast, well..... it was something special.

Well done Chris, it was something which we will all look back on in the years to come with pride. We thank you for helping to lift the profile of the L&HCRT during 1998.

There can not be many people connected with the Waterways who have not heard of the Trust. Indeed the whole case for more money to spend on the neglected parts of the system and the need for dredging the canals and rivers have been highlighted by Chris and the journey of Progress through the country, during his adventurous trip to Anglesey, which reached National Newspapers too.

We have continued to receive some very generous gifts which have come as a direct result of the extra publicity and effort of Chris and the team support given by our marketing Manager, Bob Williams all of which will serve to advance the cause in the months towards the Millennium. With their generosity and the dedicated efforts given by the team we have been able to proceed at a pace with the restoration on the Lichfield canal.

A meeting with ministers and delegations of Members of Parliament is being-planned when we shall be looking for improvement in the present position so that we will be able to continue with our quest to bring back life into the Northern part of the BCN and to open the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals.

During the next few months working parties under the direction of John Horton will continue and you will observe from the Tamworth Road that restoration of the Lock is showing great progress thanks to all who help with the brick work and to WRG for their visits.

continued

Notes from the Chairman (continued)

The canal at Darnford is moving on at a great pace too where much record breaking piling has been done. Here also trust members have been working laying bricks and helping with the piling where the canal at this point is taking shape rapidly.

We are still in need of more assistance in many areas and particularly with the fund raising and whilst we have had the offers of some help we are still in need of assistance in this field and other areas of the Trust's work. Anyone who is computer literate and has a few hours each week to spare should contact Rob Davies who would welcome extra help.

After 10 years of campaigning there is need for others to take up the gauntlet and offer some help.

We can not all sit back and wait for the efforts of a few to succeed. It can be completed earlier and easier with all the members helping.

PERHAPS YOU COULD FIND A NEW MEMBER IN 1999?

If we intend to hit our target of 1,000 by the year 2,000 then we must all help

J Eric Wood. Chairman.

New Members upto 04/01/1999

Mr D T Smallman	Hammerwich	Mr R D Lane	Gnosall
Mr A Kemp	Barnstone, Notts	Mr B E Truswell	Lenton, Notts
Mr I R Hunt	Loughborough	Mr J Waters	Coventry
Mr S Blackwell	Lichfield	Mr R Tite	Pelsall
Mr D Thompson	Heath Hayes	Mr J Hooper	Lichfield
Mr D O Fowweather	Barnetby	Mrs A E Harris	Tipton
Mr M B Powers	Lichfield		
Mr J Glock	Leighton Buzard	Mrs C A Aston	Lichfield
Mr J K Mace	Lichfield	Mr D N Charlton	Streety
Mr G Tuckley	Chasetown	Mr P Smith	Halesowen
Mr M Knuckley	Lichfield	Mr A H Cross	Coventry
Mr M Stanyard	Sutton Coldfield	Mr C R Boxall	Solihull
Mr R Elder	Penicuik, Midlothian	Mr I West	Dorridge
Mr M Davys	Little Haywood	Mr J Godson	Lichfield

Additional work parties at Tamworth Road

In the temporary absence of Waterway Recovery Group local groups coming to our Canals the following Irregular Work parties at Tamworth Road have been arranged.

Peter and Barry will be working on the following additional dates

Feb.	Saturday 13th (as well as Sunday 7th)
March	Saturday 13th, Saturday 20th, Sunday 21st, Saturday 27th
April	Tuesday 6th, Saturday 10th, Saturday 24th (as well as Sunday 4th)
May	Saturday 8th, Saturday 15th, Sunday 16th, (as well as Sunday 2nd)
June	Saturday 5th, Sunday 6th, Saturday 26th, Sunday 27th (as well as Sunday 6th)

They would appreciate any help with moving bricks, mixing cement, tidying up etc.

John Horton



St Johns Bridge (see page 15)

Please note Press date for Cut Both Ways 19 is April 5th
any articles or photos to the Editor (address inside cover)
preferably typed or on a computer disc

“PROGRESS” REPORT

All our Members and avid readers of the waterway press will know of the excellent work done by Chris Coburn and the crew of NB. "Progress" during the 1998 Spirit of Adventure Cruise, supporting the rights of inland navigation. The aims were to raise the profile of little-used, endangered or difficult to access waterways and also to raise funds for L & H restoration and Waterway Recovery Group. More specifically, this meant bringing to national attention the plight brought by the intransigence of the Government in authorising construction of the Birmingham Northern Relief Road without adequate provision for canal crossings.

In appreciation of the promotional budget agreed by Barrus Yanmar Diesel Engines and Canal & Riverboat Magazine at the London Boat Show last year, it was fitting that the Progress Appeal be concluded at this year's Show at Earls Court. At a reception on 15th January attended by Richard Drake, National Chairman of I.W.A., Chris Coburn presented payments from the Appeal Fund of £4,155 to L & H and £1,323 to WRG as decided by contributors.

On behalf of the Trust Eric Wood, Chairman presented certificates for Honorary Life Memberships to Chris Coburn and Laurence Hogg for their outstanding support. Also complimentary Corporate membership certificates were awarded to E B Barrus Ltd and Canal & Riverboat Magazine.

A greater benefit is derived from 78 pages of editorial coverage and 35 letters from organisations with waterway interests and the many dignitaries met on the Cruise who back the cause. There is no doubt that the issue has been elevated to a national level and the Trust is most grateful to Chris Coburn for his dedication to the cause and creating a firm platform from which further Government lobbying will take place.

You too can join Chris and the crew on the Spirit of Adventure Cruise through the "Cut to Caernarfon" videos by Laurence Hogg. Available on the enclosed Product Order Form, Volume 1 covers "The Outward Bound Voyage" and volume 2 "Bringing the Slate Home", both dedicated to publicising the L & H restoration in a really unique way!

Bob Williams

**With our sympathy
We record the passing of our member Mrs. O E Jennings
of Lichfield and extend our sympathy to her family
and friends she leaves behind.**

Two New Events For The Spring

Giant Jungle Bash and Bonfire

to be held on **Sunday 7th March 1999**. Our friends at Tamworth Cruising Club are coming to make a special fun scrub bash and social on the far end of Fosseway Lane site down towards the pumping station. We shall also be inviting Lichfield IWA members and hope to set a record for the largest working party on the Lichfield Canal. All are welcome, 17 to 70. Parking on site from 10.00am. Bring wellies, gardening gloves and a packed lunch.

Guided walk of Lichfield Canal Sunday 25th April

from Fosseway to Huddlesford Junction, including an open day at Sandfields Pumping Station. By special arrangement with landowners, South Staffs Water and Lichfield Cruising Club, this will be the first opportunity to walk this half of the canal line (apart from a couple of road diversions). We plan to offer a guide sheet covering the route and some historical notes for the walk with stops at Sandfields to view the beam engine, Tamworth Road to see the lock and for refreshments, then Darnford for the lift bridge and piling plaques. The final section along the arm will be a chance to see Watery Lane Bridge, finishing at the Plough Inn where we hope to have a minibus to return drivers back to their cars. We shall be inviting all walking and waterway-interested clubs/societies in the area, so make a note of the date now **Sunday 25th April** 10am onwards. Fosseway Lane is Southwest of Lichfield city by the railway crossing between Pipehill and Sandfields. (SK101079)

PRODUCT SALES

The several new products introduced in issue No.17 attracted good income up to the year end and we hope the buyers have enjoyed their purchases - or gifts perhaps? Thanks to all our customers for supporting the Trust.

To save space in this issue, details are not repeated here but all our product lines remain on sale, as detailed on the information and order form inserted in this issue. Please complete the form and send it with payment to Bob Williams at the address shown thereon.

Wanted a set of Gates

The wooden gates at the entrance to Darnford lane need replacing has anyone a set of gates wood or metal to fill a approximately 16ft gap ?,
Please contact John Horton 01543 262466

NOTICES

Saturday, 13th Feb., 10am-1pm.

PENKRIDGE JUMBLE SALE

Peace Memorial Hall, Penkridge.

Plenty of helpers will be needed as this has proved to be a popular event.

It is not too late to supply white elephants and cakes.

Please ring Tim Burgin on 01922 451610 who can arrange collection.

Daily, 20-28 February, 10am-6pm.

BOAT, CARAVAN & LEISURE SHOW

National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.

Help during the busy periods will be needed.

Please ring Bob Williams on 01543 671427 for days and times.

Thursday, 15th April, 7.45pm.

LICHFIELD I.W.A. MEETING

Windmill Inn, Wheel Lane, Lichfield.

Special guest Chris Coburn will explain how the "1998 Spirit of Adventure Progress Cruise" highlighted the strategic importance of navigable passages across the B.N.R.R.

Daily, 29-31 May, 10am-5pm.

BRAUNSTON BOAT SHOW

Braunston Marina, near Daventry, Northamptonshire.

Help will be needed to run the stand at this premier inland boat show from which the L & H has benefited greatly in the past two years.

MARKETING REPORT

Well done everyone! We closed the books for 1998 with a total of £8,105 raised for the Trust through the efforts of all those involved with marketing of Goods, Membership, Piling, Show and Appeal donations, and there is more in "the pipeline" for next year. Under broad categories, this came from:-

Sales profit	£1,041 L & H branded goods
Fees	£1,218 Membership taken at events
Piling Appeal	£1,996 Inscription contributions
Events	£1,082 Collections at Trust and Public events
Donations	£5,034 inc. Braunston Show £1,000
and part of the Progress Appeal £3,000.	
Net income	£10,371
<u>Stock & Costs</u>	<u>£2,266 -</u>
Residual funds	£8,105

Thanks go to the many volunteers who freely gave their time and effort to represent the Trust throughout the year, and especially to Chris Coburn for his dedication to the L & H cause through the Progress Appeal (reported elsewhere in this issue).

Overview of the Lichfield Canal

PART 3 The Bridges

Watery Lane Bridge

Starting from Huddlesford Junction this is the first bridge, being located halfway along the present arm. It is an original brick structure of traditional design, recently repaired by BW.

Cappers Lane Bridge

Removed when the canal was abandoned. The Trust is at present planning a grant application to pay for the design of a replacement by Staffs County Council Bridge Engineers. Modern highway design criteria combined with the facts that the water level is tied to the Coventry Canal and also the slope of the land on the Whittington side mean that extensive re-grading of the road will be involved. It may be necessary to offset the alignment slightly to balance these factors.

Darnford Lift Bridge

Recently installed by the Trust (see Cut Both Ways 14).

Darnford Lane Bridge

Originally a hump backed structure. Our new deeper excavation is designed to suit a replacement bridge with a flat deck.

A38 and Tamworth Road Bridges

Two new culverts will be required to take the canal and path under these. The major civil engineering firm of Trafalgar House (now part of Kvaerner) produced a range of six options for these which are required because both roads have been built since the canal was abandoned. These schemes were included within our cost/benefits study and offered in evidence to the BNRR inquiry which, after cross examination, was accepted by the Inspector. We would hope that the cost of £1.4m would fall within the recommendation of "Major Funding" for this canal in 5 to 10 years time included in the recent IWAAC report.

Freeford Farm Bridge

The foundations of this accommodation bridge long since demolished were uncovered when the Trust excavated lock 25 recently. It would be nice to rebuild this in one form or another as a pedestrian bridge in connection with the Darwin Walk.

Cricket Lane Bridge

Similar situation to Darnford Lane bridge.

PART 3 The Bridges (continued)

St. Johns Bridge

Rebuilt in the 1930's this is in use as a pedestrian underpass under London Road (see Page 10).

Railway Bridge

A replacement will be required for the existing bridge which is lost within the concrete works. It will have to be thrust-bored under the railway embankment on a new alignment to the south of Shortbutts Lane.

Birmingham Road and Claypit Lane Bridges

Two new bridges where the diverted canal line is planned to follow the proposed Lichfield Southern Bypass road. The Trust is currently seeking greater involvement with the design team involved with this new road.

Fosseway Lane Bridge

Demolished after abandonment it will need to be rebuilt on a slightly amended road alignment.

Wall Lane Bridge

The canal passed under Wall Lane in a deep cutting, since in-filled. It is not known if the bridge was destroyed or merely in-filled.

Shaws Bridge

An accommodation bridge within the grounds of Pipe Place Farm, which has been demolished.

Pipe Hill Bridge

Undistinguished from above, this early Victorian structure comprises a double arch taking both the canal and the railway under the road. Viewed from below it is a most impressive feature and in good condition

Coppice Lane

Similar situation to Fosseway Lane

Muckley Corner Bridge

A twin of St. Johns bridge except the channel on either side has been in-filled. Proposals to under-fill the bridge have been objected to by the Trust.

continued over

PART 3 The Bridges (continued)

Watling Street Bridge

Lost when the road was re-constructed as a dual carriageway. Discussions with Department Of Transport in 1993 suggested that if construction were to take place after the BNRR was in operation, then the consequent reduction in A5 traffic would allow the culvert to be put in by "cut and cover" method which would be much cheaper than "thrust boring".

Boat Bridge

Also lost when the A461 road was reconstructed, however this road is scheduled to be reconstructed once again to allow the BNRR to cross under it in Crane Brook Valley just to the south. This will present a definite opportunity for a new culvert to be installed at that stage by "cut and cover" methods and without additional traffic management costs. The Trust has obtained an estimate for the manufacture of the necessary culvert units of £75,000 and has commissioned Ove Arup and Partners who have produced a design drawing of the scheme. The next step will be to investigate sources of grant for the manufacture and installation, hopefully in time to take advantage of this window of opportunity.

BNRR Aqueduct

A new structure to replace the existing embankment where the new motorway will cross. The design known as "Alternative 18" has been accepted but whereas the Inspector recommended that the road promoters should pay for the whole cost for this replacement structure, the Secretary of State ruled that they would pay for only the foundations and loss of toll revenue. The cost of the super structure to be raised by us. The Trust continues its campaign to have the Inspector's report accepted in its entirety.

Warren House Bridge

The original hump backed bridge which took Barracks Lane over the very short pound between locks 5 and 6 has been demolished. It could be rebuilt either by vertical realignment of the lane or by horizontal realignment of the lane around the tail of lock 6. Both these are possibilities as the road is to be considered for redesign in accordance with a proposed bypass of Brownhills. A third alternative would involve altering both locks so that the road could pass over with a flat bridge.

Ogley Junction Footbridge

An existing cast iron bridge by Horseley (see cover of Cut Both Ways 5).

John Horton

More of the Same

Our regular volunteers have continued work in the last quarter of 1998 with more bricklaying and scaffolding at Tamworth Road and more earthmoving at Darnford where all the spoil heap near the entrance has now been moved to start forming the banks at the far end of the site beyond the lift bridge. They have been assisted by London wrg in October. At the end of November a small party of Navvies Anonymous came to Darnford where they set a new record of 75 piles driven in a weekend.

We have now installed all the plaques sponsored up to date (Christmas 1998). Many thanks to all subscribers. There will be a splendid chance to view them during the walk proposed for April 25th.

Meanwhile we are two-thirds of the way from the lift bridge towards the far end of the field so please keep sponsorship coming in and we will try to get another batch ready for installation around Easter.

Thanks also to wrg for the loan of their JCB 803 and bendy Dumper.

John Horton



Fosseway towpath surfaced

A pile from afar

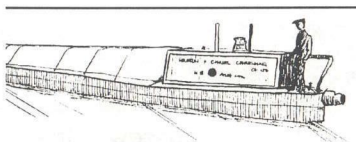
Bob Williams, The Trust's Marketing Manager is always interested to learn how people from around the globe become interested and give support to our canal restoration, and so when a sponsored piling form arrived in the post from Toronto he inquisitively wrote to ask them how they got to hear about us. This is an extract from their reply letter:

Our connection with your L&H restoration work is somewhat serendipitous. Having discovered the joys of canal boating some years ago, we take an annual narrow boat holiday in the UK, always in early September when the schools have re-opened and the canal traffic is distinctly less crowded! We usually rent from one of the well-known canal boat companies and plan our trip to include at least some canals that we haven't travelled before. This year, 1998, we did the Warwickshire Ring, counterclockwise, starting and ending in Alvechurch. On Sunday, September 13, we moored, by chance, for the night on the Coventry Canal north of Nuneaton. We noticed the nearby BWB Hartshill maintenance yard which, by happy coincidence, was having an "open day". Moored in the yard was a fully restored working boat (sorry, we can't recall the name), and although it was near closing time, the lady in attendance, a member of the group that had done the restoration, kindly let us view the boat inside and out. She regaled us with its particular history and the history of working boats in general. Among the handouts we picked up from her was the L&H Appeal!

Having enjoyed the canal system so much over recent years and admiring the efforts of the numerous groups around the UK working to preserve and restore many forgotten waterways, we felt we should contribute and make a donation to your project. Besides, it does appear that the project could be completed within our lifetime and we may yet travel by narrowboat on the L & H!

That lady was me. It only goes to show that it pays to have a leaflet in your pocket. I do remember the friendly Canadian boaters. They are indeed true enthusiasts of our canal heritage!

Janette Horton.



IN THE BEGINNING (PART 1)

Phil Sharpe looks at the Acts of Parliament for the Wyrley and Essington Canal.

The first Act of Parliament for the Wyrley and Essington Canal received Royal Assent on 30th April 1792 (2), authorising:

"a Navigable Canal from or from near *Wyrley Bank*, in the County of *Stafford*, to communicate with the *Birmingham*, and *Birmingham and Fazeley* Canal, at or near the Town of *Wolverhampton*, in the said County, and also certain Collateral Cuts .." (3).

These collateral cuts included a branch to Essington and another to Birchills near Walsall. The original line was opened in November 1794, but soon after construction had commenced it had been decided to apply for an extension and this second Act received Royal Assent on 28th March 1794 (4). The full title is:

"Anno Tricesimo Quarto, Georgii III. Regis. CAP. XXV. An Act for extending the *Wyrley and Essington Canal*".

Two hundred year old Acts of Parliament have a distinctive style which appears rather quaint today and can be difficult to read, not least because a single sentence can run for a whole page or more, with liberal use of punctuation, capitals and italics; and also (alfo !) due to the frequent use of 'f' for 's' . I have therefore attempted to extract some highlights which give a flavour of the language and describe the route, restrictions, financing, tolls, etc. which are pertinent to, or contrast with, today's situation and values. I have suppressed the 'f's and italics for ease of reading but retained the other spelling and punctuation as original.

After a reference to the earlier Act, the preamble says this work is now nearly completed and describes the route of the new extension:

"And whereas, by Levels and Surveys lately taken, it appears, that a Navigable Canal may be made from the said Wyrley and Essington Canal, at or near a Place called Birchill, in the Parish of Walsall, in the said County of Stafford, to join and communicate with the Coventry Canal Navigation, at or near Huddlesford, in the same County, and from or near a Place called Catshill, in the Parish of Walsall, through or near Linley and Rushall Park Lime Works, to the Lime Works at Hayhead, in the Parish of Walsall aforesaid; and also a Navigable Cut from the Canal proposed to be made by virtue of this Act, from or near a Place called Little Bloxwich, in the Parish of Walsall, into certain Lands, in the Liberty of Wyrley, called Lords Hayes, belonging to the Most Honourable the Marquis of Stafford: And whereas the making the said Canal and Cut would be of great Benefit and Advantage to all Persons residing or having Estates near the same, and of publick Utility: ..May it therefore please Your Majesty that it may be enacted; ..".

continued over

IN THE BEGINNING (PART 1) continued

As well as the deference, it is interesting to note that the branch now called Lord Hay's is not named after some mythical person Lord Hay but after the name of the land it crosses, and should really be called the Lords Hayes Branch.

In similar vein, the Act goes on to summarise the above route and the places traversed whilst describing the powers to be enacted:

"And be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful for the said Company of Proprietors .. to make, complete, and maintain, a Navigable Canal, from the said Wyrley and Essington Canal, now cutting or intended to be cut, at or near Birchill aforesaid, to communicate with the Coventry Canal Navigation at or near Huddlesford aforesaid, and from or near Catshill aforesaid, through or near Linley and Rushall Park Lime Works, to the Lime Works at Hayhead aforesaid, and also a Navigable Cut from the proposed Canal, from or near Little Bloxwich aforesaid, into the said lands, called Lords Hayes, which said Canal and Cut lies within and leads through the Parishes and Townships of Walsall, Wolverhampton, Walsall Foreign, Goscott, Pelsall, Norton, Brownhills, Catshill, Wyrley, Rushall, Aldridge, Ogle Hay, Wall, Pipehill, Hammerwich, Saint Michael's Lichfield, Saint Chad's Lichfield, Freeford, Whittington, and Huddlesford, in the County of Stafford, and in the County and City of Lichfield, and also to make, erect, execute, do, and perform, all such Works, Matters, and Things, as shall be requisite and convenient for making, completing, and maintaining, the said Canal and Cut, and for supplying the same with Water ..".

Some may think that 'Walsall Foreign' remains an appropriate title ! The apparently repetitious phrase 'Canal and Cut' may be a shorthand for 'Canal and Collateral Cuts', meaning the main canal and its branches.

This is followed by conditions on property, plans and deviations:

"nothing in this Act contained shall authorize the said Company of Proprietors .. to take down any Building, or to cut through or damage any Land or Ground, which, on the First Day of February (1794), was a Garden, Park, Paddock, planted Walk or Avenue to a House, or Lawn inclosed and adjoining to a Mansion House, without the Consent of the Owners thereof respectively; save and except .. some Garden Ground near Lichfield, in the possession of [blank] Burton, of the George Inn".

"And whereas a Map or Plan describing the Line of the said intended Canal and Cut, and the Lands through which the same are intended to be carried. together with a Book of Reference containing a List of the Names of the Owners or reputed Owners, and Occupiers of such Lands, have been deposited at the Office of the Clerk of the Peace ."

IN THE BEGINNING (PART 1) continued

"the said Company of Proprietors, in making the said intended Canal and Cut, shall not. deviate more than One hundred Yards from the Line or Course thereof described in the said Map, or Plan ..".

Water supply was always a major issue for canals and the Act restricts the Company from taking waters from brooks over a wide area that supply Lord Mountrath's mills, or from the Birmingham Canal or from any streams that supply the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, or from the mines in Goscott. Of particular interest for the Lichfield section is the paragraph preventing too much water being discharged into what we know as the Darnford Brook, and the requirement for bywash culverts:

"And whereas the said Canal will pass over a certain Brook, called Freeford, otherwise Whittington Brook, at or near Whittington aforesaid; which said Brook, by Means of a Culvert, passes under the said Coventry Canal, into and through the Pleasure Grounds and Pools of the Most Honourable the Marquis of Donegall, at Fisherwick, in the said County of Stafford: And whereas a greater Influx of Water than is at present conveyed into the said Pleasure Grounds and Pools by the said Brook would be highly injurious to the same Pleasure Grounds and Pools: Be it therefore further enacted, That no Waste Water, issuing out of the said Canal, shall run into the said Brook, but that proper Aqueducts or Culverts shall be made and completed, at the Expense of the said Company of Proprietors, for the Purpose of conveying the same out of the Pond between the First and Second Lock at Catshill aforesaid, into the Pond between the Second and Third Lock, and so on from Pond to Pond, till the said Waste Water shall be discharged into the said Coventry Canal."

The money needed to build the canal seems very modest by today's standards:

"And be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful .. to raise .. a competent Sum of Money (not exceeding in the Whole the Sum of Seventy-five thousand Pounds) for making and completing the said Canal and Cut .. That if the said Sum .. shall not be sufficient .. it shall be lawful .. to raise .. such further .. Sums of Money .. not exceeding the Sum of Forty thousand Pounds ..".

The tolls to be charged are then detailed:

"For all Coals, (except Slack or small and inferior Coal to be used for the Purpose of burning Limestone or Bricks), Coak, Iron, Ironstone, Rockstone, Bricks, Tiles, and other Minerals, which shall be carried or conveyed upon the said Canal or Cut .. and not pass through a Lock to be erected at or near Catshill aforesaid, the Sum of Nine-pence per Ton ..".

continued over

IN THE BEGINNING (PART 1) contined

"For all Coals, Coak, Iron, Ironstone, Rockstone, Bricks, Tiles, and other Minerals, for which the Sum of Nine-pence per Ton shall have been paid .. and shall afterwards pass through any Lock .. the further Sum of One Shilling and Threepence per Ton ..".

"For all Coals, Coak, Iron, Ironstone, Limestone, Rockstone, Bricks, Tiles, and other Minerals, which shall be produced or gotten from or out of any Lands or Grounds situate below the Lock at or near Catshill, and shall be carried or conveyed upon any Part of the said Canal between Catshill and Huddlesford, the Sum of Two Shillings per Ton ..".

"For all Slack or small and inferior Coal for the Purpose of burning Limestone or Bricks, Limestone and Lime, which shall .. not pass through a Lock .. the Sum of Sixpence per Ton ..".

"For all Lime for which the Sum of Sixpence per Ton shall have been paid .. and shall afterwards pass any Lock .. the further Sum of Nine-pence per Ton ..".

For those brought up on decimal currency, there were 12 old pence per Shilling, which equals 5p.

Finally in this review, there is a section on protecting the Lichfield Conduit pipes which supplied the City with water.

"And whereas the said Canal will pass over the Pipes that convey the Water from the said Foul Well Springs at Aldershaw, in the Hamlet of Wall, in the Parish of Saint Michael in Lichfield, to and for the Use of the Inhabitants of the City of Lichfield; be it therefore further enacted, That the Company of Proprietors shall not take or use, for the Purpose of supplying the said Canal with Water, any of the Water issuing from the said Foul Well Springs at Aldershaw aforesaid; and that the said Pipes over which the said Canal may pass, shall be covered and protected by a Culvert of a sufficient Width and Heighth, so that the Feoffees and Sidesmen of the Conduit Lands, and their Agents, shall at all Times have a Right to enjoy the said Culvert, and to enter therein, to alter, amend and lay the said Pipes ..".

It would be interesting to know exactly where this culvert was situated, and who were the "Feoffees and Sidesmen" ?

The main line of the canal was opened through to Huddlesford Junction on 8th May 1797 (1) and the Hayhead (or Daw End) and Lords Hayes branches about 1800. For the full history of the Wyrley & Essington Canal see the books by Hadfield and by Broadbridge

In the second part of this article we will look at the 1840 Act which authorised the merger of the Wyrley and Essington Canal with the Birmingham Canal Navigations.

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The Trust gratefully acknowledges the above donations, making the total of £4,000 contributed since the Appeal began in mid-97. The scheme will continue to run as it provides steady income for the ongoing piling work.

Donations over £10 received from 30th September to 31st December 1998

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