

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

Issue 44 SUMMER 2005



Barry Kenn hands over £400 raised by a sponsored parachute jump.
(Photo by Sue Williams)

Black Country Night Out

Whittington Village Hall off Main Street, Whittington
Saturday 12th November 2005 at 7.30pm
see page 15 for details

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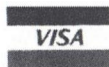
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CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Last time I finished the Chairman's column with reference to the impending general election and suggested that we should attempt to hold candidates, and now MPs, to account over waterways and the restoration movement. I am sure it is safe to say that such issues did not dominate the election or even attract significant attention. We are fortunate that "our" MPs are very supportive of our work and are prepared to "Get stuck in" on our behalf. For that we are most grateful. As a rule it is difficult to get anything more than reassuring expressions of support from politicians both locally and nationally. Clearly, there are few votes in canal restoration and it is easy to see a number of very valid reasons for this. The basic message is that we have to continue to work hard to get the public support that we need.

We are very fortunate that Jan Horton has toiled for many years to build up a rapport with the local news media and we can now be reasonably confident that our news is published. She specialises in the Lichfield area and has been a tireless polemicist for the cause. She has also worked to raise the Trust's profile in the local tourist organisation and this is clearly shown in the 2005 Lichfield visitors brochure which has several canal photographs, including one on the cover. Now we need to repeat that success on the Hatherton. Both our canals are equally important to us and we really do need to explain our work to the residents at the western end of our patch. It is a job which requires great persistence and a determination to be taken seriously by the media. We have learnt that reporting is very localised and that it is quite rare for items published in say Lichfield to also appear in Cannock or Wolverhampton. It also helps if the contact lives reasonably locally. If there is anyone who feels they would like to have a go at this please contact me or anyone whose details appear in this magazine.

Meanwhile, as you will read further on, we continue to show persistence in several areas where we are continuing to experience considerable frustration. The delays at Cappers Bridge and the complications with the Lichfield Southern Bypass are foremost in our minds and occupy a great deal of our time. Yet it is easy to dwell on the difficulties at the expense of the positive. Right from the start we have realised that regaining control of the land, so much of which passed into private ownership when the canals closed, is most important. One of the most difficult areas is the Ogley flight up to the connection with the BCN. Suddenly, as Phil Sharpe reports, there is the prospect of beginning the slow advance down the hill to the aqueduct and beyond. As ever, we must seek the opportunities and be sure that we do not waste them.

(continued over)

Our Vision Statement

To restore the Lichfield Canal and the Hatherton Canal to re-open waterway links between Staffordshire and the West Midlands, for the benefit of the environment, amenity and prosperity of the people of the region and to enhance the nation's inland waterway system.

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN (continued)

Anyone who was able to attend the May Weekend event at Huddlesford cannot fail to have enjoyed themselves. This was the successor to the famous "Coffee Morning" which our President, Eric Wood with Doreen, had hosted at their home for several years. This joint effort between the Trust and Lichfield Cruising Club was a rewarding one to attend and a great tribute to the organising team. It had all the attributes of small campaigning rallies with the boats, the stalls and the entertainment. Above all it was friendly and positive. It was a great pleasure to meet our 1500th member and to award certificates to both him and his dog. Edward Blacksmith was granted honorary Life Membership of the Trust and his "Hearing Dog" Molly was granted honorary membership of the Pets Club! I also presented a certificate of honorary Life Membership to Pat and Mervyn Ainge in recognition of a very generous donation to the Restoration Fund. On Sunday evening the Mayor of Lichfield was the guest of the Trust for the entertainment in the marquee. In every sense, including financially, it was a great weekend.

(continued over)



Bywash weir stone and partly rebuilt offside wing wall above Lock 26
(Photo by Phill Sharpe)

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN (continued)

As ever, much of the operational effort and inspiration came from the Marketing Group. The level of commitment shown by David Moore and his small team is remarkable. Recently, one weekend saw them committed to representing the Trust at three events simultaneously. The financial return is not always bank-breaking but the return to the Trust cannot be measured in wholly monetary terms. "Showing the Flag" is a vital part of what we do. I join in where I can and enjoyed a very busy and rewarding day at the Crick Boat Show. It was a pity that we could not show a formal presence at the big BCN Cruise over the May Bank Holiday but we were just too stretched. We are very aware that we were founded to restore the links into the northern BCN and thereby ensure regeneration and a considerable increase in boat movements. We are grateful to IWA and all those who organised such a successful cruise. If anyone would like to join the Marketing Group please contact David Moore or myself. It is a very good and rewarding way of getting to know us and contributing to our work.

Finally, as the midsummer rain beats down on Shropshire (and Staffordshire), let us again pay tribute to all those involved in the great work at Tamworth Road. I was recently given a guided tour of the site and gained a fresh understanding of what is being done. The whole area from the tail of lock 24 to the tail of lock 26 and on down to the A38 is the scene of great activity but there is a shape and order to the work which is impressive. Over the next two years I am sure we will see the emergence of a small but significant stretch of restored waterway track. The significance of this should not be understated.

Brian Kingshott

Letters to the Editor

Dear members,

East Anglian Ambulance Service have launched a national "In case of Emergency (ICE)" campaign with the support of Falklands war hero Simon Weston.

The idea is that you store the word "ICE" in your mobile phone address book, and against it enter the number of the person you would want to be contacted "In Case of Emergency". In an emergency situation ambulance and hospital staff will then be able to quickly find out who your next of kin are and be able to contact them. It's so simple - everyone can do it. Please do. Please will you also forward this to everybody in your address book, it won't take too many forwards' before everybody will know about this. It really could save your life.

Malcolm Bridge, Waterway Recovery Group

VICE-CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our AGM seems a long time ago now, being just after the press date for the last Cut Both Ways, and there were no surprises. But we should record that Bob Williams, Trevor Morris and David Moore were duly re-elected as directors, and the Director's Report and Accounts for 2004 as published in CBW were accepted. Any member wanting a copy of the minutes before next year should contact our Secretary. Following the AGM all Trust officers were confirmed in post and David was elected as Chairman of our Trading Company.

CAPPERS BRIDGE

I should have known better than to make predictions in the last CBW about the start of work on Cappers Bridge. Although the preferred tender has now been chosen and detailed design work completed, actually letting the construction contract and starting the work depends on first transferring all the land required to Staffordshire County Council. However, this has been delayed by seemingly endless complications due to minor differences between various plans and further legal delays which have again conspired to defer the contract signing. The Trust is doing all we can to push things forward but we are dependant on other people to complete their work with the same degree of urgency that we recognise is now needed to ensure that this much-delayed project can be started this summer and completed before the end of the year.

OGLEY TOP LOCK COTTAGE

As some members may be aware, the Top Lock Cottage at Ogley Junction has recently come onto the market at £300,000. Although much extended and modernised, it still carries its former BCN number 272 and, of most interest to us, includes half of the top lock chamber buried in the front garden. This is an unmissable opportunity to buy back an essential part of the Lichfield Canal and the Trust has conditionally identified a means of sponsoring this. Although road access and drainage problems will preclude any major work on restoring the lock until we also have access to the other half of the lock in the property next door, we can rent out the property until such time as we can sell it on again, minus the restored lock. Restoration of the top 4 locks at Ogley has always been a difficult issue due to their being in several ownerships, with access roads to the houses extending across the canal line and gardens over the infilled side ponds. If we can acquire the Top Lock Cottage this will be a significant step forward, although it may take some years to replace the other pieces of the jigsaw. One interesting problem to contemplate meanwhile is what to do with the septic tank which is located in the lock chamber. I would not like to write the Risk Assessment for its removal!

(continued over)

VICE-CHAIRMAN'S NOTES (continued)

LICHFIELD SOUTHERN BYPASS

The plans for the Lichfield Southern Bypass are causing us considerable concern at present. Since the formation of the Trust we have known that a major diversion of the Lichfield Canal would be necessary to avoid previous development on the original line between Sandfields and Wordsworth Close. It was agreed with both the District and County councils that this would follow the line of the proposed Lichfield Southern Bypass and outline plans were drawn up to show how this could be achieved. As a result, further redevelopment has since been permitted which has removed any possibility of returning to the historic route. Although we have been meeting the District Council regularly for over 9 years, and progress with the bypass plans has frequently been discussed, efforts to engage the County as the highway authority have been more difficult to achieve. All enquiries about what provision would be included for the canal in the bypass plans were fobbed off with claims that they had no funding to even draw up the plans, until last November when they suddenly announced that they were going to build the section which affects us by this August, financed by the Chesterfield Road housing development, but would include no work on the canal.

We were horrified at this and pointed out in person and in several letters that national planning policy, which had been changed substantially as a result of our battle over the BNRR, now required them to make provision for the canal diversion which is necessitated by the bypass and the ongoing development that it serves. This is clearly set out in national Planning Policy Guidance PPG13 Transport and in great detail in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. But in April, after a long delay so that they could claim that it was too late because planning permission had by then been given, the County made the extraordinary claim that Government policy does not apply to them! This is all the more galling because we have been getting excellent co-operation from other sections of the County including the bridge engineers for Cappers Lane, the estates section over land on the Hatherton Canal route and the regeneration team over funding opportunities. But the road engineers seem set on denying their obligations and frustrating national and local planning policy support for the canal's restoration.

We expected that all the land necessary for the canal route would be provided by the developers, and that they would contribute to financing the earthworks and bridges, the rest of which would need to come from District, County or Government sources through the Local Transport Plan. All that is on offer is a strip of land of insufficient width and no construction work, which the County claims meets its obligation not to actually obstruct the canal. Perhaps they should actually read the relevant documents which make clear that this is no longer sufficient.

(continued over)

VICE-CHAIRMAN'S NOTES (continued)

PPG13 says that "local authorities should protect disused waterways by ensuring that sites and routes are not severed by new development or transport infrastructure"; and Para 11.7 of the Design Manual says "A navigable crossing or diversion should normally be included in the scheme where there is a viable proposal to restore a waterway and physical work is either under way, or is likely to start within a reasonable time after completion of the scheme. The crossing or diversion should meet the reasonable requirements of navigation on the waterway being restored and include provision for ancillary facilities such as towpaths where possible."

We have met Ian Thompson the Development Services Director for Lichfield to seek his assistance and the Lichfield MP Michael Fabricant has helped to raise the profile of this issue by asking questions of the Deputy Prime Minister. We do not want to get back into political campaigning mode against the County Highways, and post-BNRR it should not have been necessary, but unless their attitude changes substantially and soon, we may need to call on all the resources of our supporters to fight this as a test case of the effectiveness of Government policy and planning guidance on waterway restoration projects.

(continued over)

The Marketing stand will be at the
Autumn Craft Fair
Friday 21st Oct 2005
Guildhall, Lichfield
9.00am - 4.00pm

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VICE-CHAIRMAN'S NOTES (continued)

HATHERTON MARINA

A planning application has been made to South Staffordshire Council for a marina, facilities building, workshop and public house on the Hatherton Canal, just west of the Roman Way and above Meadow Lock. Although perhaps surprising as the canal is not yet navigable here, the Trust warmly welcomes the proposal as an important step forward in demonstrating commercial interest and confidence in its restoration. Whilst developing the full facilities of the marina will obviously depend on restoring the canal through to Calf Heath, it can meanwhile be used for static moorings, boat sales, chandlery, etc. and the offer of space in the proposed visitor centre for Trust promotional and educational material is much appreciated. The plans indicate an attractive design and a pleasant landscaped setting based on existing ponds with their own spring-fed water supply. If consent is given we look forward to working with the Hammonds to bring forward the restoration of the canal channel from the Roman Way to Cats Bridge to give more than half a mile of cruising water for boats to use, and to promoting the extension of this section towards Calf Heath by replacement of the road bridges.

EXCAVATOR

For some time now we have been discussing the need for the Trust to acquire its own mini-excavator. Whilst our old JCB3 has given sterling service over the years, it is too big to take along the towpath or into locks and too unmanoeuvrable to work into tight corners. For years we have depended on the occasional loan of Waterway Recovery Group's JCB803, which has been much appreciated, and it has proved to be the ideal size of machine for a large variety of excavation and levelling jobs. However, due to demand from other societies 'Blue' is not always available when we most need it, and it has become an increasing problem trying to plan our other work around its availability, especially when bookings become altered. With a similar machine of our own on hand whenever needed, we could use our volunteer work force more productively. Obviously, major earthmoving operations would still need larger plant hired for that specific purpose, as at present, but all our smaller and long-running jobs would benefit. We have, therefore, been looking around lately for a used 803 in reasonable condition at the right price, and it seems that we should be able to get one for £10,000 or so, half of which we expect to cover through a grant. Although there are several other manufacturers of similar 3 tonne excavators it makes sense to stick to a model that we and all the visiting WRG drivers are familiar with and for which servicing, repairs and parts are locally available. The aim is to have this in use by August - but there I go again making predictions!

Phil Sharpe

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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DONATIONS TO THE TRUST

We gratefully acknowledge the following donations for
amounts over £20 from 1st April to 30th June 2005.

Name (in order of receipt),	Trust & Marketing	Land Fund	Restoration Fund
Dr P F Cann (with sub.)	25.00		
Lt Cdr G Glover (with sub.)	50.00		
Miss G M Branson (with sub.)	30.00		
Lichfield St. Chads - Rotary Club (talk),	100.00		
Dr S F Mills - (prize draw sponsorship),	100.00		
Mr J M Smith (with sub.)	54.00		
Mr J W Farren (with sub.)	50.00		
Dr E Pringle (with sub.)	35.00		
Mr R J Buckler (with sub.)	30.00		
Mrs J M Faulkner	100.00		
Mr & Mrs P R Swindale - (with sub.)	55.00		
Dr J R Massy (with Prize Draw),	90.00		
Morris Ground Golfing Soc.- (with sub.),	50.00		
Mr M P Shimell- (with Prize Draw)	40.00		
Mr J Lamming (with sub.)	35.00		
Mr F Kelley (with sub.)	25.00		
Dr T H Hollingworth	112.00		
Mr Brian Kingshott - (donated expenses)	432.27		
Burntwood Library meeting (talk)	40.00		
Mr David Stanistreet - (£30 x 3 months)		90.00	
Mrs P Ainge - (in memory of late Mother)			5,000.00
Mr L Barry Kenn - (parachute jump sponsorship collection)		400.00	
Miss J Titley		100.00	
Regular donors to appeals	130.00	408.00	15.00
Aggregated donations below £20 each 1209.32			

For details about our Regular Giving Scheme
contact Bob Williams Tel 01543 671427
Norfolk House, 29 Hall Lane, Hammerwich, Burntwood, WS7 0JP

FUNDING NEWS

GRANTS

From this year's bids to the local councils, we have only been awarded £500 from Lichfield City Council towards restoration work at Tamworth Road.

Other grant applications have been under consideration for potential awards from the Local Heritage Initiative Fund, DEFRA (Rural Enterprise Scheme), ONYX (Land-fill Tax Credit Scheme), and Living Spaces. It is not always easy to satisfy funding criteria and new ideas are being researched with prospects of more assistance for this important work.

I would love to hear from members who have ideas or would like to help with grant applications; call 01543 671427 any time.

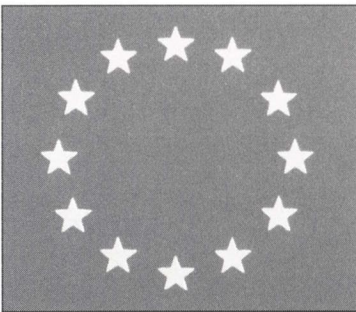
PRIZE DRAW REMINDER

Thanks to members who have returned their Prize Draw counterfoils and payment where it is evident that efforts are being made to sell tickets more widely, some demanding more! Whilst the Draw will not be made until November, please do not forget to send in your entries in good time: TOP PRIZE £250.00 and eight other valuable items to be won.

Bob Williams

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We regret to record the death of the following members:-
Mrs Glynnis Lee, Alrewas, Staffs. May 2005
Mr G Hayward, Wolverhampton, May 2005



The Trust receives grant assistance from the European Regional Development Fund

1998 DATA PROTECTION ACT

The Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust Ltd will hold your details for marketing purposes in accordance with the 1998 Data Protection Act. If you do not wish to receive updates from the Trust or any third party with whom we co-operate then please advise the Trust through Director Bob Williams on 01543 671427.

New Members up to 01 July 2005

Mrs J.S. Ralph, West Bromwich
Mr I. Christie, Bloxwich
Ms K. Smith, Lichfield
Mrs S. Theaker, Barton under Needwood
Mr and Mrs A. Marr, Peterhead, Aberdeen
Mr L. Marr, St. Fergus, Peterhead, Aberdeen
Christadelphian Boating Holiday, Nuneaton
Mr F. Weetman, Shenstone, Lichfield
Mr M. Yeomans, Shepshed, Leics.
Mr J.A. Smart, Sutton Coldfield
Ms J. Blackmore, Burntwood, Staffs.
Mr R.C. Snell, Bordon, Hants.
Mr C.J. Lowe, Coppull, Lancs.
Mr G.G. Gibbons, Pelsall
Mr M. Adlington, Balsall Common
Mr J. Deakin, Walsall
Mr K. Herring, Abingdon

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MARKETING REPORT

THANK YOU MIKE & MAY

My first report as Marketing Chairman must begin by saying thanks to my predecessor Mike Brown. Mike has carried out the role for four years and over that time the Group, under his leadership, has raised considerable sums of money for the Trust. But the purpose of the Group is twofold and the value of the publicity it generates can never be fully realised. Throughout this time Mike has been assisted by May Brown who has kept the notes of the meetings and arranged venues etc. Both are taking a rest from the front line but they will continue to be seen working at the various shows and festivals we attend.

So what have we been up to? Well, the festival and show season is in full swing and the marketing team have been very busy.

AGM 23 April

As usual we had a Trust stand at the AGM; this gives members the opportunity to see what we have to offer and to purchase new t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc. It is also the chance to meet the members and appeal for new volunteers.

Huddlesford May Day Gathering 30 April/1 May

This joint event with Lichfield Cruising Club replaced the traditional Easter Coffee Morning which has been held at the home of Eric & Doreen Wood for many years. It was a successful and enjoyable event for both the Club and the Trust. The weekend raised £1120 for the Trust. This included over £200 from the Saturday evening auction conducted by our President, Eric Wood. Thanks to everyone who helped with the organising, baking cakes, manning stalls, providing bric-a-brac, etc, not forgetting our barbecue chefs. Sunday evening entertainment by Black Country comedian, David Bartley and folk band, Claret was much enjoyed.

**DAVID CAN BE HEARD AT OUR AUTUMN SOCIAL EVENING
12th NOVEMBER AT WHITTINGTON VILLAGE HALL
PUT THE DATE IN YOUR DIARY NOW**

Moira Canal Festival 14/15 May

An outing for our SMART trailer, thanks to Peter Magee who towed it to and from the site. It makes life a lot easier having the trailer but it needs someone ideally with a 4x4 or a Transit type van to tow it. If there is anyone who owns such a vehicle, and would be willing to do some towing, we would be very pleased to hear from you. Draw tickets sold - £75. One new member. Thanks to Bob & Sue Williams, Mike & May Brown, Shirley Theaker, Mike & Bobbie Battisson and Mavis Moore for their help.

(continued over)

MARKETING REPORT (continued)

Crick Boat Show 28-30 May

A successful event, thanks to Rob Davies assisted by Bob & Sue Williams, Brian Kingshott, Trish Humphries, Mavis Moore and Pat Barton. Draw tickets - £142. Six new members recruited. In addition, British Waterways made a donation of £180 from the profits of the show.

Lichfield Greenhill Bower 30 May

Many thanks to the Brown family and friends who raised £338, largely on bric-a-brac and second hand books. This weekend also saw the Crick Show and the IWA campaign cruise on the Northern BCN; so you can see that the team was stretched to meet all the venues.

IWA BCN Cruise 28-29 May

Not an event with any sales potential but we thought it vital to be seen as our two canals hold the key to this part of the BCN. Three boats displayed L&H banners and our thanks go to Barry Kenn, Trevor Morris and Des Barnard from Lichfield Cruising Club.

Kelvin Register Rally 4 June

A small gathering for owners of Kelvin engined boats at Napton. There was considerable interest in the restoration as one would expect from dedicated boaters, with the inevitable question, "When will it be open?".

(continued over)

BLACK COUNTRY NIGHT OUT

An evening of local humour and music with

Black Country comedian

DAVID BARTLEY and friends

Whittington Village Hall off Main Street, Whittington

Saturday 12th November 2005 at 7.30pm

Tickets £10 includes supper

Phone Mike Brown on 01543 450541

Bar available during interval

All funds raised go to

Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust

MARKETING REPORT (continued)

Historic Boat Gathering Braunston, 25/26 June

Another busy weekend with one stand at the show and, on the Sunday, another stand at Brownhills Festival. Visitors included Terry & Monica Darlington. If you watched the last series of *Waterworld* you will remember them as the couple who crossed the Channel and boated down to Carcassonne in the south of France. They are now back on their home mooring at Stone. They donated a signed copy of their book, *Narrow Dog to Carcassonne*. The dog of the title, Jim, a whippet, was given honorary membership of our Pets Club.

The Trust stand raised £207 for the funds and gained four new members. Thanks to Bob & Sue Williams and Mike & May Brown.



"Narrow Dog to
Carcassonne"
authors
Terry & Monica Darlington
(as seen on Water World)
with dog Jim.
(Photo by Sue Williams)

Now on sale! "NARROW DOG TO CARCASSONNE"

An account of an improbable journey by narrowboat from the Midlands to "the France nobody knows" by Terry Darlington as featured in ITV Central's *Water World* series in 2005. Available from good book shops and Amazon via Internet, ref: ISBN 0593 053117, cover price £14.99.

MARKETING REPORT (continued)

Brownhills Canal Festival 26 June

A small enjoyable local event, now in its third year. Several boats struggled through the weed and low water to reach the site near Brownhills town centre, including Barry Kenn. Thanks to Barry, Mike Battisson, Keith Grice, Trish Humphries and Peter & Pat Magee.

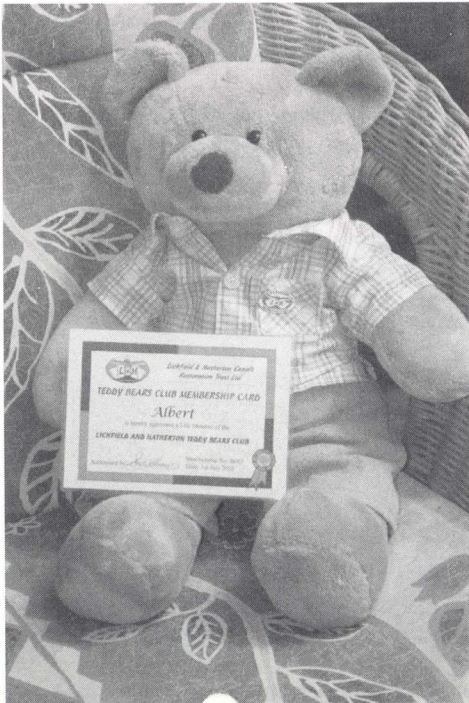
IWA National Festival, 27-29 August

Are you going to the IWA National at Preston Brook? The Trust will have a stand there but we need your support. Are you going up by car on the Friday; have you room to carry a box or two of stock for the stand? Can you spare an hour or two to man the stand and talk to the public or sell goods? Contact David Moore on 01543 432718.

PETS CLUB

We now have, by popular demand, a Teddy Bear section of the Pets Club. So if you want that special present for your teddy, just £5 buys life membership. Very good value for teddy bears (they do live a very long time) and a useful contribution to the funds.

David Moore



Teddy Bears Club
new member Albert,
mascot of the
Happy Faces Playgroup, Daventry
(Photo by Sue Williams)



SHAKESPEAREAN RESTORATION

On Saturday 25th June Trust members Bob & Sue Williams, Peter & Pat Magee and Bobbie & Mike Battisson attended a matinee performance of William Shakespeare's play Twelfth Night as a result of an invitation from the Lichfield based charity Shakespeare In The Park (SITP).

The play was presented in a leafy woodland setting in the grounds of Maple Hayes Hall, Lichfield, with seating on bales of straw. The mini-amphitheatre was used to great effect by the director and producer, whose influence not only resulted in an excellent performance, but even impressed the weather to co-operate!

The result was a wonderfully entertaining afternoon much enjoyed by all.

Shakespeare in the Park has become a feature of the Lichfield cultural calendar having been in operation over the past 22 years. Proceeds from the performances are distributed to various local charities, last year totalling £3,500. These distributions are generally made to causes considered to be beneficial to the people of Lichfield.

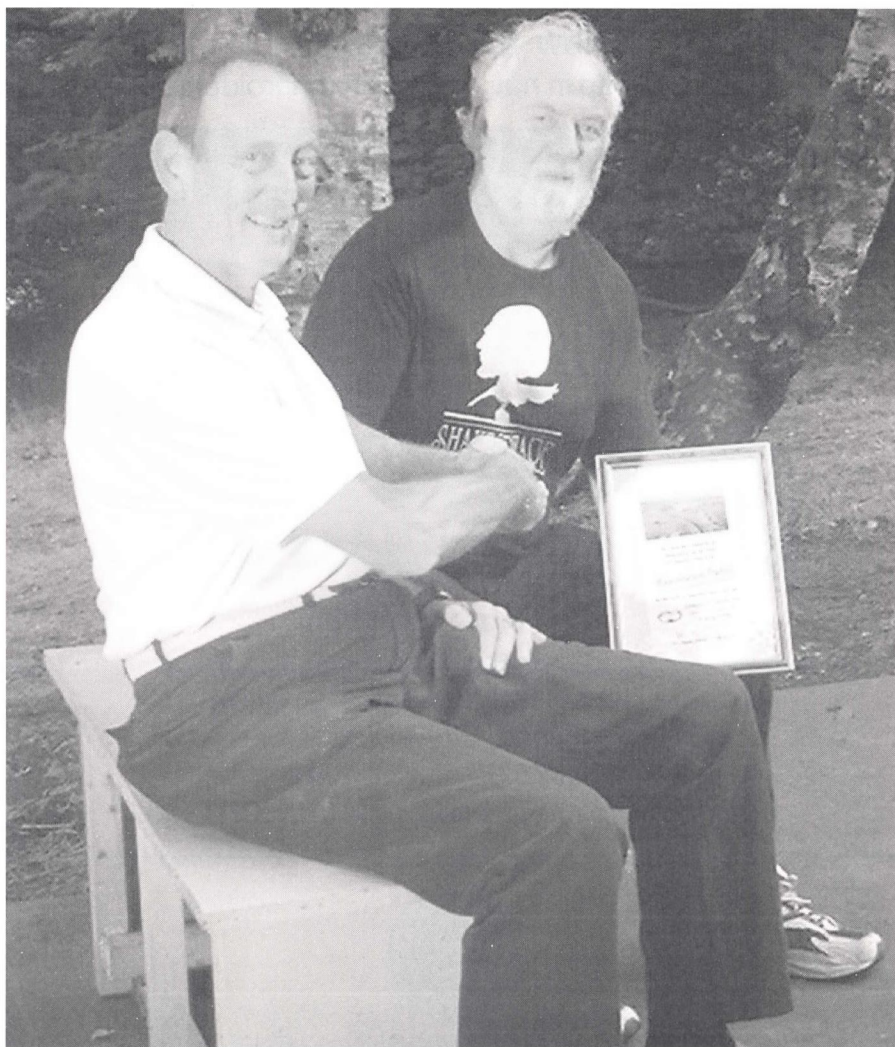
This year, as a result of meeting Neil Davies the SITP Business Manager at the Huddlesford Gathering and discussing our restoration activities at Tamworth Road, our Trust was awarded a donation of £450 to be used as a contribution towards our objective of improved access for all to the Lichfield Canal Towpath Trail at Lock 25.

Following the Twelfth Night performance, the SITP donations to local Charities were formally recorded with a group photo taken with Steve Baker, SITP Chairman. LH-CRT was represented by Mike Battisson.

Mike Battisson



The audience take their places for Twelfth Night (Photo by Sue Williams)



Mike Battison receives a cheque from Steve Baker

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Vade Securitas

Andrew Phasey
Boat Safety Scheme Examiner

Telephone: 07850 - 753633

email: andrew.phasey@btinternet.com

Please contact me to discuss the Standards required by the Boat Safety Scheme prior to an Examination; or to arrange a visit to your boat club or society to provide advice to boat owners.

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(advertisement)



Michael Fabricant MP

Member of Parliament for
the Constituency of Lichfield.

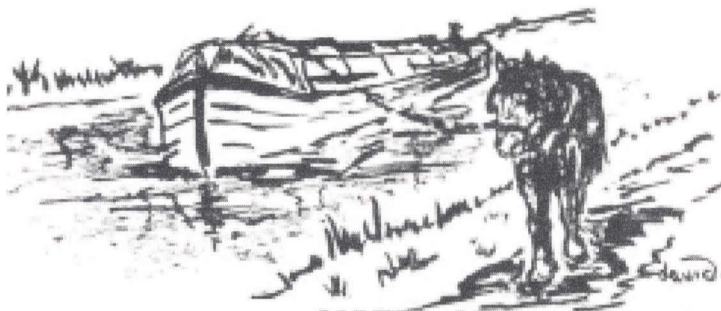
if you live in the Lichfield Parliamentary constituency,
and you require assistance and think your MP can help,
you can either write to Michael Fabricant at the
House of Commons, Westminster, London SW1A 0AA;
or you can email him by using the webform at
www.michael.fabricant.mp.co.uk/contact.html
or telephone his office at 01543 419650
where you can also make an appointment
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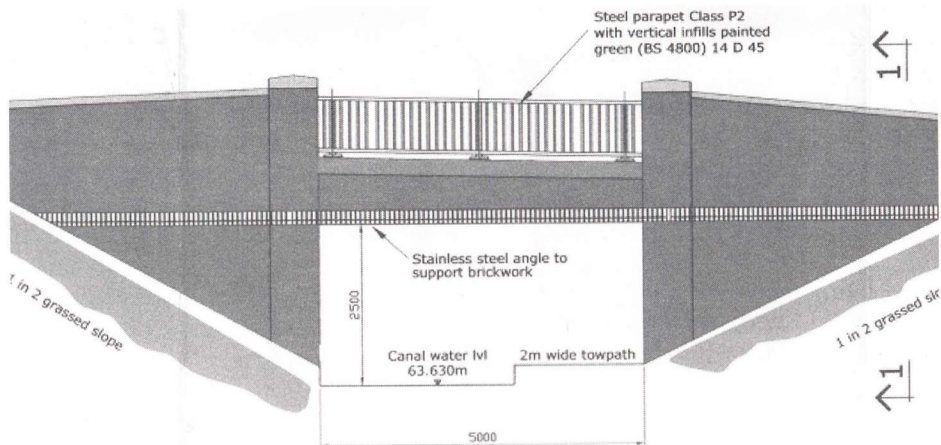
PHONE 01543 422227

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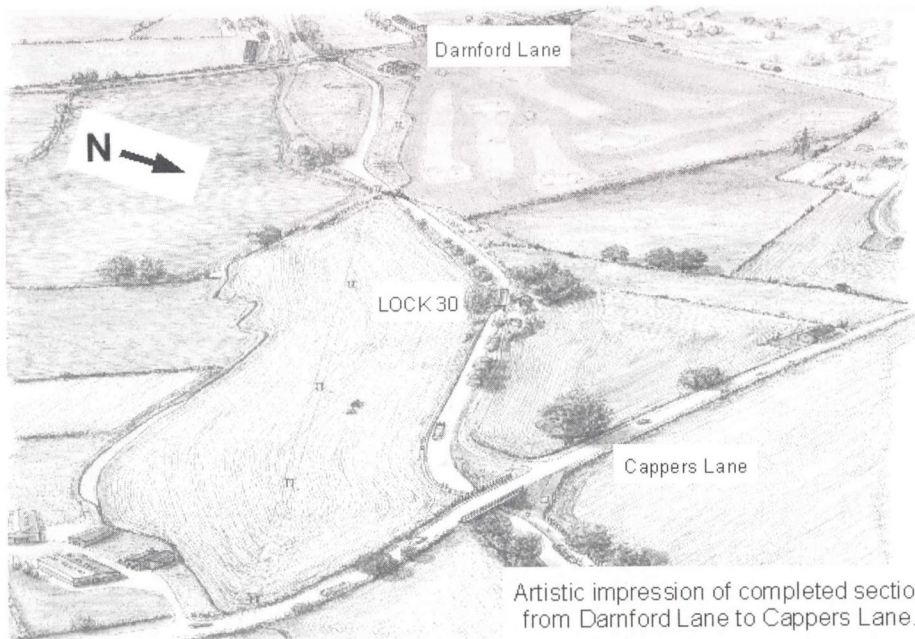
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SOUTH ELEVATION

Scale 1:50

The proposed design for Capers Lane Bridge



Artistic impression of completed section from Darnford Lane to Cappers Lane.

PRESS & PUBLICITY

It was a comparatively quiet quarter from April to June 2005, but nevertheless some useful publicity for the Trust's activities has been obtained.

The theatre trip by Trust members to see David Suchet and his signing of a bottle of champagne for auction was further reported in the *Lichfield Mercury* as "Star toast to canal charity", in the *Express & Star* as "Suchet's bubbly to be up for bidding", and by *The Post* as "Bubbly goes under the hammer", with accompanying pictures and plugs for the May Day Gathering at Huddlesford. The Black Country entertainment at Huddlesford was also reported, twice, by the *Express & Star* as "Local act lined up at canal" and "Funday in aid of canal trust".

Another story popular with the press was the recruitment of our 1500th member Edward Blacksmith, pictured with his 'hearing' dog on his boat, and with Trust Chairman Brian Kingshott, as "Milestone membership honour" in *The Post*, as "Man and dog honoured - Membership of canal trust" by the *Express & Star*, and in *Waterways World* for July as "Lichfield & Hatherton's 1,500th member". More human interest was supplied by our member Barry Kenn pictured on his 'barge' in reports on the Brownhills Canalside Festival in both the *Walsall Chronicle* and the *Walsall Advertiser*.

(continued over)



BBQ at Huddlesford May day Gathering,
The Williams family serve Jean & Peter Buch (Photo by Jan Horton)

PRESS & PUBLICITY (continued)

The controversy over the Lichfield Southern Bypass and proposed housing developments at Shortbutts Lane continued, with a letter to the *Lichfield Mercury* quoting from our comments in this magazine. However, the Village Green application that could have given us problems has been withdrawn, reported as "Green campaign admits defeat" by *The Mercury*, and "Bid to save beauty spot 'bound to fail'" by the *Express & Star*.

The Waterway Recovery Group's *Canal Camps 2005* booklet contained details of the forthcoming Lichfield Canal Camp in August, and the WRG magazine *Navvies* for April-May reported on work at Lichfield in a "Dig Deep update". Meanwhile the *Express & Star* rather bizarrely reported on hundreds of frogs being squashed by cars at Hammerwich which would be saved if the canal was restored and a bridge erected over the road. Perhaps we should sign them all up for our pets club !

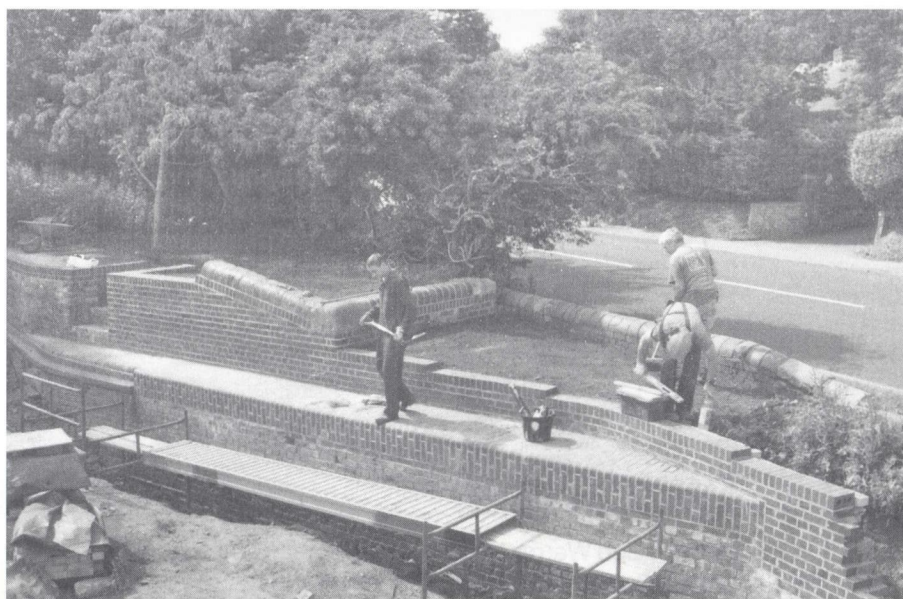
Phil Sharpe



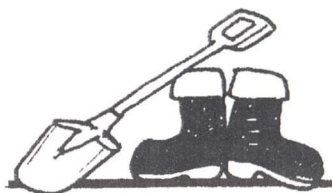
ITV presenter, Bob Warman who opened the Brownhills event, talks to Mike Battisson and Mavis Moore (Photo by Barry Kenn)



Bob, Bob, Keith and Simon landscaping the offside wall at Lock 24
(Photo by Phil Sharpe)



Clive, Barry and Bob and completed offside landscaping at Lock 24
(Photo by Phil Sharpe)



HATHERTON CANAL

WORKING PARTY NEWS

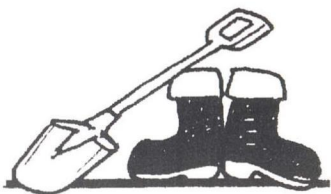
We completed our major clearance of the invasive willow trees from the offside above Cats Bridge in April, winching out most of the big branches from the mud with our newly repaired tirfor. In May and June the Sunday work parties plus several mid-week sessions cleared and mowed the towpath right through from the M6 to the Roman Way to maintain this as a pleasant walk and local amenity. Ongoing tow-path and hedgerow maintenance will occupy us through the summer, with no doubt some more effort to control the Himalayan Balsam.

Our regular date is the third Sunday of each month, from 10 am, with some occasional extra days as required. Contact Denis Cooper on 01543 374370 (work) or Phil Sharpe on 01889 583330 for details of meeting places.

Work Party Dates: Sundays; 21 August, 18 September, 16 October, 20 November, 18 December.



Wrg BITM barrowing readymix concrete into Lock 25 thrust block in April
(Photo by Phil Sharpe)



LICHFIELD CANAL

WORKING PARTY NEWS

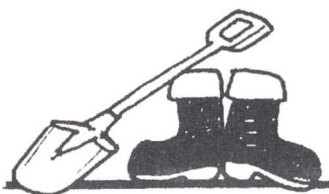
Visits from WRG BITM in April and Newbury WPG in May, with our own volunteers working at least one day every weekend plus some weekdays and Wednesday evenings, has produced significant progress on a wide variety of jobs at Tamworth Road site in the quarter up to the start of July.

On Lock 24 we have completed rebuilding the offside landing stage, the retaining walls and the steps up to ground level, rebuilt the roadside boundary wall and back-filled and landscaped the area. On the towpath side the landing stage paving was finished and the ground cut back to a safe slope and grass seeded. The remaining section of the wing wall, bywash outfall and the gap in the towpath wall were excavated, cleaned off for rebuilding and re-pointed, and then deepened concrete footings were shuttered and cast over the residual brickwork of the towpath wall. The back of the roadside pound wall was also shuttered where low and has been filled with 2 loads of 6 cubic metres of readymix concrete, delivered right to where needed.

At Lock 25 another 6 cubic metres of readymix concrete had to be barrowed the length of the lockside on the BITM weekend to fill in the towpath side bottom gate thrust block and lay a platform for future quadrant paving. Re-bricking the ladder recess continued, the towpath slope alongside the quadrant was levelled and the slope alongside the retaining wall has been landscaped.

The major excavation work in Mrs Attwood's garden continued with her agreement, and the towpath wall has been uncovered down to where it has been demolished above Lock 26. The offside tail wall below Lock 25 was excavated and the large sycamore tree root removed after considerable effort to disentangle it from the wall, although it still brought a substantial amount of brickwork and ironwork out with it. At the other end of the garden old fencing and a small leylandi tree were removed to enable excavation of the Lock 26 bywash weir and wing wall. Several coping stones and large numbers of old bricks have been recovered from the excavations and transported to the storage area above Lock 25 for cleaning and reuse, and some of the original stone and brick copings from the demolished bridge have also been found. All the spoil has again been dumpered down to a temporary spoil bank near the A38, where it can be used in future to build up the banks across the end of Mr Moody's field. Below Lock 26 spoil which had spread over the boundary with the field along the middle section of the offside bank has also been pulled back by a few feet to reinstate a straight boundary line.





LICHFIELD CANAL

WORKING PARTY NEWS (CONTINUED)

Various repairs have been necessary to keep our plant operating, including extensive repairs to the hydraulic rams on the JCB3 and welding in a new section of roof, and repairs to the brakes on the dumper. Thanks are again due to Chasetown Civil Engineering for transporting the JCB3 and for moving 10 laboriously collected bags of brick rubble down to Darnford Lane for towpath reinstatement. Amongst the numerous other minor jobs were collecting more donated bricks, planting trees and bulbs, maintenance work such as strimming, weeding and mowing, including some at Fossey Lane site, and moving the display panel board up to towpath level.

Plans for the next few months include further excavations, completing our rebuild of the tail of Lock 24, then rebuilding the towpath wall through the garden, which will be the main job for the Canal Camp. Bricklayers and more brick cleaners will be especially welcome!

To find our usual work site at Lock 25 on Tamworth Road (Grid ref. SK 130 083) take the A51 out of Lichfield and the site is on the right about 300 metres after Cricket Lane. We are working one day or more on most weekends now, usually the Sunday, except for the third weekend of the month when it will generally be on the Saturday. Our own work parties are supplemented by some WRG weekends and a one-week Canal Camp in August. We generally work from about 9 am to 4 pm and more help is always welcome, even if you can spare only a few hours. Check the latest plans with Phil Sharpe on 01889 583330 or Peter Matthews on 01543 318933, or visit our web site where any additional dates will be shown.

Work Party Dates:

August: Sunday 7, WRG Canal Camp Sat 13-20, Saturday 20.
September: Sunday 4, Kent & East Sussex CRG Sat/Sun 10/11, Saturday 17, Sunday 25.
October: Sunday 2, Sunday 9, Saturday 15, London WRG Sat/Sun 22/23, Sunday 30.
November: Sunday 6, Sunday 13, Saturday 19, Sunday 27.
December: Sunday 4, Sunday 11, Saturday 17.

The last of the summer Wednesday evening sessions will be on August 10 & 24, starting about 5pm.

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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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Lichfield Work Party	Peter Matthews	☎ 01543 318933
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