

CUT
BOTH
WAYS



The Magazine of the Lichfield &
Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust

Issue 65 Autumn 2010



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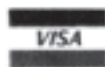
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CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Although the Trust has always taken a deliberately parochial approach to restoration it is now impossible to avoid thinking about the broader picture. We have focussed on the needs of our two canals and left the big issues to our friends and colleagues in the Inland Waterways Association. Of course, many of us are also members of IWA and keep very closely in touch with its activities. IWA has a long and honourable history of campaigning for the preservation and development of existing waterways and can point to many decades of success. It has also sponsored and encouraged the restoration of abandoned canals either in a lead role or as an important force behind the scenes. When we have needed support, either financial or political, IWA has always been a pillar of strength. Over the years, IWA has developed a good working relationship with British Waterways coming from a difficult start to a level of mutual if critical respect.

L&H has always been able to work closely with British Waterways and has been appreciative of its support in difficult times. When we were building the Lichfield Canal aqueduct and ensuring the construction of the major culverts at Churchbridge BW stood firmly with us and brought their professionalism to bear on the often difficult discussions which made the politicians and the engineers sit up and listen. Local BW executives have offered advice, practical help on occasions, and have sat with us in meetings with road builders and planners. Obviously, the voluntary sector is always looking for more than the state bodies can deliver but we have worked in an atmosphere of creative tension which has brought many good outcomes.

Now, as we go to press, we hear confirmation that the whole structure of waterways management is to undergo a major reconfiguration. Not only is there to be a very big shake-up in the management structure but there is to be "mutualisation" which, for the moment has no clear definition. Whatever all this comes to mean for waterways management in general it must also have a serious impact on the work of the restoration movement. If nothing else, it will take a while for the structures to settle down and for we volunteers to rebuild a working relationship with the new teams. Not all improvements make things worse but it will take a long time before we can reach a valid judgment.

(See open letter from Tony Hales C.B.E., Chairman British Waterways on page 13)



**Project Part-Financed
by the European Union**

**European Regional
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CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

We, in common with other restoration trusts, have always worked to a clear objective. We would restore our two canals to the highest of standards, certainly to ones acceptable to BW. We have never wished to become a navigation authority and run the waterways ourselves. Our aim has always been to hand over a track in excellent condition to BW or its successor. Now it would appear that this would not be acceptable. Any restored waterways must be clearly self-sustainable and come with a commercial "legacy" which would ensure that it did not become any kind of financial burden on its new owner. This must surely mean an entirely new business model in which the physical restoration must go hand in hand with commercial projects which can bring in an assured income.

Now, to some extent, L&H has already been doing this. Our discussions with landowners always stress the income potential from moorings, farm shops, tourist attractions and a whole range of leisure activities. Perhaps now we must ensure that the navigation also benefits financially from such activities. It will add another, and not wholly welcome, dimension to our work. This comes at a time when we are undertaking a review of our strategy which needs an update after the passage of some considerable time. We are delighted to welcome Shaun Bowden to our Council who has volunteered to go through our strategy documents and bring them up to date. He is currently "reading himself in" and watching what we do and talking to directors and officers. We have asked him to be our "critical friend". We so often appeal for volunteers (more info on page 23) and it is a welcome surprise when someone comes forward.

I know that Shaun has visited our major worksite at Tamworth Road where the pace of activity has quickened considerably over the summer months. We have benefited from several WRG group visits (over 30 on one weekend) and from the return of our friends from Jaguar Land Rover. The latter enjoy a day out of the office and bring a ready expertise to our work which is most welcome. The result has been a rapid extension of the "long wall" from the tail of Lock 26 to the A38 corner where we must install a weir. Thoughts have now turned to the construction of the entirely new Lock 27 as a prelude to lining up the approach for the crossing under A51. This latter will concentrate our minds as major funding will be required to employ contractors to thrust bore under the A51 and then the A38. These two projects will almost certainly have to be run together. We must not run ahead of ourselves but exciting times may be just ahead. Our own work force has punched far above its weight in getting us this far. All credit must go to Bob Williams for managing and encouraging our team and to Brian Davis who has both laid so many of the bricks but also planned and designed most of the detail. We are so sorry to hear of Brian's recent illness and wish him well in his recovery.

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

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

In all this we do not forget the Hatherton where our main focus is on the reopening of the Lords Hayes Branch and the protection of the route through Churchbridge and Bridgtown. Our conversation with BW about extracting spoil from Lords Hayes has been encouraging and we are waiting to receive detailed information from their engineers. At Churchbridge we are closely monitoring a planning application for housing from Redrow which does not make adequate provision for the canal and an adjacent watercourse. We can only concede adjustments to the route identified by Arup if the proposals are fully validated by engineering survey carried out by the developer. South Staffordshire Council has been most helpful in ensuring that our protected route is respected. Meanwhile, we have continued to talk to the planners at Cannock Chase District Council about protecting our route in the Local Development Framework. Much of the planning process is subject to government review and we must watch developments carefully.

Canal restoration seems to have become very much more complicated than when we started back in the late 1980s. Certainly, it is much more complex than when some of the early projects were carried to fruition. Even thirty years ago it seemed that one could send out the lads with picks, spades and a rickety dumper to push on from lock to lock. Great men such as David Hutchings could buccaneer their way through both the mud on the ground and the mire of the bureaucracy and get things done quickly. Would that those days, and those men, could return. How we would welcome them.

Would you like to receive a trial colour copy of Cut Both Ways
in an electronic PDF format?

Please email the editor (Stefan.Szulc@Gmail.com) and request a copy.

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.

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.

Donations to the Trust

We gratefully acknowledge the following donations for amounts over £20 from 1st July to 30th September 2010.

Name (in order of receipt)	Trust & Marketing	Suchet Appeal	Restoration & Land Funds
Mr H JY Pringle (with sub.)	105.00		
Mr P R Newman (with sub.)	35.00		
Mr J Lamming (with sub.)	35.00		
Dr P F Cann (with sub.)	35.00		
Mr N Blears (with sub.)	25.00		
Mr & Mrs G N Giddings	28.25		
Mr & Mrs A Turner (part pledge)		60.00	
Mr A Barnes		50.00	
Mr R W Lloyd-Hart (with sub.)	24.00		
Mr J R Davies		50.00	
Mr J Holt		30.00	
Mayor and Sheriff of Lichfield's charity	2,510.00		
Mr A V H Gulvin (with sub.)	50.00		
Mr G H Thompson (with sub.)	50.00		
Brown Co Ltd	25.00		
Mr D Shipman (with sub.)	35.00		
Mr D Cooper (with sub.)	50.00		
Mr R Hallam (with sub.)	30.00		
Mr R H Jennings (with sub.)	100.00		
Mr R F Kilsby (with sub.)	25.00		
Ms L E Leys in memory of the late Allen Matthews, OwnerShips	50.00		
Mr C W Butler		30.00	
Burton on Trent Engineering Soc. (talk)		65.00	
Lichfield Running Club (Darnford water station for 10k run)	100.00		
Mr David Stanistreet			90.00
Mr J Moody (returned property rent)	150.00		
Mr D Dixon (returned expenses)	135.60		
Mr B Kingshott (returned expenses)	766.30		
Mr R O Williams (expenses/goods)	82.10		
Regular donors to appeals (inc. GA tax)	909.80		801.22
Aggregated donations below £20 each	602.58		

Membership rates are:

Adult £10; Family £15; Junior (under 18), Student, Retired or Unemployed £6;
Group (Clubs & Societies) £25; Corporate £200; Life Membership £200.
To join, please contact the Membership Secretary (see address page).

New Members 1st. July 2010 to 30th September 2010

Mr. M. Baker, Lichfield	Miss L. Edwards, Lichfield
Miss J. Brain, Norton Canes	Mr. T. J. Habart, Lichfield
Mr. I. Hill, Fradley	Mr. N. Summers, Lichfield
Ms D. Boston, Lichfield	Mr. T. Bennett, Lichfield
Mr. K. J. Sheppard, Burntwood	Mr. E. Cartwright, Lichfield
Mr. A. Taylor, Lichfield	Mrs C. Cooper, Pelsall
Mr. R. E. Sadler, Walsall Wood	Mrs Crossland, Walton on the Hill
Mr. A. Holden, Lichfield	Mr. B. Marshall, Cannock Wood
Mr. D. Gittens, Lichfield	Mr. and Mrs M. Steele, Lichfield
Mr. G. Rowley, Tamworth	Mr. S. Griffiths, Cheslyn Hay
Mr. M. Goldsmith, Lichfield	Mrs L. Salter, Whittington, Lichfield
Mr. J. Shakespeare, Great Barr, Birmingham	

We are very grateful to the following donors:-

Mr. S. Hughes and Mr. G. Jones, Burton on Trent, for surplus building materials.
Mr. David Walker, Cannock for loan masonry tools.
Mr. R Teall, Brownhills for construction equipment.
Chasetown Civil Engineering Ltd for assistance with site materials.

Membership 1204 (Including 131 Life, 18 Joint Life, 12 Group, 12 Corporate)
Plus 518 Family. Total 1722. Covenanted Members 64.
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(advertisement)

Notes from the Editor

I wonder if anyone is able to help out with research for an article connecting Lichfield Cathedral to our canal; asks Roger Rosewell, the news and features editor for Vidimus, an online magazine devoted to medieval stained glass?

He is working on an article about the Belgian Herkenrode stained glass windows, which were removed last year for restoration, belonging to Lichfield Cathedral. The Flemish stained glass was purchased from Herkenrode Abbey in 1803 by Sir Brooke Boothby and placed in the windows of the Lady Chapel to replace the stained glass destroyed during the English Civil War.

Mr Rosewell claims the panels were brought to Lichfield from Hull by canal and unloaded at Gallows Wharf. He is looking for any history we may have about Gallows Wharf, drawings or engravings, canal traffic in the early 19th century etc. and what the canal route from Hull to Lichfield would have been. The magazine website is www.vidimus.org and Roger's email is features@vidimus.org or phone 01865 300320

Knowing our councils as we do I am sure any link between the Cathedral and the canal must be to our benefit.

Does anyone have anything, or know of anything about the canal that might be useful?

* * * * *

I grew up in Lichfield and as a school boy I used to cycle along the canal in the late 1950's. I clearly remember cycling under the Birmingham Road Bridge, where there was a lock, and out passed [sic] the Waterworks. I don't remember the Tamworth Road section, but I remember crossing the canal in Darnford Lane when driving to Whittington with my parents.

Over the years I have enjoyed seeing working beam engines in Cornwall and on the K & A Canal at Crofton. I drove up to Lichfield for the first canal walk and was surprised to find a beam engine in the Waterworks that I have passed many times. At the time it was being looked after by a group of people, but they couldn't steam it as the boiler house had been pulled down. I was told about 2 years ago that it is no longer being kept greased up which is a shame.

I drive up to Lichfield about once a year to see how things are going and in 2003 I went looking for the site of the new aqueduct over the M6 Toll Road. As I arrived two other cars pulled up with some of the L & H directors and David Suchet, so I had a conducted tour with David. I have kept the October 2003 edition of Waterways World which had on its front cover a photo by Harry Arnold of the aqueduct being lifted into place. Looking back it's amazing what has been achieved by the Trust in the last 10 years, lets hope that in the next 10 years we are able to achieve as much.

Regards, John Holloway, Chinnor, S. Oxon.

An excerpt from a letter sent to the Chairman of the Trust.

My name is John Stars, I came across your trust web site just the other day and was interested in your project - specifically in what (if any) progress you have managed to achieve west of Capper's Lane bridge towards Darnford and on to London Road.

Google Maps (Fabulous tool) seems to show a section with water up to about lock 30, though not under the Capper's Lane Bridge itself to the moorings towards Huddlesford Junction. Now Google Maps images are often some age and so are not necessarily a current representation of the actual situation on the ground of course. A picture on the linked CanalPlanAc website taken by their user 'Shultzzy' shows a dry and rather overgrown Lock 30 dated 30th June 2010 and captioned "the next lock to be restored".



Site of former Lock 30 cottage

To explain my interest – although there are a couple of canals within reasonable distance of me (I live about half-way between Edinburgh and Glasgow) - canals of and in themselves are not, I must confess, what intrigue me. What piques my interest about your canal in particular, and its restoration, is a personal link and story. My mother was a Lichfield lass – and was born on the canal at 'lock house' – specifically, I believe, adjacent to lock 30 where her father was lock-keeper for the section between Huddlesford Junction to beyond London road until his untimely death in 1942.

She was reminiscing recently, the result of some innocuous remark and after some questioning I thought it would be nice to fire up Google maps and try and pinpoint where she grew up, at this point we did not know that it was lock 30 (the designation comes from your web site) only that it was the first lock after Capper's Lane bridge heading west from Huddlesford Junction.

It was a great pleasure to be able, seemingly, to identify the location, although lock house is long gone. We spent a happy hour 'scooting' around using Google Street View showing her some familiar landmarks such as her primary school in Whittington, now a Youth Centre I think, The Horse and Jockey where, amazingly, she used to "fetch a pint of bitter and a pint of mixed" for her father on the hot summer's days (with a bottle of Vimto to herself!) along with a number of locations in the City itself – the chapel where she married and Beacon Park where her brother was the head gardener, living in the small cottage (alas also now demolished) by the tennis courts until he retired.

My mother, now 87, was thrilled to recognise many local landmarks from her childhood and it was pleasing to learn of the restoration work underway on the canal itself.

Now you will understand my keenness to learn of the progress and plans for the restoration of this particular section of the waterway. Although my mother was in the past a fairly frequent visitor to the city (to see her brother and his family) she has not to my knowledge, for obvious reasons, been back to the site of her birth and centre of her childhood since the canal was abandoned in the 1950s and her last visit to Lichfield itself was in the late 1980s.

Were the restoration at some stage to become sufficiently advanced, particularly in the vicinity around lock 30 then I think it could make a fitting, if emotional, centre piece of a return visit to her 'home town'. I am now in the early stages of examining the practicality, options and possible logistics of arranging a short trip perhaps as a birthday treat.

I would be grateful if you were able to furnish me with any up to date information on progress and plans etc regarding the work of the trust that might be relevant so that I can better determine whether or when it might be opportune to consider options for a visit.

With best regards, John Starrs

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50% paid in prizes to its members.

The "500 Club" could contribute up to £3,000 a year - or even more - whilst, for just £12 a year, Club Members get four chances of winning prizes of up to £400 - or maybe more each time!

Since the last draw took place in June, there have only been four new subscriptions, the latest being 304. Regretably, seven numbers have been lost due to bereavement. The number of active subscriptions is currently 215. Because we have lost some subscriptions, this means that the sum available for the Capital Fund and for prizes is not increasing. Don't forget, membership of the 500 Club is open to everyone, not just Trust members, so please spread the word.

The winners of the September draw are:

First prize	£167.70	No 69	Graham Danbury, St Albans, Herts
Second prize	£109.65	No 239	Mrs Sylvia Jarvis, Maidenhead, Berks
Third prize	£45.15	No 71	Mr K Jackson, Little Aston, Staffs

Mr Danbury has the distinction of winning a prize three times! He has four numbers.

The "500 Club" Capital Fund has been established to raise funds for capital expenditure on land purchase and rebuilding structures on the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals. For an annual subscription of £12 Club Members are allocated 1 chance in each of 4 successive quarterly draws. Based on a membership of 500, the maximum prizes will be:

1 st Prize	£400	approx 26% income
2 nd Prize	£250	approx 17% income
3 rd Prize	£100	approx 7% income

If there are more or less than 500 members, the prizes will be proportionally increased or decreased. So the more 500 Club members we have, the higher the prizes. Remember, membership of the 500 Club is open to everyone, not just members of Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust.

So please spread the word. If you want to subscribe, you can download an application form from our website www.lhcr.org.uk, or write to Mavis Moore, 88 Spring Lane, Whittington, Lichfield WS14 9NA.

GOVERNMENT GIVES THE GO AHEAD FOR A 'NATIONAL TRUST' FOR THE WATERWAYS

Dear waterway supporter,

The Government has today made an important announcement about the future of the inland waterways in England and Wales, in probably the biggest shake up of our canals and rivers since nationalisation in 1948.

The plan, to move the waterways out of state control and into a new independent national charity, builds on the proposals I launched at the House of Commons in May last year and on Robert Aikman's vision for a 'National Waterways Conservancy' half a century ago. When we called this proposal '2020', we thought it would take a while to achieve. The fact that the Government now wishes to adopt it as policy, replacing British Waterways with the new charity by April 2012, is a tremendous achievement and I have congratulated the waterways minister, Richard Benyon MP, on his imaginative and positive response.

The waterways have been utterly transformed for the better in the time since British Waterways was established in 1962 and they are used and enjoyed by more people, in a wider variety of ways, than ever before. This transformation owes its success to the contribution of countless staff, volunteers and enthusiasts. Moving the waterways into a charitable body recognises the need to build on that enthusiasm and marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter in their history.

The Board and directors of British Waterways believe that this is absolutely the right next step for the nation's magnificent waterways. The move will attract new funding for waterways maintenance, safeguard investment and give everyone who uses and enjoys the waterways a greater role in how they are cared for. I don't underestimate the challenges ahead in making it happen, but history has shown that the waterway movement, when it pulls together, can achieve great things.

There is still a lot of work to do to: develop the new governance model; agree a long-term funding contract with government and; put in place transitional arrangements. Defra will examine the inclusion of the Environment Agency's navigations, as part of a coherent plan for the waterways it funds in England and Wales, and the Scottish Government will decide whether Scotland's waterways will be in the new body. British Waterways will continue to work with government officials and waterway stakeholders to ensure good continuity, a smooth transition and a successful launch for the new body.

The question for us all now is not whether we should form a new waterways charity, but how we can do it. Open dialogue and involvement will be vital to making this happen and I know that Defra intend to consult with waterway stakeholders as they develop the content of the Public Bodies Bill, through which the new charity will be set up.

(continued over)

I cannot overstate what an enormous opportunity this is for the waterways, and for all those who feel passionately about their future. We must all make sure our views are heard and I look forward to many interesting and constructive debates during the next six months. With this in mind, please pass this letter on to any colleagues, friends or members who you think will be interested and feel free to reproduce it in your own publications or websites.

Yours faithfully,

TONY HALES C.B.E.

Chairman British Waterways

14 October 2010.

* * * * *



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Some of the home team completing Lock 25 bywash, 21-Jul-10



wrg NW & BI TM scrub bashing the Darnford section, 19-Sep-10



wrg NW & BI TM extend Pound 27 towpath wall, 18-Sep-10



wrg NW & BI TM add to Pound 27 towpath wall, 19-Sep-10



JLR start surveying the foundation level, 14-Sep-10



JLR members improve the public path, 14-Sep-10



JLR members help Keith Grice re-fencing Cricket Lane corner, 6-Oct-10



JLR members on the rocks!, 21-Sep-10

MEMORIES OF TYRLEY WHARF

How life has changed at Tyrley Wharf, which is about three miles from Market Drayton, on the Shropshire Union Canal. Now in the 21st century, the old cottages have been extended and modernized to make a tranquil haven for the occupants who can watch the pleasure barges go by.

At the beginning of the 20th century, this hamlet was very different, a hub of activity for the nine or ten families who lived there. Daily life revolved around the canal, with working boats bustling through on their way to deliver goods to industrial centres. My late mother-in-law, Mary Ann Abbotts, who had moved there on her marriage to Tom, who was born in their cottage, No.34, ran a little business selling cigarettes and snacks to the boatees to supplement their income. In a freezing winter, the cracking sound of the horse-drawn ice breakers could be heard from a long way off, clearing the way for the barges. There was also a thriving transport business run from Tyrley by Arthur Newbrooks, lorries would come in and out at all hours, parking up by the side of the cottages, and disturbing the peace with the rattle of milk churns.

The dairy farm up the hill, run by the Willis family, provided them with both work and food. At various times Annie (as she was known) worked there either looking after the children or doing the milking, jugs of creamy milk came in very handy! She and Tom started their married life when he returned from the First World War, serving in France. He received a non-fatal injury which luckily meant that he was invalided home; he'd lost his teeth and gained two dimples where a bullet had gone in one side of his face and out the other! Life was hard, no welfare state then to cushion them from life's blows, doctors had to be paid for, it was important to try and keep the family in good health, which Annie certainly struggled to do. She would go to the health stall at Market Drayton market, pushing the pram all the way along the Newport Road; from there she bought remedies, such as her 'magic pad', which she used to rub on her arthritic hands, and amazingly in later years the swellings disappeared, whether from that or from an easier life, who knows?

All of Annie's nine children were delivered at home with the help of a very skilled midwife, who became a valued friend. Two of these, Jimmy and Charlie, died in childhood, one of meningitis the other who sadly fell in the canal, no-one at hand to rescue him; all the men were in the fields. No counselling then, Tom and Annie had to pick themselves up and carry on. It was the help of good neighbours that got people through bad times in those days, always there for support or to borrow the odd cup of sugar. Tom and Annie's best friends at Tyrley were the Bragger family at no.37; Sarah who was a real character, always ready for a cup of tea and a gossip, her husband George, her daughter Doris, and her son-in-law Bill, a lorry driver who had a heart of gold, never too busy to mend the boy's bikes. It was difficult to keep any secrets in this close community, especially as it was possible to overhear neighbours' conversations through the walls of the snug cottages!

During the first half of the century, horses were used on the farm as well as the canal; Tom could skilfully plough a field walking behind them, not so efficient as now but definitely less stressful. My husband John remembers being placed on the back of a huge working horse when he was only about ten years old, to take it to be shod at the blacksmith's at Woodseaves, he thought he was leading the horse, but later realised that it was probably the other way around, the horse knew the way! Life was certainly hard, no electricity until the late 1950s, and water had to be carried from the nearby well across the road. Memories of washday are embedded in the minds of their children. When they set out for school Annie had already started doing her washing and was still in the scullery when they came home, the soft stone floor wet through, the 'dolly peg' had had a good bashing! She was very proud of her pristine



Tyrley Bridge, stairs leading up to the old clubroom, now living accommodation (photo by Penny Abbotts).

line of washing. They both worked hard, Tom at work, then tending his amazingly productive vegetable garden, to provide food for immediate consumption and for Annie to bottle and preserve for the winter months, pickles and jams. When she asked for some flowers to be planted he said that his favourite flower was the cauliflower! Fertiliser in those days was of the home grown variety,

nothing wasted, the outside toilet came in handy, all organic then!

Many families kept a pig which was fed on left-overs and boiled up peelings, when one was killed it was shared with neighbours. Fresh joints were eaten immediately, black and white puddings made and bacon cured hanging from the living room ceiling. A treat for Tom was to cut a slice to have with some bread, and in the winter when the children came home from school, when it was 'lobby' night, Annie made extra stock so they could have a cup to warm them up. There was never a problem with obesity then, despite the fatty bacon, full cream milk and pies. It must have been because of all the walking, cycling if you were lucky enough to own one, hard work, and children who were lucky enough to have the freedom to roam the fields as a playground. Neither the diet nor the adventurous play would have conformed with today's health and safety standards!

From the early morning lighting of the open fire, she never stopped. Children had to be got off to school, husband sent to work with a packed lunch, then all the jobs to do. She was an accomplished needle woman, she made beautiful dresses for the three girls, Betty, Joan and Winifred, on her old treadle sewing machine, and short trousers for Joe, John and Donald cut down from those of older brother Bill. As well

as her own work she did decorating for neighbours; evening relaxation was not watching television, but creating rag rugs from old clothes. There were always home made pies and cakes, all cooked in the side of the range. When day-light had gone, oil lamps were used, and candles taken up to bed, with a brick heated in the oven and wrapped in cloth, to warm the bed, an alternative to our modern hot water bottle! Shopping was done in Market Drayton, meat pies and fish from the Shambles, and breads and cakes from the Butter Cross. Annie had a good relationship with Cheadles the butcher, he always saved her a nice piece of beef for Sunday roast, sometimes letting her have it 'on tick' until the following week. In later years a coach converted into a shop used to call at Tyrley.

But there were occasions for relaxation, the Club Room was used for all manner of things such as children's parties, whist drives and as an election room for people to cast their votes; Tom would tell Annie where he wanted her to put her cross! Before the war, there were fantastic carnivals in Market Drayton to be looked forward to, and the children used to attend Sunday School at the quaint Tyrley Church, looking forward to the parties and presentations of books to the lucky regular attenders. On pleasant summer evenings the men would gather on the bridge for a smoke and a chat. On Saturday nights, when they had the money, the young people would dash for the bus to one of the cinemas at Market Drayton, the Regal or the Hippodrome, one of their neighbours, Joby, would remark if the boys had made an effort with their appearance, "got a bit of fluff then?" Some dark nights returning home on their bikes along the quiet lanes, there would be a sudden noise in the hedgerow making them pedal furiously until they reached the safe haven of Tyrley Wharf. There was a little shop, run by Edna Williams, next to the Four Alls, after the war the children had to put their name down in advance just to be able to buy a packet of crisps! One rare treat for the family was when Bill Morris had been on a run to Cadbury's factory and brought back bags of 'crumb chocolate' as it was known. This was like rock and had to be broken with a hammer before being relished.

In the early years, the hierarchy of the countryside was firmly embedded; the 'gentry' were respected, albeit often grudgingly, as they were the landowners and landlords on whom one's job and accommodation depended. They lived in Peatswood Hall, later demolished. Caps had to be doffed, gates opened, and great care taken not to be seen taking anything from the estate which belonged to them, even a few sticks for the fire. But the men were allowed to go out at night sometimes using the headlights of a vehicle to blind rabbits in the fields, to shoot and take home to eat. But never after the awful scourge of myxomatosis arrived from abroad, it was a terrible sight to behold the poor rabbits suffering from this dreadful disease.

As the years went by, things began to change, people drifted away from the land to seek a better fortune elsewhere. The older Abbotts children went to London, followed subsequently by their younger brothers and sisters. Eventually too, Tom and Annie joined them, closing a 60 year chapter at Tyrley Wharf, and changing for ever that way of life.

FROM HERE AND THERE

Ogley Cottage

We seem to be making progress on determining the future of Ogley Cottage which has much exercised our thoughts in recent months. After difficulties with tenants it seemed sensible to put the property on the market at the first opportunity after separating it (in legal terms) from the section of Lock 1 which goes with it. Our lawyers have advised on how this should be done. This was the position as we reported in the last CBW. However, the valuation we obtained was disappointing at a time when the property market seems to be turning down.

The condition of the house, after the departure of previous tenants, was also causing concern and would make selling into a difficult market very demanding. The first priority had to be a general clean up and an attack on the overgrown garden. On several occasions we have had a good turn-out of directors and friends who have toiled hard to bring things up to standard. A break-in did not help matters especially as the theft of copper cylinder and piping caused a flood into the main living area. This latter problem is the subject of an insurance claim and required the services of a professional plumber.

However, many gallons of emulsion paint and all-purpose cleaner later, the house is looking habitable to the point where several of our members even thought of moving in themselves. At this opportune point we found a family who would make ideal tenants and wish to take up residence. This has meant going back on the previous decision not to let again and to concentrate on a sale which would clear the mortgage. Security is another issue as well as restoring the income stream.

This remains very much a work in progress and a race against time to get things up to standard but we are hopeful that Ogley Cottage will soon be “off the agenda” for the next couple of years.

LDFs

Given the slow progress of voluntary canal restoration it is vital that the “track” which the canals will require when work actually starts is properly identified and protected. In the 1990s the Trust missed out on inclusion in the then Lichfield District Plan although it did get the Hatherton into the Cannock Chase and South Staffordshire Plans. This has meant that in Lichfield we have had to keep a very careful eye on any proposed developments even though we have not had statutory protection. (Officers of the District Councils have always been supportive.)

In the other two districts the protection given to the route has been invaluable. We have worked with all three councils in recent years to ensure that the canals enjoy protection under the Local Development Frameworks which will replace the District Plans when the laborious process has been completed.

FROM HERE AND THERE

Volunteers

This is a difficult and recurring issue which is becoming very pressing. To some extent this is a widespread problem in the voluntary sector despite the fact that the government seems to think that the “third sector” can be run for nothing by an inexhaustible supply of volunteers. Most voluntary bodies report a declining number of active members and a rising age profile. If you dig below the surface of many apparently successful clubs/societies/charities you will find that they are sustained by a very small pool of people. The younger members of society are tending to work long hours and have demanding work and home lifestyles with little energy or time left for volunteering.

L&H is no exception to this. In some areas we are doing quite well but over-all we need more people. This is especially true of our Marketing Team where numbers are declining and the average age is rising. We need people to give us just a few hours now and again. We are not looking for highly specialised workers but people who can help in the kitchen at social functions, those who can sell raffle tickets and anyone who can come to the shows and just talk to the public. David and Mavis Moore are finally stepping down from leading this team and they will leave a huge gap. Please give it some thought.

Funding Opportunities

Our Finance Director, Bob Williams follows up every potential funding stream, both local and national. We are often asked about National Lottery funding which can deliver major sums. We have tried this approach several times in the past but have never been successful. In the last four years it has been clear that the 2010 Olympics would use up much of the available resources. Now that the end of Olympic funding is in sight it may well be that the National Lottery will be more amenable to helping canal projects.

Membership

Our membership level remains healthy at a time when it might be expected to decline. We have had no recent major projects to attract attention and the general financial belt-tightening might have been expected to impact on membership numbers. We remain in the top ten of similar membership-based organisations. Although we so often appeal to members to become more involved we greatly value the financial backing and moral support which the bulk of our members give us from afar. Subscriptions are the vital “bread and butter” income which sustains us. The number on our database is a source of great strength when we negotiate with bodies of all kinds. We really do value our members.

Brian Kingshott

* * * * *

All Photos in this issue are by Bob Williams unless otherwise stated.

BOOK SALE

Promoted by Trust Members Beverley and Paul Marshal (No 2) and supported by Bobby & Mike Battisson (No. 3), alias the "Minors Hill Mob", a second hand book – sale was held on Saturday 17th July in Paul and Bev's garage.



*Paul and Bev's garage stocked to the gunwales
now where's that H&S cat to check the space?*

Having first circulated the locals with a plea to donate unwanted books the response was excellently supported. At 25p per paperback and £1 per hard-back business was brisk; the final result amounting to £100.00 for the Borrowcop Locks Canal Park planting plan on the nearby Trust restoration site Tamworth Road, Lichfield.

With new friends met and old acquaintances renewed, the day passed quickly, helped along by the exchange of local gossip and news: as it always does!



Corporate Member

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Britain's inland waterways*

MARKETING REPORT



Marketing stand at Chasewater Cars in the Park, 26-Sep-10



"Now there's something you don't see every day! Send your amusing caption by e-mail to the Editor for the next edition."

MONEY MATTERS

Water Park Project

As we go to press, we await a final decision on one of our grant applications towards watering the section in the Borrowcop Locks Canal Park between Locks 25 and 26 by the Tamworth Road, Lichfield. Lichfield District Council have made a conditional allocation of £35,000 and Lichfield Conduit Lands Trust have granted £5,000. Another £30,000 will hopefully become available from Staffordshire County Council Aggregates Levy so that we can commission a contractor to start work. We thank Derek Lord for undertaking survey work to seek approval from Severn Trent Water for an acceptable method of diverting an underground drain as an initial requirement.

Grand Prize Draw

By the time you read this, the 2010 Draw will have been made but too late to announce the winners in this edition. However, all the winners will have been notified. A good response in the last month took the total gain to nearly £4,000.

Mayor and Sheriff's charity fund

During their term in office, Lichfield Mayor Cllr Terry Thomas and Sheriff Simon Price jointly smashed previous records in raising £10,000 for local charities. At a presentation in the Mayor's Parlour in August, our President and Treasurer collected a cheque for £2,500 towards the Trust's funds (see photo below).



*L to R Eric Wood, Bob Williams, Former Lichfield Mayor
Cllr Terry Thomas and Lady Mayoress*

(Photo by Robert Yardley Photography, www.ryphotography.com)

Marketing and strategy

The Chairman comments that we need more people helping to promote the Trust at the events we attend and in a broader spectrum. Our strategy is under scrutiny to review the principles of fund-raising, not only for restoration work but for continuing maintenance thereafter. The more we do, the more we need to do just to keep up until sections become fully serviceable. Even then, the tide is turning towards having to fund them too as British Waterways is compelled to become restructured. We are not alone of course, and must work closely with colleagues elsewhere in finding new ways to capture the enjoyment of our waterways in the future.

Bob Williams, Director (Finance)



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LICHFIELD CANAL WORKING PARTY NEWS

The Chairman's Column gives due recognition to teams of visiting volunteers who made a big difference at two of our sites through September. Such visits are planned well in advance when it is not always possible to be sure what stage the work will have reached when they come. By August, an early estimate kept growing till it became clear we could expect about eighty man-days of extra work. That sharpened our focus to tackling a new section.

The Jaguar Land Rover Corporate Citizenship Scheme permits the release of senior engineering staff to undertake community work. Twelve men, who have mostly been to us before, willingly set about a variety of tasks on the Tamworth Road site. Recent progress opened up opportunities for them to undertake some valuable developments which can be appreciated through the pictures in this issue, rather than words.

Whilst the Waterway Recovery Group team expected from Essex could not muster a worthwhile number this time, it was more than compensated for with a total of thirty seven from North West and BITM. Good weather enabled brick-laying and concrete foundations to proceed. Others set about surveying the land bought by the Trust to divert the canal parallel to the A38 to plot the optimum location for a completely new Lock 27 as advised by Atkins in their Feasibility Study. Seeing the position pegged out gives all the workforce a clear view of the intentions so that the approach can be planned with confidence. Yet another team spent two days at the Darnford Lane site reducing its jungle appearance to a controlled green canal corridor.

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LICHFIELD CANAL WORKING PARTY NEWS

Inspired by such activity, the “home team” got to grips with extending the long wall in Pound 27 with the innovative method of using large concrete blocks which mimic the “Lego” principle with interlocking nodes as a bulk structure. And so it goes on, more wall, more brickwork! That brings us to turning the corner, but more about that next time (see centre page photos).

We thank all the visiting volunteers and our regular team, particularly Peter Magee, with help from Chasetown Civil Engineering Ltd, for an exceptional period of hard work which it seems everyone really enjoyed as there was so much to see for their efforts.

Educational party

The Trust took part in the launch of an Environmental Project Day at Millfield Primary School, Brownhills on 10th September. Their playing fields adjoin the Wyrley & Essington Canal where they plan to have a boat mooring to instil canal appreciation in the new generation. Now that's progressive!

Bob Williams, Project Co-ordinator



L-R, Geoff Crook (L&H Ecologist), Michelle Sheehy (Headmistress), Mike Battison (L&H Environment), Richard Shepherd MP present a 62-volume Wildlife Encyclopaedia to Millfield Primary School, 10-Sep-10.

LICHFIELD & HATHERTON CANALS RESTORATION TRUST LIMITED.

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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 Birmingham Canal Navigations.

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