

Excalibur

**THE LONDON NEWSLETTER OF THE
INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION**

NUMBER 16, AUTUMN 1994

Editor: Mike Stevens, 333 Lyham Road, London SW2 5NS—Telephone: 081-674 9387



*The 5000th walker on London IWA's towpath walks
(For details, see Late News page)*

WHO'S WHO IN LONDON IWA

* = answerphone

LONDON REGION

PRESIDENT

Illyd Harrington, JP, DL

VICE-PRESIDENT & WALKS ORGANISER

Dr Michael Essex-Lopresti — 081-882 1337

CHAIRMAN

Mike Stimpson — 0923-770425

6 Norfolk Rd, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 1QE

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Vacant

SECRETARY

Rosie Limming — Uxbridge (0895) 252011*

13 Tachbrook Rd, Uxbridge, Middx UB8 2QS

TREASURER AND

CANALWAY CAVALCADE DIRECTOR

Libby Bradshaw — 081-874 2787*

Ground Floor Flat, 61 West Side

Wandsworth Common, SW18 2ED

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Bill Bannon — 0753 650938

Richard Bird — 081-857 6367

Ron Bingham — 081-855 3693

*(Navigation and Liaison officer and Chairman
of Planning and Navigation Committee)*

Vernon Draper — 081-668 5522

Ian Ferguson — 081-985 4507

Mike Stevens — 081-674 9387*

(London Branch Chairman)

MIDDLESEX BRANCH

CHAIRMAN

Bill Bannon — 0753 650938

nb Aquinas, The Boatyard

Mansion Lane, Iver, Bucks SL0 9RG

SECRETARY

Alison Struckett

nb The Albannach, The Boatyard

Mansion Lane, Iver, Bucks SL0 9RG

TREASURER

Siobhan Selden — 081-574 5624

20 Bulls Bridge Road

Southall, Middx UB2 5LU

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

David Daines — 081-941 1411

Vernon Draper — 081-668 5522

Rosie Limming — Uxbridge (0895) 252011*

(Publicity Officer)

Terry Marston — 081-902 1150

(Membership Officer)

Bob McGowan — 081-848 8384

LONDON BRANCH

VICE-PRESIDENT

AND LECTURERS PANEL ORGANISER

Arthur Farrand Radley, MBE — 071-603 6062

CHAIRMAN

Mike Stevens — 081-674 9387*

333 Lyham Road, London SW2 5NS

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Libby Bradshaw — 081-874 2787*

VICE-CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Dorothy Robbie — 081-857 6367

SECRETARY

Marcia Davies — 081-881 4688

169 Langham Road, London N15 3LP

TREASURER AND SALES OFFICER

Rosie Limming — Uxbridge (0895) 252011*

13 Tachbrook Rd., Uxbridge, Middx UB8 2QS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Eric Garland — Dartford (0322) 342296

Ian Ferguson — Day: 081-985 4507

Tim Lewis — 081-367 6227

*(Central London Social Secretary,
WRG contact and 200 Club Chairman)*

Jim Mason — 081-847 1538 (work)

Adrian Steinkamp

Pager: 081-840 7000: pager no. 0335269

*(Waterways for Youth contact
and Membership Recruitment Officer)*

Marion Waters — 081-530 4767

(Publicity Officer)

OTHER OFFICIALS

NOT ON THE BRANCH COMMITTEE

Lewis Phillips — 081-673 4412*

(London Ring Plaques distribution)

NORTH-EAST LONDON SECTION

CONVENORS

Alan and Cath Russell — 081-529 0689

97 Waverley Avenue, Chingford E4 8HS

EXCALIBUR

EDITOR

Mike Stevens

333 Lyham Road, London SW2 5NS

Telephone 081-674 9387

Mobile 0850-665102

Fax (agency) 081-671 4080

ADVERTISING MANAGER

Robin Bishop

11 Lichfield Road, Cricklewood

London NW2 2RE

Telephone 081-452 2632 (evenings)

0276-63366, ext. 236 (work)

From the Editor

As usual for the Autumn issue, I'm writing this Editorial during a quick dash home from our main boating trip of the year. This year we decided to spend the Summer on the Kennet and Avon and the Thames, and are currently on the return leg of the K and A stage. It's the first time we've cruised that cut since it's been open all the way through, and I'm finding it very exciting to take our own boat through a canal I grew up near and knew over 40 years ago when restoration wasn't thought of except by the dedicated few. The work that has been done is most impressive. It is not intended to take anything away from that when I say that there is still plenty more to be done before the K and A is truly boater-friendly. In particular there is almost nowhere, apart from a very few wharves, where even a modest-draughted modern boat can tie up alongside without using a mooring plank. But BW and the Trust are, quite rightly, putting the water supply at the top of their priority list. This hasn't been too bad this year. Devizes locks are by prior booking only (and I gather that no more bookings are being taken as I write this) and time restrictions on a few other flights have been introduced since our outward trip earlier in the Summer. Nothing like as bad, I gather, as the previous few years, but it is still good to see work starting on the back-pumping station at the foot of Caen Hill.

WHAT IS CAMPAIGNING?

Reading reports in various magazines of the Pelsall Campaign rally (which sounds as if it was a great success) has caused me to think about the whole idea of campaigning. Why is this one event in the IWA calendar labelled as 'Campaign'? Aren't they all? What does campaigning mean?

In one meaning the word refers to taking a lot of boats on to a threatened waterway: the *Use It or Lose It* approach. That is, of course, very important as I have argued in these pages before: and we are about to do it locally with Bow Back Rivers and Eastenders cruises during the Limehouse Festival. But it's not the only form of activity that contributes to the IWA's overall campaign.

Saving threatened waterways and restoring lost ones aren't the only tasks before IWA and its allies. We also have to campaign to retain the existing system in good working order. I know that's the job of BW, NRA, the Broads Authority etc. Nor am I just suggesting that we need to be a User Group to keep these bodies on their toes. The whole set-up is publicly owned and dependent on public finance. Hence it is all too

likely to suffer the whims and arbitrary decisions of Governments of whatever political hue. If we are to protect the waterways against that sort of threat then we, together with BW and the rest, need to run a campaign aimed at the hearts and minds of the public, to persuade ever-growing numbers of people that waterways are a good thing. Not just the places where rich people who can afford boats go to play with them, but an amenity for everybody. I haven't heard our *Waterways for All* slogan much recently. Surely it wasn't only about the Derwent?

So all our events need to have this campaigning aspect built in. It is something we are very conscious of at, for example, Canalway Cavalcade. The 'National' is a prime opportunity, with umpteen thousands of people coming to a waterways event: how well is the opportunity seized? The Earls Court and other Boat Shows also count for a lot.

But a lot of campaigning can, and does, take place far away from these organised events. Every IWA (or NABO or Canal Society) badge on a boat, a car, a jacket, a husband, is a campaign statement. It may not be a very loud one, and its individual impact may not be very great, but the cumulative effect if all members of relevant groups wore such badges would surely be significant.

Talk to people. Every gongoozler at a lock, even that kid throwing stones and abuse, is not just a piece of humanoid scenery but also a campaign opportunity. Talk to them. Let them know what the waterways are, and why. They may even want to know more and get involved. But even if all you do is stir something very faintly at the back of somebody's mind to think of waterways a bit more positively than they did before, you have contributed a tiny bit to a more positive public appreciation of the waterways, which is what we need.

Mike Stevens

FUTURE ISSUES

Publication Date	Copy date
No. 17 Winter 1994	8 October 1994
No. 18 Spring 1995	17 December 1994
No. 19 Summer 1995	7 April 1995
No. 20 Autumn 1995	15 July 1995

The IWA may not agree with opinions expressed in this magazine but encourages publication as a matter of interest. Nothing printed may be construed as policy or an official announcement unless so stated, otherwise the Association accepts no liability for any matter in the magazine. Although every care is taken with advertising, no responsibility whatsoever can be accepted for any matter advertised.

© IWA London Branch 1994.

Published by the Branch at 114 Regent's Park Road, London NW1 8UG.
Telephone: 071-586 2510/2556.

The Editor reserves the right to edit any article or letter submitted for publication.

One day through London with *Farnham and Highlander*

by Alice Bucket

NOTE: Names have been changed to protect the innocent

A mis-matched pair of narrowboats (a 72ft unconverted ex-working boat and a 56ft ex-hire-boat), with a joint crew of 5 people (Michael, Linda, Edward and David on *Farnham*, and myself on *Highlander*) set off from Enfield Lock on the River Lee on a drizzly winter morning.

The journey downstream started uneventfully, and apart from a minor skirmish with some trees on the bank, resulting in the abduction of a Christmas Tree from *Farnham*'s cabin roof, it wasn't until we got to the junction with the Hertford Union Canal that things started to go wrong. For a start, we had to make a decision—whether to turn right, or whether to take the much longer detour along the Limehouse Cut. We chose the latter.

Almost immediately we heard shouts from an angler on the bank telling us we couldn't go that way. We moored up to investigate, thinking there might have been a stoppage, but it turned out that the angler had just never seen any boats go that way before and wasn't aware that they could!

The river below the locks was very shallow and muddy, and our progress was quite slow with the two boats breasted up. The Limehouse Cut was a little better, and at Limehouse Basin we turned into the first lock of the Regent's Canal.

A group of children were playing by the lock and they wanted a ride to the next lock. We declined, so they catapulted stones at us. This was quite alarming, but fortunately the only damage was a scratch to *Farnham*'s paintwork, and they didn't follow us to the next lock (maybe Michael's camera pointed at them did the trick).

As we were leaving the next lock a large wooden pallet hit *Farnham*'s propellor, with the result that Michael was swept into the water. He hit his head (we don't know what on) and came out bedraggled and bleeding. Our First Aid Officer (of course, we never go boating without one) examined the gash on his head and ordered him to hospital with Linda accompanying him.

This left David, Edward and me to crew the two boats. Due to a mechanical problem at the time, *Farnham* needed one person to steer and another in the engine room to change gear! So we just used *Highlander*'s engine (the shorter boat, which made steering a bit tricky) and continued on our way up the next lock.

At the following lock, Mile End Lock, I steered the two boats into the lock, and they came to a sudden halt half-way in. The problem turned out to be a large cable-drum wedged between *Highlander* and the lock wall. *Highlander*'s engine alone couldn't get us out, so we tried *Farnham*'s engine as well. That didn't work, so David opened the top paddles of the lock to flush the boats out. That didn't work either, until we tried all three things at once. Then there followed a lot of manoeuvring to get the cable-drum out of the lock and the two boats back in.

At this rate it was taking us about an hour to get through each lock. We still had a long way to go, since we had arranged to meet William (who had jumped ship at Enfield) at Little Venice by nightfall. Nightfall! It was already getting dark . . .

At Old Ford Lock (on the Regent's, not to be confused with Old Ford Lock on the River Lee that we had gone down a just few hours earlier!) we were held up while Edward removed a lot of plastic bags from *Highlander*'s propellor.

We got up the next lock without mishap, but we were making slow progress with the boats breasted up. Due to the differing lengths it was impossible to tie them tight at the bows, and they were drifting apart by about a foot, which made it tricky getting through bridge-holes and into locks, and also slowed us down quite considerably. So we decided to separate out, with David and Edward on *Farnham* and myself on *Highlander*. Again, we got up the next lock uneventfully, and began to think our luck had changed.

Approaching City Road Lock, the two men were ahead on *Farnbam*. David jumped off to set the lock, which of course sent a flood of water down, which caught *Farnbam's* bow, swinging it across at an alarming speed towards a moored boat on the other side of the canal. Edward had to walk along the gunwale, into the engine-room, change into reverse gear, get out of the engine-room and walk back along the gunwale, by which time he was heading backwards towards the other bank at an alarming speed. This whole process was repeated quite a few times before he finally got the boat under control and into the lock (and without hitting anything!)

Once up that lock, we had Islington Tunnel to contend with. Now tunnels are all very well when you've got plenty of crew on board to keep you company and ply you with cups of tea (whoops, you're not allowed to do that any more!). But this time I was on my own and it was dark outside (I know that doesn't make a lot of difference when you're in a tunnel, but it is nice to see the daylight out of the other end). I could tell from the rattle of the tiller that more rubbish had found its way around the propeller, and I also noticed that the canvas air outlet in the engine room had just fallen off and the engine was in danger of over-heating. To cap it all, as we went in I noticed a sign which read '*Tunnel Closed—Danger—Men at Work*'. *Farnbam* was in front, so all I could do was follow and hope we didn't come across stop-planks or men putting up illuminated arrows. However I kept my spirits up by singing the Dudley Tunnel song very loudly, and eventually emerged out into the night city air. In case you are wondering, it transpired that the tunnel stoppage was not in force over Christmas and the New Year, but nobody had changed the sign!

We got up the rest of the locks slowly but surely, and the only real problem was *Farnbam's* headlight, which was getting dimmer and dimmer all the way up to Camden due too the batteries having stopped charging.

The end was not so far off now—just Regent's Park and Maida Hill Tunnel to navigate. I set off first on *Highlander*, and I kept on looking behind me to see how their headlight was doing. It was an amazing sight, to see the huge bow of an unconverted narrowboat coming round a bend or through a bridgehole, silently like a ghost. By the time we turned right at Cumberland Basin, their headlight had dimmed to nothing. I turned my headlight out a couple

of times to see what they had to contend with, which didn't help them in the slightest, of course.

About half-way through Regent's Park I saw a familiar figure on the towpath, and a voice hailed me from the bridge above. It was our missing crew members—Michael and Linda returned from hospital with Michael's head glued back together with superglue, and William, who had been waiting for us at Little Venice.

After they had managed to scramble through a hole in the fence to join us, our adventure was abruptly at an end. Michael got *Farnbam's* headlight working again ready for the tunnel, and very soon we were moored up in the safe haven of Little Venice. It was gone 10pm, so we hurried to the Bridge House before last orders, to recover slowly with a pint of beer from the ordeals of just one day boating through London. It had taken us 13 hours, half of it in the dark, to do what should have been an easy day's travel. But I'm sure it won't put us off doing it again.



IWA

The Inland
Waterways
Association

IWA SEEKS OFFICE MANAGER

Salary negotiable above £15,000

Fixed-term contract (length negotiable)
to start immediately

*Have you experience of a small office, including supervision?
A good grasp of book-keeping principles and elements of company law? How about basic keyboard skills and database principles? Can you communicate clearly and concisely both verbally and in writing?
If so, please contact us.*

Send postcard for application form and job description to:

Inland Waterways Association,
114 Regent's Park Road,
London NW1 8UQ.

Welcome to Middlesex!

SOME NEWS OF LONDON'S IWA REGION, BRANCHES AND SECTIONS

Since we don't have a Region Chairman's page this time, for reasons which will become clear by the end of this article, I include instead a selection of some Region, Branch and Section news.

WELCOME TO MIDDLESEX BRANCH

The Special General Meeting of London Branch on 21 July passed all four resolutions it was asked to consider, each without opposition but with one or two abstentions. The resolutions were already agreed by Branch and Region Committees and by IWA Council, so the approval of the proposed restructuring London Branch was complete.

The first stage will have been implemented by the time you read this. On 1 September, the previous Middlesex Section will have become a Branch in its own right. The success of its activities as a Section augurs well for its future as a Branch, and we wish it all the best.

WHAT DO I BELONG TO NOW?

As you will have read in our last issue, the division of members between the Branches will be by postcode areas. Immediately, all existing London Branch members with postcodes HA, KT, NW, TW, UB or W transfer to Middlesex Branch, unless they request otherwise. Any IWA member has the right to choose what Branch to belong to, so if you don't like the allocation outlined here, you need only write to Kerstin Michaels at Head Office (address at the foot of page 3) and make your wishes clear. Middlesex Branch members should, if everything is on schedule, see a new Branch code on the envelope that this issue came in.

For the time being, all other London Branch members will continue as such, until the second change happens, with the remainder of London Branch dividing between North-East London and South London Branches. The timing of this is yet to be decided. We originally hoped to complete the process by 1 January 1995, but Easter 1995 now looks a more realistic target. Expect more news in our next issue.

How we allocate overseas and other out-of-area members between the new Branches is still under discussion, but of course the principle of individual choice will continue to apply.

You will all continue to receive *Excalibur* and *Smallsword*, since these now become London Region publications and go to members of all the Branches in the Region. *Excalibur* will cover news and announcements for all Region, Branch and Section activities in London.

TWO NEW VENUES

We continue to expand our range of Social Meetings, in the hope that soon all London Region members will have a venue they find easy to get to. Our new North-East London Section is not only continuing with our meetings aboard *Hazelmere* at Waltham Abbey, but also launching a new venue at *The George* in Islington. This is in Liverpool Road (on the corner of Tolpuddle Street), a few minutes walk from Angel tube station.

Our Croydon group (part of which will eventually be the South London Branch) is moving to a new venue, at the Unitarian Church Hall by Croydon Flyover. This is forced on us by cost: we dearly wanted to increase the frequency of meetings to monthly, but couldn't afford to do so at our previous venue. Incidentally, we have kitchen facilities available at the new venue and are on the look-out for one or more volunteers to see to refreshments. Could that be you?

We hope to continue with all other venues we used last year, including the Central London meetings in Westminster, which are now Region events. Not all details have been confirmed yet for all of the venues (or if they have, my holiday dates have not coincided with those of the Committee member making the arrangements, so the news hasn't yet reached me. Therefore I'm afraid that some of the arrangements in the Diary pages have had to be marked provisional.

AND A NEW/OLD REGION CHAIRMAN

The Late News page of our previous issue said (very briefly) that we had a new Region Chairman. The Region was faced with a choice of candidates: Mike Stimpson or Eric Garland, both superbly qualified by previous experience. There can be very few Regions with such an embarrassingly good choice. In the end Eric won the vote and became Region Chairman and Mike agreed to become Vice-Chairman.

But that wasn't the end of the story. Some weeks later, Eric felt he had to withdraw, for business reasons, from some of his IWA commitments, including the Region Chairmanship. The next Region Committee meeting therefore elected Mike Stimpson as Region Chairman once more. Ian Ferguson is acting as Deputy Chairman for the time being. So we're back where we started for the Chairmanship but without Eric as Vice-Chairman. He will be missed from the Region Committee. We hope he won't withdraw totally from IWA activities, and wish him all the best in his new business venture.

Welcome home - to the moorings you've always wanted

Available

Whatever boat you own - be it traditional Narrowboat, GRP Cruiser or classic Wooden Craft - you want to know she's moored on a site about which you can feel proud.

Friendly

At last you have a choice!

Receptive

Phase One at Willowtree Marina is now complete and we'll be delighted to welcome you.

Accessible

Moorings in West London's newest and brightest purpose-built Marina

Convenient

The promise of warm and personal service to you, your family and friends

Handy

An individual berth for your craft and all the facilities demanded by today's discerning Boatowner

Relaxing

Ideally positioned right in the middle of the Paddington Arm of the Grand Union Canal

Peaceful

Large car park with excellent road connections for A40, M4 and M25

Well stocked Chandlery, a slipway and a large modern Engineering Workshop opening soon

Bistro Restaurant and Wine Bar with a range of quality food and drink at affordable prices coming shortly

Rural setting surrounded by green parkland and including a planned Equestrian Centre

For your free brochure containing further details and a mooring application, write to:

**Arthur Bennett
Marina Manager
(Mooring Enquiry IWA1)
Willowtree Marina
West Quay Drive
Yeading Middx UB4 9TB
Tel: 081-841-6585**

On the Metreau

News and Gossip of London's Waterways

UXBRIDGE 200

The 200th anniversary of the opening of the Southern part of the Grand Junction Canal, from Brentford to Uxbridge will be celebrated by an event called *Uxbridge 200*. This will take place on Saturday 5 November and will be run jointly by our new Middlesex Branch and the Hillingdon Canal Club, at the latter's canalside premises at the old FMC boatyard in Uxbridge (off Waterloo Road). Plans are still being made at the time of writing, but it is hoped that the activities will include the carriage of a token cargo by working boat from Brentford to Uxbridge, the unveiling of one of the replacement GJC mileposts, a gathering of boats, and a firework party with barbecue and music. More details can be obtained from Vernon Draper (081-668 5522)

LONDON REGION NEW YEAR DRAW

The London Branch (and now Region) New Year Draw has been run for the last three years, and over this period has raised £3,500 for Branch funds. The proceeds are used to help produce and mail *Excalibur* to all our members as well as contributing to the costs of running social meetings. This income is significant and your Region Committee would like the Draw to become a permanent feature of our work.

Over the last three years Richard Bird has been organising the Draw, and he would now like to stand down to concentrate more on the fund-raising aspects of Canalway Cavalcade. So we are looking for a volunteer to carry on the good work. The job is not difficult. The printing of the draw tickets is totally sponsored and we now have a regular group of sponsors for the various prizes. However we could do with more sponsors to donate different types of prizes to appeal to non-waterway people and generate a greater sale of tickets. If you feel you could help with this important job, please contact Richard on 081-857 6367 (evenings) for further details.

THAMES CENTENARIES

Two centenaries have been celebrated on the London section of the River Thames this Summer. On 21 May, the Duke of York re-inaugurated Richmond Half-Tide Lock and Weir, which had been opened by the then Duke of York a hundred years (and two days) previously. A splendid turn-out by the Thames Vintage Boat Club and the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships was spoilt by the weather, one of the most dismally wet days we have had this Summer.

This, sadly, put off most of the public who might otherwise have come. In the adjacent display area, the London IWA stand, along with various others, saw all too few visitors.

Later, in July, came the centenary of Tower Bridge, a major event whose details were surprisingly poorly publicised. Your Editor knew nothing of the main celebration at mid-day on the Thursday until he found himself on a bus trapped in the traffic snarl-up which resulted. However the Royal Yacht *Britannia* made a fine sight in the Pool, opposite *HMS Belfast* and a cruise liner (Norwegian, if I remember correctly). That evening saw a firework display, also poorly publicised. However that did attract some attention and brought more crowds to see a second firework display on the Saturday. Why two displays? I understand one was arranged by the City of London (who own Tower Bridge) and one by the Port of London Authority (who operate it).

A word to the organisers of both events; please tell us what you're planning. I'm sure that better publicity would have been an advantage (it might even have found some more people willing to brave the rain at Richmond). In particular, we in London IWA want to persuade our members to take more interest in the Thames. It's hard to do that if we don't know what's going on. The NRA (whose length of the Thames lies outside our Region) send lots of Press Releases to *Excalibur*; the PLA send none unless I happen to hear of something and ask for information. Please. . .

IWA/WRG CHARITY BANK

Michael Handford, who runs this scheme, regularly writes to all editors of waterway publications to thank readers for their past support and appeal for future help. Please keep sending him your old and new Green Shield, Cop, Blue Chip, Pink, Look, Cash, Premier Gold, Supersave, Nationwide and all other types of trading stamps; Texaco, Gulf, Mobil, Shell, BP, Esso, Fina, Elf, Total, Burmah and all other petrol vouchers; Air Miles, cigarette coupons, silver foil, aluminium can ring-pulls, Tetley, Brooke Bond and other tea vouchers, all denominations of used postage stamps, foreign coins and notes plus old 10p pieces. The used stamps are turned into cash and the petrol vouchers etc into goods for sale.

Since August 1988 we have raised over £10,000 to support canal restoration schemes all over the country. There are 130 restoration schemes in the British Isles, plus 30 already fully completed and re-opened. To save postage costs, acknowledgements of contributions are sent only if specifically requested, but your stamps etc are much appreciated nonetheless. The address to send them to is:

IWA/WRG Charity Bank
6 Spa Lane, Hinckley, Leics LE10 1JB

A LOT OF WALKING

I have written in these pages before of the success of our programme of towpath walks, especially since we in London IWA teamed-up with the *London Walks* organisation. As I write this, arrangements are in place to welcome our five thousandth walker since the scheme was launched some eighteen years ago. Michael Essex-Lopresti, who organises the walks, confidently expects the magic number to be reached on his next walk (7 August). A presentation will be made to the five thousandth customer by the actor Edward Petherbridge, himself a *London Walks* guide, and they will also get a dinner for two on board the restaurant-boat *My Fair Lady*. This last has been donated by the appropriately-named Paddy Walker. The name of the winner will appear on our late news page.

MUSEUM NEEDS HELP

The London Canal Museum, at Battlebridge Basin, needs helpers for a range of tasks relating to its current improvements to the museum and its displays. These include practical jobs such as carpentry and electrics, graphic design, historical work, clerical work and project co-ordination. Any volunteers please contact Malcolm Tucker, 9 Blythwood Road, London N4 4EU, phone 071-272 7160.

MIDDLESEX GOES TO CHATHAM

Middlesex Section's visit to the historic dockyard

The Historic Dockyard at Chatham is very much a museum in transition. The site itself is impressive with many interesting Georgian buildings and attractive covered slips and dry docks. Among the museum exhibits are pockets of a still-living workplace, including two 'traditional' businesses operating commercially (a sail- and colour-maker and rope-making). For those who like to get on the water, Britain's last working coal-fired paddle steamer, *Kingswear Castle*, runs trips on the Medway.

The museum exhibits themselves are varied both in content and quality. The history of the hovercraft and the dockyards' historical museum are from an earlier time and are showing their age, while the brand new Wooden

Walls exhibit employs the latest techniques to take you on a guided walk through the working dockyard of 1758. More traditional exhibits are the fine collection of ships guns and the rope-making exhibition. At several times in the day there is also a rope-making demonstration using equipment from 1811 in a gallery ¼ mile long.

There are signs of the attempts to expand the exhibits and rejuvenate other parts of the museum. A new exhibit is planned in the foundry, currently a pile of rusting metal and pigeon droppings. There is a large collection of vehicles in the steam and traction engine exhibit just waiting for the time and money to renovate them. Some of the buildings will be turned into craft workshops.

So is it worth a visit? The unanimous verdict among the people who went was 'yes'. Whatever your taste in museums you will find it here. If you do visit, allow plenty of time and take comfortable shoes; it is an extensive site. It is well worth considering a trip on a weekday when the sail- and colour-maker and the commercial rope-making workshops are in operation. At weekends, pick one which has a special event running; this year there were ten. Better still, try both, second visits are half-price.

The historic dockyards are open daily (10-5) from Easter to 30 October. There is restricted opening during the winter. For further information contact the Visitor Manager on 0634 812551. For information about trips on *Kingswear Castle* ring 0634 827648.

BRENTFORD REDEVELOPMENT

A recent Press Release from BW tells us that their proposed redevelopment of the six-acre Brentford Lock site has received planning approval from Hounslow Borough Council. The plan includes a 100-room hotel fronting onto the High Street, and a waterside public open space.

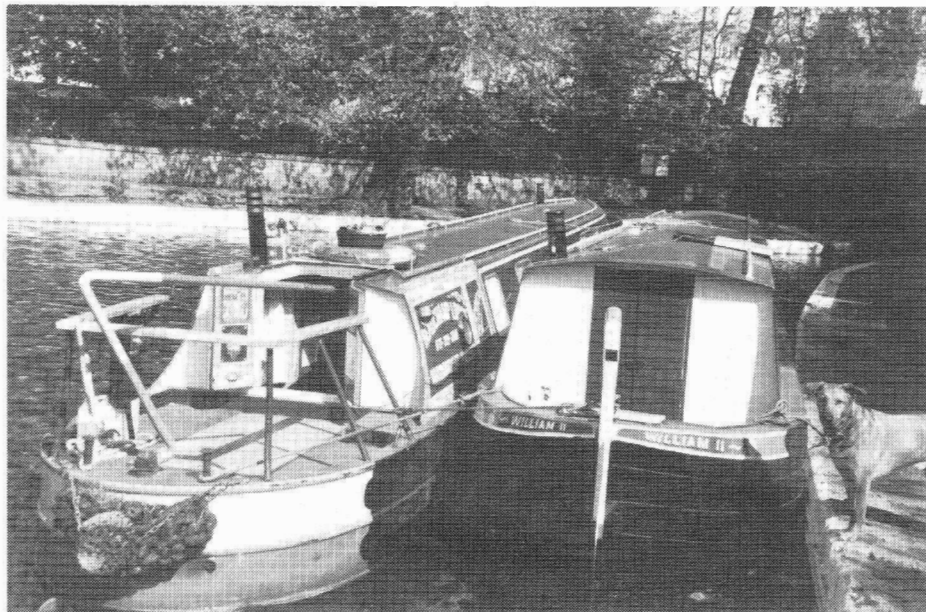
Ron Bingham, Chairman of our Region's Planning and Navigation Committee, says that the plan is not good news for boaters, and was opposed by his Committee on behalf of IWA. He comments that BW's determination to maximise the financial benefits has led to all the facilities for boaters being crammed together in one little corner which, he suspects, BW could not see any more profitable way of developing.

IWA NATIONAL A.G.M.

This is to be held on the afternoon of Saturday 1 October in Lichfield; details will be in *IWA Waterways*. Lichfield Branch invites members attending the meeting to join a walk of historic Lichfield in the morning. If there is enough demand, London IWA will take a coach up to Lichfield for the day. If you are interested, please contact Marion Waters on 081-530 4767.

Beauchamp Lodge Boats

Part 2 of our series on Community Boat Projects in the London area



Two of the boats moored at Little Venice in May of this year

Photo: Mike Stevens

Those of you who have visited Little Venice, either for Canalway Cavalcade or at any other time, will have noticed Beauchamp Lodge, the large white building next to the Harrow Road bridge, and the only survivor of the old buildings on the South side of the Pool. This is the home of Beauchamp Lodge Settlement, a charity which, among many other activities, runs a group of community boats. At Canalway Cavalcade you will have seen not only their boats, but their fund-raising stall, and you may have patronised their café (whose boaters' breakfasts at the event are deservedly popular). The following article was contributed by their steerer, Phil Gavigan.

Beauchamp Lodge is a settlement in Little Venice, in the heart of London, a charity that has been in existence for over 80 years, and has run youth, community and family projects throughout that time.

Our narrowboat project started in 1958 with our first boat *William*, a 40ft wooden-hulled

coal boat which we purchased for £50. (Prices may have risen since then.) *William* travelled over 9,000 during the next ten years, including crossing the Wash and a much-publicised voyage to Whitstable harbour.

In 1968 we obtained our second boat, *Sweden*, a 70ft long 8ft beam wooden boat with a semi-diesel Bollinder (complete with blow-lamp for starting) and an unheard-of luxury, central heating.

With two boats, we were able to carry twice as many people and to cover even more miles of the canal network, and were regular entrants at rallies up and down the country.

With thoughts of building up an armada of community boats, the barge *Ben Macdubui* was purchased as a floating workshop, coffee-bar and saloon.

William and *Sweden* became in need of a well-deserved retirement after so many years of service, so in 1976 we purchased our first steel narrowboat, *Erica*.

Beauchamp Lodge was content to operate just one boat until a further outbreak of fleet fever in 1988 with the purchase of a 50ft butty *William II* to enable us to carry larger groups. Although a mis-matched pair (Rugby motor, Springer butty), it is a real pleasure to work a pair and to teach groups the mysteries of breasting up, cross straps and the real treat of bow-hauling the butty up long narrow flights.

In 1989 we were asked by Westminster City Council to take over the running of *Victoria*, a 70ft Hancock and Lane commissioned by Marks and Spencers primarily as a boat for people with disabilities. Our first task was to install a hydraulic wheelchair-lift and to make other improvements to the interior of the boat in order to make it user-friendly to our disabled hirers.

With 36 years of community boating, Brauchamp Lodge is one of the oldest, if not the very oldest, projects of its kind in the country, and in that time we have faced funding cuts, major engine breakdowns, a holed hull and other problems common to all boaters. On the positive side we have taken countless groups of all descriptions on day and residential trips, sharing with them the history, wildlife, nature and joys of our canal network. We hope to be doing so for another 36 years.

Further information may be obtained from:

Beauchamp Lodge
2 Warwick Crescent
Harrow Road
London W2 6NE

Telephone: 071-289 3388/9

or from the boat skipper, wherever you may meet him.



DAY TRIPS

Exploring the history and industrial archaeology of the Regent's & Grand Union Canals in London.

EASTWARDS to **LIMEHOUSE**
or the **RIVER LEE**
WESTWARDS to **BRENTFORD**
and our first ever
LONDON RING CRUISE -
the canal & Thames in one day.

Full commentary given.
Tickets from £8.75

Tel. 071-482 2550 Mon-Fri
London Waterbus Company

London Canal Museum

Canal Museum Trust Regd Charity 277484

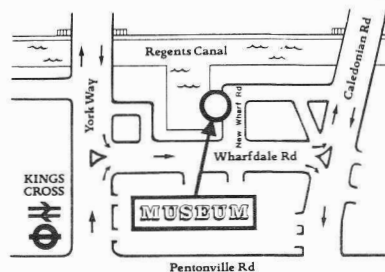
The story of London's Canals & Ice Trade

Admission: Adults £2.50; others £1.25

Facilities for school groups and parties

Canal books, maps, guides, canal-ware & canal holiday brochures from the shop

**Museum and shop open Tuesday to Sunday
and on Bank Holidays 10.00 am to 4.30 pm**



**12-13 New Wharf Road, Kings Cross,
London, N1 9RT Tel: 071 713 0836.**

A Hack on the Cut



Photo: Mike Stevens

This must surely be the longest horse-drawn carrying run for many years! On Easter Monday, narrowboat *Regulus*, a Middle Northwich butty, left Ellesmere Port for London with a mixed cargo consisting of 1 ton of Lifebouy soap, 1 ton of Sunlight soap, 1 ton of New Persil, 5 tons of limestone and 5 tons of assorted sinks, lavatory pans and urinals. She was crewed by Dylan Winter and Jeremy Browne and pulled by Molly, a 14-year-old chestnut horse. The start day was only Molly's second as a boat horse: her only previous experience having been a practice session at Stoke Bruerne.

Their route took them from Ellesmere Port via Chester, through the Middlewich Branch then South through Harecastle tunnel, through which they were towed by a hire-boat. Through Stoke-on-Trent, they headed for Haywood where they turned down the Staffs and Worcs. At Atherley they turned up the Wolverhampton locks to go through the BCN. Leaving Birmingham via the Birmingham and Fazeley they continued their journey to London via the

Coventry, Northern Oxford and Southern Grand Union Canals. At Braunston tunnel they were again under tow, this time by a private boat, but were allowed by British Waterways to leg through Blisworth. At Bull's Bridge they joined the Paddington Branch, arriving at Battlebridge Basin on the Regent's Canal six weeks from their start, via their last tunnel at Maida Hill through which they poled the boat, a technique that they had been forced to use often to pass linear moorings on the towpath side.

Their destination was the London Canal Museum, where they were welcomed by Michael Essex-Lopresti and your Editor. Their cargo was unloaded and delivered to local traders. The journey was made in part to mark the centenary of Sunlight Soap and partly to become the subject of a radio series, provisionally entitled *A Hack on the Cut*, to be broadcast on Radio 4 in the Autumn. This will be the third series that Dylan Winter has made about his travels with Molly, but the first afloat.

Waterways Events in and around London

SEPTEMBER 1994

- On-going until 19 October LONDON CANAL MUSEUM—Exhibition about the Ice trade and ices. At the Museum, 12/13 New Wharf Road, King's Cross, N1 9RT. For details of opening times/admission charges, see advertisement elsewhere in this issue.
- Sunday 4th: 2.30pm **LONDON IWA WITH 'LONDON WALKS'** GUIDED WALK The New River: Manor House to Highbury. Meet at Manor House tube station. About 2 hours. £4 (concessions £3)
- Tuesday 6th: 8pm **IWA N.E. LONDON SECTION SOCIAL** at 'The George', Islington (corner of Liverpool Road/Tolpuddle St., nearest tube Angel). Peter Coyne (BW Regional Manager): *The future of the waterways*. Contact Alan Russell (081-529 0689)
- Thursday 8th: 7 for 7.30pm LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. Talk by John Boyes: *The River Lee*. At the Museum, 12/13 New Wharf Road, King's Cross, N1 9RT. Admission £2 (£1 concessions.) Contact 071-713 0836.
- Weekend 10th/11th LONDON WRG Dig on the Thames/Severn Canal. Contact Tim Lewis (081-367 6227)
- Sunday 11th: all day COLNE VALLEY GROUNDWORK TRUST Slough Canal Open Day at Bloom Park, off Middle Green Road, Slough.
- Tuesday 13th: 7.30 for 8pm **IWA MIDDLESEX BRANCH SOCIAL** at Hillingdon Canal Club, Waterloo Road, Uxbridge. Michael Essex Lopresti: *The New River*. Contact Bill Bannon (0753-650938)
- Thursday 15th: 7 for 7.30pm **IWA CENTRAL LONDON SOCIAL** at the Abbey Community Centre, Great Smith Street, SW1. Speaker to be announced. Contact Tim Lewis (081-367 6227)
- Thursday 15th: 8pm IWA CHELMSFORD BRANCH at AEU House, Primrose Hill, Chelmsford. Richard Thomas: *Hertford to Old Ford*. Contact Molly Beard (0702-554492)
- Saturday 17th: 9.30am LONDON WATERBUS COMPANY Boat trip from Camden Lock to Limehouse and return (by about 5.30pm). £9.75 (Seniors £8.75). Booking essential, phone 071-482 2550.
- Sunday 18th: 2.30pm **LONDON IWA WITH 'LONDON WALKS'** GUIDED WALK The Regent's Canal: Paddington to Camden. Meet at Warwick Avenue tube station. About 2 hours. £4 (concessions £3)
- Tuesday 20th: 8pm **IWA N.E. LONDON SECTION SOCIAL** at Hazelmere Marina, High Bridge Street, Waltham Abbey. (Provisional arrangement, please phone first to check). Mike Stevens: *The BCN*. Contact Alan Russell (081-529 0689)
- Tuesday 20th: 8pm IWA HERTS BRANCH at Hatfield Cricket Club, Ascots Lane, Welwyn Garden City: Tim Sidaway: *The ageing infrastructure of the waterways*. Contact: Greta Wright (0727-860137)
- Friday 23rd: 8pm **IWA S.E. LONDON SOCIAL** at 'The Crown', Mottingham (corner of Court Rd/Sidcup Rd, close to Mottingham BR). (Provisional arrangement, please phone first to check). Speaker to be arranged. Contact Dorothy Robbie (081-857 6367)
- Tuesday 27th: 7.30 for 8pm IWA KENT/EAST SUSSEX BRANCH The Fountain Inn, Barming, Maidstone. *Recycling/litter abatement*. Contact Angela Madle (0634-722661)

OCTOBER

- Weekend 1st/2nd LONDON WRG Dig on the Wilts/Berks Canal. Contact Tim Lewis (081-367 6227)
- Sunday 2nd: 2.30pm **LONDON IWA WITH 'LONDON WALKS'** GUIDED WALK—The New River: Highbury to Islington. Meet at Highbury/Islington tube station. About 2 hours. £4 (concessions £3)
- Tuesday 4th: 8pm **IWA N.E. LONDON SECTION SOCIAL** at 'The George', Islington (corner of Liverpool Road/Tolpuddle St., nearest tube Angel). *The River Police* (subject to confirmation). Contact Alan Russell (081-529 0689)

- Thursday 6th Launch of *Heritage Afloat* in the Pool of London.
- Tuesday 11th: 7.30 for 8pm **IWA MIDDLESEX BRANCH SOCIAL** at Hillingdon Canal Club, Waterloo Road, Uxbridge. Richard Thomas: *nb President*.
Contact Bill Bannon (0753-650938)
- Thursday 13th: 7 for 7.30pm LONDON CANAL MUSEUM Talk by Robin Weir: *Hokey Pokey and Penny Licks—a history of ice cream*. At the Museum, 12/13 New Wharf Road, King's Cross, N1 9RT. Admission £2 (£1 concessions) Contact 071-713 0836.
- Thursday 13th: 8pm IWA CHELMSFORD BRANCH AEU House, Primrose Hill, Chelmsford.
Ian Fletcher: *Journey from Nampton to Bingley*.
Contact Molly Beard (0702-554492)
- Saturday 15th THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY Sponsored walk from Brentford to Uxbridge.
Contact David Loftus (081-898 5509)
- Sunday 16th: 2.30pm **LONDON IWA WITH 'LONDON WALKS'** GUIDED WALK The Regent's Canal: Camden to Islington. Meet at Camden Town tube station. About 2 hours. £4 (concessions £3)
- Tuesday 18th: 8pm **IWA N.E. LONDON SECTION SOCIAL** at Hazelmere Marina, High Bridge Street, Waltham Abbey. (Provisional arrangement, please (phone first to check). Speaker about GRP boats. Contact Alan Russell (081-529 0689)
- Tuesday 18th: 8pm IWA HERTS BRANCH Hatfield Cricket Club, Ascots Lane, Welwyn Garden City: Brian Holden: *Rochdale restoration/future cruising possibilities*.
Contact: Greta Wright (0727-860137)
- Wednesday 19th: 8pm **IWA CROYDON SOCIAL** at the Unitarian Church Hall, The Flyover, Croydon. Mike Stevens: *The Kennet and Avon Canal*.
Contact Mike Stevens (081-674 9387)
- Thursday 20th: 7 for 7.30pm **IWA CENTRAL LONDON SOCIAL** at the Abbey Community Centre, Great Smith Street, SW1. *Waterway photos of the 1960s*. Contact Tim Lewis (081-367 6227)
- Weekend 22nd/23rd LONDON WRG Dig: venue to be decided. Contact Aileen Butler (081-467 1292)
- Tuesday 25th: 7.30 for 8pm IWA KENT/EAST SUSSEX BRANCH The Fountain Inn, Barming, Maidstone. Martin Ludgate: *The Waterway Recovery Group*. Contact Angela Madle (0634-722661)
- Friday 28th: 8pm **IWA S.E. LONDON SOCIAL** at 'The Crown', Mottingham (corner of Court Rd/Sidcup Rd, close to Mottingham BR). (Provisional arrangement, please phone first to check) Speaker to be arranged. Contact Dorothy Robbie (081-857 6367)

NOVEMBER

- Tuesday 1st: 8pm **IWA N.E. LONDON SECTION SOCIAL** at 'The George', Islington (corner of Liverpool Road/Tolpuddle St, nearest tube Angel). *Waterways Forum*.
Contact Alan Russell (081-529 0689)
- 1st to 27th LONDON CANAL MUSEUM Exhibition about the River Thames in London.
At the Museum, 12/13 New Wharf Road, King's Cross, N1 9RT. For details of opening times/admission charges, see advertisement elsewhere in this issue.
- Saturday 5th **IWA MIDDLESEX BRANCH WITH HILLINGDON CANAL CLUB** UXBRIDGE 200: celebration of the opening of the Grand Junction from Brentford to Uxbridge. See details elsewhere in this issue.
Contact Vernon Draper (081-668 5522)
- Sunday 6th: 2.30pm **LONDON IWA WITH 'LONDON WALKS'**: GUIDED WALK The Regent's Canal: Islington to Mile End. Meet at Angel tube station. About 2 hours. £4 (concessions £3)
- Tuesday 8th: 7.30 for 8pm **IWA MIDDLESEX BRANCH SOCIAL** at Hillingdon Canal Club, Waterloo Road, Uxbridge. Arthur Farrand Radley: *Transport of the Peak District*.
Contact Bill Bannon (0753-650938)
- Thursday 10th: 7 for 7.30pm LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. Talk by Gavin Weightman: *London River, a history of the River Thames*. At the Museum, 12/13 New Wharf Road, King's Cross, N1 9RT. Admission £2 (£1 concessions) Contact 071-713 0836.
- Thursday 10th: 8pm IWA CHELMSFORD BRANCH at AEU House, Primrose Hill, Chelmsford. Waterway and railway films. Contact Molly Beard (0702-554492)

- Weekend 12/13
 Tuesday 15th: 8pm LONDON WRG Dig: venue to be decided. Contact Tim Lewis (081-367 6227)
IWA N.E. LONDON SECTION SOCIAL at Hazelmere Marina, High Bridge Street, Waltham Abbey. (Provisional arrangement, please phone first to check)
 Speaker from the police about security (subject to confirmation).
 Contact Alan Russell (081-529 0689)
- Tuesday 15th: 8pm IWA HERTS BRANCH at Hatfield Cricket Club, Ascots Lane, Welwyn Garden City: Len Faram, tugmaster. Contact: Greta Wright (0727-860137)
- Wednesday 16th: 8pm **IWA CROYDON SOCIAL** at the Unitarian Church Hall, The Flyover, Croydon. *The River Police* (subject to confirmation).
 Contact Mike Stevens (081-674 9387)
- Thursday 17th: 7 for 7.30pm **IWA CENTRAL LONDON SOCIAL** at the Abbey Community Centre, Great Smith Street, SW1. Hugh McKnight: *Some East European waterways*.
 Contact Tim Lewis (081-367 6227)
- Sunday 20th: 2.30pm **LONDON IWA WITH 'LONDON WALKS': GUIDED WALK** The Regent's Canal: Mile End to Limehouse. Meet at Mile End tube station. About 2 hours. £4 (concessions £3)
- Friday 25th: 8pm **IWA S.E. LONDON SOCIAL** at 'The Crown', Mottingham (corner of Court Rd/ Sidcup Rd, close to Mottingham BR). (Provisional arrangement, please phone first to check). Speaker to be arranged. Contact Dorothy Robbie (081-857 6367)
- Tuesday 29th: 7.30 for 8pm IWA KENT/EAST SUSSEX BRANCH at the Fountain Inn, Barming, Maidstone. Christmas gathering with MRUA and talk on security by Maidstone Police.
 Contact Angela Madle (0634-722661)
- 30 November to 2 January LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. Exhibition of canal art. At the Museum, 12/13 New Wharf Road, King's Cross, N1 9RT. For details of opening times/admission charges, see advertisement elsewhere in this issue.

DECEMBER

- Sunday 4th: 2.30pm **LONDON IWA WITH 'LONDON WALKS': GUIDED WALK** The Regent's Canal: Paddington to Camden. Meet at Warwick Avenue tube station. About 2 hours. £4 (concessions £3)
- Tuesday 6th: 8pm **IWA N.E. LONDON SECTION SOCIAL** at 'The George', Islington (corner of Liverpool Road/Tolpuddle St, nearest tube Angel). Dr Michael Essex-Lopresti: *The New River*. Contact Alan Russell (081-529 0689)
- Thursday 8th: 7 for 7.30pm **IWA CENTRAL LONDON SOCIAL** at the Abbey Community Centre, Great Smith Street, SW1. Quiz/Auction. Contact Tim Lewis (081-367 6227)
- Thursday 8th: 7 for 7.30pm LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. Talk by Tony Lewery: *Canal art/narrowboat painting*. At the Museum, 12/13 New Wharf Road, King's Cross, N1 9RT. Admission £2 (£1 concessions) Contact 071-713 0836.
- Thursday 8th: 8pm IWA CHELMSFORD BRANCH at AEU House, Primrose Hill, Chelmsford. Christmas Social. Contact Molly Beard (0702-554492)
- Tuesday 13th: 7.30 for 8pm **IWA MIDDLESEX BRANCH SOCIAL** at Hillingdon Canal Club, Waterloo Road, Uxbridge. Victorian Music Hall evening.
 Contact Bill Bannon (0753-650938)
- Wednesday 14th: 8pm **IWA CROYDON SOCIAL** at the Unitarian Church Hall, The Flyover, Croydon. Speaker to be announced. Contact Mike Stevens (081-674 9387)
- Wednesday 14th LONDON WRG Christmas Party: details to be arranged.
 Contact Tim Lewis (081-367 6227)
- Sunday 18th: 2.30pm **LONDON IWA WITH 'LONDON WALKS': GUIDED WALK** The Regent's Canal: Camden to Islington. Meet at Camden Town tube station. About 2 hours. £4 (concessions £3)
- Tuesday 20th: 8pm IWA HERTS BRANCH at Hatfield Cricket Club, Ascots Lane, Welwyn Garden City: Christmas Social. Contact: Greta Wright (0727-860137)
- Monday 26th: 11am **LONDON IWA WITH 'LONDON WALKS': BOXING DAY GUIDED WALK** Waterways in Islington. Meet at King's Cross tube station (exit by taxi rank). About 2 hours. £4 (concessions £3)

Late News

5,000th WALKER

As forecast elsewhere in this issue, our programme of towpath walks had its 5,000th customer on Sunday 7 August. The lucky person was Maria Kyriakidou, a student of linguistics at London University. The presentation was made to her alongside Kentish Town Lock during the walk by the actor Edward Petherbridge, himself a *London Walks* guide, in the presence of the other walkers, Michael Essex-Lopresti (who organises our walks), Eric Garland, Arthur Farrand Radley (both representing London IWA) and Mary Tucker (representing *London Walks*). Over the 18 years of the walks, some £5,400 has been raised for the IWA.

Incidentally, some more people willing to train as guides would be most welcome. If you are interested, please contact Michael Essex-Lopresti ('phone number on page 2).

LIMEHOUSE FESTIVAL

This took place on the weekend of 20/21 August, and produced a splendid mix of inland and sea-going vessels. Narrowboats and cruisers mixed with yachts, the Thames sailing barge *Ironsides*, the Dutch clipper *Good Hope*, a Norwegian trawler and the tug *Pelikaan*, of whose nationality I was unaware.

The cruises round the Isle of Dogs and the Bow Back Rivers were very well supported. On the Bow Back Rivers cruise we actually had the whole navigable loop full of boats, with the head of the procession emerging while other boats were still on their way to the start. Towpath walks on the Sunday afternoon and the following Tuesday evening were also well-supported. There will be a full report and a picture in our next issue.

AWARDS FOR LONDON BOATS

From Limehouse, many of us went on to the National Waterways Festival at Waltham Abbey over the August Bank Holiday weekend. Many London IWA members were at the Festival, many of us working there, either as part of the Festival team or on the London IWA stand. We were pleased that London-based boats won the two most prestigious construction awards. The Lionel Munk award for the best commercially-built and -fitted boat in the exhibition went to *Tarn*, a new boat built by Midland Canal Centre at Stenson for Richard Bird (*Excalibur's* printer) and Dorothy Robbie. The Marion Munk Rose Bowl for the best privately-entered narrow-beam pleasure craft went to the restored 1928 Grand Junction Canal inspection launch, *Kingfisher*. Your Editor was among those delighted to see a vintage boat win this particular award in competition with a lot of newer vessels.

MEETINGS UP-DATE

The River Police have confirmed that they can provide a speaker for the 16 November meeting in Croydon, but unfortunately not for the 4 October meeting in Islington. The speaker at the latter will therefore be Mike Stevens on the subject of *The Kennet and Avon Canal*.

The dates for the meetings in Nottingham have now been confirmed with the pub, but the list of speakers is not yet to hand, I'm afraid. Come along and have a pleasant (we hope) surprise.

There was some doubt at one time about the continued availability of the boat *Hazelmere* for our Waltham Abbey meetings, but the latest news is that this has now been resolved and once again the dates are confirmed and arrangements for speakers are going ahead.

A RENEWED THREAT

I am sure that most *Excalibur* readers are aware that what remains of the Grosvenor Canal is in use as a dock from which the City of Westminster's rubbish is transported out of the Capital by lighter. We have been aware for some time the Westminster has other ideas for developing the site, and a recent report in the *Evening Standard* indicates that this threat has come back to life. From what I have heard, it appears that Westminster is going to make the present contractors tender competitively against road transport.

We have two fears about this. Firstly, if such competition goes ahead, will the environmental issues of road versus water transport be taken into account, or will the prospect of redeveloping the site sway the decision in favour of cluttering our roads with the large fleet of lorries that will be needed? Secondly, of course, there is the threat to one of our London canals, albeit a very truncated one, and to one of the surviving trades on London River.

If you share our concerns, please write to the City of Westminster, City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QP.

COMMUNITY BOAT NEWS

Phil Gavan, who was the steerer of Beauchamp Lodge's boats *Erica* and *William II* at the time he wrote the article about them elsewhere in this issue has recently left them to become the steerer of another community boat, *Tarporley*. This boat was until recently funded by the Borough of Camden, who have had to withdraw from the operation. *Tarporley* is now run by a newly-formed charitable trust.