

Excalibur

THE LONDON NEWSLETTER OF THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION

NUMBER 36, SUMMER 2002

EDITOR : Mike Stevens, 333 Lyham Road, London SW2 5NS

'phone (020) 8674 9387

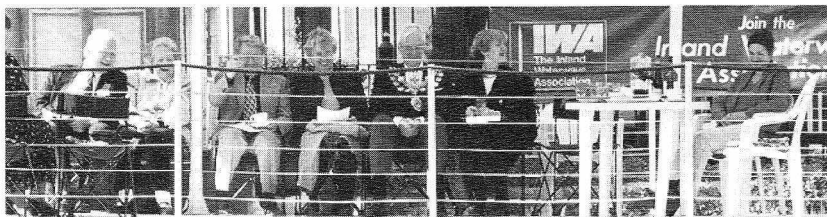
fax (020) 8674 3724

mobile 07850-665 102

e-mail michael.stevens@which.net

Region web site :

<http://www.waterways.org.uk/regionandbranch/londonregion/index.htm>



*Martin Ludgate, the "afterthought" of the London WRG entry in the pageant at this year's Canalway Cavalcade, goes past the judges.
See report on page 5. Photo by Mike Stevens*

Who's who in London IWA

☎ = answerphone

LONDON REGION

President

Iltyd Harrington JP, DL

Vice-Presidents

Dr Michael Essex-Lopresti
Arthur Farrand Radley, MBE

Chairman

Roger Squires (020) 7232 0987 ☎
46 Elephant Lane, London, SE16 4JD
e-mail : rogersquires@ntlworld.com

Secretary & Information Officer

Mike Stevens (See page 1 for details)

Treasurer

Mike McHugh (020) 8843 0046
7 Norwood Terrace, Tentelow Lane,
Southall, Middx, UB2 4NB

Committee members

Libby Bradshaw (020) 8874 2787 ☎

Stu Carrie 07833 183500
(Middlesex Branch Chairman)

Tim Lewis (020) 8367 6227 ☎
(N&E London Branch Chairman)

David Llewellyn (020) 8653 4862 ☎
(South London Branch Chairman)

Colin Edwards (020) 8365 1348
(Chairman of Plan/Nav Committee)

Robin Bishop (020) 8452 2632
(Minutes Secretary)

Official not on the Region Committee

Lewis Phillips (020) 8673 4412 ☎
(London Ring Plaques distribution)

NORTH & EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman

Tim Lewis (020) 8367 6227 ☎
6 Downs Road, Enfield, Middx, EN1 1PA.
e-mail : tim@timlewis.org.uk

Secretary & Publicity Officer

Marion Riley (mobile) 07958 505204
Stanmore, North St, Islip, Oxon, OX5 2SQ

Treasurer

Ian Israel (020) 8446 1823
32 Walfield Avenue, LONDON. N20 9PR

Committee members

Colin Edwards (020) 8365 1348

Peter Nash (work) (020) 72693401

Cathy Russell (020) 8529 0689 9

Ted Skelton 0208 5181903

MIDDLESEX BRANCH

Chairman

Stu Carrie 07833 183500
108 High St, Cranfield, BedfordMK43 ODG
email : stu@scarrie.fslife.co.uk

Vice-Chairman & Treasurer

Mike Mc Hugh 020 8843 0046
7 Norwood Terrace, Tentelow Lane,
Southall, Middx, UB2 4NB

Secretary & Sales Officer

Robin Bishop see below

Committee members

John Ashley (020) 8572 0067
(Plan-Nav rep)

Keith Clayton (020) 8573 0883
(Membership Officer)

Peter Coles (020) 7731 5822
(Social meetings Secretary)

Terry Liddle (020) 8863 2551

Jim Sitch (020) 8568 9659
(Publicity Officer)

Newsletter Editor (non-committee)

Rosie Limming (01895) 252 011 ☎

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH

Chairman & Membership Secretary

David Llewellyn (020) 8653 4862 ☎
5 Cornwall Gardens, Tennison Rd, SE25 5RZ.

Secretary & Publicity Officer

Mike Stevens See details on front cover

Treasurer & Minutes Secretary

Dorothy Robbie (020) 8857 6367 ☎
23 Porcupine Close, Mottingham, SE9 3AE.

Committee members

Libby Bradshaw (020) 8874 2787 ☎

Mary Llewellyn (020) 8653 4862 ☎

Andrew Mann (020) 8692 3637
(Croydon Canal Campaign Co-ordinator)

Lesley Pryde (020) 8679 9866
(One vacancy)

Excalibur

Editor

Mike Stevens See details on front cover.

Editorial Assistant

Andrew Mann (020) 8692 3637
43c Halesworth Road, Lewisham, SE13 7TJ
e-mail andremann@freenetname.co.uk

Advertising manager

Robin Bishop (020) 8452 2632
11 Lichfield Road, Cricklewood, NW2 2RE

From the Editor

BW licence and mooring fees

British Waterways is proposing to change the structure of both its licence and its mooring arrangements. Details can be found in the May and June issues of *IWA Head Office Bulletin*, available on the IWA website at <http://www.waterways.org.uk/news/bulletin/index.htm>. Needless to say, both sets of proposals have caused considerable discussion, not least of the shortness of the consultation periods involved.

The proposals for changing the licence are too complicated to summarise here, but among other aspects they propose a single "baseline" licence fee, from which other fees are calculated using a multiplier. BW tell us that the examples they quote are hypothetical, and that they propose to calculate them in such a way that the result of the change on their total licence income will be neutral. Some of us might be tempted to say "pull the other one".

Some examples of these multipliers are 0.6 for a boat less than 7 metres long, and 0.85 for a 6-month licence. For a holiday hire or time-share boat, they propose a multiplier of 2.5, and for a day-hire boat, one of 1.5. Multipliers would be used cumulatively where more than one was relevant. IWA London Region has said that it would wish to see River Registration retained (as is, in any case, required under the 1983 Act), and that does feature in the proposals, with a multiplier of 0.6.

The most controversial proposal is a multiplier of 2.5 for a boat which is continuously cruising. As one who aspires to this status in a few years time, I take a particular interest in this figure. One part of me says "well, I suppose I'll be using the facilities more heavily when I'm cruising permanently, so paying a bit more seems fair enough." Another part of me says "Well, but two-and-a half times??". A third part of me (I must have Gallic roots) says "Isn't this the beginning of a slippery slope towards charging by use rather than by a licence fee, and wouldn't that be a bad thing?"

For mooring fees, BW has abandoned its previous "moorings matrix" which purported to set the fee for those moorings it manages itself in terms of their location and the facilities on offer at the site. While there

were many imperfections in this, most people saw it as fair in intention.

They are replacing it with an instruction to their waterway managers to set their fees according to what the market will bear locally. In nearly all cases this has meant an increase (9.6% on the London Canals, 5.4% on the Lee & Stort, but as much as 23.5% on the Kennet & Avon).

IWA is involved in discussions with BW about this and has expressed a number of concerns. It is pressing for IWAAC to be given a rôle as an arbitrator over such charges, and has advised individual members to challenge their waterway managers over any unfair-seeming increases.

Personally I find the change totally reprehensible. Even if one believes in market-driven systems (and I don't), this one is totally bogus, because far too much of the market is controlled by BW itself. The huge majority of mooring operators not run by BW pay fees to BW in some way, rent, connection charge or whatever. This applies both to commercial operators and to Clubs. And even end-of-garden mooring fees are calculated with reference to BW's own fees locally.

So the "market" is actually a near-monopoly in which BW will be in a position to play one group of moorers off against another to ratchet the fees ever higher.

Mike Stevens

COPY DATE

No. 37 Winter 2002/3 26th October

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 Region 2002

Published by the Region at 3 Norfolk Court, Norfolk Road, Rickmansworth, WD3 1LT. Tel : (01923) 711114 Fax (01923) 897999

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

CANALWAY CAVALCADE 2002

This year's Canalway Cavalcade was extensively previewed (at least that's what it would have been if we'd managed to publish on time!) in our last issue, and everything duly happened as planned, so I'll not waste your patience repeating it all this time. The one down side of the event was a bitterly cold day on the Sunday which kept down the number of visitors on what is usually the event's busiest day.

The winners of the various competitions were as follows :

THE MARCUS BOUDIER TROPHY for the best-decorated privately entered boat

1st	nb <i>Scyeffe</i>	Caroline Watsham (for the second year running)
2nd	nb <i>Chérie</i>	Eric & Sally Naylor

THE RAY DUNFORD BUCKBY CAN TROPHY for the best-decorated boat entered by a waterway or community group

1st	nb <i>Hartley Harlequin</i>	The Church Army
2nd	nb <i>Sussex</i>	London Waterway Recovery Group

THE CRUISE ELECTRIC TROPHY for the best-illuminated boat

1st	nb <i>Gnaskers II</i>	David Pearce
2nd	nb <i>Lucy</i>	David Harris. (Last year's winner)

THE GRAHAM CAPELIN TROPHY for the best entry from a boater who has not previously taken part in either the Saturday Pageant or Illuminated Boats

nb *Caroline Mathilde* "Steve"

THE WESTMINSTER TROPHY for the boat-handling competition

1st	Paul Garner	nb <i>Kelly Ann 2</i>
=2nd	Craig Haslam	nb <i>Malta</i>
=2nd	David Lichfield	nb <i>Kew</i>

ROGER SQUIRES TROPHY for the best novice competitor in the boat-handling competition

Terry Streeter nb *Aun*

THE VIC TROTT MEMORIAL TROPHY for the best "boaters' Sunday best" costume

Colin Edwards and Linda Anfuso

PROGRAMME DRAW

One week's holiday on a 4-berth hireboat (thanks to Black Prince Holidays)

Eric Margan, London NW2

One night stay at the Colonnade Town House Hotel (thanks to Eton Town House Group)
Jan Bros, London E14.

CANALWAY CAVALCADE 2003

As soon as this year's event is over (actually a little bit sooner), planning for next year's begins. The venue, as ever, will be Little Venice and the date the May Day Bank Holiday Weekend (Saturday 3rd to Monday 5th May 2003). The theme for the event will be "CARRY ON CANALS".

We want to expand our core organising team. With extra space becoming available as the development down the arm to the Basin continues, we have the opportunity to expand our Trade Show, and would like a couple of new people to work on that aspect of the event. We also need somebody to look after procurement and contracts.

Our Harbourmaster, Allan Scott, is looking for a deputy. We could also do with one or two more people to deal with a range of local liaison tasks including leaflet distribution and selling brochure advertising. This year

the decision to include WoW (*Wild over Waterways*) activities for young people was made at a late stage, resulting in some of the activities being put together in rather a hurry. With more advance planning there is scope to make them bigger and better, so we'd like to recruit somebody to our core team to be responsible for liaison with the national WoW team.

If you are willing and able to offer your services in any of these rôles, please contact Jerry Sanders on 01283 716158.

Boat entry forms are available from Allan Scott on (020) 8642 8104. Trade entry forms are in preparation and the contact for these will be Jerry Sanders (see above).

Then, of course, we'll be keen to recruit more volunteers to help during the weekend itself, but more of that anon.

A MIDDLE LEVEL EXCURSION.

Being one of those boaters who like to seek out the lesser-used routes, when I heard that the Peterborough Branch of the IWA was planning a cruise through the tide gates on the Old Bedford River, I immediately signed up as crew on *Hillpenny*. The cruise was planned over the Jubilee Weekend. The aim was to use one of the few open weekends on the Forty Foot or Vermuyden's Drain, through Horseway Lock and Welches Dam to gain access to the Old Bedford River. Navigation is strictly limited and normally the levels are kept low as the Drain leaks. But on a number of weekends each year, the Environment Agency is willing to allow the level to be raised by about 2 feet, if craft give notice they wish to navigate the section between Horseway Lock and Welches Dam.

Our trip was set for one of these weekends. However, it all rested on the replacement of the lower gates of Horseway Lock. The boats had no trouble reaching Horseway Lock. The Forty Foot Drain was wide and clear. However, when *Hillpenny* arrived at Horseway Lock, we were confronted by men working on the new gate, which had only been put in place the day before. The problem now was the stop planks, the lower two of which had jammed. After much banging and use of heavy crowbars, they finally bobbed to the surface. The men removed their ladders and called us into the lock. Would the gates leak? Was the water coming in sufficient to raise the level? After a few minutes, we knew we were OK.

Roger Sexton, on the lockside, offered reassurance. "Don't worry about the mass of reeds ahead. Others have got through to Welches Dam when the route looked that weedy." "How long will it take?" he was asked. "About an hour and a half" he replied. "We'll keep you to that" was my reply.

Although the section was reedy, the fact that the level had only been raised the day before gave us the assurance that the weed base was some 20 inches down. We set off in trepidation. With regular thrusts into reverse to clear the prop, only two sessions down the weed hatch were required. Sure enough, an hour and a half later we were at Welches Dam. A smiling Roger Sexton looked at his watch. Spot on, he said.

Welches Dam lock is both the water supply source for the raised level as well as the access point into the Old Bedford River. The

lock raises craft about 3 ft at summer levels. You would not want much more as there is an access bridge built right across the centre of the lock. Care has to be taken to count windlass turns, as the paddles have to be reset after the locking, to maintain the raised water levels. After some 20 minutes we were able to creep out and turn sharp left into the Old Bedford River. We were most grateful for the locking team, as there was no landing stage above the lock, making it difficult to recover crew.

Our original plan was to cruise along to Purls Bridge, where the *Ship* offers a welcome pint. However, as it was early and the sun was out, we decided to continue on to Welney. The number of water lilies at Welches Dam should have offered a warning of the problems of weed ahead. At first all went well, but soon after Purls Bridge, the weed became evident, gradually getting thicker and nearer the surface. By the time we reached the Manea railway bridge, five visits to the weedhatch had been made. This routine continued for the next mile, to just beyond the Welney Pumping station. Our companion boat, *Housemartin*, was having the same problem and had dropped further behind. We kept going, since the pub was at Welney, which we reached, after some three hours cruising, or perhaps more realistically 'weedcutting'. Fortunately, the last half mile into Welney was less weeded. We tied up and went to the *Lamb and Flag* expecting the crew of *Housemartin* to arrive later. They did not.

The next morning I received a call from *Housemartin* which had broken down the night before. Could we send out a recovery party, with long ropes, to get him out of the weed? Just over an hour later, after a long walk through waist high weeds, we finally reached 'Housemartin'. He was completely weeded in. After a consultation, we poled him over to the other bank, set to and created a very long hauling line, and after much poling, started off towards Welney bow hauling him. We must have pulled him for a mile and a half, when at last we heard the engine come into life. We had just reached the less weeded section and with care he could proceed slowly under his own power. We kept up the pulling for a while, before agreeing that he was now likely to be OK.

Roger Squires

TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

ROUTES AND BRANCHES :

Region, Branch and navigation news

New Region & Branch Officers

The annual round of elections is over., and the results will be seen on page 2. Roger Squires has been re-elected as our Region Chairman, and your Editor has taken over the formerly vacant post of Region Secretary, with the assistance of Robin Bishop as Minutes Secretary. Mike McHugh is our new Treasurer.

Middlesex Branch's new officers were announced in our last issue.

South London Branch has now completed its election of Officers, with Dorothy Robbie taking over as Branch Treasurer in place of Mary Llewellyn (who has retired from that post), and David Llewellyn (re-elected as Chairman) also taking over as Membership Secretary in succession to David Young, who has retired from the Committee.

Because North & East London Branch was having difficulty recruiting Officers and Committee members, and several of its existing Committee members wished to retire, a Special General Meeting was held on 18th June at which some new members agreed to be co-opted to the Committee, and some of them volunteered as Officers. Very recently their Committee has appointed its Officers (see page 2). Alex and Jenny Nunes have retired from the Branch Committee. Apart from their Committee, the Branch has asked Libby Bradshaw to head the team running the Three Mills Rally, 2003.

Thames lifeboats

On Friday 28th June the South London Branch social took the form of a visit to one of the new Thames lifeboat stations at Gravesend, where we had a long talk with the duty crew (two permanent employed crew and one volunteer) and enjoyed seeing their boat put through its paces. From Gravesend they are responsible for a section of the river from the Barrier to well downstream towards the North Sea, and from receiving a 'phone call at their base, they can be at either end of their territory in under 25 minutes.

All four lifeboat stations on the Thames have been very busy since the service was instituted in January.

More recently there have been naming ceremonies for two of the lifeboats, *Chelsea Pensioner* for the one based at Chiswick and *Public Servant* for the one at Tower Pier.

Croydon's Take Part event

On 15th June, South London Branch provided a range of *Waterways for Youth* activities at Croydon's annual *Take Part* event at South Norwood Lake, the former reservoir of the Croydon Canal. Despite a very slow start because of a crucial World Cup match, by the end of the day rather more youngsters than last year had participated and won prizes.

South London socials

In the hope of boosting the numbers at its socials, South London Branch enclosed with the last issue of *Excalibur* a questionnaire to its members about the socials. Fewer than 20 replies were received, and the main result to come out of them was predictable - those people who come to the meetings find the current arrangements quite convenient, but those who don't come would like a change.

The one significant thing that came out of the survey was that there are some members in places like Sutton on the western side of the Branch who find both of our present venues inconvenient. The replies were roughly equally divided between people who come (or would come) by car and those who use public transport.

The Branch Committee therefore decided (a) to make no changes until after Christmas (b) to look for a venue in central Croydon to replace South Norwood in the New Year, as there are train services to East Croydon (in particular) from a lot more areas than there are to South Norwood, (c) to retain the Mottingham venue at present, but keep its future under review.

The Slough Arm

For some years the responsibility for this within IWA has lain with the Chiltern Branch. A proposal to transfer it to Middlesex Branch has now been agreed by both Branches and their parent Regions..

FROM THE REGION CHAIRMAN :

Roger Squires

As Regional Chairman, I am often invited to attend various waterway events. Two recently have attracted considerable publicity.

One was the launch of the Towpath Wardens scheme by Thames 21. This got the Minister, Michael Meacher MP, out of his office to Camden Lock to get graffiti off the walls. This scheme has the support of IWA. It is aimed at improving the environment of London's Canals. We hope that it will achieve its aims.

The second event was the 'topping out' of the new Visitor Centre at Cowley Peachey Marina. The Visitor Centre and the associated urban farm are incorporated as part of this major 'brown field' site development financed jointly by LDA and BW. The 120 berth marina will offer top quality off line moorings within easy access of London. Whilst they will not be the cheapest on the system, the quality of the development and its facilities will set a new standard for moorings in the London area. [BW are currently taking bookings for mooring spaces when the Marina opens later in the year.]

I am one of those who passionately believe that the IWA is a 'campaigning organisation'. I therefore try to support waterway campaigns nationwide. Recently I have been involved in two such events.

The first was on the Middle Level where Peterborough Branch have run a long campaign to get the Old Bedford Level route through the Fens reactivated. This year they achieved partial success. Horseway Lock had one set of gates renewed and the Environment Agency did some spot dredging outside the Old Bedford tidal sluice. Over the Jubilee Weekend a campaign cruise was organised to prove boats could safely negotiate this second Fenlands route. This was achieved.

My second excursion was to lead a flotilla of narrow boats across the Mersey, from Eastham, on the Manchester Ship Canal,

to the Albert Dock which is by the Liver Building in Liverpool. 39 boats made the Mersey crossing, with IWA's boat *Jubilee* in the lead. This was part the build-up to the Mersey River Festival, one of whose aims was to promote the new canal to re-link Canning and Albert Basins to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. Here again the sight of the flotilla entering via Canning Dock gained much local publicity. Subsequently, the moored 'Jubilee' gained a steady stream of visitors who were all informed of the IWA and its wider waterways campaign. Both of the events for me proved the value of the 'Campaign Cruise'.

Later this Summer British Waterways are promoting a London Waterways Week. This starts on 7th September. It coincides with this year's Slough Canal Festival [7th and 8th September]. For a long time now the Middlesex Branch of the IWA has been involved in the boating side of the Festival even though the Slough Arm was effectively in the domain of the Chiltern Branch. Recently that anomaly has been corrected. This therefore is the first time Middlesex Branch has full jurisdiction over the whole of the Arm. They clearly would like to make this year's Slough Canal Festival a roaring success. For this they need your active support. Whether you are a walker or a boater, please try to get to that event.

Whilst on the subject of the Slough Arm, I recently attended a meeting in Slough at which the topic of getting more boats to cruise the Arm was high on the agenda. It is proposed to use the Slough Canal Festival to test the water for the possible formation of a 'Friends of the Slough Arm' group. Its aims will be twofold. To promote the rejuvenation of the Arm, especially the Slough Terminus, and to seek the improvement of facilities on the Arm. These are both worthy aims and I hope that local members especially will give the Group their support.

Enjoy our waterways.

Roger Squires

THREE MILLS BOAT RALLY, 2002

This year's event was on the weekend of 20th & 21st July, and took place, as ever, on the River Lee Navigation at Three Mills, Bromley-by-Bow, and was attended by 39 boats. It was organised by IWA North & East London Branch and St Pancras Cruising Club, with help from the Lea Valley Regional Park.

At the opening ceremony on the Saturday, IWA Region Planning & Navigation Chairman, Colin Edwards, spoke of the importance of this year in the history of Three Mills and the Bow Back Rivers. After years of neglect, these East End Waterways are about to be transformed. British Waterways has already completed work on Bow Locks and elsewhere to make this stretch of water non-tidal, and have recently started dredging the Bow Back Rivers to re-create the navigable loop of St Thomas' Creek, City Mill River and the Old River Lee, so connecting Bow Bridge to Old Ford via Carpenters' Road lock.

Plans are now being drawn up to redevelop the area to the East, including the Waterworks River, to create a new "Amsterdam of the East End". There are even plans to build a new waterway from Bow Creek towards Stratford. So, for the first time for many years, things are looking positive for the waterways of East London.

Colin then introduced Councillor Maria Collier, Chairman of the London Borough of Newham Council, who opened the event.

The involvement of St Pancras Cruising Club in the event guarantees that some cruises will take place, and this year they ran two.

On the Saturday morning eight boats explored the Channelsea River, and on Sunday morning twelve boats ventured to the Thames Barrier.

But the most adventurous cruise was a Challenge Cruise on the Saturday afternoon when seven narrowboats went to see how far round the "navigable" loop of the Bow



*NB Opportunity at Carpenters Road Lock.
Photo by Tim Lewis*

Back Rivers they could get in the present incomplete state of dredging. They entered the loop at Bow Bridge and set off down St Thomas' Creek. At City Mill Lock they had to tow a BW mud-hopper out of the way, and there also they met up with a group of towpath walkers led by your Editor.

From there the boats managed to get about half-way along the City Mill River before running into shallows they could not get through. So they had to struggle back the way they came, while the walkers completed the loop. But two canoes from the Tideway Adventurers did manage to complete the loop.

There were lots of other activities at the Rally. The Bow Connections children's band played in the marquee, there were public boat trips and guided tours of the House Mill, possibly the world's biggest tidal mill. The regular craft market that takes place at Three Mills was supplemented for the weekend by a number of waterways stalls, including those from Middlesex and South London IWA Branches, the latter in the form of Dave Young's swing-boats. The Tideway Adventurers offered people the chance to "have a go" on canoes. On the Saturday evening there was a boaters' barbecue and a quiz.

It was good to see the Rally well supported by cruising clubs, not only St Pancras but also Rammey Marsh and Spring Lea.

THREE MILLS NEEDS YOU !!

Three Mills Island in Bow E3 is a source of amazement for first time (and regular!) visitors. Often described as an oasis of peace and tranquillity in this busy part of east London, its main source of beauty is the two Mills (House and Clock) that form the entrance to the Island. The Three Mills Boat Rally is always a busy weekend for the House Mill. Its volunteers are on hand to give guided tours, staff the admissions desk and shop, serve tea, coffee and something to nibble, oversee the children's games and help host art exhibitions. The River Lea Tidal Mill Trust owns, maintains and manages the larger and older House Mill. The Trust has been incredibly successful in fundraising for capital works, and most recently secured SRB funding for

improvements and the well-crafted retail and café 'pods' in the ground floor. The Mill has also extended its opening times to include Saturday afternoons throughout the summer months.

All this activity needs many willing hands and the Trust has a core group of friendly and motivated volunteers who would be delighted to welcome you on board. Opportunities are available for guides, or to help with the café, shop and admissions desk. Or anything else you think needs doing!! If you're interested in becoming involved at the Mill, please call Beverley Charters on 020 8980 4626 or email bcharters@bcos.demon.co.uk

Nikki Christie

NEWS FROM LONDON WRG

Recent months have seen WRG's London regional group carrying out weekend voluntary working parties on various canal projects around southern England. These have varied from the long-term restoration projects (or 'no-hopers' as they used to be called in the past; these days there's no such thing as a hopeless case in canal restoration!) to some canals that shouldn't need restoring at all as they've never closed.

The long term: progress continues near Wootton Bassett on the Wilts & Berks, where Summit Lock is being completely rebuilt under the 'Dig Deep' initiative and London WRG have not only helped to keep the work progressing (we laid over 2000 bricks in a single weekend!) but trained-up bricklayers from other groups so as to keep the work on schedule.

Not to mention somewhere that you may have heard a lot about a couple of years ago, but where things have gone strangely silent recently. Over basin on the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal. Having taken a bit of a rest since the completion of one of WRG's biggest single projects to date - rebuilding the entire entrance basin to the canal - we returned in April to help build a permanent water supply to replace the temporary arrangements that were all that there was time to provide for the 2000 opening.

The much shorter-term: a hectic weekend of bricklaying, concreting, stonework and landscaping in May saw work completed on Hanbury Locks on the Droitwich Canal just two weeks before the official reopening!

Unfortunately they won't be generally available to visiting boaters until the next section of canal towards Droitwich has been restored, but that's not very far off.

Already restored: the Basingstoke is within easy boating reach of London and has now been open for 11 years, but still very few boats visit it - mainly because it lacks a good water supply. This is in the process of being rectified: we've already helped to build a backpump system at Woodham Locks and we're now installing one at St Johns near Woking, and the canal is well on the way to being able to stay open all year every year.

Never closed: the Walsall Canal was this year's venue for the National Cleanup weekend held every March on the Birmingham Canal Navigations system, and as usual we removed huge amounts of rubbish from what is in theory part of the national navigable system; it's only thanks to events like this that it remains navigable in practice as well as in theory.

We're currently taking a bit of a break as many of our volunteers are either boating or on Canal Camps, but we'll be back in September with a working party on the Ipswich & Stowmarket Navigation, followed by the Wey & Arun, the Thames & Severn and a new one for us - the national WRG 'Bonfire Bash' reunion weekend (and Guy Fawkes party) on the Monmouthshire Canal near Newport in South Wales.

Martin Ludgate

ON THE METREAU :

New IWA national Chairman

Richard Drake, IWA's present Chairman, announced a while ago that he wished to retire from that post after this Autumn's AGM. IWA Council has recently announced that, subject to ratification by the first meeting of the new year's Council, his successor will be John Fletcher, currently North West Region CHairman. John is a Trustee of the Waterways Trust and is also well-known for his involvement with the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal.

A seat for Ray

Longer-standing readers of *Excalibur* will probably remember the late Ray Dunford. Ray was for many years a London boater, mooring his successive boats, *Bobalong*, *The Merchant of Little Venice* and *Albion* at Little Venice, and an active member of what was then IWA London Branch. Some years ago he and his wife, Hazel, left London and moved to Preston Brook, where Ray turned his hobby of decorative canal-style painting into a living and bought a new boat, *Ellington*. Ray died in 1999, and Hazel has subsequently moved back to London.

A collection among Ray's boating and internet friends raised the money for a memorial to him, in the form of a seat, with an appropriate inscription, alongside the canal at Little Venice (just near Warwick Avenue bridge).

On 18th May, a group of Ray's friends joined Hazel and other family members to view this bench and to scatter Ray's ashes in Browning's Pool from his last boat, *Mock Turtle*, which is still owned by the family. Hospitality was provided by Alex and Jan Prowse on their gallery barge.

Volunteers needed at the London Canal Museum

The London Canal Museum, a registered charity, aims to make visitors aware of the history and development of London's Waterways. The Museum is an entirely voluntary organisation, run by a Management Committee of Trustees. The Trustees coordinate policy and maintain special oversight of the various elements of the Museum's work. All work at the museum is done by volunteers.

If you can spare half a day a week or more the museum would be delighted to hear from you. The museum needs help with the day to day running of the museum, greeting visitors, answering the telephone, serving in the shop and all the other routine jobs. Visitor numbers are increasing and more volunteers are needed to respond to this.

The variety of visitors is amazing, tourists from all over the world, school parties, adult groups, waterway enthusiasts and even folk who have an hour or so to while away before catching their train from Kings Cross. Increasing numbers of passing boats are using the visitor mooring to stop and visit.

The shop is the only bookshop in London selling waterways related books and is increasing its range to meet demand. It is also one of the few sources of canal gifts and souvenirs in London. Visitors sometimes come just for the shop when they are looking for a present for a canal enthusiast. Recently an American visitor bought one of almost every small item to take back and wanted details of the museum's suppliers.

Every day is different and it is impossible to predict what each day will bring, except for what is in the diary. In one June week, for instance, there were three school parties, two performances by Mikron and the tug was used to rehearse a performance by the Almeida Theatre.

Anyone who is interested please ring the museum 020 7713 0836 or email volunteers@canalmuseum.org.uk or call in.

A major part of the Museum's efforts is devoted towards education in its widest sense. School parties regularly attend the Museum, especially for special projects such as *Science Week*. In view of the high profile that education demands, the Trustees currently are actively seeking an Educational Advisor to join their team. The rôle would be ideally suited to a recently retired senior teacher who has a passion for and knowledge of waterways. The role is one of Advisor, but needs someone who can personally contribute to the various innovations in education that the Museum seeks to promote. It would also involve maintaining a general overview of the work of volunteers involved in delivering the

news and gossip of London's waterways

education projects and the management overall of quality control of outputs.

The Museum seeks to further raise its profile. It already has wide support in education circles locally. Much more can be done if the right person can be found.

If you would like to learn more about this key development role, please contact Margaret Gwalter at the Museum. Phone: (020) 7713 0836.

London Canal Museum
12/13 New Wharf Road
Kings Cross, London N1 9RT

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD : THE NITTS & STUFFS CANAL

By Mike Stevens

(Continued from our previous issue)

THE STORY SO FAR : Lord Montmorency Gomery is the rich proprietor of the Nitts & Stuffs Canal. His beautiful daughter, Araminta is sought by the County's two leading politicians.

Lord Francis "Greybeard" Dobbins was the owner of the Wellington Boot factory, the leader of local society and a crony of the Lord Lieutenant of the County, Lord Bleagh. He wished to establish himself as a County landowner as well as a businessman by marrying into the Gomerys.

Tim Galaunt was a dealer, whose business ethics were reputed to be rather shady. Whether his nickname of "Red" came from his politics or from the colour of his hair is not recorded. Some years before our story he had set up business in Stuffitt, where his methods soon earned him the nickname "Wily" Galaunt. He was a romantic and in love with Araminta.

Red Tim wanted to be Mayor, and so did Greybeard. As election time drew nigh, it was obvious that transport was going to be the main issue. The local gentry spent much of the time driving by carriage to one another's houses. This was causing a lot of congestion and destroying the rather primitive roads of the district. So "Greybeard" Dobbins got Lord Bleagh to have a word with another of their cronies, Sir Jonah Pushpott, who was Commissioner of Turnpikes for the County. This was done, and Pushpott promised a new road to cure the congestion - the "Stuffitt-Upham Northern Relief Turnpike". This was popular with the gentry, but offered nothing towards the problems of the small businessmen, whose cause was therefore espoused by Wily Tim.

The new road was planned to have no fewer than five low-level crossings of the Nitts & Stuffs Canal, thus extinguishing all trade on the latter. "Mont" Gomery may not have been the brightest bee in the hive, but he realised that the family fortunes came from the mine and the canal and without the latter he would soon be broke. So he started campaigning

against the new road. "Could not", he asked "the crossings be made at a navigable level?". This was ruled out as the pony-traps of the aristocracy weren't capable of climbing a gradient. And it would cost money.

At this time Wily Tim decided to throw in his lot with Lord Gomery in the hope of winning the hand of Araminta. He decided that only deception would win the day. On the far side of Stuffitt from Upham, in the village of Dotcom he found a disused clay-pit. From a neighbouring valley he bought a load of turnips, which he brought in at night and tipped into the hole. He then announced the discovery of an incredibly rich turnip mine, and wrote several pseudonymous articles in the local newspapers extolling the virtues of turnips as the important new investment field. With the help of some equally-pseudonymous "market analysts" he convinced the gentry of the area that they all wanted to invest in the Dotcom turnip mine, relieved them of large parcels of gold, and organised a petition to Sir Jonah Pushpott to scrap the Stuffitt-Upham Northern Relief Turnpike in favour of one of the other new hi-tech fashions, the Dotcom & Stuffitt Railway.

Pushpott agreed and Red Tim won the Mayoral election. Of course it was not long before his deception was discovered and he fled to the colonies to spend the rest of his life in a series of failed attempts to build a Brisbane, Ayers Rock, Melbourne & Yarawonga (or BARMY) canal.

Araminta, a woman of determination and good sense, married Ephraim Balaclava, engineer of the new railway, and it was their son Thomas Balaclava who revived the fortune of Stuffitt at the time of the Crimean war by setting up a factory to make his eponymous helmets along with cardigans and raglan coats.

But the Nitts & Stuffs had been saved, and the story was never totally forgotten. A later generation of people committed to saving canals commemorated the initials of Wily Red Galaunt, and one of their chroniclers took as his pen-name an anagram of Red Tim Galaunt.

IWA London Region 200 Club

The club was formed some years ago to help fund the running of the Region, so that other sources of income could be devoted more fully to campaigning and donations to waterways causes. At the moment the Club is well below its target of 200 members. If you've not yet joined, why not do so now? If you are a member, you can always take out an extra membership or two!

Members of the Club must be IWA members aged 18 or over. The annual subscription to the club is £12, payable by annual cheque or standing order (either for £12 annually or £1 monthly). A member may hold more than one membership of the Club. Prizes are awarded by a draw which takes place six times a year. When the club has its full quota of 200 members, each draw awards four prizes of £100, £50, £25, £25. When the Club has less than 200 members, prizes are reduced so that the ratio of prizes to subscriptions remains the same. The present officers of the Club are: Chairman : Mike Stevens (contact details on front cover); Secretary : Vernon Draper (address below); Treasurer : Tim Lewis (contact details on page 2). All queries should be addressed to Vernon Draper at the address at the foot of this page.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

To the Officers,

I wish to become a member of the Inland Waterways Association London Region 200 Club. I have completed and enclose the standing order / enclose a cheque as payment for membership(s) at £12 each.

Full name

Address

..... Postcode

Phone email.....

I am a member of the Inland Waterways Association and I agree to be bound by the rules of the London Region 200 Club.

Signed..... Date.....

Cheques should be made payable to "IWA London Region 200 Club"

STANDING ORDER MANDATE

To : The Manager Bank/Building Soc.ety

Address.....

..... Postcode

Please pay to Barclays Bank plc Kettering Branch, Sort code 20-45-77 for the credit of the Inland Waterways Association London Region 200 Club Account no. 80204234, quoting reference

.....(*) as follows : {(*) will be inserted by Officers when processing.]

(ANNUAL OPTION) the sum of £..... (..... pounds only) with immediate effect and on the first day of (*) each year thereafter until further notice from me.

OR

(MONTHLY OPTION) the sum of £..... (..... pounds only) with immediate effect and on the first day of each month thereafter until further notice from me.

Please debit my account in the name of Account no , accordingly

Signature Date

The two halves of the form should be sent to Vernon Draper at :
12 Chipperfield Close, New Bradwell, MILTON KEYNES, Buckinghamshire MK13 0EP

Waterways events in and around London.

See back page for details of venues and contacts for further information.

For up-dates to this list, watch the Diary page on the Region web site at <http://www.waterways.org.uk/branchandregion/londonregion/index.htm>

- Please Note:
- (i) All activities listed are open to the public.
 - (ii) Much of the Autumn Programme of the IWA NORTH & EAST LONDON BRANCH is still in preparation. For further information, contact Tim Lewis (020) 8367 6227.

SEPTEMBER 2002

- Throughout the month LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. Temporary Exhibition continues. *Boating Life and Work*. Poland's River Oder in the 1950s. Atmospheric photographs by Mieczyslaw Wroblewski.
- Sunday 1st 11:30am to 5pm ANGEL CANAL FESTIVAL on the towpath around City Road lock, Islington.
- Sunday 1st 2.30pm LONDON IWA with *THE ORIGINAL LONDON WALKS*. GUIDED TOWPATH WALK. The Regent's Canal. Islington to Mile End. *Passes through Angel Canal Festival*. Meet at Angel tube station. About 2½ hours. £5 (concessions £4).
- Thursday 5th 7.30pm LONDON CANAL MUSEUM LECTURE.: *Tide Mills of London* by David Plunket.
- Weekend 7th/8th SLOUGH CANAL FESTIVAL at Bloom Park, Langley. Contact 01753 875571/81
- Monday 9th 8pm IWA LEE & STORT BRANCH. Members slides + Rope-splicing demonstration
- Saturday 7th to Sunday 15th BRITISH WATERWAYS LONDON CANALS WEEK. Details from (020) 7286 6101
- Tuesday 10th 8pm IWA MIDDLESEX BRANCH. Speaker to be announced.
- Wednesday 11th 6:30 pm LONDON IWA WITH BRITISH WATERWAY. GUIDED WALK The Regent's Canal, Little Venice to Camden.. Meet at Warwick Avenue tube station. About 2 hours. £5 (concessions £4).
- Friday 13th to Sunday 15th G.L.A. THAMES FESTIVAL. Details from (020) 7221 5000
- Sunday 15th 2.30pm LONDON IWA with *THE ORIGINAL LONDON WALKS*. GUIDED TOWPATH WALK. Three Mills and the Bow Back Rivers. Meet at Bromley-by-Bow tube station. About 2½ hours. £5 (concessions £4).
- Sunday 15th 2pm LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. Guided Towpath Walk from Museum to Camden. Donation of £4 invited.
- Thursday 19th 8pm IWA LONDON REGION CENTRAL LONDON SOCIAL. *"Plans, schemes and the reality"* by Colin Edwards, Chairman of London IWA Planning & Navigation Committee
- Weekend 21st/22nd LONDON WRG DIG on the Wey & Arun Canal. Contact Allan Scott (020) 8642 8104.
- Weekend 21st/22nd LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. 'London Open House' with Free Admission.
- Weekend 21st/22nd 1 to 5 pm BRITISH WATERWAYS. "London Open House" at the West India Dock impounding station. Details from (020) 7517 5550.
- Weekend 21st/22nd 1 to 5 pm BRITISH WATERWAYS. "London Open House" at the Limehouse hydraulic accumulator tower. Details from (020) 7286 6101.

Thursday 26th 8pm

IWA CHILTERN BRANCH. *The Wey Ahead* (Wey & Arun Canal) by Anthony Woolhouse.

Friday 27th 8pm

IWA SOUTH LONDON BRANCH AT MOTTINGHAM. Martin Ludgate : *WRG and the Over Basin project.*

OCTOBER 2002

Throughout the month

LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. Temporary exhibition continues until 27th October. *Boating Life and Work*. Poland's River Oder in the 1950s.

Thursday 3rd 7.30pm

LONDON CANAL MUSEUM LECTURE. *Thomas Telford* by Anthony Burton.

Sunday 6th 2.30pm

LONDON IWA with *THE ORIGINAL LONDON WALKS*. GUIDED TOWPATH WALK. The Regent's Canal. Paddington to Camden. Meet at Warwick Avenue tube station. About 2 hours. £5 a head (concessions £4)

Tuesday 8th 8pm

IWA MIDDLESEX BRANCH. Paul King (ex-harbourmaster at Chelsea harbour) will speak.

Wednesday 9th 8pm

IWA SOUTH LONDON BRANCH AT SOUTH NORWOOD. *London's Waterways Partnership* by Michael Render..

Saturday 12th 10am

LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. Canal Art "Roses and Castles" Workshop. All day till 4pm. All levels, incl. beginners. £25 a head to include some materials.

Weekend 12th/13th

LONDON WRG DIG on the Thames & Severn Canal

Monday 14th 8pm

IWA LEE & STORT BRANCH. *European Waterways* by Colin Edwards.

Tuesday 15th 8pm

IWA NORTH AND EAST LONDON BRANCH Social meeting at Springfield.

Thursday 17th 8pm

IWA LONDON REGION CENTRAL LONDON SOCIAL. *Canadian Waterways Revisited* by Roger Squires.

Thursday 17th 8pm

IWA CHILTERN BRANCH. *The Waterways of East Anglia* by Alan Faulkner.

Sunday 20th 2.30pm

IWA LONDON with *THE ORIGINAL LONDON WALKS*. GUIDED TOWPATH WALK. The Regent's Canal. King's Cross to Camden. Meet at King's Cross Station, by the taxi rank. About 2 hours. £5 a head (concessions £4).

Friday 25th 8pm

IWA SOUTH LONDON BRANCH AT MOTTINGHAM. Speaker to be announced.

Sunday 27th

LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. Temporary Exhibition closes. *Boating Life and Work* (see above).

Tuesday 29th

LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. Temporary Exhibition opens: *Waterways Art Show*. Annual Exhibition of waterways art by the Guild of Waterway Artists.

NOVEMBER 2002

Throughout the month

LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. Temporary Exhibition continues until 24th November. *The Waterways Art Show*.

Weekend 2nd/3rd

LONDON WRG taking part i the Bonfire Bash on the Mon & Brec. Contact Martin Ludgate (020) 8693 3266.

Sunday 3rd 2.30

IWA LONDON with *THE ORIGINAL LONDON WALKS*. GUIDED TOWPATH WALK. The Regent's Canal. Islington to Mile End. Meet at Angel tube station. About 2½ hours. £5 (concessions £4)

- Thursday 7th 7.30pm LONDON CANAL MUSEUM LECTURE. *Further Secrets of the Lea Valley* by Dr Jim Lewis.
- Monday 11th 8pm IWA LEE & STORT BRANCH. *The Restoration of the Wiltshire & Berkshire Canal, and boat trips on the Canal* by Ken Oliver.
- Tuesday 12th 8pm IWA MIDDLESEX BRANCH. *The Cotswold Canals Restoration* by Bruce Hall, Chairman of Cotswold Canal Trust.
- Wednesday 13th 8pm IWA SOUTH LONDON BRANCH AT SOUTH NORWOOD. *'Beauchamp', the Floating Classroom* with Sally Mayhew of Beauchamp Lodge Settlement.
- Thursday 14th 8pm IWA CHILTERN BRANCH. *Waterway Watercolours* with Garth Allan.
- Sunday 17th 2.30pm IWA LONDON with *THE ORIGINAL LONDON WALKS. GUIDED TOWPATH WALK.* The Regent's Canal. Mile End to Limehouse. Meet at Mile End tube station. About 2 hours. £5 a head (concessions £4).
- Thursday 21st 8pm IWA LONDON REGION CENTRAL LONDON SOCIAL. Speaker from the Thames & Medway Canal Association (subject to confirmation)
- Sunday 24th LONDON CANAL MUSEUM. Temporary Exhibition ends. *The Waterways Art Show.* (See above).
- Friday 29th 8pm IWA SOUTH LONDON BRANCH AT MOTTINGHAM. Speaker to be announced.
- Weekend 30th/1st Dec. LONDON WRG/ KESCRG joint dig and Christmas Party (date & venue to be confirmed), Contact Martin Ludgate (020) 8693 3266

DECEMBER 2002

- Sunday 1st 2.30pm IWA LONDON with *THE ORIGINAL LONDON WALKS. GUIDED TOWPATH WALK.* The Regent's Canal. Paddington to Camden. Meet at Warwick Avenue tube station. About 2 hours. £5 (concessions £4).
- Thursday 5th 7.30pm LONDON CANAL MUSEUM LECTURE. *Boating and Barging in the 1950s* by Tom Foxon + Shopping Evening. Wine and mince pies before and after lecture.
- Monday 9th 8pm IWA LEE & STORT BRANCH. *The Mikron Theatre, and 'I'd go back tomorrow'* by Mike Lucas.
- Tuesday 10th LONDON WRG Christmas "do". Contact Lesley McFadyen (020) 8693 3266
- Thursday 12th 8pm IWA LONDON REGION CENTRAL LONDON SOCIAL. Waterways Quiz and Auction.
- Friday 13th 7.45pm IWA SOUTH LONDON BRANCH. Christmas Dinner and Waterways Quiz. Venue to be arranged. Contact Lesley Pryde 07787 360957
- Sunday 15th 2.30pm IWA LONDON with *THE ORIGINAL LONDON WALKS. GUIDED TOWPATH WALK.* The Regent's Canal. King's Cross to Camden. Meet at King's Cross station, by the taxi rank. About 2 hours. £5 (concessions £4).
- Thursday 26th 11am IWA LONDON with *THE ORIGINAL LONDON WALKS. GUIDED TOWPATH WALK. BOXING DAY CIRCULAR WALK.* Canals of Paddington. Meet at Paddington tube station (main Praed Street entrance). About 2 hours. £5 (concessions £4).

Venue details & contact people

<u>MEETING</u>	<u>VENUE</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>
IWA CENTRAL LONDON	<i>The Lamb</i> Lamb's Conduit Street, WC1 (Nearest tube Russell Square)	Mike Stevens (see details on page 1)
IWA MIDDLESEX BRANCH	Hillingdon Canal Club, Uxbridge Wharf, Waterloo Rd, Uxbridge	Peter Coles (020) 7731 5822
IWA N & E LONDON BRANCH	Spring Lea Cruising Club/ Springfield Marina, Spring Hill, Clapton London E5	Tim Lewis (020) 8367 6227
IWA SOUTH LONDON BRANCH (SOUTH NORWOOD)	S.Norwood Conservative Club South Norwood Hill SE25 (Close to Norwood Junction BR)	Lesley Pryde (020) 8679 9866
IWA SOUTH LONDON BRANCH (MOTTINGHAM)	<i>The Royal Tavern</i> , Mottingham (corner of Court Rd & Sidcup Rd, close to Mottingham BR).	Dorothy Robbie (020) 8857 6367
LONDON IWA / LONDON WALKS TOWPATH WALKS	As listed. Each about 2 hours. £5.00 (concessions £3.50).	London Walks (020) 7624 3978
LONDON WATERWAY RECOVERY GROUP	Meeting point for digs is usually Waterloo Station 7 pm on Friday to travel to site. Socials the <i>Jugged Hare</i> pub Vauxhall Bridge Road, SW1. (Victoria tube station)	Lesley McFadyen (020) 8693 3266
LONDON CANAL MUSEUM	12 New Wharf Road, King's Cross, London, N1 9RT Opens Tues. to Sun, 10 am - 4:30 pm. Admission £2.50, concessions £1.25, Admission to lectures £2.50, concessions £1.25..	(020) 7713 0836
IWA CHILTERN BRANCH	Old Market Hall, Amersham	Colin Bird 01932 248178
IWA KENT & E SUSSEX BRANCH	<i>The Bull</i> , East Farleigh	Sid Sharman 01795 872839
IWA LEE & STORT BRANCH	<i>The New Inn</i> , Roydon	Craig Haslam 07956 848025
IWA HERTS BRANCH	Hatfield Cricket Club	Celia Byham 01992 466180

*Type-set by Mike Stevens in Lucida Casual and Arial using Pagemaker software
and printed by Leighton Printing Company, 15 Palmer Place, London N7 8DH*
