

Excalibur

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION—LONDON BRANCH SUMMER 1992

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The winner! The boat-handling competition at Canalway Cavalcade produced a win for the youngest contestant, who was also in the biggest boat. Full details on page 10.

Photo: Mike Stevens

From the Editor

SORRY WE'RE LATE!

Our apologies for the late arrival of this issue. I decided to wait until after Canalway Cavalcade before putting everything together, in order to include a report and pictures. Then the day-job became even more hectic than usual, and some contributors were late with promised articles, so what was planned as a late-May edition has turned into a late-June one (I hope!).

MYSTERY AT LITTLE VENICE

Canalway Cavalcade is reported elsewhere in this issue. Its tenth annual happening was a great success, but some of us beginning to wonder how many more of them there will be. A recent paper by British Waterways proposes some changes in the use of Browning's Pool. These proposals are not specific, but indicate that they want to develop some kind of trading activity there. It's not clear whether this will be a permanent market like Camden Lock Market, or a series of free-standing events like the Antiques Fair that took place soon after Cavalcade this year. Apart from the one mention in a study covering a wider area of the London canal system, there doesn't seem too have been any consultation yet with either IWA, local residents or local traders.

In addition, the retaining wall above the towpath on the South Side of Browning's Pool has been rebuilt. This ought to be good news, as we've been pressing for this to be done for some years. The old wall had been damaged by tree roots and had been shored up, making an ugly an inconvenient intrusion on to the towpath. After a long period of argument between BW and the City of Westminster about whose responsibility it was, the job was finally done. But the new wall is not a simple replacement of the old. It's not in the same position, but several feet nearer the edge of the water, which gave our Trade Organiser at Cavalcade quite a problem working out what traders he could fit into the diminished width of tow-path. The wall also has some decorative brick pillars projecting above it, whose design, we understand, has annoyed a number of local residents who find their view of the Pool obstructed. The wall also embodies what appear to be storage spaces. Are these for the use of future permanent traders? And all this has apparently been done without planning permission, a matter that the Branch Planning and Navigation Subcommittee and Branch Committee are complaining about.

What about it, BW? What have you got up your sleeve? Come clean and talk to us about your ideas: we might even approve of them if we knew what they were. As it is, with only vague statements, rumour and speculation to go on, we can be pardoned for assuming the worst!

ADVERTISING

Some issues ago I mentioned that we should like to help pay the cost of producing *Excalibur* by selling advertising space. What has prevented us from doing so until now has been the lack of anybody willing to act as advertising manager. That gap has now been filled by Robin Bishop (address below), so I hope that we shall have advertising income to help us from the next issue. This shouldn't mean you'll get any less editorial matter to read, since we have set our advertising rates so as to enable us to print more pages, with the advertising income more than covering the extra cost. So if you run, or work for, a business that would find it useful to advertise to waterway enthusiasts in London, or would be happy to sponsor us by taking advertising space, please give Robin a call.

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FUTURE ISSUES

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From the Branch Chairman: Eric Garland

I mentioned last time our efforts to lure you to local meetings, alas with little success so far. The meetings at Uxbridge, Croydon, Orpington and Waltham Abbey were very poorly attended, possibly because of the way they were advertised. We still have one more meeting planned, at Croydon on 23 June, as well as two walks on 9 and 18 June when we hope to see some new faces. The decentralised meetings will continue in the Autumn. The Summer break gives a breathing-space to ensure that the programme is properly thought-out and advertised. We would still welcome any ideas on speakers or venues.

The Branch intends to progress the existing timetable on London Branch/Region reorganisation and this entails the setting-up of a London Region Committee on 1 January 1993. A good base of local activities with the possibility of a Branch/Section structure in place by then will ensure that the new Region will be in a good position to give members an even better service. A question that has been asked is whether social meetings will continue to be held in Central London: the answer is yes.

Although the monthly meetings are discontinued in the Summer, this does not mean there is any less to be done. The Branch stand is out and about during these months and has already attended Canalway Cavalcade and the National Trailboat Rally at Taunton. Among others still to come are the BBC Day, Brentford Carnival on 11/12 July and the National at Wakefield. The number of helpers at Canalway Cavalcade was higher than ever; many thanks to you all; but still not enough. Any help even for only an hour or so will be very gratefully received and Rosie Limming (phone number opposite) will be delighted to hear from you all.

The results of the AGM and the success of our tenth Canalway Cavalcade are reported more fully elsewhere, and I am delighted that we have one new elected member, one co-opted and one more very interested in joining the Branch Committee. We do, however, need more, not just for the Branch Committee but also for the Planning & Navigation and Cavalcade committees. Their work continues throughout the year and their successes depend on a lot of hard work put in behind the scenes.

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From the Region Chairman: David Allison-Beer

Last time I wrote about the bills then before Parliament. Since then the Transport and Works Act has been passed and the British Waterways Bill has started its course through the Commons. This time I have decided to continue on the 'bills' theme but to consider the financial bills, which face the Association.

The IWA has a number of sources of income but apart from funds raised by branches, there are two major providers of funds: subscriptions and profits from national waterway festivals. The profits from festivals are contributed to the National Restoration and Development Fund (NWR&DF) and go to fund restoration projects; the Waterway Recovery Group is a major benefactor.

Subscription monies are used to fund campaigning and administration (including members' services), split roughly half and half. As a major campaigning association we suffer in the same way as Mr Micawber, as recently our expenditure has been beyond our income. We have agonized for many hours over what we should cut from our campaigning and administration to ensure we live within budget. A difficult decision as we are keen to continue to look after the interests of all waterway users, and our members in particular. Recently we agreed to increase our support for the 'end-of-garden moorings' litigation to £3,000 so that when it comes to court in summer it can be properly established whether it is legal for BW to charge for these. Last year we spent over £11,000 on legal and other professional advice connected with the Bills before Parliament. At the beginning of this year your Council decided to appeal to the branches, canal societies and boat clubs for assistance with funding this campaign. I am pleased that all branches of SE Region have contributed and over £7,000 has been donated. However this will probably not cover our full costs this year.

At the end of last year the landowners appealed successfully to the House of Lords in the Yorkshire Derwent rights of way case. We have since learnt that the costs have been awarded against the trust and consequently the IWA's commitment to the fees of nearly £180,000 may be required. The exact costs are still to be established. However this will knock a severe hole in both our reserves and income for a

number of years. I feel, as I believe do the majority of our members, that your council's decision to support the trust in this case was right. This will not mean the end of our campaigning, although your council has agreed that it is unable to commit further funds to this case. I believe that more and more decisions on navigation and the use of waterways are going to be made either in parliament or through the courts, with the associated costs.

These large bills mean that we are going to have to take some fairly drastic steps to ensure a strong and secure financial future. I hope that you will want to help; if so why not see if you can recruit just one new member this year. If each of us did that we would be an even greater force to be reckoned with.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

FAREWELL

Two members stood down from the Branch Committee at the AGM. One was Len House, an extremely long-serving member, who felt it necessary to give up because of his age and ill-health. A note of Len's service and the ways in which it has been recognised appears on another page. The other was our Vice-Chairman, Lewis Phillips, who has given up his post for family reasons.

TWO FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

It has taken two people to replace Lewis: because of the increasing level of activity of the Branch, the Committee decided to appoint two Vice-Chairmen in the persons of Rosie Limming and Mike Stevens. Lewis has not totally severed his connection with Branch activity, as he will continue to run our London Ring Plaque scheme.

WELCOME

Three new members have joined the Branch Committee. Sue Blake was elected at the AGM and has been appointed Assistant Social Secretary. She has long-standing family connections with other IWA Branches and together with her husband has just bought a boat.

Kevin Saint was co-opted to the Committee after the AGM, and will serve in two capacities, as Working Party Organiser and Assistant Publicity Officer. Sue and Kevin are both active WRGLies, bringing that interest to exactly half the Branch Committee.

Jim Mason was co-opted at the May Committee meeting. He is already active on behalf of the Branch as Chairman of our Brentford Rally Committee. Jim runs a boatyard in Brentford, and we have had cause to be grateful to him for lending us his work-boat Stanley for Canalway Cavalcade each year.

ROOM FOR MORE

This will still leave some vacancies for more people to be co-opted until the next AGM.

London Canal Museum



Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal at the opening of the London Canal Museum on 9 March, with the Museum's Curator/Director Nigel Sadler, and the President of its Management Trust, Dinah Hutchinson.

Photo : Central Office of Information

A new canalside venture in London is the London Canal Museum in Battlebridge Basin. This was formally opened by the Princess Royal on 9 March and opened to the public at Easter.

It was around 1979 that the Canal Museum Trust came into being, having developed from the Regent's Canal Group. A leading light at that time was Diana Hutchinson, who became Chairman of the Council of Management of the Museum. In 1986 they obtained a lease on buildings at 7/10 New Wharf Road, which they later exchanged for their present building at 12/13 New Wharf Road, originally the premises of Carlo Gatti, an ice-factor. It was not realised that the original ice-pits still existed until a survey revealed them in 1989. They have recently been partly excavated by WRG.

Major funding for development of the Museum has come from the Department of the Environment via the City Action Team. This funding has been used mainly to bring the building up to the required standard. A number of display panels have been produced: by now 61 should be in place and

more are planned. IWA London Branch is helping to finance some of these.

About a year ago, with the building's readiness on the horizon, serious efforts started to amass a display collection of artifacts and documents related to the London canals. Much of the relevant archive material is at the National Waterways Museum in Gloucester. BW has been helpful by way of loaning some models and other items, and it has been possible to get together a number of items relevant to the ice trade for which the building was originally designed.

Towards the end of 1991 it was decided that the time had come to appoint some professional staff to the Museum. The post of Curator/Director was advertised and attracted about 70 applicants. Nigel Sadler was appointed. He has a degree in Geography and Archaeology and worked for three years as an archaeologist before taking a Museum Studies course at Leicester University. He then worked for a time as a freelance consultant in the Museum world before his present appointment. It is hoped to add two part-time staff.

To supplement this small professional staff it is planned to build up a team of volunteers through the 'Friends of the Museum' scheme. 'Friends' will pay a subscription (£10 individual, £16 for a couple, £20 for a family) which will entitle them to free access to the Museum and a quarterly newsletter. It is hoped that they will offer their services to help staff the museum, to seek out sponsorship and to work on publicising the Museum.

Future plans for the Museum include having traditional crafts on display: canal painting, bonnet-making and rope work. There is a mooring outside the back door of the Museum, where it is hoped to have a periodically-changing selection of interesting boats. When I visited just before opening day, this slot was filled by the working pair of narrowboats *Barnham* and *Angel*.

The museum includes a classroom which local schools will be encouraged to book for project work, possibly with the help of Museum staff or volunteers. The Museum plans to produce its own Education pack, to be used alongside that already produced by BW (and reviewed in an earlier edition of *Excalibur*). Group visits from Societies will also be encouraged. At present disabled access is limited to the ground-floor but there are plans for a chair-lift to the upper floors in due course.

The entrance to the Museum contains a sales area, which Nigel hopes to build into the main retail outlet in London for canal books. There will also be a temporary exhibition area, where the display will change every three months or so, and which will be available to local companies, societies, schools and colleges. The initial display in this area has come from the former (and much-missed) BW Camden Information Centre.

I first visited the Museum for the Royal opening on 9 March: an event that seemed to bring in just about everybody one had heard of in the waterways movement. The navvies from WRG who had spent their first indoor dig excavating the ice-pits were very much in evidence, if not very recognisable in suits!

I went back a few days before the Museum opened to the public and saw all the work going on to get things ready. Nigel was conscious that there is still a lot to be done in collecting suitable artifacts for display. One of their prize exhibits at the moment is half the old GUCCo Small Woolwich butty *Coronis*.

The other half is afloat as a conversion and one of Nigel's ambitions is to have her visit and tie up outside the Museum. What the Museum has is the stern half of the boat, which was in process of being re-bottomed when I saw it. Later the boatman's cabin will be restored and what is left of the hold will be fitted out, under traditional cloths, as a video-viewing area for 10 or 12 people. This work is expected to take about eight months, and the work-in-progress will be a feature of the Museum display for that time.

The well-known film *'Barging through London'*, showing the Regent's Canal between the Wars, has been transferred to video and will be shown in the Museum, as will a new film about the Regent's Canal today made by IWA London Branch member Dr Michael Essex-Lopresti, the undoubted expert on the Regent's. It is hoped to have both of these videos on sale.

If you want to visit the Museum by boat, it is in Battlebridge Basin, adjacent to the London Narrowboat Association moorings. From the land, you will find it at 12/13 New Wharf Road, off York Way near King's Cross Station. Opening times until September are 9am to 4.30pm every day except Mondays (but they will be open on Bank Holidays). Admission costs £2.50 for adults and £1.25 for children and concessionaries.

Mike Stevens

The following not-too-serious account of the Museum's first day of public opening is written by one of the volunteers who was on duty that day.

Dateline: 16 April 1992. The mission: to boldly go to New Wharf Road. I beamed down to Kings Cross, via the Victoria Line, wolfed down a bacon sandwich, checked the action on the Pentonville Road, and crossed with the Green Man.

I had the password ready, but the door was open. I slid in: all was quiet, and then suddenly appeared . . . Nigel Sadler, Curator, Manager and General Dogsbody. Yes, in a blaze of obscurity the London Canal Museum was to open that day, and I was to be an ATTENDANT.

A man, whose name I've forgotten, but who was apparently born with a seagull on his head, came in and started to destroy the boat moored in the Museum. This was a direct result of me dusting down everything in the shop and polishing all the surfaces to get rid of

the authentic dust that blew freely through the four-inch gap under the door.

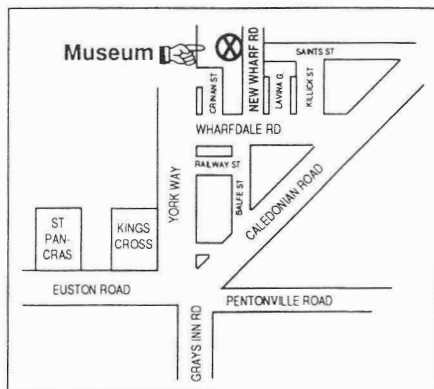
Meanwhile Nigel had celebrated my arrival by leaving. Luckily he returned with the official tickets, and at 10am, amidst no pomp and circumstance, the door was opened wide, and nothing happened.

The previous evening, at a reception for various Mayors, some of whom showed, and some didn't, I saw several influential people. Eric G was the most influential as he had a cheque for the Museum. Martin, the official wine-drinker was probably the most influenced. The S.E. Region Chairman, who is a DAB-hand at this sort of thing, did a bit of influencing; and there were a load of people from the 'too numerous to mention' club.

Where were they this morning? Where were the queues of people yearning for knowledge about the great tradition? Not to worry, they weren't coming. Sigh of relief, as I know nothing about canals, although Nigel swears he does. Jill showed up at 10: that made four of us: and then a pair of punters. They got more attention than HRH did four weeks ago! Anyway, they PAID, and bought a book.

So, look, if you know what's good for you, get down to the London Canal Museum, say hello to Nigel or Jill, and have yourselves a real good time.

Kevin Saint



The Museum entrance in New Wharf Road

Photo: Mike Stevens

On the Metreau

News and Gossip of London's Waterways

RETIREMENT HONOUR

At the Branch AGM in March, our longest-serving Committee member stood down. Len House has decided that he has reached the age to give up Committee work. His activities for the Branch have been traced through the Minutes Books back to the early 1970s, and we're not convinced that we've got all the way to the beginning! Len served for many years as the Branch Social Secretary and was an active member of the Planning and Navigation Subcommittee. He was also every year the most successful programme-seller at Cavalcade. In honour of his long and distinguished service, Len was successfully nominated for the Edie Palmer Award, an IWA National Award recognising administrative service to the Association. Len is also to be presented, on behalf of the Branch, with a mounted IWA badge in silver wire. Although Len has retired from Committee work, he still intends to be with us at the Central London Socials that he ran for so many years.

A WELCOME AWAITS YOU

Hillingdon Canal Club, who are the hosts for our successful series of area meetings in Uxbridge have asked us to point out that IWA members are automatically members of HCC and welcome to call in during their Bar opening hours (Weds and Fri 7.30 to 11 pm, Saturday noon to 4pm and 8.30 to 11pm and Sunday noon to 3pm). Their Club is on the canal bank almost opposite the 'General Elliott' in Uxbridge. Access from land is by way of Waterloo Road, Uxbridge.

NB PRESIDENT

Narrowboat *President* wasn't able to be at Cavalcade this year, but by the time you read this she will have been at Little Venice (on 12 June) as part of her Big Cruise in aid of the St Lawrence Hospice in Cernovoda, Romania, a home for destitute children. Nationwide support for the campaign has come from the Church of England, the Catholic Church and agencies like the Red Cross. Civic receptions are planned along *President's* route from Ellesmere Port: the Shroppie, the T&M, the Staffs & Worcs, the BCN and the Grand Union. Gifts of tins and other suitable items will be collected *en route* and off-loaded at Little Venice.

Travelling with *President* will be *Kildare*—her new Jasher butt, built for FMC by Braitwaite's in 1913. *Friends of President* have bought her from the Warwickshire Flyboat Company where she was a camping boat. Over the winter she has been re-fitted and restored to FMC colours. Together *President* and *Kildare* will present a complete picture of the working days of the waterways.

PAT SAUNDERS

It was with sadness that we heard from Kent & East Sussex Branch of the death on 23 April of one of their stalwarts, Pat Saunders. He had been a very early member of IWA, working with Aickman and Rolt. He had many careers including the Army, pioneering hotel-boats, and teaching. He retired a few years ago as Vice-Principal of Sutton College of Liberal Arts, with great plans including a horse-drawn trip boat on the Basingstoke Canal and an autobiography detailing some of the early work of the IWA. Despite a 'dicky ticker' he continued to lead a very active life. He was a regular helper on K&ES Branch's boat trips for the handicapped, often making a 200-mile round trip to be there. Shortly before his death he had visited Australia to give his daughter away in marriage and combined his trip with explorations of waterways in Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Condolences go to his wife and children.

JUST IN TIME

While Canalway Cavalcade is reported fully elsewhere in this issue, it is appropriate to note here that two key members of Cavalcade Committee only just managed to get their boats there. Cavalcade Director Libby Bradshaw, having spent the winter stoppage-dodging all the way back from Llangollen got *Panacea* as far as Rickmansworth and had to rely on friends to bring it the last lap. Meanwhile Cavalcade Site and Services Supremo Peter Jackman (whom readers of the gossip bits of this column will remember took *Panacea* to the National last August because his own boat, *Triggs*, was locked in on the Basingstoke by the water shortage there), actually got *Triggs* off the Basingstoke and to Cavalcade, in time to carry the British Gas sponsored prize-winning entry.

N.A.B.O

The National Association of Boat Owners was formed last year to promote and protect the rights and interests of boat-owners on Britain's inland waterways. This aim clearly overlaps with those of the IWA, but it is the declared intention of NABO's founders that the two organisations should co-operate rather than compete. NABO has no intention of impeding the enjoyment of waterways by non-boat-owners, but it does recognise that navigations were built for boating, and that boaters need an effective voice of their own. If you would like more details, please contact Dave Green, St Annes, Poundfield Road, Crowborough, E.Sussex, TN6 2BG.

MORE NEWS OF KESCRG

Readers will have seen many mentions in these pages of the Kent & East Sussex Canal Restoration Group. Not only are they extremely active in canal restoration, but we are also most grateful to them each year for providing the work-force for site and services at Canalway Cavalcade. In addition they seem to have a very active social side. At a recent Branch Social in Croydon, their Chairman, Ken Parish, told us that their active membership stretches from teenagers to a few folk well into retirement, so they can obviously offer something to people of all ages.

This year they are working on a wide range of restoration projects, with many working parties and two major work camps. One of these is on the Droitchich Canal, and will have taken place by the time you read this. Among work which they have done on that canal is the restoration of Linacre Bridge, an important and rare example of a Brindley bridge which does not narrow the canal, presumably to allow for easier passage by the sailing barges that have left the mark of their masts on the arch of the bridge.

But the KESCRG project dearest to the heart of many in London Branch is their work on the Bow Back Rivers. Their work-camp there (25 July to 9 August) will be the first-ever restoration work-camp in London. It follows work they and others have already begun, and should make a very considerable difference to these interesting byways of the London waterways. The work-camp will concentrate on three aspects of the restoration. City Mill Lock is unusual in having triple gates to deal with differing tide levels. These gates are all on the point of collapse and need removing with a view to their eventual replacement and the full restoration of the lock. Carpenters Road lock is equally unusual, having radial lift gates operated by winches on an overhead gantry. The work planned here is clearing

the lock for later restoration of the machinery. The third project is to build an access ramp for the disabled to the towpath near Carpenters' Road.

Full details of this work-camp and all KESCRG activities may be obtained from Ken Parish on 0622-858329.

LONDON RING CRUISES

In just over a year since we introduced our re-designed plaque for boaters who complete the London Ring Cruise, over 50 people have applied for one. This does not include any orders arising from St Pancras Cruising Club's Ring Cruise in late May, although rumour has it that 31 boats took part. London Branch is organising another Ring Cruise (if there enough boaters interested) on the weekend of 4/5 July, as a curtain-raiser to the Brentford Rally the following weekend. The plan is for people to cruise the Northern side of the ring in their own time, assembling at Limehouse in time for the afternoon tide on the Sunday and to cruise the tideway in company. It will be possible to leave boats at Brentford to await the Rally. If you're interested in taking part, don't just turn up on the day! The cruise will only happen if we know there are sufficient boats wanting to come, so please ring Libby Bradshaw (081-874 2787) to let her know you're interested.

200 CLUB NEWS

February winners

£60	no.246	M J Evans, Hertford
£30	no.23	Miss M P Leach, London W4
£15	no.154	Miss J R Smith, Southampton
£15	no.127	Mr R A Brown, London SE21

April winners

£60	no.79	Mr A R Sawyer, Bexleyheath
£30	no.152	Miss A M Robinson, Woodley
£15	no.207	Miss H Hays, London EC1
£15	no.151	Miss A M Robinson, Woodley

OFFICERS

Recent months have seen a complete change in the Officers of the Branch 200 Club. First David Allison-Beer gave up the Treasurership on his election to the Region Chair, and was succeeded by Dorothy Robbie. When Lewis Phillips decided to stand down as Branch Vice-Chairman, he indicated that he would also wish to be relieved of the 200 Club Chair. Dave Greatorex expects to move out of London soon and has asked to step down as Secretary. The new Chairman and Secretary are Tim Lewis and Sue Blake respectively. All relevant telephone numbers are on page 3.

Canalway Cavalcade 1992



His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester GCV O declares the Tenth Canalway Cavalcade open, from the horse-bridge at Westbourne Terrace. With him are Branch Chairman Eric Garland and Cavalcade Director Libby Bradshaw
Photo: Peter Austin.

Canalway Cavalcade's tenth annual event on May 2 - 4 was blessed with good weather, huge crowds and a Royal visitor. A number of boats had arrived at Little Venice the weekend before, and by the Thursday evening a festive atmosphere was already beginning to develop. Friday was a hectic day, with Peter Jackman (Site and Services Co-ordinator) getting everything ready with the help of the KESCRG team, Richard Bird and Dorothy Robbie welcoming traders and Harbourmaster Chris Port, assisted by Allan Scott, juggling the boats round to fit as many as possible into the pool. I haven't yet been told the final number of boats, but heard a figure on the Saturday well over 120, the biggest ever.

The event proper started on Saturday with the arrival of two boatloads of guests from East and West, including Mayors of Boroughs along the Paddington Branch and the Regent's Canal. They were welcomed by the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Dame Shirley Porter DBE DL, and by representatives of IWA, BW and the Branch. Later we were joined by His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester GCV O, who declared the event open. Other speakers in the opening ceremony were Dame Shirley Porter, Brian Dice (Chief

Executive of BW) and David Stevenson (National Chairman of IWA).

This was followed at once by the Cavalcade of decorated boats. With accurate bad timing, the only rain of the weekend fell just as the leading boats arrived at the pool. The turn-out of decorated boats was even better than usual, and the prizes were hotly contested. Winner of the Marcus Boudier Trophy for the best private entry was Alec and Betty Gosling's boat, *Betty G*, Last year's winners, Ian and Jane Barratt's *Jane B* were runners-up, along with John and Doreen Sawyer's *Sorrel*. The London Underground Challenge Trophy for the best sponsored entry went to British Gas on Peter Jackman's boat *Triggs*. There was a special commendation for the WRG entry (celebrating the 175th anniversary of the Welly) on Rupert Smedley's *Ben*.

Sunday's splendid weather brought out the crowds: the police estimated that 12,000 of the general public came that day. Activities started with the Salvation Army service and included the first two sessions of the boat-handling competition and the ever-popular Teddy Bears' Picnic. That evening saw the procession of illuminated boats, 16 of them. Once again the standard was very high, and

the Cruise Electric Trophy went to Jan Smith's *Victoria M* with tough competition from runner-up *Ufton* and the highly-commended *Paragon*. This event was accompanied by a string quartet on our floating bandstand: an innovation that we might make more use of in the future.

Monday morning was the last leg of the boat-handling competition. The winner of the Westminster Trophy was Philip Bittner steering Philip Phizackerley's (*apologies if that's the wrong spelling!*) Big Woolwich motor *Elstree*. Runners-up were Jan Smith on *Victoria M* and Gerry Thorne on *Ufton*. Philip was the youngest competitor ever, his age being variously reported at 14 or 15, and was in the biggest boat: a large working boat running unballasted with its nose high in the air. Not only did he perform an almost flawless set of manoeuvres, but he made it look so easy! As a competitor myself (of the 'let's do it for fun' type rather than a determined would-be-winner), I was green with envy. Truly a well-deserved win by Philip and, for me at any rate, the story of the weekend.

Monday lunchtime brought the awards ceremony, and the afternoon was devoted to Cavalcade's Birthday Party. The birthday cake was cut by that well-known waterways figure Derek the Duck.

There's lots more I haven't got space to

write about: the boaters' ceilidh on Saturday night and barbecue on Sunday, the entertainers including, as always the Daystar Theatre Company, the canoe displays, and the Trade Show which seemed to do good business. Indeed three separate traders said to me that they had done better than at the National. 'Well, we are better than the National' I replied to one of them. 'Yes, and more modest' was the reply.

It's too soon to know the financial outcome but, thanks to the weather and to our sponsors, the Treasurer was looking pretty cheerful when we last talked about it, so we're hoping that we'll be able to make some good donations to our two featured charities (and such others as we may decide to help). One of these featured charities was the Bow Back Rivers restoration project and the other the Richmond Venturer Youth Boat. You may have seen the *Challenge Anneka* TV programme achieve an earlier stage of the conversion of *Richmond Venturer* from a cargo-carrying motor barge to a youth boat: they're now into the next stage.

We're now already starting to plan Canalway Cavalcade 1993, whose theme will be the 200th Anniversary of the Grand Junction Canal. If you're interested in helping, please contact Libby Bradshaw on 081-874 2787.

Mike Stevens



A section of the moorings on Monday afternoon

Photo: Mike Stevens

Towards a new London Region

'As of 1st January 1991 the Guildford and Reading, Solent and Arun and Oxfordshire Branches of the Inland Waterways Association will cease to be members of the South East Region of the Association, and from that date they will form a new Region yet to be named ... and that a further restructure of the South East Region takes place by 1st January 1993 to create a separate London Region.'

This was the resolution approved by the IWA Council in June 1990 and passed at a special general meeting of South East Region in September 1990. It was formulated after months of negotiation between Dave Moore, then chairman of SE Region, IWA council and the branches affected. The initial split took place on schedule and following this timetable the new London Region is due to be formed on 1st January 1993 leaving Kent and East Sussex and Chelmsford Branches as the SE Region.

Your London Branch Committee has been working for the last year towards this goal. The purpose of this article is to update you on progress to date and to lay out the main arguments for and against the split. It is hoped it will also provoke some discussion.

Why become a region?

The main arguments for and against are detailed below. As the original resolution was approved by Council and passed by a special general meeting of SE Region these arguments should be now be academic and the formation of a London Region on January 1st 1992 a formality. The reasons for London becoming a region are:

1. With about 20% of the Association's membership within the current region there is a need for a more equitable representation of that membership on council. Even after the split, London and SE Regions would both be numerically larger than most other regions.
2. London organises a series of events, including Canalway Cavalcade, the most consistently successful IWA branch-organised rally both for publicity and fund raising. This year it is organising a second rally at Brentford in July. It is hoped that this will, in a very few years, be as successful as Cavalcade.
3. London until recently was the only branch having its own planning and navigation subcommittee. It remains perhaps the most important local IWA committee, addressing many problems which are of national importance. It also publishes the 'Thames Tideway Guide'. Owing to demand the latest edition published last autumn has had to be reprinted already.

The main argument against forming a London Region is that it would have only one branch. Although this is not contrary to the Association's articles, it would be unique in the association. Some council members at the time the resolution was tabled were unhappy about the prospect. They did, however, pass the resolution in spite of these concerns.

Where are we now?

The 'region steering committee' was formed in the summer of 1991 to pull together the Branch's plans for a region. It co-opted Dave Moore and held its first formal meeting at the IWA National Waterways Festival last August. We made two key decisions. These were to continue towards the original date of 1st January 1993 despite a late start to formal planning and to retain a 'normal' structure by creating a London Region above the existing London Branch rather than try to turn the existing Branch into a region.

The bulk of our activity, however, has been directed towards generating additional Branch activity away from our central London venues. This is being addressed in two ways, both with disappointing results as yet.

We launched the adopt-a-length scheme last year. Members and their friends and family were invited to adopt a length of canal which they would keep an eye on and report back on any problems. This project will benefit all waterway users. The original plan was to have more than one person adopt each length and to hold regular meetings around London to discuss problems in your local area. Take-up has been slow so that it has not possible yet to hold these meetings.

During the last few months we have been holding area meetings in Uxbridge, Croydon, Waltham Abbey and in SE London. The Uxbridge meetings have been organised by Mike Stimpson and are well attended. The other meetings have been universally poorly attended.

Where do we go from here?

Plans for the formation of a London Region are proceeding and we intend to complete them to the original timescales. We must address the issue of dividing the existing London Branch into further branches. There have been suggestions that we should force a split, which we have resisted, feeling this will stretch our existing resources to an unacceptable degree and may not produce the best solution.

We still see the local activities of adopt-a-length and local meetings as the best vehicle for generating local interest which may lead eventually to forming sections and potentially branches. We will therefore be continuing with

these meetings throughout the winter. Even if they do not have the desired result they do have the short term benefit of enabling us to meet a few new people.

We need your involvement however to make this work. The current meetings are organised by the existing Branch Committee in addition to all of their existing activities and the Branch cannot afford to continue to expend the amount of money and effort it takes to maintain this programme for the small return we currently have. For most of these meetings the sight of two new faces is considered a major triumph! We would like to feel that we can reach some of the 95% of the London Branch membership who

currently have no involvement in either social meetings or other Branch activities but have so far had little success. What stops you attending? Do you have any other suggestions to offer? Could you perhaps organise a local gathering near you (we could supply a list of the local membership and cover reasonable room hire costs)?

On 1st January 1993 a London Region will be formed consisting initially of the existing London Branch. We hope that within a few years this region will consist of three or more branches and will continue to pursue this secondary aim. We will continue with the local meetings for the foreseeable future but eventually if there is no interest they will die out. The choice is yours.

Rosie Limming

Brentford Carnival and Rally

Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 July at Boston Manor Park

In our last issue we announced this event: the Branch's second Rally of the year. It follows an event last year which was very small, but proved enough of a success to encourage us to mount a full-scale Rally in that area this July, building on the experience of the team who ran last year's event.

This year's Rally is being run jointly with Brentford Carnival, and will use the site at Boston Manor Park that was used for the National a few years ago. By water, the site is adjacent to Clitheroe's Lock. Boaters taking part in the Ring Cruise the previous weekend (see elsewhere in this issue) will be able to leave their boats on a safe mooring nearby for the intervening week. By land, the site is on Boston Manor Road, off the A4 (car parking will be signposted). The nearest tube station is Boston Manor (Picadilly Line).

Opening hours are 10am to 6pm and the Carnival Procession is at noon on Saturday. There will be a beer tent available from 10 am to 5.30 pm on Saturday and from noon to 3pm on Sunday.

In addition to the usual Carnival events, there will be one very special attraction. This year marks the 350th anniversary of the Battle of Brentford which is to be re-enacted on the Carnival site by the English Civil War Society: not a routine thing to find at a Boat Rally!

In addition, the event will incorporate IWA's annual national Waterways for Youth event: the second time London will have hosted it in just under two years, the last time being at Little Venice in October 1990. This year the national event was to be held at two different simultaneous venues, Brentford and the National Campaign Rally at Worksop, but the latter has had to be cancelled because of expected water shortages, so

we are now the sole hosts for the event. The Waterways for Youth passport scheme will operate and will include the following activities for 6 to 16-year-olds:

- Canoeing
- Water safety
- Fishing
- Boat-handling
- Canal and Riverboat Quiz
- Mural painting
- Traditional canal art
- Wildlife identification
- Canal restoration
- Knot-tying
- Digger driving
- Inland Shipping Quiz

In addition there will be dragon-boat racing, but I understand that this will be available only to organised teams, because of the insurance involved.

So do come and support the event: there's clearly going to be plenty for all the family to enjoy. Boat entry forms have already gone out to many people and are also available from Jim Mason or Marion Scott (see below). Some have been returned already as I write this, but it's never too late!

CONTACTS:

BOAT ENTRIES & GENERAL ENQUIRIES

Daytime	Jim Mason	081-847 1538
Evenings	Marion Scott	081-560 6044

WATERWAYS FOR YOUTH

Marion Waters	081-530 4767
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Waterways Events in and around London

JUNE

Sat 20th—Sun 21st	ST PANCRAS CRUISING CLUB	Annual Rally at St Pancras Basin
Sat 20th—Sun 21st	R.N.L.I.	Illuminated Sail-past and Regatta at Kingston upon Thames
Sunday 21st 11am, 4pm	Enfield Lock Conservation Group	Enfield Lock Fair at Ramme Marsh. Nearest station Enfield Lock (5 minutes).
Sunday 21st	Sea Cadets London SW District.	Pulling Regatta at Sunbury
Tuesday 23rd 6.30 pm	IWA LONDON BRANCH	Guided walk along the Regent's Canal from Camden to Islington. (Meet at Camden Town tube)
Tuesday 23rd 8.00 pm	IWA LONDON BRANCH	CROYDON SOCIAL MEETING (The Railway Bell, North End, Croydon, almost opposite West Croydon BR and bus stations). Mike Stevens: <i>Waterways activities in London</i>
Sat 27th—Sun 28th	KESCRG	Working Party on the Wey and Arun Canal
Saturday 27th 8.00	Mikron Theatre	'Imogen's War' at Batchworth Lock Canal Centre, Rickmansworth. For tickets phone 0923-778382
Sat 27th—Sun 28th	Steam Boat Association	Steamboat Show at Broxbourne Cruising Club, Old Nazeing Rd, Broxbourne.
27 June—12 July	ST PANCRAS CRUISING CLUB	Summer cruise to the River Wey and Basingstoke Canal, ending up at the Brentford Rally
Sunday 28th	Small Boat Club	Regatta at Teddington
Sunday 28th 3.00 pm	Mikron Theatre	'Imogen's War' at Batchworth Lock Canal Centre, Rickmansworth. For tickets phone 0923-778382
Monday 29th 8.00	Mikron Theatre	'Imogen's War' at the Fisheries Inn, Harefield (sponsored by IWA London Branch)
Tuesday 30th 8.00	Mikron Theatre	'Imogen's War' at the Etcetera Theatre Club, Oxford Arms, Camden High Street. For tickets phone 071-482 4857

JULY

Wednesday 1st 7.45	Mikron Theatre	At Richmond Yacht Club, Eel Pie Island (sponsored by IWA London Branch)
Wednesday 1st 6.45pm	Conducted walk of the Lower Lee Valley (2 hours). Meet at Leyton tube station, finish at Tottenham Hale	
Friday 3rd 8pm	Mikron Theatre	'Imogen's War' in the open air at Lee Valley Leisure Pool, Old Nazeing Rd, Broxbourne. For tickets phone 0992-713838
Sat 4th—Sun 5th	Leander Scouts Group	Regatta at Teddington
Sat 4th—Sun 5th	River Thames Society	Regatta at Molesey
Sunday 5th	IWA LONDON BRANCH	London Ring Cruise (to be confirmed). Contact Libby Bradshaw (081-874 2787)
Sunday 5th 2.30 pm	IWA LONDON BRANCH	Guided walk along the Regent's Canal from Camden to Paddington. (Meet at Camden Town tube)
Saturday 11th	Kingston Amateur Regatta at Kingston upon Thames	
Sat 11th—Sun 12th	IWA LONDON BRANCH	Brentford Carnival, IWA Rally and Waterways for Youth national event
Sat 11th—Sun 12th	Herts Youth and Community Service	Women on the Water: activities for women over 14 at Herts Young Mariners Base, Windmill Lane, Chesunt. Creche and overnight camp available. For bookings phone 0727-55374
Sunday 12th	Sea Cadets London SW District	Boat-handling at Twickenham
Sunday 12th 10am-4pm	British Waterways	Ware Watersports Day. Meet at Ware Priory
Tuesday 14th 6.30 pm	IWA LONDON BRANCH	Guided walk along the Regent's Canal from Camden to Islington. (Meet at Camden Town tube.)
Saturday 18th	Molesey Amateur Regatta at Molesey	
Tuesday 21st 6.30 pm	IWA LONDON BRANCH	Guided walk along the Regent's Canal from Camden to Paddington. (Meet at Camden Town tube.)
Saturday 25th	Hampton Court & Dittons Regatta at Teddington	

Sunday 26th
25 July—9 August

London River Yacht Club
KESCRG

Regatta at Kingston upon Thames
Work-camp on the Bow Back Rivers

AUGUST

Sat 1st—Sun 2nd

BW, Lee Valley Park etc.

Broxbourne Water Festival at Lee Valley Leisure Pool, Old Nazeing Rd, Broxbourne. Details from 0992-764626

Sunday 2nd 2.30 pm

IWA LONDON BRANCH

Guided walk along the Regent's Canal from Camden to Islington. (Meet at Camden Town tube)

Saturday 8th 2pm

London Borough of Enfield

2-hr walk on the Lee towpath from Enfield to Waltham Abbey. Meet at entrance to Albany Park, Albany Road, Enfield Wash

Tuesday 18th 11am-2pm

Lee Valley Park & L.B.Waltham Forest Afloat in a Boat: river activities for children aged 2 to 10. Meet at Lee Valley Ice Centre, Lea Bridge Road, E10. Bookings phone 0992-713838

Tuesday 18th 6.30 pm

IWA LONDON BRANCH

Guided walk along the Regent's Canal from Camden to Paddington. (Meet at Camden Town tube) Regatta at Walton

Saturday 22nd

Thames Valley Skiff Club

Saturday 22nd 7pm

Lee Valley Park and Broxbourne Leisure services 3 hour boat trip and barbecue starting from Lee Valley Boat Centre car park, Old Nazeing Rd., Broxbourne. Bookings phone 0992-713838

Tuesday 25th 6.30 pm

IWA LONDON BRANCH

Guided walk along the Regent's Canal from Camden to Islington. (Meet at Camden Town tube) Rally at Kingston-upon-Thames

Sat 29th—Mon 31st

A.T.Y.C.

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 1st 11am-2pm

Lee Valley Park and Broxbourne Leisure services Afloat in a Boat: river activities for children aged 2 to 10. Meet at Lee Valley Boat Centre car park, Old Nazeing Road, Broxbourne. Bookings phone 0992-713838

Saturday 5th

Small Boat Club

Single-handed Competition at Teddington

Sunday 6th 2.30 pm

IWA LONDON BRANCH

Guided walk along the Regent's Canal from Camden to Paddington. (Meet at Camden Town tube)

Sunday 6th 2pm

Lee Valley Park and Passmore Edwards Trust Guided tour (2½ hours) of Three Mills and the Bow Back Rivers. Meet Three Mills car park (near Tesco), Bromley-by-Bow

Tuesday 8th

IWA LONDON BRANCH

UXBRIDGE SOCIAL MEETING (Hillingdon Canal Cruising Club, Waterloo Road, Uxbridge) Speaker to be announced

Saturday 12th

Dittons Skiff and Punting Club. Regatta at Teddington

Sunday 13th

Walton Bridge Cruiser Club Boat-handling competition at Molesey

Sunday 13th

T.M.Y.C. Family Watermanship Competition at Teddington

Tuesday 15th 8.00 pm

IWA HERTS BRANCH

(Hatfield Cricket Club, Welwyn Garden City). Mike Stevens 'What is Parliament doing to the Waterways?'

Thursday 17th 7 for 7.30pm IWA LONDON BRANCH

CENTRAL SOCIAL MEETING (Abbey Community Centre, 34 Great Smith St, SW1P 3BU). Dr Guy Johnson 'The Panama Canal'

Sunday 27th

Dittons Skiff and Punting Club Championship Regatta at Teddington

FURTHER DETAILS FROM

IWA Herts Branch

Greta Wright

0727-860137

IWA LONDON BRANCH

Brentford rally

(Jim Mason (day-time)
(Marion Scott) (evenings)

081-568 7041

081-560 6044

Central meetings

Tim Lewis

081-530 7926

Uxbridge meetings

Mike Stimpson

0923-770425

Croydon meetings

Mike Stevens

081-674 9387

Regent's Canal Walks

Dr Michael Essex-Lopresti

081-882 1337

KESCRG

Ken Parish

0622-858329

London WRG

Lesley McFadyen

081-693 3266

St Pancras Cruising Club

Roger Squires

071-232 0987

Other activities as listed.

LATE NEWS

THAMES INFO LINE

NRA Thames Region now have a Thames River Users Information Service, not unlike the BW Canalphone service that many of us are used to. The service will give weekly information about planned river events, river works and other restrictions that may affect the river-user, and where possible an estimate of stream conditions for the forthcoming week. It is not designed to react to unplanned incidents, but will be used if there is a significant and long-term incident. The message will be updated each Monday morning (or Tuesday following a Bank Holiday) and calls will be subject to the normal rate of charge. The number to ring is 0734-535520.

RAMMEY MARSH C.C.

A couple of items from Rammev March Cruising Club, who have hosted a number of our local social meetings at the club-house at their moorings just below Rammev March Lock on the Lee Navigation (near Waltham Cross).

They are holding their Regatta on 18 & 19 July. Details are available from Richard Townsend : 'phone number below.

They also offer a friendly welcome to like-minded waterways and boating enthusiasts at their moorings and clubhouse. They have moorings available to members old and new at reasonable rates. If you are interested, please contact either their Commodore, Richard Townsend (0992-36727), Treasurer, Charlie Miller (081-840 3531) or Mooring-master, Nick Wattam (0992-469411).

NEW BW MANAGER

News reached us recently that BW's South East Region Manager, Robin Garrett, is moving on to another post within BW. Robin has been a good friend to the Branch and we shall miss him. We understand that his replacement will be Peter Coyne, who is moving from BW's Scotland Region. We look forward to working with Peter and hope to enjoy as good a relationship with him as we have with Robin.

BW BILL : LATEST

The BW Bill received its First Reading in the Commons in March. 42 petitions against it have been lodged, including many from new petitioners since the House of Lords stage (including IWA), as well as some from that earlier stage whose objections have not been satisfied by the changes introduced into the Bill then. I see in *Waterways World* that a number of MPs objected to the Bill getting a Second Reading without debate and so passing straight to Committee, and that it is likely that the Second Reading debate will be in late July. The time before this Second Reading debate is the ideal one for those of us who still aren't happy with the Bill to lobby our MPs. I certainly intend to write to mine : I hope each of you will do the same.

MIDDX TO HERTS

Customers of "the Kevins", i.e. Middlesex Boat Services, may or may not know that they have now moved their business from Adelaide Dock, Southall, to Winkwell (near the swing bridge). They now trade as *Middlesex and Herts Boat services* and may be contacted by 'phone on 0442 872985 or by fax on 0442 863394.