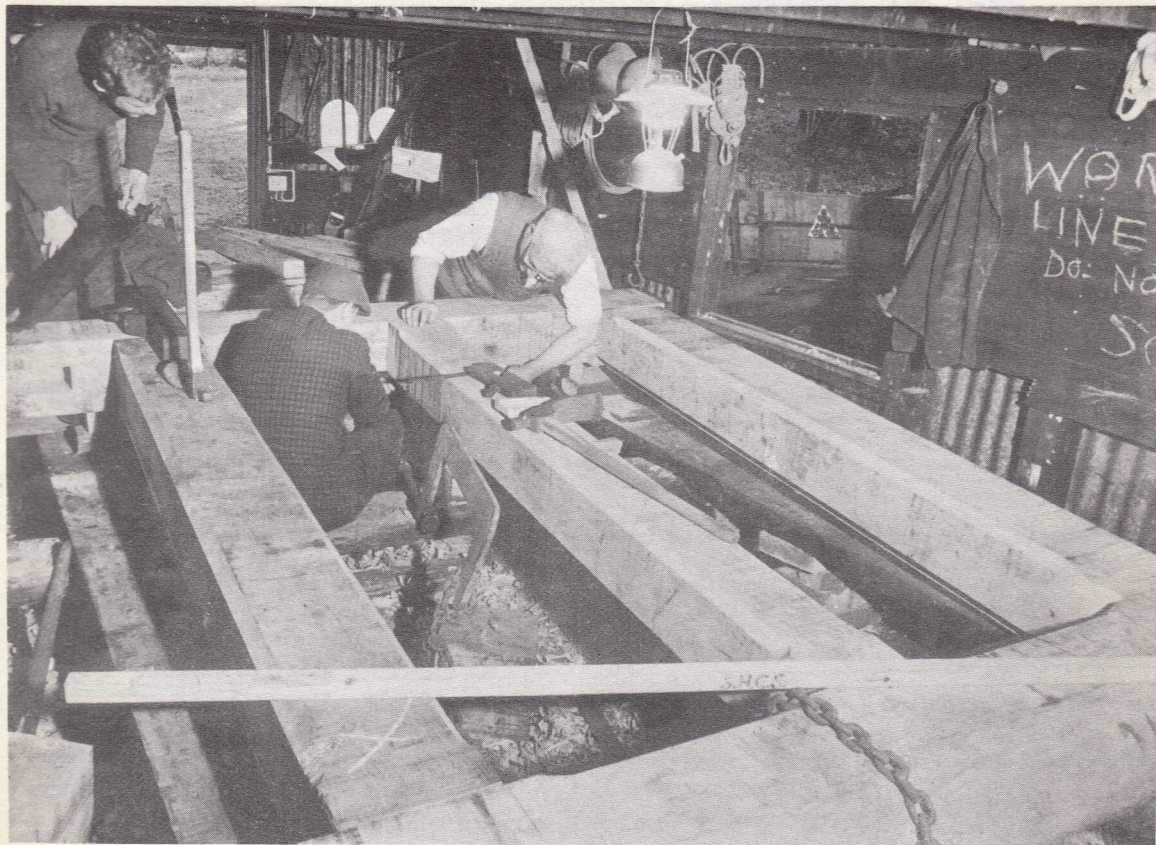


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London and South East Branch

The object of the Association shall be to advocate the use, maintenance and development of the inland waterways of the British Isles and in particular to advocate and promote the restoration to good order, of every navigable waterway and the fullest use of every navigable waterway by both commercial and pleasure traffic.



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THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION LIMITED

General Office: 114 Regent's Park Road, London N W 1 (01-586-2556; 01-586-2510)
Chairman - Lionel Munk General Secretary - John Dodwell

COVER: Surrey & Hants Canal Society volunteers construct
lock gates for the Basingstoke. Photo by Anon.

branch and routes

The Branch Committee's Memorandum on Government proposals for waterways reorganisation provoked an anguished protest from the Commodore of the Stoke Boat Club, Harry Turner. Our Memorandum contrasted the discretionary grant of £20,000 for the Upper Avon with one of £40,000 for Stoke's new HQ on the Caldon Canal. Mr Turner informs me that only £900 has been received, and that the maximum grant of £10,000 would need £ for £ matching by the Club and completion within 18 months.

Branch Committee will doubtless apologise for its exaggeration. Yet the general argument on the uneven application of discretionary grants still stands, in spite of a poor example. And a maximum £10,000 is still quite high compared with the Upper Avon sum.

next branch meeting

Probably a talk by Peter Zivy of 'Saint Line' (see their regular advertisement). Also a discussion on the Branch itself: our objectives and methods of operating - your comments welcomed. On Thursday 26 October at 7.30, 'The Albert', Victoria Street.

Future meetings thereafter on November 23 and then on December 13.

Last meeting saw an interesting discussion on the I W A response to Government proposals between some 60 members, David Gibson and John Dodwell. And an excellent but all-too-short film on waterways and the 'Ministry of Public Apathy' - available for hire from the British Film Institute, ask for "Prendergast File".

working parties

What has the London Group been doing?

Well, since ASHTAC in March we have cleared locks on the Caldon and on the K & A at Bath; helped with gate fitting at Luddington Lock, as well as a number of necessary agricultural and maintenance jobs on the Wey, Avon and K & A; while volunteers from London have worked regularly on unofficial private (non-LWPG) parties on the Basingstoke. In July there was the WRG workcamp, attended by largely novice volunteers from all over the country: where new navvies built by-washes to locks when they had never seen a canal before - when are YOU coming to help?

Then in September we returned to the Ashton, and joined the PFCS working on four lock clearances at once (two of them locks we cleared at Operation Ashton four long years ago, and now filled again).

Meanwhile the aggravating problem continues: we can't work where we want to close to home. The Basingstoke restoration approaches, but we aren't needed just yet; the eastern end of the K & A is held up by Berkshire C. C. sitting on a road bridge. So we must go where we are needed - future work will therefore be on the Caldon, Avon, Montgomery, Stratford and the Ashton or Lower Peak. Future dates will be:

OCT 7 - 8

NOV 18 - 19

DEC 9 - 10

Ring Nigel Stevens (01-373-7234) for details.

branch trip - east london

Those many souls who applied to go on this trip are owed an apology by Branch Committee for the late reply. This was due to double our maximum boatload applying: frantic efforts were made to find extra capacity, but tourist traffic was taking precedence. A Spring trip is being considered, and we hope to give priority to those disappointed this time.

BRANCH COMMITTEE REPORT

In addition to our bi-monthly discussion of specific waterways, three one-off items were covered at our September meeting:

1. The vacant post of Vice-Chairman was filled by the election of Nigel Stevens to it.
2. There is now no elected member of the Branch Committee on I W A Council. To improve liaison, we are suggesting that Branch Committee representatives be instituted ex officio on Council.
3. A further discussion on Government proposals for waterways reorganisation led us to the constructive suggestion that freight development might be best ensured by transforming B W B Freight Services Division into a separate division of the National Freight Corporation. As to W S A C, the crucial test of its power and independence would be its constitution with a full-time Chairman and full-time executive - without the power to give full-time attention to the waterways, other powers are illusory.

Peter Harrison.

NOT SINCE THE FIRE of LONDON...

The following thoughts were prompted by Mr Collard-Britten's address to the Branch Committee on 13th July, on the plans for the use of land which is at present the Port of London. Mr Collard-Britten is in the Planning and Transportation Department (Plans Branch) of the Greater London Council.

The first things to note are the enormity of the area and its immediate availability. For example, in 1970 the 370 acres of Surrey Docks became available; docks on the Isle of Dogs occupy 440 acres; the Royal Group another 790 acres: these and various others will become available over the next 15 years. A third factor of great import is that the area is central. It is the same distance from Charing Cross to South Kensington/Hammersmith as from Charing Cross to the docks. Planning errors made now will affect the centre of the capital for generations.

Planning is not just the use of space: it is people and activity. What are the present uses of the area? It is densely populated by semi- or unskilled workers. New private housebuilding is negligible. Communications are slow and there are few river crossings - 5 to the East, 25 to the West. Traditional industries are in decline and there is migration out of the area. The economy of the district is spiralling downward. This is in contrast to the prosperous Western end of London, where offices, schools and universities, and tourist facilities are all attracted by good communications and environment.

What are the uses competing for space in the area? Industry, housing, power stations, roads and docks are all represented by groups clamouring for space. On the latter, it is interesting that 18% of UK dock tonnage passes through Thames docks; that trade over private wharves rose 2% during 1965-9 despite the reduction in numbers of up-river wharves; that petroleum traffic increasing has compensated for barge traffic declining.

The planning of the re-use of London Docks is the specific responsibility of no single body. A joint working party co-ordinates the efforts of the GLC, PLA, local authorities and other interested bodies. Planning thus seems to take on a co-ordinating role: it is said that the essence of the planner's job is to balance.

This is fine if the end result is what people want. But is it? As things are heading, the newly built port area will be much the same as anywhere else. But do people want huge roads and lorries in their environment? Do they want no large open spaces - no new Hyde Parks? Do they want a hotch-potch of unrelated building? The great towns of civilisation - Georgian Bath, Amsterdam, Bruges are example - suggest that keeping road traffic in bounds, providing open spaces, and a related scheme of architecture have great value to society. In Britain now, these future assets have few proponents - a few feeble pressure groups. The immediate claims of industry, housing etc have noisy proponents. The planners hear the noise, bow to the greater political pressure.

Two things are needed. The area should be planned by a body with the will and the authority to express the unarticulated desire of our society for a civilised environment, and the power to ensure that the physical requirements for such an environment are provided. And in addition, the reliance on road transport - inefficient and fatal to the environment - should be ended by the building of new waterways so that London could grow afresh as an international port, with direct access to the hinterland of the United Kingdom and of Europe.

It appeared that no decisions would be taken until a consultants' Report had been received and studied by the Department of the Environment. Nor could decisions on the docks area be isolated from planning decisions on such matters as the Fleet Line and Ringway 2. Finally, developments in the area should be put in the wider context of the Third London Airport, the Chunnel, and the effects of Common Market activity.

Peter Harrison.

SILVER SWORDS

The following members of the Branch have received awards:

A G Eggby of London in "Torito"

A Green of Market Harborough in "Placide II" and

"Maid Mary Carol"

M H Helliwell of Wroxham in "Manto"

Ken Goodwin of Macclesfield in "Petrina"

Scott Pereira of Oxford in Narrowboat "Alcor"

John Gagg of Princes Risborough in "Nike Three"

F E Clark of Portmadoc in Narrowboat "Ferret"

BASINGSTOKE

Woking, Surrey

Dear Sir,

Mr New's letter (Windlass - June) may resurrect many old squabbles connected with the Basingstoke Canal (It credited the Canal Company's Manager and her Bailiffs for much unpublicised progress - Ed.).

But surely it cannot be denied that the present state of apparently successful negotiations is mainly due to an intensive 'pressure' campaign, which was instigated by the I W A and intensified after the formation of the Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society.

Since the formation of the latter, many meetings have been held with local authorities and dignitaries to such an extent that many are now supporting our campaigns.

Jim Woolgar

SURREY & HANTS NEWS indicates progress under the following heads:

- an engineering survey has been undertaken with the Surrey County Council
- Hants County Council Planning Authority is being pressured on the continual problem of canalside development, and a proposed development at Camberley rejected until the layout is improved
- a Memorandum of Association seeking Trust status is being prepared
- premises are being sought for the building of more lock gates (see cover photo)
- a Land Rover and several dumper trucks have been acquired
- an Autumn membership drive and more social activities are being planned

Hence the general picture is one of increasing readiness for restoration activity. It appears that much of the eventual reconstruction may be done by contractors, but the crucial first phase will be to improve access before they commence operations. A 'SAVE THE BASINGSTOKE CANAL' car sticker should be enclosed with this issue of 'Windlass' - please display it and help keep up the momentum.

LEE and STORT

On 2nd September a river trip was organised by the Lea & Stort Development Committee. The object was to invite guests from bodies who had interests in one form or another in the River Stort.

Although notice was very short, we had representatives from the Lea Valley Regional Park Authority, The Ware Society, The Stour Trust, The Essex County Planning Office, the U.D.C.s of Bishops Stortford, Cheshunt, Sawbridgeworth, Ware, Braughing R.D.C., the I.W.A. and Tony Ellis of I.W.A.A.C.

In a very informal atmosphere and the close confines of a boat, everyone was soon chatting quite freely and exchanging views with people with whom they would never normally have had contact. This took place in glorious weather and in the peaceful surroundings of the beautiful Stort valley. Nothing but good can come of such meetings.

Visitors to the river will be pleased to find that the landing stages have been installed below most locks, where getting ashore could present a problem. B.W.B. are continuing to build them where landing is difficult. A full programme of weed cutting has been carried out during the past season, but unfortunately the cut weed was not gathered but was allowed to lie on the surface causing much inconvenience to boaters and anglers alike for some months.

Norman Underwood.

IF THERE'S NO NEWS FROM YOUR WATERWAY -
IT'S BECAUSE NO - ONE SENT IN ANY !!

CHELMER & BLACKWATER NAVIGATION

In June the Chelmsford Boating Club held their 21st Annual Canoe Race, with a large national entry racing in front of press, TV and Munich selectors.

In July, more sadly, the annual director's inspection had to borrow a farmer's horse to tow the traditional inspection barge. The horse fell into the canal, and the 17 passengers had to rescue it and continue the 17-mile journey by powered barge.

Press reports announced the end of timber barges on the waterway, and a sudden conversion to pleasure cruising on the part of the private owners. Yet the condition of the waterway could deteriorate without regular barge traffic. And the company has raised its charges for canoes, albeit with a concession for the race entrants this year.

On September 2nd, a successful excursion was arranged by timber barge from Chelmsford to Heybridge: tickets were allocated through various amenity societies and village representatives, and 73 people made the trip. The opportunity was taken to bring home the threat of excessive gravel workings, indiscriminate use of high-tension electric pylons, the routing of the new Chelmsford Bypass which will span the river at Boreham end, and the alarming spread of weed throughout the canal since the timber barges ceased scouring it daily.

This is a situation which will only be controlled by the resumption of heavy barge traffic, either with commercial cargo or excursion passengers.

Four local newspapers sent reporters, and reported the excursion with pictures and favourable comment.

Finally, the Branch Committee's discussion of rally possibilities for 1973 indicated the Chelmer & Blackwater, for trailed boats at least, and probably over the Spring Bank Holiday.

John Marriage
and Alastair Stewart.

THAMES

Pressure over the Thames Barrier continues. We have wrung concessions from the proponents that our idea of a half-tide barrier plus lock be included in model tests, and that communication of test results and consultation on on proposals from them will be affected with this Branch. Our case is based on the need for a full river for reasons of amenity, riverside development and future commercial development

RIVER WEY

In cooperation with the National Trust, the Branch has now set up a Voluntary Lock-Keeping Scheme on six of the previously unmanned locks on the Navigation. The new lock-keepers have agreed to inspect their locks at weekly intervals during the summer, fortnightly during the winter; and to carry out minor maintenance work, keep the surrounds tidy, remove rubbish from locks and overflow weirs, and generally keep their eye on the structure, reporting major trouble to the Navigation Office. They are also to do some lock manning, in conjunction with their visits at busy periods in the summer. The new voluntary lock-keepers are as follows:

Weybridge Town	Mr & Mrs R Laws of Weybridge
Coxes Lock	Mr A Egby of Norbury, with members of the Norbury & S. London Transport Club
Pyrford Lock	Mr R Waters of Walton-on-Thames
Newark Lock	Mr R Slatter of Farnham
Bowers Lock	Mr R Penny of Guildford assisted by Mr Orchard of Guildford
Catteshall Lock	Mr D Vickers of Chiddingfold

We have yet to appoint anyone to Millmead or Unstead Locks, and if anyone feels they would like to be considered please contact me. This is a year-round job, and only keen volunteers need apply!

Tony Davis.

SLOUGH CANAL GROUP

After its cruises for members of Slough Borough Council in June, another trip was organised for Slough supporters by horse-barge from Berkhamsted. This took place on September 23rd, with sixty people aboard.

Negotiations with the Council continue, as do the very welcome visits by boats coming up the Slough Arm: the initial order of Plaques has been exhausted, with quite a few boats coming up at the time of the Little Venice Rally.

Because the Broads are to limit beam to 12 ft in some areas, Wilds are seeking to transfer operations for 15 (later 30) 12' 6" beam Caribbeans to Pinkhill, above Oxford. Such craft might be considered "unsuitable" in these winding reaches: Thames Conservancy is opposing the plan, we are watching the matter.

John Crosby

culture on the canals

MIKRON THEATRE COMPANY

This professional company, having performed its musical canal documentary at the Little Venice and Lymm rallies, is now taking to the Grand Union for a trial tour. Some school performances have been arranged, but public events will be staged as follows:

OCT 16 - 19 Hemel Hempstead Festival
21 & 22 Grand Junction pub, Bulbourne, lunchtime
26 Aylesbury
30 Stoke Bruerne village hall

It is then hoped to run a longer tour next year, through waterside boroughs during the Greater London Arts Festival. Further information try 01-240-3385 or Editor.

N. W. R. F. DRAW - PRIZE WINNERS

- 1 Mr A C Crouch, 38 Matlock Road, Chaddesden, DERBY
- 2 Mr Jones, 52A Blenheim Park Road, SOUTH CROYDON
- 3 Mrs Green, Ravenstone Road, LIVERPOOL 19
- 4 Mrs Toke, 83 The Ridgway, SUTTON
- 5 E Rafferty, 146 Gallante Farm Road, EAST BARNET
- 6 Mr Moynan, 17 Kelmars Avenue, Wigston, LEICESTER
- 7 Mr K J Moger, 57 Killinghall Road, BRADFORD 3
- 8 Mr I M Seavers, Tolworth Hospital, SURBITON
- 9 Mrs Jobling, 109 Mill Lane, OXTEAD
- 10 Mrs H Tilbury, 6 Pine Ridge, TONBRIDGE
- 11 Mr H C Swinney, 266 Eastcote Lane, SOUTH HARROW

NARROWBOAT TRUST

The Trust's first restored boat ALTON, together with the CHISWICK loaned from Trust member Jim Evans, may have been seen filming on the Regent's Canal during August.

The film is a children's adventure story about the theft by narrowboat of a rare animal from London Zoo. Shooting during the school holidays, it uses child actors and (hidden) Trust members as crew for 'goodie' and 'baddie' boats.

Filming took place in Limehouse and City Road basins, Victoria Park and finally through the Zoo itself.

WATERSIDE LONDON

London Transport has just published a useful little booklet 'Waterside London' which explains how to see London's waterways by bus and Underground.

Copies are available (free) from B W B at Melbury House, Paddington or Watford; from the London Transport Publicity Officer; or from Enquiry Offices at certain Underground Stations.

Copies can also be made available to clubs and organisations for distribution to their members - state the number requested to Deputy Amenity Services Manager, 3 W B, Melbury House, Melbury Terrace, London NW1 6JX.

Dear Sir,

Woking, Surrey.

Your account of the National Rally at Lymm in the September issue of 'Windlass' makes disappointing reading and I hope that the somewhat sarcastic and negative style of this report is not indicative of the new Editorial policy.

The increase in the number of boats attending the National Rally each year, or in fact any Rally, must indicate that the majority of members do not find such events boring and certainly they continue to attract enormous public support with resulting financial gain, as well as vital publicity, for the Association and its aims.

I would therefore suggest that 'Windlass' should show more enthusiasm and support for the National Rally and hence encourage readers to attend. Without their attendance there would be little to attract the Public who must be looked upon as our potential supporters and members for the future.

As new Editor please accept my good wishes for what must be a difficult job.

John Ashford

Thank You: it is! Editorial policy follows Branch policy where stated, and otherwise aims to inform, to question and to amuse, complementing other sources to members. There were no more boats at Lymm than at Northampton 1971, and the profit may well be less: campaign coverage may well have been greater - but how much was the Minister's, and how much ours? About 500 boats attend National Rally, and 200 to 300 are anticipated for Ely: I W A has reached 9,000 members. . . Editor.

LETTERS - NATIONAL RALLY

Portmadoc, Caerns.

Dear Sir,

With reference to the comments from A.G. in September 'Windlass', I feel I must write in support of the choice of Lymm for this year's National Rally. When first proposed the whole question of the repair of the breach and the future of the Cheshire Ring was still very uncertain. It must be very disheartening for Branches who work for many months to organise such a Rally to receive such comments.

Personally I think the route to the Rally - particularly via the Shroppie, Trent & Mersey and Bridgewater canals - among the best cruising in the country. I found the Rally organisation exceptionally efficient, and for once we had an excellent tannoy system, clearly audible without being raucous.

The Rally was an excellent publicity vehicle for stating our case against the Waterways Carve-Up. How else can we gain access to such wide-spread press and radio coverage?

As for being a boring Rally - as in all human activities, enjoyment must depend on the amount of endeavour the individual participant is prepared to put into it.

On one point only can I agree with A.G. - the choice of Ely for next year's Rally. For one thing it is very near to Northampton, last year's venue. What on earth shall we be campaigning to save in Ely? And the only access for narrowboats is by a hazardous crossing of the Wash. I'm sorry to say this is one rally I shall not be able to attend.

Joan Clark N. B. Ferret

P. S. What about Paddington Basin for 1973 National Rally?

Ashtac Grafter is doing his bit on the Cheshire Ring, and was putting a non-boatowner's view of the conflicts in running Rallies to campaign and satisfy both public and boatowners and to make a profit. 'Windlass' prints anything that is readable and relevant. Personally, I agree with you both. Editor.

Romsey, Hampshire

In the short article (or too long, depending on one's point of view) the 1972 I W A Rally was dismissed by 'A.G.' in ten lines which smacked more of 'Private Eye' journalism than someone who one must assume is a member of the Association.

My wife and I are very new members of the I W A and as such would be interested to know why Ely is considered to be even sillier than Lymm which to our new and possibly unjaundiced outlook seemed a first-class choice considering the implications if the breach was not repaired.

Is it possible that the 1973 Rally is being held as near as possible to the planned re-opening of the Ouse from Tempsford to Bedford or is it to get the Middle Level popularised?

Maybe you can persuade 'A.G.' to explain his instant dismissal of Ely in your columns for the edification of the uninitiated or is he incapable of doing nothing more than decry the efforts of those who try to please the majority of members?

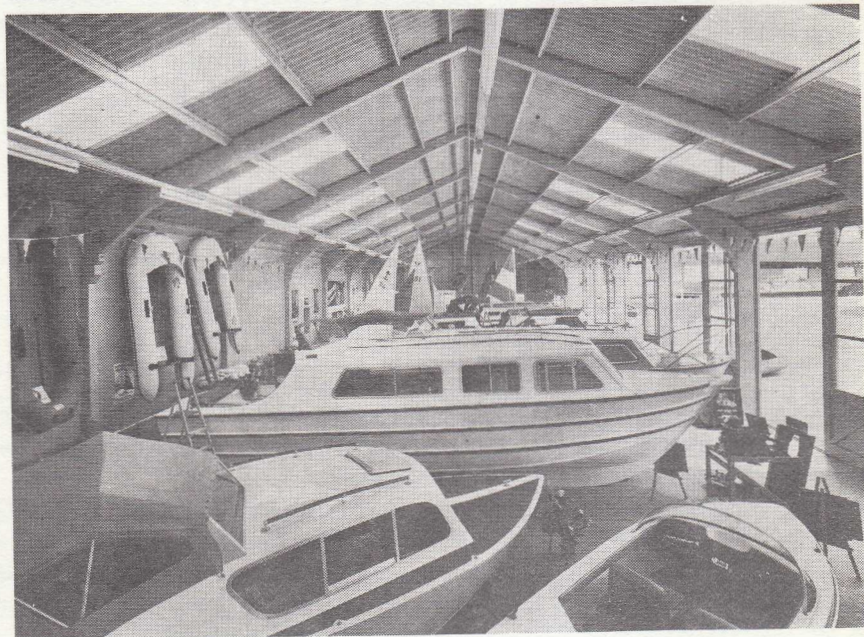
V. G. Richards

Membership of the I W A is open to all, whether 'Private Eye' or 'Country Life' journalists, even. 'A.G.' is away on a canal holiday, but will answer on his return. More on Ely next month: current suggestions for parallel rallies include Peterborough, Stratford and Surrey Docks. Editor.

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Mountsorrel Marine Centre, 14-20 Loughborough Road, Mountsorrel, Nr. Loughborough Leics.
Tel: Rothley 2144

The Swag Boat Centre, Batns, Lane, Stubber's Green, Nr. Aldridge, Staffordshire.
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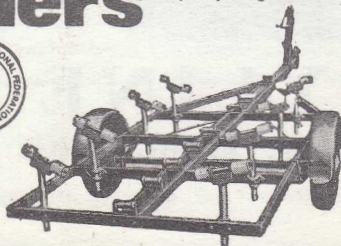
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