

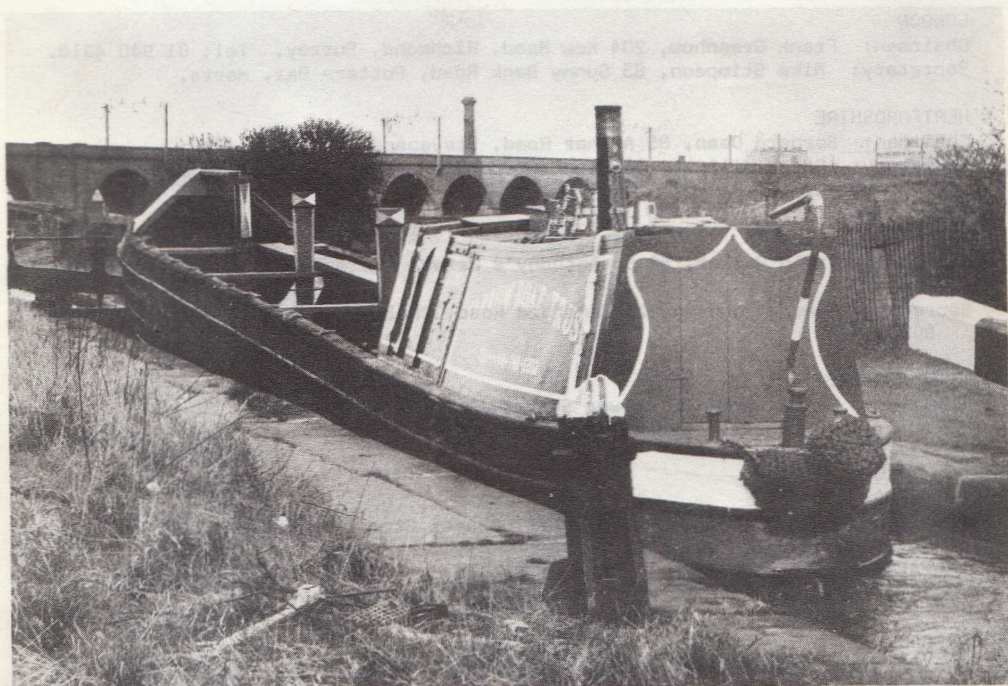
# WINDLASS

July 1977 Number 139

## Editorial

After the last issue of 'Spot-the-deliberate-mistakes' Windlass, we return to sanity (hopefully!). For the more eagle-eyed of you, yes you were right, the Basingstoke Canal was completed in 1796 not 1976 as stated on page 6 of the last issue. Also you should send your Boxmoor Jubilee Rally entry forms to: Mr Dudley Wells, NB Cantley, Hampton Hall Farm, Moor Lane, Rickmansworth, Herts. For further information on the Boxmoor Jubilee Rally see inside.

---



Alton, restored with loving care by the Narrow Boat Trust. For further information on the Narrow Boat Trust and what it has been doing see page 6.



## South east Region Inland Waterways Association

General Office: 114 Regent's Park Road, London NW1  
Telephone: 01 586 2510, 01 586 2556  
General Secretary: John Taunton

---

Patrons: Dame Margot Fonteyn and Sir John Betjeman  
Region President: Lionel Munk  
Chairman: Mike West, 14 Thurlstone Road, Ruislip, Middx. Tel: Ruislip 35811.  
Secretary: Marion Heffer, 59 Wellington Close, Hepworth Way, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey. Tel: Walton-on-Thames 45644.  
Treasurer: Philip Mowle, Arbor House, The Woodlands, Amersham, Bucks, HP6 5LD. Tel: Amersham 3291.

---

Windlass Editor: Geoff Terrill, 43 Montague Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 1QN  
Tel: 01 759 1984 (daytime).

The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those either of the Editor or of the Council of the Inland Waterways Association.

©IWA South East Region 1977

---

### Branch Addresses

#### LONDON

Chairman: Frank Greenhow, 204 Kew Road, Richmond, Surrey. Tel: 01 940 4318.  
Secretary: Mike Stimpson, 83 Sunny Bank Road, Potters Bar, Herts.

#### HERTFORDSHIRE

Chairman: Bernard Dean, 85 Archer Road, Stevenage.  
Secretary: Steve Willott, 46 Mount Grace Road, Potters Bar, Herts. Tel: Potters Bar 53293.

#### CHELMSFORD

Chairman: Gerald Parker, 52 St Anthony's Drive, Chelmsford. Tel: Chelmsford 56428.  
Secretary: David Johnson, 27 Sandford Road, Chelmsford. Tel: Chelmsford 50863.

#### KENT AND EAST SUSSEX

Chairman: R Hallwood, 50 Brewer Street, Maidstone, Kent.  
Secretary: G Clarke, Ivydene, High Street, Cranbrook, Kent. Tel: Cranbrook 3321.

#### GUILDFORD

Chairman: Mike McGrath, 2 Weir Court, Thames Street, Weybridge, Surrey. Tel: Weybridge 47826.  
Secretary: A Davis, 55 Holme Chase, St George's Avenue, Weybridge, Surrey. Tel: Weybridge 44261.

#### OXFORD

Chairman: D Jones, 74 Hill Road, Watlington, Oxford. Tel: Watlington 2792.  
Secretary: Mrs P Pugh, 10 Vanner Road, Witney, Oxon. Tel: Witney 71138.

## The Writing in the Editor's Waste-paper Basket

The following letter was sent to The Times in February. It was not published.

Dear Sir,

We are writing on behalf of our respective organisations, namely the Campaign Against the Lorry Menace, Friends of the Earth, Inland Waterways Association, Joint Dockland Action Group, and Transport 2000.

We are very disturbed at the way the Strategy for the South East: 1976 Review - intended to guide the formation of structure plans for the South East of England - has been promulgated. Public consultation with many organisations vitally concerned with the Strategy has been minimal. We consider that the Strategy is unacceptable, particularly because it fails to understand the transport dimension of planning. This consultative lapse is potentially very serious.

A regional plan must address itself to the physical connections to and within a region. It should ensure that decisions made by companies and individuals, in their own interests, are nevertheless made within limits designed to minimise damage to the environment.

The Strategy confuses causes with effects. Previous planning and government pressure has encouraged our dependence on road transport, which together with other factors has led to the depopulation of Inner London. The Strategy exemplifies all that is worst in the now-discredited technique of trend planning.

A recognition that access, and not mobility, is what matters is fundamental to transport planning. Efficient access is achieved by placing source and destination adjacent to each other or to forms of transport that are economical in the use of resources. In general this means locating industry close to its market and, wherever possible, by a railway, waterway or both, depending on the nature of the goods. Suitable locations are frequently (for historical reasons) though by no means always, the traditional industrial sites in or near cities. Despite gestures towards Inner London, the Strategy simply continues the recent British practice of locating new industry on 'green field' sites, away from rail or waterways and then claiming that industry must have the 'flexibility' of heavy lorry transport. This flexibility is maintained by the use of different investment criteria for transport modes. In particular, investment in waterways and railways, even when justified by market studies, has to face crippling interest charges from which road investment is free.

The Strategy makes no mention of water freight transport, although good rivers already exist in the region and improvements could be undertaken at relatively low cost. The continuing role of London's docks receive no mention, although they are well placed for the European trade.

This Strategy merely reinforces previous planning errors and we urge that it should be re-examined.

Yours faithfully,

Keith Buchan, Organiser, Campaign Against the Lorry Menace,  
Mick Hamer, Transport Consultant, Friends of the Earth Ltd.,  
Mike Harris, Operations Manager, Transport 2000,  
G C Matthews, Chairman, South East Region, Inland Waterways Association.  
Nick Sharman, Joint Docklands Action Group

## So when will the K & A Re-open?

That's a good question! If one were to pay too much attention to uninformed opinion, then the answer would be 'Never'. Fortunately however, there are a number of us who know better, but for those who are unaware of the current situation, who do not realise just what has been achieved so far and what the planned restoration programme is at this stage, then this is a brief update on the Kennet & Avon Canal.

As you probably know it stretches from High Bridge, Reading to Hanham Lock, Bristol. When the 1968 Act came into being the Canal was divided into three 'Cruiseways' under the administration of BWB.

Reading to Tyle Mill Lock, Sulhamstead	8 Miles (7 Locks)
Bulls Lock (East of Newbury) to Hampstead Lock	5½ Miles (6 Locks)
Rivon Avon, Bath to Hanham Lock Bristol	11 Miles (6 Locks)
A total of	24½ Miles (19 Locks)

The total length is 86 miles and 106 locks, and thanks to an excellent working relationship with BWB and a lot of money being raised, the original total of 24½ miles and 19 locks has been increased to 62 miles and 46 locks at the present time (June 1977). Ufton Lock is no longer used and Locks 8 & 9 have been rebuilt as one deep lock at Bath and so the total number has been reduced to 104. The future programme of restoration has been agreed up until 1980 and BWB will be making an immediate start with one workforce concentrating on the Little Bedwyn to Crofton Section and another workforce working its way eastwards from Claverton.

The job Creaton Scheme at Limpley Stoke is going extremely well and will finish on schedule. The ¼ mile dry section at Claverton is to be repaired, the Dundas and Avoncliffe Aquaducts are to be put into a safe and serviceable condition, the landslip east of the Avoncliffe Aquaduct is to be cleared and the restoration of Bradford Lock will commence in July this year. A floating dredger is now working its way eastwards from Bath and will follow the lock repair team up to the foot of Caen Hill.

Thus by 1980, cruising should be possible between Thatcham and Devizes Top Lock and Devizes Bottom Lock and Bristol and all that will remain would be the Caen Hill Flight at Devizes (1½ miles and 29 Locks) and the River Kennet Section between Padworth Lock and Monkey Marsh Lock, Thatcham (5½ miles and 7 Locks - assuming that the K & A Trusts' own restoration of Widmead Lock is complete by then).

There are those who argue that to pay BWB to do our restoration work for us is an exceedingly expensive way of achieving our objective. So it may be - but what is the alternative? The Reading and Newbury Branches of the Trust put together an excellent and enthusiastic team who set to work on the restoration of Bulls Lock in May 1975. This was a straight-forward brick chamber repair with new top and bottom gates and new cills to be made. A BWB team doing the same job, but with their own workshops providing the gates to be fitted, would have charged about three to four times the cost actually incurred by the Trust. However, with work, family and other commitments, the Trust Restoration Team were unable to put in more than two working weekends per month and so without the aid of mechanical equipment - apart from two pumps - a first class job was done in eighteen months. The BWB Team could have completed the job in three months. So if one applied this timescale of 18 months per lock, even with another first class team on the job, how long would it have taken to finish the restoration programme that has been completed already and that which is now scheduled for completion by 1980 .... fifty years?

One can only speculate about the future. Answers are being sought on the water supply problem in the Long Pound between Wootton Rivers and Devizes. Discussions are taking place with Wessex and Thames Water Authorities and if successful bore holes could be sunk then it is conceivable that BWB might agree to discuss the possibility of restoring Caen Hill.

That just leaves the River Kennet Section and the infamous bridge carrying the A340 over the Canal at Aldermaston. It might well be best all round if a new road could be laid by-passing the Canal settlement to the east and crossing the Canal somewhere below Padworth Lock allowing reasonable headroom. The existing bridge could then be swung with the minimum inconvenience to the local residents who would benefit from the fact that all the heavy traffic had been diverted away from their homes.

BWB will not agree to any of the turf sided locks being restored to their original condition. Steel or concrete chambers will have to be constructed; at today's commercial going rate of around £80-90,000 per lock one is talking of around £½M on the locks alone. Therefore a firm completion date is out of the question, at least for the time being anyway. We still need money - lots of it - but though we cannot see the light at the end of the tunnel, at least we do know that it is there and we will not give up until we emerge into the daylight.

Anyone coming to the National Rally at Reading in August - should make a detour trip up the River Kennet Cruiseway to Padworth. It is a worthwhile trip that will not only show what restoration has been accomplished so far, but also the potential that is there given the will and the right climate in the future.

N.B. For the time being 70' Boats must turn below Ufton Lock. Boats up to 44' can be turned below Towney Lock and those up to 25' can go all the way to Padworth Swing Bridge and turn there. This Bridge is going to be repaired by BWB soon, though so far no date has been given. When open, it will allow full length narrow boats to proceed to the Winding Hole below Padworth Lock.

### **APCO Looking at Locks leaflet**

At long last a brochure has been produced for boat hirers which explains with the help of numerous photographs, the do's, don'ts and dangers of working locks. All we have to hope for is that people actually read them. Certainly a step in the right direction.

### **Travel and Transport in Essex exhibition**

Travel and Transport in Essex is an exhibition concerning transport in Essex from the past to the modern day. There is a complete section devoted to waterways showing how the county's rivers were improved during the eighteenth century (mainly by the construction of the Lee and Stort Navigations in the West of the county and the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation in Central Essex). Newspapers and other sources represent the attitudes of the opponents of these schemes, who claimed that they would ruin, not the natural environment, but their own 'amenities'. The section ends with a reference to the abortive plan for a canal from Romford to the Thames in the late nineteenth century.

The exhibition runs until 1 October and is open Tuesday - Saturday, 10am - 12.30pm and 2pm - 4.30pm (admission is free). Ingatestone Hall, Ingatestone, Essex.

## The Narrow Boat Trust

The Rover's rather caustic reference to NBT in 'Windlass' 135 (November) has prompted the thought that newer readers may be unaware of the Trust's activities, or even its existence, since it has kept a very low profile in recent years. The story is briefly as follows:-

Around 1970, the decline in regular narrow boat trading accelerated alarmingly, and a group of concerned enthusiasts (including well-known IWA personalities) got together to set up the Trust, with its primary objective 'to restore and preserve canal narrow boats .... of all descriptions .... and exhibit the same for the benefit of the public generally, and wherever possible to promote their use in commercial canal carrying, in order to enhance the character of the inland waterways .... and as examples of the tradition of canal carrying and the way of life associated therewith'. Such was the appeal of the working narrow boat that the inaugural meeting in July 1971 attracted over 70 people to Northampton on a wet week-end.

With some hastily-acquired, but often generous, loans and donations, the Trust successfully tendered BWB for the motors 'ALTON' and 'NUNEATON' and butty 'SATELLITE' of the lately-defunct Willow Wren's fleet, then slowly disintegrating up the GU Wendover arm. They were taken to moorings at Norton Canes, 'NUNEATON' calling en route at the Northampton national rally, where the Trust received the Vivian Bulkeley-Johnson award. Then began what was intended to be a fairly leisurely task of restoration, but which became a hectic rush to get 'ALTON' superficially renovated for her first assignment, instigated by the late Dennis Cole - used in a children's film made on the Regent's in summer 1972, the income from which helped substantially towards repaying the original purchase loans.

Over the next two years, under the direction of Claire Johnstone, the Trust's publicity activities gradually increased membership to around 400, but with the usual small hard core of activists restoration work proceeded only slowly. A variety of pressures brought the Trust to a crisis early in 1975, which was only resolved by the reluctant sale of 'SATELLITE', this being the least sound of the three boats. This action precipitated a serious split within the Trust; publicity and fundraising virtually died, and membership plummeted almost to a handful, who, however, manfully carried on the restoration. Their perseverance was rewarded when, early in 1976, the Trust received an offer from Ashby Canal Carriers to use 'ALTON' as a camping boat that summer. After another hectic scramble, she made the deadline and, moreover, was now in full working trim.

No sooner had the camping season ended than the long-awaited breakthrough was achieved - 'ALTON' carried cargo once again! Under the aegis of the enterprising Ashby Canal Transport concern, and crewed by Trust members, she took two loads of coal from Norbury Junction onto the river Weaver.

The year's activities have financed the maintaining of 'ALTON' in AI carrying condition, and enabled a start to be made on the complete restoration of 'NUNEATON'. Membership has started to revive, and is currently approaching 100. 'ALTON' will be camping again this summer, and there are sound prospects of more carrying work later.

Wherever possible, of course, the Trust's boats will be employed in their proper role as freight carriers, but this will not preclude their travelling the cut to attend rallies, or for camping etc, in pursuance of the Trust's aim, ie to present the traditional canal narrow boat as a valuable asset to the nation's inland waterways. Naturally, the Trust welcomes new members - so if you sympathise with its objectives, or have ever had a secret longing for

your own narrow boat, why not become a partner in 'ALTON' and 'NUNEATON'? Your support, both by subscription and, even better, by active participation, can guarantee the survival of this unique facet of the canal scene. The NBT Membership Secretary is Roger Hudspith, 39 Porters Close, Buntingford, Herts, SG9 9BW.

---

### Traditional or Traditional-style?

After the appearance of an advert on page 66 in the April edition of Waterways World, Council member David Pedley decided to take out a prosecution under the Trades Descriptions Act. The advertisement was offering for hire traditional narrow boats on the South Oxford Canal, and Mr Pedley's contention was that they were not traditional narrow boats. The case was heard on Wednesday 15 June at Marlborough Street Magistrates Court. The hire Company - Halcyon Cruisers pleaded guilty but was granted an absolute discharge. The Magistrate said, 'We consider this to be a frivolous prosecution and an utter waste of time', although they recommended that the hire-brochures be altered and the current adverts be changed.

During the hearing a statement by Robert Aickman was read out. In it Mr Aickman defines a narrow boat as 'a vessel, normally 7' wide and about 70' long, used for the transport of freight on the navigations of England and Wales'.

So what, you may be asking yourself, does it really make any difference? Well, there is a growing feeling that everything the IWA originally stood for is fast being eroded and that it's time we called a halt. This is a view to which I would subscribe, the mushrooming interest in canals over the last few years has caught us on the hop and we're not really sure whether we're coming or going. This situation must change and it seems likely that we will be seeing more legal action in order to preserve our heritage, after all heritage is traditional isn't it?

---

### Book Review

Back Door Britain by Anthony Burton published by Andre Deutsch £4.95

This book is the story of a journey of nearly a thousand miles travelled by canal and river in order to discover the Back Door Britain, the Britain which only a few people know.

Anthony Burton has that unique talent of being able to write graphically, his descriptions seem to come alive on the page - when he says 'You need a sense of humour in Blackburn to cope with what's happening to the place. In the centre, the tower blocks rule' you know precisely what he means. The book very ably sums up the tensions present in today's environment, new versus the old, senseless destruction for superficial gain. 'What curious anomalies the changing times produce. The walker, who has really nothing to do with the canal, takes over the towpath, while horses, the creatures it was built for in the first place, are actually banned from using it.'

After reading this book I began to see our Back Door in a new light and I'm sure that after reading it you will too. I highly recommend that you add this book to your collection.

---

## How safe is it to go to a Rally?

Now that the Rally season is firmly with us again exactly how safe is it to go to one? Carole E Pedley BA Solicitor and Lecturer in Contract and Commercial Law, College of Law, London, ponders the question.

'I understand that no liability is accepted by the Organiser, its officials or assistants, for any loss, damage or injury to persons or property, however caused.'

It seems impossible to go to a rally nowadays without having to sign some such clause on the entry form. What it means, in fact, is that if you suffer because of the actions of carelessness of the organisers, you cannot get redress.

This is, surprisingly, not always clear even to the organisers themselves. They put in such a clause at the behest of an insurance company. You might think they could use the clause and forget about insurance - and generally speaking so they could. The main beneficiaries of all this are insurance companies.

The whole topic seems to be full of confusion for the layman. The first point to clear up is, without the exemption clause what is the organisers' liability? The answer varies according to the terms of the contract, because a contract is simply a series of promises between the parties, but generally they are liable for damage that occurs arising from their acts. Therefore if you go to a rally and crash into another boat, that's between the two of you. But if you did so solely because the organisers insisted on waving you through, then they would take some liability. Some people appear to have the odd notion that without an exemption clause every sprained ankle or lost windlass could be laid at the organisers' door.

The clause itself, then, is designed to leave the boatowner without cover. In fact it cannot do that entirely because the law recognises something called 'fundamental breach of contract'. If the organisers, wildly drunk, leap aboard your 11 ft. cruiser, calling everyone over for a party and driving mooring spikes through it at 6 inch intervals, then it is unlikely the clause will protect them. My example is extreme - but so is fundamental breach. In a less extreme case the exemption clause might be effective. So if you go to a rally, beware! Check your own insurance (both for the boat and your own and your passengers' personal injury). You might, though, be able to sue a helper in his individual capacity.

And what if you are a volunteer helper? The exemption clause says it protects you. There is a snag; an exemption clause only protects the person who is a party to the contract - the organising body itself. It has exempted itself for its own responsibility for your actions, but you cannot be covered, because you are not involved in the contract. If you do some damage and are adjudged negligent, you will be responsible to the victim in damages and you will not be able to claim protection from the clause. It is no good the organisers telling you that their insurance policy covers you, because you can only claim recompense from insurers with whom you have made a contract of insurance. You have made no such contract with the insurers and the organisers, who have exempted themselves from any liability they may have for your actions. Therefore you go bankrupt to pay the damages, the injured party may be disabled for life but with no prospect of getting out of you the money the courts awarded as compensation, the organisers wring their hands in helpless sympathy, and the insurance company goes on collecting premiums from rally organisers.

However, hope is in sight. Since the rest of this article was written, a Bill has passed through the House of Commons, and will probably soon be law, to make such exemption clauses unenforceable as regards personal injury, and enforceable as to property and goods only if a court considers the provision 'reasonable'. It is likely that at some time in the future, powers under consumer protection Acts will be used to make the insertion of these clauses a criminal offence. Then, at last, it will be safe to go to a rally.

## The Camden Lock Public Inquiry

Originally scheduled for three days starting on 13 April, this inquiry eventually finished on 27 April with a site visit courtesy of Paddy Walker and "Jenny Wren".

The proceedings opened with the main appellants, Northside Developments and their architects, Seifert. Against them were; Camden Council, The Tenants Assoc., GLC/LCCC, Camden Civic Trust, Regents Canal Group, Transport on Water (TOW), IWA plus local groups and individuals including David Widdecombe QC a planning barrister. BWB were not called by either side and did not appear in their own right until the Inspector 'requested' their attendance.

Neither of the two partners in Northside (Dr Pulford and Mr Wheeler - variously referred to over lunch as Mr North and Mr Side, Messrs Wheeler and Dealer, Dr Rip-off etc and some unprintable names) appeared to give evidence. This task was left to a young architect employed by them. Their case was simply that Camden Council had to show grounds why they should NOT grant planning permission, and that they were suitable developers because they 'conserved old buildings'. (This turned out to mean that they buy old houses and convert them into flats!).

Seifert himself did not attend. One of his partners, Mr Morris, gave evidence. He appeared to be singularly ill-informed about the design. Although his name appeared on the drawings, Northside's architect had apparently drawn them, even though he had never been employed by Seifert.

Virtually everyone produced documentary evidence to show that BWB supported their own particular view, eventually the inspector 'requested' BWB's attendance. Mr Mattick (estate dept) appeared first and baldly stated that it was 'BWB policy' that the canal should be screened from public view. Camden's and the Tenant's barristers, the GLC/LCCC Planner Architect and the IWA amateur cross examined him for the best part of a day. 'BWB policy' decisions are apparently made by the officers of the Board in a meeting at which the chairman is present. As the Estates dept bring in most of the income, theirs is the most powerful voice. The Board members are neither asked to rubber stamp, nor informed of these 'policy' decisions according to Mr Mattick. This struck me as undemocratic and possibly illegal, so I asked Mr Mattick, 'Do you know if the Chairman of the Board, Sir Frank Price, is the head of a large civil engineering firm that has done a lot of work for Seiferts the Architects?'. Mr Mattick denied that Sir F.P. was the head of such a firm and as far as he knew Seifert's had not been involved in any other canalside developments on BWB land. Surprising that, considering Mr Mattick is BWB's principal surveyor and he was presumably involved in some part of the negotiations to sell the basin in Sheffield for development, (Architects - Seifert and Partners): Still that was a long time ago way back in 1975/76.

Mr Nicholson of the Engineers dept appeared next. He had no evidence to give, and as he had only been told that very morning that he was to appear he could

not answer many of the Questions. Camden Council wanted the East Basin (under the proposed new building) re-opened. This is against BWB 'policy! As he was incorrect by 10 years when the basin was filled in, the material, and what the CEGB can do with a 400Kv cable, I was left a little unsure about the validity of his evidence.

The IWA case was that the building, a very ugly four storey mock Victorian 'warehouse', would screen the canal and the basin totally from public view, this would inhibit people from using it and encourage vandalism. As a personal bete-noir I criticised the design for making too much use of step access, thus preventing the physically handicapped from visiting the site. Northside's barrister pointed out that people in wheelchairs could be pushed up a slope to the top of 'Le Routier' cafe and have a lovely view of the boats going through the lock. He seemed to be one of those people who think the physically handicapped are mentally retarded too!

Mr Mattick stated that it could be made a condition of the lease of the site that the caretakers (Northside foresee the need for three) could patrol the towpath. This presumably means that Northside can be held responsible for damage to any craft moored there, although I don't think I will risk leaving mine there if the development goes through.

The Inspector will now think about what he has heard, check facts and recommend to the Secretary of State the decision that should be made. This will probably be in the Autumn. Although I felt that the objectors had the edge on factual information, both sides are confident of victory. If nothing else we now know where those strange BWB policy decisions emanate from and I cannot help but wonder what is discussed at the monthly Board meetings. London Branch has asked IWA Council to write to the individual Board members and ask them if they have officially and legally delegated the making of Board policy to the employees.

Glen Knight, London Branch Waterways Affairs Co-ordinator.

---

## **Sponsored message to Windsor Castle**

A sponsored message is being delivered to Windsor Castle on Wednesday 10 August. It is likely that the BBC will be filming some of the boats escorting the message on the Thames at Teddington Lock. Obviously we would like as many boats as possible to be there in order to create an attraction. If you are taking your boat to Reading, this could be an ideal meeting point. For further information contact Frank Greenhow, 204 Kew Road, Richmond, Surrey. Tel: 01 940 4318.

---

## **The Closure of Blisworth Tunnel**

Blisworth Tunnel was closed on Thursday 26 May after the detection of some movement of the walls. BWB (after having to make special mitre-gates for the tunnel in order to be able to drain it) have now completed their engineer's survey. Their engineers say that this is not going to be another Harecastle situation. Approximately one third of the distance from the north end, a 25 yard section of the base and side wall has moved. It is estimated that the repairs will take three months.

One of the effects of the closure is that north-south movement is now limited to the Oxford Canal, not the most over-watered canal at the best of times, and in order to save as much water as possible the following restrictions have been introduced at Napton and Claydon flights - they are open from 8.00am to 7.00pm daily and are being staffed by BWB. Boats are asked to enter the flights by 6.00pm in order to be clear by 7.00pm.

Boaters are asked not to use the Stoke flight unless they are mooring at Stoke Bruerne, water is being back-pumped up the flight but is in limited supply. For boaters north of the tunnel, boats over 35' long should not travel south of Gayton Junction as this is the last winding point before the tunnel.

\*Editor's note: the next issue of Windlass will probe in depth the cause of the increasing failure of our 200 year old canal system.

## National Waterways Festival – Reading

### 12–14 August

The national festival is being held this year at Reading on the Thames above Caversham Bridge. The Festival is being held in support of the National Waterways Restoration and Development Fund and the campaign for the restoration of waterways in the South of England to full navigation, in particular the Kennet and Avon Canal.

There is a full and varied programme of events to suit all tastes including a Water Safety Spectacular on both the Saturday and Sunday afternoons, and a cruise of illuminated boats on the Saturday evening. On land there is a large trade show and fair, and entertainments include the Company of Sixty, the Reading Archers, Pumpkin Pie, Mikron Theatre, and the Imps' motor-cycle display team.

Opening times are: Friday 2.00 to 7.00pm; Saturday and Sunday 11.00am to 7.00pm. Admission is 40p for adults and 20p for children. (Advance tickets are available from your local Branch at 20p each.)

## Crew wanted

St Bernard's Hospital at Hanwell has been able to borrow a 20ft outboard boat which will be used to give patients trips along the canal, however the hospital does not have the staff to crew a boat and it has contacted the IWA to see if any members would be prepared to help. The trips will last from 2 - 4.30pm and will be on weekdays. There will be six patients and one nurse on each trip.

If you would like further information or think you can help please contact Mr J Eccles at Northwood 23373.

---

## Windlass copy-dates

6 August for September issue  
1 October for November issue  
3 December for January 1978 issue

---

## Trust the Boater

After several meetings with BWB both sides compromised in their attitude to overnight restrictions, a 'Trust the Boater' situation now exists. Locks will not be locked but we must ensure (as best we can) that people do not travel after dark. There have already been some complaints of pounds being drained overnight due to paddles being carelessly left open.

---

## Sutton College waterway lectures

Sutton College of Liberal Arts held nine weekly illustrated lectures and films about Waterways during the Spring and early Summer. In this interesting series our guest speakers included Peter Beresford (W & ACT), Neil Rumbol, (T&S), Denys Hutchings (K&A) and Peter Daniel (BWB). At the latter talk the amount raised went towards providing a plaque for the Anerley Road Bridge on the Croydon Canal.

I on behalf of all those attending wish to thank Pat Saunders, the Vice Principal of Sutton College of Liberal Arts, who has not only arranged these talks but has shown his abilities as a speaker in his own right, particularly in 'Horseboat on the Thames'.

This Autumn Pat is arranging monthly talks on the following Wednesdays:-

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <u>September 21</u> | 'There's more in canals than appears on the surface' explains Peter White, BWB's chief architect who is, of course, the author of 'Waterways Environment Handbook'. |
| <u>October 19</u>   | To be announced   |
| <u>November 23</u>  | Avril Lansdell curator of Weybridge Museum will speak to us about 'Clothes of the Cut' which is also the name of her book published by BWB.                         |
| <u>December 7</u>   | To be announced   |

We meet at 7.30 pm in the Lecture Theatre, Sutton College of Liberal Arts, Cheam Road, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, Surrey. 01 643 0142.

---

## Boxmoor Jubilee Rally 10-11 September

There will be a Jubilee Rally of boats at Boxmoor on 10 and 11 September. An entry form appeared in the last issue of Windlass and the address to which this should be sent is: Mr Dudley Wells, NB Cantley, Hampton Hall Farm, Moor Lane, Rickmansworth, Herts.

After the success of the last Rally at Boxmoor which was held in 1974 and attended by over 6,000 people we hope that this Rally will be equally as successful. The profits from this event will be divided between the IWA and the Dacorum Narrow Boat Project.

There will be trade show stalls, canal society displays, and all the usual events which make Rallies so popular with the public. One not to be missed.

---

## Small ads (5p per word)

**DISCOVER ENGLAND!** Cruise the rivers and canals of Southern and Central England from our bases at Iver (Bucks) or Thurmaston (Leics). Choose from over twenty 2/8 berth luxuriously fitted steel narrow boats. Every convenience: shower, fridge, running H & C water, TV. **GUARANTEED PRICES WITH ABSOLUTELY NO EXTRAS.** Free brochure: High Line Yachting, Mansion Lane, Iver, Bucks. Tel: Iver (0753) 651496.

**INLAND WATERWAYS Insurance Scheme:** for immediate telephone quotations/coverage with Lloyds Underwriters. Phone 01 778 0161. St Margarets Insurances Ltd, 153 High Street, London SE20 7DL.

**NEW in John Gagg's fascinating and widely-read pictorial series - CANALS IN A NUTSHELL** (every aspect in potted form) and **BROAD CANALS** (including GU, of course). Add them to **LOCKS, TUNNELS, NARROW CANALS** and **LANDMARKS**. All still only 50p, plus postage of 9p (1), 11p (2), 17p (3), 4 or more post free, from Shootacre House, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire.

Spare berth in 8-berth boat. Leeds Liverpool Canal. August 20 or 27. P Barnes. ERITH 36275.

**FOR SALE 30' Cruiser 10' 6" beam**, spacious accommodation, separate galley, Morris Commodore marine petrol engine. Very seaworthy craft built on life-boat hull, recently anti-fouled. £1,250. Contact Mr R A Cowan, Hornchurch 58357.

**BUCKINGHAM 20ft cruiser, GRP.** Comfortable 2 Berth, lined, cooker, sink, toilet, folding windscreen, navigation lights. 10 HP Crescent outboard. Moored River Lee. £1,800. Mr Dean, 20 Milehouse Close, St Albans. St Albans 66509.

**POWER SUPPLY SUITABLE** for running all domestic power tools. EC 1500 Honda portable generator. Brand new. Unwanted present. £180. Phone 01 552 6318.

## Dear Sir... (letters to the editor)

Dear Sir

My impression that the Inland Shipping Group would be more correctly named

'The Anti-road Group' is confirmed by Paul Winch's negative attitude as expressed in Windlass, May 1977 - 'The IWA should fully align itself with the anti-road lobby.' I fully support Mr Winch's right to express his personal opinions but when he signs himself as chairman of an IWA committee then I ask what mandate he has from IWA members to say that we are opposed to road building, or even more impertinently, should he.

Mr Winch seems to think that roads are built for the sole use of heavy haulage. Does he seriously suggest that we should all go about our daily business by waterbus?

If, or as Mr Winch has it, 'When' St Paul's is demolished by heavy lorry vibration it will be due to the lack of more suitable routes for road traffic and it is this that would have all our support.

Yours faithfully,  
RV Bingham, Kent.

(Editor's note: what do other readers think?)

Dear Sir,

Reading the Jubilee Sponsored Walk leaflet of the Wey and Arun Canal Trust I was surprised to see that it is proposed to restore Malham Lock to a width of only 12 feet.

Might I refer you to a letter in Waterways World for May 1977 by a Canadian contributor Adrian Stott, who beseeches all canal restorers to rebuild to a minimum width of 14 feet, thus being able to cater for two breasted up 7 foot narrowboats.

This could help towards breaking the non standardization of locks which contributed towards the downfall of the waterways system years ago.

I must say it sounds like good sense to me.

Yours etc, Jim Spencer, Sussex.

Dear Sir,

As Chairman of the Inland Waterways Association I was happy to attend the reopening ceremony of the Harecastle Tunnel on 2 April last.

Prior to the ceremony I was present at a reception and lunch given by the British Waterways Board during which I had the opportunity of saying a few words celebrating this happy occasion.

Upon reflection, I realise that I omitted to obtain the prior permission of 'Rover' and can only apologise to him and to the Committee of the South East Region for this lapse.

Yours faithfully,

J C Heap  
Chairman IWA

## Restoration of Stour Lighter

Whilst Cap'n Roy Porter - as he is now known to his friends - and crew steadily proceed with the restoration of the Lighter at Ballingdon under a Job Creation Scheme other work is proceeding by members of the Trust to ensure that the restoration is authentic. Roy's current problems are rebuilding the two holds and the bridge and the much more tricky work of repairing the bow and stern, where the planks have not only sprung away from the bow and stern posts but rotted away in places - creating a real strain on Roy's expertise.

Frank Frecknall, a Council member of the River Stour Trust, is preparing the working instructions but this is made difficult by the fact that the memory of the Lighters has all but disappeared from living memory - the only people still living who remember them, being very young at the time and not therefore able to recall the constructional details.

One major source of reference has been, of course, Constable, as many of his sketches show working details of the old vessels. Then, too, there are a number of invaluable photographs, mostly with the Essex Record Office.

But perhaps the most difficult problem of all has been the forthcoming construction of new hatch covers. Since these are always in position in the various illustrations, no details exist of their construction, nor how they fitted on to the hatches. But in this, the Trust has been lucky - they have found the 'Chubb' Horlock, the well known authority on Mistley shipping has been able to give them valuable advice. As a result brand new hatch covers, the first to exist for half a century, are about to be made.

Restoration work on the lighter is due to be completed on 31 August but to enable the public to see the ancient vessel still under reconstruction the Trust is to hold an open day on Sunday 31 July when they will be able to view its progress and to see some of the photographs from which the restoration has been based.

## London Branch news and events

East London Canal Festival: The Festival which was held over the Jubilee weekend attracted about 15,000 people despite the heavy rain which fell on both days. It also managed to attract a great deal of publicity both locally and nationally and went a fair way to achieving its aim of showing the general public that the canal exists.

Camden Lock Public Inquiry: There is a more comprehensive report of the inquiry elsewhere in this issue, but we would like to thank Glenn Knight for representing the Branch throughout the whole of the inquiry.

Sponsored Walk: John King would like to give a brief note of thanks to all the walkers and helpers who took part in the sponsored walk which was held on Monday 6 June. The walkers will have raised approximately £300. Comments made by various walkers have been noted and it is hoped that you will return for another walk next year.

Social Events: Central London events can no longer be held at 'The Albert' and the forthcoming season of Socials will be held in the upstairs room of 'The Ordnance

Arms', 79 York Road, London SE1, (opposite the main entrance to County Hall). For those who work for the GLC there is ample parking in the County Hall car park ... Make a note in your diary of the following dates, all socials are 7.30 for 8pm.

Thursday 22 September: Mr Smith talking about the work of B&W.

Thursday 20 October: Neil Rumbol will talk about the Thames and Severn Canal.

Thursday 17 November: It is hoped that we will have a waterway MP to give a talk.

De-centralised Meetings: We will again be holding de-centralised meetings around London during the coming social season. The first meeting will be held at the Kodak Social Centre in Harrow and will be a Disco/tote evening. Plenty of fun for everyone, come along and meet other IWA members. 7.30 for 8pm on Saturday 1 October.

---

## **Hertfordshire Branch news and events**

Monthly Meetings: These are held at 8pm on the last Wednesday in each month (except July, August and December) at 'The Beehive', Beehive Lane, Welwyn Garden City. 'The Beehive' is situated near the hospital and approached via Cole Green Lane or Howlands. (Buses 330, 816 and 844).

Wednesday 28 September: A talk on the Kennet and Avon Canal by Dennis Hutchings, Hon Secretary of the K & A Canal Trust.

Wednesday 26 October: Members photographic and slide evening. This meeting is being held in conjunction with the Lee and Stort Cruising Club at their club house, Stanstead Lock, Stanstead Abbots - access via towpath 300m north of A414, cars can be parked at St Margaret's station.

Waterways Recovery: Graham Banks proposes to arrange working parties to help with the restoration work on the Basingstoke Canal and/or the Upper Avon. Volunteers should contact Graham (Welwyn Garden City 22927) to arrange transport etc.

East London Canal Festival: The branch attended the Festival with its publicity stand and sales table. The 'Hot Wheels' game proved to be a crowd puller and appealed to young and old alike - providing amusement at the festival as well as some needed funds for the Branch. We are grateful to Trevor Taylor for making the game and to Neil Jeffery and Ken Armstrong for manning the branch stand. (Bookings for other events now being taken!)

---

## **Kent & East Sussex Branch news and events**

The branch is entering a float in the town carnival on Saturday 23 July, together with a sales stand at the central site. As well as the road show, the day will also include a river display on the Medway. The branch urges all members able, to help with the activities of the day. Last year a fair sum of money for the association was raised at the event, so the more helpers the more funds raised. Please contact: Ian Ruck, 11 Wickenden Crescent, Willesborough, Kent, (Ashford 26792) as soon as possible.

The branch has arranged a visit on Sunday 11 September, by coach to visit the Basingstoke Canal and see the restoration work done so far on the Pirbright

flight, with time to explore. A packed lunch would be suitable here. In the afternoon a trip has been arranged on the River Wey, from Guildford to Godalming.

The coach will leave at 08.30 sharp from Elwick Road, Ashford (by Market Car Park) and will pick-up en route at 09.00 opposite the Royal Star Hotel, High Street, Maidstone, and at 09.40 opposite Tunbridge Wells Central Railway Station, Tunbridge Wells.

On the return, it is intended to leave Godalming at 17.00 via the same route, arriving back at Ashford by 20.00 Bring a packed lunch (Pub stop organised). This trip is limited to 53 persons; so apply without delay to: Ian Ruck, 11 Wickenden Crescent, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent. (Ashford 26792) enclosing cheque made payable to 'Kent and East Sussex IWA' Adults £3.50 each and children £2.50 each. Please state where you intend to join the coach.

## Chelmsford Branch news and events

The Branch are disappointed to report that they will not be able to celebrate the 180th anniversary of the opening of the Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation by a commemorative trip in their barge 'SUSAN'. Her restoration was held up as she developed an embarrassing relationship with the bottom of the cut, with whom she stayed hidden for most of the winter and early spring. The reason? She had developed a bad leak beyond the capacity of the bilge pump to cope with.

However, in late April, with water levels falling, she was raised and bow hauled down to Little Baddow, where she can maintain her new found friendship with the bottom without embarrassment - as it is only about a foot beneath the surface! In fact she is at the former coal wharf at Little Baddow, where a small but faithful group are working on her. One consolation is that sections of the upper part of the waterway are currently too shallow for her to pass and so that hopefully by the time she has been repaired, taking into account current dredging programme, a belated cruise will be able to penetrate into the town centre.

Some 50 persons recently took part in a sponsored towpath walk and canoe cruise organised jointly by the branch and the Chelmsford Boating Club on Sunday May along the entire canal from Chelmsford to Heybridge Basin. It is expected that the two groups will jointly share £100.

## Oxford Branch news and events

We have now drawn to the end of our highly successful season, and by the time you read this we will have had our Annual Barbecue at Manor Farm, Thrupp, as we did last year. That one gave us a profit of £247, so we hope this one will have been as successful.

Our Jumble Sale in May gave us a profit of £85, and I would like to thank everybody who collected the vast amount of Jumble, and to the people who did the selling - a highly commendable effort all round.

Our committee has undergone many changes at this time - details of which I will give next time.

Pam Pugh, our secretary has moved. Her address is now: 10 Vanner Road, Witney, Oxon. Tel: Witney 71138.

Working Parties: Over the last 10 months we have been involved in clearing the old 'Hythe Bridge Arm' in Oxford. This involved cutting back the overhanging trees, and pulling out countless milk crates, bicycles, mattresses etc! This was in preparation for BWB to come along with the dredger - which they have just started doing. When this is finished there will be moorings for about 12 boats, as well as a very pleasant area for people to walk along. We had about 20 - 30 people at our work parties, and I would like to thank them for all their help.

Our programme for next year is still being finalised, but by the time you read this, our Fixture Card will be available - so please drop a line to Pam Pugh (Address above). I will be able to supply information in the next issue.

As most people will know, the National Waterways Festival is taking place in Reading on the 12, 13 and 14 August 1977. We, in the Oxford Branch, are endeavouring to run a couple of stands on all three days of the festival.

The reason for this letter is really a plea for people in the Oxford Branch to come forward with ideas for things to sell on our stands. We really want 'creative' people to come forward, who can make things relatively cheaply, that we can sell for a profit. We already have people making scarves and toys etc but we need a lot more.

As there are over 300 members in our Branch only about 70 of which come to our monthly meetings, we feel that there must be many people who would like to help us, even if they would only like to staff one of our stands.

If any member in our area has any ideas for helping us one way or another could they write to or telephone: Pam Pugh (Sec Oxford Branch), 10 Vanner Road, Witney, Oxon. (Tel: Witney 71138).

---

## **Guildford Branch news and events**

Meetings: We hope to publish a full programme in the September Windlass. Meanwhile please note that the first meeting of the new season will be on Friday 30 September in Woking or Guildford. Details of speaker and venue will be in August 'Waterways', and, hopefully in September 'Waterways World'.

Archive Film Show, Reading: On Sunday 2 October the Branch will be organising a programme of rare archive films on the story of the canals, which will be presented and introduced by Mr John Huntley. The show will include: BARGING THROUGH LONDON (Regents Canal 1924); THE BASINGSTOKE CANAL (1913 and 1948); scenes on the Kennet and Avon Canal; and a complete screening of PAINTED BOATS (showing scenes of legging through tunnels, horse-drawn narrow boats, and commercial life on the canals 30 years ago). Venue will be Odeon Cinema, Cheapside, Reading, and the programme will commence at 1.30pm (doors open 12.45). Tickets are £1 Adults, 50p Children, available by post (SAE please) or personal call from G Lane, 13 Cypress Road, Woodley, Reading, or at the door on the day if any still available. Proceeds will be donated by the Branch to the Widmead Lock Restoration Fund, on the Kennet and Avon Canal.

Windsor/Maidenhead Jubilee River Pageant: The IWA were represented by 3 craft - Mr John Humphries with 'CLEVANDA'; Mr Tom Christie with 'SUNBEAM'; and

Mr Desmond Briscoe with 'SAMANDA'; and our thanks are extended to them for their efforts.

Branch Waterways - River Thames: At a recent meeting of the TWA Advisory Committee we learned that the reconstruction of Romney Lock, Windsor, scheduled for the winter 1977/8 has been postponed yet again, because of the financial situation, and the earliest date is now 1979/80.

We have asked the TWA to review their policy on short-term licences, which we feel are proportionately far too expensive at present.

Kennet and Avon Canal: We understand it is possible that BWB will put Padworth Swing Bridge into operable condition, mainly for the benefit of their maintenance boats. However, this will be welcomed if it happens, as it will bring into use a winding point at the current head of navigation from Reading.

Basingstoke Canal: The Hampshire County Council Recreation Plan for the canal was reported in the last issue. We understand that in excess of three hundred representations were received by them on this from individuals and organisations. Their Committee duly met in April and made a number of important decisions. They have fixed the limit of navigation for motor boats at the Whitewater Aqueduct Winding Point, and for unpowered craft only, to the portal of Greywell Tunnel - not the best decision for us but certainly not the worst. For reasons which are not readily apparent they wish to erect some sort of physical barrier across the canal at the winding point. They require further information before they will allow the S & HCS tripping boat to operate along the summit level. They approved in principle the provision of nature reserves in Eelmoor and Claycart flashes, and small car parks adjoining the canal at various points. Other than the above they have postponed decisions on all further matters mentioned in the report, including moorings, boats, Country Parks, byelaws, and further dredging in Greywell cutting. Let us hope that the intervening period will be put to good use and that wiser and better decisions will eventually be forthcoming, hopefully in conjunction with Surrey who are carrying out a similar exercise.

River Wey: Proposals for the M25 Viaduct crossing have now been published, and they are almost exactly as we envisaged, if not somewhat worse. Certainly the plans of the viaduct show it to be a most overpowering structure, and the Department of Transport will not consider an earth embankment with a tunnel. We are still fighting for improvements and landscaping and have lodged an objection to the Crossing Order.

Volunteers: Wanted to go round Thames boatyards to keep them stocked with TWA membership forms. This job could be split into several areas. Please contact Secretary.

#### ARCHIVE FILM SHOW AT READING

SUNDAY OCTOBER 2

\*

Proceeds to Widmead Lock Restoration Fund

\*\*\*\*\*

See Guildford Branch Notes for details

## The Rover's Return!

Looking at the new IWA notepaper (most of the 'Rover' comes on official paper) I find we now have an Hon Consultant, why is the other Hon Consultant (see Bulletin 56) not honoured by having his name on the notepaper?

In March the AWA bill finally became law. It makes the AWA maintain waterways 'To at least as a good a standard for the purpose of navigation by pleasure boats as that to which they were maintained immediately before the Bill was introduced'. What about commercial carrying, you may well ask, this section was put in at the specific request of IWA. Donations to pay for this work should be addressed to the Campaign for Rights of Navigation - or perhaps drop a line to the ISG!

The IWA's solicitors' costs in the High Court Action of David Pedley (now a council member) were claimed at £1142. On appearing before the taxing master (an official of the court) to justify these costs, they were reduced to £790 (including £20 for an articled clerk to be present at the 1975 AGM just in case). The IWA will have to pay £352. Now we know where the money goes, but not why.

Following my caustic comments on the K & A Trust, their Chairman sent me a copy of their latest annual report. Interesting to note that the Wiltshire Inland Navigators gave them a grant of £1339. And I always thought they were in dispute! We shall have the London Canals Society giving the IWA money next.

Quote: 'British Rail should follow the example of the British Waterways Board and make more use of volunteers - particularly for such jobs as painting canopies and iron-work.' As ever, would that BWB were as effective and thoughtful as their PR dept.

While we are talking about BR, they gave evidence at the Winchester Bypass (M3) Public Inquiry. A precedent for BWB, or even the IWA at other Motorway Inquiries?

The Black Knight of Bulls Bridge wants to know how it comes about that the proprietor of Willow Wren Wharf (the Lay-by at Bull's Bridge), lets out moorings and gives a right to residential boats to occupy the water surface of the lay-by, and that BWB insist on the boats having a residential licence, thereby implying that the water surface of the lay-by is still theirs. Somebody is claiming rights to which they are not entitled, and getting money out of it.

BWB are appointing a three man team to trap licence dodgers. Based at Tring they will cover the canal from London to Brum - equipped with a van. So if anyone doesn't have a licence, don't moor too near a bridge, and you should be alright. Why on earth couldn't they issue at least one of them with a motorbike so that he could actually check on moored craft.

Is WRG Central a station on the Bakerloo line?

The rally season is with us again, as is the Mikron season (quick plug). Rally's invariably appear to me to be disorganised chaos, is this because we don't have the cruising clubs gregariousness, or is it true that the IWA couldn't organise a p\*\*\* up in a b\*\*\*\*\*. Whilst on this subject, the Norton Owners Club Annual Rally advertises events including 'Abusing Committee Members'. Watch out John Heap, I shall be looking for you at the National!