

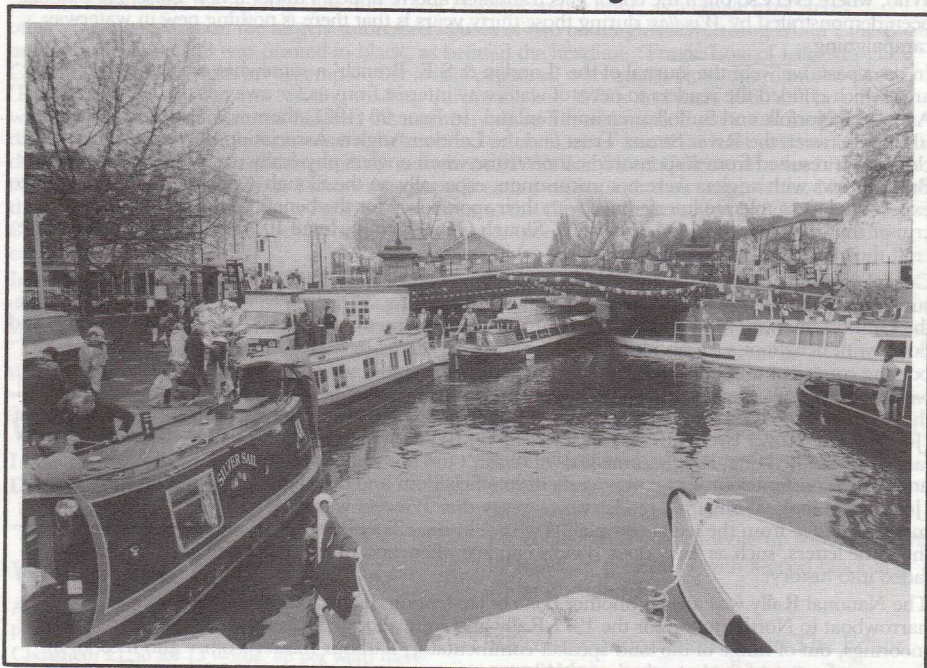
WINDLASS



SOUTH EAST REGION

INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION

WINDLASS 1957 — 1987 WINDLASS
30th Anniversary Issue



“Little Venice crowded with boats at Canalway Cavalcade '87”

Photo—The Editor

July 1987

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windlass

Inland Waterways
Association



JOURNAL OF THE SOUTH EAST REGION

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Editorial

IS NOTHING NEW?—Reading through the scrap-book the other day I was horrified to realise that *Windlass* has been running for exactly thirty years. It's like a longer running version of Doctor Who, where every so often the editor gets translated and re-appears under a new guise. All that has been demonstrated by *Windlass* during those thirty years is that there is nothing new in waterway campaigning.

In days past, we were the journal of the 'London & S.E. Branch' a somewhat elastic geographical area which entitled the readers to news of waterway interest from as far away as the Kennet and Avon, the Norfolk and Suffolk area and Fenland. In Issue 98 (1971) there was a succulent tit-bit 'the rift between the River Strour Trust and the London Anglers Association shows no signs of closing.' It resulted from a sponsored canoe cruise when anglers physically obstructed the river near Bures. Rows with anglers were not uncommon, especially on the Slough Arm: 'It is unreasonable to expect anglers to tolerate interference with their sport solely for the benefit of the occasional cabin cruiser that may turn up,' (M.A. Timms, Slough Canal Group, Issue 101). Advertisements for hire craft then carried photographs of plywood cabin cruisers.

Colin Issacson was Editor in those days, when Illyd was Chairman of the Branch, and not surprisingly the subject under discussion was canal carrying. When there were proposals to upgrade the Grand Union up to Watford, it might have been assumed that IWA would have jumped up and down with delight at such an idea. But there were no official moves on our behalf, and the only boating comment to reach the press was from some miserable sod who moaned about the effect it would have on pleasure boating. BWB came in for the usual vilification about their 'not doing all they could do to encourage commercial use of the waterways', while correspondents of the calibre of 'Josher' and 'Rover' were always quick to leap on BWB when they didn't do anything at all. In fact, that damned dog, as it became known, wasn't too fussy about doing what he did to anybody, and was a constant source of embarrassment to officialdom and of delight to the reader. When 'Josher' got took off one irate reader wrote to say that *Windlass* was no longer worth reading. It made a change from the usual complaints we got in the office. But don't worry, we're still getting the same letters, such as 'why does *Windlass* appear after most of the happenings advertised have faded into history?'

The National Rally was always another bone of contention. Tom and Jennifer Sewel took a narrowboat to Northampton for the 1971 Rally and were allocated a berth 'at the gritty end of the moorings, out of range of the loud-speaker commentator, harbour master's office and most of the time out of range of the lavender boat.' What a way to treat *Windlass* correspondents. They were fairly bursting to go, they said, while others were bursting not to go to the Ely Rally because they said it was too difficult to get there. There were complaints about the venue of the Branch Rally on the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation, another place deemed inaccessible. Any why was it, one correspondent demanded to know, that powered craft were not permitted on that Navigation when the Canal Company itself ran timber barges powered by outboard motors?

Windlass was a very campaigning organ in the past (when it was allowed to be) and a popular feature calculated to raise the blood pressure was PRON—the Public Right of Navigation. Somebody was actually appointed to collect all facts about any loss of this public right, from anyone hindered by anything resulting from delays of loss of public right of navigation. I don't know what happened to either that somebody or to the PRON campaign, both probably died unnatural deaths. The last great campaign was at Folly Bridge on the Lee at Hertford, where militant boaters converged on that town and demanded that the bridge height be lifted to admit boats into the basin. It was a personal tragedy to many of use when the authorities meekly acquiesced and it became no fun going to Hertford after that.

Waterway restoration used to be all the rage. To prove the Kennet and Avon was navigable a crew of eight navigated a 13½ foot inflatable called *Rogue* from the Bridgehead at Bristol to Westminster in 17 days in 1971. They paddled, hauled, carried and bounced their boat over a course described by commandos as 'too tough in places' but got rather bored when they reached the River Thames and got sore bottoms from sitting still for too long. Meanwhile, foolhardy enthusiasts were banding themselves into groups and were coming up with crazy ideas to try to restore long lost waterways like the Kennet and Avon, Wey and Arun and the Basingstoke! Issue 101 reported the first AGM of the newly formed Wey and Arun Canal Society, and two issues later there was a photograph of a near derelict lock captioned 'shall we at last be able to get onto the Basingstoke.' Following an item about the Lark Navigation (you may need a map for that one) several correspondents got very excited about being able to cruise from the Great Ouse to above Biggleswade, but a lock full of cold water was poured on those hopes. Not so the Great Ouse itself. The campaign to restore navigation to Bedford got off to a bad start when the Council gave a large sum of money and the navigation got restored. The long-running saga of the Paddington Basin goes back into history and seventeen years ago there was a call for a public enquiry into its future.

In spite of all this, *Windlass* has staggered on, albeit from what used to be a monthly magazine. There have been some memorable issues, like the 150th edition with its full colour cover—I bet nobody remembers the photographs of the *John Pinkerton* on the front, as all male eyes were otherwise engaged upon the largely undressed figures of two bikini girls advertising Maid Line Boats on the back. Issue 148 was printed in black, as befitted the headline 'Tragic Loss of Life—English Canal System Dies' with an accompanying article peppered with quotes from that damned dog 'Rover' who made such entertaining reading during the late 1970's and early 1980's. Then there was the issue 155 which never reached the membership as the entire stock was consumed before distribution. What terrible facts were to be revealed we shall never know (at least you won't) but it is darkly hinted that they so endangered the existence of IWA that Head Office staff were ordered to consume every copy. As far as I know they are still eating copies with their sandwiches. No wonder that when IWA advertised for a Personal Secretary to the General Secretary at No. 114, (salary £1,050 p.a.) it carried the wording 'sense of humour imperative', but said nothing about having to eat words.

In those thirty years so much has been done one wonders if there is anything left to do, and at the end of the day perhaps the poor old River Lark Navigation will be the only thing left to restore.

I leave you with this charming piece of intelligence about the Slough Arm from 1971:

'The transportation study carried out for the Slough Corporation states that there is no need to utilise the canal as a road up till 1980, now it is likely to be the best solution before 1991'.

WINDLASS DATES FOR 1987

Issue 182, Copy by 20 October.

Distribution, 4 December.

WINDLASS ADVERTISING

Advertisements to be prepaid. Cheques to 'IWA', please to reach the Editor by deadline date.

Classified: £1.50 for 15 words. 8p per word thereafter. **Full page** £50, **½ page** £26, **⅓ page** £17.50, **¼ page** £13.50, **⅛ page** £7.

Distribution. Branch Secretaries can obtain additional copies of '*Windlass*' from Dennis Cozens, 260 Boundary Road, Wood Green, N22. Telephone: 01-888 4646.

PUBLICITY—Will publicity officers dealing with both branch affairs and events please ensure that copy is sent to *Windlass* well in advance of copy dates. Immediately after an event has taken place a write-up should be sent to *Windlass*, preferably with a good black and white photograph.

All contributions to be sent to The Editor, Richard Hugh Perks, Weald Cottage, Eastling, Faversham, Kent ME12 0BA
Tel: Home (079589) 603;
Office (0227) 470620.

BACKCHAT—by the Editor

WALKING FOR IWA—Dr Essex-Lopresti's popular Regent's Canal walks continue during the summer and autumn; Walking to Islington, Sunday 2 August at 2.30pm, Tuesday 18 August at 6.15pm and Sunday 4 October at 2.30pm. Walking to Paddington on Sunday 6 September at 2.30pm and Sunday 1 November at 2.30pm. All walks start from Camden Underground Station and walkers are asked to pay £1.50 for IWA funds.

BASINGSTOKE SECTION—I am sad to receive a letter from Mrs Brenchley to say that due to lack of support that the Basingstoke Section of the Guildford and Reading Branch of IWA is to cease holding 'speaker' meetings after the November 1987 meeting. They will continue to hold a monthly social on the first Tuesday of each month in the lounge bar of the 'White Hart', London Road, like the GUCS's 'Noggin and Natter'. All remaining funds at the end of the financial year will be passed back to the Branch. Mrs Brenchley regrets that the committee has made this decision, but feels they had no alternative.

CAVALCADE '88—I am fascinated to read in the copy I received from London Branch that 'The Lord Mayor of Westminster committed the City Council to lavish amounts of dosh for '88's Cavalcade....' Is 'dosh' what Westminster's streets used to produce in the days of horse-drawn transport? I had a feeling at the time that the WRG 'horse' *Basingstoke* was not always behaving itself at this year's Cavalcade. Loading 'dosh' into narrowboats at Little Venice could inspire a whole new meaning to the phrase 'Bring Back Canal Carrying'.

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT—As a result of the various Branch Committee elections earlier this year several familiar faces are leaving Committees. On behalf of Region we extend our thanks to them for their services, and welcome the newly elected officers. Among those retiring are Mike Phipps, the successful Sales Officer of G&R Branch, and Dave Strivens who for several years edited the rival magazine to *Windlass*, the Kent and East Sussex Branch Journal, *IWAKES*.

Windlass also is about to undergo change. After what seems a long while in this hot seat (and boy, some of you don't know how hot it can get), as some of you may know, I have aspirations for the Church, and in September commence training for the Lay Ministry. For the next two years my time is spoken for, and I hope someone will come forward either to take over the Editorship of *Windlass* or to act as Editorial Assistant, at least for the next two years. Would intending applicants please get in touch either with me or with Regional Chairman, Dave Moore.

WATERWAYS FOR YOUTH—John Gagg, co-ordinator of the 'Waterways for Youth' Movement has been in touch to tell me how the campaign is coming along. The name of the game, he stresses, is youth involvement, a growing involvement of youngsters in all sorts of ways. He reports that some bodies have appointed a 'youth' member to their committees and hopes that next year we shall see a few more specific youth events, and wants to see more youngsters in everything from now on. One way which John cites, is by introducing more direct activities, such as canoeing, school projects and going on camping boats, etc.

I have recently been involved in two activities which have helped in the way John suggests. One is the Royal Yachting Association's scheme for teaching 7-11 year olds to sail. The RYA has several fleets of 'Optimist' sailing dinghies which are loaned to youth organisations together with instructors. From some of the profits made by the Kentish Sail Association, which runs the 'Swale Smack and Sailing Barge Match', we have given the RYA a grant to purchase three 'Optimist' dinghies which will be based in their SE Region. IWA Branches might like to consider similar schemes, say by raising monies to buy canoes or dinghies for local youth organisations. The second involvement was great fun. It was the making of a Children's Television film for the 'Then and Now' series, screened on BBC2 in May. It was on travel and transport, and ten children from a school in East London were involved in a project which traced how goods were carried to London in Victorian times up the River Thames and into the Regent's Canal. The youngsters were taken afloat for a weekend, and came down to the Sittingbourne brickfields to trace how London's household refuse was brought to the brickworks, sifted through by young children, and how the ashes were used as an admixture in the bricks which built Victorian London.

PLOWMAN YOUTH TROPHY—This trophy is being inaugurated this year and will be presented next year for youngsters navigating unpowered boats. The scheme has been initiated by Mrs Greta Plowman, a SE Region member, whose late husband Piers won several awards for his long distance journeys made in a 'Wayfarer' dinghy. A redoubtable traveller who sailed his craft into Northern waters (see *Windlass—passim*), the award will be an inspiration to youngsters.

BOOKS REVIEWED—'Exploring the Regent's Canal' by Dr Michael Essex-Lopresti. KAF Brewin books, 13 Gunners Lane, Studley, Warks B80 7LX. £5.40 net. 77 pages, illustrated with photographs and maps.

In the same series as the author's definitive work 'Exploring the New River', his new book on the Regent's Canal is ingeniously constructed. From his Regent's Canal Walks—and I don't suppose he can work out just how many miles of towpath he has tramped over the years—Dr Essex-Lopresti has become the acknowledged authority on this waterway. This knowledge manifests itself in the extraordinary detail to which the reader is treated on this inquisitive tour. Did you know that at one time the Canal received its water from the Thames by means of a complicated back pumping system? Or that the Carpet Warehouse by New North Road Bridge was one a film studio where Will Hay made many of his films? Written primarily for those intending to walk the Canal towpath, this is a reference rather than a mere guide book. Every twist and turn of the towpath is marked by a delightful cameo of canal life. The book is backed up with strong historical references and detailed notes on construction.

I don't think the author will mind too much if I make one criticism and it is that I would have liked to see this as a much larger book, delving more into the aspects of trade and commerce of the Canal, information which I am sure the author has at his finger tips. On the other hand, we may well have the makings here of a prolific author.

WATERWAY NOTES

THE EASTERN ROTHER

Kent and East Sussex Branch has written to Southern Water Authority giving the Branch views and suggestions for the improvements to Rye Harbour. Their suggestion is for a new lock in the Rock Channel to provide more wet moorings and easier navigation to Bodiam. Meanwhile there is a proposal for a new bridge over the Eastern Rother, and Branch Chairman, Ian Dempster, is seeking assurance that it will be at a navigable height at least equal to the existing rail bridge. The Branch has been in touch with Southern Water Authority about the proposed installation of a small slipway above Scots Float Sluice on the Rother. SWA is at present pleading poverty but the Branch will persevere. Such a slipway would be of great value in enabling more craft to use this lovely, but little used waterway.

CHELMER AND BLACKWATER NAVIGATION

John Gale reports that the balance beams from the top gates of Springfield Lock have been stolen!

RIVERS LEE AND STORT

Some 57 boats attended the Lee and Stort Rally at Bishop's Stortford. At the head of navigation opposite the large car park, mooring rings have now been installed along the towpath together with concrete access steps; also the company by the road bridge have installed a water point, also with adequate moorings rings.

A canoe slalom course is to be included in the substantial new development at Dobbs Weir.

BASINGSTOKE CANAL

The houseboat licences expire on 31 December 1987 and if any fail to pass to current survey they will not be renewed. In order to allow any of them to be moved from the Basingstoke by water, there is a suggestion that a contractor may have to be called in to complete Lock 2. Agreement has now been reached for boats up to 72 feet to use the Basingstoke Canal at an annual cost of £55.

Windlass Diary

The early May Bank Holiday found us dodging rain squalls for the Canalway Cavalcade at Little Venice, to enjoy the once-a-year spectacle of the maximum number of boats and boaters squeezed into the smallest possible area, for all the fun of parades of boats, boat-handling displays, side-shows, fireworks and watching trip boats vainly trying to conduct normal business.

There were some nice touches to the festivities, including several stilt-walkers, and several creatures dressed up to attract the children to the 'Teddy Bears Picnic.' Lord St. Davids kindly gave trips round Browning's Island in his electric boat *Silver Sail* and collected monies from passengers in aid of IWA. He can cruise for 50 miles without re-charging his batteries, and as a result of his campaign to introduce more electric boats to the 'cut' the system is now well provided with charging points. WRG trundled out a rather badly behaved horse called *Basingstoke* which danced sweetly, if you can call it dancing, to a concertina. During one of its more ecstatic wriggles, a voice from the crowd was heard to comment, 'Well, it's got a lovely bum!'

While boats were parading at Little Venice on the Saturday, I joined representatives of the Royal Yachting Association, rambblers, fishermen, conservationists and coastguards to line a sea-wall in protest at erosion of rights of access. A nature conservation group had acquired land adjacent to the sea-wall, paid for largely by grants, and were seeking powers to restrict the public use and enjoyment of the sea-walls, in an area where access to the water is already severely impeded by wall to wall nature reserves. If nothing else, our protest caused the cancellation of the grand opening ceremony. Even as we protested drama was unfolding in the East Swale, and unbeknown to us a boat was in trouble. But the shed, from which volunteer rescue boats used to be kept had been taken over by the conservationists. I received a telephone call early on the Monday saying that a yacht was ashore on the rocks of the sea-wall. There was no one aboard. With police and coastguards a search was made for a body. I was refused access with my car onto the track leading to the sea-wall, by orders of the local conservation group which has extensive rights. In gale force conditions I walked a total of seven miles and eventually found the boat's dinghy. Shortly after dawn the next day police and fishermen found a body. The third drowning in three weeks.

Back to the Regent's Canal, and this time a trip on the *Water Buffalo* through the Maida Hill Tunnel. What shook me was that on both passages of the tunnel young children were hanging out of the windows, trailing their hands along the brickwork of the tunnel. Neither parents nor the boatman made any attempt to caution them as to the danger.

To the River Blackwater for the 25th sailing of the Blackwater Barge Match which finished in a strong gale, force 9. Most craft got a pasting, several ran ashore, and others went on the 'putty' as a means of avoiding the worst of the weather. I think only two craft came back undamaged, and *Reminder*, well known to Chelmsford Branch members, twisted her 60 foot long steel sprit. I had intended to stay for the Chelmsford Branch IWALK along the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation the following day but would not have had the energy to get to the starting line.

A husband and wife, long standing members of IWA wrote to me with a nasty tale. I would like to reproduce their experience, with names etc., but it might involve us in more than a solicitor's



It's got a lovely bum—WRG horse *Basingstoke*
'Where shall we go now?' she whispered tenderly in the horse's ear,
'Back to the stable'—(It's true, we overheard it) Photo—RHP

letter. My correspondents had taken their boat onto the River Wey and were tied-up to the bankside when they were struck by a hire boat. The hirer apologised and admitted liability. It was assumed that the matter would be settled by insurance—it was not, and both the hire boat company and their insurers flatly refused to accept any liability for the damage. In other words, sue if redress is sought, and this my correspondents could not afford to do, having paid the repair bill for the damage done to their own boat. In fact, the hire company's dealings with them were unpleasant.

There is little that anyone can do except to press and continually press hire boat organisations to insist on a boat-handling course to any hirer who has insufficient experience. The unsympathetic attitude of the hire boat company suggests it is worthwhile making inquiries through booking organisations as to what sort of third-party liability exists. Fortunately, there was no personal injury in this instance, but had there been, one must infer that there is a large question mark over liability. Intending hirers would be well advised to think of taking out their own liability before they step afloat, and inquire closely into the cover by hire boat companies.

KENT AND EAST SUSSEX BRANCH—HANDICAPPED OUTING

The Branch ran its boat trip on the Medway for handicapped people on 30 May aboard the trip boat *Kentish Lady*. The passengers comprised 60 children from five organisations, including Leybourne Grange Hospital and schools for the autistic and blind, together with 30 attendants. Twenty three of the children were in wheelchairs. So great was the response that some parties who applied had to be turned down. Malcolm Evans, skipper of *Kentish Lady* took the boating party from Maidstone to Wateringbury and back, passing through two locks, which included the triumph of negotiating East Farleigh Bridge, where there is only a couple of inches to spare on either side; there is slightly less on the top, and any error under the arch threatens to turn *Kentish Lady* into an open top model.

Organiser of the Handicapped Boat Trip is K&ES Branch Secretary, John Morgan, who had the idea of running the first trip back during 'Waterways Fortnight' when the Branch was trying to think of some unusual contribution. From then on it has grown from success to success. It is a magnificent way of publicising waterway use. This year's trip was outstanding in several ways. The cost of the trip is raised by Branch members in several ways. Gerry Savage of *Radio Kent* got to hear about the trip and invited John and Branch Chairman, Ian Dempster, to an interview in the 'People to People' programme. The programme was heard by Mr Johnson, area service manager of British Gas, and as a result he offered the Branch a substantial donation to help run the trip. The Anglia Building Society was another organisation which contributed.

Among the guests aboard the *Kentish Lady* for the trip was Mr Johnson of British Gas, and John Morgan recounts the delightful incident when Mr Johnson was talking to one of the young passengers. He had been chatting away to her for ten minutes before he realised that she was blind. It says much for the incredible skills which the Branch guests acquire.

So far, the trip has been held every other year, but because of the generosity of so many people, it looks like becoming an annual event and the Branch is in the position of being able to plan for another Handicapped Boat Trip to be held in the spring of 1988. If you, or your Branch would like to contribute to future boat trips, I am sure John would welcome donations to him at 49 Hillbrow Road, Ashford, Kent. (A full account of this year's trip, together with details of the scheme is available from John, but please send an S.E.A.).

RAISING OF THE TEISE

The *Teise* was one of a number of lighters built for the Kent Catchment Board to carry stone for the rebuilding of sea-walls within the conservancy area. Registered at 52 tones she was built at Acorn Yard, Rochester in 1936, where she joined the Board's sailing barge *Llandudno* and several smaller lighters in carrying ragstone from the Allington quarries and faggots for the building of sea-wall bases. The craft were towed up and down the Medway by the wooden tug *Beult*. In the early 1950's the Board got rid of their craft by the simple expedient of sinking them at Yalding. The *Teise* (pronounced Tees) has now been raised by an enthusiast and is now being converted at Medway Bridge Marina, Borstal. The *Teise* is believed to be the only one of her type ever built, with a raked bow to enable her to go bow first onto the sea-wall and for her cargo to be unloaded straight over the front end.

ON THE BASINGSTOKE

The Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society now believe that there is a real prospect of extending the restoration of the Basingstoke from Greywell to Up Nately, with the construction of a new canal basin $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Basingstoke, and is making an engineering study of the work entailed. One of the Society's stated aims when it was formed twenty years ago, was to restore the Greywell Tunnel, first opened in 1794. Society engineers believe the tunnel could be restored for around £200,000.

Considering the work which has already been done to the restoration of the Basingstoke these remaining works would not seem a difficult undertaking, and the idea of a project which might restore the Greywell Tunnel in time for its 200th anniversary in 1994 would be an engaging one.

The engineering side of the aspect is entirely feasible but the prospects are not assisted by the 'Bats in the Belfry (or in this case, Tunnel)' brigade of conservationists who seem to support dereliction as a way of life. The inside of the tunnel, as you know, has become designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest because of the well known colony of bats, and now The Nature Conservancy Council is seeking to protect the exterior, because Butter Wood, which takes in the western part of the tunnel entrance, and part of the canal to Up Nately has been found to contain a collection of common plants. Just what effect boating might have on bats or on common plants is a matter of conjecture, but it is a widely held view that boating might actually be good for them, in the same way that endangered wild life on the Norfolk Broads mysteriously increases in direct proportion to the number of holiday makers who come to enjoy them. And the conservationists, it would seem, do not approve of anyone enjoying wildlife, unless they are accredited conservationists, that is.



The Mildred Stocks is an electrically powered boat suitable for use by disabled passengers. It was used for public trips during the National Steam and Small Boat Festival on the Basingstoke Canal
Photo—Ray Carnell

THE WEY SOUTH

The Wey and Arun Canal Trust announce with regret the death of their Hon Treasurer, Denys Walter, who had been a member of the Trust for twelve years. Donations in his memory to be sent to the Hon Secretary of the Trust. The Trust is also losing the Editor of *Wey South*. After six years Bill Thomson is retiring to take up a position with a national waterways magazine, and we wish him all good fortune.

BRANCH NEWS AND NOTES

OXFORD AND SOUTH BUCKS BRANCH—*Report by Ray Powell*

Chairman: Bert Pettitt, 2 Rowan Drive, Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire. Tel: Swindon 853100

Secretary: Mrs Pam Pugh, 10 Vanner Road, Witney, Oxon. Telephone: Witney 71138

BRANCH MEETINGS

Oxford Section: Meetings at The Red Lion, Kiddlington, Oxford, at 8pm

9 SEPTEMBER. Noggin' and Natter with Thrupp Canal Cruising Club.

14 OCTOBER. Wilts and Berks Canal—Jack Dalby

11 NOVEMBER. An evening with a canal artist—Alan Firth

9 DECEMBER. Cheese and wine evening.

Bucks Section: Meetings at Market Hall, Old Amersham, opposite Crown Hotel, at 8pm.

13 SEPTEMBER. Coach and river visit to Thames Barrier.

22 OCTOBER. Norfolk Wherry Trust—Major Forsythe.

19 NOVEMBER. Progress on the Stroudwater, Thames and Severn Canal—David Boakes.

10 DECEMBER. Social evening with refreshments and an illustrated talk on plans for restoration of the Wendover Arm—Martin Wood.

BRANCH REPORT

The various AGM's are now behind us and the committees remain much as before except for the following: Geoff Clegg, the outgoing Chairman of the Bucks section has accepted the Vice-Chairmanship of the Branch. Grateful thanks are due to Geoff for his efforts on behalf of Bucks section on whose committee he will continue to serve and support. Ray Powell has succeeded Geoff as Chairman of the Bucks section and is pleased to report a strengthening of the original team by two regular attendees of members meetings, welcome to Brian Lake and John Brice.

We are sorry to report the Banbury section, unable to form a committee for the coming season, has gone into suspended animation and therefore for the present no programme of members meetings is planned at Spiceball Mill, Banbury. Should there be anyone who is prepared to help form a Banbury committee, our secretary, Pam Pugh, would be pleased to hear from them. Come on—there must be someone! Support in getting an autumn programme together would be forthcoming from the Branch committee.

The following major angling events are planned in our area during 1987 and your usual consideration is requested when passing the lines of anglers—please slow right down and keep to the middle of the navigation: Oxford Canal, Banbury area 18 July and 10 October.

Looking ahead on the Oxford Canal, may we also remind you of the planned closure of Fenney Tunnel during the winter of 1988/89 which will hopefully result in the widening of the channel and stabilising of the cutting.

Now to the National—We are looking for volunteers to sell decorated silver balloons at Hawkesbury to boost Branch funds. Please contact Pam Pugh.

As part of 'Waterways for Youth' we are trying to establish contacts within local schools and colleges with a view to promoting the waterways cause, and any help would be appreciated.

A coach and river trip to the Thames Barrier and Exhibition is planned for 13 September. Details and bookings from John Brice, telephone Chalfont St. Peter (02407) 3298.

Our representative on the River User Group (RUG) Hugh Cundell has been appointed Chairman, and we extend our good wishes. If you have any comments on the river Thames in our area, I am sure he would be pleased to hear from you; his address is 'Old Swan', Preston Crowmarsh, Oxon OX9 6BL.

The Branch programme card should be included with this issue of *Windlass*. If you do not have one or require extra copies, please contact our secretary, Pam Pugh.

Happy cruising, here's hoping we have a good summer. Hope to see you at our meetings in the autumn.

CHELMSFORD BRANCH—Report by John Gale

Chairman: Mrs Molly Beard, 241 Benfleet Road, Benfleet, Essex. Telephone: Southend 554492

Secretary: Ken Wood, 39 Linley Crescent, Romford, Essex. Telephone: 765504

BRANCH MEETINGS

Unless otherwise specified, all meetings are held in the downstairs room at AEUW House, Primrose Hill, Chelmsford, at 7.45 for 8pm.

We would really like to see more members at these meetings. They are quite well attended, but nearly always by the same people. If you have not been before, please come along—a map is included in the programme card which is enclosed with this issue of *Windlass*.

5 SEPTEMBER. Saturday. Outing on *Water Buffalo*—see below.

10 SEPTEMBER. Thursday. Canal Carriers—Alan Faulkner

7 OCTOBER. Wednesday. At 'The Moorhen', Harlow. Speaker to be arranged.

8 OCTOBER. Thursday. The Kent and East Sussex Canal Restoration Group—Ken Parish

12 NOVEMBER. Thursday. The Royal National Lifeboat Institution—Sherwin Chase.

10 DECEMBER. Thursday. Christmas Social.

BRANCH REPORT

New Faces—Following the AGM in March, although the committee remains the same, some of the posts have changed. Francis Booth has taken over as Membership Secretary from Gerald and Angela Parker, who had done the job for many years, and Jeff Osler has taken over Publicity. Previously, Pete Warsaw had taken over the Sales Stand.

Springfield Basin—There is no news about the basin itself, but some from the general area. 'Interface'—the charity that occupies Moulsham Mill—or rather their RATS (Rehabilitation and Training Scheme) have applied for planning permission to build a slipway from the Mill. A scheme which has the full support of the Branch committee.

We had hoped to have a working party on Springfield Bridge, where erosion has removed the soil covering the top of the arch. However, as the Gas Board were dithering about giving us access for plant, it has had to be postponed. We now hope to have it in the Autumn. If details are known by the time that *Windlass* is posted, we will put an insert in. Either way, if you are interested in helping, please ring Paul Strudwick (Chelmsford 358342).

Exhibitions—On 25 April the Branch had a stand at two exhibitions, both taking place in Chelmsford town centre. One, organised by the Chelmsford Society, was part of environment week and featured our Springfield Basin display. The other—'Leisure Time'—was arranged by the Borough Council and was attended by the Sales Stand. This latter exhibition could well become annual.

Branch Outing—We have booked the *Water Buffalo* for a day trip on the Regent's Canal on Saturday, 5 September. It leaves Camden Lock at 9.30am prompt and goes to Limehouse where there is an hour's stop-over, and then returns via Limehouse Cut, River Lea, and Hertford Union, arriving back at Camden Lock around 6pm. The charge for this will be £6 per head—and strictly on a 'first come, first served' basis. Although tea, coffee and drinks will be available, you should bring your own packed lunch. Tickets are available from Don Hair, 40 Nelmes Crescent, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 2QB (Hornchurch 45335). At the time of writing, the trip is already a third booked. If you want to come, please apply quickly

Sponsored Mow—Various members took part in the mow on 2, 3 and 30 May. There is now a narrow, walkable path right along the navigation. The company's rotary mower broke down the week before the last session, but Ernest Doe & Son Ltd., of Ulting kindly lent us an equivalent model at no charge, and enabled us to complete our self-imposed task. BBC Essex and the Press were in attendance.

IWALK—The previous week's monsoons seemed to have scared off most of our usual walkers. The sixteen who turned up, prepared to brave the elements, found—rather to their surprise—that it was a reasonably pleasant day, fairly warm and completely dry although a little breezy. The fact that around 100 runners were also on the towpath and coming the opposite way caused some shock! The low turn-out meant that our net proceeds are too low to purchase a dumper for WRG. We will be sending them a cheque instead.

KENT AND EAST SUSSEX BRANCH—Report by Roger DeL'A. Fitzgeorge

Chairman: Ian Dempster, 16 Dixwell Close, Gillingham, Kent. Telephone: 0634 35627

Secretary: John Morgan, 49 Hillbrow Road, Ashford, Kent. Telephone: 27594

BRANCH MEETINGS

8 OCTOBER. A talk by the Kent and East Sussex Railway Society. To be held at the Eight Bells, Tenterden High Street, 7.30 for 8pm. Parking behind the shops, or in the High Street.

6 NOVEMBER. A talk about the Mary Rose Trust by H. Ricketts, at the White Hart, High Street, Orpington, Kent, 7.30 for 8pm.

BRANCH REPORT

Our February meeting was held in Tonbridge, where David Smith gave a talk illustrated with slides on our 'own' major waterway, the River Medway. Attendance was more encouraging than recently, and this was continued with a reasonable turnout for the AGM. We were pleased to welcome the Regional Chairman, the well-travelled Dave Moore, to the meeting at Hastings, where we afterwards enjoyed Bill Attenborough's entertaining memories of a lifetime afloat.

The Annual Dinner was held at the Poulton Wood Leisure Centre in Tonbridge. Although not large in numbers, members attending considered the evening a great success and we will probably use the venue again. Orpington was the scene of our May meeting, which featured films and a talk by Ghulam Haider of BWB, mainly concerned with the work on Blisworth Tunnel. Mr. Haider is acquiring a good reputation as a speaker and he did not disappoint us. In the 'question and answer' session he was both frank and informative.

Two days before was the Branch Outing for the Handicapped, organised by John Morgan. The boat was filled with children, their minders and stewards, and took place in the awareness that a generous donation from British Gas South East has assured future trips.

Finally, a word from the Branch Sales team, who were at work three consecutive weekends in June and with a full programme ahead. The word? HELP!

LONDON BRANCH—Report by Marion Waters

Chairman: Eric Garland, 39 Valence Road, Erith, Kent DA8 3JT. Telephone: 0322 342296

*Secretary: David Allison-Beer, 61 Winkley Court, East Coate Lane, South Harrow, Middlesex
Telephone: 01-864 3798*

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are held at 7.30pm in the Old Refectory, University College, Gower Street, London WC1. Entrance, including car park, in Gower Street—one way, North-South. Well stocked bar.

17 SEPTEMBER. R.N.L.I. Film show and talk.

22 OCTOBER. Canal Schemes associated with the River Lea considered in Tudor times—Keith Fairclough.

19 NOVEMBER. More Continental Canals—John Boyes.

3 DECEMBER. Auction and Quiz Evening. Please bring something new or old for us to auction.

BRANCH REPORT

One of the problems of being a Committee that represents a large number of people is to be able to feel sure you are representing those people by making decisions they would choose for themselves. It is hoped that the provision of *Windlass* and *IWA Waterways* provides the extra 'voice' of the people that cannot come to the regular monthly meetings. As the response is usually a silent one, we can only presume that no one has any topic that they feel strongly about that is not already voiced by the majority. But here is an appeal to all of you. London Branch has been trying to decide upon a 'local project' to which it might be able to give some assistance, the only ideas we have come up with are already well under way, and the Capital Roving Rally in September will be raising money towards the restoration of the House Mill in Bow. If you know of a project (or even where one should be started) let us know, hopefully within the next month or so.

CAPITAL ROVING RALLY, 19-20 September, Three Mills, Bow, London

The aim of this rally is to raise money towards the restoration of the House Mill. The House Mill is the only tide mill in London and the largest in the country. The Passmore Edwards Museum Trust are trying to restore this listed building back to its former glory, and it is hoped that the Rally will give them the support they so much deserve. Boating will be fun, instead of catching shopping trolleys you might get a bedstead just like in the 'good old days!'—when did you last navigate the Bow Back Rivers and all it has to offer? Mooring will be opposite the House Mill; shopping nearby at Tesco, Bromley-by-Bow, who are giving use of their car park on Sunday. Entertainments, trade and craft stalls, car boot sales, as well as guided walks and trips. Boat entry forms are available from Ann Hancox, 95 Grosvenor Court, London Road, Morden, Surrey SM4 5HQ.

CANAL WALK, 12 AUGUST—Run jointly between the Ramblers Association and BWB. Meet 6.30pm at Osterley Station, circular route taking in parts of the Grand Union.

CAVALCADE REPORT by Jon Kenny

And what did this year's Cavalcade (Little Venice—May Day Bank Holiday) achieve? NOTHING—Oh, except for live TV exposure on the Friday 'Six O'clock Show' with Chris Tarrant (LWT) and more press coverage than ever before. But what else? True, the Lord Mayor of Westminster committed the City Council to lavish amount of dosh for '88's Cavalcade—indeed, this year, the Council were more involved than ever before—including a splendid firework display to launch their new Canalway Brochure (pity about the R.N.L.I. tent, though!); But other than that? Well, the Pageant of Boats saw some excellent entries, *Cleopatra* won the Marcus Boudier Trophy and British Gas on *Tug No. 1* won the best commercially decorated boat; and of course there was the Teddy Bears' Picnic with *Waterways News* doing a bit of judging themselves; the Tug of War had more entrants than ever before, and not forgetting the flying canoes and the skilful handling of boats around a tricky course.



*Cavalcade '87
Little Venice—view
taken from Silver Sail
Photo—RHP*

Reluctantly one has to admit Cavalcade '87 was a thumping success—Ken Goodwin, Illyd Harrington, Mike West and Dave Moore to name(drop) a few were seen to be thoroughly enjoying themselves—in fact, some of the traders were seen begging to come back for more. Thanks to all those who supported it. See you next year—May Day Bank Holiday 1988.

200 CLUB by Lewis Phillips

Together with this issue of *Windlass* you will find a membership form for the London Branch 200 Club. This is an important fundraising activity for the Branch. Last year the Club raised nearly £1,000 which was divided equally between the winners and the IWA. To help us in our continuing efforts to support restoration work, we invite all readers to join the 200 Club for the forthcoming year. A subscription costs £12 per year, which can be paid in one lump sum or by monthly banker's Order. You can have as many memberships as you wish. Prize draws take place six times each year at the London Branch social meetings. Please note that all IWA members are eligible to join the 200 Club; you don't have to be a member of London Branch.



*Don't you dare print one of me! London Branch's David Wood at Cavalcade '87
Photo—RHP*



*London Branch Secretary David Allison-Beer trying to eat an ice cream at Cavalcade '87. The spare hand belongs to David Wood.
Photo—RHP*

HERTFORDSHIRE BRANCH—Report by Michael Wright

Chairman: Barry Martin, 7 Northridge Way, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 2AE

Secretary: Beryl Martin. Telephone: Hemel Hempstead (0442) 54031

BRANCH MEETINGS—held at the Hatfield Cricket Club, Ascots Lane, Welwyn Garden City (near the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital) at 8pm, on the third Tuesday of each month (except July and August)

BRANCH REPORT—It was with great pleasure that we welcomed our Regional Chairman, Dave Moore, to our Annual General Meeting this year, as it is his unenviable task to attend all Branch AGM's throughout the Region, despite his many commitments. This year we have added three new members to our committee, Janet and Ian Packe, who will be taking particular interest in the Grand Union Canal and Wendover Arm, and Richard Thomas who will be involving himself in the eastern side of the county with the rivers Lea and Stort. After many years Stuart Antill has relinquished the position of Sales Officer, but remains on the committee, whilst the position has been taken over by Derek Payne, the well known artist with the raffle tickets.

A few week later we welcomed Dave Moore again at the Regional AGM, together with Illyd Harrington in the chair as President. Following the formalities, which passed quite calmly, Ron Martin of the Caracruiser Club enlightened us with the details of 'Trailboating' in an exceptionally humorous way.

The members slide evening was up to its usual high standard and nine members gave varying locations for their subjects, but the customary sunset shot was surpassed this year by details of the Newbold tunnel being shown. The Chairman rounded off the event with some comparative slides of the Wendover Arm.

Following the appeal for the Anderton Lift, the committee agreed to make a donation of £100 to the fund. It has also been agreed by the committee to make a donation of £150 to the Grand Union Canal Society, for them to provide and erect an information board in addition to those that are already being supplied for the Wendover Arm.

On Thursday 23 July, the Mikron Theatre will be giving a performance of 'The Flight of Fancy' at 'The Old Barge', The Folly, Hertford at 8pm. Our Sales stand will be there, so, we hope, will those local members who have an interest in these things. Moving perhaps further to the east of the county, it is proposed to hold a joint meeting with the Chelmsford branch in Harlow, at the Moorhen on Wednesday 7 October at 8pm. Further details will be published in our programme for 1987/1988. We hope again that local members will come along to support us.

An item that should not be over-looked or forgotten is the Wendover Arm Amenity Document. Have you got your copy yet? This is readily available from Ian Packe, 2 The Driveway, Anchor Lane, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 1NT. The cost is £1.50 including post and packing. Cheques made payable to 'Wendover Arm Group'.

Members who have had trouble with the swing bridge at Winkwell on the Grand Union Canal—don't despair—so has our Chairman and he is taking up the matter with the BWB, (along with other members perhaps). The mechanism as installed is supposed to be vandal-proof and idiot-proof, but that is only the theory. Apparently to get your BWB key from the control box the secret is to get the bridge to close to the last millimetre. Not so much a Ho-Ho, more a HEAVE—Ho-Ho.

Our thanks to our speakers during the last four months. No matter what the weather or conditions, they always turn up at the right place at the right time, so thank you Giles Baker for your detailed talk on the economics of the hireboat trade; Pat Saunders for the illustrated talk on horse-drawn boats; Ian Fletcher for the usual excellent production 'Napton to Bingley'; Bob Hall from the BWB Leisure Services, who replaced Francis Read at short notice; and Dr. Roger Squires who brought us up to date with great detail on the progress of the Droitwich Canal Trust.

It was hoped that by now a meeting would have taken place between the Wendover Arm Group, the BWB Chairman—Sir Leslie Young and Robert James, MP., but after the original meeting was postponed due to the BWB Chairman being ill, a General Election was called, Parliament was dissolved and the meeting was again postponed. However the pressure will be maintained and hopefully will take place eventually.

Finally, for those that have not heard, there will be a 'Gathering of Boats' at Cassiobury Park on Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 September. Entry forms and details from Mrs. B. Martin, Branch Secretary. Cost is £6 per boat and will include a plaque. Boaters barbecue will be held on the Saturday evening. And yet even more finally, on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 August, there is to be a Wendover Arm Event. This is a boat rally, but with events for all the family. If you don't own a boat, then come by car, (but keep it out of the water...) Join in the fun and enjoy a barbecue on the Saturday evening. Details from the Chairman or Secretary.

HERTFORDSHIRE EVENTS

15-16 AUGUST. Saturday and Sunday. **Wendover Arm Event**—Boat Rally and event for all the family. If you don't own a boat, come by car or on foot; join in the fun and enjoy a barbecue on Saturday evening.

29 AUGUST-1 SEPTEMBER. Saturday to Monday. **IWA National Rally** at Hawkesbury. See IWA Waterways magazine or other waterways magazines for details.

19-20 SEPTEMBER. Saturday and Sunday. **Gathering of Boats** at Cassiobury Park, below Ironbridge Lock. In celebration of the 190th Anniversary of the opening of the Grand Union Canal from Rickmansworth to Kings Langley.

GUILDFORD AND READING BRANCH—Report by Colin Ward

*Chairman: Brian Percy, 2 Fir Tree Way, Fleet, Aldershot, Hants. Telephone: Fleet (0252) 625939
Secretary: Neil Morley, 10 Gosden Road, Westend, Woking. Telephone: (04867) 4759*

BRANCH MEETINGS

20 OCTOBER. Bringing news from the western part of our Branch area and beyond, Jack Dalby will tell us about 'Kennet and Avon Restoration'. Joint meeting with Surrey and Hants Canal Society at Christ Church Hall, Woking, (near Centre Halls).

9 NOVEMBER. Brian Williams makes the intrepid journey from Guildford Boathouse to describe 'How not to run a Hire Fleet'. Anyone familiar with Brian's sense of humour will know that this promises to be a good evening. At BT Social Slub, Leapale Lane, Guildford, (near Friary Bus Station).

11 DECEMBER. Christmas Get-together at our regular Yuletide venue, The Blue Anchor, Byfleet, Surrey. (Pub on old road, south of A425). Come and swap waterways tall stories or bend our ear about where you think we're going wrong.

All meetings start at 8pm.

BASINGSTOKE SECTION MEETINGS—Mrs W. Brenchley, Basingstoke (0256) 24692

15 OCTOBER. Kennet and Avon restoration is on the agenda here too, as Mike Smith talks about his work on the canal in Berkshire.

1st TUESDAY of every month. Everyone is welcome to join us for a Noggin'n'Natter.

All meetings at the White Hart, London Road, Basingstoke. Start 7.45pm.

"I JOINED THE IWA—but no one asked me to help"

Well, we are asking you, albeit through the pages of *Windlass*.

We are seeking a successor to our Sales Officer, Mike Phipps, who has run our Branch stand for the past five years and now wishes to take a break. Mike has done the job with great efficiency and enthusiasm, keeping Guildford and Reading Branch at the top of the sales tree, and we are pleased to record our hearty thanks to him. Do not worry about Mike being a hard act to follow, if you would like to help please get in touch with the Branch Secretary, whose address appears above.

The Branch Secretary is himself looking for assistance in the form of a minutes secretary. Our Committee meetings are only ten times a year, we pack up at a reasonable hour and speak fairly slowly! If you can help us keep a record of them please contact Neil Morley, address above.

1987 NATIONAL STEAM AND SMALL BOAT FESTIVAL

A super event this, on and beside the Basingstoke Canal at Frimley Green. The Festival was the first event at Frimley Lodge Park, a 59 acre area of former farm land now being brought into use for a wide range of recreational pursuits, which will include water based activities. The canal runs alongside much of the site and what a good beginning our event must have given to the park.

Over a hundred boats were there, ranging from brand new folding dinghies to an 1880 (yes, eighteen eighty) North American-built steam launch. On the water there was constant activity. Four trip boats ran non-stop and barely kept up with the demand; there were displays of canoeing and competitions for cruiser handling and even blindfold rowing round an obstacle course. Also to be seen on the move were Canadian canoeists in fancy dress, a coracle, steam launches, rowing boats, cabin cruisers, oil drum rafts and more. All the time there was activity for the visitors to watch. Small boat users obviously like to use their small boats! Larger boats which could not reach the Festival by water had their own gathering at Lock One, near the junction with the River Wey, with boaters coming to the Festival by road. no doubt the boats were a bit sad at being left behind, tugging at their ropes in anticipation of the day when they too could go to a rally at Frimley.

On the land were arena entertainments, steam train rides, children's fairground sideshows, sales stands, steam roller, drag racing cars, new boats on walk-through exhibition; in short, something for everyone. And thanks to the good weather everyone came to see it.

Congratulations to Festival Director, Tony Davis, and all his team for putting on a great event.



Steam launch Lesley Ann prepares to set off on a cruise through the site of the National Steam and Small Boat Festival on the Basingstoke Canal

Photo—Ray Carnell

GATHERING OF BOATS

On Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 September 1987 at Cassiobury Park, Watford, the Herts Branch of the IWA, together with the Grand Union Canal Society will be holding a **GATHERING OF BOATS.**

This is in celebration of the 190th Anniversary of the opening of the Grand Union Canal from Rickmansworth to Kings Langley.

The cost of entry will be £6.00 and will include a plaque, although plaques will be on sale during the weekend.

A boaters barbecue will be held on the Saturday evening, but it will be 'bring your own bottle' style.

Entry forms are now available from:

Mrs B. Martin at 7 Northridge Way, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 2AE.

It is hoped that 'Trail Boat' facilities will also be available for the weekend.

The Joys of Navvying—by *Jeremy Frankel of WRG*

A few more shovelsful and the barrow would be full. I leaned against the lock wall pulled off my mud-soaked gloves and attempted to wipe my splattered glasses as the wheelbarrow rose with fits and starts into the air like an early version of a jump jet Harrier. Except that Harriers didn't have dollops of mud dripping off. Bob and Neil swung the barrow-hoist arm around, lowering the barrow onto the lockside. Tim slid the chains off it and onto another which then descended. Start again; within seconds my glasses were covered in mud, I gave up trying to clean them and tried to concentrate on swinging several shovelsful of this dark grey oozing mess in the general direction of the barrow. At least it's sunny, I thought, but then every blue sky has one dark cloud and ours was the smell of the mud and everything that lurked underneath.

'What about writing something?'. I froze, but the shovel and its contents continued in the direction of...., well I couldn't see where. I looked over to my left and glimpsed an almost mirror image of wellies calf-deep in mud, overalls which had started life dark-blue but were now very sky-blue and covered in polka-dot grey. This apparition was topped with a bright yellow hard-hat with the label 'Waterway Recovery Group'. Under the hard-hat was Helen's face also peering through splattered glasses. 'What do you mean, write something?' I stuttered. 'You know, the joys of restoration, going away for the week-end, into the countryside and having fun, not to mention the beer'. The beer, yes I was looking forward to that. 'Yes but how can you describe all this?', as I surveyed the scene. Here we were in the middle of a field, miles from civilisation at the bottom of some filthy dirty, desolate, overgrown, totally ruined lock. It hadn't seen a boat for over a hundred years and we were attempting to restore it to its former glory. We must be mad.

'But if we can convince people that it's fun and we do actually achieve something, like digging out all this muck, laying new brickwork and a new concrete floor, then they'll see we are not mad and that way we will get more people involved and more canals restored'. I stood there looking ever so slightly amazed at her enthusiasm. 'What's wrong?' retorted Helen. 'What's wrong, we'll be done under the Trades Description Act. Just imagine, we advertise a peaceful week-end in the country and what do they find; mixers making concrete, dumpers forever squelching up and down the towpath delivering ballast, cement and an assortment of tools for the variety of jobs that need doing. Not to mention the generators for powering the Kango hammers which break up the old brickwork, and finally last but not least and provided we get them going—pumps for keeping the water out of the lock whilst we are working in it.

'Are we really going to get people to spend a week-end down in this muck?'. 'It's not that bad' Helen pleaded, 'there's hot water back at the hall and the kitchen has all the facilities for cooking'. 'Stop jawing and fill that barrow up, its the last one before lunch'. We looked up to see Bob yelling and making motions with an imaginary shovel.

So we started digging again. 'Yes, go on, you can write something, you're good at that kind of thing'. I looked round at Eric (or Winnie as we call him). 'Don't you start, I've just had an earful from Helen', I replied. 'But you have been digging for ten years' Winnie reminded me. I just shrugged and grunted. 'Tell you what, you write something and I'll buy you a pint'. I peered through my glasses. 'Okay, okay, I'll tell you something though, I'll buy you a pint if we get anyone at all'.

Letters to the Editor

15 Shenfield Crescent
Brentwood,
Essex CM15 8BN

Dear Sir,
re Speed Restrictions

In your recent paragraph on speed restrictions you mention that it is your belief that every first time boater should go on a pre-boating course.

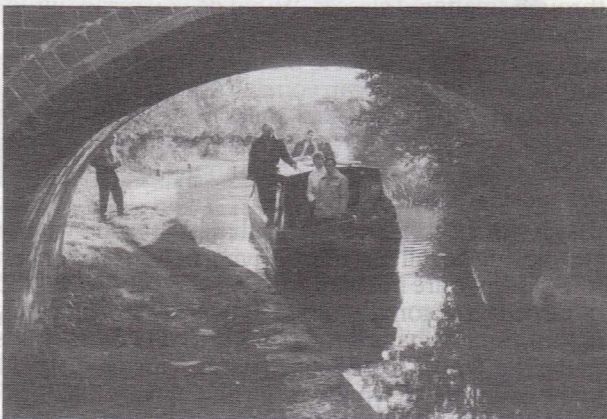
You may be interested to hear of the Canal Cruising course run by the Brentwood Adult Education Centre.

The course consists of six evening lecture/discussions covering such aspects as boat handling, how locks work, ropes and knots, what to wear and safety, with a bit of nature, tradition and archaeology thrown in. We then have a whole day out on the Oxford Canal with the kind co-operation of Fenny Marine.

The next course starts in September. Details in brochure out in August.

Yours sincerely
Marion F. Panzetta

Opposite are some photographs of a typical day out on the Oxford Canal.



Letters to the Editor

58 Pond Bank, Blisworth
Northants NN7 3EL
Blisworth (0604) 858192

25 Tudor Way
Hillingdon,
Middlesex UB10 9AA

Dear Sir,

In response to your two paragraphs in 'Backchat'—Books by members and Speed Restrictions, I am sure you will not need to know about Iris' three books, but nevertheless leaflets about them are available from the above address.

Also, I wonder if you know that we are undertaking boat handling courses on *Bix*, with the approval of BWB, and one or two local boatyards. Not as many as we would like have made recommendations to prospective hirers, but this may build up. In addition we are providing one day courses at a cost of £25 per person.

Leaflets are available.

Yours sincerely

Owen and Iris Bryce

Dear Sir,

In your column, *Windlass 180*, you say "...it is the historic ex-working craft that provide the colour for our waterways."

So why have the majority of owners of such craft in the region either resigned from IWA or refused to join?

Your sincerely

Glenn Knight (*Ex-BCN I.B. Antartic*)

Will publicity officers and regular contributors note that copy dates are the very last dates on which copy can be accepted for inclusion, as in the past late copy has resulted in inconvenient delays to publication.

CAPITAL ROVING RALLY

On Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 September 1987 at Three Mills, Bow London, the London Branch of the IWA will be holding the first of their Roving Rallies to raise money towards the restoration of the only tide mill in London,
HOUSE MILL

The cost of entry will be £4.60 and will include a plaque.

Barbecue, entertainments, trips, activities, craft stalls, car boot stalls, guided walks, demonstrations, etc.

Entry forms are now available from:

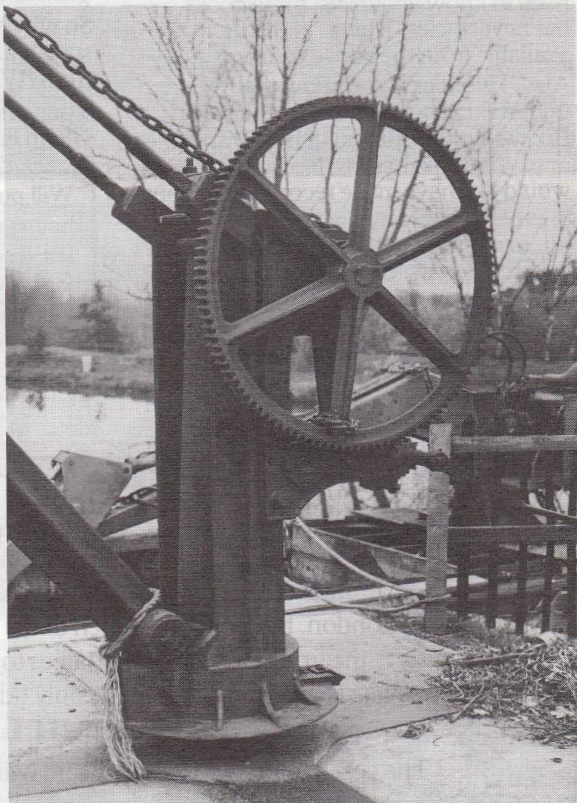
Ann Hancox, 95 Grosvenor Court, London Road, Morden Surrey SM4 5HQ

Basingstoke Canal—Report by Peter Cooper

Restoration Progress Report

The epic restoration of the St Johns (or Goldsworth) flight of locks, near Woking, is now complete and the Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society's parties of lock restorers have moved on. The St Johns operation was almost entirely a volunteer undertaking, with contractors doing one or two comparatively small jobs. It took almost six years, and had its ups and downs, but now the locks are left waiting for their gates to be fitted, and the SHCS's full time workers have started to do this; two of these locks are already gated. The massed work force of lock restorers have now moved a few miles east, to the other side of Woking, to the Woodham flight of six locks. Here Locks 5 and 6 have already been restored by a local group, and Locks 1 and 4 have been the work sites of two local groups for varying lengths of time. This leaves only Locks 2 and 3, and these, which received their first attention in the 1986 work camp, are now being worked on regularly. This is the final round-up to complete the lock restoration on this canal, and is the biggest task still remaining.

Readers of *Windlass* may feel they wish to make a contribution to the final push, to help restore the last locks on this canal. They may even wish to form themselves into visiting groups to come and work here. If they do, the man they should contact to make arrangements in Mike Fellows on Wokingham (0734) 787428.



The wharf crane of the Basingstoke originally came from Lower Heyford Photo—Unknown

FOR SALE—30' steel hulled narrowboat, v.g.c., 4 berth, H&C, toilet and galley, space heater, canvas covers. Ready to cruise. £6,500.
Ring 0895 30715.
