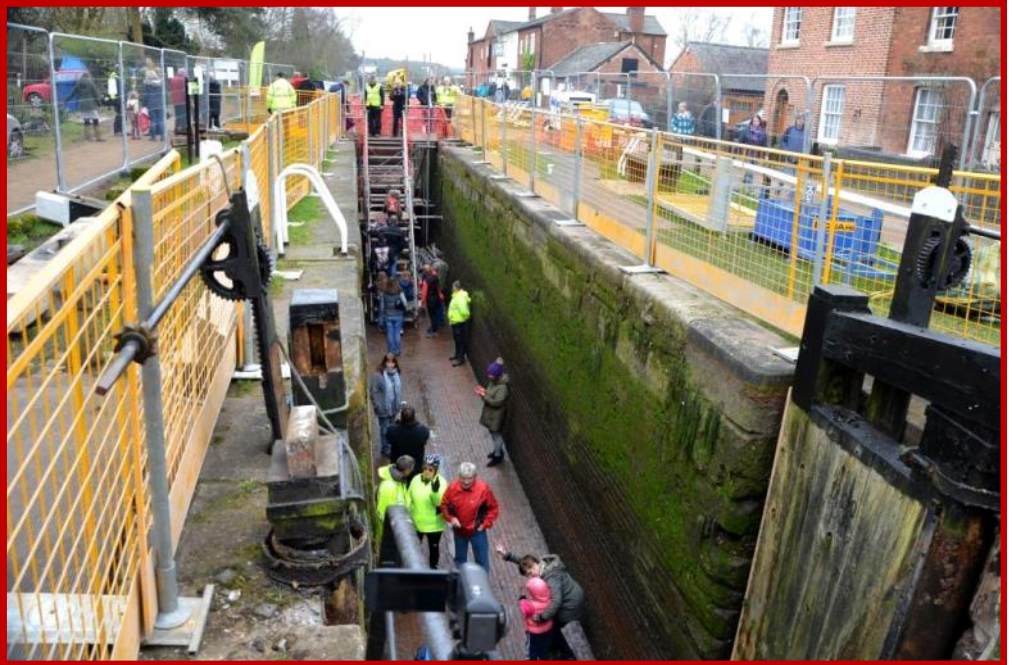


GRAND TRUNK



**Fradley open weekend
18th-19th February
Inside the lock**

Photo courtesy Waterway Images



March/April 2017

www.trentandmerseycanalsociety.org.uk

Geoff Williamson

It is with great sadness that I have to inform members and friends of the death of one of our past Chairmen, Geoff Williams.

He died at home on Sunday 19th February with his family around him.

Geoff was 85 years old and not far short of his 86th birthday which would have been on 22nd March. His record with the Society is more than impeccable, he must have been one of our longest serving members as he and his wife Shirley joined when they were cruising through the Potteries and encountered members campaigning to save Harecastle Tunnel from being permanently closed. This would be shortly after 1974 which was when, and what the Society was formed to campaign for.

Living near Fradley Shirley and Geoff were very much a part of the Southern Team and we enjoyed many happy years at Rallies and Locking Weekends around Fradley as both boaters and shopkeepers. They were even foolish enough to put us up overnight on a couple of occasions.

Geoff was Society Chairman prior to my tenure at the beginning of the new millennium, so he saw our involvement with the latter part of the completion of the Anderton Lift Restoration. But I think his most important contribution to the Society was financial, rather than political. It was Geoff who set the ball rolling to allow us to reclaim gift aid on our membership fees. This was no easy task as the Revenue Dept responsible wanted everybody to apply on-line, and Geoff hated the very idea of the home computer. But he doggedly persisted and by numerous letters and phone calls, he developed a relationship with several revenue people and over a number of years we saw our bank balance rise by many thousands of pounds. It was for this time and effort he was awarded the Wedgwood Trophy in 2002, his second such trophy, the first being awarded in 1992.

Geoff's health had suffered in the latter years, his eyesight hadn't been good for some time and they'd given up boating because he couldn't see. Then he suffered a stroke in 2013 which took away his mobility, and his spirit for life. After suffering 2-3 falls around Christmas time he went into hospital for three weeks but they could do nothing for him and allowed him home to enjoy his last days with his family.

He'll be much missed by those who knew him, and it is with great sadness that Angela and I see another member of the old gang join the T & M club in the sky.

Malcolm Turner

Chairman's Bit

So far, the theme of this year has been "looking back". First we decided to add a "mileposts" section to our website during 2017 to celebrate 40 years since the society began our campaign to get them restored, re-instated or replaced. Harry Arnold has promised to help, both with pictures and documentation, so I hope to have more to say on this next issue.



Then we heard that Phil Myott's milepost website no longer existed. When I contacted Phil, he told us that he felt the site was too out-of-date (as it was created in 2002) to be of current interest. However the site is now available again (via a pointer on the "Links" page of our website). Phil has also done some corrections and even added pictures of old concrete mileposts. [Please note that this is still Phil's site, not part of the society website.]

Next we learnt that Tony Poulton (ex-Southern section chairman) was about to move and wanted to pass on some archive material. So a quick drive to Wolseley Bridge, where we collected 5 boxes of archive material, and 8 boxes of books for the society to sell on our stall. I am currently merging Tony's archive with the material we already hold. His copies of *Grand Trunk* included issue 1 from 1974, and many from the "milepost campaign" years which will prove very useful.

Finally we have just heard of the sad loss of Geoff Williamson, a society stalwart for well over 20 years who held many posts. See Malcolm Turner's obituary (opposite).

No room for an editorial this issue, more from me next time!

Margaret English

T&MCS social calendar October 2016 to April 2017

The location is the Big Lock and can be accessed on 2 levels. For those who prefer not to use stairs, there is access to the room at the back of the building via the door facing the lock, we can arrange for your drinks to be collected from the bar.

There is no charge (we have a raffle to pay for the room hire) and no need to be a member.

If you want to make more of an event of your evening I can recommend the food, I usually eat there before each talk.

Some speakers will bring associated objects and products to be viewed or bought, we positively encourage interaction.

To find Big Lock by road, :

Webbs Lane, Middlewich, Cheshire,
CW10 9DN

Telephone: (01606) 833489

<http://www.thebiglockpub.com>

The room will be open at 7.30pm,
the talks will start at 8.00pm,
in two 40 minute parts with a comfort break.



Contact: Gillian Watson 01606 835 606

Friday 17th March 2017

Trent & Mersey Canal posters

Peter Brown will discuss a treasure-trove of 106 Trent & Mersey Canal posters and notices, mainly dating from the 18th century. These give an impression of the canal company's management practices and worries, in a way which doesn't emerge from a study of minute books or other sources.

Friday 21st April 2017

The work of the Waterway Partnership

Ray Butler (of the Manchester & Pennine Waterway Partnership) will explain what Waterway Partnerships are, and what the Manchester & Pennine Partnership does for waterway user.

Trent and Mersey Canal Society - Annual Accounts

		2016 Accounts	versus	2015 Accounts
Income				
	Bank Interest	Nil		Nil
	Gift Aid	£313.10		£301.32
(Note 2)	Grand Trunk Advertising	£220.00		£120.00
(Note 3)	Membership Subscriptions	£1,680.00		£1,440.00
	Donations	£252.80		£297.27
	Fund Raising	£60.86		£67.00
(Note 4)	Sale of Goods	£570.05		£790.60
	Members Meetings etc	Nil		Nil
		===== £3,096.81		£3,016.19
Expenditure				
	Accountancy	Nil		Nil
(Note 5)	AGM & Annual Report	£110.54		£240.00
(Note 6)	Grand Trunk	£918.55		£1,371.29
	Insurance	£281.93		£295.65
(Note 7)	Meetings	£52.50		Nil
	Prizes and Engraving	Nil		£7.99
(Note 8)	Publicity & Recruitment	£73.39		£154.39
(Note 4)	Sales (Stock, Postage)	£437.21		£789.32
	Subscriptions to other organisations	£71.50		£71.50
(Note 9)	Sundry Expenses	£233.34		Nil
		===== £2,178.96		£2,930.14
		Surplus in 2016 (before Campaigns & Donations)		Surplus in 2015 (before Campaigns & Donations)
		£917.85		£86.05
Campaigns and Donations				
	Burslem Port Trust	Nil		Nil
	Canal & River Trust	Nil		Nil
	Cheshire Locks Campaign	Nil		Nil
(Note 10)	Etruria Boat Group	Nil		£428.86
	IWA Chester	Nil		Nil
		===== £0.00		£428.86
		Final Surplus in 2016	£917.85	Final Surplus in 2015
				£514.91

Notes

- 1) Ring-fenced for Anderton Boat Lift (ex-Trust) £1,601.28 2015 £1,601.28
- 2) Grand Trunk Advertising was significantly up in 2016 as we had 2 extra adverts
- 3) Membership Subscriptions in 2016 includes 2 new life members (at £150 each)
- 4) Sales were down in 2016 by £220 but costs were down by £350 (and nominal value of stock held was up by £75
No new stock lines were added in 2016
- 5) AGM costs were lower in 2016 as the food had to be purchased from a caterer as a condition of room hire in 2015
- 6) Grand Trunk Expenses were lower in 2016 as we only bought 600 stamps (enough for 3 issues).
In 2015 we bought 1,400 stamps (enough for 7 issues) to avoid price rises
- 7) Meetings Expenditure in 2016 including expenses for 2 speakers
- 8) Publicity and Recruitment costs were less in 2016 because we no longer pay for updates to our main web-site.
These cost us £75 in 2015
- 9) Sundry Expenses in 2016 were 6 tins of specialist paint for mileposts (Zinc Rich Primer was £120 for 5 litres!)
- 10) Campaigns and Donations total was negative in 2015 as Etruria Boat Group returned part of an earlier donation.
This was the unused part of the £500 we gave them in 2012 towards the cost of the Etruria Boat Festivals.
- 11) Bank Balance at the end of year £14,452.49 2015 £13,534.64

Stone Town Council approves Crown Wharf development plans

A multi-use development plan for the semi-derelict Crown Wharf site alongside the Canal Cruising Company's wharf in Stone has been proposed by Joules Brewery and is now backed by Stone Town Council.

The plans, which are still being developed and have not yet been presented to Stafford Borough Council for approval, consist of

- * Restoration of the derelict wharfinger's Cottage and conversion into a coffee shop or restaurant
- * Creation of a Joules' Brewery Tap with possibly a brewery shop
- * Creating the potential for a community theatre/cinema
- * Creating the potential for a Stone museum and tourist information centre



Joules' Brewery is now based in Market Drayton but was formally a Stone brewery and one of the oldest in the country. Canal users will be very familiar with the Joules' sign on the old bottling plant nearly opposite Stone Boat Building.



This proposal, which meets many of the Town Council's objectives, needs to make much more progress before it is put to the Borough Council for approval but is widely supported by local residents and canal users and will be of much benefit to the town.

It is certainly preferable to the bulky residential home previously proposed by others and is good news compared with the recently approved plans for a supermarket on Westbridge Park immediately south of the Star Inn.

David Dumbelton



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Albert Southam from Cumbria shares his recollections of early boating days.....

Memories

On taking early retirement at 58, in 1984, it was my intention, within the scope of my pension, to discover all the places we hadn't had time to visit during our working family life.

Sadly, our retirement time together was brief- following a gradually increasing painful illness, Muriel died of cancer in 1987. My world, as was, ended there. Up to now I had become, of necessity, totally occupied in caring for my invalid wife and seeing to all our domestic needs. The children were grown up and away, living their own lives. With the help of family and friends I was trying to re-organise my life.

My son David invited my bachelor brother, Dennis and I to join them on a narrowboat trip on the Llangollen canal..... Now, in my home county of Cumbria, water means sea with waves, rivers with rocks, rapids, waterfalls all draining into the sea, and lakes for drinking, fishing, and irrigation. My knowledge of canals was meagre, I knew that they were invented and built over two hundred years ago as a revolutionary means of transport that became obsolete with the arrival of steam railways.

I quickly became aware that my son David and his wife Jill, who now lived in canal country, and were both educated in canal country, Loughborough, were seasoned narrowboat users, and we, Dennis and I, were briefly educated in the mechanics of canal cruising. Immediately after this experience we were taken to a Caravan and Boating exhibition at the N.E.C. in Birmingham, where I expressed an interest in plastic cruisers, scornfully described by David as "gin palaces", who then took us through a narrowboat also on show.

Shortly afterwards I suggested the purchase of a narrowboat, but eventually took on the challenge of making our own custom-built one. I set about investigating designs and specifications, an impossible task I found, until I discovered a new publication by Waterways World magazine, which gave all the information we needed to start. We had thought to persuade my

friend and brother-in-law, who owned and ran an engineering business with two sons, to build the shell locally, but he declined on the grounds that the sons would need to attend to more profitable work, leaving the boat to him and me. Eventually, David designed the boat and, in about 1989, engaged Chris Cliff of Middlewich Narrowboats to build the shell. He very kindly allowed us to moor it in the yard while we partially fitted it out and made it moveable. Thereafter it became permanently moored just below the Big Lock at Middlewich, where we completed the internals. It was christened *Jamsalad* a barely plausible concoction of the initials of the family that brought it into being.

It was an all-consuming interesting and satisfying venture from which we learned a lot about narrowboats, enjoyed the benefit of many hours, indeed years, of great motivation, adventure, misadventure, exercise, travel, (usually with two cats and a tortoise), and because of its situation, near the Big Lock Inn, a genial atmosphere in which to work or relax. We became part of the Trent and Mersey Canal Society Northern section, which held many of its fund-raising activities there and elsewhere along the canal, so enjoying the joy and excitement of these occasions, together with the pleasure of the company of a wonderful group of volunteer workers, most of whom now are not with us.

And, sadly, eventually my brother, who was older than I, developed arthritis and blindness and just couldn't manage to crew the boat, then David suddenly became ill and died in 2008. Jill was obliged to sell our boat which is most probably cruising still, and I am still a member of the T & M C S with so many wonderful memories.

Albert Southam
Membership No. 521B

Are there any more interesting Trent & Mersey memories to share?
Editor Margaret (see p.23) would love to hear from you!

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the [Trent and Mersey Canal Society](#). They are, however, published as being of interest to our members and readers

Advance Notice: Another exciting social event!

Skittles Tournament!

Stafford Boat Club

8th September 2017

7.30 pm

Competing Teams-

Broken Cross Boat Club

IWA North Staffs, South Cheshire

Trent & Mersey Canal Society



Fish and chip supper in the middle (bring own crockery and cutlery and take home to wash).

More details in next magazine, names to Margaret or Roger please

Stoke on Trent Boat Building Co Ltd

DISTINCTLY DIFFERENT



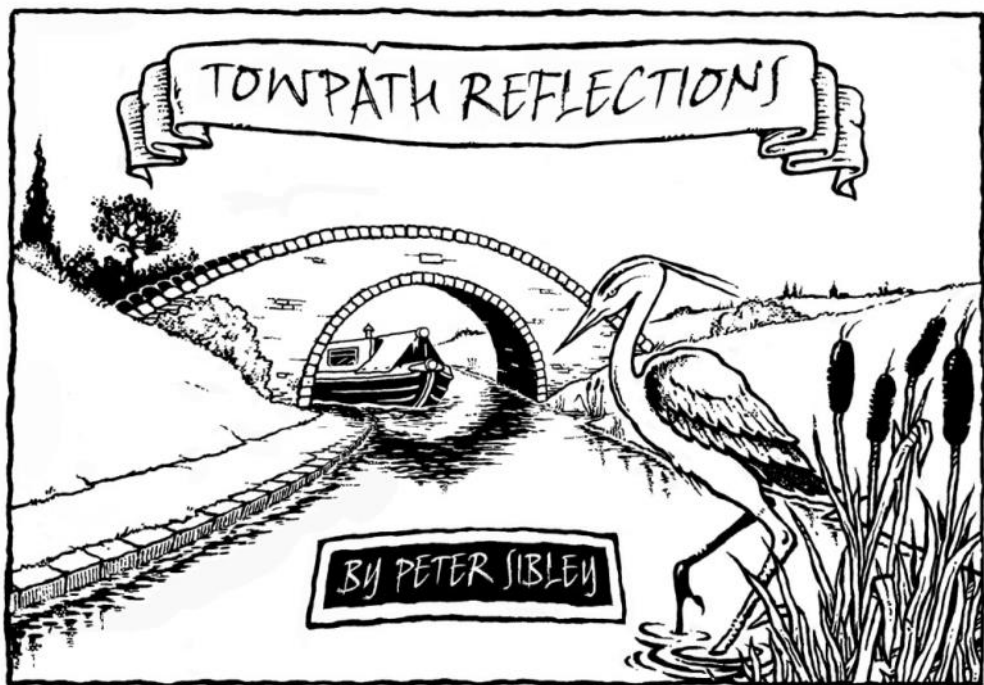
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We left Val and Peter near Hawkesbury Junction (Sutton Stop)

Friday 30th May.

We awoke to another dull overcast day but at least it was dry and no wind at all. We enjoyed a gentle cruise along to Hawkesbury Junction. We moored just before the stop lock which marks the end of the canal and had our mid morning coffee after which we caught a bus into Coventry and had our sandwiches in the well kept 'Lady Herbert's garden' next to the Coventry Transport Museum. After lunch we visited the museum (free) which houses the largest and finest publicly owned collection of vehicles in the world. Even though two of the galleries were closed for a major £3-5 million refurbishment, we



Lady Herbert's Garden



spent an interesting couple of hours in there. We then wandered up to the priory visitors centre which explores the ruins of Coventry's first Cathedral. This was constructed over the first cathedral which was built more than 1000 years ago by Lady Godiva. We then walked round the ruins of the the second cathedral. which

was destroyed in the 2nd world war; after which we then caught the bus back to the canal bridge where we had moored the boat.

Saturday 31st May.

The day was rather gloomy and when we set off there was no sign of the sunny spells which had been forecast, but it was pleasant warm and calm. We swung through 180 degrees at Hawksbury Junction and started up the Coventry canal. We were surprised to see not one single boat moored on the 48 hour moorings which now carry a £25 a day overstay penalty. Charity Dock has to be seen to be believed- it seems to become more idiosyncratic every time we pass. There is a small motley community of live aboard boaters here who seem to compete with each other for the most bizarre collection of objects to decorate their individual patch of mooring. Much use is made of shop window dummies. A covered dock is available for hire if you can access it, and huge piles of cannibalised boat parts occupy the rest of any available space! A glance up the Ashby Canal at Marston Junction looked very inviting but no - another time! We



Top of Atherstone Locks

shall have to give the Ashby Canal a more leisurely exploration soon! Nuneaton does not show an inviting front to the boater. Graffiti daubed on every

bridge and back garden wall does little to attract visitors. However things soon change towards Hartshill and the delightful canal maintenance yard. Between here and Atherstone the scenery is as good as can be found anywhere on the canal system. We moored at the top Atherstone locks for lunch. We spent the afternoon doing a bit of shopping in the town which has many small independent shops as well as Aldi and a Co-op. When we got back to the boat the sun was shining so we let Henry (our tortoise) out for a stroll- the first time since Cropredy he was quick to remind us! He had his usual effect on passers by!

Sunday 1st June.

When we awoke the sun was streaming in through the windows. It turned out to be the best day we have had since our week on the River Thames. The canal was busy and so was the towpath with cyclist and families out dog walking. The canalside pubs were also heaving from lunch time. However when we set off at 8am it was still peaceful. The lock keeper helped us down the first 5 locks. The flight of 11 locks took 2½ hours in all. These locks are notorious for being slow to fill and the 3rd from the bottom seemed to take forever as one of the paddles was out of action and has been for several months according to a local boater. We chose a quiet spot to moor so that we could let Henry out for some exercise. The warm sunshine had made him super active. He headed off down the towpath to the next boat moored at least 60 yards away. Three times I had to fetch him back, much to the amusement couple off the boat!

To be continued.....

Welcome to New Life Member

**Mr Brian Holt of Lowestoft
and Nb. Harnser**



**We hope you enjoy being a member
of The Society.**

FROM LANCASHIRE TO YORKSHIRE BY CANAL – A JOURNEY IN THE 1950's

A TALK BY ANDREW HEMMINGS .

On 20th January 2017, Andrew Hemmings gave a well received illustrated talk to The Society at the Big Lock , Middlewich. Andrew is the co-author of the book:

'From Lancashire to Yorkshire by Canal – A journey in the 1950's '.

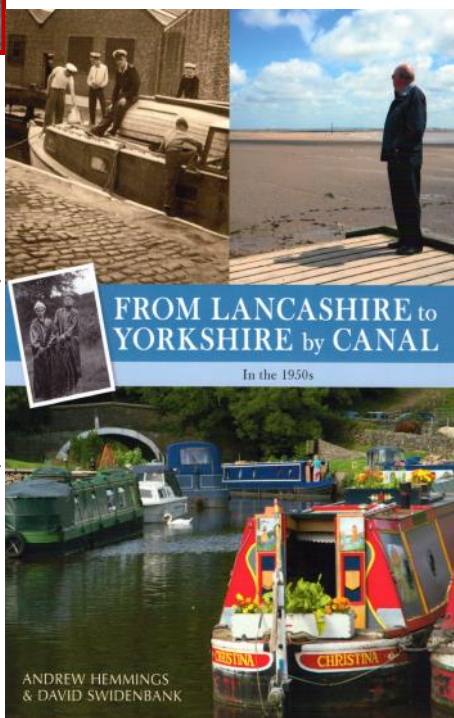
In his introduction, Andrew explained that in the 1950's Britain's waterways

were still full of commercial traffic, lined with the mills, factories and ports of a leading industrial nation. This era is captured in the photographs of the Lytham Sea Cadets who in 1958 ventured from coast to coast via the canals, rivers and estuaries of Lancashire and Yorkshire aboard Training Ship Queenborough.



As they journeyed from the Ribble Estuary via the Leeds & Liverpool Canal and the Aire & Calder Navigation to the Humber Estuary and Hull, the Sea cadets witnessed regular merchant shipping on the Humber and the dying throes of commercial transport on England's tired and neglected canals. They also glimpsed the occasional 'pleasure boat'. Little did they know that such craft and their owners would be the salvation of Britain's waterways.

Combining black and white photographs from the 1950's with stunning modern day images in colour, Andrew showed how canal life had changed over the past





58 years. Introducing his 'cast of characters' he said that he had known for many years that his brother-in-law, Ben Lynch, had made the journey in 1958. Occasionally Ben used to reminisce and to ask if it was possible to repeat the enterprise. It was not until 2010 that he discovered that virtually the whole journey had been photographed by Alf Firby, one of the

Sea Cadet Officers. These photographs had survived in the care of Ben Lynch, his brother-in-law who was 15 years old when this fascinating trip was accomplished.



From this discovery it was agreed to preserve and digitise the photographs, by enlisting the help and expertise of David

Swidenbank, a well regarded photographer and family historian who had published 'Journey through Time' books with Amberley Publishing. After gaining Amberley's agreement David began his search for other cadets. Thanks to the Lytham St Anne's Express newspaper, David and Andrew were contacted by two former cadets from Lytham Sea Cadet Corps, David Appleton and Bruce McCalla. More fortuitously, Judith Eastwood and her mother Jean Blackledge came to learn of the work. Judith is the daughter, and Jean is the widow, of Lieutenant Terry Blackledge, the first officer on TS Queenborough. They kindly provided a further set of photographs and the Captain's Log which is recreated in the book.

Andrew explained the way he and David set about the next stage. Ideally they would have gathered a crew and at least sailed from Tarleton in Lancashire to Goole in Yorkshire along the Leeds & Liverpool Canal and the Aire & Calder Navigation. In the event, the absence of a suitable crew

and the cost and time involved made them plump for a road trip starting in Lytham and ending in Hull.

Using the Captain's Log and Ben's identification of most locations, they planned their journey which took 6 days in July 2011. Andrew told his audience of some remarkable features. Firstly, they encountered lock keepers, boaters and



members of the public who were unfailingly helpful. Secondly, they came



across scenes that seemed unchanged from 1958. These included the Rufford Arm of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, Skipton, Bingley and Saltaire. Thirdly, they surveyed locations that had changed out of all recognition such as Blackburn, Burnley, Leeds and the Aire & Calder Navigation, Goole

and Hull.

By the end of the summer they had submitted the text and chosen photographs to Amberley. The book was published in September 2012 and two book launches were held; one in Hull at the Sea Cadet Corps Headquarters and one in Lytham at St Annes Royal British Legion. Andrew was also invited to appear in Sally Naden's show on Radio Lancashire and has given his talk at the Hull History Centre.





Join Us on a Canal Work Party

Cheshire Locks, Trent & Mersey Canal
Monthly work party on the third Thursday each month
Jointly with IWA North Staffs & South Cheshire

Why not join us for our monthly work parties, on the Cheshire Locks between Kidsgrove and Wheelock, carrying out vegetation management and other tasks in the fresh air and good company?

Work parties run from 10am to 3pm on the third Thursday each month (except December) and volunteers are welcome to come for a couple of hours or all day. The meeting place varies each month, so please contact us for details.

All tools and equipment will be provided. Volunteers are advised to wear old clothes, stout shoes and to bring waterproofs in case of rain and a packed lunch if staying all day.

Contact: John Brighthouse
John.brighthouse@waterways.co.uk 07808878317

Our Indian Summer (part 1)



The River Mayenne

At the beginning of last September we set off once more in our motorhome and crossed the English channel on the ferry from Newhaven to Dieppe. Our destination was the Basque coast of northern Spain but the weather was so good that it seemed crazy to drive for hours and hours so we

headed south a short distance and arrived at the town of Le Lion d'Angers which is south west of Le Mans. We booked into the campsite next to the River Oudon which is navigable for 11 miles from Segré to the River Mayenne which makes it one of the shorter navigable rivers in France. This waterway was originally used to transport construction timber, granite and slate but is now only used for leisure cruising.

Having donned shorts and sun cream, we walked beside the Oudon to the Mayenne. At the junction is a very high bridge which originally took the towpath over the Oudon and teenagers were cooling off by jumping from the bridge into the river. We walked by the Mayenne and in the grounds of a riverside chateau we were surprised to see two very tall pine trees that looked as though they were wearing "short white socks". We walked through the grounds to investigate – the base and roots appeared to be covered in matt white fibreglass.



There are 45 locks on the Mayenne and over 20 of them have hydroelectric micro-generators for the production of electricity.

Barges used the Mayenne to carry wood, oil, sand, cider, cereals and linen and hemp but nowadays it is used by pleasure craft and the towpath is a long distance walk and cycleway. We returned along the towpath to our motorhome arriving at about 18:15hrs and it was 33° inside!

Another riverside campsite we stayed at was at Saintes. This is by the River Charente and only a 10 minute walk into this very interesting town. Saintes was a Roman town and by the river is the Arch of Germanicus next



to the Archaeological Museum. The impressive Arch was built between 18-19AD and was originally situated in front of the bridge that crossed the Charente. Amazingly it remained there until

it was dismantled in the 19th century when the old bridge was demolished. The arch was then rebuilt about 100 yards away so that a wider road crossing over the river could be made. We walked round the remains of the very large Roman amphitheatre and wondered how many people had lost their lives there and also as a result of the decapitating mechanism introduced to France by Dr Guillotin who was born in Saintes. We walked back through the narrow streets of the old part of the town where many traders were doing a brisk business selling ice-creams – it was 16:00hrs and the temperature was 30°!

The river has influenced the development of Saintes and provided a means of transport, trading and communication. Saintes certainly had a busy commercial port in the past with cognac, salt, timber, stone and paper being transported. Today there is much river tourism in Saintes with canoes and electric boats for hire as well as a variety of passenger trip boats operating and with floating pontoons provided next to the park as visitor moorings it appeared to be a popular place for hire boaters to moor.

To be continued

Annette & Terry
NB Emily and Steamboat Sidney
Kennet & Avon Canal

TRENT AND MERSEY CANAL SOCIETY

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Members of the Trent and Mersey Canal Society are hereby given notice that the 2017 Annual General Meeting will be held at:

**THE BLUE BELL INN
25 HARDINGS WOOD ROAD
KIDSGROVE
STOKE-ON-TRENT
ST7 1EG**

**on Saturday 6th May 2017 at 10.30 am
(Room open from 10.15 for welcome tea/coffee)**

A buffet will be provided after the meeting.

The Blue Bell Inn is a friendly local pub situated near the top lock of the Cheshire Flight on the non-towpath side. It has a large bar-room where the meeting will be held (before opening hours) and a smaller room where our buffet will be served at 12 noon (this is also when the bar opens to the public). Reviews mention a good selection of ales!

Also

The photographic competition will be judged with a view to choosing pictures for the Society's 2018 calendar.

In the afternoon members will have the opportunity to join a guided walk along the towpath, led by Jon Honeysett and lasting about an hour. The historic twin locks here may not be as pretty as some further down the flight, but they have a charm of their own, while it is unusual for some of us to see the mouths of the two Harecastle Tunnels from the land!

Existing committee members who retire by rotation do not need to be nominated for re-election. Nomination of any other member for the

committee must be in writing and must be proposed and seconded by paid up and voting members of the society. The nomination paper must contain the signed consent of the nominated person.

No motion can be dealt with at the AGM unless such a motion has been included in the formal notice of the meeting. Nominations of persons to the committee and details of any motions to be considered by the AGM must be received by the secretary at her home address by Thursday 6th April 2017, otherwise any motion or nomination cannot be accepted.

Everyone is welcome, **but we do need an idea of numbers** for catering purposes. Please therefore let Roger and Margaret know (by phone or email) if you will be attending.

Margaret English

Photo Competition

Following the success of our T&MCS calendars in 2016 and 17, we would like to produce another one for 2018.



Please send any pictures you think might suit to Roger or Margaret before the end of April. These should be of or around The Trent & Mersey Canal and not submitted in previous years.

Members will choose the pictures by vote at the AGM, so get snapping and get your photo looked at for a whole month in 2018!

Please send contributions for the next issue to me, Margaret English, by e-mail to margaretetlm@hotmail.com, by post, or by hand. Remember, this is *your* magazine. Contributions from the South especially welcome!

Last date for inclusion in the May/June edition is 01/05/2017.

BRITAIN'S 'CATHEDRAL OF THE CANALS'

Cheshire's Anderton Boat Lift near Northwich, known as the 'Cathedral of the Canals' has been awarded *VisitEngland's* Best Told Story Accolade. This highly prestigious award recognises the unique story-telling experience that the Lift's staff give its 120,000 plus visitors each year. Visitors can visit the Canal & River Trust's Anderton Boat Lift, free of charge, giving access to its exhibition, play area, shop and its tree-top Coffee Shop overlooking the giant lift. Accolades are only available to attractions that are part of the *VisitEngland's* Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme and are awarded following a rigorous scoring scheme based on a unannounced visit.

Timothy Turner, General Manager, Anderton Boat Lift, said: "I am delighted that the hard work and commitment of all the staff and volunteers at the Lift is recognised with this sought-after and prestigious accolade. We are all very passionate about the Lift and its history and try to go that extra mile to create an enjoyable and memorable experience for all our visitors."

"A great deal of thought has gone into telling the fascinating story of the world's first successful boat lift and how it is still working today. So whether visitors come to visit the free exhibition, listen to our experienced boat guides as they float through the Lift and along the River Weaver or simply read the display boards as they walk through the terraced site, we aim to interest and educate visitors from young to old."

The Lift has an extensive programme of activities throughout the year to encourage visitors to this iconic site. This includes a variety of paid events such as the annual beer festival, Summer concert and Firework Spectacular as well as a host of free events such as a Transport Festival, Victorian Weekend and a Wild West Weekend.

The Lift is owned by the Canal and River Trust and was restored in 2002 after a £7 million restoration made possible due to a substantial grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

(Press Release) For further information, contact:

Fiona Young, Anderton Boat Lift on 01244 851867 or at f.young@marketingcheshire.co.uk

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***The Trent & Mersey Canal Society is proud to
support Burslem Port***

Bringing Boats Back to Burslem



**Fradley open weekend
Lichfield Shanty Singers performing in the lock
(CRT Chief Executive Richard Parry watching at the far end!)**

Well over 300 people sampled the delights of this empty lock

Photo courtesy Wateray Images