



The header features the word "ALERT" in large, yellow, serif capital letters against a blue background of water ripples. Below it, "AWCC NEWSLETTER" is written in smaller, yellow, sans-serif capital letters. A dashed white line separates the title from the sub-title. At the bottom, a yellow box contains three columns of text in brown, serif font: "CHAIRMAN'S PAGE 1 REGIONAL REPORTS 2 - 4", "CLUB NEWS PAGES 5 -6 FEATURE ARTICLES 7 - 9", and "COMMUNICATIONS PAGE 11 OBITUARIES 12".

NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



The summer has been fairly quiet on the wider waterway scene particularly following the interest of 2012 surrounding the launch of CRT and the prospect of a time schedule for EA Waterways to join the trust. The latter did not materialise of course and we now face an open-ended period of uncertainty both for staff members of EA and it's Waterway Users. This situation is very unhelpful for all concerned and we must press for a decision at the earliest opportunity if EA Navigations are not to decline due to the pressure on Grant-In-Aid Funding. I believe we should congratulate EA Staff on their ability to remain positive at a time when their future is far from clear.

CRT has been in existence for just over a year and the transfer to trust status has injected new buoyancy into the organisation. I had the pleasure of meeting Richard Parry, the new CEO on two occasions recently; firstly at the CRT Annual Meeting, where I suggested that we might meet for an introductory discussion about AWCC and how we see the current waterway scene. Richard was very receptive and I shall arrange a meeting later in October. Richard attended the Navigation Advisory Group Meeting held on Monday 7th where he highlighted the importance of communication between the trust and it's user groups. Richard is keen to hear all views of waterway users so please give me a steer as to your thoughts.

One item of concern over the summer was the siting of a wide beam trade boat near the lock at Stratford on Avon. AWCC, along

with other bodies cautioned against this development, which was subsequently approved, by CRT and the Local Authority. I shall be talking to CRT Business Managers to explore ways of improving communication and understanding over such developments.

The other area of interest will be HS2 and I would like to add my appreciation to the work underway by Des Bernard in support of AWCC. Des has clearly spent much time on the subject, which will add to the understanding, and negotiations on the HS2 Project.

Finally I would like to express the sincere condolences of the Association to Bobbie and the family and friends of Dick Elder. Dick was a stalwart of the AWCC over very many years and his knowledge and experience will be a sadly missed by our organisation.

Best wishes,
Paul

REGIONAL CHAIRMEN'S REPORTS

LONDON SLOUGH ARM

There have been several problems on the arm during the year, first there was an embankment that was cracked below an industrial estate. Later in the year the abutments to Reeds Bridge began to crack this resulted in the canal being partly Filled in to enable the heavy machinery to gain access to the site. However the C&RT did a grand job to get both projects completed in time for the annual Slough Canal Festival on the 8/9 September they also carried out some weed cutting to enable boats to get to the basin to wind .

The proposed dredging works have been postponed due to the cost of the emergency repairs.

Several AWCC boats attended the festival we like to use the canal as there is still a good, chance to link up to the river Thames. When the dredging work is carried I am sure we can attract more boats to the Slough Arm and The Festival.

Slough Council Borough are in favour,of the link providing its technically feasible and economically viable C&RT will support the scheme in general terms.

ROVING MOORING PERMITS

This is a new scheme that has been introduced on the southern G.U. between Stockley park and Harefield it is an alternative to continuous cruiser status and will only be available to boaters that have been logged on the system in this area **NEW BOATERS WILL NOT BE ELEGIBLE FOR THIS PERMIT.**

LONDON MOORINGS

Jenny Jones London Assembly member is to lead an investigation into the illegal moorers particularly

around Noel Road close to the east end of the Islington Tunnel

I think we should welcome the involvement of the London Assembly as the overcrowding and possible pollution has become a very serious issue.

TREVOR GILLAM

SOUTH&WEST

No Regional Meeting has taken place since the last NEC so nothing to report from the Clubs other than to say many of the members have been out and about over the summer months.

Our Secretary reported that "she joined the Cotswold Canal Cruising Club cruise to the Inland Waterways Festival in Watford where the Club won the prize (a big propeller) for having the most cruising club boats present at the Festival and then we went along to Limehouse Basin and did the cruise through the Thames Barrier under the guidance of the St Pancras Cruising Club and then back to Teddington and home via the Upper Thames. Great fun! Possibly the Wash in search of King John's crown jewels next year, watch this space".

The Bristol Festival was attended by several boats from the Canal Taverners Boat Club.

My own Club, Pewsey Wharf Boat Club, recently enjoyed a Treasure Hunt set by Brian and Jill Rich, much fun was had by all.

We have not had a User Forum for a long time, despite promises from CRT.

The Towpath Mooring Plan for the K&A West of Devizes has been published for public consultation. You may remember following the demise of the Local Mooring Strategy the Local Waterways Partnership came up

with a new plan following their report in November 2012. There new report was published in March this year.

Following our Regional Meeting in June a suggestion was made that perhaps the NEC could meet at Burghfield Island Boat Club. I have approached the Club and it is going to be discussed at their next Committee Meeting in October.

PAULINE KING

MIDLANDS

Christine Potter

We learned of the demise of Christine Potter, who with her boat Polly Otter was well known to many. Christine was a past Secretary of Goldsbrough Boat Owners Club, and also in Boaters Christian Fellowship, as well as being a regular moorings officer at IWA national festivals. There was a thanksgiving service on Friday 20th September at St John's Church, Harborne, Birmingham. Midlands President, Howard Smith, attended, as well as others from the Region. Condolences can be sent to Clair Dinsdale, 12 Symphony Court Birmingham, B16 8AD.

Although Midlands has not met during the summer, clubs have been very active, including these events.

Soar Boating Club celebrated their Diamond Anniversary [60 years] in style. The Mayor and Mayoress of Rushcliffe joined members for a short cruise on Bliss, owned by AWCC Reps Bernard and Janet Greasley, followed by an anniversary service at St James's church, Normanton, after which the Mayor unveiled a plaque on a newly planted Remembrance Tree.

Goldsbrough Boat Owners Club held their tri-annual cruise and gathering. Fifteen boats cruised the Liverpool Link into Salthouse Dock, to be joined by non-boating members.

REGIONAL CHAIRMEN'S REPORTS

Friday saw a buffet dinner and social, and on Saturday, a bus tour of the City, an evening tour of the Anglian Cathedral and formal dinner followed by a light show with organ recital. On Sunday, they visited the Keithley and Worth Valley Railway in West Yorkshire, riding steam trains and visiting the museum and workshops.

Coombeswood Canal Trust held an Open Weekend for the public to visit the basin and learn more about the Trust in promoting the use and retention of the Dudley No 2 Canal. 3000 visitors were welcomed to the Basin, with funds raised for the Trust.

Erewash PC&DA had a hugely successful rally at Langley Mill with an estimated 10,000 visitors over three days, with wonderful weather too. Rangers have now been set up for CRT, and the ECP&DA will be doing the first mile or so from Langley Mill.

Stoke on Trent Boat Club planned a picnic in their grounds in August but the day was one of the few rainy days this summer, so the event moved into the clubhouse. However, they did manage to hold a paper boat race in the arm, surprisingly won by a 'vessel' entitled Titanic!

Coventry Cruising Club had a strawberry tea planned, and Tamworth Cruising Club a boat gathering, but no further details on these two events.

NORTH EAST

Terry Pound

We are sorry to report the death of Terry Pound, back in June. Terry was a stalwart of AWCC both regionally and nationally, and was well known to many of you. Our Regional President Dave Dix, and his predecessor Alan Hodgkinson, both of whom have known Terry for many years, have sent suitable Obituary information for inclusion in ALERT.

AWCC was well represented at Terry's funeral in Leeds - Jean and I attended, along with both Dave Dix, Alan Hodgkinson and Howard Smith, as well as many other AWCC and boating friends - a massively well-attended funeral. North East region has also purchased an elegant cut-glass crystal vase inscribed "In memory of Terry - In recognition of his devotion to the AWCC". We presented the vase to Mrs. Pound in mid-July, and she certainly appeared to appreciate it. It was nice to see that on the Friday afternoon we visited, 2 of their children and a grandson, were at the house.

We were disappointed that our last Regional meeting at Hull Bridge Boat Club on June 12th. was so poorly attended, with only 5 member clubs represented. Our next meeting is on this coming Wednesday, at the premises of our newest member, West Stockwith Yacht Club.

The lock landing at Fairies Hill Marina on the River Calder has still not been built - latest promise is for late September - and we shall keep a close eye on progress so as to challenge the N.E. Waterways Partnership at the User Group Meeting on October 16th.

Another question which we shall raise at this meeting is the operation of flood gates on the Calder & Hebble Navigation. Very heavy overnight rain on the last Saturday in July caused the river levels to rise rapidly by over 2 ft., resulting in many boats at South Pennine Boat Club being dangerously tilted as the flood gates had been left open by CRT. Fortunately several members were spending the night on their boats, realised the danger, and were able to slacken some of the mooring lines, but had no option but to cut several more. A club member despatched to close the flood gates found that one had been chained open by CRT.

We shall push for a spare key to be deposited at SPBC to allow club members to close the gates in any future emergency.

We have heard rumours, probably via concerned lock-keepers, that CRT is

considering remote automatic operation of River locks in the region Selby, Naburn, West Stockwith, Torksey, and Keadby.

Our view is that that issuing boaters with "key-fob" remote controls would be suicidal. Conditions at all these locks are such that expert local knowledge and advice to boaters are ESSENTIAL for safe operation. We have registered our extreme concern with N.E. Waterways who assure us that no action will be taken without comprehensive consultations and safety studies. WATCH THIS SPACE!

The 2012 fiasco of Standedge Tunnel where a member was refused passage despite his having passed through the tunnel on 8 or 9 previous occasions in the same boat, has now been resolved - after a fashion.

His complaints and ours resulted in a FREE! "trial run" by Manchester & Pennine Waterways back in June. Needless to say, his boat passed through with no problem. Hopefully he has received a suitable and genuine apology!

It is sad to have to report the end of commercial gravel boats on the N.E. waterways with the take-over of Lafarge by Tarmac, who have stopped the regular traffic up to Castleford from the River Trent.

GARTH ROBINSON

NORTH WEST

It is usually a quiet time during the summer months, we had a meeting in May and our last meeting was on 12th September.

HS2

This topic is being given a considerable amount of attention in the media during recent weeks. We will be impacted in the North West on the Trent & Mersey and Bridgewater Canals. We need to clearly understand the impact of the scheme and liaise with Des Barnard on any actions needed register concerns.

REGIONAL CHAIRMEN'S REPORTS

Vegetation Control

The towpaths are becoming increasingly overgrown making it difficult to moor. This issue has been raised at one CRT User Group Meeting and will be raised at the other 2 meetings in the NW during October.

Maintenance of Huddersfield Narrow Canal

In August a live-aboard boat sank in lock 9W. It is thought that the water levels in the pounds and leakage from lock gates were factors that resulted in the sinking. Another boat sank 2 years ago in same lock and it is alleged that an RCR engineer said that they have dealt with 78 sinkings this year! The Region has written to the Waterway Manager at Manchester & Pennine Partnership. We await his response.

2014 Raffle Tickets

The raffle tickets will be issued to all clubs attending at the meeting on 12th September.

Bramble Cutting Volunteer Project

On site meeting held with CRT as 'fluid' work has been limited to vegetation control.

A working party is to be held in October to enhance the railway track on the site with sleepers and limestone chippings now that the heritage issues have been addressed.

Mersey Crossing

On a personal note I took part in an organised passage from the Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port via the Manchester Ship Canal, the Mersey Estuary and dock system. We stayed in Liverpool for a week with no problems then left via the Liverpool Link.

I would recommend it.

Bryan Pollard

SOUTH EAST

There have been no meetings held over the summer and our autumn meeting took place on Friday, 6th September.

Change of Treasurer. Alison Clipstone from Whilton Marina Cruising Club has taken over the post of region Treasurer. (Her details are to be passed on to Graham Churton at the meeting).

AWCC Finance. It was explained to the meeting the concerns of the state of AWCC finances and that a sub committee would be formed to review the situation. It was agreed that we would boost region funds by putting an additional amount to the national subscription. It was not certain that all clubs had received their raffle tickets.

Burgees and Calendars. Doubt was expressed about the sale of AWCC burgees for the rally. It was thought that club members would not be willing to pay out the amount suggested. The idea of the sale of calendars was received favourably.

New Clubs on the River. We have 1 new club on the River Nene, Barnwell Boat Club, and 1 new club on the Middle Levels, March Cruising Club. We will try to canvas them into becoming members of AWCC.

Aylesbury. The club has now moved to their new site but the Arm is still not open to navigation.

Middle Level Watermen's Club celebrated their 50th anniversary over the August Bank Holiday Weekend. Lots of celebrations took place with good support.

Transfer of EA to CRT. There was much disappointment that this will not take place as planned but not surprised. In the Anglian region EA said that there is still much to do in preparation for any changeover.

EA Customer Survey. A survey had been circulated to a random number of licence holders to get boaters views on licence fees and services. There was dissatisfaction on value for money of the licence and it was thought that there should be more river inspectors employed to cope with problems. There

was most customer dissatisfaction on the River Nene which came as no surprise as we lack so many services. A request has been made for copies of the survey to be sent to clubs and organisations so a wider view can be sort. Clubs would report back on their findings to the EA Regional Navigation Group.

CRT SE User Group Meetings.

These are planned for October. CRT are asking for questions to be submitted in advance so responses can be recorded before the meetings.

CRT Partnerships. Peter Braybook, Boaters Christian Fellowship, had been approached by the Banbury MP on setting up a partnership with the town. We discussed the roles of partnerships and explained that in our region we have several successful partnerships formed with Blisworth Council, Stoke Bruerne Council and Northampton IWA. Notable improvements have been made in the areas in which they have taken some responsibility. How is this working in other regions? We represented the AWCC on a CRT Partnership Update in Milton Keynes. It was interesting to note that we met a representative from the Salvation Army at the meeting. She explained that because of the number of social issues that have arisen from people who are taking to living on boats with drug, drink, mental health problems they are having to take a role to help dealing with the problems.

Ralph and Jenny Sullivan,

Vice Chair and Secretary

South-East Region and NEC Rep.

CLUB NEWS REPORTS

EREWASH RALLY

I have just arrived back home from holiday and am now going through over 100 emails.

We held a rally at Langley Mill on the old Whit weekend. Up to the Friday the weather was terrible but having threatened to call the whole thing off we decided to press on. Glad we did as everything turned out for the better. Big crowds came to see us and what we had been doing over the last few years. 107 boats were booked in but due to the sandbar on the Trent several could not make it. Money taken on some of the stalls was amazing but of course the beer tent was the star attraction. We have had many accolades about the rally and how it was run "just like an old fashioned rally" came from many people. The next one is five years away when it will be our Golden Jubilee.

HOWARD SMITH

BRIDGEWATER 2013

A Fun, Music and Boats event was held on the 7th September at Bridgewater Motor Boat Club at Runcorn on Mersey. The club opened its doors to the local residents and provided all the fun of the fair. Music was provided on two stages, one aboard the Canal Boat Adventure Project's wide beam ADA and also inside the club house with about a dozen acts performing during the day. There were many stalls selling everything from jewelry to fancy cakes and pastries. The children enjoyed a huge slide and bouncy castle plus a

"hook the duck" stall, but most popular were the free canal boat trips on the "Wizard" run by Warrington Disability Partnership.

The event was run in partnership with the local Halton Disability Partnership and they had got the local schools



The children's bunting decorates the BMBC Club House. Visitors enjoy the days attractions as well as a pint!

involved by creating a string of bunting with each flag being hand painted by the children and showing the history and features of the canal and the local area. This was then strung around the clubhouse and was a real talking point. Food was provided all day by the ladies section of BMBC. It is hoped that this could become a regular event on the clubs calendar. Many more photographs are available on the clubs Flickr site at www.flickr.com/photos/bmbc/ Ed.

Goldsbrough Boat Owners Club Cruise & Members Gathering 2013.

On Wednesday the 3rd of July the first of two groups gathered above the swing bridge at Aintree. They were 9

(Goldsborough B.O.C. Continued)

boats in number & were to be followed by a further 6 boats on Friday the 5th. At about 9-30 am the CRT team conducted the flotilla through the bridge & later a further swing bridge that joined two halves of a housing estate.

The cruise to the basin at the top of the Stanley Dock locks was uneventful. The CRT team and some volunteers awaited our arrival. In pairs, we were penned down the 4 locks into Stanley Dock. We cruised the length of the dock passing the abandoned Tobacco Warehouses. A narrow exit opened up into a much larger series of docks. The route was clearly marked by floating fender balls strung on ropes. After a while we entered a narrowed channel along the inner edge of a "filled in" dock. The waterway opened out again & we had our first sight of Liverpool's iconic buildings.

The first of the two locks lowered the waterway to accommodate a lower level on the next section. Like the Stanley flight is accommodated 2 boats. We were now within the new channel that was constructed to connect the large docks to the older & smaller dock system. We entered a series of tunnels under the esplanade passing the "Three Graces" & the new Museum of Liverpool. The final lock lowered us into the original dock system. We did an end to end U cruise into a further dock that had a gate into the tidal Mersey. It is assumed that it was the original entrance to the old docks. To some extent entrance is still dependant on the tide. There is a "lifting gate"

CLUB NEWS REPORTS

across the entrance. At low tide it is raised to control leakage. From that dock you next enter Albert Dock with its busy restored warehouses. A 90 deg turn took us into the short passage into Salthouse Dock to tie up at our allocated pier. Each has an electric point & there is access to drinking water. Our group had 2 free days to explore the city & visit the Sales in nearby Liverpool One shopping malls. The second group arrive during the mid-afternoon on Friday.

Friday also marked the arrival of members who had been unable to join the cruise. They were booked into a hotel for the weekend. We joined them for a Friday evening buffet dinner in their hotel. We were to have cruised the docks in a DUCK during Saturday morning. However, 2 recent sinkings led to cancellation & a replacement bus tour of the city. On Saturday evening boat crews & hotel guests gathered at the Anglican Cathedral for a tour of the building followed by a formal dinner in the cathedral restaurant. To “round off” a memorable night we gathered in the nave to witness a light show accompanied by stirring organ music.

There is an experience that is nearly as good as cruising a boat. That is riding behind a steam locomotive on a restored railway. The Sunday excursion was to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway in West Yorkshire. The journey to the train station was quite exciting. The bus driver left the M62, near it's summit level, onto a series of narrow rural roads that was not really suitable for large 48 seat bus. Long steep twisting uphill roads eventually gave way to equally steep & twisting downward hills. We had glimpses of a Pennine canal at the bottom of deep valleys. Every village seemed to be a continuous strip of parked cars & the banks where a cycle race course. The driver must have been “worn out” when we arrived at our destination at about 11 am. We spent the remaining

morning & afternoon travelling on the trains to visit the museums & workshops on the route. Some fit members even climbed the steep hill to the Bronte Parsonage at Howarth. In the “mean time”, the bus driver had taken advice. Our return journey was via Halifax, longer but a faster & less stressful route.

Monday was day free to explore & take pictures. Early Tuesday morning 6 club boats left the moorings to meet the CRT team at the lower lock. 9 am was the appointed hour. However at 10 there was no sign of the navigation team. A phone call informed the waiting 1st pair, that we had been overlooked but the team was on its way. Once “on our way” the trip up Stanley flight & on to Aintree was pleasant & relaxed. The second group were to leave for Aintree a couple of days later. Some even opted to travel via the Mersey & the Manchester Ship Canal to Ellesmere Port. The cruise & the weekend events were successful thanks, in part, to Isles of Wight Travel who made all the “land side” arrangements.

John Reeve GBOC

Soar Boat Club Celebrates 60 Years

Soar Boating Club at Normanton on Soar celebrated its sixtieth anniversary on Sunday 16th June. Councillor Brian Buschman, Mayor of Rushcliffe, and his wife the Mayoress, Mrs Vivienne Buschman enjoyed a short cruise on BLISS (owned by Bernard and Janet Greasley) to St James' Church in Normanton, for a special anniversary

(Soar Boat Club Continued)

service. On their return Councillor Buschman led the unveiling of a plaque on a newly planted remembrance tree in the Boat Club grounds. On unveiling the plaque in memory of past boat club members, Cllr Buschman remarked, “It gives me great pleasure to join in the 60th anniversary of the Soar Boating Club and I am most honoured to be asked to commemorate past members in this way.”

The Commodore, Mrs Jennifer Westby, said “I am delighted to be Commodore during this prestigious year and am proud to be a part of a successful Club run wholly by volunteers for the local boating community. Our thanks go to the Mayor and Mayoress, our Club President, Mr Michael Hammond and his wife Paula, and to the Priest in Charge of St James' Church, Normanton on Soar, The Revd Dr John Davey, for leading the thanksgiving service.” Along with the Club members, all past Presidents and Commodores were invited to join the celebrations.



The Mayor and Mayoress Cllr and Mrs Buschman and the Commodore Jennifer Westby aboard Bliss

OUR VOYAGE ACROSS THE MERSEY

When my wife and I heard on the grapevine that Mike Carter of IWA Merseyside Branch was organising a trip across the Mersey Estuary to Liverpool we were very interested. Numbers were limited so we put our

the Manchester Ship Canal travelling towards Eastham Lock.

We had been told that we were locking down with a small tanker... he was waiting in the lock when we arrived. Even with the tanker and ten narrowboats, the lock was barely a quarter full. Down we went, very gently, then at about 9.50am, the lock gates opened and we entered the estuary.

A vast expanse of water, we believe it is two miles wide at this point where the Manchester Ship Canal and Mersey Estuary meet.

In the distance, through the haze, we could see the buildings that form the Liverpool Waterfront. We travelled up the Wirral side of the estuary as advised, following the lead boat of the flotilla; one boat passed their local pub where their neighbours gathered to wave them on.

The Liverpool landmarks, the Anglican Cathedral, Paddy's Wigwam and of course the famous Liver Building, became clearer and larger as we progressed up the estuary. The boats all seemed to go really well and we stayed fairly close, each keeping an eye on their 'buddy'. As we got near to Camel Lairds we turned across the estuary and headed directly for Brunswick Lock. The conditions were perfect and although we were travelling against the tide for the majority of the way engine revs were reasonable with no overheating problems. We found it easier than travelling up the Ribble Estuary.

As we approached Brunswick Lock, to leave the estuary, the water started getting a little choppy and we encountered a few yachts and motor boats. Fortunately for us we were one of the eight boats allowed straight into the lock, the two other boats had to hover in the estuary, not an easy task, until

there was room for them. There were smiles all around as we tied up to each other in the lock, everybody had obviously thoroughly enjoyed this adventure and we felt proud that we had tackled the tideway.

The trip from Brunswick Lock through several docks to Salthouse Dock was both interesting and fascinating, especially if you tried to imagine the docks in their heyday. Now the old docks have been put to good use. There were boats of all shapes and sizes in the marina and some of other old docks are now used for various water sports.

Still in glorious sunshine we moored at our allotted berths and there was a wonderful feeling of camaraderie. That night we all went for a meal together. A good ending to what had been a great day.

The next day two of our ten boats were joined by three boats that were already in Liverpool. They travelled across the Estuary in the opposite direction towards Eastham. The rest of us stayed in Liverpool for a week to enjoy the best that Liverpool had to offer. It's a great place to see and there was much going on, including a triathlon which took place in the dock system and surrounding roads.



EASTHAM LOCK

name down straight away.

We have previously done the Thames Tideway, Ribble Link and the Liverpool Link but to go to Liverpool across the estuary would be a new challenge.

10 boats were to make the crossing to Liverpool on 7th July, 4 of them were Broken Cross Boat Club members.

The majority of the boats assembled in the basin in Chester. Another Mike Carter (the younger according to him) came and surveyed the assembled boats to ensure they were fit to travel the Ship Canal and the next day we all moved onward to Ellesmere Port.

We enjoyed beautiful sunshine for our two & a half day stay at Ellesmere Port. We had our 'skipper's briefing,' paired up with our 'buddies,' prepared our boats for the trip (anchor and chains at the ready, engine checks, secure boat poles etc) and got to make new friends with the crews of the other boats doing the trip out to Liverpool.

Sunday morning dawned and by 8.30am we were ready and on our way. The weather couldn't be better. Down the lock we went to the Ship Canal level and waited in the basin for clearance. There was excited anticipation. Then at last we were off into the main line of



CROSSING THE MERSEY TO LIVERPOOL

On our final evening; before starting the homeward journey via the Liverpool Link and canal system, we dined at the Pump House and all agreed it had been one of our best trips.

We had an amazing experience on the Mersey Estuary, a wonderful week in a great city we would recommend it to anyone. **Bryan Pollard**

Monday

Boated to Capestang where the lowest bridge on the Midi is



Bon Viveur is quite a tight fit in Capestang Bridge (not recommended in high winds)

situated, we managed to clear the bridge first time thanks to Bon Viveur's bow and stern thrusters and tied up.

We went into the village, shopped and decided to have lunch in the square. There is a plaque in the square detailing the extradition of 179 young men from the village in reprisal for the killing of a German soldier during WW2. In the Capitainerie they offered free wi-fi but in spite of the assistance of a Dutch lady I couldn't get on line. We carried on along the long pound with vineyards lining almost every inch of the route, the colours were absolutely breathtaking. Autumn is certainly a great time to be on the Midi. We tied up at Le Somail the base of Cruisers Minervois and chatted to the new owner of La Caunette a boat we had hired in 2002.

28km 0 locks 4.1 hours. (I managed to get on line at the tourist office in Le Somail.

Tuesday

We stopped at Ventenac for lunch and wine-tasting to replenish our stocks. The price of "draught" Merlot had rocketed to 1.2 euros a litre! We carried on after lunch meeting two peniches at awkward spots. At the first lock (Argens Minervois) we came in contact with the only grumpy lock-keeper on the trip; it is deep single lock and Gill was unable to flip the stern rope over a bollard. He kept pointing to the ladder and refused to touch our ropes, in the end I threw my rope up and went up the ladder. We didn't buy any wine, jam or postcards from him! We were politely held up by the young lady lock-keeper at Homps who seemed determined to fill her lock completely as it was the last pen of the day. We moored at the village of Homps for the night where we had power and water.

21km 6 locks 4.4 hours

Wednesday

Very windy and rainy decided to give ourselves the day off and stayed tied up in Homps all day at La Tonniere

Thursday

Boated to La Redorte yet another town entirely dedicated to winemaking where we stopped for lunch. We then carried on to Marseillette several of the locks on this section are doubles and triples but all have lock-keepers. Of particular cultural interest is the double staircase at Aiguille the lock-keeper is a sculptor with a sense of humour, the lock is surrounded by examples of his art including an anatomically precise naked lady on a bicycle who pedals like mad when the top paddles are drawn!



Entertaining addition to lock operation at Aiguille

We took a walk around Marseillette and found that the clock tower used to be one of Napoleon's early signalling towers which allowed him to get orders around France quickly. We had the best Cassoulet (a local dish of duck, sausage and beans) ever at "La Muscadelle" ironically the chef was Swiss not local at all.

19km 11 locks 5.2 hours

Friday

We boated on to Trebes and turned at the foot of the staircase and walked up into the town to shop we saw the world's first 100% solar powered peniche descend the staircase and "Anjodi" the hotel boat in Rick Stein's TV programme ascend. Later we returned to our mooring at Marseillette for the night.

19km 0 locks 3.4 hours

Saturday

Grey and cold we caught up the solar boat and passed them at La Redorte cleared the last lock at Jouarres before it closed for lunch and tied up at Homps to clean the boat ready for the next owners Dick and Karen .We ate on board.

19km 11 locks 4.8 hours

FEATURE ARTICLE THE LOG OF BON VIVEUR PART 2



Solar Powered Peniche

Sunday

Today the clocks went back but it was “Vide Grenier” day in Homps a massive car-boot sale started to set up at around 4am to get the best pitches on the quayside. We were intrigued by the startling variety of junk that was assembled. In the end well over 150

they are fairly common in this part of France.
16km 6 locks 3.1 hours.

Monday

We had a text from Dick and Karen to say they had had a breakdown on the way to the ferry and would be delayed.

stalls were massed around the canal. There was also quite a lot of gunfire, we were told that the hunters were out looking for wild boar. We left it as late as we could to depart and returned to Ventenac for the night, once again topping up on essentials at the Chateau. That evening some of the local kids came to feed the ducks and a Ragondin (Coypu) came to join in the fun, he seemed to have very little fear of humans, apparently

We boated back to Le Somail where the handover was due to take place and did a final tidy up of the boat.
5km 0 locks 1 hour

Tuesday

Dick and Karen arrived around 9.30 and we took their car to their departure point at Agde.

Total km---746 Total locks—61
Total hours---100

We came home via Montpellier by TGV to Paris and thence by Eurostar to St Pancras. On the way home where we crossed the Rhone we noticed that it was pretty much in spate and we later heard that Bon Viveur was trapped at Vias, west of Agde, due to flooding. The system shuts down in early November and the boat will have to stay where it is until the canal re-opens on December 18th.

JOHN WILKINSON

(Bon Viveur and her sister boat Bon Viveur 2 are shared ownership boats)

FEATURE ARTICLE A VIEW FROM ACROSS THE POND

For our 2013 cruise, we decided to go to Llangollen again, across that big cast iron bathtub in the sky called the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. We had done it before but the thrill was just as great this time. I videotaped the entire crossing and it can be seen on YouTube. (Go to YouTube - Yeomans Too Pontcysyllte) We took two weeks for the trip from the Caldron and back. We had a few rainy days, nothing serious, mostly a very pleasant cruise on lovely canals. Since in the past we’ve often had something dramatic happen on our cruise, I wondered what to write about this year.

Here in America we talk a lot about gratitude. An Attitude of Gratitude is said to be the key to lasting happiness. I won’t argue with that. When I think of cruising on Yeomans Too with Erica and Brian Martin and Bess, the first thought in my mind is always one of

gratitude. How did I ever get so lucky, to have them as friends and to be welcomed aboard Yeomans Too every year with a cup of tea and some special pastry made with love by Barbara Wells. This year she made strawberry shortcakes for us. Luscious!

I’m grateful for every volunteer who has kept the canal system open and growing. I love it when we’re locking up or down and someone tells us they are on their way to Froghall. I remember when it was a derelict lock and a murky basin, now it is beautiful. I’m grateful to our friend Chris Vernon for that, and to all of the hard working people who turned her contribution into a much greater amount so that Froghall could once again welcome boats.

I’m grateful to every member of the Stoke on Trent Boat Club because you

are an inspiration to me. I often tell people over here about the Club, how everything is done by volunteers and how you have fun together more than once a week and all year round. I can’t think of a single organisation in America that can boast that kind of participation.

Cruising on the canals wipes away all the worries and stresses that plague me. Moving slowly through the countryside with horses frolicking and cows mooing, building my muscles on the locks, baking bread in the morning, all of it adds up to an incredible gift. For which I am very grateful.

Dr Jeneene Brengelman

Cincinnati, Ohio

AWCC NATIONAL RALLY 2014

**DOES YOUR BOAT CLUB
HAVE A HISTORY TO
TELL?**

The Black Buoy Cruising Club, who are hosting the AWCC Golden Jubilee Rally in July 2014, would like to produce a film, in slideshow format depicting the history of the AWCC and its clubs. The intention is to show this at the rally on a flat screen in a rolling format such that visitors can chose to view as much or as little as they wish.

To do this we need clubs to help by providing photos, a potted history of the club and some background information.

Without being too prescriptive we would like any or all of the following

Background information -

Name of Club

Location

Waterway Authority

Number of boats

Number of Members

Date formed

Date joined AWCC

History

A short potted history of the club (maximum 400 words)

Photos

Up to eight digital photos (a mixture of old and new). Any format accepted (but with best resolution possible bearing in mind these will be displayed on a large screen). It would be helpful if the photos were identified with captions either in the filename or accompanying email (e.g. "Old clubhouse - 1973" or "View of club moorings 1980" etc). You can either attach the photos to emails or upload them to somewhere on the web and provide links. Please be aware that some email providers place size limits on file attachments.

Please send your contributions to Allan Richards via the following email address awcc50film@talktalk.net



A SPECIAL BURGEE FOR THE AWCC 50TH ANNIVERSARY

LONDON REGION HAS
PURCHASED THE BURGEES AND
ALL CLUBS ARE ASKED TO
ORDER AT LEAST TWO

THE PRICE IS JUST £12.00 EACH.

PLEASE CONTACT TERRY WITH
ORDERS AND REMITTANCE
(MONEY WITH ORDER PLEASE)
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE)

TERRY ARISS 313

DESBOROUGH AVENUE,

HIGH WYCOMBE,

BUCKS, HP11 2TH.

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Any views, opinions or comments expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the policy of the AWCC.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

ALERT Electronically

The distribution system seems to work satisfactorily; our statistics show that about 70% of recipients open the notification email directly which we anticipate means that they are reading or downloading ALERT

Club Information Database/Handbook

I will be starting to collate all changes to Club Officer information following the next NEC meeting in September. As last year, I will be aiming to cut off information collection in December, and producing the 2014 handbook for distribution at the February NEC meeting. It may be necessary to make a increase in the cover price for the paper version of the 2014 edition. I should have better information by the next NEC meeting.

At the last NEC, the possibility of collating information on local facilities at Clubs was discussed for inclusion in some sort of directory. I've not been able to progress this project to date.

Not much progress with developing the database for use by regional secretaries.

AWCC Website

Too much summer has got in the way of a detailed makeover.

2014 Calendar

At the last meeting I agreed to collate any pictures submitted by AWCC Clubs or the members towards producing a 2014 Calendar. Response to the request for pictures has been patchy, and I've had pictures offered by only three Clubs/Individuals, and not enough to build a complete calendar. It is doubtful that I can get this together on a realistic timescale for 2014. Brian Rich

INFORMATION

**IMPORTANT & URGENT NOTICE
TO ALL LEISURE BOATERS
STOP THE EU FROM TAKING AWAY
THE RIGHT TO USE RED DIESEL ON
INLAND WATERWAYS**



**SIGN THE ON-LINE PETITION
BEFORE THE CLOSING DATE OF:**

9TH OCTOBER 2013

LOG ON TO:

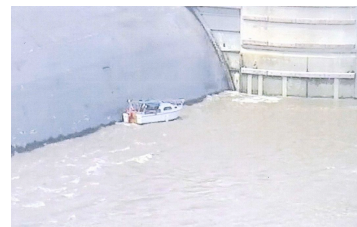


SAFETY BULLETIN No.2/2013

SAFETY BULLETIN TO RECREATIONAL VESSEL OWNERS NAVIGATING ON THE TIDAL THAMES

On the 27th July 2013 a recreational motor boat was inward bound approaching the Thames Barrier when they experienced engine failure approximately 200m downriver of the closed Foxtrot span of the Thames Barrier.

As the vessel did not deploy an anchor it was quickly swept by the strong tidal flows onto the closed span and came to rest against the closed gate in Foxtrot span.



Fortunately a commercial RIB was in the vicinity and the vessel was safely towed free of the Thames Barrier, without injury to the crew or damage to the vessel. This incident could have had a very different outcome and it was fortunate that the vessel was not capsized and sunk.

Safety Lessons:
Following this incident the PLA undertook an investigation, which identified a number of safety lessons that would like recreational users to consider:

1. The PLA recommends that all sailing and powered vessels navigating the tidal Thames are equipped with an anchor, suitable for the size of vessel; with a sufficient length of chain and rope with a suggested minimum of 5m and 25m respectively.
2. Before venturing on the tidal Thames please ensure your anchor is in good working order, ready to be deployed in an emergency and the bitter end of the rope is securely made fast to your vessel.
3. If you suffer an engine failure or get into difficulty on the tidal Thames, deploy your anchor as soon as it is safe to do so, having due regard to your chart of the area. Subsequently call London VTS on VHF Channel 14 (Tel: 020 8855 0315) to advise them of your situation.

September 2013

OBITUARY

TERRY POUND

It is with much sadness that I have to report the loss of Terry Pound who passed away, at the age of 80, on 15th June 2013 after suffering a stroke.

Terry was a stalwart of Craven Cruising Club and the North East Region of the AWCC.

He and his wife Margaret started their boating, with their young family, on the Norfolk Broads, later boating on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in the early 1980's. They joined Craven Cruising Club, at Skipton, in 1984. He soon became very involved in the club and held a number of positions including Commodore (three times!) and Editor of the Club Magazine.

Although he is best remembered for managing a Photographic Shop in Leeds, which he did for over 30 years, Terry's early career was with the Royal Navy at Chatham Docks. He also had a number of years working for the Rugby Football League at their Red Hall Headquarters; apparently one of Terry's favourite jobs was polishing the Challenge Cup before the Wembley final.

Terry was a key member of the North East Region for over 25 years, over 20 being spent as Region Secretary. It was a measure of the man that despite a number of health problems in recent years he continued in this post until the travelling to NEC meetings became too much for him. A lesser man would have given up at that, but Terry being Terry then took on the role of Regional Quartermaster and Craven Cruising Club representative, positions he held until he stood down at this year's AGM.

Terry was a man with great integrity, a ready smile, a wicked sense of humour and a pragmatic approach to dealing with people and problems. But more than this Terry was a man who was immensely proud of his family. As well as Margaret he leaves behind 5 sons, 2 daughters, 16 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild. He took great pleasure in telling me about their annual family Christmas get together, part of which involved a walk, which Terry likened himself to "Moses leading the tribe of Israel to the Promised Land"! *David Dix NE Region*



RICHARD (DICK) ELDER

WE ARE SADDENED TO REPORT THE
DEATH OF RICHARD DICK ELDER
FORMER A.W.C.C. SOUTH AND WEST
REGIONAL CHAIRMAN.

THERE WILL BE A FULL OBITUARY IN THE
NEXT ISSUE OF ALERT

CHRISTINE POTTER

We are saddened to announce that Christine Potter died peacefully on the 15th August following a long illness. Christine was an IWA member who was harbour master at IWA Festivals for the disabled moorings for very many years as well as being an active member of IWA Birmingham Branch. A thanksgiving service for Christine's life is to take place on Friday 20th September at 12 noon at St John's Church, Harborne, Birmingham B17 9PT and will be followed by a private cremation.

(reproduced courtesy of the IWA Bulletin news letter)



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SAVE MONEY WITH YOUR OWN PUMP OUT SYSTEM

In these financially “challenging” times, perhaps it’s time to consider owning your own on-board pump out system!

LeeSan, the Warwickshire based Marine Sanitation Specialists, offer a simple hand operated portable unit which costs just £316.58 (about the price of 21 pump outs). This system includes a robust and reliable single action diaphragm pump with detachable pump handle, mounted on a strong storage panel. Also included are 2 metres of LeeSan pump out hose with a screw in sight glass connection which meets ISO standards to fit all European ISO Standard deck fittings and 10 metres of strong “layflat” discharge hose stored on a rotating drum, complete with end fittings. When in the “stowed” position the complete system is extremely light and simple to carry. An electric version is available for £366.36.

As well as not having to pay for a pump out, owning your own system means that emptying your waste tanks can be carried out in many more locations, not just where there is a pump out station. It also means that this can be done at almost any time, even when yards, marinas or pump stations are closed or unmanned.

For light commercial use, boat clubs and even for end-of-garden moorings, this year LeeSan has launched a wheeled, mobile pump out unit. This easily transportable, electric pumped unit on its neat, stylish, two wheeled trolley provides storage for both suction and discharge hoses. Its all weather construction allows it to be stored outside, (where it can be seen as a visible support to commercial, environmental requirements) while its compact size allows it to unobtrusively fit almost anywhere.

For more information on LeeSan on-board pump out systems and on all sorts of marine sanitation equipment:

Lee Sanitation Ltd. Tel: 01295 770000 – Fax: 01295 770022



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