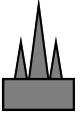




The Inland
Waterways
Association

Issue 11



Lichfield Branch

www.waterways.org.uk/lichfield

Spring 2015

Lichfield Lines

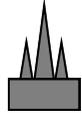


March Work Party—See Page 4

The newsletter of IWA Lichfield Branch

The IWA may not agree with opinions expressed in this magazine but encourages publication as a matter of interest. Nothing printed may be construed as policy, or as an official pronouncement, unless specifically identified as such.

The Inland Waterways Association is a non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee. Registered in England no. 612245. Registered as a charity no. 212342



Branch Chairman's Report

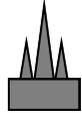
We are now at the start of a new IWA year having held our Branch AGM on March 15th. After the AGM we were lucky to have two presentations. Margaret Beardsmore gave us an excellent slide show of our branch work parties at Rugeley (which reminded us of just how much has been achieved there) followed by a talk by IWA National Chairman Les Etheridge at which he was able to answer members questions.

Neil Hodgson has finished his three year stint on the committee and has stood down in order to pursue some of his other hobbies. We will still be seeing him at our branch meetings. Christine Watkins previously a co-opted committee member has been elected onto the committee as Minutes Secretary and John Stockland has been re-elected to the committee and has agreed to take on the role of Speakers' Secretary taking over from Peter Chandler who has done a great job for the last few years for which we are very grateful. There has been a slight "Cabinet reshuffle" as you can see from the list of committee members on page 14.

Summer is traditionally a quieter time of year with fewer formal meetings but we have organised plenty of activities for those of you who want something different to do over the summer and hope that you will be able to join in with them. This year it would be really good if we can get to grips with tackling other areas where we find Himalayan Balsam. We have already identified that it is massing in the woods close to Great Haywood Junction of the Trent and Mersey, in the stretch of Staffs & Worcs canal below Park Gate Lock and around Wychnor on the navigable section of the river Trent. We have successfully negotiated with CRT for the use of their little aluminium boat so that we can reach off-side outbreaks of this attractive but destructive plant. We have set a date for our first attempt at Balsam bashing this year as the 17th June. (See Page 2 for latest details) It is essential that we tackle this plant early to avoid it spreading further than it already has. Those of you who cruised the southernmost section of the Staffs & Worcester canal last year will see just how troublesome it can be with huge swathes of Himalayan Balsam plants as much as 7-8 feet tall invading the towpaths and making them almost impossible to walk along. We must not allow it to take hold in our area.



I hope that you all have a terrific summer.



Forthcoming Events

All Lichfield Branch meetings are held at Martin Heath Hall, Christchurch Lane, (off Walsall Road), Lichfield WS13 8AY 7:15 for 7:30pm

Wednesday 3rd June 2015—WALK

Ashby Canal Evening Walk. Meet at 5:15 for a 5:30 pm start from the car park of The Lime Kilns PH on the A5 Watling Street, near Hinckley, Leicestershire, LE10 3ED. A 5 mile, dog-friendly, circular walk on flat farm tracks and the canal towpath, with no stiles. The walk should take around 2 hours, returning to The Lime Kilns for refreshments and an optional meal. Held jointly with Ashby Canal Association. Contact Clive Walker on 01827 282298 or clive.walker@waterways.org.uk

Wednesday 17th June 2015—HIMALAYAN BALSAM BASH

We will be picking Balsam between Wychnor lock and Alrewas lock. The CRT small boat will be launched between 2:00pm and 3:00pm at Wychnor lock. Meeting time 3:00pm by Bridge 44 (above Wychnor Lock). If you are interested in helping to do a spot of canal-side “weeding” or in becoming a team leader to help tackle this weed, please would you let me know by phoning 01543 491161 or emailing helen.whitehouse@waterways.org.uk.

Remember to wear stout boots, trousers and gardening gloves when you come along.

It may be easier to park in Alrewas and walk downstream. We hope to be finished by 6.0pm at the latest.

Wednesday 15th July 2015—WALK

Join us for a short exploratory walk along the newly acquired Summerhill section of the Lichfield Canal to and over the New Cranebrook Culvert and up to the M6 Toll Aqueduct returning to the Oddfellows at the Boat for an optional meal. Stout shoes/boots recommended. Led by Peter Buck, Engineering Director of the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust.

Meet 6:45pm for 7:00pm at the Oddfellows at the Boat pub (formerly The Boat Inn), Walsall Road A461, Summerhill, nr Muckley Corner, WS14 0BU.

Bookings for the meal at 8:30 pm are needed by 1st July. To reserve places see the menu and booking form on the website www.waterways.org.uk/lichfield

Contact Helen Whitehouse helen.whitehouse@waterways.org.uk or 01543 491161

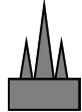
Sunday 2nd August 2015—PROPOSED LOCK WIND

On Sunday, 2nd August 2015, we hope to hold a fund-raising/recruiting/information lock-wind at Barton Turn Lock on the Trent & Mersey canal (near Barton under Needwood) between the hours of 10:00am and 4:00pm.

The idea is to give information and leaflets out about the IWA to boat crews passing through the lock and to briefly discuss the advantages of being in IWA. We will also offer to work the lock for them in return for a donation to IWA funds.

We will need people who man our small branch sales stands and hopefully sell knick-knacks and books, people to work the locks and people who are happy to give out leaflets and chat about IWA.

Barton Lock is situated adjacent to the Barton Turns pub. We will also have refreshments available and a small gazebo will be erected beside the lock to protect us from the sun!



Anyone who is working the lock will need to have been assessed as competent enough to do so!! We are hopeful that one of our members will be approved by CRT to perform the assessment!! I know! I know!!

At 4:00pm we will have a barbeque for all those who have taken part (and their nearest and dearest) in a nearby canal-side garden. This should be great fun.

Before we finalise the details, we need to be assured that we will have enough members willing to take part to make the event viable. Please would anyone who might be interested in taking part (even if only for a couple of hours) contact Lichfield@waterways.org.uk or telephone Helen Whitehouse on 07766 687102 to register their interest as soon as possible.

Wednesday 16th September 2015

Our new season of meetings restarts on September 16th 2015, 7:15 for 7:30 pm at Martin Heath Hall, Christchurch Lane (off Walsall Road), Lichfield, WS13 8AY. Keep an eye on our website www.waterways.org.uk/lichfield for full details.

For further information about our meetings please contact John Stockland on 0121 308 0293 or email: john.stockland@waterways.org.uk.

Adjacent Branches Calendar

The **Birmingham, Black Country and Worcestershire Branch** hold their meetings at Coombeswood Canal Trust, Hawne Basin, Herewood Rise, Halesowen B62 8AW 7:15 for 7:30pm

The **Warwickshire Branch** hold their meetings at the Sports Connexion Leisure Club, Leamington Road, Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Coventry, CV8 3FL. 7:30pm

Wednesday 10th June 2015

A walk at Bascote Locks.. Meet at 7:30pm at Welsh Road lock car park NGR SP385640

Wednesday 8th July 2015

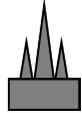
Saltisford Canal Arm tour and barbecue. Meet 7:30pm at Saltisford Canal Trust Centre, Budbrooke Road, Warwick CV34 5RJ NGR SP271656

The **North Staffs and South Cheshire Branch** hold their meetings at Stoke on Trent Boat Club, Endon Wharf, Post Lane, Endon, Stoke on Trent ST9 9DT. 7:45 for 8pm

Recent Activities

Walk Tuesday 5th May 2015 Huddlesford, Whittington and the Coventry Canal

Around thirteen hardy walkers and a dog, a mixture of regulars and newcomers, set off from The Plough Inn car park at 10:15 under a leaden sky. We headed first in the direction of Whittington passing the entrance to Lichfield Cruising Club on our right. At Huddlesford Farm we turned south west onto a grass track, and as if on cue, a brief squally shower blew straight into our faces as we crossed first Cappers Lane and then Darnford Lane. The weather improved as we walked towards Whittington golf course, where we crossed the proposed line of HS2 for a second time. Skirting the outward greens we continued eastwards along Sandy



Lane and a ploughed field, where we passed the redundant rifle range, and extensive yellow rape fields on our right, we then zigzagged through the polytunnels of Peel Farm to join the Coventry Canal at Hademore House Bridge, where a group photo was taken, and the sun came out. We then followed the Coventry Canal around Whittington back towards Huddlesford, passing the IWA plaque near Whittington Bridge. This plaque commemorates the point where the Trent and Mersey met the Birmingham and

Fazeley Canal after the original builders of the Coventry Canal ran out of funds. At bridge 79 we were greeted by Eric Wood and his wife, founding members of the Lichfield & Hatherton Canal Trust, whose house backs onto the canal.

Six miles and two hours after setting off, we arrived back at The Plough Inn, Huddlesford where we stayed for lunch and refreshment.

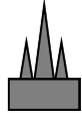
Clive Walker 9th May 2015

Work Party 20th-23rd March 2015

Coinciding exactly with the peak of the partial solar eclipse, our work party at Brindley Bank could not have had a more auspicious start as we assembled at 9.30 on the Friday morning. Although missing 95% of the sun initially made for a somewhat chilly beginning, as it gradually reappeared the weather set fair for a dry and sunny day and it remained that way until the end of work on the Monday morning.

The purpose of our gathering was to complete the resurfacing of the offside footpath between the aqueduct and the bypass bridge that we had started last November. On that occasion, a combination of dreadfully wet weather and some equipment problems had curtailed the work after a week with the task only two-thirds completed, although the basic stone surface laid throughout has made walking this section much easier over the winter.





Another 30 tonnes of roadstone had been ordered, although rather more than that delivered, and Margaret and Derek Beardsmore, our organisers, had arranged the hire of two motorised wheelbarrows and an excavator to load them, with the costs again being borne by the Canal & River Trust. We 'borrowed' Terry Brown and Keith Grice from LHCRT to man a mini excavator which was used to load hardcore into powered barrows and

wheelbarrows. However, it was up to Lichfield Branch and local volunteers to supply the rest of the labour and we were very pleased with the numbers who came and how hard they all worked. So hard in fact that what we had expected to take 4 days was completed in 3, helped by the pleasant spring weather.

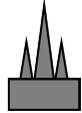
The first 2 days were spent barrowing stone to raise the level of the path up to its full thickness, using hand pushed wheelbarrows as well as the motor barrows to speed up the job. On delivery the tipped stone was then raked level and consolidated with a whacker plate. The stone provided this time included some fines which, when mixed together, gave a good firm base with a smoother surface than on our previous lengths of path. The stone was laid up to the top of the edging boards to give us a well defined footpath, 1.2 metres wide (4 feet in old money). Progress was steady with half the length finished on day one and the full length conveniently completed by Saturday afternoon. Sunday was spent moving some of the excess stone to fill in low areas between the path and the edge of the canal, around the mooring rings we installed in November 2012. We then barrowed a load of top soil, saved from our first path laying work above the Bloody Steps in March 2013 to provide what we hope will become a nice grassy and well drained canalside strip, once the seeds grow.

A small group returned on Monday morning to finish moving the left over stone from behind the pumping station, where South Staffs Water had kindly permitted us to work from, to form a small mountain near the foot of the steps which will no doubt find suitable future uses.

Throughout the weekend the workers had been sustained by tea and cake and excellent picnic lunches in the gazebo, thanks to Margaret and Derek's boat being conveniently moored alongside, and several volunteer galley slaves and cake makers. Everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy the occasion despite no doubt a few aches and pains towards the end from muscles not used to so much exercise. Thanks to all who contributed to the work, the organisation and the catering; you know who you are, and some of you feature in these photos!

Margaret and Derek have since been down to the site again and spread some more grass seed where needed, so we'll either have a nice grassy verge or some very fat birds!

Watch out for email notifications about future work parties which won't be quite so hardcore. We're planning to do some general tidying up and painting towards the Brereton end of



Rugeley, more work around the historic tramway at Brindley Bank, and start to build up the canal bank at St Augustine's Field (by the Rugby Club) using sandbags.

Would you fancy being the person officially 'in charge' at a work party morning? We badly need someone who would volunteer to be there for an odd morning occasionally. It's not difficult and you would have all the help you needed. Give Margaret Beardsmore a ring on 07581 794111 or email Margaret.beardsmore@waterways.org.uk if you think you might be interested and want more details.



The Team celebrating completing the job

Report Margaret Beardsmore & Phil Sharpe

Alrewas, Orgreave & Fradley Junction Walk - Tuesday 3rd March 2015

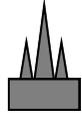
A bright and breezy day greeted the 25 walkers who met up in the car park of The Swan Inn, Fradley Junction. Most of the attendees were newcomers to the walk and the IWA; they had heard about the event through the regular newsletter. Our route covered 5.7 miles across flat terrain with just one stile.

We set off at a fair pace eastwards along the tarmaced towpath, before turning left at Keeper's Lock to pick up the approach road to Alrewas Hayes. The avenue is lined with attractive tall sedge grass, which apparently will be harvested for burning in Rugeley power station.

Alrewas Hayes is a privately owned country house dating back to the 1700s. It also serves as a popular wedding venue, and the group posed for a picture in front of its attractive facade.

We then continued northwards along a clearly defined farm track with a view westwards towards Cannock Chase. This was the exposed section of the walk where the wind could be felt whipping unhindered across open fields. Still on public footpaths we skirted and eventually crossed a small brook, called the "Ashby Sitch" on OS maps. Two of the walkers remarked that the name *Sitch* is a term commonly found in the Burton upon Trent and Shrewsbury areas to refer to local streams, but the name seemed out of place here since we were neither in those localities, nor did the stream ever reach Ashby!

After two and a half miles we cautiously crossed the busy A513 to reach the hamlet of Orgreave, where we paused briefly for liquid refreshment and to investigate the Grade II listed Orgreave Hall. This 18th century house has connections with Shugborough Hall, since it was once owned by Viscount Anson (Earl of Lichfield). We then continued across farmland in the direction of Alrewas. The public footpath takes you towards, and eventually past, a row of very tall conifers. These shield the Orgreave Estate from a view of Alrewas High Pressure Gas



Compressor Station. Fortunately we had no smokers in our group!

With the sight of Alrewas Mill ahead of us we eventually reached the single stile, which took us over the leat on a concrete bridge and into Alrewas itself.

The group leader stayed behind to check all the walkers and dogs had negotiated the stile. As we left the stile the walkers inadvertently split up into two distinct groups at a junction in the road. The front group using local knowledge turned right out of Mill Lane and join the Trent

and Mersey canal at bridge 48. Unaware of this 'breakaway', the undersigned continued along his intended route and turned left with the remainder of the group towards bridge 46 and a chance to view where the Trent and Mersey canal enters the river Trent.

Thoughts of Corporal Jones shouting "Don't Panic" came to mind, but fortunately it is not possible to get lost on a towpath (?) and both groups found their independent ways back to the start, passing Bagnall Lock, Common Lock and the three locks east of the junction.

Splitting up actually worked in our favour, because it meant we got served quicker at The Swan Inn, who had been notified of our walk. The food, drink and ambience were excellent, and it was good to see so many new faces.

Report and photo by Clive Walker

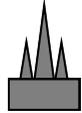
WRG's Summer Canal Camps

IWA's Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) launched its 2015 working holidays at the end of January. 'Canal Camps' offer a unique opportunity to volunteer and learn new skills, whilst exploring amazing parts of Britain's industrial heritage. This year we have 27 Canal Camps planned on 12 different canal restoration projects. This summer we will be traveling throughout England and Wales – offering volunteers the chance to **rebuild bridges** on the Ashby Canal, **restore a lock** on the Stover Canal, or **improve towpaths** on the Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation.

Already this year WRG volunteers have been working hard having cleared vegetation and undertaken tow path improvement works on the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation on the February Canal Camp. Over 40 volunteers also spent two weeks brick laying at Bowbridge Lock on the Cotswold Canals. A bit closer to home found 100 volunteers in April clearing the Birmingham Canal Navigations (BCN) on 18th and 19th April. Volunteers spent the weekend clearing over **40 tonnes** of rubbish along the BCN Old Main Line at Smethwick Junction and surrounding locks.

In 2014 WRG spent 40,000 volunteer hours working towards the restoration of derelict waterways and we want to do even more in 2015! If you'd like to know more about volunteering with WRG please contact Jenny or Amber at WRG Head Office – 01494 783 453 ext 604, email enquiries@wrg.org.uk or visit the WRG website www.wrg.org.uk [Each camp costs £56 and is open to anyone aged over 18].

To support these camps and enable them to take place WRG owns a set of four vans. These



vans will travel around 10,000 miles annually across the country to ensure WRG keeps running smoothly.



Help keep WRG on the Move – £120,000 Appeal

Since WRG first purchased the set of vans around eight years ago, they have been driven a total of **400,000 miles**. This is the equivalent of travelling around the world sixteen times! WRG's vans play a vital role transporting volunteers, equipment and tools on WRG's week-long Canal Camps and weekend digs across England and Wales, and without them WRG couldn't continue to support canal restoration. The current fleet of four much-loved Transit vans needs to be retired and it is time to find new sets of wheels for the next generation of volunteers. IWA has launched an appeal to help WRG raise £120,000 to purchase the four vans with the aim of buying two vans in 2015 and a further two in 2016.

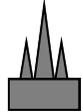
We can't do this without you. The appeal needs the support of people like you that are passionate about waterways restoration to help reach the target. If you would like to help WRG get the essential equipment for restoring canals then please make a donation or get involved in one or more of the many exciting events and activities that will take place throughout the appeal.

Ways to Donate

Online: See www.wrg.org.uk/wrgvanappeal for how to donate via the Virgin Money Giving appeal page.

Cheque: Make cheques payable to The Inland Waterways Association and send them to WRG Van Appeal, Island House, Moor Road, Chesham, HP5 1WA.

Debit/Credit Card or Direct Debit: See the appeal leaflet inside the current issue of Waterways that explains how to pay by credit/debit card or set up a direct debit.



If you would like any further information on the appeal visit www.wrg.org.uk/wrgvanappeal or contact Toby Gomm at 01494 783453 ext. 611.

Planning Matters

Phil Sharpe, Planning Officer

This has been a slightly quieter quarter with about 50 planning matters, large and small, dealt with between mid January and mid April. As usual, this report highlights just the more notable ones, but they are all summarised in the monthly notes on the Planning page of our website and if anybody would like further information please contact me.

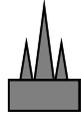
On the **Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal** at Otherton Boat Haven it is proposed to replace an untidy collection of sheds and containers by a single permanent building to include reception, offices, stores, toilet facilities and accommodation for a manager. This will improve the appearance, facilities and security of the site and has been supported.

Along the **Trent & Mersey Canal** the plans for the housing development at Armitage Road in Rugeley have been amended as we requested to replace 3 of the houses that were too close to the canal by 2 houses set further back. At Fradley Junction the alternative rear access to the Kingfisher Holiday Park that we have long advocated has at last been approved and is estimated to reduce vehicle movements along the towpath by 50-60 per day on summer weekends, which will help alleviate congestion and improve safety. At Alrewas the proposed housing area at Dark Lane has been reduced again and is now distant from the canal, and the Alrewas Neighbourhood Plan has proposed a Local Green Space designation to protect the Conservation Area alongside the canal above and below Alrewas Lock. However, the Neighbourhood Plan also proposes up to 30 houses in the fields on either side of Bagnall Lock which conflicts with various policies in the Plan that seek to protect the canal. We consider that the Dark Lane site can provide all the housing needed without damaging the canal or the Conservation Area.

On the **Coventry Canal** at Tamworth the wartime concrete pillbox at the end of the River Tame aqueduct was attracting vandals and anti-social behaviour so CRT has obtained permission to fix grilles on the door and windows. On the edge of Tamworth at Amington the former municipal golf course is allocated for a large housing development, although the area near the canal will become part of a nature reserve. Meanwhile it has been proposed that the open land in North Warwickshire between here and Polesworth and adjoining the canal around Alvecoté should be protected from development.

On the **Birmingham & Fazeley** section of the Coventry Canal the proposed 86 metre high wind turbine on farmland at Hademore south of Whittington, which had previously been refused, went to Appeal (as reported in LL5, November 2013) and has now been allowed, subject to some landscape planting alongside the canal.

Along the **Wyrley & Essington Canal** a proposed solar farm would cover 4 fields at College Farm opposite Park Lime Pits on the Daw End Branch. This would be less intrusive than the previously rejected wind turbine but is still inappropriate development in the Green Belt. On the Anglesey Branch, between Middleton Bridge and the railway aqueduct, two new houses proposed right on the edge of a steep slope down to the canal could be potentially unstable and would be over-development.



HS2 High Speed Rail Update – April 2015

Phil Sharpe, Planning Officer

The High Speed Rail Bill Select Committee of the House of Commons has been hearing evidence and petitions about HS2 since June 2014, but is now suspended until after the General Election in May.

Petitions

Petitions have generally been heard in a north to south direction, starting from Birmingham and Staffordshire, progressing through Warwickshire, Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire to the edge of London. Various sessions have covered the Digbeth Branch and Birmingham & Warwick Junction Canal crossings in Birmingham, the Birmingham & Fazeley Canal at Curdworth, the Oxford Canal crossing at Wormleighton, and the Grand Union Canal at Harefield. But acceptance by HS2 Ltd of the alternative route avoiding most of the Trent & Mersey Canal crossings around Woodend, Fradley means that hearing the outstanding points of the IWA and CRT petitions has been postponed until the autumn, after the Additional Provisions implementing the changes have been published, expected around July.

Woodend

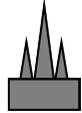
Meanwhile, the latest draft drawings for the Woodend area show the Up line of the Handsacre Link going under the Manchester spur rather than over it, which will help to further reduce the track levels near the canal. This is satisfactory for the railway but repositioning the overbridge for the Wood End Lane road diversion, whilst it avoids a second bridge for the lock cottage access track, would result in a road embankment near the canal below Woodend Lock. Wood End Lane is shown as being diverted between the canal and railway on a rising embankment which would have visual and traffic noise impacts on the canal, so further meetings with Staffordshire County Highways, CRT and HS2 Ltd are being arranged.



Woodend Lane Diversion

Cappers Lane

Discussions with HS2 Ltd by Lichfield & Hatherton CRT and Lichfield Cruising Club continue, and recent drawings for the Cappers Lane area show the canal will not need to be diverted as far as previously feared. Although Cappers Lane Bridge will still be demolished, the canal diversion will have gentler bends and a full width channel with ample headroom under the new rail bridge. The replacement road bridge will be close to Watery Lane Bridge and the plans include provision of a mooring arm and replacement slipway for the club.



Phase 2

The public consultation on the HS2 Phase 2 lines to Manchester and Leeds closed in January 2014 but there has still been no government response or decision on the routes, and this is not now expected until the autumn at the earliest. Likewise, any decision on the Safeguarding proposal for the Fradley to Crewe section seems unlikely before then. Surprisingly, the Select Committee has recently heard a number of petitions against Phase 2. Although nominally limited to sections of the Bill that give wider powers over any further extensions of Phase 1 and to compensation issues, in practice the committee were quite indulgent of local concerns.

Election

The Select Committee produced a brief interim summary report before its suspension summarising its decisions and recommendations so far. It is possible of course that not all the committee members will be re-elected and the change of Government after the election and new priorities could also result in major changes to the project, or even its cancellation.

Navigation Report

Mike Bending, Navigation Officer

Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal

Dredging

Canal and River Trust (CRT) have allocated £1M for dredging on the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal to be carried out during the 2015/2016 winter maintenance season. The branch was represented at the CRT West Midlands Waterways' consultation on where the work should be focussed. The attendees were able to identify a number of shallow areas of which CRT were unaware. These in general did not affect our area which extends from Great Haywood down to the M54 bridge south of Penkridge, most problems being further south. However the dredging work will include cutting back the reeds on the canal from the Sow aqueduct to Great Haywood where the waterway is narrowed by vegetation during the summer.

Tixall Wide

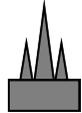
People who frequent the lovely moorings at Tixall Wide half a mile or so along the canal from Great Haywood will be aware that sections of the towpath have collapsed into the waterway restricting the amount of mooring space. CRT have agreed to investigate whether any work can be done there to improve the situation as part of the dredging contract.

Trent & Mersey Canal

At the April branch committee meeting we were pleased to welcome Darren Green, Waterways Manager of CRT



Fradley Swing Bridge (see over)



Central Shires who are responsible for the Ashby Canal as well as all of the Trent & Mersey Canal in our Branch area which stretches from Sandon Lock between Great Haywood and Stone to the Dove aqueduct beyond Burton. During the meeting we were able to raise issues we have regarding the Trent & Mersey:

Fradley swing bridge

CRT have still to decide on how to secure the footbridge to reduce the chance of accidents. They are well aware of the congestion and delays that would be caused if boaters were required to unlock the bridge with a BW/CRT key and are trying to avoid this.

Rugeley Moorings

We are pressing CRT to improve the visitor moorings at Rugeley north of the bridge by the new Tesco supermarket where the edge of the towpath has fallen into the canal. The difficulties of mooring here have led to boaters using the other side of the bridge where the canal is narrow. Although the main focus of CRT's funds is directed to keeping the waterway open, money has recently been allocated to "Customer Service" works. CRT will see what can be done with this money and also try to obtain further financing from the town.



Below Barton Turn Lock

Barton Turn Lock

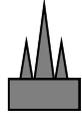
For some time now the collapse of the canal bank below Barton Turn Lock south of Burton on Trent has blocked the towpath, removed lock moorings and reduced the width of the waterway. CRT intended to repair the bank during this past winter season but investigation by their contractors identified that the required work was more difficult than had been envisaged. CRT hope that it will be completed later this year.

Great Haywood Lock

A branch member has drawn our attention to Great Haywood Lock where access to the offside is awkward over the narrow top lock walkway. Both the branch committee and CRT have investigated this and unfortunately we cannot find any practical solution. The options are limited by cost, the available space and by heritage considerations as the bridge below the lock is a listed building.

Anything else?

Please can you let me know if there are any other issues regarding the local waterways which we can usefully raise with CRT. We would be particularly interested to hear about other canals in the Branch area which includes the Ashby, the Birmingham and Fazeley, the northern part of the Birmingham Canal Navigations and the Coventry as far as Marston Junction.



Good News for the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust (LHCRT)

Recently IWA Restoration Committee have donated £2,250 to the Trust towards the cost of installing signs where roads cross the line of the canal under restoration. This will help raise awareness of the canal restoration.

The following press release was jointly produced on 14th April (prior to the Election) by LHCRT and Midlands Expressway Ltd detailing the donation to the Trust.

CANAL RESTORATION GIVEN M6 TOLL ROAD GROUP'S £50,000 BOOST

The operators of the M6 Toll Road have made a major contribution to a Lichfield group's work in restoring an abandoned canal.

Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust has been very pleased to receive a contribution of £50,000 from Midlands Expressway Limited (MEL) towards the costs of work near the motorway.

This was presented at an on-site ceremony close to the Trust's aqueduct over the motorway. MEL's Chief Executive Officer, Tom Fanning, was honouring an undertaking made when the motorway was built to make a "substantial contribution" towards the cost of reinstating the Crane Brook Culvert which was removed as part of the motorway construction programme.

A cheque for £50,000 was received on behalf of the Trust by President Eric Wood.

Chairman Brian Kingshott presented Mr Fanning with a certificate of honorary life membership of the Trust. This was in recognition of the generosity of MEL and the currently close co-

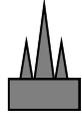
operation between the two organisations in progressing this stage of the restoration project. The aqueduct will be opened up to the public when the Heritage Towpath Trail has been completed along this Summerhill section and when safety work to the structure is in place.

The restoration of the seven mile Lichfield Canal, opened in 1797 and closed in 1954, will allow boats to travel from Huddlesford on the Coventry Canal to Ogley Junction on the Birmingham Canal Navigations near Brownhills.



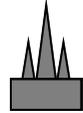
From left to right, front: Brian Kingshott (LHCRT Chairman), James Hodson (MEL Director of Motorway Operations), Tom Fanning (MEL CEO), Michael Fabricant, Prospective Conservative Parliamentary Candidate for Lichfield and LHCRT Patron, Peter Buck (LHCRT Engineering Director) and Eric Wood (LHCRT Founder and President)

Picture courtesy of MEL



Your Committee

Chairman, Sales and External Talks Tel: 01543 491161 Email: helen.whitehouse@waterways.org.uk	Helen Whitehouse
Secretary and Membership Tel: 01283 761971 Email: denise.bending@waterways.org.uk	Denise Bending
Treasurer Tel: 01785 716806 Email: barbara.hodgson@waterways.org.uk	Barbara Hodgson
Deputy Chairman and Recruitment Tel: 07947 337491 Email: pat.barton@waterways.org.uk	Pat Barton
Planning & Website Tel: 01889 583330 Email: phil.sharpe@waterways.org.uk	Philip Sharpe
Speakers Secretary Tel: 0121 308 0293 Email: john.stockland@waterways.org.uk	John Stockland
Newsletter Editor and Publicity Tel: 01785 255101 Email: pete.gurney@waterways.org.uk	Pete Gurney
Volunteer Coordinator Tel: 07581 794111 Email: margaret.beardsmore@waterways.org.uk	Margaret Beardsmore
Minutes Secretary Tel: 07523 112683 Email: christine.watkins@waterways.org.uk	Christine Watkins
Navigation Officer Tel: 01283 761971 Email: mike.bending@waterways.org.uk	Mike Bending
Ex Officio: Region Chairman Tel: 0121 477 9782 Mob: 07971 202406 Email: vaughan.welch@waterways.org.uk	Vaughan Welch
Branch Contact Address	IWA Lichfield Branch 35a Main Street Linton Swadlincote DE12 6PZ lichfield@waterways.org.uk



TR
BOAT
HANDLING



RYA RECOGNISED TEACHING ESTABLISHMENT

The ideal present that lasts forever

1,2 and 3 day RYA Inland Waterways Helmsman courses aboard our training boat SHROPSHIRE LASS, or on your own craft.

RYA Certificate on successful completion of the course for both beginners and the experienced from £95.00 per student.

Also available: ICC and CEVNI assessments for boating in Europe.

Friendly and Understanding Instructor

A few comments from satisfied customers:

“Thank you for a fantastic day. Your guidance, gentle coaxing and patience got the best from both of us”

“The course was conducted in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere and was complimented by tips from you that cannot be found in the tuition book”

BOOK YOUR COURSE NOW

TELEPHONE TERRY ON MOBILE- 07947 337492

Email: shropshirelass@trboating.fsnet.co.uk

Website: www.trboathandling.com