

# Lichfield Lines



Hard work at Rugeley courtesy of Tesco (see report Page 5)

# The newsletter of IWA Lichfield Branch

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## **Branch Chairman's Report January 2017**

I would like to start by wishing you all a Happy New Year. It is the time of year when we look forward - at the AGM Mike and I come to the end of our term on the committee. We have decided not to stand again, however we will still be attending branch and national events when our time allows. This means that there will be fewer people on the committee than we would like, so if you are looking for something different to do this year maybe you could join in helping to guide the branch forward. Branches are always on the lookout for new committee members to bring fresh ideas and new approaches to how we can help to keep our waterways alive. You can always talk to one of the current members about what is involved or even come along to one of our committee meetings to see what goes on. The work is not difficult and there are many ways in which you can get involved.

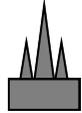
The work party that was held at the end of 2016 did some very good work at the moorings near Tesco in Rugeley and another session has been planned for February 24<sup>th</sup> to continue this work – details are further on in the newsletter. There will also be the annual BCN Clean-up taking place on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> April. This year it is on the Wyrley & Essington Canal between Horseley Fields and Sneyd Junction see [www.waterways.org.uk/wrg/canal\\_camps/camp\\_details/bcn\\_cleanup\\_2017](http://www.waterways.org.uk/wrg/canal_camps/camp_details/bcn_cleanup_2017) for all the details, or contact

Chris Morgan -  
[cbmorgan@sky.com](mailto:cbmorgan@sky.com).  
WRG volunteers and dozens of volunteers from IWA, Birmingham Canal Navigations Society, Dudley Canal Trust, Coombeswood Canal Trust, Canal & River Trust, Friends of Tipton Cut and local residents work



together to help keep the less well known parts of the BCN & Black Country Network from getting choked up with rubbish and to improve the general tidiness of the area.

The branch will have a stand at the IWA Trailboat Festival, which is being held in conjunction with the Moira Canal Festival on the Ashby Canal at Moira on May 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. This should be a fun event with lots going on for all the family. For more information see the Moira Canal Festival website [www.moiracanalfestival.co.uk](http://www.moiracanalfestival.co.uk). We will need volunteers to help man the stand so if you can spare a few hours one day



please get in touch.

We are hoping to do another Lock Wind in August for which we will need volunteers – more details about this will be available later in the year. There will also be the usual meetings at Martin Heath Hall and also our regular walks. Look at the website for further information about these and all our other events.

*Denise Bending January 2017*

### **Forthcoming Events**

Posters for our upcoming events may be found at [www.waterways.org.uk/lichfield](http://www.waterways.org.uk/lichfield)  
If you can download these and help to publicise our events it would be very helpful.

#### **Meeting—Wednesday 18th January 2017**

"The Derby Canal Past and Future" an illustrated talk by Chris Madge. 7.15 for 7.30 pm at Martin Heath Hall, Christchurch Lane (off Walsall Road), Lichfield, WS13 8AY

#### **Meeting—Wednesday 15th February 2017**

"The Claverton Pumping Station". An illustrated talk by George Eycott ('Bungle' of Waterway Recovery Group) about this iconic water powered pumping engine on the Kennet & Avon Canal. 7.15 for 7.30 pm at Martin Heath Hall, Christchurch Lane (off Walsall Road), Lichfield, WS13 8AY

#### **Work Party—Friday 24th February 2017**

The next work party will be continuing the great work started at the last one around Leathermill Bridge in Rugeley (See article page 5)

The aims for this time will be:

- Installing a handrail for the steps we put in.
- Clearance work on the paths
- Litter picking.
- Possible offside clearance.
- Hedge maintenance.

Meet at Leathermill Lane Canal bridge (by Tesco) on the Trent and Mersey Canal in Rugeley, Staffordshire, WS15 2HN. (Parking at Tesco is expected to be free for the day by arrangement) 9.30 am for a 10.00 am start.

As usual, CRT will provide all the kit we need, but please wear heavy duty boots and old clothes that will not snag on brambles.

Lunch and hot drinks will be provided and no doubt our cake makers will oblige with more cake! For further information, or for confirmation of the arrangements if the February weather looks likely to spoil the plans, please email our Workparty Coordinator Margaret Beardsmore at [margaret.beardsmore@waterways.org.uk](mailto:margaret.beardsmore@waterways.org.uk) or ring 07581 794111.



## **Walk—Tuesday 7th March 2017**

Middleton Lakes walk. This is an easy 5 mile walk across farmland, through a country park, and along the towpath of the Birmingham & Fazeley Canal. There are no stiles and the terrain is flat. From the Dog & Doublet Inn we turn right out of the car park and leave the towpath at Bodymoor Heath Lane. After a short road stretch we head across fields towards the Grade II listed Middleton Hall. From there we pass through part of the RSPB reserve and re-join the canal at Fisher's Mill Bridge. At Curdworth Bottom Lock we make a short detour around Canal Pool and Broomey Croft Pool before returning southwards along the towpath to our starting point, and a chance of refreshment at the pub. Please bring binoculars as there will be several opportunities for birdwatching along the way. Meet at 10:15 for a 10:30 start in the car park of The Dog & Doublet Inn, Dog Lane, Bodymoor Heath, Sutton Coldfield B76 9JD. Contact Clive Walker on 07866 201873 or [clive.walker@waterways.org.uk](mailto:clive.walker@waterways.org.uk)

## **Annual General Meeting—Wednesday 15th March 2017**

Our March meeting will be preceded by the branch AGM (see Agenda page 17) followed by a social evening with members' slides and films. 7.15 for 7.30 pm at Martin Heath Hall, Christchurch Lane (off Walsall Road), Lichfield, WS13 8AY. Lichfield Branch members are invited to join the committee; contact the Chairman or any committee member for further information (see Committee page). Please bring along some interesting waterway photos from the last year, or particularly historic ones, for our education or amusement; either as colour slides or digital images in jpeg format on memory stick or CD. We can also show old film clips on DVD. Contact Phil Sharpe to discuss technicalities on 01889 583330 or at [phil.sharpe@waterways.org.uk](mailto:phil.sharpe@waterways.org.uk).

## **BCN Clean Up—Saturday/Sunday 1st and 2nd April 2017**

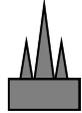
This event is organised by IWA's Waterways Recovery Group (WRG) but members can just turn up on the day. The event is great fun and worth attending to help ensure the navigability of the Wyrley and Essington canal. See the Chairman's report for details.

## **Meeting—Wednesday 19th April 2017**

"The Lost Canals of Tipton" an illustrated talk by Keith Hodgkins. 7.15 for 7.30 pm at Martin Heath Hall, Christchurch Lane (off Walsall Road), Lichfield, WS13 8AY

## **IWA National Trailboat Festival—Saturday/Sunday 27th and 28th May 2017**

Moira Canal Festival is hosting the IWA National Trailboat Festival this year. The aim is to raise awareness of, and money for, the restoration of the Ashby canal. See the IWA website or the Moira Canal Festival website for full details. Helen Whitehouse (branch sales officer and West Midlands Region chairman) will be



taking the Lichfield IWA branch sales and information stand to the event to wave the IWA flag and needs help to man the stand on the 27th and 28th and also to erect the IWA marquee on Friday, 26th May (and dismantle it on Sunday 28th). If you are able to assist, even if only for a couple of hours, please contact Helen on 01543 491161 or email [helen.whitehouse@waterways.org.uk](mailto:helen.whitehouse@waterways.org.uk) asap"

## **IWA Festival of Water—Saturday/Sunday/Monday 26th to 28th August 2017**

The IWA Festival of Water is not in our area this year but is pretty close at Ilkeston on the Erewash Canal. See the IWA website nearer the time for full details. Forms for camping/mooring are already on the website at [waterways.org.uk/events\\_festivals/festival\\_water/IWA\\_festival\\_water](http://waterways.org.uk/events_festivals/festival_water/IWA_festival_water). Information about volunteering at the event is also on the website.

### **Recent Activities**

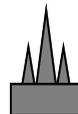
#### **Walk—Tuesday 8th November 2016** **Tatenhill and Branston Water Park**

Fifteen walkers met in the car park of the Horseshoe Inn in the pretty village of Tatenhill, just to the west of Burton upon Trent.

We turned right out of the car park and walked through the unspoilt village which contains several listed buildings, notably the 12<sup>th</sup> century church of St. Michael and All Angels. After a few hundred yards we crossed the road to proceed sharply uphill towards Tatenhill Common, with a view of the battlements of Callingwood Hall across the valley to our right.

We left the climb and the four stiles behind us at Cuckoo Cage Farm, and headed south west along a tarmac farm track before turning almost due east to face Battlestead Hill. One of our group, John Parry, recounted the origin of the place name; it is alleged to be the site of a major confrontation between the Saxons and the Danes, who had come up the river Trent to





Burton in search of settlements.

We proceeded steeply downhill back towards the Horseshoe Inn, pausing for a group photo by two large trees.

The strenuous part of the walk was now behind us, and we headed gently downhill to join the Trent and Mersey canal at Tatenhill lock. The lock cottage has been renovated and now offers B & B.

After another group photo above the lock, we entered Branston Water Park, which was originally an open cast gravel pit, and is now home to many species of plants and animals.

Taking a semi-circular route through the Park we rejoined the canal close to Branston bridge and returned via the towpath to Tatenhill lock, before doubling back to our starting point, where we took refreshments in the Grade II listed Horseshoe Inn.

Clive Walker 18th November 2016

## **Meeting—Wednesday 16th November 2016**

Our November meeting was an illustrated talk on the wartime “Idle Women” by Mike Constable. This was a fascinating talk and showcased the huge amount of research Mike has put in on the subject. Despite suffering from a heavy cold Mike gave us an interesting and informative talk on the subject.

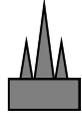
## **Christmas Meal—Saturday 10th December 2016**

Our branch Christmas lunch was again held at the Oddfellows in the Boat at Muckley Corner. The group enjoyed an excellent meal with several hours of social chat. A message from our chairman (who seemed to be elsewhere when this picture was taken) was followed by our regular dose of humorous tales from Adrian Wedgwood. A great social get together!



## **Volunteer Work Party—Friday 9th December 2016** **Rugeley, near Leathermill Lane**

Thirteen IWA volunteers teamed up with CRT staff to tackle an ambitious project in Rugeley. This was the first work party under the new ‘West Midlands’ CRT Region, with Barry Keight providing supervision and including two other CRT employees.



## Tasks planned:

- Installing new steps just south of Leathermill Lane Canal Bridge. These are not intended to replace the official access to the north of the bridge, but rather to provide an extra access to Love Lane.
- Planting Wild Flower Bulbs
- Exposing the historic stone wall on the canal banking.
- Putting in hedging whips by the existing fence
- Litter Picking.

Given that we only had 6 hours, including setting up, lunch, tea breaks and packing up, it seemed doubtful that we would complete everything on the list, especially when the litter pickers decided to start dragging the canal for shopping trolleys! A job well worth doing, as the final haul was five from Tesco and one from Morrisons.

This was complemented by about thirteen bags of rubbish and loads of scrub, which all went on the CRT flatbed truck and was carted away.

Meanwhile, other volunteers worked on clearing the bank's vegetation, exposing the historic wall and planting hedging whips at the top of the bank.

Mixed wildflower bulbs were then planted on the banking so we hope for an attractive show of flowers in Spring.

People had made an unofficial access onto Love Lane, along with other unofficial access points further south of the bridge. This made the whole area look unsightly, so it had been decided to make the access into an official one.

Making the steps wasn't easy, as the historic stone wall needed to be worked around. However, Barry and our volunteers (after much scratching of heads) managed the task and the new access is quickly being well used.



We plan to do further work in this area in the New Year - this will include towpath maintenance, bank clearance and hedge improvements. We may also put in a handrail to the new steps.

We are very grateful to Tesco, who not only allowed us to park all day on their carpark, but gave us the full use of their staff canteen, free tea and coffee, and made us a fish and chip lunch at a very modest cost.



Pat's mince pies and Helen's cakes were also very popular, as was the big bag of chocolates we were given by a passing well-wisher as encouragement.

Report and first photo by  
Margaret Beardsmore  
Workparty Coordinator,  
IWA Lichfield Area.  
07581 794111



Photo by Richard Curtis

## HELP NEEDED PLEASE!

I am looking for someone who would be prepared to help get some local grant funding to help with our volunteering activities.

This is not a particularly time consuming job, as it is mainly filling out a few forms which aren't too complicated. However, it is a job too many for me to do! I have just missed a deadline for local Town Council funding simply because I didn't get round to looking at the forms before Christmas. We would no doubt have been given a grant of about £300 which would have been useful, so this has made me realise that I really need some assistance.

I am confident that if we put our minds to it we could probably get close to £2000 a year if we tried which would help with lots of volunteering activities.

You would not necessarily have to attend committee meetings, although we would welcome someone who also wanted to join the committee.

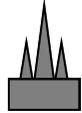
If you think this might suit you, or you just want more details please contact me on 07581 794111 or email: [margaret.beardsmore@waterways.org.uk](mailto:margaret.beardsmore@waterways.org.uk)

Many thanks,

Margaret

## **Walk—Sunday 1st January 2017** **Huddlesford Circular Walk**

New Year's day saw twelve walkers assemble in the car park of The Plough Inn in Huddlesford. They were undeterred by the break in the dry spell of weather and were suitably equipped as we set off eastwards at a brisk pace in the steady rain. After half a mile we turned left into a tree-lined avenue heading towards Thatchmoor Farm which is also a local depot for a well-known frozen food delivery firm based in Wiltshire. The farm is well-maintained and modern, and there was no sign of the



slurry that some walkers had feared.

We then turned east, and had to negotiate three stiles that took us around the perimeter of a stud farm at Sennex House. Passing the second duck-pond of the day, and a driveway gate that fortunately was open, we walked through onto Brookhay Lane. This took us northwards towards a junction of road, rail and canal close to Brookhay Cottage where we joined the Coventry Canal.

Many members will recall previous owners of this cottage as it has strong connections with Lichfield Branch. It also has one of the longest and thinnest gardens you will ever see as it tapers to a halt 1/4 mile from the house.

We then proceeded along the towpath back towards Huddlesford. By bridge 87 there

is an unusual milepost marked 3 miles on the one side (to Fradley Junction) and 2 ½ miles on the other.

Considering the terminus at Coventry is more than 20 miles away, you have to



know the history of the Coventry Canal to understand the reason for the mileage of 2 ½ - answers by email please to the author!

The rain had started to ease off as we passed first Streethay Wharf and then Kings Orchard Marina. We retired to The Plough Inn for a well-earned hearty meal.

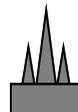
Clive Walker 5th January 2017

## **Planning Matters**

**Phil Sharpe, Planning Officer**

This report covers the more notable of the 45 planning matters dealt with from mid October 2016 to early January 2017. They are all summarised in monthly notes on our website Planning page, but if you want further information please contact me.

On the **Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal** at Penkridge, new owners of the



Boat Inn, Greene King, wanted to replace the Inn sign and wall panel picturing a traditional working narrowboat with a new one showing a Leeds & Liverpool Canal wide boat ! This is a Listed Building in a Conservation Area and we have objected to such inappropriate signage.

On the **Trent & Mersey Canal** at Great Haywood the Appeal against refusal of the application to convert The Lock House Restaurant to a house has been dismissed because of harm to heritage assets, loss of a community facility and insufficient evidence that the business could not be run successfully.

At Handsacre the moorings opposite The Crown Inn will not now be overlooked by a housing and commercial development after it was refused as being harmful to the setting of the Canal Conservation Area, amongst other planning reasons.

Along the canal at Wharf Farm, just past Kings Bromley Marina, permission to convert the boathouse and dry dock to a house with swimming pool has however been given, despite CRT and our concerns at the loss of this boat maintenance facility.

At Fradley Junction the Swan Inn is another pub in new ownership where the brewery wants new signage. In this case we objected to them painting the central gabled warehouse part of the building white, which would unnecessarily change the historic character of the Listed Building, and to proposed painted signage in large letters for directions to the rear which could be conveyed on a small board; and the consent specifically excluded these elements.

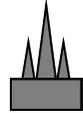


The Swan Inn at Fradley Junction

Barton Marina gained permission in 2014 for a range of 9 craft units along the side of the basin but new plans show these as two storey units with offices above.

At Burton-on-Trent yet another large warehouse is proposed between the one recently constructed and the A38 bypass, and again too close to the canal with limited space for screen planting. The disregard for the Conservation Area status of the Trent & Mersey Canal through Burton by East Staffordshire Council over many years has been disgraceful.

The **Wyrley & Essington Canal** through the industrial estates at Aldridge is not often used for overnight moorings between November and March, but anyone that did



stop there could be affected by high noise levels from one of two proposed 'short term reserve' electricity generating stations. Although acoustic fencing was included, the proximity of the diesel or gas fuelled generators to the canal would cause significant noise impacts.

Also on the W&E, the railway aqueduct over the Walsall to Cannock line at Leamore is owned by Network Rail which wants to raise the parapets and reline the channel. However, their proposed lining with an unspecified type of waterproof membrane, loose laid down the sides and protected from boat impacts only by boards made of "toughened asphaltic paper" sounded unconvincingly flimsy to us, and we suggested they take advice from CRT which has rather more experience of maintaining old cast iron aqueducts. Removing and replacing all the puddle clay on the aqueduct approaches also seemed unnecessary and would need a prolonged stoppage. But the stoppage, from November to March, had already begun before the Listed Building Consent application was made.

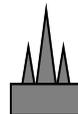
On the **Coventry Canal** the new draft Local Plan for North Warwickshire includes a large housing site off Whittington Lane north west of Atherstone. It extends for over a kilometre along both sides of the canal from the railway bridge below Baddesley Basin down to near Lock 10 and would urbanise what is now pleasant open countryside around the bottom half of the flight.



Atherstone Lock 9

On the **Lichfield Canal** section of the Wyrley &

Essington, IWA continues to support Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust on planning matters and we have commented on the wording of a replacement Local Plan policy supporting the restoration and safeguarding the route. We asked for inclusion of a requirement that adjacent developments provide any necessary infrastructure. The importance of this is emphasised by the planning committee's reaffirmation of their 2014 decision to approve the 450 house development site at Berryhill, south of Shortbutts Lane, subject to planning obligations including provision of 2 bridges over the canal route and a short section of channel. The Trust is pressing for further channel construction as part of the drainage system for the site.



## **HS2 High Speed Rail Update – October 2016**

### **Phil Sharpe, Planning Officer**

IWA has continued its campaign to get better protection for our waterways and their users over recent months, working closely with CRT and with the affected canal societies and trusts.

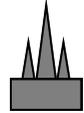
#### **Phase I London to Birmingham & Handsacre.**

Our petition to the House of Lords was deposited in April, seeking better noise screening at all canal crossings and an underpass for the Wood End Lane diversion that would keep it away from the Trent & Mersey Canal near Wood End Lock, Fradley. The petition hearing finally took place on 23rd November and Deputy National Chairman Gren Messham again presented our case to the Lords Select Committee. The case for residential standard noise protection for all affected sections of canal was heard politely and everything seemed to be going well until half way through our evidence on Wood End Lane, when questions from the committee indicated that they had not read our submission, understood the plans, or been paying much attention. The chairman Lord Walker of Gestingthorpe asked why we were concerned about the realignment of a small lane, and clearly didn't even know where it was, and Lord Brabazon of Tara wanted to know which was more senior, CRT or IWA.

After such superficial questions it was little surprise that the Department for Transport Counsel Mr Mould did not bother to go into details of the alternative alignments and advised the Lords it would be "a very bold step" for them to suggest that Staffordshire Highways be instructed to accept realignment of Wood End Lane away from the canal. Instead, they should allow the Assurance given to CRT to review the case to "take its course" (- this despite the fact the assurance was given 10 months earlier, before our Commons Select Committee hearing, and HS2 had done nothing to implement it meanwhile). The only concession was a statement that IWA would be consulted as part of that review.

Turning back to our noise evidence, Mr Mould confirmed that HS2 has invented a new criterion which was that residential moorings had to be occupied "by the same people" to qualify for noise protection, so that moorings where there were a succession of different boats being used residentially for shorter periods didn't count. He did admit that sections of canal would be "less congenial" places to stop without more noise barriers but suggested that was "a relatively small price to pay" for, apparently, saving HS2 a few thousand pounds.

It was no surprise then that when the Select Committee report was published on 15th December it made no reference to our evidence. However, with CRT on our side there is still an outside chance that Staffordshire County Council can be persuaded about Wood End Lane, and we do not intend to give up on the argument for adequate



noise protection for canals, not least because what happens on Phase 1 will set a precedent for further crossings on Phases 2a and 2b.

### **Phase 2a Fradley to Crewe.**

IWA's responses to the Working Draft Environmental Impact Assessment and Design Refinements for the early extension of the route from Fradley to Crewe were submitted in November. Our main concerns are the noise impacts from both construction and operation on the marinas and moorings at Great Haywood and Hoo Mill and the inadequate height and extent of the acoustic fencing proposed across the viaduct. Also, the height of the embankments and viaducts across the Trent valley have been increased and will be clearly visible and audible from the Trent & Mersey Canal north of Fradley Junction. We have therefore supported the suggested move of the maintenance loops from Pipe Ridware to Stone as this should allow them to be reduced again.

### **Phase 2b Kingsbury to Leeds and Crewe to Manchester**

The Preferred Routes for the remainder of Phase 2, from the junction at Kingsbury via the East Midlands to Leeds, and also north from Crewe to Manchester and Wigan, were announced on 15th November. There are several changes from the previous 2013 routes some of which benefit and some of which additionally impact various waterways.

On the Eastern leg, in Lichfield Branch area:

The **Coventry Canal** crossing at Polesworth is unaltered and will be on a 10m high viaduct, with the line cutting through the middle of Pooley Country Park.

The **Ashby Canal** crossing at Measham has been moved from near the A42 to the other side of the town.

This will enable a stalled housing site to go ahead, including reconstruction of the canal arm into Measham Wharf, which is good news.

However, the new crossing of the restoration route is at entirely the wrong level for the canal.

IWA and the Ashby Canal Trust and Association will be campaigning to have



HS2 crossing the Ashby Canal near Measham



the vertical alignment altered.

Further along the Eastern leg:

The **Chesterfield Canal** restoration will be much less affected if the recommended route change around Sheffield is agreed. This also avoids the previous impacts on the **Barnsley, Dearne & Dove Canals** restoration prospects, whilst the **Sheffield & South Yorkshire Navigation** crossing would be on a high viaduct near the much publicised Shimmer housing estate which is threatened with demolition.

The **Aire & Calder Navigation** was threatened by reduced headroom for commercial navigation but a new alignment will remove the multiple crossings leaving only one at sufficient height.

On the Western leg:

The **Middlewich Branch Canal** crossing has been increased from one to three adjacent bridges to carry extra tracks into a proposed rolling stock depot north of Crewe.

The **Trent & Mersey Canal** north of Middlewich will be particularly badly affected by a change of route that increases the crossings from one to three in a distance of 2km.

There will also be a crossing of the **Bridgewater Canal** and a high level crossing of the **Manchester Ship Canal** whilst towards Wigan the link back to the West Coast Main Line runs parallel with the Leigh Branch of the **Leeds & Liverpool Canal**.

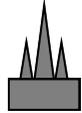
The consultation period for Phase 2b is unusually long, until 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017. We are still studying the many documents and plans, but IWA will be seeking early meetings with HS2 to press for changes at Measham and the best possible noise mitigation and visual screening elsewhere.

## **A Story From The Archives**

### **Memories of early boating by Kaye Harrison**

In 1962 my introduction to boating came on a Thames hire-boat at Easter. Originally the attraction was a holiday that enabled us to take the dog, and was suggested by a colleague of my father. There were no luxuries on board in those days and it was so cold that after the first night my mother bought hot-water bottles for us all. I remember being terrified at the locks and hiding in my cabin. This was probably not helped by my father hitting a sand barge on a lock-landing and taking a big chunk out of the wooden stem post of our hire-boat. We lost our £25 deposit for that.

The next year we hired a boat from Great Haywood and went to Cossington on the Soar. In my eyes this was much better as the locks were smaller and there were no large Thames weirs. The trip wasn't without incident though as the sea-toilet blocked. It turned out that the previous week the window in the toilet compartment



had been broken; glass had gone into the bowl and subsequently into the outlet. We were glad that the hire company came out to repair it as it wasn't a pleasant job. The whole episode caused a delay of a day, meaning cruising in real darkness to the base at the end of the week.

We were experts now and a small legacy from my grandmother meant we could purchase a wooden boat to own. It was 17'4" long and 5'6" wide (really). Into this space went a teenage girl (me), my parents and a large Golden Retriever dog. We often spent 10 days at a time cruising. I slept on a wooden bed my father made to fit into the cockpit, under canvas sides. Every time the dog changed sides someone else had to in order to maintain a balance. The engine was a Seagull outboard, made for the Dunkirk Landings and then intended to be destroyed. Nearly 30 years later we were using it on very weedy canals. We often had to tow the boat as the engine couldn't cope with the weeds on the Macclesfield Canal.

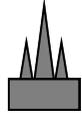
It had a string that wrapped around part of the top of the engine and then had to be pulled firmly in order to start the motor. My job was to stay on the boat in the locks, when they were ready I had to pull the starting cord to fire the engine and then drive out. Sometimes I could start it and sometimes I couldn't. I remember many fraught exchanges with my father as I was at the bottom of a deep lock, he was at the top and I couldn't start the engine. This is probably where I learnt to throw ropes accurately.



Kaye's parents at Dale Street, Manchester 6th & 7th from left with their second boat "The Highwayman"

In this boat we travelled vast distances over the next 12 months but eventually it was decided that really the boat was too small for the family. We moved up in the world to a 25'. This was still wooden as steel boats had yet to arrive on the scene but it had an inboard petrol engine. Luxury - and I had my own cabin.

On one trip we got stuck going into one of the locks at Tyrley and really had to pull on the ropes in order to progress. In hindsight this was not a good idea with a wooden boat but we thought no more about it. The boat was then left at Nantwich Basin for a week. On our return we were met with a depressing sight - it had sunk in



the basin. Only the ropes were holding it up as the water was very deep at that point. Pumping out and retrieving some of our belongings was heart-breaking, many were beyond salvage. The engine, of course, wouldn't start having been immersed in water for several days. After great debate with the locals the boat was raised sufficiently to enable it to be moved to a shallow part of the canal so that if it took on water again there was a limited way it could sink. We returned home to think. A week later my father bravely went with a friend and a borrowed outboard engine in order to move the boat to a boatyard in Chester. The journey was punctuated with many stops to pump-out water as the hull was leaking badly but eventually they reached the yard and the boat was taken out of the water.

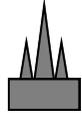
Over the following winter the boat was re-built and partially re-fitted. At Easter we were able to move it back to the home mooring on the Macclesfield Canal. We set off happily and got to Rumps Lock outside Middlewich. There we stuck going into the lock. There was no denying it; the boat was now wider than 6'10" and we had to narrow it somehow. We spent hours edging into the lock, sticking, pulling back out again, my father taking off a bit more of the wooden rubbing strake, trying again and repeating the whole process. Eventually we were narrow enough to pass through and the temporary solution would have to do until we got home. We were very anxious that we had squeezed the hull again but managed to reach base without another sinking.

As a teenage girl I was rapidly losing my enthusiasm for boating, preferring horses instead. My parents continued to cruise, although the boat always caused worries and maintenance seemed never ending. One day they were at the bottom of Bosley Locks and another club member arrived with his new boat. This was steel. There had been rumours of boats being made in steel but the sceptics did not believe they would float. This one did and was enticing. They arrived home full of ideas and it didn't take long to order a steel boat to be named "The Highwayman". Things were looking up.

It took time to re-gain my enthusiasm but I did. Once married my husband and I got a dog. History repeated itself - where could we holiday and take the dog? First we borrowed my parents' boat and then we took the plunge and ordered one for ourselves. That, however, is another story.

## **Editorial Notice**

**Lichfield Lines** is the newsletter of IWA Lichfield Branch, it is produced 4 times a year to keep members informed about our forthcoming public meetings, walks, work parties and other activities, to provide reports on recent meetings and events, and to include articles of general interest to our members.



The editor, Peter Gurney, welcomes articles, letters or photographs of waterway activities in our Branch area which can be emailed to [pete.gurney@waterways.org.uk](mailto:pete.gurney@waterways.org.uk) (Please note there is a 10MB limit for emails with photos as attachments sent via this address).

The copy date for the next newsletter will be 15th April 2017, for publication in May.

## Advertising

Lichfield Lines is posted or emailed to about 300 addresses covering around 440 Branch members. It can also be read and downloaded by anyone from the Branch website pages.

If you would like to publicise your waterway related business to our members, and others that read the newsletter online, we can offer advertising space at the following rates:

Full Page - £20 per issue

Half Page - £10 per issue

Please contact the editor to discuss artwork and layout.

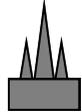
By advertising you will help to sponsor IWA's charitable activities and reach potential customers who are all committed to the waterways.

The IWA has a range of corporate members some of whom offer discounts to members. The discount details can be found on the IWA website at [www.waterways.org.uk/support\\_us/corporates](http://www.waterways.org.uk/support_us/corporates).

Corporate members in our area are—

Lichfield Cruising Club	Russel Newbury Register
Stafford Boat Club Ltd	Ashby Canal Association
Truman Enterprise Narrowboat Trust	Tamworth Cruising Club
Ashby Canal Trust	Ash Tree Boat Club
Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust	Countywide Cruisers (Brewood) Ltd
Canal Transport Services Ltd	Elite Furnishings
Waterways World Ltd	Birmingham and Midland Marine Services
Fingerpost pub Pelsall	River Canal Rescue Ltd
Clifford Arms Great Haywood	Midland Chandlers

Please mention the IWA when contacting any of these Corporate Members.



## **IWA LICHFIELD BRANCH**

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 15th MARCH 2017, at 7.30 PM**

To be held at Martin Heath Hall, Christchurch Lane (off Walsall Road), Lichfield,  
WS13 8AY

### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the minutes of the 2016 AGM and any matters arising from these minutes
3. Report from the Branch Chairman
4. Financial Report from the Treasurer
5. Elections to the Committee
  - Members completing 3 years in post and eligible for re-election.  
Denise Bending and Mike Bending have been in post for 3 years but will not be standing for re-election.
  - Members co-opted since last AGM and willing to stand for election.
  - None
  - Any other candidates
6. Any resolutions requested by members of the Branch (provided the Branch Chairman was notified in writing of the item at least 6 weeks prior to the AGM)\*
7. Any Other Business

#### **Notes:**

Candidates for election to the committee must be current members of the Lichfield Branch and should indicate their willingness to stand.

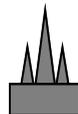
The Branch committee officers (Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer) are elected by the committee from its members at their first meeting after the AGM.

Current members of the Committee are: Denise Bending (Chairman and Secretary), Pat Barton (Vice-Chairman), Barbara Hodgson (Treasurer), Margaret Beardsmore, Mike Bending, Pete Gurney, Philip Sharpe.

\*Item 6: Please put any resolutions in writing and address them to the Chairman at 35a Main Street, Linton, Swadlincote, DE12 6PZ by 1st February 2017.



<b><u>Your Committee</u></b>	
<b>Chairman and Secretary</b> Tel: 01283 761971 Email: <a href="mailto:denise.bending@waterways.org.uk">denise.bending@waterways.org.uk</a>	<b>Denise Bending</b>
<b>Deputy Chairman and Recruitment</b> Tel: 07947 337491 Email: <a href="mailto:pat.barton@waterways.org.uk">pat.barton@waterways.org.uk</a>	<b>Pat Barton</b>
<b>Treasurer</b> Tel: 01785 716806 Email: <a href="mailto:barbara.hodgson@waterways.org.uk">barbara.hodgson@waterways.org.uk</a>	<b>Barbara Hodgson</b>
<b>Planning &amp; Website</b> Tel: 01889 583330 Email: <a href="mailto:phil.sharpe@waterways.org.uk">phil.sharpe@waterways.org.uk</a>	<b>Philip Sharpe</b>
<b>Speakers Secretary</b>	<b>Position Vacant</b>
<b>Newsletter Editor and Membership</b> Tel: 01785 255101 Email: <a href="mailto:pete.gurney@waterways.org.uk">pete.gurney@waterways.org.uk</a>	<b>Pete Gurney</b>
<b>Volunteer Coordinator</b> Tel: 07581 794111 Email: <a href="mailto:margaret.beardsmore@waterways.org.uk">margaret.beardsmore@waterways.org.uk</a>	<b>Margaret Beardsmore</b>
<b>Minutes Secretary</b>	<b>Position Vacant</b>
<b>Navigation Officer</b> Tel: 01283 761971 Email: <a href="mailto:mike.bending@waterways.org.uk">mike.bending@waterways.org.uk</a>	<b>Mike Bending</b>
<b>Ex Officio: Region Chairman</b> Branch Sales and External Talks (non-committee posts) Email: <a href="mailto:helen.whitehouse@waterways.org.uk">helen.whitehouse@waterways.org.uk</a>	<b>Helen Whitehouse</b>
<b>Walks Coordinator (non-committee post)</b> Tel: 07866 201873 Email: <a href="mailto:clive.walker@waterways.org.uk">clive.walker@waterways.org.uk</a>	<b>Clive Walker</b>
<b>Branch Contact Address</b> Email: <a href="mailto:lichfield@waterways.org.uk">lichfield@waterways.org.uk</a>	IWA Lichfield Branch 35a Main Street Linton Swadlincote DE12 6PZ



  
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