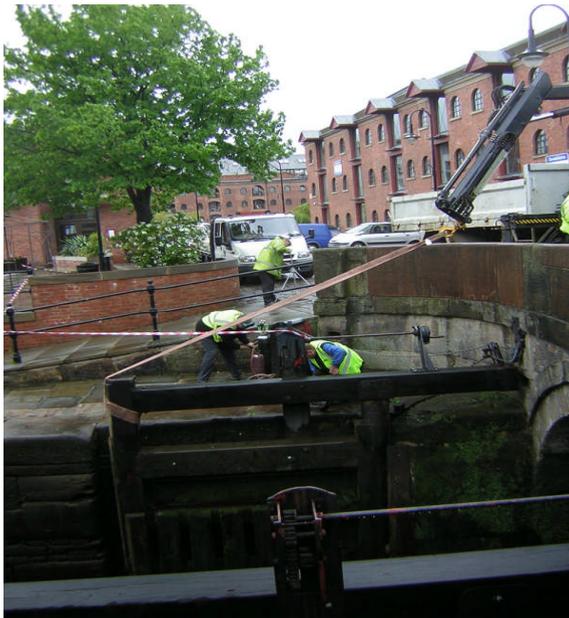


MANCHESTER PACKET

Newsletter from the Manchester Branch



The Inland
Waterways
Association



Emergency gate repairs Lock 92 Rochdale Canal (page 11)

Issue 20

January 2009

Inland Waterways Association – Manchester Branch Committee

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Planning (joint):	Conservation:	Publicity:
		All Vacant

Editorial Comments

By Ian Price

I am not sure when the last issue of the *Packet* appeared but fear it might have been this time last year – that's the last issue I found in my bookcase (No 19)! If so it has become an annual publication not what was intended or needed. The purpose of the *Packet* is to circulate information about Branch activities and 'our' canals. To do so it requires information and articles to print and effort to put together, collate and circulate.

It is now 2 or 3 years since I joined the Branch (or started coming to meetings) and I offer these, not too astute, observations: the meetings are invariably interesting and people friendly but not many attend; the 'work' of the Branch is done by very few; almost all of the content of the *Packet* is written by 3 or 4 people.

- I would welcome ideas on how to increase attendance at the Winter Talks (see back page for the listing) and so reward Sue Day for the effort she puts in to arranging them and the speakers for coming to present them.
- The workload of the Branch can easily be spread by more of us volunteering to help. This issue gives notice of the Branch AGM and lists the committee (page 6). You will see that a number of posts are vacant and some members are juggling several tasks. Clearly this is not a good thing for either the Branch or the individuals so please give thought (and action) to volunteering your help: even before the AGM on a trial basis would be very welcome.
- The '*Packet*' – how to increase content or at least increase the number of authors? As members of the IWA we are all interested in canals and therefore, I presume, do some or all of the following: walk, fish, boat, restore, research and read canals. In following our interest we will have seen, or come across, things which could be of interest to others so why not put pen to paper or fingers to key board and let the *Packet* spread the word*.

To push this idea from the canal bank I offer a little tale from the heart of Manchester (page 11). I noticed, in my found issue of the *Packet*, the editorial was on campaigning about BW cuts, new mooring charges/letting arrangements, and red diesel. The year has seen the light at the end of the tunnel appear and possibly be extinguished and a lot of criticism of BW. However it is my experience that at a working (canal side) level BW's employees are friendly and helpful. My tale illustrates this. One of the pleasures of canals

is the friendliness of those involved with and using them whether BW, boatyards, boaters, walkers etc. It would be good to have your good news tales too*.

**Copy date for the July issue is 15th June 2008*

Disclaimer

The views expressed by our contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or the IWA. They are, however, published as being of interest to our membership.

From the Branch Chairman - Steve Connolly

I will leave the explanation of the new byelaws to Gillian's report that you will find elsewhere in this issue. I would however like to point out that I suspect that some of the changes were instigated following Manchester Branches close shave with closure, following our inability to persuade members to support the Branch Committee. We enjoy a strong, purposeful committee these days, still only 8 out of 557 memberships but we manage to keep things ticking over. However if we wish to engage fully with the challenges that appear to a waterways charity we need to move beyond the vital role of subscription payments and learn to engage in close contact with the navigation authorities, the local councils, businesses, the various, extremely efficient none government bodies that drive the areas regeneration and last but not least that group of people that take the brunt of excuses when times are difficult, the communities living besides the water. How often have we heard tales of criminality and vandalism that deter folk from visiting certain systems, yet when visited these turn out to be a happy experience. Yes I know there are well documented problem areas that need a special approach,

usually visiting in broad daylight with a camera and mobile to hand but the vast majority of canal users enjoy many a tranquil day on or close to water. So when you inundate our Editor Ian with lots of tales of your summer sojourns, keep the sun shining and encourage others to visit your favourite spot. Then come and join the committee and help us to make it even better.

Gillian has also given us a detailed insight into the aspects of the structural review of the Association and I reiterate her invitation to you to let us have your views on this restructuring of your Association.

Manchester Branch had a meaningful input into the discussions with BW's Waterways Manager Debbie Lumb and Customer Relations Manager Mike Marshall, centering mainly on the Rochdale Canal from Castlefield to Failsworth. It is hoped these discussion points will lead to a rise in the number of boat passages and users taking the time to enjoy this cityside canal on their way to or from the beauty of the Pennine stretches.

I have:

attended the BW South Pennine Ring West with Peak Forest canal User Group Forum on the 10th October at BW Wigan offices. Debbie Lumb pointed out that boat safety would be the priority for the coming year. The main priority within BW was Minimum Safety Standards, and the water supply and the booking system for the Rochdale Canal. The water supply is an ongoing issue with regards to anti social behaviour. A workshop is being set up regarding the booking system and BW would like to hear views and comments from Users and any other interested parties with suggestions on how to improve the service.

attended a scheduled meeting of the FBCC at Lymm Cruising Club on the 14th November with a view to assisting the FBCC in their dispute with Peel Holdings regarding swinging increases in parts of their licence fees.

responded via email to the Irwell City Park Draft Consultation document, making some twenty observations, including Middlewood Locks investment pulling power, water bus operation, provision for visiting boats, inclusion in the document that building materials for waterside buildings should be delivered by water, a recommendation that Hulme Lock be restored and made a destination, and many others. All carry the IWA name and they can be viewed at:

http://consultation.limehouse.co.uk/representation.do?identifier=manchester&action=list&draftId=19&contentId=project_42&children=true

From the Regional Chairman - Gillian Smith

Branch and Region Byelaws

At the Branch Officers' meeting at the National AGM in Norwich Council agreed to undertake a quick consultation on certain aspects of the new byelaws which had been introduced on 1st August 2007. In the light of this consultation a few amendments have been made. The responses showed a considerable majority who wished to see the position of secretary reinstated, a near unanimous request for officers to be appointed by the relevant committee and a significant majority who wish to see longer than a one year term of office for committee members (mainly favouring a 3 year term of office).

New versions of the branch and region byelaws have therefore been produced. The significant changes are:

- The term of office for committee members has been extended to three years
- One person may hold up to two officer positions but for financial management reasons the positions of chairman and treasurer are not allowed to be held by the same person.
- No specific responsibilities have been allocated to the secretary. Responsibility remains with the chairman for ensuring that, for example, minutes are produced and sent to Head Office
- A treasurer need not be appointed if a region holds no money or assets. If a treasurer is not appointed the positions of chairman and secretary cannot be held by the same person.

Perhaps this is an ideal time to reiterate that your committee needs you! Something to think about prior to the AGM in the Spring. I think that sometimes the titles of these roles appear more onerous than the roles themselves and I know that Steve and his committee would welcome some new faces, fresh ideas and support.

Structural review of the Association

The three National Deputy Chairmen and Neil Edwards, Chief Executive, met in October, to consider how to further Council's wish to restructure whilst taking into account the comments made by members at the National AGM. The objective of the meeting was to build the best possible structure for IWA that will be fit for purpose for at least the next 10 years. Seven key areas were considered:

The relationship between the Trustee Board and the Operations Executive

The concept of the Trustee Board and the Operations Executive was created by Council to separate the roles of governance and management of IWA. This allows Trustees to meet their legal obligations and avoids conflicts of interest. It is proposed that Trustees should not be allowed to have any senior management role (e.g. chairmanship of national committee) but could take on a supporting role, either nationally or locally, provided that this is unlikely to be seen as being in conflict with their role as Trustees.

The role of trustees

The role of Trustees is to be responsible for all governance and strategy. The Trustee Board may, for example, determine that a strategic aim would be to increase membership by 10% per annum and that we should particularly target members who were not from our traditional narrow boat background. It would be for the Operations Executive to then delegate this to the appropriate committee(s) and to monitor progress. The Trustee Board would maintain oversight via minutes.

The skills required by trustees

Trustees must be capable of seeing the big picture, thinking strategically, have an enquiring mind and a good understanding of the IWA, its aims and objectives. Particular skills may include legal, financial, lobbying, management, human resources, heritage, conservation, environmental, engineering, volunteering and waterways business. No member of the Trustee Board could reasonably be expected to have all these skills – therefore, an objective should be to have a range of trustees who collectively have as many of these skills as possible.

The number of trustees

It is suggested that there should be 9 trustees. This enables a good range of skills to be achieved whilst keeping numbers manageable. The intention is that the members should elect 3 trustees each year and that trustees should not normally be able to serve for longer than two successive terms of 3 years, although after a gap of at least one year they could re-stand.

The appointment of trustees

Trustees should be elected by the members at the National AGM and any member should be able to stand for election. Members wishing to stand for election should be required to complete a structured proforma highlighting their specialist skills and waterways expertise. This information would then be made available to members along with a summary of both the range of skills that ideally Trustees should have available to them and the skills and expertise of the Trustees who remain in office.

The future role of the National Chairman

It is felt that the current workload for the National Chairman is unsustainable. The National Chairman should be an elected Trustee and chosen by the Board of Trustees for this task. The role should be

- Chairing the Trustee Board
- The figurehead who attends key major events on behalf of IWA
- Public spokesman for the IWA at a national level
- The highest level contact with other national bodies

The future management structure of IWA

One of the strengths of IWA is that volunteers do a large amount of work and are ably supported by paid staff. It is proposed that IWA adopt clearer management structures enabling clarity in terms of roles and responsibilities for both volunteers and paid staff.

In the new structure the Operations Executive would effectively be the management committee of IWA and in the proposed structure should be led by a post designated "Chairman of the Operations Executive". This could be either a volunteer or employee.

I apologise that my report could be perceived as being rather "dry" and has covered the structural review in some depth. I feel that it is important that you as members are aware of these changes and proposals and the implications that they bring. These are Council's initial thoughts. The structural review in ongoing and an evolving process, additional areas and elements still need to be included. I am sure that future magazines and even my contribution within them will include more information, and there will of course be lots more consultation so please do give us your feedback.

NW Region Committee meeting with Debbie Lumb (BW General Manager, NW)

We invited Debbie Lumb to attend our September meeting of Region to address several issues relating to navigation, conservation, restoration, multi-user use and development of the waterways here in the North West. We had a very productive meeting and were delighted with the forthright and frank conversation that took place.

We also asked "How can we (BW and IWA) encourage those who value our canals and wish to volunteer their services at a time when bureaucracy can seem overwhelming? Debbie's response was very supportive. BW have offered to assist with the completion of any necessary paperwork and a meeting will take place between representatives of Region Committee and BW

over the winter months to ensure that all paperwork and arrangements are in place for any proposed work for next Spring/Summer. Finally, we on North West Region Committee look forward to your continued support, especially at the Branch Open Meetings. We hope you have an enjoyable festive season and hope to see you at the Branch and Region AGMs in Spring 2008.

The Bedford Basin Toll House

A tale of long term commitment - Steve Connolly

Those of you who attended the December Open meeting would not have failed to notice the interest generated by the slide of Bedford Basin in Leigh in 1970: June 13th to be precise, as John Ryan our speaker was able to affirm. You will all be aware of my connection with Bedford Basin through my work on *Waterwomble* but what might not be so obvious to those of you who don't know Paul Lorenz so well, has been his long term ambition to restore the Toll House that sits in the back of the basin. There was an attempt at restoration in the 70's when Lorenz Brothers leased Bedford Basin, but a diabolical, dastardly, early morning sortie by a mechanical digger, in the employ of Case Tractors, reduced the intact building to three walls. The roof and back wall being smashed down into the interior. This infamy being actioned immediately after Case heard of an unsuccessful application for restoration funding. It is a matter of history that the basin survived further dastardly attempts by Case Tractors, the adjacent landowner and local employer, to have the basin filled in. Had it not been for a waterway enthusiast being well placed to thwart these big brother tactics, things would be very different these days in Leigh.

One of the unique features of this toll house and its surroundings is the fact that coal being shipped out from the yard at the back of the basin arrived there by railway through a tunnel that ran under the town centre of Leigh, constructed when objections to coal traffic filling the town centre became predominant. However back to the restoration, driven on by the daily sight of the Toll House's ignominious fate, Paul beavered on over the years until he and Gabrielle were able to fund a restoration. The breakthrough came when the land adjacent was purchased and developed as a bus garage. To Paul's eternal thanks the owner, Jim Stones, was willing to allow a slight boundary change thus allowing restoration to begin. This started with digging down from the upper storey floor level, leading to the gradual clearing of the ground floor and the sorting of reusable bricks, the spoil from this first phase being removed in *Womble's* on board skips when debris collecting allowed. It was something of an attraction, I understand, during the later stages of digging to watch as shovelful's of rubbish erupted through the downstairs canal side window into the waiting onboard

skips. Also something of an attraction was the slow revealing of the base of the side wall where it joined into the copings of the much higher basin wall, no expensive sandstone blocks in this, out of sight inner wall, just lots of courses of brick to keep the earth at bay.

Interest also rose as the features at the back of the ground floor were revealed for the first time in decades. First a straight edge to the brickwork, then a rotted doorway pillar, until the worn stone steps, that would have lead up to the higher cobbled yard at the rear, gradually appeared. It was nice to think of this "cellar", as it would have been, filled with all the needs of a busy coal trans-shipment operation, including possibly some tack for the all important horses that were never far from the action. There were no internal steps from this basement cum cellar to the upper "office", perhaps that was the reason the steps were so worn?

Access to the management level was from the higher basin wall that rises some 6 feet on the far side of the building away from the loading chute. This difference in levels from one side of the building to the other is another unique feature of the ticket office, although Ken the brickie, having decided to rebuild the complicated base of this structural wall described it in other terms. However once the technical plans were approved for this 6 course thick wall, John T, who volunteered to be brickie's mate, was hard pressed to keep Ken supplied with bricks and mortar.

Paul, having got the heritage bug whilst searching for compatible bricks, now embarked on a mission to source other materials, the style of which was gleaned from a treasured black and white photo of the ticket office, a reproduction of which was circulated in the form of a family Christmas card some years ago. It was the similarity of this photo to the slide shown at the open meeting that caused the excitement I mentioned earlier.

One particular item that thwarted Paul's search for some time was the chimney pot, it was of a distinctive shape and clearly visible in the photo. I understand that a moorer at the basin eventually tracked one down in Shrewsbury. Having obtained a suitable pot the next challenge was to replicate the roof, complete with slate and shaped lead cappings on the corners of the four triangular sections of the pointed roof. One of the nice things about the quest to rebuild the ticket office has been the number of craftsmen knowledgeable in the skills required to restore what is essentially an early Victorian building, a run of the mill Victorian, canal side building, admitted, but a gem of an historic building for all that, especially in knock 'em down Leigh.

Once the building was weather proof thoughts turned to the interior, especially the upper, management floor. Master of wood, Bob, took some persuading to incorporate the triangular form of the roof into the woodwork on the ceiling

directly below. This design in pine tongue and groove was complicated by the slightly rectangular measurements of the room. Now completed this sets off the room very well. However discussions then began as to the suitability of varnish against paint, a solution being found when John the painter pointed out that you can paint over varnish but not varnish over paint, he also diverted any further discussions by replicating paint wash effect walls whilst everyone was looking the other way.

One referral to the expected problems of modern day materials supply became apparent when Paul ordered the pitch pine floorboards from a once respected reclaimed timber machine shop west of Wigan on the Leeds and Liverpool canal. The original plan was to collect the boards by boat, family wide boat *Pauline* to be precise. A good plan, nice summer weekend boating and then a triumphant return with the Toll House floorboards delivered straight from the boat to the building. However the shaping machine broke, then this happened, then that happened, then "when do you want them" was asked, eventually, some 9 weeks later the boards were collected by van and were reverently laid by Bob at the end of November. Boards complete with occasional small holes from items that had been fixed to the original 150 year old beam from which the boards were cut, another nice touch.

It will not be long now before the sight I'm waiting for happens; smoke from the reclaimed chimney, percolating up from the range, past the chimney breast where is fixed an engraved brick carrying the words LCS 2005, a gift from moorer's Crick and Hope Grundy. The smoke is of course wood smoke, from logs recovered from the debris collection activities of *Womble*, full circle I think?

Interesting Photos In Unexpected Places - John Palmer

At various times I have found canal photographs in unexpected books, several concern railway history, not totally surprising since a large number of canals spent some time under railway ownership and photography was slightly more advanced than in early canal days. However it is worth remembering that a photo of 'work' would be anything but, since film speeds meant an exposure of one or more seconds and only if the sun was shining, so most people had advance warning to be in their Sunday best, and looking like they were doing something whilst not actually moving. Some of us can remember school photo's with this sort of situation. (What the cameraman of yesteryear would make of today's digital revolution and computer 'enhancement' and all in glorious colour, as against plates, darkrooms and optimism is probably best just guessed at).

So to start off with a very interesting book covering the Churnet Valley, primarily the Caldon Canal:-

TITLE	<i>The Churnet Valley Railway</i>	AUTHOR	Basil Jeuda
ISBN	1 899889 05 1	PUBLISHER	Lightmoor Press
COST	a ludicrous £19.95		

There are several interesting plans, (though bearing in mind their age several comments about accuracy made by a previous open meeting speaker talking about maps should be born in mind, i.e. whom so ever commissioned them will be reasonably accurately represented but anything else could be distorted to suit or missing altogether if that suits). Amongst others Froghall Wharf 1816, Leek Wharf and arm and it's relationship to the rest of the Leek railway complex. The two separate railway lines by the bottom lock at Bosley and the wharf there. Several photographs show Rudyard Lake, which is artificial in that it was built as a feeder for the Caldon, and the Consall area is covered with a railway based Ale delivery to the Black Lion and a photo of the original overhanging station (now I believe rebuilt and reopened by enthusiasts). Not actually a canal at all but an interesting shot showing Alton Station looking ready to receive a selection of canal packet boats.

Other items of interest are peoples names, how today's selection appears somewhat tame compared to those of less than a couple of hundred years ago.

Staying in the same area and with the same author and publisher we find this volume has a complete section entitled CANALS.

TITLE	<i>The Knotty</i>	ISBN	1 899889 01 9
COST	an extortionate £14.95		

Nowhere near as many plans or maps in this discourse. I actually find the map content of most historical books lacking. The odd grid reference would be useful when comparing to present maps. But such is life. This volume covers a much larger area and has some twenty nine canal prints including:- Sharlow 1910; Bottom Lock Stone 1910; The inspection launch *Dolly Varden*; North end of the old Harecastle Tunnel in use; Anderton boat lift and salt chutes; Working limestone boat exiting Froghall tunnel; Froghall basin 1904; Leek branch and basin. Then the only two photos I have ever noted of the Newcastle branch. A whole way of life nigh on alien to today. A much more leisurely pace though I feel it is worth remembering that, like most photographs of sailing ships, the camera only came out when the weather was fine. No point and press in those times.

Source of these odd books is the Borders Bookshop in Stockport, on the old power station site now called the Peel Centre, which has the commendable idea they sometimes have height barriers in place.

(Ed – try your local second hand bookshop, they all seem to have extensive railway books sections)

THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION – MANCHESTER BRANCH

Annual General Meeting 2007/8

The Annual General Meeting of the Manchester Branch of the Inland Waterways Association will take place on **Monday 10th March 2008 at 8pm at Dukes 92, Castle Street, Castlefield, Manchester.**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of minutes of previous AGM (12/3/2007) & matters arising
3. Reports from the Region Chairman & Branch Chairman
4. Presentation of statements of income & expenditure, assets, liabilities & commitments
5. Business of the meeting notified under byelaw 40
6. Notice of Committee size
7. Election to fill any vacancies on Branch Committee
8. Talk by Leslie Brown (former diver for the MSC)

Statement of Committee Size

The statutory requirements, which were agreed on the 14th September 2002, state that the Branch Committee shall be comprised of a maximum of 16 selected members.

There are 4 retirements under the 3 year rule. Steve Connolly, Andrew Perry, Keith Fowler, Sue Day and they have all indicated their wish to be re-elected. There is also one co-opted member, Ian Price, who has indicated his wish to be elected to the committee.

This leaves 8 vacancies on Branch Committee and the Branch Secretary would be **happy to receive nominations from anyone who would be prepared to serve on the Branch Committee.**

Nominations for elections to the Committee (which must be in writing, signed by the proposer, seconder and nominee) should reach the Branch Secretary not less than 14 days before the meeting i.e. **before 25th February 2008.**

Nomination form for Manchester Branch Committee 2008 – 11

I (name)*of

Address

Agree to accept nomination for election to the Committee of The IWA Manchester Branch for 2008/2011.

Signed

Proposed by*

Signature

Seconded by*

Signature Date:

NB: Nominee, proposer and seconder must be members of the IWA in good standing.

(*Block Capitals please. Photocopies of this form accepted)

Please send to: Branch Acting Secretary John Palmer, 53 Southwood Road, Great Moor, Stockport SK2 7DJ by **25th February 2008.**

THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION – NORTH WEST REGION

Annual General Meeting 2007/8

PROGRAMME

11.00pm – Informal Tour of the area led by Steve Connolly

2.00pm – Annual General Meeting

This year attendees are being asked to make their own lunch arrangements as there are numerous eating venues in this locality.

Please inform Steve Connolly if you want to go on the informal tour (address etc in branch Committee listing page 2).

THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION – NORTH WEST REGION

Annual General Meeting 2007/8

The Annual General Meeting of the North West Region of The Inland Waterways Association will take place on **Saturday 1st March 2008 at 2pm at Dukes 92, Castle Street, Castlefield, Manchester M3 4LZ**

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Approval of minutes of previous AGM held 3rd March 2007 and any matters arising from these minutes
- 3 Reports from the Region Chairman & Branch Chairmen
- 4 Presentation of statements of income & expenditure, assets, liabilities and commitments
- 5 Notice of Committee size
- 6 Election to fill any vacancies on Region Committee
- 7 Discussion on the revised structure of the Inland Waterways Association.

Statement of Committee Size

The statutory requirements, which were agreed on the 14th September 2002, state that the Region Committee shall be comprised of a maximum of 16 selected members plus Branch Chairmen.

This year there are two retirements under the three year rule, Cynthia Greenall & Sue Thurstan and both are eligible for re-election.

There is a total of six vacancies on Branch Committee and the Region Secretary would be happy to receive nominations from anyone else who would be prepared to serve on the Region Committee.

NOMINATION FORM - N W REGION 2008 – 11

* Name

*Address

Telephone numbers

E-mail
.....

Signed

Date:

Nominee must be an IWA member of good standing.

*Block Capitals please. Photocopies of this form accepted

Please return form before or at the Annual General Meeting 1 March 2008

to: Mrs S Thurstan, 30 Queensway, Blackburn BB2 4QT Tel: 01254 200363;

e-mail sue.thurstan@ntlworld.com

Under the new bye-laws nominations may also be accepted from the floor at the AGM

Cover Storey

The BW Man Cometh - Ian Price

In April we were gently cruising from Llangollen en route to Penkridge (Staffordshire) via Manchester. It was surprising to see the number of Canada Geese nesting and raising young in right in the centre of Manchester. Perhaps inner city living appeals to them as much as those purchasing apartments in the towering blocks. We moored for the night in Castlefield along with three hire boats and, to our pleasure, noticed musicians leaving one of them. Having ascertained they were headed for the *Deansgate* our plan for the evening took shape. A bonus to a very enjoyable evening was the promise of help locking up the Rochdale and Ashton flights next day.

Up early to cast off at 7am another surprise, a heron standing between two boats fishing for his breakfast. Diana manoeuvred into Lock 92 together with the first of the musical hire boats and, as there was plenty of help around, I went on to set the next lock. I wandered on to the one after before realising that the boats had

not appeared out of 92. On returning I discovered that they were having difficulty closing one of the bottom gates and it became apparent that it had slipped forward slightly. A call was duly put in to BW's emergency number and we were told the lengthsmen would be with us as soon as he had arrived at the office. Accordingly he arrived and called in the 'gang' to fix the problem. The 'gang' arrived, two men in a small lorry with rakes and rubbish collecting equipment, who correctly determined a crane would be needed to lift the gate back into position. In due course a lorry with crane attachment arrived. Having examined the gate closely the driver pointed out that the top band had not simply become loose but had been bent and the blacksmith would be needed to reshape it. Therefore he would await the blacksmith as to lift the gate he would need to position his lorry blocking the bridge over the canal. The blacksmith was summoned conjuring up visions of a lorry arriving complete with furnace bellows and anvil! However gas bottles and torches were what appeared and with a large hammer and much skill the band was returned to its proper shape. The gate eased onto its socket and vertical and the band positioned. New washers were needed and 'feather' to secure it. My simple mind ran through the likely contents of and whereabouts of the nearest B&Q. I could not remember seeing large rectangular washers in my local branch and was somewhat puzzled as to why feathers were needed at all. I was worried that it might take a trip to Rochdale yard to collect the washers and 'feathers' causing an even longer delay but no, the blacksmith fashioned them by the lock side and soon the gate and lock were pronounced serviceable. The boats re-entered the lock and our journey recommenced some 5 hours later than planned. The 'feathers' turned out to be triangular pieces of metal inserted to wedge the band tightly in place.

The story does seem like a canal version of the old Flanders & Swan song 'The gas man cometh' but when faced with a very large lock gate hanging loose would you expect it to be fixed whilst you wait? I certainly didn't but much to our amazement BW did. Brilliant.

A post-script: as we rose in Lock 92 (wondering a little about how secure the gate was) we were told that there was no water in the pound above Lock 88! "No problem", said the lengthsmen. "I'll get some sent down from Rochdale, they are not using it". So after a little wait in Lock 88 we cruised on to one or two more 'incidents' as we travelled through deepest Manchester. Perhaps worth a tale another time.

IWA Manchester Branch Winter Talks Programme February - April 2008

2nd Monday in the month commencing 8pm prompt
In the Brindley Room, At Dukes 92, Castle Street, Castlefield, Manchester

Meetings are open to members and non-members All Welcome

February 11th

Glen Atkinson

*Building the Big Ditch – The Manchester Ship Canal
Victorian magic lantern slides from the Frank Mullineux
collection*

March 10th

Branch AGM followed by

Leslie Brown (former diver for the MSC)

*The Maintenance of a waterway – diving and working
below water*

April 14th

Margaret Myatt

*A Special Experience – A Horse Boating Holiday
A blatant advert to encourage everyone to spend time
with a new company operating Horse Boating Holidays
on the Montgomery Canal*

Manchester Branch area Canals

The Bridgewater Canal, The Rochdale Canal, The Ashton Canal, The
Huddersfield Narrow Canal, The Lower Peak Forest Canal, The
Macclesfield Canal, The Manchester Ship Canal.

In addition there are four restorations in progress within the Manchester Branch:

Hollinswood Canal; The Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal; The Stockport Branch Canal; Bugsworth Basin

Canal and Navigation Societies in the North West.

Shropshire Union Canal Society

The Society was formed in 1968 to promote interest in the past, present and future of 158 miles of canal. This embraces the Main Line of the Shropshire Union Canal, from Ellesmere Port to Autherley Junction, the Llangollen Canal, the Middlewich Arm, the Montgomery Canal and the line and remnants of the Shrewsbury and Newport Canal. These canals are an essential part of our waterways system and the society believes that they have a tremendous social and commercial value to the community.

The Society's main concern is to reopen the Montgomery Canal which was abandoned by Act of Parliament in 1944, but which remained in British Waterways ownership. In 1987 a further act was passed to enable the full restoration to be undertaken.

The Society has done a considerable amount of work and reopened Carreghofa locks in 1986 followed by Burgedin Locks in 1998. The opening of Burgedin Locks extended the navigable stretch of the canal by 11 miles near Welshpool. The Society subsequently turned its attention to the Newton end of the canal and Brynderwen Lock was officially opened in June 2002 after restoration work by the society, which started in 1998. Work now continues at Newhouse Lock.

To promote the restoration of the Shrewsbury and Newport Canal a new organisation was formed in the autumn of 2000, the Shrewsbury and Newport Canals Trust, which has resulted in the restoration being upgraded to a rating of National Significance. This was because the Society felt unable to support two canal restoration projects at the same time. It has strong links with the new Trust which has a representative on our Council.

Contact: Linda Andrews, Secretary. Telephone 07867790195.

Email nbjosephinecollier@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.shropshireunion.org.uk/

Wooden Canal Boat Society Street in Stalybridge, on the Ashton canal in Greater Manchester. These craft are a vital but hitherto largely neglected part

of the canal heritage. Less than 200 wooden working boats now survive on over 2000 miles of inland waterways. The W.C.B.S. is saving as

Street in Stalybridge, on the Ashton canal in Greater Manchester. These craft are a vital but hitherto largely neglected part of the canal heritage. Less than 200 wooden working boats now survive on over 2000 miles of inland waterways. The W.C.B.S. is saving as many as it can, when restored they function not as dead museum pieces but as living working boats serving today's community.

As well as creating a fully functional heritage boatyard the Society is now involved in a range of activities aimed at preserving and using wooden narrow boats.

The Wooden Canal Boat Society, 33 Beauchamp Street, Ashton Under Lyne, OL6 8LF

Contact: Chris Leah, Telephone 0161 330 8422 or Mobile 07931 952037

Email: wcbs@beeb.net Website: www.wcbs.org.uk/

The Horse Boating Society

The Horse Boating Society was formed in 2001 at the Boat Museum, Ellesmere Port. The primary aim of the Society is to preserve and promote horseboating and has about 100 members and with other organisations also affiliated, the Society represents over 1000 in total.

The objectives of the Society are to promote the communication and cooperation between persons and organisations with an interest in horseboating. It also strives to maintain responsible operation of horsedrawn craft on the inland waterways and the training of crew and horses to a standard suitable for use by bothorses and horsedrawn craft and the preservation, restoration and maintenance of the various types of horsedrawn craft. The Society promotes the education of public about the history and present use of horsedrawn craft and the research into the skills, people, horses, boats, structures and equipment involved in horseboating and archiving and retention of relative literature and documentation. Many of the horsedrawn journeys undertaken so far have depended on Sue Day, the chairperson, providing the horse, harness and horsebox.

Email: enquiries@horseboating.org.uk

Website: <http://www.mossley.freeuk.com/horseboating/about.htm>