

## IWA Parliamentarian of the Year

IWA has recognised the work of a member of the House of Lords for the first time, nominating Rt. Hon. The Lord German OBE as its IWA Parliamentarian of the Year.

Lord German has been a leading advocate for canals and rivers, serving on the All Party Parliamentary Group for the Waterways and is currently a Vice Chair of the Group. He is a former leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrats and Deputy First Minister of the National Assembly of Wales. Lord German is also President of the Monmouthshire, Brecon & Abergavenny Canals Trust, which is currently working to restore the Ty Coch lock flight on a derelict section of the canal in Cwmbran.

Presenting the award, IWA National Chairman Les Etheridge said: "Through his staunch support for and active involvement with the inland waterways both at Westminster and locally in South Wales, Lord German is a very worthy recipient of this trophy. The Trust of which he is President promotes all that is good about our inland waterways – restoration of the canal, economic regeneration, training, work experience for young people, health benefits and community



Photo: Rt Hon the Lord German OBE being presented with his award by Les Etheridge, IWA's national chairman

involvement." The award ceremony took place at IWA's annual Parliamentary Dinner, held at the Houses of Parliament on 1st November. Over 30 parliamentarians and other guests heard Les Etheridge tell of the wide community benefits of IWA's festivals programme, typified by the 2016 National Campaign Festival in

Liverpool, and discuss the potential transfer of the navigations currently run by EA to CRT.

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## IWA News

### Enjoy Prize Winning Photography Throughout 2017

IWA's calendar is packed with brilliant photographs submitted as entries to our very popular photographic competition so you can view fabulous waterway scenes every month of the year. An added bonus is that the picture can be used as a postcard after the end of the month - a bargain at £3.95! Order your IWA 2017 calendar online at [iwashop.com](http://iwashop.com) or call 01494 783453.

If you would like your waterway photographs to be featured on the IWA calendar or cards please do enter the annual competition - entries for the 2018 calendar close on 31st January 2017.

### WRG Canal Volunteers Helped by Python

The annual WRG Bonfire Bash was held on the Chesterfield and Cromford canals during the first weekend of November. Over 70 volunteers attended enable significant progress on the two restoration sites. The annual Bonfire Bash acts as a reunion where attendees from the previous summer's Canal Camps can meet up and plan next year's activities. The event is also attended by many from the WRG regional groups who hold regular weekend work parties throughout the year. Whilst there were work sites on both canals, the event was

primarily hosted by Chesterfield Canal Trust, which has hosted a number of Canal Camps in recent years.

The Trust's Publicity Officer, Rod Auton said: "We are hugely grateful for the help received from IWA's WRG on projects like the new Staveley Town Lock. It is incredible what a sudden influx of WRG volunteers can do to add to the wonderful work done by our own volunteer work party. We have been very lucky that they have been able to come to us so often."

The volunteers worked on four sites – Kiveton, Renishaw and Lowgates on the Chesterfield Canal and Ironville on the Cromford Canal. The Chesterfield gangs were all involved in scrub bashing, i.e. cutting down trees, shrubs and undergrowth to expose the canal. The resulting logs soon disappeared to be used on local log burning stoves, often in return for a donation. The remaining scrub was burned. These fires, plus the time of year, lead to the title Bonfire Bash. At Renishaw and Lowgates, the volunteers were removing vegetation along the line of the unrestored canal. At Kiveton, where the canal is in water, they were cutting back trees and saplings that had grown up alongside. A boat was needed to help, so the Chesterfield Canal Trust volunteers brought Python.

Python was built in 1929 and served as a working boat for over 70 years, latterly for British Waterways. The Chesterfield Canal Trust acquired it in 2009, when it had become surplus to

requirements. It was used as a promotional boat at waterway rallies and carnivals until 2013, when it sprung a serious leak and major repairs were required to the hull. These were completed a year ago and the Trust's volunteers are currently fitting out a new cabin. Python will continue to be a promotional boat for the Trust in the summer, but will help CRT with maintenance on the canal in the winter.

### IWA Waterways Restoration Raffle

For the chance of winning a £1000 cash prize and contributing to IWA's support of canal restoration go to the online raffle page. When you buy your tickets you can nominate your favourite project so funds are allocated to where you want them to go.

## IWA Branch News

### IWA Warwickshire Branch

On Sunday 23rd October IWA Warwickshire Branch held their latest clean up of the Grand Union canal and the adjoining towpath in Warwick, centred on Emscote Road Bridge.

A diverse group of 60 volunteers used grappling hooks to haul a variety of items from the canal bed. These included the usual selection of shopping trolleys and bicycles, although it was noticeable the

number of supermarket trolleys was greatly reduced since the last visit to this site adjacent to Tesco. The majority of the sunken items coming north of Emscote Road towards Coventry Road Bridge. These included a Vespa motor scooter, tyres, a gym bench, a lawnmower, a fish tank, a garage door, several large oil drums, a mattress, a sewing machine, road work signs and cones, part of a car, lots of pipe, and a sundry mixture of metal and plastic. In addition a litter pick produced several bags of rubbish.

The volunteers came from the IWA, Warwick University volunteers, including almost a complete team from the ladies hockey XI, Tesco's staff, canal enthusiasts, some of whom had travelled from outside the area, plus a dozen local residents. CRT gave their usual support by providing gloves, litter pickers, grapples, coordination through their Volunteer Leader, Steve Lambert and a large hopper and push tug, manned by IWA members who are regular volunteers on CRT's helmsman scheme.

## **IWA North Staffordshire & South Cheshire**

Good progress has been made on the Cheshire Locks over the summer period with work on lock 43 plus the surrounding area been completed. The team has now moved onto lock 42 where the work party on 20th October comprised of 6 volunteers who had a very productive

day completing most of the metalwork and painting some of the woodwork. In addition a small team contributed another 12 hours during the month to complete the milepost painting up to Harecastle Tunnel.

At the beginning of this year IWA volunteers worked on a memorial garden alongside the Red Bull Offices. The IWA team cleared extensive overgrowth and brambles, removed rocks and levelled the site. Over the course of the summer CRT arranged for another team of local youngsters to complete the garden.

## **IWA Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire Branch**

Sunday October 23rd saw 15 volunteers from the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Branch cleaning out the Nottingham Canal between the city centre and London Road. The Canal & River Trust kindly provided a work boat and the volunteers were split into grappling, work boat and litter picking teams. It was refreshing to see the litter this year was reduced and the pickers made it all the way to Meadow Lane Lock and the canal's entry into the River Trent. The grapplers and work boat crews however, found they had quite a task on their hands. Although only a one mile stretch, the work boat had to be offloaded part way through proceedings as it was full. The haul included 25 bikes, 24 shopping trolleys, seven car tyres and three full size 'Heras' fence panels as well as other assorted signs, pipes, cables and scrap. Chairman

Mike Snaith said it was good to see such a haul of very old and very mangled scrap pulled from the canal, it had obviously been hit hard by passing craft so was much better out than in but it was disappointing to see two relatively new Nottingham City Citycard cycles dumped in the canal, albeit good to retrieve them from their watery grave.

## **IWA Ipswich Branch**

IWA's Ipswich branch has organised a weekend away for both members and non-members on 13th-14th May 2017.

The trip, with additional pick-ups near Chelmsford and Waltham Abbey, includes a visit to Stockwood Discovery Centre in Luton, a 3hr boat trip along the Great Ouse on board the John Bunyan, overnight hotel accommodation with dinner and breakfast, a visit to Woburn Abbey with lunch followed by a visit to Bletchley Park plus return coach transport.

Go to the Branch webpage for more information and details of how to book. If you have any questions please email the Branch contact, Spencer Greystrom.

## **IWA Branch and Region Network**

IWA is organised through a network of eight Regions and 33 Branches across the country. To find a Branch near you click on this link which will take you to information about the Branches, their newsletters, contacts and the

local waterways in their area.

## Other Waterways News

### Weevils on the Wey & Arun

Tiny beetles have halted an outbreak of weed which was choking part of a historic waterway. The two millimetre-long North American weevils nibbled away at a carpet of vegetation on the Wey & Arun Canal, clearing the non-native water fern in just a few weeks. Twelve thousand weevils were released into the waterway at Tickner's Heath, Dunsfold, in July, to combat *Azolla filiculoides*. This floating fern is considered one of the most invasive plants in the country.

The project was a partnership between the Canal Trust, the Heritage Lottery funded Arun and Rother Connections and the Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International, which supplied the weevils.

All known infestations of this invasive plant have now been removed from the river catchment. Wey & Arun Canal Trust will continue to monitor its waterway to ensure that the plants do not return in the spring. Individually, the weevils consume a small amount of *Azolla*, but they breed to produce large populations which feed extensively on the weed. Across the UK, entire

infected lakes and canals have been cleared using this form of biological control.

*Azolla* was introduced into the UK from the Americas in around 1840 as an ornamental garden aquatic. Some North American weevils also arrived with the imported ferns, and the insect species is now considered naturalised. They pose no threat to UK ecosystems, unlike the fern itself, which soon escaped into the wider environment, where it now causes considerable problems on ponds, lakes and waterways.

The initiative at Tickner's Heath is in line with the Wey & Arun Canal Trust's policy of controlling and eradicating invasive species, including Himalayan balsam, giant hogweed and Japanese knotweed, on land that it has responsibility for.

### Buckingham Canal

During October the Buckingham Canal Society started to expose the remaining parts of the former Bridge 1 at Cosgrove, the first significant milestone towards restoring the bridge and the re-watering for the Cosgrove section of the Buckingham Canal.

During the Second World War, the Old Stratford arm of the Grand Union canal, now part of the Buckingham Canal, was blocked off at bridge number 1. The bridge itself remained intact until the 1970's when its main arch was demolished and filled in, leaving a mound of earth and rubble that has since served as a farm crossing. Earlier this year, Buckingham Canal

Society volunteers performed some exploratory hand excavation of this mound and confirmed that significant portions of the bridge still exist. Since then, working with support from CRT and other adjacent landowners, the society have agreed plans for the full restoration of the bridge. This is a key milestone towards the eventual removal of the blockage and full re-watering of the Cosgrove section.

Over the past few months Buckingham Canal Society volunteers have created a temporary farm crossing, adjacent to the bridge, allowing the formal closing of the bridge and the installation of necessary safety fencing. The volunteers have now started work on the excavation of the infilled barrel and the abutments. More of the original stonework and the sides of the original arch have now been exposed providing encouraging signs that the restoration is achievable.

### Divers Repair Torksey Lock

A team of divers has braved the cold to carry out important repairs needed to a canal lock which forms the gateway to Lincolnshire's waterways. The divers working on behalf of CRT carried out the repairs at Torksey Lock which marks the junction of the River Trent and Fossdyke Canal.

On Tuesday 25 October they inspected and repaired a damaged 'spear rod' that connects the lock operating mechanism to a sluice

Find out about volunteering - [www.waterways.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.waterways.org.uk/volunteer)

door, known as a paddle, which is used to fill the lock with water. As the paddle is under the water CRT called in a team of divers to investigate the full extent of the problem which revealed damage to a bolt connecting the rod to the paddle.

The lock is the first on the historic Fosdyke Navigation and enables boaters to make their way from the River Trent to Lincoln, Boston and beyond. The Fosdyke is widely believed to be one of the country's oldest canals, dating back to Roman times and remains a popular waterway junction today.

## Towing a Heritage Mud Hopper Through Birmingham

A 70' heritage mud hopper, Tow, belonging to Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust, was towed by Muskrat, a 35' foot narrow boat, from Camp Hill to Alvechurch, on Sunday 23 and Monday 24 October in fine weather along the Birmingham Canal Navigations. The journey involved going through 25 locks in Birmingham from a little basin at the top of the Camp Hill flight, through the Ashted flight, then the Farmer's Bridge flight, past Cambrian Wharf and through Gas Street Basin, then West Hills tunnel and down to Alvechurch with support from Birmingham Canal Navigations Society. The team included Seth Barnett, a budding boater all of 11 years old, who steered Muskrat through numerous locks ahead of Tow. Until recently, his family lived on boats in Bath.

As the sun shone, people along the route stopped to gaze at this relatively diminutive narrowboat evidently able to tow the huge wide rusty and heavy 70'+ mudhopper, a relatively unattractive-looking craft, apart from its adornment of H&G Canal Trust banner and bunting. The high point of the day came when entering Gas Street Basin and the challenge for Muskrat towing Tow of the sharp turn right there. From there father and son, John and Henry, took the boats on through West Hills tunnel, arriving at Scarfield Wharf in Alvechurch, ABC Leisure Group Ltd's head office on Monday 24 October.

After being craned out of the water at Scarfield Wharf, Alvechurch, a gesture generously offered to the Trust by ABC Leisure, Tow will be transported on a lorry to Over Canal Basin, near Gloucester, to undergo her restoration makeover and to start a new life on the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal. The restoration of the mud hopper will be carried out entirely by Trust volunteers who already maintain the heritage boat fleet of a half dozen boats owned by the Trust currently in the Over Basin.

## Reinstate Clydach Council Depot Towpath Petition

Please sign this petition of support for Swansea Canal Society's bid for funds to reinstate the original towpath through the former Clydach council depot to the proper standards. This is important because the existing

statutory footpath transgresses all the current standards and the surface of the relevant portion of National Cycle Route 43 passing through the yard is unsatisfactory. The reinstated canal towpath will also provide safe uninterrupted passage during the restoration of the buried lock and canal.

Sign the petition at: <http://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/reinstate-clydach-council-yard-towpath>.

## Santa's Back on the Chesterfield Canal

Santa will be all over the Chesterfield Canal this Christmas. He will be cruising from five different venues on four different boats with the Chesterfield Canal Trust. All the children will get a suitable present and all the adults will get a mince pie (or similar) and a drink. All this for £7 per person. Advance booking is essential.

These Santa Special cruises run on Saturdays and Sundays, plus the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before Christmas. Some even run on Christmas Eve. John Varley will be running Santa Special trips from Tipton Lock in Chesterfield from 19th November - to book, ring 01629 533020. Santa starts sailing on Seth Ellis from Retford on 26th November - to book ring 07925 851569. The event will only be on Hugh Henshall in Worksop for one weekend - 3rd and 4th December. However it will be going from Shireoaks from 10th December. To book all Worksop and Shireoaks cruises, ring 0114 360 0460. Madeline will be hosting Santa on

cruises from Hollingwood Hub in Staveley, starting on 3rd December - to book, ring 01629 533020.

## IWA Member Discounts and Special Offers

The following special offers are now available exclusively for IWA members:

### Enjoy the Waterways Through Hire Boats and Leisure

ABC Boat Hire - 15% discount on holidays

Airedale Cruising, Yorkshire Dales BB18 6TP - 10% discount off skippered day cruises

Blackwater Boats, Essex CO4 5HF - 10% discount off boat trips

CanalCruising.co.uk - 10% discount

Canal Boat Magazine - 12 issues for £21.99 + Gourmet Society Plus

City Centre Cruises - 10% discount for Sunday lunch cruises

Frangipani SUP Ltd - 10% discount

Jenny Wren, London NW1 8QS - 10% discount off cruises

Middlewich Narrowboats - 25% discount off hire price of Willow

Wyvern Shipping Co. Ltd- 10% discount on published prices

### Eating Out

Bounty Pub, Bourne End SL8 5RG - 10% discount off food

Clifford Arms, Staffordshire ST18 0SR - 10% discount off food  
Fingerpost Pub & Restaurant, Pelsall WS3 5AU - 10% discount off food

Kings Lock Tearooms, Leicester LE2 8LT - 10% discount off food

Ring 'O Bells Pub, Marple SK6 7AY - 10% discount off food

Three Locks Pub, Stoke Hammond MK17 9DD - 10% discount off food

Wharf Pub, Bugbrooke NN7 3QB - 10% discount

### Better Value on Boats and Equipment

Boatshed Grand Union - 10% discount on brokerage

Boat Windows Ltd - 5% discount

Calcutt Boats - 5% online discount

Channel Glaze - 10% discount on double glazing

Cotswold Outdoor - 10% discount

IceGripper - Special offer on ladies walking boots

Kings Lock Chandlery - 5% discount on purchases excluding all fuels (diesel, gas, coal, wood, etc)

Marine Mega Store Ltd - 15% discount

Midland Chandlers - 5% discount

RoadPro- 5% discount

Solar Technology International- 10% discount on PV Logic Narrow Boat Kits & Foldup Panels

Willowbridge Marina - 10% discount on chandlery purchases and services in the yard

Zead - Free Postage & Accessories

### Services

Europcar - Special hire rates to IWA members

Forge Studio - 10% discount

I Love Meet and Greet Ltd - 15% discount

Lee Sanitation - 10% on orders over £100

Paper Wizard - 15% discount

River Canal Rescue - up to 15% discount

Wavetrain Marine - 5% discount on selected training

**Please note: All discounts and offers are entirely at the organisers' discretion.**

To see details of how to take advantage of these offers, please go to the IWA Members discount page.

For IWA members who receive a printed copy of this bulletin in the post, please contact the membership team on 01494

783453 for the details of the offers.

Members can also support IWA with a Narrow Boat magazine subscription

### Boat Insurance

IWA has an arrangement with insurers Navigators & General and River Canal Rescue that provides top quality boat insurance and access to the basic waterway rescue service for boat owners, with the added benefit that every policy taken out and subsequently renewed helps IWA, and thus furthers our charitable work for the waterways.

### Contact Us

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