

email: middlesex.newsletter@waterways.org.uk

No. 27 Spring 2011

MIDDLESEX MATTERS



Lot Mead Lock, Rickmansworth. The Grand Union canal Lock 80

Diary Dates 2011

March

8th - Middlesex Branch AGM and social evening

April

12th - Middlesex Branch social evening

May

10th - Middlesex Branch social evening

June

14th - Middlesex Branch social evening

July

29-31st - IWA's National Festival and Boat Show
Shobnall Fields, Burton-upon-Trent

September

13th - Middlesex Branch social evening

October

11th - Middlesex Branch social evening

November

8th - Middlesex Branch social evening

Middlesex Branch social evenings are held at Hillingdon Canal Club, Waterloo Rd, Uxbridge.
Entrance is free and all are welcome including non members.

IWA NATIONAL WATERWAYS FESTIVAL & BOAT SHOW

Friday 29th- Sunday 31st July 2011

at

**Shobnall Fields
Burton-upon-Trent.**

On the Trent & Mersey Canal

Adult advance ticket - £8 (£10 on gate)

Concession ticket - £7 (£8 on gate)



Chairman's Column

British Waterways and the new charity

It is proposed that British Waterways will become a charity from 1 April 2012. DEFRA will shortly be launching a public consultation to seek the views of all waterway users. The proposed structure of the "New Waterways Charity" is set out in the various waterway publications. In a nut shell the proposals are to have a national Council of about 50 people, made up from representatives of various stakeholders such as boaters, walkers, cyclists, environmentalists, heritage experts, employees, etc.

Appointed by and reporting to the Council will be the Trustees. They will have an oversight at a strategic level and will appoint Management to run the Charity on a day to day business. Council members and the trustees will be unpaid.

There will also be local waterway boards to advise the new charity's regional managers on local issues. The chairs of these local boards will sit on the national council.

Therefore there is going to be plenty of opportunity for people involved in the waterways to become active within the structure of the new waterways charity.

Proposals for a suitable name for the new charity (The New Waterways Charity is the working name) were available up 4 Feb 2011 at www.surveymonkey.com/s/YBGCVXF.

In my view the success of these changes, welcomed as they are, will be down to a few critical requirements:

- 1) Adequate and a maintained level of funding. Once again the Government has cut funding for British Waterways, this time by £9.8 million. Unless the Government will commit to an adequate funding level the new waterways charity will have a troubled first few years as it makes difficult decisions and tries to raise

new funds to keep canals open and navigable.

- 2) The new charity must look and feel different to British Waterways. Obviously it needs to retain the current British Waterway staff that run the system but there has to be changes, real changes, at the top. There is a danger in my view that we could end up with a Big Wolf (BW) in boaters' clothing! If this happens many boaters will not support the new body.
- 3) Users need to feel they are involved in The new charity and thus in the running of the waterways. This will not be a charity you can join and therefore there is a real danger (my view) that many users will feel left outside the process. I would rather a charity you can join and through an elected council one in which users have a real involvement.

What is clear we need a strong IWA to act a 'critical friend' to the charity and one willing and able to argue our points to the Government of the day.

Thank you.

Keith Clayton

Vice Chairman - IWA Middlesex Branch

Branch social evening

At the February social evening Roger Squires provided us with a fascinating talk on the Panama Canal. It was illustrated with pictures about the early development during the 1880's through to 1914 when the canal opened to shipping. Roger concluded the talk with pictures taken more recently from a ship on which he was a passenger.



Roger Squires with Keith and Robin draws the prizewinning tickets for the 200 Cub draw.

The history of the Panama Canal is a totally absorbing subject, full of intrigue rife with corruption and subplots between the players.

With unknown origin and no cure thousands were dying from malaria and yellow fever. There's creative accounting and spin without control. Does this sound familiar today? The story is the stuff of legends and reads more like a thriller.

The battle to build the canal has been documented in the book *Panama Fever* by Matthew Parker. It traces the history of a dream that spanned four centuries. It unfolds with Victorian European confidence, through one of history's

greatest engineering disasters, into an account of triumph over vast obstacles. A great read.

CANALWAY CAVALCADE

London's premier waterway event at Little Venice

Organised each year by
the Inland Waterways Association

Saturday 30 April to Monday 2 May

FREE ADMISSION

Little Venice is situated between
Paddington and Warwick Avenue tube stations.

Volunteers are needed to help with the
branch sales stand and other activities.

If you can help, phone Robin on 020 8452 2632

IWA Middlesex Branch donations

To let you know how your subscriptions are used, part of your subscriptions come to the Branch from IWA Head Office together with contributions from Robin and the sales stand. This money is then distributed to waterways related activities.

2010	Dacorum Narrowboat Trust	£100.00	Since 2005 the branch has donated a total of £5510 to various waterways related causes.
	Inglesham Lock Restoration Appeal	£100.00	
	Cotswold Canal Trust	£250.00	
	Hillingdon Canal Club	£150.00	
		£600.00	The table, left, shows the recipients for the last two years and the types of groups to which we make donations. For the period from 2005 there have been 38 donations to 22 different groups.
2009	Wey & Arun Canal Trust	£100.00	
	Medway Queen Preservation Society	£200.00	
	Dacorum Narrow Boat Trust	£250.00	
	Tideways Adventurers Narrowboat Project	£250.00	
	The Sculptor Appeal	£200.00	Since 2000 the branch has made 51 donations distributing a grand total of £8023.
		£1,000.00	

Any group may apply to the committee for a donation and due consideration will be given to any application.

Andy Holmes

Andy Holmes, who along with Steve Redgrave formed the double Olympic gold medal winners died last October, aged 51. He contracted leptospirosis, known as Weil's disease – the rare condition that waterways users can pick up from infected water.

Weil's disease or leptospirosis is contracted through contact with water carrying urine from infected animals (especially rats and cattle). As well as affecting water-sports participants, it

has also been known to affect canal users. Handling ropes etc. that have come into contact with infected water, especially if one has recent cuts or wounds could place someone at increased risk.

All users of our waterways networks are encouraged to be ever vigilant against this nasty disease and if in doubt, to seek medical advice with the utmost urgency.

Thames to get cable car at Greenwich

A cable car link across the Thames has been given the go ahead by planners at the Greenwich Council's Planning Board meeting on 27 January 2011.

The cable car link is a Transport for London project that will provide a spectacular river crossing between Greenwich Peninsula and the Royal Victoria

Dock in Newham. It is anticipated to be up and running for the 2012 Olympics.

One small problem, the route crosses the flightpath for the City Airport and may be considered too big a hazard.

The application is now go before the Greater London Authority for consideration.



Working boats at Rickmansworth - 1967

More pictures from Mike Timms' collection.

Mike was lucky enough to have been around taking photographs during the last days of commercial narrowboat carrying. Whilst on a walk near Rickmansworth Mike and his wife Jean came across four working boats (top picture) moored below Batchworth lock. Shortly after a pair of working boats (below) came down, heading towards Uxbridge.





Rickmansworth - 2011

Modern day Rickmansworth, leisure boats have all but replaced the working boats.



Walton Bridge

Often described as the ugliest bridge on the river Thames the temporary bridge at Walton on Thames is to be replaced. On 29 December 2010 Local Transport Minister, Norman Baker, confirmed that funding of nearly £23.9 million has been made available for the new bridge.



The bridge will replace the two existing bridges, which will remain in use until the new bridge is completed, in summer of 2013.

The bridge carries the A244 and is used by 34,000 vehicles daily.

As a result of bomb damage during the Second World War a temporary bridge was built in 1953

alongside the damaged one. The current road bridge is a second temporary bridge that opened to traffic in December 1999, whilst pedestrians and cyclists still use the earlier bridge. The 1999 temporary bridge has a limited period planning permission that expires in December 2014, by which time a new bridge needs to be in place.



The new bridge will have no piers in the river opening up views along the river and improving navigation.

It will also include a new viaduct built alongside the existing Victorian viaduct across the Cowey Sale flood

plain; and a new Cowey Sale junction, where Walton Lane joins the road across the bridge, with twin link roads down to the riverside.

Unlicensed Thames boaters in court

FIVE boaters without a valid Thames licence have been prosecuted by the Environment Agency costing them a total of £4,344.

Of the five boaters caught without valid licences three separate cases were heard at

Kingston Magistrate Court and two at Staines Magistrates' Court, all were convicted and fined. The unlicensed boats were moored at Teddington (2), Kingston, Molesey and Wraysbury.

New lifeboat for the Thames

The Thames will have a new lifeboat, thanks to Ross Brawn of Formula One motor racing.

The Mercedes GP Petronas Formula One Team and other businesses helped raise money for his Brawn Lifeboat Challenge.

In just eight months they raised £360,000, which will buy a new lifeboat that will be shared between Chiswick and Tower RNLI lifeboat stations. Named The Brawn Lifeboat Challenge it will be on service in early 2012.

MIDDLESEX MUSINGS



Don't cut corners do it right first time

Over the years most of us come to realise that if you do it right first time then you only need do it once. This also implies that you only need pay for it once. Walton bridge might well be a good example of where this principle wasn't applied (re: three bridges in sixty years).

To be fair the first temporary replacement was in 1953; austere times, not long after the war when the whole country was suffering from severe shortages.

The second replacement (also temporary) of 1999 has a lifespan of 15 years, so a third bridge has to be in place by 2014. It looks as if somebody in authority has noticed that three bridges in sixty years isn't a very good return on expenditure. I don't know what the original costs were of the first two, but the combined total must be close to the cost of a permanent replacement. So it looks now as if we've paid for the bridge twice, but at last there's a permanent one on the way. We won't have to pay for another (at least not for a very long time, hopefully).

Things aren't what they used to be

The construction of the Grand Union Canal was headed by William Jessop between 1793 and 1805. Now he was an engineer that built things right first time.

Last November British Waterways were replacing one of the six 3.6 tonne lock gates at Hanwell Flight on the Grand Union Canal

Antonia Zotali, British Waterways' senior engineering project manager said: "The Hanwell Flight on the Grand Union Canal is one of the jewels in the crown of the London waterway network. This picturesque piece of working industrial-era infrastructure is over 200 years old so it's not surprising repair works like these are necessary."

It's a great tribute to William Jessop, who built the original lock gates over 200 years ago that only now require replacement.

The replacement gate project, is expected to cost £500,000, and will last about 25 years.

Is that right? William Jessop's original design lasted 200 years but the new one is expected to last 25 years. Hmm...

Fit for another 200 years life

In 2009 a total of £3 million was spent on a major repair to the Lune Aqueduct on the Lancaster Canal that would see it through 'another 200 years'.

Now, just two years later another £2.5 million is to be spent on the aqueduct. Hmm..

Hard day at the (BW) office

The Information Commissioner's Office has written to British Waterways to tell it that it is breaking the law with regard to the Freedom of Information Act. This regarding two information requests that should have been supplied within 20 days.

Kelly Radley, BW's Internal Communications and Customer Services Manager, claimed that all 18 directors were too busy due to high workloads 'preparing for the move to civil society'.

Terry Liddle
Editor.

MIDDLESEX BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**The AGM of the IWA Middlesex Branch of
will take place at**

**Hillingdon Canal Club,
Waterloo Road,
Uxbridge UB8 2QX.**

8pm Tuesday 8th March 2011

Middlesex Branch Secretary:
Robin Bishop, 11 Lichfield Road, Cricklewood, London NW2 2RE.
E-mail address:- robinebishop@tiscali.co.uk

LONDON REGION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**The AGM of the IWA London Region
will take place at**

**Pirate Castle,
Gilbeys Wharf, Oval Road,
London NW1 7EA.**

7.30pm Tuesday 19th April 2011

London Region Secretary:
Robin Bishop, 11 Lichfield Road, Cricklewood, London NW2 2RE.
E-mail address:- robinebishop@tiscali.co.uk

IWA Chairman to attend the London Region AGM

The IWA National Chairman, Clive Henderson, will be attending the London Region annual general meeting. He will address the meeting to discuss the future of British Waterways and what the future may hold when they become a charity based organisation. This is scheduled to take place in April 2012.

AND *almost* FINALLY

Proposed dates for our committee meetings for 2011 are given below. Members are welcome to attend. Meetings start at 8.00pm at the Hillingdon Canal Club, Waterloo Road, Uxbridge UB8 2QX.

25 Jan	22Mar	24 May
19 Jul	27 Sept	22 Nov

YOUR BRANCH COMMITTEE

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The newsletter welcomes communications from readers. If you have a point to make, a question to ask, or an interesting article worthy of publication send it to us at

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Email to: middlesex.newsletter@waterways.org.uk.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR Terry Liddle

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The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Inland Waterways Association or of its London Region or of its Middlesex Branch. They are however published as being of interest to our members and readers

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The Inland Waterways Association is a charity campaigning for the conservation, use, maintenance, restoration and development of the inland waterways and is a non profit distributing company limited by guarantee registered in England number 612245 registered as a charity number 212342 whose registered office is at:

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Reflections
 Reflections

Anyone for an ice cream? The Floating Boater cafe at Little Venice – Photo Tim Lewis

Warning

Some members have received emails about contaminated tinned pork. If you receive one delete it because it's spam.

We used to have some

How many boaters does it take to change a lightbulb?
 None, because the right size bulb isn't on board, the chandler says he doesn't stock that bulb, and the mail-order is out of stock, awaiting delivery.



Very cheap price. Towels included?