

BEAR ESSENTIALS

The Newsletter of: -
IWA Warwickshire Branch



Issue 55 August 2019

Hillmorton Handover

Some 18 or 19 years ago – when we were considering the launch of a Branch Newsletter – I asked the late Harry Arnold what was his ‘recipe’ for the success of such a venture. His immediate response was with the negatives first, “keep away from recipes, and jokes, and be wary of over using quizzes - they’re not everyone’s ‘cup-of-tea’. So just concentrate on the essentials of a newsletter – the current news and information that’s most relevant to most of your branch members at that moment.”

A magazine type format, containing all of Harry’s no- noes, plus in-depth articles, was therefore ruled out – not least because we’d have had to call it something like ‘Bear All!; and, as he had virtually given us the title in his response, Bear Essentials it became.

Since 2001, we’ve more or less kept to Harry’s formula. However, I’m now thinking, just this once, of breaking this ‘habit of a life-time’, and introducing a little quiz.

Therefore my question to you is :- What is the one word that links the three images shown below ? Or more specifically, what links the two images left and centre, to the picture on the right ? And, to save you time and effort, and having to turn to the back page for the answer, that word is ‘changeover’.

In the right-hand picture, I’m to be seen handing over my ‘baton’ (or should I say memory stick) to your new editor - Kevin Marriott - along with which go my good wishes and on-going support for the future to Kevin, and also to the current committee who back him.

I’ve thoroughly enjoyed my time with BE, and I hope that you’ve enjoyed it too. In fact if you’ve enjoyed reading it half as much as I’ve enjoyed producing it then I’ve been the lucky one – ‘cus. I’ve enjoyed it twice as much as you !

Thank you all. Ian Fletcher



Bridge 44 - Southern Stratford Canal



Bridge 67 – Northern GU



Lock 3 Hillmorton

Brexit may Not Save Red Diesel

IWA is appealing to boaters and boatyard operators to respond to an HMRC consultation following the announcement that private pleasure craft in the UK will be prohibited from using red diesel. Just in case we remain in EU or our government independently bans us from using Red Diesel, we should all look at <https://tinyurl.com/iwareddiesel>. All boat fuel tanks stained with red dye would have to be replaced. Red could possibly still be used for heating but stored in a separate tank to white fuel for propulsion, and where would it be bought from? Whilst many could afford the extra cost per litre, who would supply it if current canalside suppliers find it just too expensive to replace all their tanks and equipment and would not store both fuels because of the low volume of sales and minimal profit. Continuous cruisers may be least able to pay the extra costs involved in replacing their tanks and using only white diesel. Some advocate electric propulsion but can we envisage charging points along all canals and rivers (let alone the moorings to access them) or use of petrol generators increasing the risk of fire on board! The consultation runs until 9th September and you are urged to respond.

Mind the Gap

For some time now the IWA “Gap Tracker” has been gathering information about facilities along the waterways and before it ends they urge you all to please tell them now if you find that any boater’s facilities that were previously used, have now closed or are in a bad, misused or unkempt state. You can be sure that your comments will reach the highest level of CRT / EA management.



**FACILITY
CLOSED**

An outline of upcoming activities.**Our Autumn / Winter Programme of Activities**

Unless otherwise stated, evening events take place at:

**The Sports ConneXion,
Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Coventry CV8 3FL**

Wednesday September 11th 2019:**CRT Head of Operational Projects -West Midlands
- Ian Lane**

A talk on CRT's involvement in the development of the Roundhouse in conjunction with the National Trust, Coventry City of Culture & the Commonwealth games in Birmingham & surrounding areas

Saturday / Sunday October 5th / 6th 2019:**Working Weekend Installing Benches / Lock
Painting**

10am start either installing benches or lock painting
Location to be confirmed. Full details on the monthly reminder e-mail

Wednesday October 9th 2019:**The rise & fall of the Rugby Radio Station
by Malcolm Hancock former station manager**

A not to be missed talk on the iconic Rugby landmark that is no more!

Sunday October 13th 2019:**Grapple and Litter Picking Leamington Spa**

Hopefully meeting in carpark adjacent to Europa Way (SP311 651). Booking in at 9.30 for 10am to 1pm event. Details to be confirmed. Wear suitable clothing.

Wednesday November 13th 2019:**Neath & Tennant Canals by Liz & Gareth Hughes**

The history of two connecting but contrasting South Wales canals from their heyday to their decline & restoration.

Sunday November 17th 2019:**A 4mile circular walk.**

Starting from Wormleighton village hall carpark (SP448 536), via Stoneton Manor & Oxford canal towpath. Meet 10 for 10.30 start. Lunch at The Wharf, Fenny Compton (CV47 2FE).

Wednesday December 11th 2019:**Hartshill Blacksmith's Workshop & Quiz Night**

7pm – tour of the Blacksmith's Workshop at CRT's Hartshill depot. Followed by a meal with quiz at the Anchor Inn, Mancetter Rd, Hartshill. Booking Essential. Menu TBC.

Sunday January 5th 2020:**Walk & talk hosted by Grantham Canal Society.**

Park at the Dirty Duck, Duck Lane, Woolsthorpe by Belvoir (NG 32 1NY), on left immediately inside gates. 10 for 10.30 Start. Please confirm attendance with Carole 07768 372151

Friday January 10th 2020:**New Year dinner at White Hart, Ufton (CV33 9PJ)**

Menu TBC **Booking is essential.**

Ian's Chaireport:

Head Office now pay a bounty of £50 to a Branch for each new member, even if they only pay the minimum £36. However, assuming a new recruit remains a member for a few years, I think the £50 scheme is good original thought and a great opportunity for you to increase the spending power of your Branch by finding a new member.

4 years ago, Lesley and I set out on our annual Badsey cruise aiming for The Avon until we were firmly stuck, 3rd lock down the South Stratford. Debris from the wall had lodged behind a gate so it would not fully open. A posse of waterways staff arrived and ordered us back to the junction and to never return!! (*today of course if Badsey was a widebeam, they'd send engineers and divers to squeeze it through – me-ow*). So I joined Stratford & Warwick Waterways Trust, formed to make the River Avon navigable to Warwick, negating need to use the South Stratford again. They merged with Avon Navigation Trust whose recent membership renewal letter included a report that offered little hope that they would ever again actively push that project. That is very sad.

HUGE THANKS to Ian F for years of bearing his essentials and a great bear hug welcome to Kevin. He needs YOU to now become a (Bear) Cub reporter and send him your articles and pics.

Ian Lauder

Regional Chairmessage:

Members who receive IWA Bulletin will have noticed that for the first time in recent history, there are contested elections for IWA Trustees.

There are three places and five candidates, Rick Barnes, John Butler, Ivor Caplan, Dave Chapman and Peter Scott. It will be a close run contest and it is important that we have a board of Trustees with the right skills to lead IWA. Please read the candidates addresses carefully before you vote. For anyone who would like to question the candidates before making your choice, there will be hustings held at the Festival of Water at Waltham Abbey on Sunday, 25th August.

Helen Whitehouse



Walk Talk n Picnic

On 12th July, members walked the length of a disused arm below Hillmorton Locks which became a Basin for the Oxford Canal Co HQ in 1834. Our Chairman Ian described the work in which local canal heritage group, Old Mortonians, are now engaged, through the CRT canal adoption scheme, supported by our Branch and local Lock-keepers.

The group are pictured here standing on the bed of the old Canal, at the very spot to which it had reached on the day that its engineer James Brindley died. (you can see the old towing path heading North from middle left of the picture to top centre)

The area will be a sunken garden venue for a grand canal festival to mark the 250 years since James passed on in September 1772.

Members then enjoyed their picnics beside the modern canal, to entertainment from local musicians, The Vague Brothers



Warwickshire's Waterside Womblers

Despite having no formal Branch representation at this year's Stratford River Festival, a number of individual members were able to support the Branch's profile.

Over the last 10 years, it has become an early Sunday morning 'tradition' for boaters at the Stratford River Festival to undertake a litter-pick on the Rec - after the thousands of non-boating visitors have left behind 'evidence' of their enjoyment of Saturday's music, food and fireworks. Of late they've been joined by a voluntary group - called 'Rubbish Friends'; and this means that the 'haul' is now sorted into black bags for general rubbish - destined for land-fill, and clear bags for dry recyclables.

Several Branch members took part in this years clean-up - including Carole Nicholson, Ian Fletcher and Anne Rudeck - seen here below, plus Nick Nicholson, Sue Roy and Richard & Jackie Sanders.

Interestingly, despite numbers attending being about the same as in previous years, the overall 'haul' was slightly down; but perhaps more impressive is the fact that half of the 200 bags filled were with recyclable material



Photo by Jackie Sanders.

[Chairman's Note: A few of your dedicated Committee Members put in a lot of work for our Branch to fly the IWA Banner at the Stratford River Festival each year and even stayed behind after the show to help clear up the huge amount of rubbish discarded by, it seems mostly, Stratford tourists who have little actual interest in waterways. As the reward from the organisers was to DOUBLE the fee they charge for our gazebo site, your committee decided not to have an official presence in 2019. That of course did not put off those stalwarts who were attending the Festival in their own boats, from helping out as usual - because that is the sort of folk they are.]

Ready Teddy GO

Well you have made it all the way to the back page of this my maiden edition of Bear Essentials. I trust you like what you have seen and read, if you have, then tell your friends, if you haven't then please tell me.

Hopefully the look and feel remains familiar while now aligning to the IWA style guidelines, of which I am deeply indebted to Helen Whitehouse for supplying me with a copy.

Now I need your help with future editions by way of reports, stories and photographs of our branch activities or indeed any relevant waterway news.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ian for all his many years of hard work in making Bear Essentials what it is today and for his kind help and support during our handover.

And finally..... Although Ian gave you the answer to his 'quiz' on page 1, We would like to finish with another:- Bridges 44 on the Stratford, and 67 on the NGU are, as you've seen, changeover bridges; but how many more such bridges are there on our 'patch' ? At our September meeting Ian will buy a pint of beer (or glass of wine) for the first person to name/number for him all of the others. Good Luck!

Kevin Marriott

Barely Sung Towpath Taskforce Volunteers

Neil Skerry, Carole and myself joined the towpath taskforce ten years ago. At first we were little more than litter pickers but gradually the range of jobs increased. Imagine the excitement of being asked to paint the Stratford single locks. How many would we get done in a day? It was soon revealed, our tiny group could barely finish one in a day.

Over the years the team has grown with a core of six or seven extremely regular volunteers and thirty who have time for the odd day each month. CRT have provided training and the regulars are now qualified to do brick-work repairs and handle lime mortar, use power tools, ride on mowers and trailers and helm boats.

Some of us gained Lantra certificates for using wood chippers and have spent weeks in the winter months working along the offside cutting back years worth of overhanging vegetation.

The Taskforces started at Lapworth, but over the years other have been added at Hatton, Stratford town and recently Stockton. As well as the advertised days, small groups of volunteers work either with the fulltime staff or go out independently on a range of jobs all over our area. Recently we continued the IWA's good work when we spent two hot days at Bascote repainting lock 16 and making a start on lock

17. Very buoyed up by appreciative comments from passing boaters.

As volunteers we can dip in and out as much or as little as we feel like, but it's always fun with plenty of back-chat and biscuits to keep us going. The more the merrier. So please check out the details below and find the odd day to come out. Many of you will know Phil and Pete from the grapples and Neil, Martin, Rob, Christine and the rest of the team are great folks to work with. CRT are always very supportive and

really welcome us. Nick Nicholson



Continued from page 2

CRT-WM: Towpath task-force Information*

- Hatton 1st Wed & Fri of the month
- Stratford 2nd Thur & Fri of the month
- Lapworth 3rd Thur & Sat of the month
- Stockton - 4th Friday of the month Apr-Nov

Please contact Thomas.pierce@canalrivertrust.org.uk before your first visit

*Note: For our most up-to-date information please see the Warwickshire page on the IWA web-site.
www.waterways.org.uk/warwickshire



**INLAND
WATERWAYS
ASSOCIATION**

Registered Office: Island House, Moor Road, Chesham HP5 1WA
Tel: 01494 783453 **Web-site:** www.waterways.org.uk
The Inland Waterways Association is a non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee. Registered in England no. 612245.
Registered as a charity no. 212342

IWA may not agree with opinions expressed here in this newsletter, but encourages its publication as a matter of interest. Nothing herein may be construed as a matter of policy, or an official announcement, unless otherwise stated. The Association accepts no liability for any of the material contained herein.

Editor: Kevin Marriott
Phone :- 07831 546990.
E-mail :- kev@themarriotts.org.uk

For local contact on all other Branch activities please e-mail:
< info.warwickshire@waterways.org.uk >
For up to date info. between BE editions visit our web page:
< www.waterways.org.uk/warwickshire >

Please inform Head Office of any e-mail address changes.