

THE MAGAZINE OF THE



President: Bill O'Brien J.P. M.P.

ISSUE 2/02 - April 2002

Fee Rise & BSS Action/Duty of Care/A&C Guide

IN THIS ISSUE

3	The Chairman's Column	James Mason
4	Navigation Authorities' Duty of Care	Stephen Peters
6	Cabinet Office Consultation Guidelines	
7	Membership Alternatives	Roger Davis
8	Hello!	Michelle Harris
10	E-mailing members	Webmaster
11	New Council Members	
12	Some publications reviewed	Stephen & Stuart
14	Mud, Mud... about dredging	James Mason
16	Editorial	The Editor
	<i>< A Skipper's guide to the A&CN - Pull-out Supplement ></i>	
17	Notices	
18	Rivers – including “A Hull of a Mess”	River Users Rep.
21	Diesels Course	Helen Gardner
22	Fly on the Wall	A Fly
23	Security on Urban Bollards	Stuart Sampson
24	Nature Watch	
25	Size Matters – dimension database and headroom specs.	
26	A Moorings Solution	A “Mole”
27	Letters	Yourselves
31	Council Contacts	

2002 CALENDAR

Council meetings	Copy dates
April 27th	May 4th
June 15th	June 22nd
July 20th	July 27th
Sept 21st	Sept 28th
Nov 9th	A.G.M.
Nov 23rd	t.b.a.

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Hi Boaters,

Just when I thought our relationship with British Waterways was improving, to one of a good healthy understanding with proper consultation and worthwhile discussions with all of the user groups, and no recent confrontations, they go and commit the most blatant and undemocratic act I have seen in years. Overnight they have increased the mooring fees in some areas through the roof, without proper consultation with user groups. I have letters from boaters ranging from 60% increases for end of garden moorings to over 100% on some residential moorings.

NABO does not believe this is as a result of market forces, we believe it is an attempt to artificially push up prices, as they already own a very high proportion of the moorings as well as marinas, it appears they are competing with themselves. As a result of the complaints made to NABO, we will complain to the Office of Fair Trading and Monopolies Commission. British Waterways say they have consulted with the user groups, they said they wanted to introduce a new system, the majority of user groups said NO, we considered the Matrix System transparent and fair, and we wished to keep it, they did not consult any



further, just imposed their new system. There is no doubt that this will drive a large number of boaters off the inland waterways system and for some of them it is their home, and represents their life savings.

As regards the Boat Safety Scheme our **poll** of boaters was a quite clear mandate, to resist the BSS in its present form and fight to get it simplified and less costly with no retrospectivity, as a result of which, a letter is going to the chair's of the navigation authorities signed by the Chair's of the user groups, saying that we object, and want the review to be carried out correctly in accordance with what they 'the navigation authorities' promised. We are also writing to Lord Whitty asking him to look again at the 'review' of the BSS to attempt to get it made much more simple and less costly to you the boater .

My computer is getting pretty hot with all the complaints from irate "moorers" coming in, so I had better sign off and get off to more meetings, cool things down a piece Great life this, anyone got a good non controversial subject to discuss like – dredging, towpath cutting, etc., etc.. some light reading perhaps?

James Mason

NAVIGATION AUTHORITIES' DUTY OF CARE – HOW SAFE ARE YOU ON THE WATERWAYS?

Members will be aware that the justification given by the major navigation authorities (notably BW and EA) for introducing the Boat Safety Scheme was that they owe a 'Duty of Care' to users of the rivers and canals, and boat owners must play their part by ensuring that their vessels are safe.

Boat owners have done their bit, and paid heavily for it in many cases, by modifying their boats to comply with the BSS. Boat owners are also required to have boat insurance on many inland waterways, not for their own protection but to protect third parties. So is it not time for the navigation authorities to take their own responsibilities more seriously?

The current BW Short Term Licence conditions state, inter alia, that *'as far as allowed by law, you will be responsible for any damage to property that happens because of dangers caused by the condition of our property, however this happens. By issuing a licence we are not saying or implying our property is safe'*. B***** cheek!

All port authorities are now required to prepare and maintain Emergency Plans for their own jurisdictions (Gloucester Harbour Trustees have recently published theirs), and a number of inland waters have similar plans (e.g. Loch Lomond and the River Dee). Where is BW's Emergency Plan for each of their waterways? Has anyone seen the EA Emergency Plans?

Navigation bodies are obliged to carry out a safety audit of their estates under Health & Safety legislation. This includes:

- identifying potential hazards
- producing assessments of risks associated with use of the waterways and their structures,
- producing measures to control or mitigate any residual risks, emergency plans, etc.
- making arrangements for emergency access to the waterway and identifying locations and their Grid References.

Boat owners and others should be given this information as a matter of course for the waterway on which they are cruising.

NABO has, for some time now, been promoting safety for boat owners cruising on inland waterways under the guise of 'Crime on the Cut'. We receive regular reports from our members recounting tales of vandalism, criminal activity, personal attack and intimidation. Our Website invites reports from members so that we can compile a dossier of the incidents that have occurred. We have produced guidelines (see Issue 1/02 page 7) setting out sensible precautions and preparation recommended to promote safety of persons and boats. We need the support and active involvement of the inland navigation bodies to tackle crime along the canals and rivers.

One recurring aspect of the reports we receive is the difficulty in obtaining assistance from the Police or other emergency services, frequently because they cannot find the canal or do not know precisely where you are. All canal bridges and locks have official

numbers but these do not appear on maps. NABO has therefore taken the initiative by asking Ordnance Survey to include bridge numbers on their maps as a service to the community and we urge BW to give positive support to our request.

Safety booms at river weirs are another aspect to which the navigation authorities should pay attention. Some rivers seem to be well equipped with these whilst others lack even the most basic of safety provisions. Local authorities must also play their part by providing life-saving equipment and safe moorings.

Air draught gauges and water level gauges on river bridges are another vital safety requirement when navigating at times of flood or strong stream. They need to be easily understood, legible and well maintained. We also need information from the Environment Agency on procedures to be adopted when rivers are in flood.

And how about fixing clear markings on all bridges to indicate the correct navigation arch, and marking underwater obstructions that are likely to damage vessels and their stern gear? We have complained in the past about the proliferation of too many signs along the waterways, but sometimes proper signs are essential for safe boating.

Safe and firm edges to waterway landing places are a must for safe embarkation and disembarkation. More accidents occur due to feet encountering unseen holes or badly back-filled piling works.

Many boaters view cycling on the towpath as a potential danger. There was a time when the only bikes you saw on the towpath were those being used by boaters themselves when preparing and working locks. Cyclists used to need a permit to cycle on BW towpaths but this seems to have lost favour in recent years as more cycling is encouraged and the Sustrans cycle network has grown. There is no doubt that reckless or high speed cycling along a narrow towpath shared with pedestrians, anglers and boaters poses a danger which must be properly addressed by the authorities. Organised groups of cyclists are a definite No No.

The activities of anglers can also be a danger to boats and their crews. Dangerous hooks and weights can inflict serious personal injury and fishing tackle can damage paintwork and break windows if angling is allowed too close to, or directly opposite, moored craft. Fishing equipment on the towpath can sometimes constitute an obstruction to pedestrians and other users, and those long poles are difficult to avoid on land and on the water.

Boat owners have to consider their own health on board their boats and this includes having suitable toilets on all but the smallest vessels. Sanitary stations are provided for boaters as part of the waterway infrastructure but why are no similar, separate basic health and safety facilities provided for other users including sanitary provisions for anglers? When did you last see an organised fishing contest with toilets?

Danger to health from indiscriminate dog fouling is an ever-present problem for boat owners. The risks and unpleasant aspects are obvious. What can be done about it?

Boaters have done their bit over recent years to address the safety of their pastime – it is about time BW, EA et al did the same and curtailed their persecution of boaters.

Stephen Peters

POSITIVE THINKING – NABO shall speak peace unto BW

In conjunction with British Waterways Castleford office and the commercial operators, NABO's North East Regional Secretary and Publications Editor have prepared:-

A Skipper's Guide to the Aire and Calder Navigation

This leaflet crams a wealth of information about this navigation onto one 'concertina' folded sheet of A4 paper. There is a map showing the relationship between the rivers and the cuts, 'vigilance' points where barges may be turning or berthing, the names of locks and overnight mooring spots. Enlarged sketch maps of flood locks are also given to help the skipper make the right choice of channel where doubt may exist.

There is advice on how to predict barge encounters, using VHF radio barge call signs and other means, and how to prepare yourself for an encounter whether you are under way or moored.

Copies are to be placed in boxes that you can open with a "watermate" key, located so you can collect one before reaching the navigation, and they will also be given to hire boat operators and other groups. You will find a re-arranged version of the same information as a pull-out supplement to this magazine.

IF IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE CABINET OFFICE – IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR US

CODE OF PRACTICE ON WRITTEN CONSULTATION

- Timing of consultation should be built into the planning process for a policy (or legislation) or service from the start, so that it has the best prospect of improving the proposals concerned, and so that sufficient time is left for it at each stage.
- It should be clear who is being consulted, about what questions, in what timescale and for what purpose.
- A consultation document should be as simple and as concise as possible. It should include a summary, in two pages at most, of the main questions it seeks views on. It should make it as easy as possible for readers to respond, make contact or complain.
- Documents should be made widely available, with the fullest use of electronic means (although not to the exclusion of others) and effectively drawn to the attention of all interested groups and individuals.
- Sufficient time should be allowed for considered responses from all groups with an interest. Twelve weeks should be the standard minimum period for a consultation.
- Responses should be carefully and open-mindedly analysed, and the results made widely available, with an account of the views expressed, and reasons for decisions finally taken.
- Departments should monitor and evaluate consultations, designating a consultation co-ordinator who will ensure the lessons are disseminated.

SRP 1/2/02

MEMBERSHIP ALTERNATIVES

At the AGM at the end of 1998 we changed our Constitution to allow individuals who were 'boatless' the possibility of either becoming or remaining members by opening a new category of **Associate Member**. This was by popular request, partly from those who were either 'between boats' or who, sadly, for various reasons were having to sell their boats but who didn't wish to lose touch with us, and those contemplating acquiring their first craft, who wanted to gain knowledge of the boating world from those with experience of the reality of boat owning and with no commercial axe to grind. Most importantly Associates receive NABO News and any other mailings; the one limitation is that they have no vote at the AGM.

In our last issue I gave some statistics regarding those who for various reasons have ceased their membership over the last couple of years. I didn't mention those who had given up boat owning but had taken advantage of remaining in touch with us by becoming Associates. We are delighted that they have done that, especially that their store of experience and wisdom often acquired over many, many years of boating remains available to us.

If you, for whatever reason and however reluctantly, are considering parting with your beloved boat in the future, don't forget you can still keep in touch and up-to-date in this way. The subs are the same as boat owning members - all you have to do is let me know when your circumstances change. Of course, if you get back into boat ownership some time in the future it is just a matter of seconds at the keyboard here to restore your original membership status!

Whilst writing about non-voting membership may I remind everyone that in 1998 we also introduced the further category of **Affiliate Membership**. This was for Clubs and Societies who wished to support NABO's objectives and be in touch with our activities. This has proved quite popular and through Affiliation we can claim to represent the interests of a further 3,500 boaters around the system who are not members in their own right. Currently we are in touch with boat clubs especially in the East Anglia who might have good reason to value NABO's knowledge and expertise, not least because of the now definite plans to introduce the dreaded BSS to the Broads and other waterways in that region.

If you are a member of a Boat Club anywhere on the system, have you considered encouraging them to Affiliate to us? Do they even know they can? Please think about it. I will be more than delighted to send a letter and details to your club officers - just give me a name and address. At the end of the day, when it comes to influence and effectiveness of an organisation like ours – MEMBER NUMBERS MATTER.

Finally, when I send out a reminder to those of you who renew your annual membership by cheque, I enclose a couple of Membership Application Forms to pass on. Those valued members who pay by Bank Standing Order, helping our administration and economy no end, miss out on this annual opportunity! Sorry about that! So, please ask me anytime for as many Forms, 'Why NABO?' booklets and sample copies of NABO News as you require. Why not keep a small stock on the boat to hand out as you cruise? Just phone, e-mail or drop me a note and you will have them by return.

Roger Davis (Membership Secretary)



HELLO from MICHELLE HARRIS

At the last AGM I was co-opted onto ANABO council. I hope this short note will serve as an introduction to those members I do not yet know.

I have lived aboard my boat since 1992 during which time I have cruised over 4000 lock miles in her, much of which has been single-handed. For the most part I have been in the south, changing mooring locations to suit my particular circumstances and continuously cruising when time has allowed. Presently, I have taken a fixed mooring because this fulfils my current requirements. The ability of boats to adapt to each individual's needs is the beauty of boat life but it is also the challenge because it means whatever we pursue legally or politically, we need to ensure that we protect the diverse lifestyle and pleasure choices, available to boaters.

I consider the legal aspects to be important, as I am a practising Barrister-at-Law and a tenant in a prominent temple chambers. My work includes the law relating to boat owners and boat dwellers. To my legal expertise I bring a diverse working background encompassing financial, trade union and marine experience. The marine aspects coupled

with my own boating knowledge are useful in understanding the impact of this specialised area of law; I have worked at a hire boat yard, have a boatmasters licence, am fully qualified as a vehicle electrician & mechanic and, have been employed as a dockmaster on a large marina.

My publications regarding boats and the law have tended to focus on the impact of the Human Rights Act that was incorporated into English Law on 2nd October 2000. However, legal challenges are by no means limited to these grounds, my boating practice has so far covered contract, negligence, planning, misfeasance, misstatement, conspiracy – to name but a few!

One such challenge might be that an official residential mooring creates obligations under landlord and tenant. The result of this could be that Assured Tenancies are created preventing the eviction of the boat without a breach by the owner and providing a judicial remedy to sufferers of the present legal abyss. To achieve this result the boat owner would need to show that residential moorings did not fall within the ambit of the highly publicised case of *Pope*. The Court of Appeal in that case held that houseboats did not fall within the Housing Act (and thus not within landlord and tenant law) because they were chattels (i.e. not permanent fixtures but moveable). However, it is clear that moorings are not chattels but fixtures (i.e. fixed to the land) and thus this part of the test could be established. If that is established the boat owner then needs to show that the

residential mooring is a dwelling. Here, it is arguable that it is, because without the residential mooring the owners of the vessel are considered to be homeless, and the test for this again comes from the Housing Act. I would like to make clear that I only see this remedy assisting those on official residential moorings and am acutely aware of the danger of seeking remedies from marinas that tolerate individuals living aboard, I realise that it would be a mistake to isolate those boat yards as it may result in a reduction of the non-residential moorings available; and, in any event do not consider that the argument is transferable to non-residential moorings.

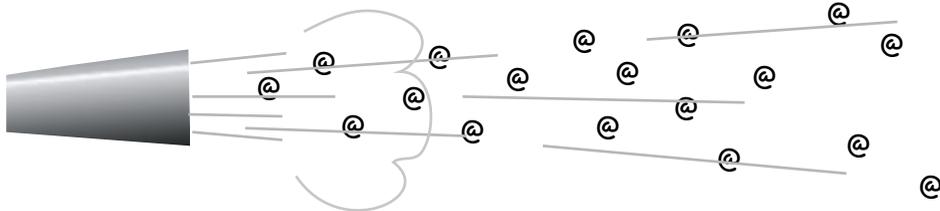
Before embarking on any legal action, an important factor to consider is cost. Potential litigants must always bear in mind that it is not just their own legal costs but the risk of losing and having to pay the other sides costs, particularly as it is likely that commercial marinas will use expensive commercial lawyers. This causes some difficulties in that the most interesting and beneficial challenges usually require higher court litigation that will result in a greater cost risk and an uncertain conclusion. In reality, it may be necessary for a legally aided client to take the action because whilst I have a duty to the legal aid board to ensure the costs merit the action, and not to advise a legally aided client to proceed where I would advise a private client to exercise caution; there is a legitimate difference of a financial loss where for one person it would mean a very unfortunate occurrence and to another, result in the loss of their boat/home or even bankruptcy. In the past, when individuals have met the means test for legal funding but have been refused on the merits grounds, I have been able to assist getting clients legal funding by providing a pro-bono counsel's advice.

Accordingly, in appropriate circumstances and within my ethical duties, I will provide similar help to those boaters who require it. This is something I am willing to do as part of my work and so it is not limited to NABO members, particularly as there is a real danger that those who would qualify for legal assistance may find any subscription, no matter how small, a difficult one to meet. Of course, it goes without saying that I advocate that everyone who can should join NABO, as it helps to give us a larger voice. As with all potential litigants who wish to instruct me, it is absolutely imperative that they do so via a solicitor (Any solicitor provided with my name can get my details from the Bar Council or from NABO Council). Under no circumstances will I engage in any correspondence or other communication without this being done. I have to follow this rule in order to fulfil my obligations under the Barristers Code of Conduct issued by the Bar Council.

My contribution to NABO council will be similarly restricted in that I will not legally advise council or be available as a contact for members, this is in part due to the restrictions aforementioned but also because, practically, if I attempted to legally consider aspects that go before council I would be unable to do so to the standards one should be able to expect from Counsel in a limited time and as a result could find myself at the receiving end of negligence claims! Additionally, whilst dedicated, I am limited in the amount of pro-bono time I can spare; work commitments, other charitable obligations and the need for a social life restrict my involvement. However, I hope that my abilities and my boating experience will help ensure that I become a valuable member of your council.

MICHELLE HARRIS

E-MAILING ALL MEMBERS



The Sighting Shot

At the end of February we made use of members' e-mail addresses en masse for the first time. Over 450 recipients were sent a mailshot, mainly to gather information about the increased mooring charges that BW have chosen to levy. This was **not** a poll of member's opinion – it was a fact-finding survey to formulate an informed response to BW before they steam-rolled the rises through, so we felt justified in using this method even though it did not reach all members.

About a third of the messages were undelivered, presumably due to address changes. Removing these has reduced the list to about 300. No members took up the option to be removed from the list.

Rapid Fire?

From the mailshot we also hoped to learn how many members would like to be e-mailed on a more frequent basis with either news bulletins or notification of fresh items on the NABO website. The frequency and production time for this magazine can no longer compete with the speed of developments, even in the field of boating, and sometimes NABO has to respond to issues before we can use traditional methods to make members aware of them, let alone canvass their views. The question of BW taking over

EA navigations was a prime example, so was the timing of the BSS "TLE" questionnaire.

Sorry about the Misses

It is a shame that we cannot include all members in this, and **it is certainly not the case that those unable to receive e-mail are second-class**. Quite the contrary, the very reason many are not "on-line" is because they are afloat which makes them very much first-class members. We will carry on doing our best to ensure you are kept informed as fully and quickly as possible, but NABO must use every weapon at its disposal to support and serve you.

Enlarge the Target?

Since filling out a NABO membership form, many of you will no doubt have either changed your e-mail address, or set one up. If you want to be included in future mailshots please notify our Membership Secretary: <mem.sec@nabo.org.uk> of your new address, preferably quoting your membership number (see the address label on the envelope this magazine arrived in). If you want to receive more frequent bulletins just send a message, blank if you like, to webmaster@nabo.org.uk with the word "bulletin" in the Subject Line.

NEW TO COUNCIL

We are pleased to welcome aboard three new co-opted members of Council, they are:-

Mark Northing

Mark is taking on the Midlands Regional Secretary post. He is also joining our Technical Committee as he works in civil engineering and has experience in waterway construction, however he points out that he must consider his livelihood above NABO interests should a conflict occur.

Carole Sampson

Carole has already put in many hours for NABO in proofreading this publication, but is now officially the Regional Secretary for the North East Region, geographically that is – her main concern being the Yorkshire waterways. She has already made her presence felt by initiating the *Skipper's Guide to the Aire and Calder Navigation*, a version of which forms the pull-out supplement to this magazine.

Peter Foster is still representing river users on the Yorkshire Ouse, Trent and Soar and connecting waterways administered from BW's Sawley and Newark offices.

Ann Berry

Ann has volunteered to look after NABO promotions as Public Relations Officer. Although she no longer owns a boat, she has been co-opted by Council as a full member so she can take full part in proceedings. She will be handling 'marketing and rallies' and working closely with the Publications Editor when it comes to 'Media' matters.

Advertisement

Advertisement

R E V I E W S

SAFE and...

The Editor has not sent back his copy of THE RED BOOK just because it was not about ropework, or even out of sheer disgust at the failure of the BSS to recognise human instinct for self-preservation.

Inside the flimsy-looking oversized binder he found some clearly reasoned advice about how to build and maintain a safe boat. In fact, by the end of it one might wonder why there is any need for the rest of the Boat Safety Scheme at all, if only everyone could be relied upon to read the book.

If it had come out before the BSS was envisaged it would probably have saved a lot of bad feeling and even been a commercial success. Now it is tainted with too many occurrences of the word 'must' and doomed to be despised. The question folks are asking is – how much midnight oil was burnt to produce this between the end of the BSS Review and the Boat Show launch, and did they have enough low level ventilation? – but then again, maybe they prepared it earlier.

SS

SECURE...

The Home Office has informed us that it will soon be publishing a new and updated version of its leaflet "Keep Your Boat Secure". This has been produced with input from the Cruising Association and the British Marine Federation and we are told that it will contain useful and straightforward crime prevention advice for boat owners.

When it is published copies will be made available to all crime prevention officers so keep an eye out for it.

SP

on the TIDAL THAMES...

The Port of London Authority has published a revised edition of its excellent users guide aimed at pleasure craft. The booklet covers topics such as speed limits (there is no speed limit below Wandsworth), VHF radio frequencies, special rules for narrow boats navigating between Brentford and Teddington, the meaning of sound signals likely to be heard on the river, and how to negotiate the Thames Barrier.

Amongst the plethora of information, a few snippets may be of interest.

Craft are not permitted within 70 metres of the northern bank between Westminster and Lambeth bridges – you might disturb their Lordships or your M.P. (about as far as you can shoot accurately from a moving boat with an English Longbow? Ed.)

Bridge arches that have restricted headroom are still marked in the daytime by a bundle of straw! Is it not time for this anachronistic system to be updated?

It is currently not an offence to discharge toilet effluent into the river (in common with many rivers) but restraint is appreciated. The PLA provides pump out facilities at two of its piers but calls for 24 hours notice. This needs to be reviewed in order to cater for small leisure craft.

The PLA controls Richmond Lock and weir which maintains the upper reach of the river at a minimum depth at low tide. Use of the lock is free to leisure users and when the weir sluices are raised the weir can be navigated safely without using the lock.

The PLA issues a separate Leisure Guide listing particulars of moorings, yacht clubs and other facilities along the tidal Thames.

Both of these publications can be obtained from Port of London Authority, Baker's Hall, 7 Harp Lane, London EC3R 6LB Tel 020 7743 7900

SP

Members with an interest in the River Severn and its history may like to make a note of a website dedicated to the river. www.severntales.co.uk shows details of a number of low cost publications and facts put together by former grain barge skipper Chris Witts.

Chris has studied the river and its features over a period of many years and has produced a fascinating booklet covering the bridges over the river from source to estuary, including a number of now-demolished structures, notably the Severn railway bridge at Sharpness.

Other books include tales of the Severn, information on the Severn Bore and associated subjects.

Chris also runs a photo library on commercial shipping at www.photomarine.co.uk

SP

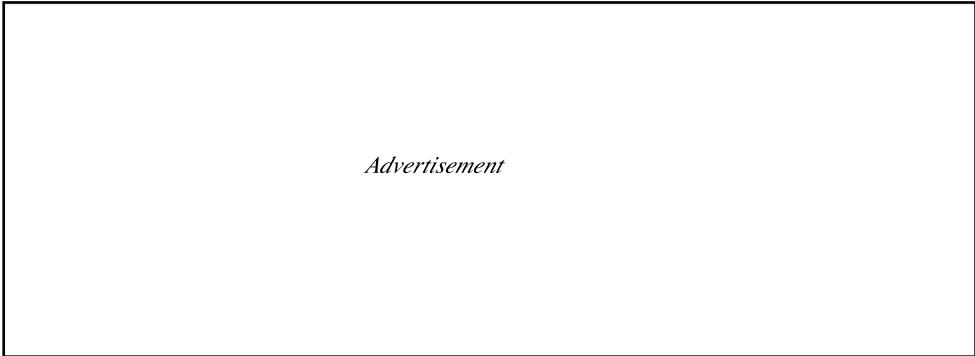
They go on about ‘virtual reality’, usually with special helmets and racks of computing power, but now you can live through, and take part in, the trials and tribulations of fitting out a narrowboat with little higher “tech” than a staple and minimal damage to your wallet. What’s more you can do it from a comfortable chair at a time to suit you.

“DIARY OF A NARROWBOAT FIT-OUT”

Douglas Maas is publishing a monthly diary of his project which he expects to get to subscribers within a few days of each month end, not bad for traditional paper and post techniques. Considering he reckons to take 3 years to finish the fit-out, this gives ample time for you to make suggestions and comments, and see the outcome. He claims the boat will be ‘middle of the range’, and that, even though it is his second fit-out, he will still leave difficult tasks to the professionals.

The preview issues I have seen so far have certainly brought back memories of the thought processes that led to the design of our boat. The style is factual but with plenty of human touches and is definitely not intended to be authoritative, however there is plenty to be learnt from it, if only what not to do! To make it simple and quick the format is double-sided A4, unbound, so it is advisable to find a ring binder for it. Ordering details may be found on the accompanying advertisement.

SS



Advertisement

MUD, MUD, THE CAUSE OF THE FLOOD?

Dredging sounds a pretty dull subject to read about, but in reality it is a very important function of rivers and canals for various reasons. Rivers can get very heavy rain in summer and winter, which will gouge out a river bottom and throw up shoals and narrows in the most annoying places, that can seriously affect navigation. So channels need to be checked and dredged out regularly, plus shallows slow down the volume of water flow, and in times of heavy flooding can aggravate the problems by not allowing the flood water to clear away fast enough.

Canals in the main are a bit different, they were man-made by the navvies to accommodate varying types of boat up to a set length, beam and draught in different areas of the country to cope with the particular freight to be moved in that area. The length of the boat's determined the maximum length of the lock, the beam determined the width of the lock, but also the profile of the canal, so as to allow for passing of the boats in either direction. The majority of the boats were approx 6ft 10ins in beam giving rise to the name 'Narrow boats' but some canals and locks were built wider to accommodate the wider beam boats and also to allow the narrow boats to double up alongside each other such as the Grand Union canal.

Whilst trade flourished on the canals they only needed spot dredging in the main to keep them clear, but when the canal traffic died off in the 60's because of road and rail transport, the canals started to silt up, with no heavy laden barges to push the mud and silt to the sides it did not take long for the mud to settle and fill up the canals.

After a number of years lying derelict the canals started to become used again by pleasure craft and with more traditional style boats being built and restored problems arose, when they started to ballast the traditional boats to sit down in the water like the early working boats the canals were no longer deep enough, so British Waterways had to start a dredging campaign.

Nowadays dredging around the country has come to the fore with terms like 'Original Profile' being discussed between engineers and user groups who wish to retain the originality and history of our unique canal system. Some people think there is a standard profile to work to, but of course there is not as each canal was built it was to suit the boat style and type of freight for that particular region, in some areas the records survived, on other regions of disused canals they were lost, so the modern canal engineers have to be very careful, if they attempt to dredge too deep they could damage the puddling clay which seals the bottom of the canal with obvious results

Today, the engineers if there are no records, survey and do spot depth checks to find the profile, and should then consult with user groups before they start to dredge, of course if the silt is toxic or there are technical reasons then it will vary from original profile.

So when you see the dredgers dipping into the canal or rivers its not as haphazard as it looks, its quite carefully worked out to try and keep to as near the original profile as is possible of over two hundred years ago.

James Mason

DREDGING – NAVIGATIONAL NOTE

White is right, dread the red!

If you encounter a river dredger, look for the red and white signs/lights on its mast. Give it a wide berth on the **white** side. Trying to pass on the red side could get you fouled up in the long hawsers it uses to pull itself along.

SADIE'S HELPFUL HINTS FOR BOATERS NO 1

Put BW customer service number (01923 201120) as one of your BT 'Family and Friends' numbers.

This way you can at least comfort yourself that you are getting 10% off all those calls you make chasing them up about your licence.

Calling them a best friend too get 20% off might be going a bit far!

SADIE'S HELPFUL HINTS FOR BOATERS NO2

When cruising on the BCN do not do so in a boat of over 18 inches draught.

BW have checked that all is clear on the recently reopened section by taking one of their shallow draughted 'flats' through.

Such a comfort to us with over 3ft in the water!

A MEMBER OBSERVES –

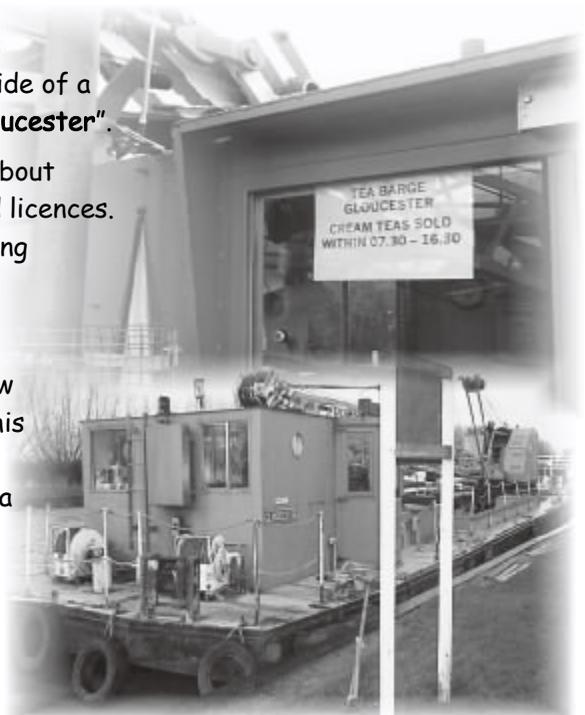
I've noticed this sign on the inside of a window on BW Crane Barge "Gloucester".

Perhaps BW are feeling guilty about increasing mooring charges and licences. Perhaps this is their way of giving something back.

A Free Cream Tea.....

or perhaps the crane barge crew have no work to do, so maybe this is the crews way of justifying their wages. So they've opened a tea shop.

It does however explain the reason why the crane barge spends so much time moored on the water points.



Firstly, I am glad we don't seem to differ much on the subject of advertising. We must continue with what we have now, they are paid for and more than half come from members anyway. I shall resist any more because it would be at the expense of useful content.

I have been reminded that David Fletcher is leaving BW and that we should be looking back at what has happened while he has been at the helm. He hasn't left yet, but here are some of my views. **A great deal has improved**, more waterways are now attractive to the public and for boaters this makes them safer too. However BW have created some 'male birds ascending' (work it out!) through bad consultation e.g. the BSS and imposition of the new mooring charges. I think a line from a song sums it up well - "It's not what you do but the way that you do it".

BW have now found themselves in possession of one of the coolest assets this country has - namely reflections. Developers are seizing every opportunity to find out how many half-million pound apartments they can cram into each derelict warehouse, and the bright lights of urban regeneration are doubled by the presence of water. There seems to be pressure to restore every forlorn ditch to increase the value of its surrounding property and previously 'lost cause' canal societies are now the flavour of the decade. They might even dig new cuts in Manchester!

Wasn't British Waterways once a 'navigation authority', a body whose job it was to facilitate the movement of vessels? Now you wonder where boats fit in. Perhaps they are just dynamic decorations for these water features, providing 'activity nodes' to attract visitors? Possibly - fees are getting so high that less decorative boats are certainly in danger of being priced off the waterways.

Another clue is the relationship between licence and mooring fees. Licence fees are excellent value when you are providing the entertainment: you can take full advantage of helpful staff, well maintained locks, places to get free water and empty the toilet, etc. But what about the other bill, what do you get for that? It can't be for rings to tie your boat to, folks who haven't got them still have to pay. It can't be for somewhere to step off your boat either, folks have to pay even if they provide that for themselves. Maybe it is for the water that gets tired of holding up the same boat all the time?

I see it more as a **tax**. A tax doesn't return to the payer any commensurate value, but those charged have few options but to pay, either directly or indirectly. A tax's rate can also be increased without any extra benefit to the payer. A mooring **fee** should be a payment to someone for looking after your boat in your absence and scaled according to the costs and services for that. The licence fee should pay for keeping a boat afloat.

Stuart Sampson

Editor- NABO News, 48 Old Lane, Bramhope, Leeds LS16 9AZ

NOTICES

A BIG THANK-YOU

to all those members who add a donation to their subscriptions.

If you pay by standing order you may have forgotten you can do this. With all the extra meetings your representatives are attending etc, costs are rising. Any help would be appreciated.

RCD problems?

Help kindly offered by

Mr R F Waddy, C.Eng; MIMechE
Diesel Engineer

15 Station Road, Long Buckby,
Northampton NN6 7QB

Tel 01327 842347

nb Adriona -
GU Leics..

Recommending NABO to friends?

Roger Davis can give you forms, past mags, "Why NABO" leaflets etc.

Give him a call

01749 677195

CAUTION - Huddersfield Narrow Canal

BW state categorically that a boat of up to **6 foot 10 inches** beam will be able to pass through all locks and the tunnel on this canal. CHECK your beam before you complain, boats can 'spread' and shell builders can be 'generous'.



2083mm

EVENTS

Put this date in your diary: **17th - 22nd July** and come and enjoy a few days in the best of company. NABO will again be hosting a strip of mooring at the Inland Waterways Exhibition in the centre of Birmingham.

Because there is plenty of mooring in a comparatively small area this event has proved to be a friendly affair.

Forms are available from Ann Berry

35 WOODLAND ROAD, SELSEY, WEST
SUSSEX, PO20 0AL. annmberry@hotmail.com

NABO will also have stands at:-

- **Little Venice** - First weekend in May
- **Crick** - End of May
- **Huddersfield**, National Waterways Festival - August Bank Holiday

Please visit - or even help!!

SEEN ANY 'ANGLING ONLY' NOTICES?

Please report any sightings of these to
NABO

Geoff Rogerson
BW/EA Liaison

"FULL CANALS"

We need to hear from you too if your waterway is deemed to have no available moorings, so we can warn others.



RIVERS



BSS on the BROADS

The Broads Authority intends to introduce the BSS on its waterways starting from 2005 as follows:

Phase 1

From April 2005 for hire craft with a length x beam of 30m² and above; and for private craft of 21m² and above

Phase 2

From April 2006 for all other hire craft; and for private craft of 11m² to 21m²

Phase 3

From April 2007 for all remaining private craft.

The following cautionary tale appeared in Private Eye, don't let it put you off using the Tidal Trent altogether:—

A HULL OF A MESS

HOW have the ill-trained “pilots” on the Humber been coping with ships since the strike of all fully-trained pilots, which stays solid? The record in the first week of February was as follows:

1 February: The vessel, *Englishman*, with a new pilot provided by ABP, the hugely rich company which has owned Hull docks since they were privatised in 1989, collided with the No 12 buoy at Killingolme. The pilot didn't notice the collision and the buoy was dragged up river for three miles, crossing highly sensitive gas pipelines with the buoy mooring weight still attached. When the pilot finally discovered the accident, he was told not to use his mobile telephone in case anyone should monitor what he said.

2 February: The mighty 35,000-tonne *Bohinj*, piloted by ABP, smashed into No 1 berth at the Immingham oil terminal, causing serious damage to the terminal and a big hole in the bow of vessel. No repair berth was available at Immingham, so the *Bohinj* was towed to the King George V dock. About a thousand tonnes of water flooded into the boat from the hole in the bow.

4 February: The car carrier *City of Rome* arrived at Grimsby docks with a new ABP pilot on board and collided with the lock and coal jetty before hitting the cargo ship *Maya* alongside Freshney terminal. The damage to the *Maya* was repaired by a team of ABP engineers who suddenly arrived on the scene to make the ship seaworthy.

6 February: The vessel *Susa K*, while leaving a berth on the river Trent, was stuck between two jetties and went aground. The ABP pilot was rescued from his predicament by a JCB heavy plant vehicle that proceeded to push to *Susa K* away from the jetty and back into the river.

7 February: The cargo vessel *Jo Ching*, bound for Immingham dock with a new ABP pilot on board, collided with an approach jetty, holing the ship on its starboard side.

The attitude of the striking pilots to the dispute should be compared to that of ABP. On 22 January a general meeting of the strikers agreed unanimously that the strike had had the effect of exposing the reduced safety levels in the port and offered to return to work at once on pre-strike conditions. This offer was brusquely rejected by ABP who announced that it was 'not in the interests of safety' to return to the old conditions. The dispute continued with the results set out above.

NAVIGATION ON THE NORTH EAST COMMERCIAL WATERWAYS

Have you seen the latest NABO leaflet entitled A Skipper's Guide to the Aire & Calder Navigation?

It has been produced in conjunction with British Waterways to encourage safer use of the commercial waterways by pleasure craft. The A&C is particularly busy with large barges and push-tows carrying coal, oil, aggregates and other bulk cargoes. The leaflet lists the frequent commercial users of this waterway and you may well encounter the sand barges with names ending in "-dale". The history of these vessels may be of interest and give an insight into the world of inland shipping.

These barges were originally part of the extensive fleet of John Harker Limited, all named after Yorkshire Dales with a suffix "H". The "Eskdale" is the oldest one, being built at Knottingley in 1946 as a 250 ton petroleum tanker for the Leeds oil traffic and bunkering work in the Humber. She is 124 ft long x 17.5 ft beam and draws over 7 feet when laden.

The "Easedale" was one of 6 identical tankers to be built in 1952 by the shipbuilders Cook Welton & Gemmell at Beverley. She was a 260 tonner 135 ft long x 17.5 ft beam and drawing nearly 8 feet. She was also employed on the Yorkshire oil runs.

The "Cordale" was another barge built in 1956 at Harker's yard at Knottingley where vessels were launched broadside into the water. She was a longer vessel 138 ft long x 17.5 ft beam x 6.5 ft draft costing about £42,000 to build and able to carry 230 tons of heavy oil. These so-called "black-oilers" were equipped with steam generating equipment and steam pipes in their holds to cope with the viscosity of the cargo.

Tanker traffic on the Trent in the 50s and 60s was considerable and had to contend with tidal and floodwater conditions. They would regularly shoot the weirs and even take short cuts across flooded fields – time was money! However, the "Cordale" ran into trouble just after Christmas 1959 when she was swept over Averham Weir and remained stranded for nearly a month before being recovered.

The "Eskdale" also got into trouble on one occasion at Trent Falls when her bows stuck on a training wall and her stern became submerged. She was eventually hauled off after removing part of her cargo. These incidents just go to show that even the professionals can get it wrong on these tricky waters at times.

The "Fusedale" was a much larger vessel (520 tons) built in 1968 and measuring 175 ft long x 18.5 ft beam x 9 ft draft. She was built to cater for a contract to supply the Esso depot at Leeds from the oil installations at Hull and BW invested large sums to improve the Aire & Calder to accommodate these larger craft.

The oil traffic on rivers such as the Severn, Trent and in Yorkshire had ceased by the late 1960s to mid-70s and these vessels were sold to be converted and given a new lease of life as sand barges. If you meet up with them, give these gentle giants the respect they deserve.

Stephen Peters

NEW CRUISING NOTES APPEAR ON THE WEB

Have you visited the NABO website recently? If you do you will see that some new publications exclusively for members have been published. One set covers the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal – giving details about mooring sites, facilities and hosts of other useful information to assist you when cruising along this commercial waterway. (Password = “Branch”)

The other set of notes are Pilotage Notes for the tidal passage between Sharpness and Bristol. This 24 mile journey can be tackled by narrowboats given the right preparation and weather conditions and these notes will prove invaluable to anyone intent on making the voyage. Every year many canal craft do the trip which is the only means of linking the South Midlands waterways with the Kennet & Avon Canal (at least for a number of years until the Cotswold Canals are finally restored).

We shall continue to offer cruising guides covering a range of waterways as an ongoing service to our members. The next one is likely to include the River Dee at Chester.

British Waterways Act (1995) on the Web

See for yourself on http://www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/locact95/Ukla_19950001_en_1.htm

WWW. - File not found

Those of you observant enough to notice this **period** of absence of our **Dot** (sorry!), she sends the following message:-

“Poor Worried Woman of the Waterways has been so overcome with her ‘F in worries’ that she has had to rest in a darkened room. Hopefully she will be back on form for the next issue”.

Advertisement

DAMSEL'S DIESEL DOUBTS DISPELLED - no longer in distress – Helen Gardner

As a single female in the process of buying a narrowboat I was warned that it was 'essential I understood everything about engines' and I'd be in trouble if I didn't! Three years later I think I've muddled through OK (with assistance from the odd neighbour, family member and of course your friendly boatyard engineer all too willing to be friends with your purse).

I was starting to feel, though, that it was about time I took responsibility for my engine and learn to do some of the smaller tasks myself, so when I bumped into Tony Brooks's stand at the 'National' I decided to enroll on his boat engine maintenance course and finally attended in February.

Tony teaches mechanics courses at Reading College and his marine engine course is run in the same labs which means the students have access to a range of different free-standing engines and teaching aids. The course is approximately 15 hours over 2 days (on a weekend) or 6 evening classes and costs somewhere in the region of £70 (depending on lunches, discount for NABO members and a price rise for next year). The aim of the course is to build up confidence when working with engines but understand where your level of knowledge stops and secondly understand what the professionals are saying and spot if they're stretching the truth. Tony starts off with the very basic 'how does an engine work?' and moves on to cover a range of topics including: drive lines; fuel systems; cooling systems; electrics and servicing engines. No prior knowledge is required and very comprehensive notes are provided. There was a nice balance between theory and practicals and there was plenty of time for everyone to have a go at everything -

less confident students were encouraged to come forward and try things first.

One thing that really impressed me was that Tony asked us at the beginning what engines we had and during each topic he pointed out things that were specific to our particular engines. There were 12 attendees - 11 of which had narrowboats (the 12th attendee works on charter yachts) but the course covered all marine engines and certainly didn't focus on narrow-boat engines to the detriment of others.

Do I have any criticism of the course? I do feel that if I had more prior knowledge then I might have been able to understand everything - but what I shall probably do is digest what I've learnt this time and go back and do the course again in a couple of years time. Another thing I would have done in hindsight is taken photos of my engine to refer to during the course.

Some of the topics weren't totally relevant to me (such as cooling systems, given I have an air cooled engine) but there were 12 people to keep happy and if (heaven forbid) I should ever change my boat or engine I'm in a much better position to make decisions about what I want.

Overall – brilliant value for money, I'm much more confident about looking after my engine and it's certainly something different to do on a weekend.

During the course it became very clear that Tony has a wealth of expertise and experience of marine engines and boats in general and it was worthwhile attempting to gain some of that knowledge.

For more information ring Tony Brooks on 0118 9675246 or email marine@reading-college.ac.uk

FLY ON THE WALL



at Council

Just buzzing in to keep my eyes on what may interest you boaters at the last Council meeting.

The first thing I saw was a new face. It belonged to Ann Berry who was prepared to try her hand at raising NABO's profile at watery events and trying to get new members.

Of course if you think you can recruit anyone, do ask the membership secretary for forms to give out. Most new members lately have come from the K&A where mooring charges are causing problems.

Talking of moorings, Council was told that the 7 - 14 day moorings on the Ashby Canal have all been changed to 48 hour ones. Your Midlands rep is hotly investigating!

At Llangollen the local BW has now proposed free mooring for a 2 hour shopping break. But wouldn't you like to see the town too? Definitely not time enough for both, and to the detriment of all local shopkeepers, pubs, cafes and the railway.

You will however be sure of mooring in the basin as you can book in advance, although you'll have to pay. Good for those on a tight timetable, like hirers. Would it mean local hire companies having a permanent slot? In fact would it set a precedent for other places?

Some of you have told NABO of your increased charges, swingeing in some cases, and seemingly set off by BW's increased charges all round. Maybe a case for the Monopolies Commission? NABO will write to them. This led on to 'full canals' and a moan on BW's lack of consultation. They do appear recently to have reversed their trend for selling off their properties and be acquiring and developing madly, especially marinas, and setting the rates!

Discussion continues on dredging profiles. In London, where everyone thought they'd reached agreement, it all seems to have gone back to 'square 1'. But the North East are expecting their profiles soon, maybe because dredging would help flood relief.

The Middle Levels are to have new by-laws, which seem to be based on those for the River Medway. Spot the anomaly?

Now you should all have a copy, how are you finding the BSS black print on grey? Not so hot by 12volt especially with aging eyes! And how much of the licence fee did it take? I think we should be told!

I mentioned last time that the RYA may take over BSS. It seems that they, like you are not satisfied with the BSS. You've said you want NABO to continue trying to get the scheme simplified.

Thank you for the completed questionnaires, subscriptions and those little extras some of you give to encourage NABO in their representation. In fact do you know any more nice people like your goodselves who would like to join us?

Time to buzz off. Hope to see more of you next time!

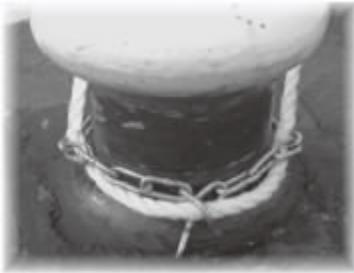
SECURITY ON URBAN BOLLARDS

Developers seem oblivious to the needs of boaters who may wish to sleep in or leave their boats on visitor moorings, where undesirables might untie ropes from bollards. This might be a reasonably simple and subtle deterrent:-

For each line you want secure: you need two feet of chain with long narrow links and the use of a strong engineer's vice (or skill with a big hammer!). Your mooring line must have a clean cut end with no bulge.

Grip one end link of the chain in the vice and squeeze it to shorten and widen it until it is almost circular. It then helps to put a steel rod through it so you can pinch the end back to form a shape as in the drawing.

The idea is that the free end of the chain should pass through this link to make a noose round the bollard, but once the mooring line is passed through it too, the chain cannot slip back out. Once the chain is secure, so too is your rope if you tie it back on your boat. SS



Advertisement

Advertisement

NATURE

WATCH

This is the time of year, now the canals are free of ice, to witness one of Britain's largest aquatic quadrupeds feeding. Although these creatures are rare, they are fairly easy to spot when basking in the shallows, particularly on narrow canals, where they seem to prefer the best mooring areas. They rest with their legs planted firmly on the bottom and appear to be totally comatose.

However, should you see one start exhaling its foul sulphurous breath from its narrow dorsal spiracle, your patience might be rewarded. You may eventually see it extend its long articulated neck and start feeding, taking gulps of sediment from the bottom of the canal, presumably filtering it for nutrients and then regurgitating it into whatever receptacle is nearby. Making slow progress, lifting its grasshopper-like legs as it moves from one feeding spot to another, this creature in action is an awesome spectacle, a sight worthy of recording for posterity as only a privileged few ever witness it - a dredger working!

Advertisement

SIZE MATTERS

If your boat is too big for the waterway it can be anything from disappointing to dangerous. A notice on our noticeboard warns that boats over 6' 10" beam are not guaranteed to pass through the Huddersfield Narrow, warning skippers not to rely on a shell builder's say-so.

Bridges and cabin tops can also want to occupy the same space at the same time, and this prompted a NABO member with a narrow-beam Dutch barge to start compiling a table of waterway dimensions based on reports from real skippers on today's waterways. John Russell's data can be found on George Pearson's website, but he is happy to give members an updated version if you e-mail him on waterman1@bopenworld.com. Keep an eye out for it on the NABO site in the near future.

There seems to be no standard meaning for the headroom figures quoted in various publications, particularly regarding arched bridges, so perhaps it might be worth proposing a definition:-

Headroom is the minimum height, measured from mean water level, of the space under an overhanging structure, which takes into account the profile of a vessel of the maximum dimensions for the given waterway passing through it.

It should be measured thus:-

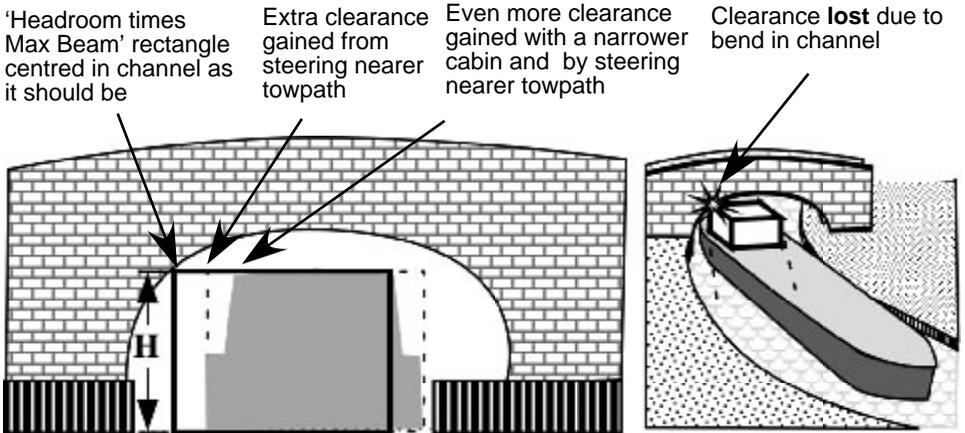
First assess the extent of water surface used by the passage of a vessel of maximum dimensions for the waterway. Assume it passes centrally through the channel unless it has to deviate to negotiate any bends or obstacles in the channel within its own length of the structure.

Measurement is then taken from water level to the lowest part of the structure vertically above this area of water.

For arched bridges this gives a figure with two possible safety margins. Firstly, many bridge arches are not symmetrically placed over their channels due to the presence of a towing path, so vessels can steer closer to the towpath to increase the clearance, and secondly, few vessels have upperworks at full height occupying their full width.

When such figures are published a warning should be added that, even on canals, water levels can rise due to rainfall, lock surges etc. It may also help to specify whether the bridge is arched or not so skippers of vessels with narrower superstructures can make a more informed judgement as to whether to attempt passage.

Note also that lock gate walkways can also overhang and restrict headroom.



BW'S NEW SCHEME FOR LLANGOLLEN MOORINGS

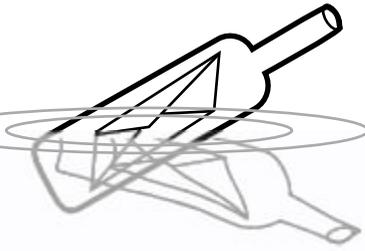


This clandestine photo, ostensibly taken at BW's top secret research establishment (which we are given to believe is nowhere near Hatton), shows a working prototype of the project they have been developing since having to abandon their work on the 'Revolver' breach loading mechanism for the Iraqi Supergun (now adapted for use on a canal in Scotland).

Complaints that linear moorings made use of only one dimension caused researchers to examine the possibility of using all three and this is the result. Rumours that they are experimenting with four have yet to be verified.

Advertisement

LETTERS



Ten years ago for the IWA Chairman

I should first like, rather belatedly, to congratulate NABO on its many achievements during its first ten years.

I was IWA Chairman during NABO's conception and formation. During my 5 years in the IWA hot seat, and it was often very hot(!), I had three particular regrets. These were:

(i) that my period in office almost totally coincided with that of David Ingman as Chairman of BW, a man pledged to get rid of the canals where possible, a fact recently confirmed by his Chief Executive, Brian Dice. It was no wonder that BW was anti-boater as Jon clearly outlines in his opening paragraphs (page 9 Issue 7/01). I had inherited an IWA that had, rightly or wrongly in recent years, tended to negotiate rather than jump up and down; and against the Ingman-led BW, which was set on imposing its or rather his way, this had little impact. Our founders, Rolt and Aickman, might have reacted very differently but probably still not agreed! Eventually, of course, IWA took a more pro-active stand, especially with regard to the Standards and their implementation.

(ii) that I did not have the support of Neil Edwards and his staff at Head Office. In my time, John Taunton was ending his long tenure as General

Secretary and had long been wearing his carpet slippers in his tiny room in 114 RPR. Alas, his successor became seriously ill before she had established herself and I found myself doing both her job and mine. Not a recipe for efficiency, which is the hallmark of Neil and his team, as they provide an excellent service for IWA's officers and committees today.

(iii) that so much time was spent on arguments between boaters many of whom joined NABO and those who supported the waterways for more reasons and on a wider front. Whilst it may never have been possible to reconcile the two viewpoints at the time, there is no doubt the 'split' had considerable repercussions in the IWA, not least in financial terms, for its membership dropped from 23,000 to 17,000, arguably mainly connected with the BSS issue, and IWA has never regained those lost members.

In recent years, the arrival of the National Inland Navigation Forum (NINF) has enabled NABO and IWA, and others, to work together for the common good and especially over the recurrent problems of the Standards. I joined NABO early on and I am proud to be a member of an organisation which has proved its value to the inland

boating community over the past ten years. Equally, I believe there is more to the waterways than boating, important though that is, and so I have been pleased to remain in the IWA and, more recently, to be back on IWA Council for the past three years. So, therefore, I have no hesitation in encouraging other members of NABO to join the ranks of IWA as well.

David Stevenson

Improper coal

The local health police told my coal merchant that he couldn't deliver proper coal to my boat because it was moored in a smokeless zone.

I challenged this and the health people quickly had to concede that, as boats are exempt from the smoke legislation, there was no legal impediment to the delivery.

It took a little longer to convince the coalman that he wouldn't be clapped in irons.

More on freight

As a new member I found your February newsletter of great interest, and was very pleased to read your supportive piece on the Commercial Waterways, and the letter from Sir Adrian Stott on Working Boat priority.

Although the Commercial Waterways are, under the 1968 Transport Act, 'principally available for the carriage of freight', in practice most barge men warmly welcome pleasure craft on to these waterways. It is a good idea to use VHF radio not only to give and

receive information on boat movements, but also as a means of obtaining assistance, which barge men will freely give not only to each other as necessary, but also other boats and crews whenever possible.

It is the custom when passing a barge always to give a little wave, and also to watch out for sound and/or hand signals (or radio advice) indicating where a barge might wish you to steer. Barges, (especially when loaded) need the deep water, or in a strong wind might wish to pass in a certain way.

David Lowe

n.b. 'Apollo' (ex Midlands & Coast, on charter to a L&L operator)

and n.b. 'Swallow', ex Cowburn & Cowpar. Managing Director, Humber Barges Ltd.

Stuck with NABO

Just a suggestion I found out about NABO, and subsequently joined, because the previous owner HAD left the stickers on the windows. Any new owner not wanting to join would soon remove stickers but in the meantime they are a valuable advert for NABO! Thanks for the work you do.

Neil Hodgson nb Griffin No2. K&A

..and happy with it

Dear Council,

May I take this chance to say how much we appreciate all the work done on behalf of us boaters; keep up the good work as all the other so-called boating organisations appear to support anybody except us. Thanks once more.

Jeffrey Piper nb Pipers Pride
Sheffield & S. Yorks

No problem

My husband and I are "Born Again Boaters" having been absent from the canals for some years.

We bought a sound but sad old cruiser without realising the rules had changed - i.e. BSS. With some common sense, the BSS handbook and a lot of hard work we were soon in the water - all legal.

We are sorry to read articles of doom and gloom because since we have been back in the boating fraternity, we haven't got a bad word to say about BW staff (No, we are not ill) They were very helpful throughout the whole re-entry process (Well done to all at BW Enfield).

Also, maybe we are just lucky, but the Lee and Stort do not seem to suffer from vandals etc. (Well, not that we have seen any throughout all our years of boating). We do feel, however, that there is certainly a need for a feisty and strong voice to represent us all (in the form of NABO), but we also agree with the article in issue 7/01 - Dec 2001, (I think she means letter -Ed.) that NABO should fly the flag of success more prominently than the flag of doom and gloom.

Keep up the good work

Charlotte and Ken Cheney
Cruiser Harlequin

Still baffled

At the risk of repeating what has been said to you many times on this subject - why can't the design used on narrow locks be used. On my patch the simple board deflector which has been in use since time immemorial works extremely well and only very occasionally gets clogged up.

I think our modern water engineers(?) try to over-engineer the problems.

John Page.(Liberty)

Better in the Basin

While we do not have full unfettered use of Market Harborough basin we found on our visit (Augs 01) that nearly all the Chaneltime* boats were out and we were free to use any mooring we needed.

The facilities are much improved from the last time we were in the area so some good has come from the 'improvements'.

Iris & Ken Bennell
NB Alice Mary

(*Come in No 5! We assume this is your alias for Canaltime. Ed)

The Slippery Slope

If one is faced with a gang of kids who ignore your warnings and insist on staying on the deck of a powered lift bridge when you raise it, who is legally responsible for any injuries they might suffer in consequence?

Concerned

P.S. from the Editor

One document I didn't review, as it isn't strictly a publication, is the Leeds Waterfront Strategy. This A4 150 page 1½ lb offering to the citizens of Leeds, at a price, was prepared by BW. New moorings feature on one of the coloured maps and are mentioned as a 'flood risk', but little else is of interest to boaters.

On the whole it is planning-speak... "*The lack of spatial rhythm can be an acute problem in a long narrow corridor where there are few features to provide smaller scale spaces*". Still, if Leeds is smartened up it can't be a bad thing, but should BW be the ones to do it?. SS

NABO News is published by
National Association of Boat Owners
FREEPOST (BM8367),
Birmingham B31 2BR

Whilst every care is taken to ensure that the contents of this newsletter are factually correct, we accept no liability for any direct or consequential loss arising from any action taken by anyone as a result of reading anything contained in this publication. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Association. The products and services advertised in this publication are not necessarily endorsed by the Association.