



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

Issue: 6/98



Nancy Larcombe

Waiting for time and tide - Avon Lock

NABO News

July 1998

Editorial

Oh dear, oh dear - didn't I get a gremlin in my spellchecker last month! Summer madness comes earlier each year. I really need that holiday which is coming up shortly (early Aug. to mid Sept.).

On to more cheerful news - Mr Finch is inside - for three years!! Now, if we could only lay our hands on one or two of his copycats, canal moorings would be much safer places.

We are taking "Thurzaway" to have one or two little jobs done - isn't it amazing how your ideas change about where you want things, after you have lived aboard for a time. We have totally rearranged our saloon since the original design and moved the TV position - such a pity that the

inbuilt aerial cable is now on the wrong side of the boat, and at the wrong end of the cabin.

Talking of TV aerials - there seem to be so many on the market nowadays, and at such a variety of prices. Does anyone have any experiences of those to be recommended, or, even more important, those to be avoided at all costs. Are there any hints as to how to position them to get the best picture?

We will be heading north on the North Oxford & Coventry, Staffs & Worcester and along the Shropshire Union to Nantwich, then hopefully returning on the Trent & Mersey (possibly taking in the Peak Forest and Caldon, if time allows), then south through Leicester and the Soar. Give us a wave, and make yourself known, if you see us.

Wendy Hook

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CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

A Time of Change

As we go into the summer holidays,

there is more uncertainty surrounding the waterways than at any time in the last 30 years.

Angela Eagle, the Under-Secretary of State responsible for British Waterways, has been moved to the Department of Social Security in the recent government re-shuffle. I would like to congratulate her on her new appointment and wish her well. However, I must say how sorry we all are to see her go. Her quick intelligence, drive, direct approach in meetings and desire to get things done have made her many friends. She has been the best Waterways minister I can remember.

I wish her successor, Alan Meale M.P., all the best in his new appointment and look forward to meeting him soon. He has a hard act to follow.

The change of Minister comes at a critical and unfortunate time. Critical because of the number of major issues affecting the future of the waterways which are being looked at by government at present. Unfortunate because it will take him several months to

settle into the job, absorb the briefs, and come to grips with the issues - which means more delay.

These issues include:

- ♦ The future of the canal network: franchising, a charitable trust or a modified status quo? And arising from this, redefining the relationship between government and the new or ongoing body or bodies; Changes to funding, and greater (but restricted) financial independence;
- ♦ Developing freight transport; New waterway standards and channel dimensions for the B.W. network as a whole and the S.S.Y.N. in particular;
- ♦ Reclassification of remainder waterways;
- ♦ The abolition of the coarse fishing closed seasons on canals;
- ♦ The transfer of responsibilities for the Nene and Great Ouse from the E.A. to B.W.

Other current issues which may involve government are:

- ♦ The revision of Thames craft licencing fee regulations (which are currently fixed by legislation);

- ♦ The possible introduction of some form of joint B.W./E.A. craft licence;

- ♦ The introduction of licencing fees on the Middle Level.

A time of change indeed!

Consultation

B.W. and E.A. officials met user group representatives in July to discuss possible options for a reciprocal boat licence. Two options of the nine we discussed are to be studied in detail: a joint licence which would be issued automatically to all B.W. and E.A. boat owners (no choice), or an optional licence which would entitle a craft with an annual licence issued by one authority to cruise the other's waters freely. The rub: either would cost more. Initial estimates were increases of 3% for the first, 50% for the second. Options (favoured by N.A.B.O.) involving discounts were rejected by the E.A.'s John Redmond. I can't see many boaters wanting to pay more for the privilege, myself included.

B.W. is holding a meeting on 18 September to "discuss the issues raised by the high intensity cruising licence consultation" (B.W.-speak for "how do we screw more money out of the b.t.s.s, sorry, boaters without bringing the

roof down?"). Users have asked for a detailed breakdown of the additional costs B.W. say they incur as a result of people cruising 30+ weeks a year. As always, we will be there to defend the boaters' interests. It should be an interesting meeting - watch this space.

Not Consultation

For some years, I (and others) have been saying to B.W., "why don't you show us the annual Corporate Plan you prepare and submit to the D.E.T.R.? There are a lot of clever, knowledgeable people among the users - we could give you some useful, constructive input" and B.W. have muttered - well, it sounded a bit like "get lost".

Finally we said the same thing to Angela Eagle, pointing out that the E.A. were giving us this information and doing a good job of it too. She said, "Good idea. I'll suggest it to B.W.". And surprise, B.W. thought it was a good idea.

So, in July, B.W. held a media event - sorry, an annual general meeting. And they distributed what they said was a summary of the Corporate Plan. This was a lavishly illustrated, full colour A4 booklet, the cost of which would bring tears to the eyes if known. Reading it, however, is like eating candyfloss - it is pretty, brightly

coloured, leaves a sugary impression - and in my opinion, has no substance to it whatsoever. No facts, no figures, no measurable targets - just more promises than an American politician at election time.

More of our money spent, another opportunity missed. As Lady Ponsonby, the first Waterways Ombudsman, said, "it isn't consultation if you don't give the consultees the information they need, to know what your plans are in the first place".

Have a good summer!



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Bring your Friends, particularly those who want to join N.A.B.O.

NB: If you are attending the Festival and are prepared to do

a stint on the stand, please speak to Christine, at the stand, on Friday or Saturday. Thanks.

Travelling to Salford Quays via the Coventry Canal?

Don't forget to give us a ring if you want to leave your boat with us for a week or two.

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River Review

Before Sailing:

- ✿ Check the weather forecasts by listening to the Shipping or Local Radio forecast.
- ✿ Telephone Marine Call on 0891 505200, or telephone the coastguard, or listen to the Weather Report on V.H.F. Channel 67.
- ✿ Check the condition of the boat and its equipment; ensure the engine is well maintained.
- ✿ Carry tools and essential spares; ensure all safety equipment is in good order.
- ✿ Carry a good torch and First Aid kit.
- ✿ Plan your trip well
- ✿ Have sufficient crew for your voyage.
- ✿ Carry V.H.F. radio (do not rely on portable phones).
- ✿ If proceeding to sea, carry flares and obtain up-to-date charts.
- ✿ Ascertain how long your voyage will take and plan safe havens or alternatives. If in doubt, check local knowledge.

River Moorings

On the River Trent, there are reports of boats staying for overlong periods at 72 hour moorings; also boats tied up in the centre of pontoons, or with several metres of space between them. Boaters are reminded that they can avoid imposition of stringent regulations by being more considerate and abiding by current rules.

Owners of narrowboats are reminded that, if possible, they should moor on the narrower landside of pontoons allowing the wider boats more room on the riverside. Don't waste mooring space: keep close and moor abreast if space is short.



River Thames

THE WATERWAYS OMBUDSMAN

The annual report from the Ombudsman for the 12 months ending 31 March 1998 is now available. It covers the period when Lady Ponsonby was in office and the first seven months of her successor, Mr Stephen Edell.

The report contains details of the cases that have come to a conclusion during the past year, one of which appears to set a precedent that if there is an answer to a question, B.W. must give it and not prevaricate.

32 potential complaints were received during the year. Some were settled by B.W.'s Internal Complaints Procedure (ICP), although for several of these the evidence of completion has not been forthcoming. In 2 cases the complainant requested no further action and others have been referred to the Boat Safety Scheme Appeals Panel or are still under investigation.

Mr Edell points out that he is unable to act until the Internal Complaints Procedure has been completed and that he then tried at every opportunity to resolve a complaint by conciliation rather than a formal decision. After obtaining all the relevant evidence and identifying the central issues, he submits papers to B.W.

requesting their response to the complaint. Once that response is to hand the Ombudsman can decide the case.

He prepares a draft decision which he is required, under the amended Terms of Reference, to send first to the party to be found against to allow them to point out any overlooked relevant facts, and then to the other party. The decision is then made final.

All this takes time, (an average of 27 weeks) and it may be longer in the future as a result of the changes to the Terms of Reference. Complaints must be made within 6 months of the ICP being completed

The appendix contains the text of the Ombudsman Leaflet which sets out the criteria under which he can investigate complaints and details of the procedure to follow.

You can get a copy of the Ombudsman's Annual Report from your local waterway office, or from:

Stephen Edell
Waterways Ombudsman

PSEUDONYM'S View from the Council

In meeting terms we are getting near our A.G.M. (only one more meeting to go) so we spent some time discussing resolutions. We were unanimous on all points, so that made life easier. It's just the wording that has to be agreed, so we decided to leave this to Nigel. It now remains to be seen whether you will agree with us at the A.G.M. It was pleasing to note that a new draft of the B.W. waterway code was circulated in June and this contained nearly all of our suggestions. The Department of Environment, Transport and Regions is studying B.W.'s proposed channel dimensions, but feel they are not an improvement.

We believe that there will be a Public Inquiry: as the old standards are 30 years out of date it could be worth the expense. If the Inquiry is not held until next year it will be for our new Council to deal with.

The Sheffield and South Yorkshire navigation dispute is also likely to go to Public Inquiry along with the proposal to upgrade 500 miles of remainder waterways.

The Government is giving nothing away over the Franchising/Trust proposals. We have been told they are considering all options and have no preconceived ideas. At the time of writing this we are

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eagerly waiting Angela Eagle's fate - will she be promoted? It will be extremely sad if we lose her now, she has done more for canals than any other Government minister for years.

The High Intensity Cruising licenced and other licence charges are to be debated at a "workshop" in Watford in September. This matter has created such a furore that a question was asked in Parliament about it. Let us hope that common sense prevails. B.W. long term boat registrations are going down proving that some boaters have voted with their feet and have been driven off the system by B.W.

Reciprocal licensing is being discussed by B.W. and E.A. It would be lovely if this could be sorted, especially for those travelling between the Oxford / Kennet & Avon / Grand Union canals. It has been suggested that Houseboat licences should be charged for mooring at the going "commercial" rates but N.A.B.O. feels that they should conform to the Mooring Matrix.

The report of the last National User Group meeting included news that investment for dredging was to be ring-fenced and a time scale would be fixed in which planned dredging would be carried out. There would also be a periodic review of standards. Figures are gradually emerging about B.W.'s hopes for

the Trust and it seems that they hope £6 million a year from membership fees, donations and legacies. Some hope in the meantime B.W. are catching up with the licence dodgers. There have been 160 prosecutions for licence evasion. We have been assured that tow paths will be paved to provide cycle ways where inappropriate. A suggestion was made that the Middle Level spindle should be used instead of padlocks on the locks vulnerable to vandalism, such as the Wolverhampton 21.

The winter stoppage list seems to be progressing smoothly.

N.A.B.O. is to suggest that B.W. put the list on the Internet. This would be useful especially as the canal entry on CeeFax no longer exists.

Our hard work at rallies and festivals seems to be paying off as our membership is increasing steadily. It is so good to hear the comments of our members and keep is with the latest news.

N.A.B.O. has negotiated a site near the beer tent at Salford, so don't forget to bring a drink to the volunteer manning the stall.

Offering to take over so as to provide loo breaks would also be appreciated. See you at Salford!

It seems that the commitment to replace gate paddles on Grand Union locks is not being honoured on gates being replaced on the

Stoke Bruerne flight. There is a safety issue with the top lock, because of the number of people who use the top gate to go from the pub to the museum, but we feel a solution can be found. A footbridge seems the best solution but it is a conservation area so getting any changes will be difficult. If they can put in imitation gas lighting in a village that never had gas maybe there shouldn't be a problem.

After our comments in the last N.A.B.O. News about boats being moored in winding holes, it seems that B.W. are now to allow pontoons in winding holes at Market Drayton and Penkridge.

The report from the K&A was interesting, It seems B.W. want to

take boaters to court to get the definition of continuous cruising defined by law. So beware! B.W. got the charging for the end of garden moorings through by tackling the weakest. It also seems that B.W. are to bring in linear moorings on this canal to raise extra cash. This is not pleasing the marina owners or cruising boaters as there is a great shortage of places for boats to moor at present.

Finally, I can recommend having a birthday the same day as a Council meeting. Three cakes, wine and a present. The meeting passed in a glow so you'll understand if this doesn't take any sense. Many thanks from me to my fellow Council members.

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Extract from Hansard - 16 June 1998

Cruising Licences

Mr Nicholas Winterton:

To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions what representations he has received in relation to British Waterway's intention to increase the costs of the permanent cruising licence from 1 August and if he will make a statement.

Angela Eagle:

I have received several letters and representations from some waterway user groups. British Waterways announced on 9 June that it was withdrawing its proposal to introduce a high intensity use cruising licence. It will be discussing with user groups options and ideas for addressing the issue of private vessels that make a higher use of the waterways network.



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“IT’S A BOAT’S LIFE” - Reviewed

If you have ever wondered if your boat has a sense of humour, seeing all the stupid unfortunate things that you manage to do whilst aboard, then this is the book for you!

“It’s a Boats Life” by NABO Member, Nancy Larcombe, tells how she found her boat, tied up and forlorn in a backwater; maintained it and learned how to manage it.

Told by the boat, the story covers several trips and many adventures, some of them hair-raising, some of them hilarious and it is beautifully illustrated by the author. Evidence of her skill can be seen on NABO News front cover as Nancy has most kindly allowed us to use her pictures.

This book (72 pages) is ideal to have aboard to pick up in those few minutes that you have time to read or to offer to a guest, of any age, who asks why you do what you do on a boat.

I have only one criticism - Nancy uses initials to identify many of the characters (to protect the innocent!), and I found this slightly irritating when there were a lot of them, repeated, during a story.

You can obtain a copy from Nancy

The cost is
£6.00 + 50p post and package.
Nancy will make a donation to
NABO for each copy sold.



B.W. First Annual Meeting

British Waterways Board held its first Annual meeting at London Canal Museum on 22 July.

The invitation list seemed to be comprehensive judging by the people who turned up. B.W. were there in force, from the two greeters on the door, the sound and video technicians, to the Board members. Photographers were everywhere you looked, snapping the famous and infamous and the who are they? There was no one conspicuous by their absence. We all wanted to know what this meeting was about. The room was packed. Now, a synopsis of the meeting with no apologies for anything left out.

Bernard Henderson gave the opening speech. He apologised for the absence of Angela Eagle M.P. and introduced Brian Glicksman as her deputy. Apparently it took parliamentary discussions on radioactive discharges at Sellafield to keep her away. Bernard announced that he was soon to retire. He could then join I.W.A. or N.A.B.O. and write letters of complaint to B.W. "Steer clear of B.W. if you haven't got a sense of fun" was his message. Good; they should love the W.R.G. panto this year! We were told that the B.W. Trust was the way forward using tax breaks and

volunteer labour was beneficial. Franchising would fragment the system. B.W. have to plan for safety 20 years ahead, although with the present backlog of work this would seem difficult.

Brian Glicksman stressed that the Minister wants to look at all the options for B.W. No decisions have been made and user group opinions will be sought. The Government wants new maintenance standards as long as they are correctly defined. W.R.G.'s work on the ice pits in the basement of the London Waterways Museum was mentioned along with the work of community boats and the Fieldfare Trust for the disabled. The latter's Chairman is now on I.W.A.A.C

The latest transport White Paper contains a commitment to freight carrying on the canals. A draft Order is to be published, followed by a Public Inquiry on the Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation and later, another on the proposed new maintenance standards and the reclassification of 500 miles of remainder waterways.

David Fletcher was the last speaker. He stressed the achievements of the last year and

the objectives for the next five years. On entry we had been handed an envelope containing two booklets and a questionnaire. One was the annual report and the accounts, the other a booklet called "Our Plan for the Future 1999 - 2003". David's speech closely followed the text in the booklet and if anyone really wants to read B.W.'s dreamtime, I suggest you ask Watford for a copy. David Fletcher welcomes feedback as this is the first published plan and they are planning to publish an update next year. The plans were likened to a three-legged stool - having a firm base! The three main points were:-

1. Operational Quality.

Improvements in efficiency to plough savings back into reducing the backlog of safety-related maintenance, coupled with improvements in service to hold existing and attract new customers.

2. Heritage and Environment.

A strong emphasis on protecting, conserving and restoring the special waterway characteristics that engage and involve millions of people.

3. New and Secure Funding.

Winning new funds from a wide range of public and private sources, whilst at the same time arguing strongly the case for a new

structure to secure the future of the nation's waterways.

Then followed a video showing B.W.'s achievements with a speech by Sir John Harvey Jones M.B.E. and complete with stirring music as if rallying the faithful to the cause. The presentation ended with a scene showing the look of wonderment on childrens' faces at an open air theatre presentation, very appropriate. If only this money spent on self-aggrandisement was being spent on maintenance.

There followed a question and answer session.

Q) The Thames Traditional Boat Society: Why can't skiffs be used on canals? What is B.W.'s relationship with I.W.A.?

A) Bernard Henderson stated that they had a excellent relationship with I.W.A., and invited Audrey Smith to comment (which she declined to do). Skiffs are not allowed on canals as the wooden boats are too vulnerable with steel boats around.

Q) David Daines of H.N.B.O.C. stated that consultation had improved and that user groups were willing to help. If user groups were consulted early it could save B.W. embarrassment. He asked B.W. to please involve user groups.

Q) Penny Barber R.B.O.A. thanked the Board for the meeting and reminded them that live-aboard boats were part of the heritage and to remember to put in residential moorings in new developments.

A) Residency had gone from not being an issue to being an asset.

Q) Peter Lea (N.A.B.O.) questioned the high interest rate of the loans incurred by B.W., and couldn't they be renegotiated as £2 million of interest is being paid.

A) Average rate of Government loans is 12% while the rate of the most recent loans are 5.5%. B.W. is receiving grants to pay loans and are talking to the Treasury about this as they think it is silly. Brian Glicksman said that some loans were taken out 20 - 25 years ago when there was a high rate of interest. Loans have to be paid.

Q) David Onslow (E.N.) Will you give a commitment to sustain Sites of Special Scientific Interest?

A) They are an asset and B.W. will control public access to conserve them. B.W. needed more expertise and are undergoing staff training to remedy this. B.W. will create

more S.S.S.I.s. An environmental assessment is being done before any work starts.

Q) Neil Edwards (I.W.A.) Does the Board regard water abstraction rights as a matter of concern?

A) Geoffrey Manse from the E.A. answered and asked the board to look at potential demands, for example the Montgomery canal could take the water from a city the size of Coventry. B.W. answered that rights should be maintained and back pumping was being brought in.

Q) David Blagrove (C.N.O.A.) mentioned freight carrying as a niche market. He wanted assurance that they would be consulted, not just used as a talking point, and the discussion would be carried forward.

A) Yes. He would be the first to be spoken to next month. A White Paper is to be published on Monday.

Q) Mike Selby Heard, (Bude Canal Trust) congratulated B.W. on moving forward to create a partnership with A.I.N.A. Bude Canal is high on heritage with no less than six inclined planes but short on cash. Long may you (B.W.) survive.

Q) M Fellows (Community Boats Association). Will B.W. continue their commitment to form partnerships with charities? Will Trust status improve the cash and kind to volunteer organisations?

A) Bernard Henderson: N.A.B.O. has urged B.W. to allow more user groups to be represented at meetings. J. Duffy: Trust status will improve benefits to volunteer organisations.

Q) Dudley Charitable Trust. Disappointed that Angela Eagle was absent. B.W. received £1 million a week from the tax payer which is equal to 2 pence per person in this country per week with two free weeks. Perhaps

B.W. should be looking at the small numbers rather than frightening people with the large ones.

A) No comment. Numbers can be looked at in different ways.

Q) Cyclists Touring Club would like to remind the deputy minister that cycling has not been mentioned.

A) B.W. is trying to do more especially in towns but there is a difficulty in rural areas. Please ask your members to put bells on their bikes. There are conflicts and it is not possible to accommodate all. The very polite meeting then ended. No B.W. statements were challenged.

DEREK PEARSON

FENDER AND CHIMNEY MAKER

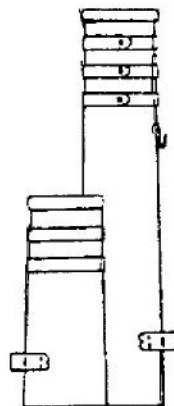
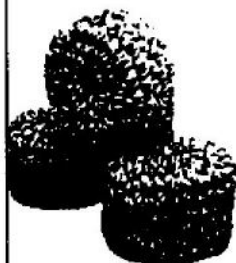
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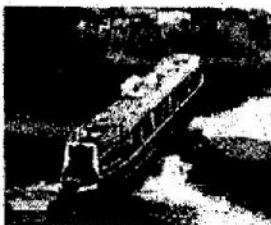
With the specific objective of raising the profile of endangered or little used waters; and to raise funds for the Lichfield & Hatherton's Restoration Trust Limited and the Waterway Recovery Group, NB "Progress" is well on its way to the National Waterways Festival at Salford.

By 21 July a sum of £5,400 has been raised for these good causes.

"Progress" has had a minor repair to the Lister engine in preparation for her trip along the Menai Straits.

At 11am on Monday 27 July, she will be leaving the Slate Quay and cruising along the Menai Straits to Conway Bay. Carrying a token load of slate, she will be captained by Joe Hollinghead, the last B.W. working captain.

These adventurous cruises have taken place annually since 1990 when "Progress" took part in the 50th commemoration of the evacuation from Dunkirk. They have reinforced the fact that suitably prepared modern narrowboats could tackle coastal passages.



In 1992, with two other boats, she cruised up the tidal River Wye in Wales to Biggs Weir, followed by an unusual passage up the tidal River Severn to Gloucester, entering the city by the upstream tidal weir.

The cruises came to higher public attention in 1997 when a coastal passage of 27 hours from the Wash to Great Yarmouth was

overshadowed by the spectacular entrance to the little-known Ipswich and Stowmarket

Navigation when "Progress" grounded on the Constantine Weir.

Happily the publicity aided fund-raising at the IWA Festival at Henley.

It was this event that gave rise to the use of the cruises to raise both funds and the profile of the under-used waterways.

You can help by sponsorship, or fundraising, by contacting Bob Williams

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| | | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Engine | Diesel <input type="checkbox"/> | HP. | Inboard <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Petrol <input type="checkbox"/> | | Outboard <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Steam <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| | L.P.G. <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Maximum speed of craft (M.P.H.) _____

Normal Mooring _____

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Cruising range required: inland non tidal <input type="checkbox"/> | U.K. Coastal <input type="checkbox"/> |
| inland with coastal use <input type="checkbox"/> | Breste/Elbe <input type="checkbox"/> |

No Claims Discount

What percentage No Claims Discount are you able to transfer? _____ %

In the past five years have you sustained any losses or had a proposal or renewal for marine insurance rejected? YES / NO

Please return this form to:

Michael Stimpson and Associates
6 Norfolk Road, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 1QE

and your quotation will be forwarded to you for your consideration

Waterway Recovery Group Camps

For those of us who are very grateful for the work done by the stalwart volunteers of the Waterways Recovery Group, but for various reasons - mainly physical - will never attend one of their camps, I reprint the following random quotes from the camp report to give you a taste of what you are missing.

" This is the story of the Canal Camp on the Cotswolds Canal over Easter. Names, dates and places haven't been changed, as there was no-one who could be even remotely described as innocent

Our task for the camp was basically to rearrange vast quantities of dredgings onto the first floor of a brewery long since demolished.

Been on canal camps before, in a village hall with only 1 tap, no heating or hot water? Our accommodation had full central heating, 6 power showers, an enormous kitchen with cooker, fridge and microwave, and a fully functional bar which stayed open to 2am.

Roger refused to use the showers - determined to hold on to his title of dirtiest Navvy.

NR said the s**t on the carpark was only 4" deep, when it turned out to be 18". A song was composed along the lines of "How deep is your Love", entitled "How deep is your mud".

Steve shouted that he loved his brick and everyone agreed they loved theirs too! Hence the mood was set for the camp.

On Monday morning the cook left, due to the excessive noise in the evening; this was not just Steve shouting his undying love for his brick.

I don't think they understand about me and hired machinery. I called out the engineer 3 times but on the 4th time the mechanic turned up on site *before* I phoned him. He said he'd had a premonition.

Wednesday was a half day off and we went to Gloucester Boat Museum. Neil turned up in the shop and handed over the award to be presented to the best volunteer - a brick, of all things.

Roger turned a light gray colour.

Lots of stone was delivered and spread over the top site.

Sunday saw the completion of the work, bollards erected and paths finished.

On Monday we packed up and went home.

This is my third camp. I have enjoyed every one, despite the fact that I get home knackered. It is obvious that a huge amount of effort is put into the organisation.

Thanks to Steve for catering for a couple of days and for sharing his love of a brick with everyone for 20 hours a day. Thanks to Liz the cook who didn't leave and thanks to Neil for the site.

Reprinted from

Navvies, the Waterways Recovery Group Newsletter No 169.

Wolverhampton Locks - Locked !

As a consequence of vandalism, the 21 locks of the Wolverhampton flights are to be locked.

A locking device, developed by B.W., will be fitted initially on certain vulnerable locks over the coming winter. The device is opened by the Leeds and Liverpool 'T' key and can be snap locked.

Local boaters will be likely to have a suitable key already, but those planning to travel through the Midlands waterways can obtain one from B.W.



"I Don't Believe it !"

Not content with proposing an Elizabethan Galleon on the Nene at Peterborough, an application has now been put in for a pirate ship!

Both vessels would be based on 105ft grain barges but their overall size would be considerably larger. These structures would be completely out of character and take up visitor mooring.

N.A.B.O. and others have made formal objections.

Winter Stoppages

The start date for stoppages is 2 November although, as this will cause problems for hire boat operators, B.W. are trying to push this on a week to 9 November.

Nearly all waterways should be fully open by 12 March 1999 but the Caledonian, Kennet & Avon and Tame Valley will be later as major work is being undertaken. None of these canals will be open over the Christmas Holidays. In fact the Tame Valley will be closed from 28 September to May 1999 as the Highways Agency want two 34 week closures in successive years for repairs to the columns supporting the M6 motorway.

B.W. will finalise the programme in August and send details to all licence holders during early September.

Looking for a speaker !

If you would like someone to talk to your boating organisation about the National Association of Boat Owners, then contact the Editor

It is not possible to guarantee we can help, depending on the date and the part of the country, but we will do our best to fulfill all requests.

The Full Monty

Reprinted from "Trent Talk"

During a cruise down the tidal Trent to Torksey from Newark, two boaters were subject to verbal abuse and obscene language from a section of the angling fraternity. One angler even removed his clothing and performed the "full monty" to the ladies aboard the boats. The abuse, the obscene language and the occasional missile, and now strippers, is on the increase.

Trent Boating Association urges its members to use the following rules

1. Log the time and date of the incident.
2. Obtain the exact location of the incident
3. Take a photograph if possible or look for identification.
4. Report the incident to the nearest lock-keeper by V.H.F or mobile phone if possible.

If we are to stamp out this obscene behaviour, we must be more vigilant and observant. Please try to follow the four rules in this article.

(Is this a problem on the Trent only, or have NABO members had any such experiences on other rivers, or the canal network? Let us know, so that we can see if it is becoming a problem for many boaters. - Ed.)

Handicapped Boaters

In response to the article in the last issue of N.A.B.O. News, a canal company based in Nantwich, Cheshire has been in touch.



Nantwich Canal Centre appears to be very aware of the need to provide suitable access and can offer several straight mooring places where a ramp can be used onto flat concrete level surface to enable wheelchair users access to their varied facilities. They also have a Day Boat that has been designed to have wheelchair access.

If you are going to the Festival at Salford this August Bank Holiday, you can see the 70ft boat they are exhibiting. It has an hydraulic ramp and bathroom suitable for use with a wheelchair. Commissioned by the charity, Warrington Integrate, the boat will operate from Nantwich to provide day charters and holidays for families who have a wheelchair-bound member. Contact Trevor

N.A.B.O. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In line with Council's wish to circulate this meeting around the country, it will be held this year in the Activity room of the Waterways Museum in Gloucester on **Saturday 14 November** commencing at 10.45am. Location maps will be send out with the papers for the meeting in early October.

In response to many requests and after due consideration, Council is minded to propose at the A.G.M. the establishment of Associated members (for individuals) and Affiliated members (for organisations), and to reduce the subscription to under 18 year old across all categories of membership in order to encourage more young people to join.

It is suggested that Associated members should receive this newsletter and may attend the A.G.M. but without voting rights. Affiliated members would receive copies of press releases (as they do now) in addition to the above. They would be limited to representatives only at the A.G.M.

Your views on this would be appreciated.

You are reminded that any resolution you wish to be put to the meeting should be with the

Secretary by 1 October.

Nominations are invited from members willing to stand for Council. If you are concerned about the waterways and their future, then please consider putting your name forward.

Help N.A.B.O. to help boaters. Proposers and seconders can be found if they are required.

Nominations and resolutions should be sent to:

The Secretary, N.A.B.O.

by 1 October

Please ensure that your envelope is clearly marked "N.A.B.O."

Members are reminded that the Constitution states:

8 f) Any member seeking election to the Council who is, or has been in the last 12 months prior to appointment to the Council, a member of any management committee, or board of directors or has held any position of influence during that time in any organisation which represents any user group connected with the inland waterways or any organisation which obtains income from the inland waterways or from activities connected with the inland waterways, shall declare their interest at the time of being nominated for the Council.

Nomination Form

Proposed candidate:

Address:

Post Code: Telephone:

I am willing to stand for election to the N.A.B.O. Council

Signed:

Proposed:

Address:

Proposer's signature:

Seconder:

Address:

Seconder's signature:

Please include a few words about yourself, your experience and why you would like to stand for N.A.B.O. Council

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| (Incl. Llan. & Mont) | _____ |
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LETTERS

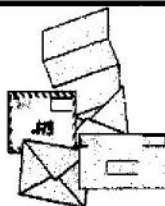
Dear Editor

I would like to write in support of Denis Smith and his sterling efforts regarding Stourport Basin.

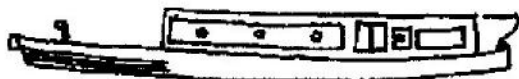
I had dealings with Roger Herrington some years ago and I did not find him helpful.

Name & Address supplied.

Your letters are invited on any subject to do with the waterways, canals and rivers, or on other matters likely to interest boat owners and their families.



PHIL LIZIUS T/A



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BLISWORTH, NORTHANTS. NN7 3EG**

END PIECES

The Trials of Boating

Have you ever had to change an 18 foot throttle cable? Half the boat was built around it! I had to phone Vetus on how to disconnect the cable (dismantle the control unit), remove the control unit even though the hole was too small to withdraw it! Remove the cable by heaving it through spaces so small that they had to be made bigger! Eight hours later I was able to seek a replacement cable.

Don't ask about putting the new cable in - it was OK another 8 hours later !!!

Reprinted from the Trent Boating Association newsletter

Surfin' the Web

Some new addresses for those of you connected to the Internet:

"Canal Roots and Routes"

<http://www.blacksheep.org/canals/dral/index.htm>

A site with detailed historical and geographical information on individual canals. Still being developed, it will eventually include all British canals.

"Canal Junction"

<http://www.canaljunction.com/main.htm>

Descriptions of canals, engineering features, boats, history, etc.

Want to keep the kids quiet for a few minutes during the school holidays? A small prize will go to the longest list of words, of 3 or more letters, made from:

N A R R O W B O A T S

Send list, with name, age and address to the Editor. Limited to under 16's. Separate prize for under 10's. Interested adults can send in lists - but they won't get a prize!
Closing Date: 14 September 1998

Small Ads

a free service to members - contact editor

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Council Members - contact addresses

Penny Barber

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Geoffrey Barnett

N W Rep

Sue Burchett

Secretary

Roger Davis

Membership Secretary

Christine Denton

Marketing/Rallies

John Denton

Strategic Planning

Peter Foster

N E Rep

Peter Lea

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Special Projects

Nigel Parkinson

Vice Chairman/Eng. Officer

Stephen Peters

River Users Co-ordinator

Geoffrey Rogerson

S Rep

Denis Smith

Midland rep

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Treasurer

Nikki Timbrell