



NABO News

The Magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners
Issue 6 December 2014

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TOWPATH WINTER MOORING PERMITS



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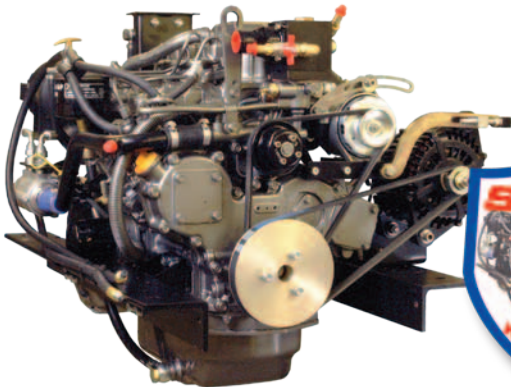
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NABO News

The magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners

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Contributions

Articles, letters, cartoons and photos are most welcome. Images and photos in JPEG format please.

Contributions to nabonews@nabo.org.uk

Next NABO News copy date

Please email or post your contributions by
31st January, 2015

Cover photo

This month's cover photo is an evocative image of winter mooring from Gillie Rhodes

[flickr.com/photos/loves-truck/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/loves-truck/)



Win a year's free membership by having your photo selected for the front cover of NABO News. Please email photos as JPEG attachments, ideally portrait format with a file size of 2MB or larger.

NABO calendar 2015

Dates for Council Meetings in 2015: 24th January, 14th March, 25th April, 13th June, 25th July (if required), 5th September, 17th October, 14th November (AGM).

Council meetings are held at boat clubs in the Midlands area. The venue for the January meeting will be the Wolverhampton Boat Club - see the website for details. Remember that members are welcome to attend meetings - please just let the Secretary or Chairman know in advance (contact details p4)

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Let's end the year on a high

Editor **Peter Fellows** in ebullient mood

It's nice to end the year on several positive notes: I'm pleased that £2 million has been earmarked to restore the historic Mile Wharf on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal in Burnley. We cruised past it in the summer and commented then on the disgraceful state it's in.

Although there are some big improvements taking place in Burnley, there is plenty more to do so this is welcome news. There was other positive news at the AGM last month, with Mike Rodd giving a summary of the year's achievements, reported in this issue. Dean Davies gave us his views on how CRT can improve its customer service in an engaging and refreshingly candid way.

River Canal Rescue's Charlotte Perry and J Forman gave a very good presentation to the AGM on their work and answered some very technical questions from the members who were present—it's a pity there weren't more attending. I was familiar with RCR's breakdown service, but not with its technical courses and online chandlery. NABO has negotiated a reduced membership fee for our members and this discount applies to parts bought in the chandlery too—more details in the next issue.

Further positive news in this issue: the HS2 diversion away from Fradley; new facilities for visiting boaters in Aylesbury; and a round-up of developments at CRT. Louis Jankel has written the first of an occasional series of articles on frequently-asked questions about narrowboats, and there are updates on the K&A mooring trial from Geoffrey Rogerson. The debate over towpath winter mooring permits

is summarised by Mark Tizard. So altogether, plenty to get your teeth into during the coming cold winter evenings.

NABO News was favourably commented on by members at the AGM and, in this last issue of the year, I would like to thank the team of proof-readers who correct my wayward grammar, Chris Pink for working his design magic, and of course all the members who send me photos, letters and articles—without these contributions it would be a much poorer newsletter. Until the next issue in February, have an enjoyable Christmas and best wishes from all the Council members for 2015.



Don't try this at home; RCR rescue during last winter's floods

Photo: RCR





Chairman's report to the AGM

Chairman **Mike Rodd's** reflections on the NABO year past and future

Having admired the work of NABO ever since we bought our first boat some 16 years ago, I was delighted to be invited to join the Council. I didn't quite tumble to what David had in mind, though, when I soon discovered that he was planning to stand down after five years as the Chairman! His are huge boots to step into, but what a pleasure and huge privilege it has proved to be, being able to work with such an amazing bunch of totally committed and highly professional boaters! I must start by thanking David for his wonderful support and for always being there—not only to give sage advice but to continue to participate in everything we do. I will refer to this further as we look at activities through the year.

NABO's relationship with CRT

Being perfectly frank, having been involved in establishing the very first trial CRT Waterways Partnership, I realised right from the start that my major contribution should be to try to ensure that NABO was fully engaged with, and respected by, CRT and its senior staff. I realised this was potentially dangerous as we might well sometimes be seen as having become CRT's puppets. Nevertheless, I felt very strongly that we had a vital role to play in helping the new CEO, Richard Parry, to transform BW into an organisation that accepted its responsibility, not only to the waterways it was established to protect and maintain, but to its prime customers/users – us, the boat owners. Without boats, the canals and other waterways will simply be ditches and rivers instead of

the unique, vibrant places of historic importance that now offer a unique environment for living and relaxation. As a boat owner and active trip boat operator, I had truly felt alienated by BW's senior management, although I was always able to work well with their excellent local staff. This attitude at the top of the organisation badly needed to change if CRT was to succeed, and I believe we are being instrumental in working towards bringing this about.

Focus of NABO's work

NABO has established itself as a well-respected organisation, fiercely independent but always basing its activities on the input of many committed and knowledgeable boat owners. As members, you will know that we have invested heavily in recent years in obtaining the best possible legal advice on matters to do with licensing requirements. We have been almost alone in this, and it has put us into a strong, and indeed leadership, position in countering many of BW's excesses.

With the change from BW to CRT, we, as your Council, felt that it would be appropriate to make much of our legal advice publicly available, and this has largely been welcomed by the boating community. The resulting lead article in Towpath Talk and the reports in Waterways World and Canal Boat were widely read and commented on. As a significant percentage of our members are continuous cruisers, we have naturally also been active in issues affecting this important community. For most of them, there is no problem – they understand the 14-day rule and do

move from one 'acceptable' or 'sensible' place to another, as part of a true navigation. Of course, we fully appreciate that there are overcrowding issues on sections of the K&A, and even more so in the London area. However, these are fundamentally problems to do with congestion and enforcement, which are issues that need to be tackled in their own right.

For these reasons we have monitored the progress of the experimental mooring project run during this year on the western end of the K&A.

From my own experience on the K&A and Mon & Brec, I am also aware that many of the overstaying boats are not liveaboard boats, but simply boats left moored on the towpath – largely because the owners do not have a home mooring. As one said to me recently, "Why should I pay £3500 for a home mooring when all I do is leave my boat on the towpath and when someone puts a notice on it, I move it to the next bridge?" Another boater I spoke to does have an on-line home mooring but can't get on it anymore because it needs dredging!

We are, above all, absolutely convinced that these issues (and others such as those related to overstaying) will only be solved by proper and effective, visible enforcement. We continue to press CRT, asking that consistent, even-handed enforcement action should be taken against boats that do not move. It is, after all, for CRT to decide (and then for the courts to rule on) what constitutes 'bona fide' navigation. However, we also believe strongly that enforcement should not be carried out by volunteers, but by properly trained staff, or someone is going to get hurt or end up in court!

As a result of our well-publicised work in the above areas, I am sure that NABO's profile is now higher than ever. We naturally hope that

this will result in increased membership – the more members we have, the more credibility we gain. I must say a huge thank you to Geoffrey for all his painstakingly detailed work on the legal issues, and to Mark for his bull-terrier-like approach to all the moorings issues.

Boat Safety Scheme Work

An important role that NABO has been playing for some time has been its detailed and professional input into the work of the various committees of the Boat Safety Scheme. Here, we believe, we can offer high quality and well-informed advice; we can also – and indeed must – ensure that the requirements that are imposed on our community are both fair and proportionate. As a direct result of my colleagues' work, we now have active NABO representation on both the Advisory Committee (David and Trevor) and the Technical Committee (Chaired by David with me as the NABO person).

The revised requirements for private boats came in last year, and we are presently all engaged in revisiting the requirements for hire boats. While this might seem a bit odd for NABO to be caught up in, of course we are all impacted (sometimes literally!) by this important industry, contributing as it does to the use of our waterways. Also, we know that any new hire boat requirement might well, in time, trickle down to affect private boats.

EA Waterways

While the Council has been largely focused on the CRT waterways, we have also had excellent input into the EA activities, especially on the Thames and related waters, by our three actively engaged representatives—Louis Jankel, Graham Paterson and Dennis Hill. There have

NABO Council 2015

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Representative



been massive changes in the operational structures of EA and especially in how it supports its navigational responsibilities. NABO vigorously opposed the initial proposals for increases in its charges of CPI plus 2% and we were pleased that these were dropped down to CPI, as are CRT's. We have also continued our opposition to the taking over by CRT of the EA's navigational responsibilities, at least until CRT can prove it can manage its existing obligations effectively. There are also funding arrangements that need to be resolved in order to make it viable for CRT to operate waterways that are so fundamentally different from those it presently runs.

Communicating with Members

NABO News goes from strength to strength and is clearly welcomed by our members, being both informative and entertaining. From comments received, it is clearly also reaching many places within CRT, EA and indeed, local and national authorities. While we are making increased use of the various social media, it is clear to us that there is a strong demand for the printed version, which seems to end up on many important people's desks!

A massive thank you to Peter Fellows and his team of copy editors, and to Chris Pink for all the very high-quality work on the layout. A new deal on distributing NABO News was negotiated; this included putting the magazine into the envelopes and labelling them. I would like to thank Ruth Field and Frances Westwood for their wonderful work in the past, including many painstaking hours doing this task.

It is also appropriate to report on our increased use of Facebook and Twitter and their integration with the website. Mark, especially, is ensuring that we have a contin-

ued presence on Facebook and the amount of resulting traffic is most significant and provides us with continual feedback, which is vital to our relevance. So, for example, Mark's recent survey of member's (and others') experience of visitor moorings and overstaying proved to be an instantaneous success, providing both us and the media (and, we hope, CRT) with a very valuable insight, in which most respondents told us that they found few problems, except for the need for additional dredging and vegetation control!

I would like to add that the coverage we get through the narrowboatworld.com website is very important, given its ever-growing viewership – we very much appreciate the work of Tom Crossley and his team, especially Allan Richards.

Administration

The retirement during the year of Melanie Darlington as our administrator, after many years of great service by her and Jon, required us to take a far-reaching look at all aspects of our administration. Here David has played a huge role in cleansing, integrating and automating far more of our membership database, with the support of past chairman Sue Burchett, and more recently, the recruitment of Helen Hutt.

David has also been working tirelessly to ensure our increasingly popular website is fully-functional; and I should also thank John Slee for all his support in this area. The whole administration process has been overhauled and is now fully volunteer-run. Helen's role as our bookkeeper is proving to be exceptionally valuable, and I feel much happier that the Council is well informed as to our financial situation; this has also made Steven Peters' job as the Honorary Treasurer far easier and more effective.

I would also like to thank Richard Carpenter for all his on-going work as our General Secretary – he really does make sure we meet all our constitutional requirements and he makes my life so much easier – especially when I complicate matters regarding the holding of Council meetings by asking that we hold them in different boat clubs round the country!

Steven will report on our finances but I would like to confirm that we are holding our own – the increased membership fees did result in a slight decrease in membership but this was largely offset by new members joining. Like all similar bodies, these are not easy days and we have had to make sure that we reduce costs wherever possible and work as efficiently as we can.

The advertising in NABO News is vital as we strive to keep the cost of producing this as low as possible. At the same time, though, we know our readers do not want to see endless pages of ads, and hence we have concentrated on attracting a few high quality and relevant advertisers.

Submissions

As one would expect, the arrival of CRT has resulted in a series of important consultation surveys, etc., and we have managed to respond to all those that we feel are crucial to boaters. These include the recent ones on sharing towpaths, the auction of towpath moorings, and the proposed water resources strategy. There was also Mark's survey on visitor moorings and overstaying that was given to CRT and taken up by Towpath Talk.

Pleasant Surprises

One of the interesting, if time-consuming, aspects of the Chairman's role, and one which took me completely by surprise, has been the

numbers of enquiries that come in totally out of the blue. Be they issues relating to obtaining a mooring in London, an argument with mooring owners, a query as to whether it is possible to sail a 90' ocean-going yacht from Bristol to London along the K&A, or "how do I fix my alternator?", we certainly seem to attract a lot of interesting questions! The answer is often, "I don't know but I know a person who does!" but this certainly does mean that people are finding us!

It also has struck me how often we are consulted on matters to do with the canals and rivers – from the new sewer through London to the re-development of land along the old canal track in the Swansea valley, we have clearly made our mark as an organisation that carries both weight and authority.

Looking Ahead

We have a strong and committed Council and I am delighted that we continue to have new folk coming forward and standing for election. Nevertheless, I have to say that – like so many similar organisations – we have to be concerned by our ageing profile. This is, of course, reflecting what we see on the cut – most new boaters are coming on mainly in search of what is perceived as a cheap way of living and we are all seeing a decline in younger active boaters. NABO, and hence our Council, does need to attract a broader membership.

On the positive side though, the most positive change we are seeing is in the steady increase in the use of our Facebook and Twitter presence, and the number of folk who are being drawn to our website. One of the challenges is to convert many of these contributors to becoming paid-up members – whilst our finances are sound, our activities are

Richard Carpenter
General Secretary
—a regular sight at Council



totally dependent on subscriptions, driven by feedback from our members.

In conclusion, a huge thank you to all members of the Council and to

our many regional representatives. As a totally volunteer-run organisation, we can only be as good as our members make it possible for us to be!

Fly's AGM

Off to Stafford Boat Club on a foggy November day for the AGM. More apologies than attendees this year, with four Council members reporting in sick – it seems NABO can seriously damage your health...!

Chairman Mike kicked off proceedings with a roundup of the year: legal matters, the relationship with CRT, CCs, liveboards; aging boaters, BSS, moorings and congestion, EA changes, improved internal admin, social media and NABO's website – it had been a busy year, with individual thanks to all who helped out.

After Treasurer Stephen ran through the accounts, it was time to welcome Dean Davies, currently CRT's Interim Head of Customer Services, but soon to head for pastures new. He was engaging and refreshingly candid about what are obvious issues and failings, and Fly can see why he was appointed to Customer Services. His enthusiasm, humour and knowledge came over in an honest account of his first six months in the job, after moving from his post as West Midlands Waterway Manager. He described his approach to customer services, acknowledging that CRT doesn't always get it right, but this was not because of lack of trying. He's a breath of fresh air which Fly hopes will permeate all corners of CRT. He noted how, when starting his job in June, visitor moorings were at the bottom of his

priority list. Within a few days, after receiving a letter from Mark Tizard, they had moved to near the top and continue to be the single biggest issue he is dealing with. He concluded by asking us to judge CRT by its actions now and not by our past experiences, and everyone wished him well in his new job of Direct Services Manager.

After lunch, Charlotte Perry and J Forman, the office manager and breakdown engineer from Canal and River Rescue gave an excellent presentation on their work. RCR holds courses on engine maintenance and electrics and runs an online chandlery in addition to the more familiar breakdown service. J described how most breakdowns are attributable to fuel problems, especially water contamination and the diesel bug. A few embarrassed smiles were exchanged around the room when he said that diesel filler cap seals should be replaced every six months! Biodiesel is more corrosive than normal diesel and RCR has seen an 800% increase in injector pump failures – so it bought a company that makes the pumps to have enough to meet call-outs. J fielded many varied and detailed technical questions from members with considerable knowledge, aplomb and common sense before the meeting closed. Another interesting and enjoyable AGM, but a pity more members couldn't be there. Happy New Year and byebye till February.



A busy Fly on the Wall observes proceedings at the last Council meeting in October.

Almost a full turnout at Wolverhampton, welcoming continuous cruiser Phil Goulding for the first time. A packed agenda kicked off with the CRT towpath consultation: apparently CRT's Navigation Advisory Group agrees with NABO that navigation should have priority. There are more and more complaints about cyclists speeding along towpaths, with even night-time racing events being organised and a boater being fined after a cyclist hit a mooring pin!

Credit where due: Council members acknowledged IWA's role in getting the HS2 route changed at Fradley. Then back to the ongoing staple: moorings. There is a consultation but it seems the auctions are here to stay. NABO never favoured this approach, preferring a well managed waiting list, fairer and better able to address the Government report's call for greater diversity among boaters. Some facetious boaters are abusing the auc-

tion system, with a recent bidder calling himself 'Moneygrabber' bidding £10k for a £2k mooring and then withdrawing when he won. So some moorings are now being withdrawn from the auction system. Council thinks that some unsold moorings could be offered as 'social' moorings for a discount, thereby ticking the box for social responsibility of the charity and also bringing in an income that it wouldn't otherwise have. Or have a 'buy-it-now' option at say 10% less than the reserve price. The idea that BW would remove an on-line mooring for every ten new marina moorings seems to have been quietly forgotten by CRT. After lunch, it was noted that NABO was the only boating organisation not invited to Sally Ash's leaving do. "My work is done!" said one old hand.

The meeting rounded off with moorings again; this time winter moorings. If you are a continuous cruiser, book your section of canal bank now and for around £600 you will have a 'home mooring' that you can take with you if you want to move over the next few months. Sounds like a bargain, but is it legal?

Sonia Rolt

The waterways community is sad to learn of the death of Sonia Rolt in October, aged 95, which was widely reported in the national and boating press. She was a truly amazing person who gave much of her life to the waterways and has left a wonderful legacy.

When World War II was declared, she became one of the Idle Women, transporting cargoes on the Grand Union Canal after the boatmen were conscripted. After the war, Sonia married a working boatman, George Smith, and stayed on the canals. She campaigned for better conditions for boat people and met Tom at a screening of 'Painted Boats' in 1945. They spent much of their time campaigning for the future of the canals and contributed to the formation of the IWA in 1946 of which she later became Vice-President. Her love of historic buildings led to her work as a furnisher and librarian for the Landmark Trust and the National Trust and she was an active member of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. In 1997 she wrote 'A Canal People—the photographs of Robert Longden' and in 2010 she received an OBE for services to industrial archaeology and heritage.

There are three videos of Sonia, including receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2014, at www.youtube.com search 'Sonia Rolt' and an excellent obituary at www.theguardian.com/culture/2014/oct/31/sonia-rolt.



Sonia Rolt with the photographs of Peter Roberts; every single book cover Tom Rolt ever published.

Photo: Andrew Denny; www.grannybuttons.com

Membership

David Fletcher

Last month I mentioned that our administration becomes near impossible when members do not reply to our correspondence. We have more than ten members who continue to pay subscriptions at the wrong rate but for whom we have no contact details. Every year this list grows. We have a number of other members whom we have written to, but they have failed to respond. To provide transparency to members and to protect the Association, the Council has agreed to introduce simple terms and conditions to cover these issues. These are published on the website and paper copies available on request. New membership and renewals assume acceptance of the terms.

L&L restoration

CRT is to restore the historic, disused Finsley Gate Wharf, known locally as Mile Wharf (situated at the end of the 'straight mile'), in Burnley's Weavers Triangle conservation area after £2 million of earmarked funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). It is one of the oldest wharves on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, dating from between 1700 and 1830, and includes three listed warehouses, a listed canal cottage, former blacksmith's forge and slipway. HLF's initial funding of £262,500, together with £26,800 from CRT, will be used for emergency repair work to stabilise the buildings from further deterioration and to commission a building restoration schedule and an activity plan to develop

educational and volunteering opportunities. This will be submitted to HLF for assessment to secure the full grant. The long-term aim is to create new local enterprises, including a boat repair yard, restaurant, rental cottage and moorings.

RCR offices destroyed

The fire at the Stafford fireworks warehouse in October was reported in the national news, but it also spread to River and Canal Rescue's unit, also located on the Baswich Industrial Estate. Managing Director, Stephanie Horton reported that RCR employees escaped the building but that all stock and documents were destroyed. Boaters in need of assistance should contact RCR on 01785 785680 as its emergency lines are currently out of operation.

Government adopts change to HS2 route

Transport Secretary, Patrick McLoughlin, announced in October that the Government is adopting the CRT/IWA proposal to re-align the HS2 route to avoid the Fradley Junction to Woodend area of the Trent and Mersey Canal, and the need for a large worksite alongside the Coventry Canal between Streethay and Huddlesford.

HS2 has also given assurances that restoration of the Lichfield Canal can continue. The alternative alignment will also substantially reduce embankment heights, noise and visual intrusion, and potentially save millions of pounds.



Photo: CRT



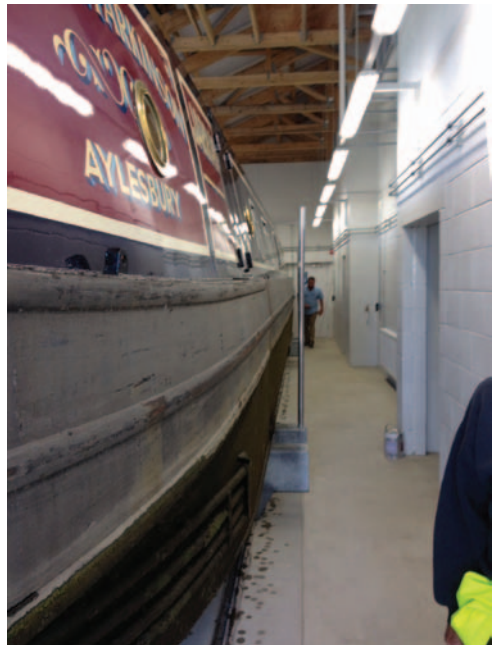
Canal to feature Anthony Gormley sculpture

The sculptor Anthony Gormley, best known for the Angel of the North and the human-size metal figures on Crosby Beach in Merseyside, will create five new figures next year as part of 'The Land' project to support the Landmark Trust. The sculptures will be placed at four waterside sites to represent the points of the compass and a fifth will be centrally placed next to Lawsonford Lock cottage on the South Stratford Canal, which is owned by the Trust. The Landmark Trust, founded in 1965 by MP Sir John Smith, rescues dilapidated historic properties and operates them as holiday homes. The 50th anniversary celebrations will include open days on May 16th-17th next year

landmarktrust.org.uk/news-and-events/latest-news/Antony_Gormley_LAND/

New facilities for Aylesbury

The Aylesbury Canal Society, which was founded in 1971 and promotes the use of the Aylesbury Arm of the Grand Union Canal, has a new £1.7m building, partly funded by the sale of the lease on the town basin in Aylesbury, and by a substantial bank loan. The building has a function room with a capacity for 300 people, a boater's laundry, toilet and shower facilities, workshops and two docks. All will be available to visiting boaters. The indoor, temperature-controlled wet dock will accommodate a 72 ft boat with an air draught of up to 2.2 m. The covered dry dock is centrally heated and a similar size. Equipment for cleaning and painting boats, such as sanding machines with dust extraction and a 3200 psi pressure-washer, are included as part of the docks' hire charges. Dock users also have separate toilet and shower facilities and a rest room with equipment for coffee and light meals away from the working space. For further information, contact Bryan Barnes on 0777 4667127 or nbkalamaki@gmail.com



One aqueduct and two bridges

Nantwich aqueduct

The iconic grade II* Nantwich Aqueduct is to be conserved in spring 2015 at a cost of £200,000. Although structurally sound, the required work includes replacement of a missing cast iron panel, masonry repairs and repainting. The aqueduct was designed by Thomas Telford in 1826 and carries the Shropshire Union Canal over the A534 Nantwich to Chester road. The project is being funded by public donations to CRT (£130,000), Cheshire East Council (£40,000), Nantwich Town Council (£20,000), Acton, Edleston & Henhull Parish Council (£3,000) and the Nantwich Partnership (£2,000).



Weaver swing bridge

There was a celebration in October of the £4.5m restoration of the Sutton Swing Bridge, which carries 20,000 vehicles a day on the A56 trunk road over the River Weaver at Frodsham, Cheshire. The bridge has a new deck and there was extensive refurbishment of the unique buoyancy tank structure on which the bridge swings. After the obligatory speeches, there was a ceremonial crossing of the bridge by a vintage Leyland lorry and a modern HGV to highlight the vehicle weight changes that the bridge copes with since it opened in 1926. This was followed by a ceremonial swinging of the bridge with a river parade of boats from the Runcorn Rowing Club and the River Weaver Navigation Society.



Wallpapered canal bridge

The underside of Sour Milk Hall Bridge (no 104, Harwood Street) over the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in Blackburn is the first canal bridge to be given a wallpaper make-over by wallpaper manufacturer Graham and Brown, whose premises straddle the canal and who have adopted the stretch of waterway. Designer and illustrator Lizzie Mary Cullen created a giant Blackburn canalscape, which was turned into the wallpaper.



CRT snippets—a roundup of news

Review of Governance

The review concerned the size and make-up of the CRT Council. Changes that will come into effect from March 2016 include:

- ▲ Friends will elect a Council member to serve from 2016 to 2020.
- ▲ Volunteers will elect a Council member. This will replace the nominated seat currently held by WRG.
- ▲ There will be an increase in the size of Council from 35 to 40 people to increase the number of people elected rather than nominated.
- ▲ The IWA will nominate a representative to sit on Council.

IWA will now have a direct role in the governance of the Trust that does not depend upon its members standing for the elected boater places.

Also the chairs of both the West Midlands, Manchester & Pennine, and the Museums and Attractions Partnerships have been reappointed, Brenda Harvey has been appointed as chair of the North Wales & Borders Waterways Partnership and David Hagg as chair of the South Wales & Severn Waterways Partnership.

Welfare Officer

CRT has appointed a Welfare Officer, Sean Williams, who previously worked for a social housing association in Hertfordshire.



CRT restructured

The new Operations and Asset Management Directorate started work in November. Reporting to Vince Moran, the directorate has refocused the 11 waterway teams. The restructuring takes responsibility for infrastructure away from waterways managers to allow them to focus on customer services and build links with local people, boaters, businesses and decision-makers. CRT technical specialists will now work in two new teams: George Ballinger will lead the Asset Management and Performance Team to oversee the physical condition of, and risks to, the wa-

terway's infrastructure and Simon Bamford will lead the Asset Delivery Team, with Dean Davies the Direct Services Manager, to deliver maintenance and repair programmes. The new post of Head of Customer Services has been advertised and will report to the CEO, Richard Parry, when the appointment is made early next year

And....

Mark Stephens, Waterways Manager on the K&A, will be moving to become Head of Engineering Design. Debbie Lumb, previously Head of Museums and Attractions, has become Customer Service Project Manager. She will focus on the establishment of a national framework for visitor moorings, review and update CRT's customer service standards and undertake a review of waterside facilities.



Photo: Bob Nowlor

Allan Richards in www.narrowboatworld.com:

"CRT is replacing its Interim Head of Customer Services, Dean Davis, and its Finance Director, Philip Ridal. Salaries for the new joiners will be around £100,000 and £150,000 respectively (both plus benefits). These are two positions of nine that currently report to CRT's chief executive, who has been systematically stripping power from executive directors and placing it in the hands of non-executive staff who report straight to him."

Reduced Carbon Footprint

CRT has been awarded the Carbon Trust Standard in recognition of its reduction in its carbon footprint by 26% since 2010, equivalent tcarbon dioxide. This has been due to:

- ▲ installing 'smart' electricity meters in buildings and acting on the data to reduce consumption
- ▲ improving insulation, installing LED lighting in offices and heating and lighting controls in operational buildings

- ▲ using vehicle tracking to reduce diesel consumption by 119,000 litres in 2013/14 compared to 2010/11
- ▲ using solar power to back-pump water in lock flights (e.g. at Caen Hill)
- ▲ installing variable speed drives at pumping stations to give greater control over the energy used at key times
- ▲ trialling electric vans in Liverpool and Gloucester
- ▲ using video conferencing to reduce travel.

Licence fees

CRT private boat licence fees will rise in April 2015 by 1.6% in line with inflation, and will be increased by no more than inflation in 2016.

Tunnel Advice

Following the inquest into the death of a boater in Harecastle tunnel in May, CRT has issued advice to boaters to wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid in tunnels. Tragically, the boater was knocked off the stern and killed after apparently striking his head on the tunnel wall. Unconscious, he sank to the bottom of the canal and was unable to be located. His body was found many hours later by police divers. Grab chains are of little use if you are unconscious and it can be hard to spot someone in the water in the darkness. Advice on wearing lifejackets will be included on tunnel signs.

Strong Stream Warning Signs

CRT has recently installed two new noticeboards for strong stream warnings at Isis Lock on the South Oxford and the Droitwich Canal junction at Hanbury. The boards have an electronic traffic light format that has been agreed with the EA, with detailed information on the local situation, and remotely controlled from the control centre at Hatton. The boards are a trial to determine their reliability

before further boards are installed. The advantages are:

- 1 Information can be changed remotely and quickly to reflect the latest situation.
- 2 The control centre can be sure that the correct warning is displayed.
- 3 The information shows conditions ahead so boaters can change their route to take account of a strong stream warning.
- 4 A warning can be given in situations where a simple river level board is not a good indication of strong stream.

They are SCADA units that measure the water level and send the information back to the control centre using mobile phone systems. They are solar powered, so if you see a pile of leaves on top, feel free to brush them off to keep the system working.

Historic Archive

CRT has published over 37,000 archive records and more than 22,000 historic images online for the first time. Many show the social history of the canals, the navigators who built them, boating families and the volunteers who campaigned to save them. There are also engineering plans, toll tickets, songs and maps. They can be accessed at collections.canalrivertrust.org.uk

Mr Charles Burdett gauging a coal boat at Hawkesbury Junction, 1950s



Bugsworth memories

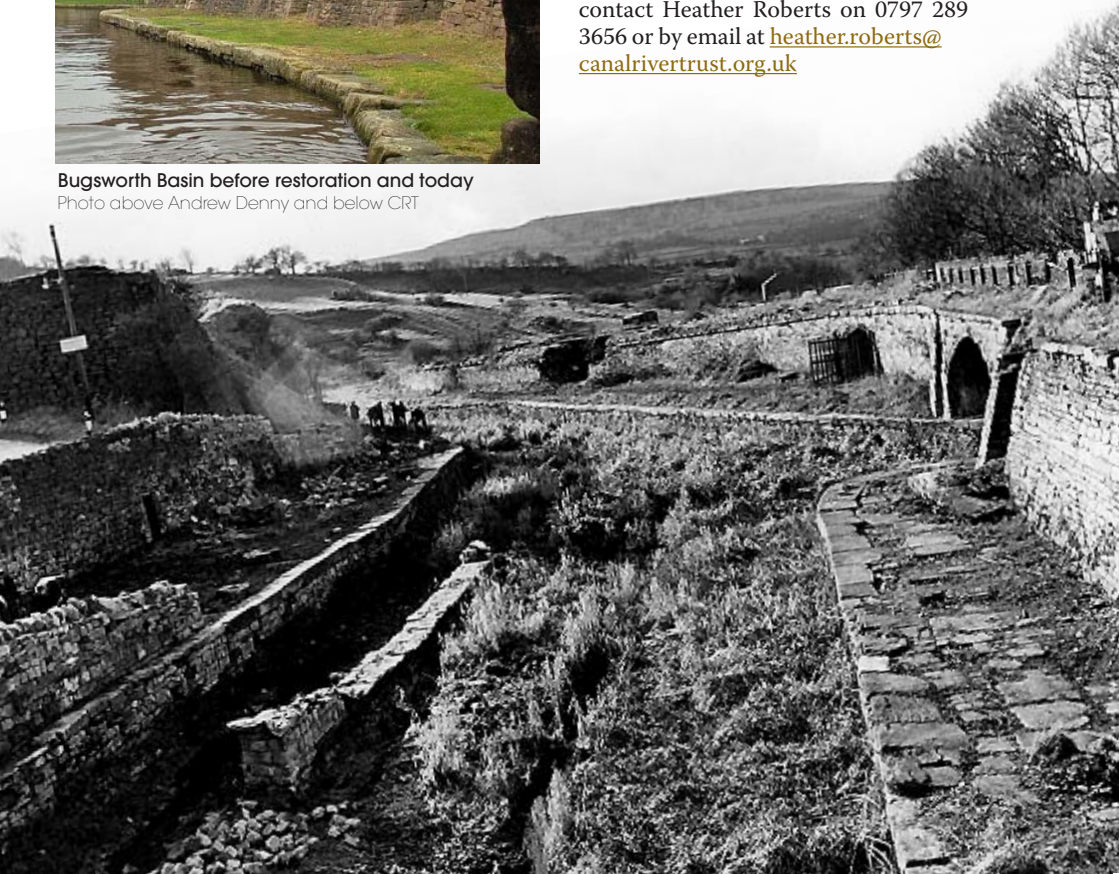
Bugsworth Basin at Whaley Bridge was once the largest and busiest inland port on the canal system and is the only example of its type to survive intact. It closed in the 1920s and by the 1960s was a dry, overgrown pit. After a voluntary restoration programme, the basin re-opened in 1999 but closed again a few months later due to extensive leaks. It finally re-opened to boats in 2005 after major repairs by BW.



Bugsworth Basin before restoration and today

Photo above Andrew Denny and below CRT

Earlier this year CRT and the Inland Waterways Protection Society used a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £76,400 to carry out repairs to a 150-metre length of wharf wall. The project was completed in April and now the Trust wants to create an archive of oral, written and pictorial memories of life at the basin. The information will be archived by the Ellesmere Port Boat Museum and Derbyshire County Council and in future it will be displayed on site. If you have a story or memory to share, please contact Heather Roberts on 0797 289 3656 or by email at heather.roberts@canalrivertrust.org.uk



FAQ: narrow boats

An occasional series from **Louis Jankel**, this time looking at purchasing your boat.

You may buy a boat from a brokerage, which is the posh title for the second-hand boat salesman or, to be politically correct, salesperson. Some brokerages sell new boats but the service, if not the deal you get, is little different to that offered for a second-hand purchase. You may buy your boat directly from the manufacturer and that is like buying a new car from a franchised car dealership.

your offer to purchase is subject to a survey and test run.....

Ask around for information about the reputation of the organisation you want to deal with. Be certain that slander thrives among boaters and you will uncover information

Caveat emptor



concerning boating organisations of every conceivable type.

There are some prospective purchasers of boats that try as hard as they might to give their money away by buying a boat from a bloke in a pub. The polite description of this transaction is a 'private purchase'. When you end up with our legal brethren trying to get

your money back, I promise you the lawyer will utter those quite crass words "caveat emptor".

A friend had owned his narrowboat for a good number of years. At policy renewal time the insurance company asked for a hull survey. As we must all have, in one form or another, such a thing as an insurance policy, the boat was put into a dry dock, which is one way to allow inspection of the hull without drowning or donning full diver's kit. I watched the surveyor, who with the same affection a rider shows towards the flank of their horse, smack the hull of this boat. His hand comprehensively penetrated the incredibly thin steel hull and ended up in the galley.

.... If the vendor has a problem with this then you should have a problem with the vendor.

I recount another story about a pair of elderly narrowboats moored in Poplar Dock Marina, both then recent acquisitions and both purchased without the benefit of a survey. Normally this would not be quite so worrying as it was on this occasion. Canals are shallow enough to allow any boat intent on sinking to settle safely just a few feet down on the bottom. Poplar Dock Marina, I was told, is more than seven fathoms deep, or nearly 45 feet. That is a long way down for a boat to sink! I could never bring myself to make a social visit to these two boats.

So you have seen the boat of your dreams. You have made an offer to purchase the boat. Make sure your offer to purchase is subject to a survey and test run. If the vendor has a problem with this

then you should have a problem with the vendor.

At this point, it is common practice to pay a refundable token deposit of between 1% and 1.5% of the agreed purchase price as sign of good faith.

Let's talk about surveys

Ask the vendor or the vendor's agent for a copy of any surveys or safety certificate reports relating to the boat. Also ask if there are likely to be any problems thrown up by a professional survey. Make certain that any surveyor you use is qualified. They will have some letters after their name. Ask what they mean and check on the web, if computer literate, or at the public library if not. There is no reason why you should not ask the surveyor to put in writing that he has professional indemnity insurance. Surveyors are a mixed lot. Some are much better than others, as is the case with all professionals. The broker through whom you wish to buy your boat will recommend one. But I ask you, would you accept the advice of a mechanic that a second-hand car dealer wheels in to vouch for the condition of the car he is trying to sell you? There are a good number of surveyors available in most areas of waterways. Boating organisations as well as waterway authorities should be able to supply you with a list*.

Points to agree with the surveyor

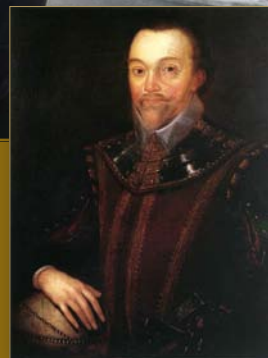
- 1 Get a full written quotation for the survey that includes getting the boat out of the water.
- 2 The surveyor should specify what he will comment on and what the report will not cover.
- 3 If the surveyor does not cover engines (and many, if not most, do not) ask him to arrange for a mechanic/engineer to inspect the engine and have the conclusions included within the report. Alternatively, a mechanic could inspect the boat engine and related items and supply you directly with



A fairly useless piece of information

Boat ownership is expressed in shares. Francis Drake et al were keen boat owners and prize boat owners. Nelson had a 'prize agent' who was responsible for recovering the admiral's share from the sale of any boats and their cargoes he or his squadron captured in battle. This function was sufficiently important to Nelson's financial security as to be the source of his ex-wife's alimony. Because so many people had their grubby hand in the murky pot, the commercial needs that developed found a convenient system of dividing boat ownership into shares.

Today each boat still is expressed as an entity with a number of shares, which is almost universally set at 64. When you complete your transaction-for-purchase, make sure you own 64/64ths and that the broker has not managed to acquire an odd share or two. A number of boats are traded as time-share holiday boats and I suspect the dozen members will own five shares each and the operator no doubt holds onto the odd four shares left over.





It's easier to inspect the stern gear out of the water. A thorough survey of the hull condition is a must when buying a boat.



a report. This will be an extra cost but worth the money.

- 4 Ask to see a recent report that the surveyor has completed for another purchaser so you know what to expect. He may only offer to show you the template from which he produces your report, but this should suffice.
- 5 The details set out in the sale prospectus do not form any part of the final contract of sale. The surveyor, broker, owner or vendor's agent and yourself need to agree the items you are contracting to purchase.
- 6 With the list of defects that his report will highlight, ask for an estimated range of costs for remedial work on each item.
- 7 Ask for a specific list of items that will cause a Boat Safety Certificate to be refused for your prospective purchase.
- 8 Have a list of the boat's equipment that is included in the purchase. If any items required by the navigation authority are missing or inadequate then this should be specified.

If a surveyor considers your requirements to be excessive, then find one that does not. If a surveyor tries to persuade you that some items on this list are a waste of money, then ask him or her to agree, in writing, to indemnify you for the cost of any ensuing problems or repairs emanating from the un-actioned items. Choose the surveyor who appears to you as the most professional and practical. Make sure no other boaters recount tales of his or her incompetence.

Following the survey you will get a written report. Don't ask the boat salesman to interpret the report. Again, to emphasise the importance of this, make sure the details that the report is intended to cover are specified in writing before you commission the surveyor. As with any

house purchase, this survey may be used to negotiate an adjustment to the purchase price – remember you have agreed to purchase the boat 'subject to survey'. Be aware that if yours is the first purchaser's survey, the defects shown up might be news

If a surveyor considers your requirements to be excessive, then find one that does not.

to the existing owner. Although an owner will never admit to having bought a boat without a survey, the position is recoverable. Obviously this cannot apply to you, but should you know anyone who has bought a boat without a survey, please advise them to have a survey next time it is out of the water. Everyone needs advice on their boat's hull condition to be aware of any weak sections. At a later date, a boat survey does save severe cardiac arrest when trying to sell the boat. Hull deterioration is a long-term problem if only because it usually takes a long time to deteriorate!

Boat Safety Scheme compliance

Be sure that part of the survey includes a check on how the condition of the boat stacks up against the Boat Safety Scheme and whether it would pass or not. This is the boat equivalent of a vehicle MOT safety check, but the existence of such a certificate from the vendor, covering your proposed purchase, is not actually sufficient. Between surveys, an owner must keep the boat in compliance with the regulations. If you 'take over' mid-certificate it is your responsibility to make sure nothing has changed since the last survey that might affect compliance. You have no way of establishing that fact.



Insurers, who are always looking for a way out, can and have invoked contravention of the regulations as a reason for refusing a claim. I know – what's new? You may wish to have a copy of the surveyor's report to send to your insurers. This covers you from any 'misunderstandings' that may arise with both the insurers and surveyors. A cautious and wise purchaser of a brand spanking new boat will also benefit from having a professional eye on the work of the constructor/fabricator/outfitter and many employ an independent surveyor to regularly check the boat at various stages of build.

Make sure the engine is included in the survey.

Towpath winter mooring permits

A debate

Mark Tizard summarises the arguments for and against.

NABO has been contacted by several members regarding the growth of towpath winter moorings and, following a discussion at the recent AGM, we thought we would open up the debate further to our members. NABO has supported winter moorings in the past where specific towpath spaces have been allocated. However there is concern that CRT's use and acceptance of the term 'home mooring' when describing the benefits of a winter towpath mooring permit contravenes the definitions of 'boats with and without home moorings' in the 1995 BW Act.

Briefly summarising the arguments for and against:

For

- ▲ Increasingly popular amongst continuous cruisers who can choose to moor on the towpath at a place of their choosing for up to five months (with a few exceptions).
- ▲ Take up has increased by 30%+ this winter.
- ▲ New revenue stream for CRT likely to be in the order of £300k this year.
- ▲ Precedent of winter mooring has been established for many years.
- ▲ Could enable CRT to create short-term chargeable mooring permits (in excess of 14 days) for popular towpath moorings throughout the summer.
- ▲ If a boater is in possession of a winter mooring permit they can then enjoy the same cruising pattern as a boater with a home mooring.

Against

- ▲ Boaters licensed as not having a home mooring required to 'bona fide' navigate throughout the period of the licence.
- ▲ Winter mooring permits, as with the roving mooring permit, are ultra vires (beyond one's legal power or authority) as confirmed by CRT's legal counsel and accepted by CRT's own legal team in previous discussions.
- ▲ Can mean good towpath mooring spots are not available to boaters throughout the winter.
- ▲ Encourages CRT to effectively define a cruising season of seven months and prevent more general cruising over a longer maintenance period during the winter mooring period.
- ▲ Could enable CRT to create short-term chargeable mooring permits (in excess of 14 days) for popular towpath moorings throughout the summer.
- ▲ Can cause noise/pollution problems in certain residential areas.

At the recent NABO Council meeting it was suggested that CRT could amend the process next year such that boaters select their preferred towpath location, call CRT and pay for the period that they wish to stay at that specific location. This gives CRT the ability to decline on the basis of suitability. Should boaters wish to move to another location during the winter period they just repeat the process. This would seem to satisfy the requirements of the 1995 Act and the needs of boaters.

What do you think?

Rented boats, thefts and cyclists

Some of the problems for London boaters, with questions asked at the User Group Meeting, 22nd October and answered by CRT

Q There is an alarming increase in the number of boats being offered for rent on the net via Air B&B or London Boaters on Facebook. I would imagine that the majority of renters are not aware they should be moving at least every 14 days, let alone have the right tools to hand; i.e. how to use mooring pins. Someone nestled alongside a boat in London who wanted to move off was flummoxed as to what to do as she could not find any mooring pins readily on the other boat. Please comment as to what CRT is doing about boats being let out for rent which contravenes CRT licence policy. Do these boats have the proper licence and insurance for renting?

A We have become increasingly aware of boats being offered for rent. Over the past three years (from Sept.2011), 111 warning letters have been sent to boats that are considered to have been trading without the appropriate licence (this includes boats being rented out for accommodation). Renting accommodation in someone else's boat can be very risky if that boat does not have the appropriate safety certificates and insurance and other boaters may be at risk should the rented boat be involved in an accident. We have now increased our attention to this issue and are challenging unauthorised renting directly, as well as undertaking media work to ensure that the risks are highlighted and misleading adverts in the press and online are challenged.

Q With more and more boaters living alongside the towpath, especially in London, thefts are on the increase. How often are CRT and the Police liaising on such matters?

A One of our mooring rangers attends police liaison meetings to help police become aware of (and target) hotspots and crime incidents on the towpath, as well as hearing about police initiatives and crime reports. This includes attending the monthly Marine Policing Unit partner-

ship meeting, and local Safer Neighbourhood Team meetings in a number of canal-side boroughs. We have also arranged towpath events with the police

to provide crime prevention advice and bicycle security marking, and accompanied the London fire brigade on a GU cruise to provide free smoke alarms, fire safety and engine maintenance advice.

Q Cyclists on the towpath in inner London often cycle too fast and thus are a danger to pedestrians, especially when approaching silently from behind, and a danger particularly to the elderly, infirm or hard of hearing. The towpath should be a safe haven for pedestrians. A 5 mph speed limit should be introduced for bicycles and other forms of transport permitted to use towpaths. C&RT should sell cycle bells.

A We too are concerned about the behaviour of some towpath visitors, this is why we have piloted the 'Share the Space, Drop your Pace' campaign in London, for which we have had very positive feedback. We'd certainly agree that the towpath should be a safe haven for everyone, but it's worth remembering that anti-social behaviour (such as cycling inconsiderately) isn't unique to towpaths—it's a problem that is faced by everyone in London.

This is why we work closely with Transport for London, the police and local authorities on such matters. Unfortunately, as a speed limit for cyclists isn't enforceable legally, it's not something we or any other authority can consider. We do, however, publish a code of conduct, put up signs, hold awareness events and where necessary (and where it can be proved effective without restriction access to others) use various speed calming measures, such as the speed bumps we have installed at City Rd lock.

CRT has recently run a national consultation on sharing towpaths and you can read the results here: canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/consultations/completed-consultations

Trial and tribulation

Geoffrey Rogerson provides an update on the K&A Mooring Trial

Earlier this year the K&A Canal Partnership, after various consultations and deliberations, came up with the K&A voluntary Mooring Trial. The object was to encourage the movement of boats and the gist of it was to divide the canal between Bath and Devizes into neighbourhoods. The intention was not to define 'place' but to show that moving only a boat length, from one side of a bridge to the other, or even 100 yards, was definitely not moving to another place. The other requirement was that boats should move through six of the neighbourhoods in three months and through ten of them in an even manner in the year, constituting a distance moved of at least 20km. Having initially taken over the plan, CRT stated that any boat not moving through the required six neighbourhoods would be subject to enforcement. However Richard Parry accepted that boaters 'may' be subject to enforcement as each case has to be judged individually.

Following the first three months of the trial, statistics have now been produced showing details of boat monitoring throughout this period. It is somewhat disappointing that 90% of boaters have not conformed to the six neighbourhoods required. Still, it is early days and there has been movement. We at NABO are hoping that the second three months will show an improvement, particularly as I understand that an additional enforcement officer is now available. At the moment, monitoring is apparently daily on three or four of the busy visitor moorings

and the rest of the towpath is monitored once every 14 days. This has been shown to be totally inadequate and has resulted in numerous complaints from boaters, claiming the letters they have received do not reflect their movements. I would repeat that it is still early days and we will have to wait until the end of next April to see whether the K&A plan has been successful. Richard Parry has asked the various boating organisations to come up with their own views as to what constitutes bona fide navigation. However, NABO's view is that it is not for us to pronounce on this, but for the courts to decide. At the moment it appears that there have been some 18 boats that have been warned three and even four times for not moving enough. One assumes that they are now the subject of the enforcement process and unless they respond they will eventually end up in court. This ultimately is the only way that distance can be defined, following the judgement that moving ten miles between Bath and Bradford on Avon did not constitute bona fide navigation. It is all very well for the various boating organisations to put forward their ideas, which tend to be both draconian and completely unrealistic, both in distance of travel required and in enforceability. If the K&A plan doesn't work then these other suggestions are academic. The law cannot be changed by consensus but only by the courts or Parliament.

P.S. The latest statistics from CRT covering the first six months of the K&A mooring plan seem difficult to interpret. The CRT report states: in

summary, between 1st May and 31st October, 169 boats have attracted the attention of the enforcement officer for not complying with the K&A Local Plan (see Table).

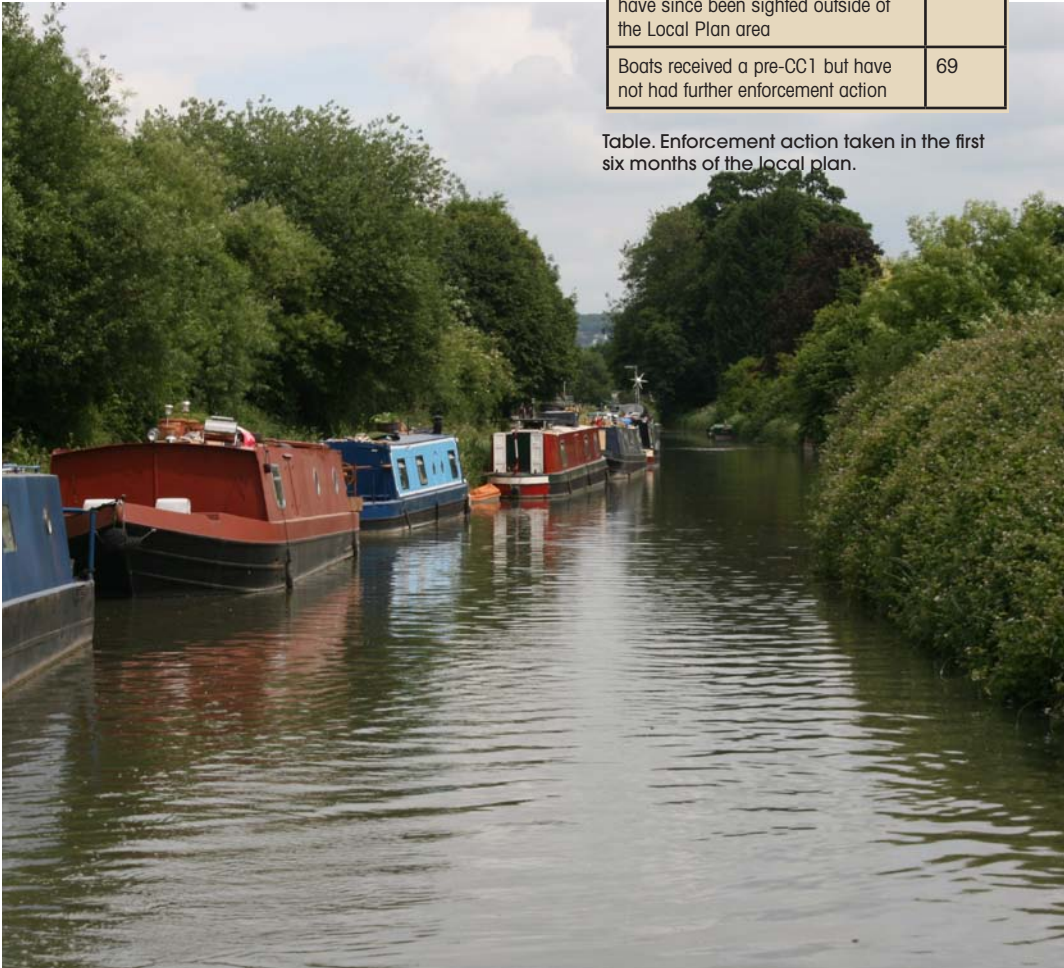
Between 1st August and 21st October, 109 boats were identified that did not move between two or more sightings. The owners have been contacted by text, email or phone to remind them to move, or to contact the Trust if there is a reason why they cannot move.

- ▲ 62 have been contacted once
- ▲ 21 have been contacted twice
- ▲ 11 have been contacted three times
- ▲ 15 have been contacted on 4+ occasions

All of the boats that have received multiple reminders are already in the enforcement process.

Action	No
Boats received pre-enforcement warning letter (pre-CC1)	169
Boats received first enforcement letter (CC1)	53
Boats received second enforcement letter (CC2)	12
Boats received pre-CC1 letter but have now secured a home mooring	12
Boats received a pre-CC1 letter but have now taken a winter mooring	8
Boats received a pre-CC1 letter but have since been sighted outside of the Local Plan area	53
Boats received a pre-CC1 but have not had further enforcement action	69

Table. Enforcement action taken in the first six months of the local plan.





The Crick poem

by Jo Bell

A poem written using the best and worst canal memories of visitors to Crick Boat Show on 25th May 2013.

We've seen more than you can write down;
cuckoos and choristers, moorhen sex,
chemical toilets and terrapins,
Anderton Boat Lift and Foxton Locks.

Curious cargoes and mystical beasts,
steam boats and herons, working pairs.
Giant pedal organs on tiny little boats,
midnight dancing at Mountsorrel weir.

The winter approach to Standedge;
our second trip out, so we took it slow
and saw a dark mouth full of blossom
as the entrance loomed in the first fall of snow.

A juvenile heron that rose and dropped
ahead of your bike on the towpath –
the dread sound of metal on water
as your dog or child or your keys take a bath.

Steering a sinking clinker boat
as droplets spin out from the flywheel;
up Heartbreak Hill, tipping ash in each gate –
and a pint at the top in the Bluebell.

Mooring at Branston beneath a tree,
and waking surprised in October dawn
as the roof sends out a guncrack of rain
and crab apples shaken down by the storm.

A roe deer at dawn, a 4.30 start
with a long strap pulling the butty behind;
a dog-fox at dusk, as you take the last berth
and set out the barbecue, pour out the wine.

The Unpronounceable Aqueduct
the Tardebigge Deep Lock, the Bingley Five;
the perfect Ashby mooring,
a peaceful spot with boats and beehives.

We've seen things that could stop your breath.
A brave duck called Fender who nearly got
squashed;
the first sod cut from the Ship Canal;
a kingfisher, angel of the grubby Erewash.

The sound of a rudder hitting the sill –
enough to stop a boater's heart.
Towcester and Bingley carrying lime juice,
forty tons moving through locks in the dark.
Mechanical trouble? We'll use the Standard Tool
(what you might call a lump hammer).
Toilet tank blocked? Not a nice job but we found
some remarkable things from Ann Summers.

The bagpiper on the Huddersfield,
who piped us into the locks one night;
the choristers in the Harecastle
who sang us through darkness and into the light.

At five years old, a taste of time –
fish and chips at Middlewich
as the last of the working pairs slid by
and the boatman tied up with a tugman's hitch.

We've done things you wouldn't believe;
crossing the wide Bristol Channel
with fingers crossed – or down on one knee
to propose in the Harecastle Tunnel.

Painting a boat in December, masked
so your breath doesn't spoil the finish;
smelling the bright smell of Brasso
as you start to spit and polish.

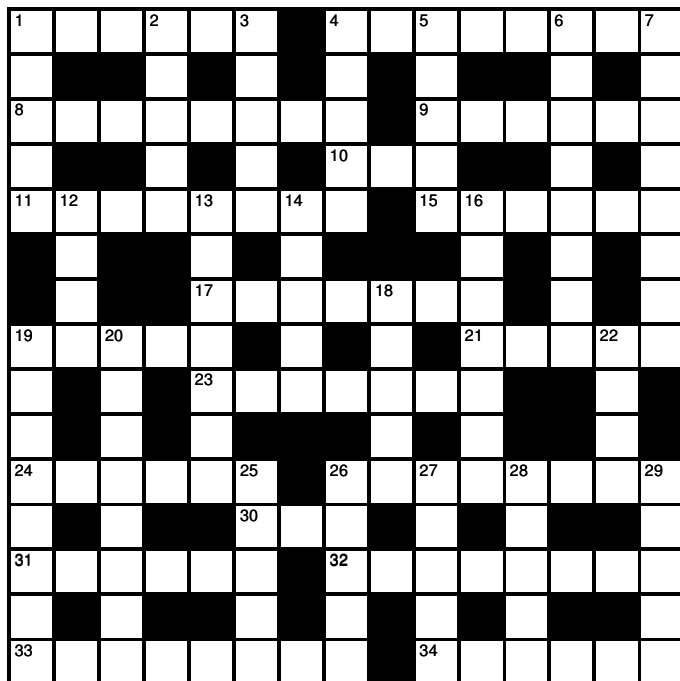
Braving the laughs of Canal Street
on a boat called Pleasure Bent; we've done it all.
They say we're freaky boat people.
And that, my friend, is the point.

More of Jo Bell's poems at Waterlines Canal and River Poetry at www.waterlines.org.uk/poems



NABO News crossword 20

By Canaldrifter



I name this boat ...

If you have spotted a boat name that made you smile, please let me have a photo to use in future issues. Here's one from Janice Steckerl.

Answers to crossword 19

Across: 1 Bandsaw, 5 Rowlock, 9 Again, 10 Submarine, 11 Litterbin, 12 Hands, 13 Yodel, 15 Steersman, 18 Insurance, 19 Dodge, 21 Cargo, 23 Elongated, 25 Riverbank, 26 Needs, 27 Enlists, 28 Trimmer.

Down: 1 Bradley, 2 Neap tides, 3 Sense, 4 Washbasin, 5 Robin, 6 Weathered, 7 Orion, 8 Keelson, 14 Larboards, 16 Eye socket, 17 Midstream, 18 Incurve, 20 End user, 22 Rival, 23 Evans, 24 Genii.

Missing clue

Apologies to readers for the missing last clue in crossword 19. It was '24 Intellectuals, and two have the knowledge (5)'.

Across

- 1 Two in tins in compartments afloat (6)
- 4 Egos vary wildly amongst travelling boaters (8)
- 8 Our menus change many (8)
- 9 Small boats in rough oceans (6)
- 10 Like his perhaps (3)
- 11 Corned beef in tune has a ring to it (8)
- 15 God of the north east on the S&K? (6)
- 17 Direction to complain about transport system (7)
- 19 Dig branch again with new tools? (5)
- 21 About as wet as a desert? (5)
- 23 Experience and leave below? (7)
- 24 A foreign lake? (6)
- 26 Getting rid of boat's shelter on the ring! (8)
- 30 Age of the Engine Room Artificer (3)
- 31 A naval vet drunk in the pub! (6)
- 32 Believes in having pictures hanging around (8)
- 33 Bass singers we hear? (8)
- 34 Brace yourself partner! (6)

Down

- 1 Cannibal puts bin out on waterway! (5)
- 2 Good night girl in dire need (5)
- 3 Horse slips on bank (5)
- 4 Call on the Five, is it? (5)
- 5 At the junction chat about boat (5)
- 6 Cape got rips. Lost cap. Cruises for the selfish! (3,5)
- 7 Uses pens to create uncertainty (8)
- 12 In shielding, reversed at tick-over (4)
- 13 Fore and aft rig in the Atlantic? (7)
- 14 Left note about gas for landowner (5)
- 16 Great fodder and fuel at S&W terminus (7)
- 18 15's god confused by point value (5)
- 19 Tear gas around the junction at rallies! (8)
- 20 Consent to IT application for the right shape (8)
- 22 Undecided about going to the navy? (4)
- 25 Shelters around the junction but damages the hull (5)
- 26 Be unwell aboard ship when it leaves (5)
- 27 Cross about same tests (5)
- 28 Unfreeze cut around the east (2-3)
- 29 Brave about wind (5)

Rewind 15 years

Tony Haynes continues his look back through NABO News from

December 1999

Chairman change: Due to pressure of work Peter Lee retires as chairman, to be replaced by Sue Burchett, with husband Roger, NABO members since the inaugural meeting. She insists on keeping the title 'chairman' as she is not known for political correctness!

NABO Membership: reaches 3000.

NABO Online: NABO now has a new website thanks to Mike Wooding and email contact with council members is being encouraged.

AGM Retiring Chairman's Report: Ended with five key rules for the new Council:

1. Maintain, and where possible improve, contacts with Government.
2. Beware of extremism in attitudes and expression.
3. Work in close liaison with other waterway groups. Cooperate wherever possible.
4. Publicise what you do and why you are doing it.
5. Keep up informal contacts with influential people.

BSS: AGM attendees were informed that the BSS is hated by the examiners even more than by boaters! It changes its mind yet again and will now allow longer flexible fuel pipe runs to and from engines to allow for vibration, to comply with European Directives. 'Readers may

well remember that when the BSS was first introduced, BW stated that they needed to bring in a boat safety scheme or else Europe would impose one on us. With the benefit of hindsight and experience of the last few years, maybe that would have been a better option?'

The Tidal Thames: The long-standing exemption from the requirement for all vessels over 20 metres to carry VHF is omitted from recent Port of London Authority General Directions. However the exemption still stands between Brentford and Teddington.

Boat Licences: BW intends to make changes to the Pleasure Boat Licence in 2000. They have proposed that 18 criteria be established to define what is NOT continuous cruising. It will only need two or three breaches of these to result in action. 'Most of these proposals affect the fundamental freedoms which we all enjoy on the waterways'.

Continuous cruising: NABO does not like the term. We are all 'boaters'. BW appears to be attempting to combine two issues: 1) continuous cruising, 2) unlawful mooring. Strangely BW states that residency is not an issue. What appears to be lacking is BW's will to enforce the BW Act 1995 as it stands.

Mooring Signs: Have been spotted allowing 14 days mooring in any one year. BW is now thinking of banning anyone from mooring on an identified 19-mile stretch for more than 14 days, with no return within 28 days. BW will also be checking electoral roles locally and even noting if milk is being delivered!



Winter quiz

Just in case you cannot face another mince pie in front of the fire, excite your boating brain cells and try a little cerebral exercise that might actually come in useful next year!

You should have received the new CRT/EA 'Boaters' Handbook' by now. Before you turn to the inside back cover, try to see how many of these waterways signs you can identify.



Letters to the Editor

Opinions expressed here are independent of NABO policy and statements made have not been verified as true.

What visitor mooring demand?

The top two photos opposite are Stoke Bruerne on 21 October and the bottom two Foxton on 14 October. We do not understand why CRT keeps these two areas as 48 hours with a £25 penalty charge for those that want to stay longer. Surely the arguments that these visitor moorings are in such demand that they have to have these restrictions in place is disproved by these photographs. It's unclear who leads mooring policy at the moment in this area: the SE Partnership, the Navigation Advisory Group or Dean Davies as Interim Head of Customer Services. Surely we should compromise and have 7-day moorings outside of August and September and hopefully more boaters would visit. We presume there will be more examples of new 48-hour moorings without prior research. Perhaps readers can let us have their photographs—Atherstone Bottom Lock or Soulbury Three Locks anyone?

Mark Tizard

No to Moorings Auctions

(This letter was sent to CRT and copied to NABO News)

I am writing in response to your consultation on the sale of moorings.

Selling to the highest bidder is quite the worse system you could have devised. Not only are moorings in short supply, but they are allocated on the basis of highest income. On land, where there is also a shortage of housing, there are always schemes to enable those with lower incomes to have somewhere to live. What you don't want to do is create some moorings sites allocated on the basis of need and others using the straight auction scheme. That way you will create poor and rich areas. Mixed communities have to be a one of the aims of the CRT.

The second question to ask is whether same size berths on the same moorings should go for dif-



Visitor Moorings this October

Above: Stoke Bruerne

Below: Foxton

Photos: Mark Tizard





ferent amounts. This is usual in streets—people in identical houses pay different amounts, but there is a market of sorts in housing on land. There isn't a true market for moorings because of the shortage of berths compared to the number of boat owners needing one. If one mooring is too expensive, it is unlikely that you can trade down to another in the same area or region, which means changing jobs, schools, GPs etc. I think CRT should have a good, defensible reason for selling the same item for different amounts and I don't see one at the moment.

I can't see why there shouldn't be flexibility in mooring periods. If a boat owner needs to relocate one year into a three-year term they should be able to do so without penalties. It goes against the employment market to do anything else; people also move to be nearer to relatives who require daily care or hospitalisation. Fixed terms are symptomatic of the problem with all navigation authorities: needless rules that would never have been allowed to continue if they applied to a majority instead of a minority of the population. Introduce flexibility as soon as possible.

J R Attar

Problem solved

I thought I'd share something positive about CRT. This is the action taken to overcome the long-standing issue at Bagnall Lock on the Trent & Mersey Canal. The problem was that the bottom gates nearly always swung open when the lock is empty. When going up, unless there was another person available to hold the gates shut, the only way to fill the lock was to start running water in at the top and then go back to shut the bottom open gate. CRT has fitted bars to both bottom gate balance beams which hold the gate shut when the lock is empty. This has also been done at Junction Lock for the same reason, though it was not as big an issue here.

James Steckerl



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