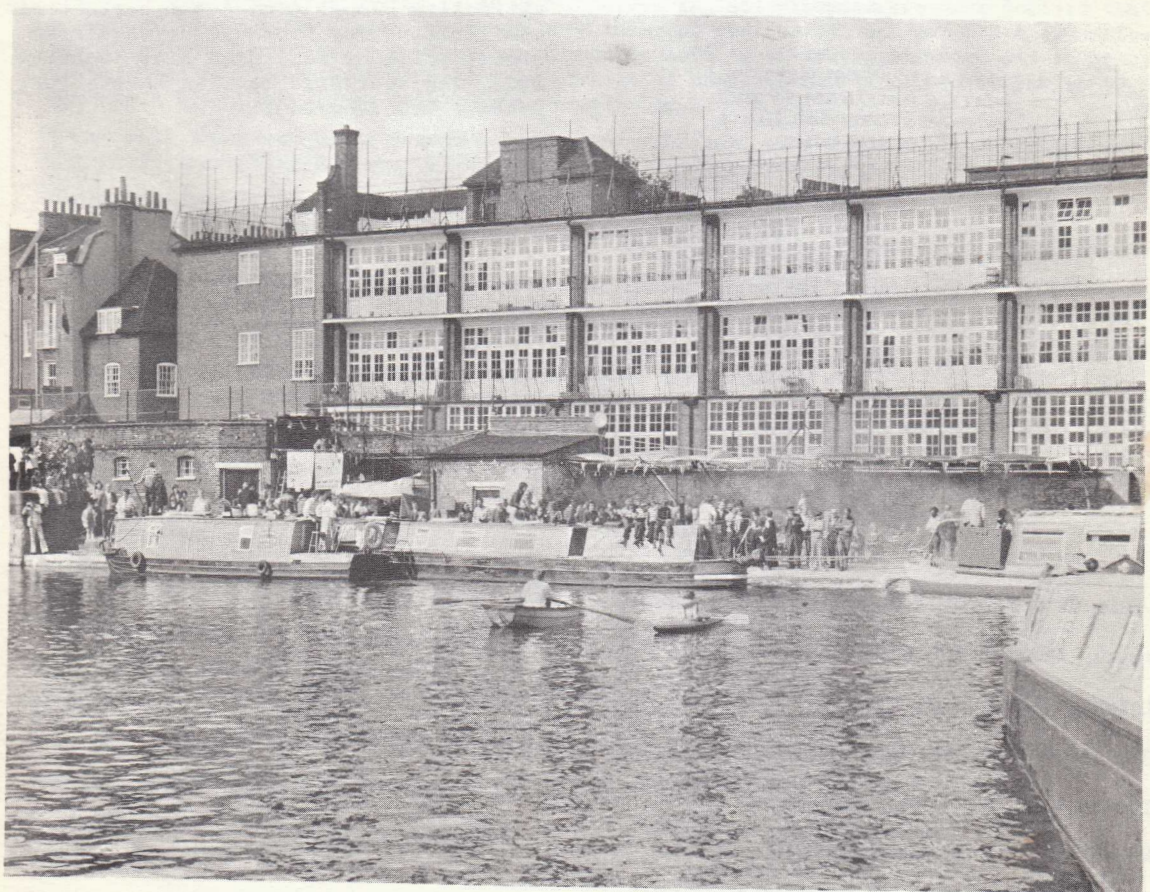


windlass

118

October 1973



NANTWICH PLEASURE CRAFT

BASIN END . NANTWICH . CHESHIRE

New Fleet of 4-8 Berth Steel Hulled Canal Cruisers

Featuring *Showers *Refrigerators
*Deisel Engines *Excellent kitchen layout

For Sale: Complete or part built Steel Boats

Write for Brochure: Simolda Ltd. Martin Street, Crewe, Cheshire Tel: Crewe 57411 - 3 lines

NEW FOR 1974

ADVENTRESS II

for your party cruise

Fully licenced, light refreshments
CRUISE, WINE AND DINE
Lunch, Tea and suppers served whilst cruising
if desired.

Details: stamp please to
LEA & STORT CRUISES LTD.,
LITTLE HALLINGBURY MILL,
BISHOPS STORTFORD, HERTS.
Tel: (0279) 723568

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENT

CRUISE IN HIGH LINE LUXURY with one of our steel-hulled, diesel-engined hire craft, now based at our own yard on the attractive Slough Arm. 4-8 berth craft available. For brochure or enquiries phone, write or call High Line Yachting Ltd., The Boatyard, Mansion Lane, Iver, Bucks - Tel Iver 1496.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS (only 2¹/₂p per word)

For sale: 19' Dolphin in immaculate condition, lying Berkhamsted. Sleeps four, new top deck. £350 for quick sale. Berkhamsted 4808

Freehold mooring, slipway, architect-designed split level house, built in Cotswold stone. Large lounge, dining room, study/fourth bedroom, laundry, three bedrooms (one with en-suite toilet), kitchen/Breakfast room; double glazing and central heating; double garage and workshop; space for trailer, caravan.

Completely detached, with views of the Grand Union and river at Croxley Green. Offers over £35,000. View by appointment. Hampson, Halfway House, Cassiobridge, Watford.

This is a special classified advertisement, seeking more advertising to fill this space, thus providing revenue for the I W A, satisfaction for buyers and sellers, and interest for our readers. Who currently number some 4,000 in London and South East. Classified advertising is currently 2¹/₂p per word, display advertising £12.50 per page. Interested advertisers should contact our Advertising Manager, Tim Dodwell, Windover, Horsell Birch, Horsell, Woking.

London and South East Branch

Patrons	Dame Margot Fonteyn and Sir John Betjeman
Branch Chairman	Lionel Munk, Ferry House, Ferry Road, Thames Ditton, Surrey (01-398-0271)
Vice-Chairman	Nigel Stevens, 52 Redcliffe Square, S W 10
Secretary	David Gibson, 4 The Ridgeway, W 3 (01-992-8846)
Treasurer	P J Mowle, Arbour House, The Woodlands, Amersham
Editor	Roderick Atkin, 25F Gail Avenue, Heaton Norris, Stockport
Ass Secretary	Peter Harrison, Number Two 14 Ashburn Place, S W 7



WINDLASS: CHANGES ON THE WAY

Firstly, your Committee has discussed the severe drain on finances caused by postage costs of your monthly Windlass. As foreshadowed in last Windlass, we have decided that a cost of some £2,000 a year, which is more than our portion of members' I W A subscriptions, cannot continue. We therefore intend to move to 6 issues per year, but of some 16 pages each: total content will thus stay as at present, and it should be easier to produce a bi-monthly issue with greater regularity.

There will therefore be no November issue, and your next copy will arrive early in December, thereafter becoming bi-monthly.

Secondly, your present editor must flee the stoppages of the South East, thereafter to work fraudulently far from the Branch area (please note new address on page 1, to which all correspondence should be sent). We therefore need to generate a fresh Editor, to take over in January. A formal job description will be printed next Windlass, after it has been cleared with higher authority. Informally, any possible volunteers may make themselves known, to receive a rosy description of the duties involved.

Roderick Atkin

WINDLASS is the journal of the London and South-East Branch
of the Inland Waterways Association

Published 10 times a year Copyright the L & S E Branch IWA 1973

NEXT COPY DATE is Saturday 10 November for December's issue

THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION

General Office: 114 Regent's Park Road, London N W 1 (01-586-2510; 01-586-2556)

Chairman - John Heap

General Secretary - John Dodwell

Branch and Routes

I W A CHRISTMAS CARDS

Members will have seen samples of the range on offer this year, as distributed with the 'Bulletin'. Please note that the actual card depicting Stourport is considerably better than that distributed as a sample. Cards will also be on sale at Branch meetings this year, as well as by post from Roger Bliss, 16D Bishopswood Road, London N6 at 50p per packet of 10. Late news is that stocks of the Paddington Basin card are now exhausted.

SOUTH-EAST BRANCH AREA

Members may be aware that a regional structure is to be adopted by the Association next year, leading to smaller branches or sections within each region. Fuller details will be given when finalised by Council. In the meantime, it has been agreed that the Broads area members would be better linked to the South East Midlands Branch.

NEW CHELMSFORD SECTION

As a direct result of the Chelmsford Rally of Boats in June which was visited by over 6,000 people, many of whom did not previously realise that Chelmsford is an inland port, the I W A has now set up a Chelmsford Section as a permanent group. The new section will have a committee of eight, chairman being Maurice Frost of Mildmay Road Chelmsford and the Hon Secretary David Johnson of 27 Sandford Road Chelmsford.

The new section will naturally be specially interested in the Chelmer & Blackwater, and hopes that it will be able to cooperate closely with the navigation authority. Broader interests will also apply, however, and the new section will be meeting for social events on the second Thursday of each month at the 'Countryman', Victoria Road Chelmsford at 7.30, starting on 8th November. All members in the area are warmly invited.

In addition to social events a wide variety of activities is planned. These will include holding regular working parties to improve navigation facilities both locally and on other waterways, boat cruises, towpath walks and other events. John Marriage.

REGENT'S CANAL

Members may have read of B W B's proposed scheme to remove opening restrictions through the London locks. The problem so far has been that water levels in the pounds almost reach the towpath, and heavily built-up areas are thus liable to flooding if locks are misused. The second lock chamber, currently disused, will therefore be converted into a weir, so that misuse could only result in a low pound above, and not a flooded pound below. "The conversion will thus enable the Regent's Canal to be made fully available for pleasure craft movements at all times. . ." (B W B press release). Work will be carried out over the next three years, and will start soon with construction and dredging at the lower locks of the canal.

BASINGSTOKE CANAL

Hampshire County Council announced on 2nd October that they had agreed terms with the New Basingstoke Canal Company for the purchase of the canal in their area, and that the agreement had been signed. They will be entering into possession on 1st November. The Inquiry to confirm Surrey's Compulsory Purchase order also commenced on 2nd October at Farnborough. Some 200 letters have so far been received supporting our case. It has been difficult to know on what grounds the Canal Company, who have property interests along the line of the canal, would be objecting: the basis of their objections seems to be the unsuitability of powered craft on the canal. The I W A and Surrey & Hants C S have been represented throughout the six day Inquiry by our Branch Secretary, David Gibson, to whom the thanks of both bodies have been expressed. Back to Hampshire, where the Council has approved a recommendation by its Countryside Committee that it should be authorised to appoint three maintenance wardens from October 1st, and it is to recommend that three more wardens should be appointed in April 1974.

diary dates

- November 2 at 7.45: Frederic Doerflinger on 'The New Canal Age' and the Grand Union enlargement with films and slides of English & Continental waters, including an award-winning film on the last Blue Line coal run. At Watford Boys Grammar School, Rickmansworth Road, A412. G U C S Open Meeting: all welcome.
- November 8 at 7.30: Chelmsford Section's first social meeting, an illustrated talk on the Chelmer & Blackwater, at the 'Countryman', Victoria Rd.
- November 15 at 7.30 Branch Meeting, with a speaker from Amenity Services Dept of British Waterways, at the Albert, Victoria Street.
- November 22 at 8.00: Oxford Section meeting in Aylesbury, with Mr D D Hutchings on the Kennet & Avon Canal, at the Mitchell Room of Hazel, Watson & Viney Sports Club, Tring Road, A41, turning left at Oakfield Road
- December 13 at 7.30: Branch Meeting, with Dr David Owen, Director of the Manchester Museum and author of Water Highways/Rallies/Byways books, on 'Canal Architecture'. At the Albert, Victoria Street, all members welcomed.

Press coverage

Most of this issue's batch of press cuttings, covering August/September, seem to concern areas along the Grand Union line.

The City Road Rally achieved good press comment and photos. The scheme to provide weirs along the Regent's Canal, covered elsewhere in this issue, was also mentioned. As was the Tring tarting up operation, covered in the Letters page of this Windlass.

Commerce: and the major item here was the G L C announcement of a joint feasibility study with B W B on the Grand Union enlargement to Watford. Students of the appointments pages will also have noted that the G L C is setting up a Freight Planning Unit, which will form policies for freight movement by road rail and waterways.

Two individual items stood out, in a generally thin period. First, the Watford Observer carried a long piece on the Sansom family of Croxley Green, who cultivate watercress beds along the Grand Union, and can look back several decades. Time was when the mills and canal traffic enforced tight control of water, water quality was high, trout swam in the rivers and pollution was presumably the production of pollen. Nowadays, population growth and the demands of industry leave less, and much worse, water, and the water table is steadily falling. "Pure water is a gift of God, and in this area, as in many others, one that has been violated beyond belief by individual selfishness and corporate lack of foresight."

More happily, our member Bob Smith of Chesham, plus friends undertook a sponsored boat trip from Boxmoor to Uxbridge - 18 miles and 23 locks - between 9 a m and 6 p m one Saturday, to raise money for the National Waterways Restoration Fund. Plus valuable publicity for the cause. Plus a thirst, no doubt, to be slaked at the Swan & Bottle?

working parties

You may have read of the massive Droitwich Dig, with October 28-29 seeing some 300 volunteers working on a local authority supported canal in Worcestershire. Another canal, nearer home, is now supported by its local authority, and we hope to start work there as soon as possible. Provisional dates so far arranged are November 17-18 and December 1-2, but you will need further details from Nigel Stevens (01-373-7234).

city road basin CANAL FESTIVAL

Conditions were good for a successful campaigning rally. Above all, the weather was very helpful for late September, staying fine all weekend. Many local residents came, plenty of children too, and all seemed to enjoy themselves.

For there was plenty going on, something for everyone in fact. About 80 visiting boats were moored either in the basin or towards the tunnel, and, with constant trips into the basin, there was always some movement afloat. The Islington Boat Club contingents, now numbering some 540 children, were often afloat too, for there was a full programme of boating events - children's events prizes distributed by Nicolette Milnes-Walker of solo Atlantic fame. Punch-and-Judy, theatre show, folk song and fireworks: there was always something happening. A novel feature was the evening's festival concert, given by a chamber orchestra wind ensemble aboard the 'Fair Lady', which contained music for still water in matching mood, and held a large audience on the towpath through to the Firework Suite and a differently matching display erupting from the basin.

A good impression was also made upon visiting dignitaries, who were all taken round the basin aboard the 'Fair Lady'. Illyd Harrington, old friend of the Association and now Deputy Leader of the G I C, could not in fact open the Rally due to a family bereavement, but the Labour Group Chief Whip read his promising statement. The Grand Union enlargement, hovercraft and other passenger services to be expanded, and a study team to help switch traffic from roads to water were all covered.

It's obviously early yet to discuss how successful the Rally has been. In fund-raising terms it is known that a likely surplus of some £500 will be one success. Decisions on the CEGB proposal to fill in part of the Basin are still in train, with a promised public meeting still to be arranged. In the end, the process could still drag on to a public inquiry. Whatever the outcome, this weekend rally can have done us no harm, and is an event to point to when asked whether there is any public interest.

"The managing committee and principal proprietors boarded the City State barge, which had been borrowed for the occasion, and several other barges, all decorated with flags and streamers and accompanied by bands and by boatmen dressed in picturesque blue and white frocks and hats decorated with ribbons. It was a fine day and crowds lined the banks all the way to Limehouse. As the procession passed through the Islington Tunnel the bands played several national airs, and the effect of the reverberation was described in one newspaper as 'grand beyond description'. At the City Road Basin, where an immense number of people had assembled, a salute was fired, and this was soon followed by a competition between several Paddington barges for the honour of being the first to land produce on the wharf. The contest was won by the 'William' which landed among other things a cask of ale, which was immediately drunk by the navigators. . . ."

Description of the opening ceremony of Regent's Canal on August 1st 1820
extracted from Spencer's London Canal pp 53-54

WHO USES IT NOW ?

540 children from the Islington Boat Club	Students from University Canoe Clubs
5 local schools for canoeing instruction	Private boat owners
Islington Sea Cadets	

And many more people are expected, now that the towpath walk is open, and as the canal locks are opened more freely at weekends. An imaginative development of the basin could obviously build upon this already substantial public interest to form a really outstanding feature in a Borough notably lacking in public open space.

The difference between a place when observed from a road and when observed from water is inexplicable in real terms but very fascinating. Last July I planned a trip up one of the straighter navigations in the South East to sample the delights of the River Lee.

These delights escaped my prying eyes largely because even the best spots appear drab under a grey sky. It was certainly different to any other waterway I had travelled, especially at Ware.

On a Saturday I left Rye House and proceeded up-river to Stanstead, and then to the most difficult lock on the river: Hardmead. A long straight section followed this lock and in the distance was Ware, dominated from my viewpoint at the lock by some grain silos. Some thirty minutes later, 'Penge' slipped by the first building, a twentieth century factory with no windows on its water frontage as it hid behind the towpath greenery. On the east of the navigation, a typical B W B building with its tatty blue paint stood guard over Kings Weir, a long structure which keeps sufficient water in the navigation and lets a small surplus spill over into the real river Lee. Being on the outside of a right-angled bend, boats had kept well away and the silted area in front of the weir contained weeds and much of the rubbish of Ware.

Round the corner, the massive silo towers of Eastern Counties Farmers, which I had seen from Hardmead Lock, looked down on a deserted wharf now used for parking lorries. The river here is very wide and straight and diverced from the town. Fishermen sat on the towpath while I continued in mid-stream by a tiny pub, outside of which hung a notice inviting mooring there for customers only. It appeared that the landlord moored his own boat permanently there, for a shabby cruiser occupied the whole mooring and ten feet either side of it!

The A10 crosses the river at Ware and the bridge had its usual collections of stalactites hanging from the beams. Immediately beyond the bridge was a pub with tables and chairs outside overlooking the river. A scene of great activity this, especially as a boat was passing. Sadly there was no ladder available for piratical boaters to use in order to plunder the liquid treasures inside. Without moorings, towns such as Ware are liable to miss out on trade from the odd boat or two. Beyond here the river changes completely for the factory/industrial images disappear to be replaced by serenity provided by back gardens, each with a summer house overhanging or hanging in the water. These 18th century buildings without exception were deserted and neglected by the owners. However, a lock cut sheltering beneath trees soon provides ideal fishing territory and the sight of boats creates an opportunity to re-cast. At the end of the cut stands Ware Lock surrounded with mown lawns and flower beds. The keeper cheerfully appeared to unlock and operate paddles and gates for us. All was as one would expect from the Water Board who were obviously more able to maintain their navigation works than are B W B. Above the lock, the river runs along by a factory - but what a display. None of the familiar rusty window frames and asbestos sheeting but really well tended lawns and borders extending for about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile along the waterway until deep country is reached.

Ware was a tremendous contrast viewed from the water, but when, some 3 weeks later, I drove down the A10 through Ware it appeared very conventional and drab. Usually towns are full of features and the navigations have their own drab but fascinatingly unlovely vista. Ware had somehow unbalanced this general equilibrium, why I can't imagine, but I certainly do not look forward to returning there by road. How about you?

In fairness to B W B, too much admiration should not be lost on the neat lawns of the Metropolitan Water Board at Ware Lock, which they control. Your Lee & Stort representative on the Committee, Trevor Taylor, tells me that 10 million gallons is abstracted every day for London's water: and if water levels on the Lee are low, then it's just hard luck on a boat wanting to take a lockfull of water. . . Editor

If you aren't a reader of 'Navvies', the magazine of the Waterways Recovery Group, then you probably haven't heard about this year's summer work camp, organised by Alan Petrie and Nigel Stevens, and consisting of a varying number of keen, totally voluntary Navvies. This camp for 'nutty Navvies' was based at Lowsonford village near Stratford-on-Avon and lasted the four weeks of August. The stretch of canal worked on was part of the 13 mile length of the Southern Stratford belonging to the National Trust, running from Stratford to Lapworth.

Work was carried out on three main sites: piling at Bishopton; painting on the Wilmcote flight and levelling off the towpath by lock 40, the top lock; and culvert demolition and construction at lock 35. Plus general towpath clearance and undergrowth slashing wherever we went.

The first swinging week mainly involved piling, with relief work (?!) of levelling off the side of lock 40. This was done with a layer of bricks covered with earth, which was in turn taken from the next lock where the earth level was higher than the lock side, thus doing two jobs in one. About 100 steel piles were also knocked in by the super-sonic hammers of our band, numbering about 25. Digging was done with similar energy. The transport provided - a special feature of the enticing W R G handout - was a cranky old red 13 seater Bedford van (I suppose to match the nutty navvies it contained. I believe the record was 23 in it at once - that was after a push start! It all adds to the fun.

Lunch was always a welcomed break. Not only to get away from the sight of a canal for an hour, but to take a much needed pint and to be refreshed with those original (chomp) outstanding (chew) never ending (gulp) cheese and pickle doorsteps! If any of the cooks are reading: no offence, the food was very good considering that most of the time it was cooked en masse. I was dreading endless watery stews with greens that looked and smelled like silage: not so. My mouth waters even now to think of those large steaming, succulent, pleasantly brown and golden joints of meat, oozing savoury smelling juices. . .

The atmosphere was very lively for 99% of the time. Plenty of jokes and pranks on people (too numerous and specialised to mention). Some of them were enough to try anyone's patience, though everyone took them very well, and it all added to the fun. Silence was never allowed to reign. If it seemed likely, some witty Navvy would be bound to cry "Well, here we all are, then", ridiculous enough in our situation to bring at least a smile to your face. Thus a typical day would pass, and evening would bring its hot meal, sing-songs and drinking. A pleasant way to end a physical day's work in the heat.

In the second week the culvert at lock 35 was started, the levelling off at lock 40 was finished, and slashing, painting and piling went on progressing. In the remaining two weeks the culvert was finished, with all its 'picturesque' trimmings. The Navvies who had been with the camp from start to finish of the culvert could take tremendous satisfaction in seeing it completed. It even looked quite professional. . . a rewarding sight for all the digging, fencing (both demolition and construction), pneumatic drilling, con-block manoeuvres, cement mixing - the list is endless. Wilmcote flight was completed and looked very trim in her coats of white and black paint. Some clearing and burning was done in Stratford. And the piling - more was done of this never ending job.

Other sights intruded, and were welcome, and here I would like to mention the horse-drawn narrowboat that most of us were lucky enough to see. An enthralling sight, the sudden flexing of muscles and swift acceleration - very thrilling. I would also like to give thanks, on behalf of all the people at the work camp, to the boating holiday makers who donated anything from 1p to £5! The money collected was much needed, and although the Bedford van took its fair share of cash, the remainder was divided into three: one third for the Upper Avon project; one third for the National Trust; and one third for the W R G Bank. Anyone want to join us on a working weekend, or on next year's camp???

LETTERS

Midgham, Reading

Dear Sir

Following my letter concerning possible improvements at Calthrop lock on the Kennet & Avon Canal, I am glad to say that remedial work has recently been carried out. This has been done by members of the Reading Branch of the K & A Trust. The gates have been creosoted and painted, but there is still more work to be done: a further working party is being held on 1 December.

Also further to my letter, Reed have just opened a new water purification plant which has greatly improved the effluent. I can only hope that these improvements are continued, especially considering that restoration will be started on Towney and Padworth locks next March.

W L Nicholson

High Wycombe

Dear Sir

Is it a silly question? It may well be, but could B W B explain why the Grand Union is to be shut virtually all the winter?

'Show-piece restoration': piling doesn't need a stoppage, 'dredging where necessary' doesn't need a stoppage, nor does hedging, ditching, stone walling etc etc. New lock gates - 4 pairs I have been told - do need a stoppage: one week per set of gates.

So why this closure? The only answer is that we are going to be treated to new improved paddle gear on every lock. This would surely need extensive stoppages.

I look forward to hearing further details. . . or is it a silly question.

R T Putnam

No question from one of our readers is taken to be silly, Terry, and this one does deserve further details.

John Dodwell has already had discussions with the B W B engineer in charge. His case for a 'show-piece' needs a southern stretch, but not too close to any part which might be widened for commercial traffic. Tring was selected partly because it could be put into good order quite cheaply, being already in fair condition (a nice contradiction). The stone walling is at the waterline, and is preferred to much more piling as it will retain the character of the waterway better - but it does necessitate dropping the level by 2ft. Since Tring reservoirs are fed from springs, they are unlikely to fill up very quickly, and it is not practicable to fill all pounds very frequently. Towpath surfaces will not be of tarmac. B W B have stated in writing that dredging will be in accordance with section 105 of the Transport Act 1968, that no more gate paddles will be removed, and that it is intended to restore side ponds.

We are still querying the length of the stretch to be renovated, as well as the length of the stoppages. It is imperative that any further Milton Keynes stoppages be fully synchronised with those at Tring. Hire firm interests have already won a delay at the Slapton end until 29 October - further concessions may be hoped for.

A moral for B W B might be that fuller consultation and better public presentation will smooth their path and gain fuller cooperation: too many of the engineering staff are now engaged in meetings with aggrieved interests, instead of getting on with the job.

A moral for us is to get all the facts before we strike rigid attitudes. By the way, the Thames Conservancy has 6-month stoppages for three winters running, and the National Trust closes the southern Stratford for the winter - though both do give considerably more notice than the five weeks allowed by B W B.

Saint Line Cruisers

LA MONTAGNE - LA COLLANCELLE,
58 - CORBIGNY, FRANCE

4 & 6 Berth Luxury Cruisers for Hire
on the French Rivers and Canals

- ★ Continuous Hot and Cold Water
- ★ Navigation Charts
- ★ Flush Toilets
- ★ Transistor Radios
- ★ Hot Showers
- ★ Economical Diesel Engines

WHY NOT COMBINE A CONTINENTAL HOLIDAY WITH A HOLIDAY
AFLOAT? WRITE NOW FOR 44 PAGE COLOUR BROCHURE

Please mention WINDLASS when replying to advertisements



John and Margaret Hall invite you and your family to
FARNCOMBE BOAT HOUSE
Boats for Hire and Moorings - Riverside Tea Gardens

Narrow Boats 4 - 10 Berth for Hire

CATTESHALL ROAD · GODALMING · SURREY

Telephone: Godalming (STD 04 868) 21306

400 yards off A3100 Guildford-Godalming road.

'snipe' boat trailers

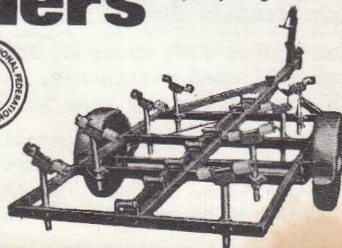
Model 14/800 KD

Capacity weight 800 lbs.
Capacity length 14 ft.



Model A 3000

Capacity length 22 ft.
Capacity weight 27 cwt.



Available from 200 lbs. to
36 cwt. capacity, for boats
from 10 ft. to 28 ft. in length.

Write for our fully illustrated
folders giving details of all
models.

LEW-WAYS LTD.

Watling Street, Cannock,
Staffs.

Telephone: Brownhills 2565

BASINGSTOKE CANAL

URGENT NOTICE

Dear Member,

The Public Enquiry into the confirmation of the Surrey and Hampshire County Councils' Compulsory Purchase Orders for the Basingstoke Canal will start on Tuesday 2nd October. One of the points that will be put forward to justify the Orders is the widespread public demand to use the Canal. We must demonstrate our support for this by writing to the Inspector who will be hearing the evidence.

Your Branch Committee and the Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society would be very grateful if every Member would write to the Inspector saying that they support the County Councils' proposals to acquire the navigation and want to see the Canal restored to full use for boating, angling and other amenities.

Please write to Mr. E. Bowen, the Department of the Environment, 2, Marsham Street, London SW1P 3EB. It would be appreciated if copies could also be sent to the Clerks of the County Councils at County Hall, Kingston or Winchester.

David Gibson
Branch Secretary