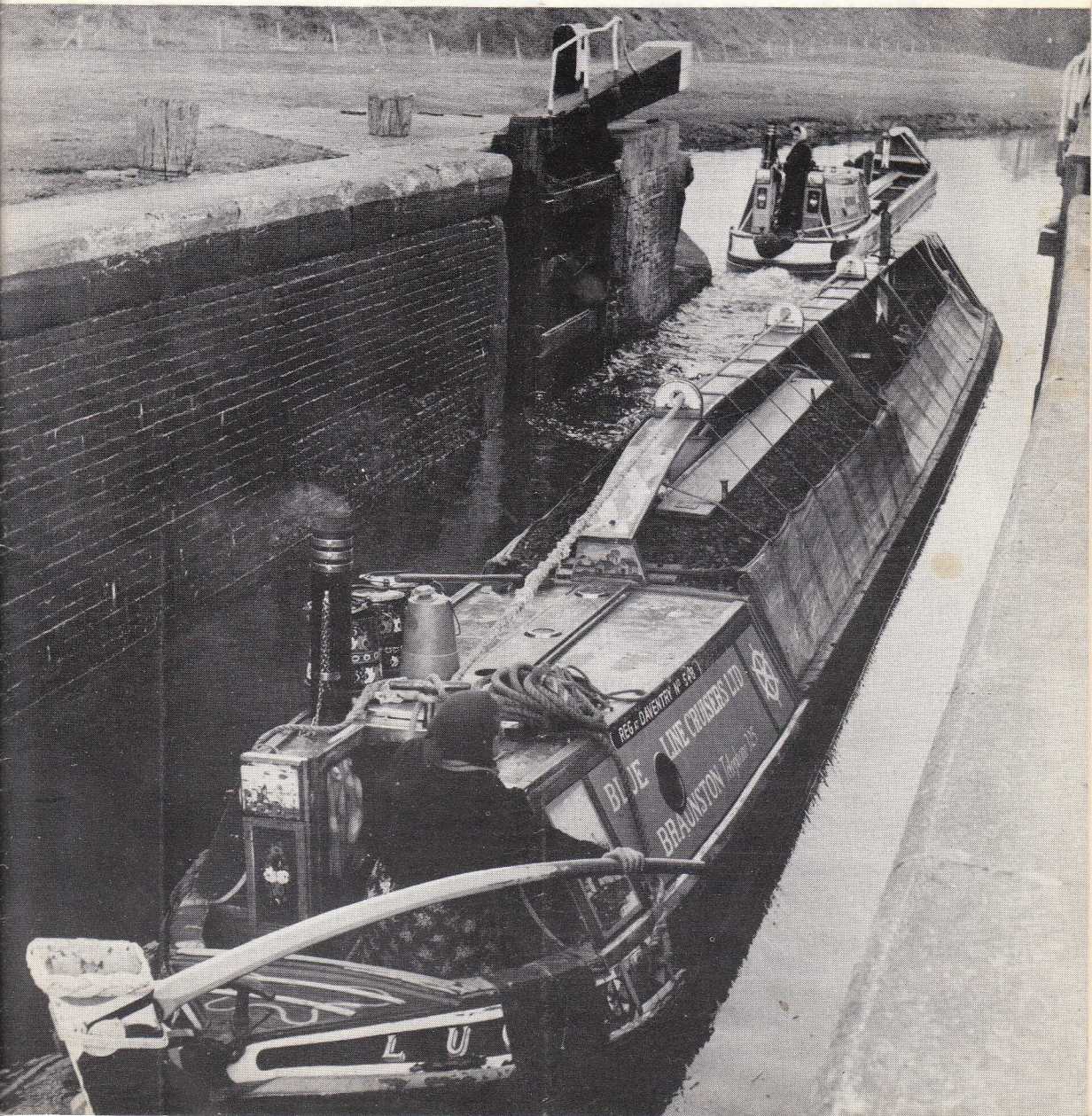
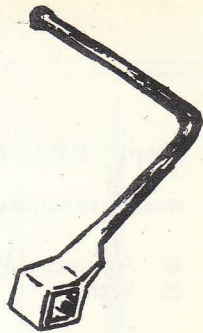


windlass

april, 1969

no. 76 1/6



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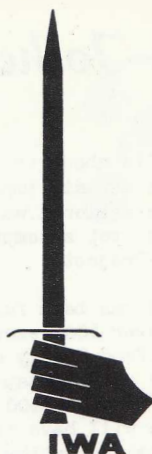
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**THE
INLAND WATERWAYS
ASSOCIATION LTD.**

General Office:
114 Regents Park Road,
N.W.1.

Chairman:
Capt. Lionel Munk F.R.S.A.,
A.R.I.N.A.

General Secretary:
Robert Shopland

From the Editor's Cabin

I had intended to write a lengthy and serious Editorial for this issue; but I find myself short of time, space and inspiration - inspiration that is to compress my ideas into this small space in the short time left before this issue must go to the printers, So instead of a proper editorial, I shall fill this space with all the odd items which have got left till the end. And I make no apology for not mentioning the Slough Water Festival in this issue, except in passing; read your Programme, sent with this issue of "Windlass" and find out all about it.

Congratulations to the Spratt family again, this time Colin and Pauline Spratt, who have a baby boy, a brother for Mandy. Sorry there was no space to put this in last month.

The Association's General Secretary asked me to mention two things; the General Office needs ladies to do secretarial work part time. Anyone interested should contact Mr. Shopland direct, address above. Also a ladies black cardigan was left on our Boat Show stand last January. Apply to Mr. Shopland if you think its yours.

The Branch is shortly adding to its list of publications; a guide book to towpath walks. Read all about it next month.

British Waterways Board's stoppages encroach rather more on the cruising season. So get a copy (from them) and check up before planning your holiday.

Josher's Column

It has always been the purpose of this column to try to bring to light details about the happenings on the waterway which otherwise might be submerged, to spotlight certain important factors, and most of all to give you food for thought and action. It is action I want to deal with this month: action on the grandest and most impressive scale yet attempted by the waterway enthusiast. I mean of course the gargantuan Upper Avon Project.

I don't think that even yet the sheer size of the problem that is being faced has been fully realised. Consider what has to be done. A river navigation, derelict for over 100 years has to be reconstructed completely from scratch. From Evesham to Stratford hardly any of the original navigation works survive, those that do are not likely to be of any use. Ten locks and weirs have to be constructed (not reconstructed or renovated). More than 200,000 cu.yards of spoil will have to be dredged from the river - and disposed of. Roads will have to be constructed to the outlying lock sites to allow access for the heavy plant; vegetation undisturbed for more than 100 years will have to be cleared. Perhaps most vexing of all, the negotiations with the River Authorities, the Local Authorities, and the riparian owners have been seemingly endless, and are still going on.

As was said about the flight of locks at Runcorn when it was built; "Truly the work of giants". The only difference now on the Avon is that there is only one giant, one driving force, one source of inspiration - David Hutchings.

For too long we have been resting on the laurels of Stratford and Stourbridge; we must now rise to the occasion, both in manual help and (perhaps most of all) money. £250,000 takes a lot of raising. If it were not for the magnificent gesture by our anonymous benefactor in promising £1000,000 if a similar sum could be raised externally, there would be little point in starting at all. But is this fantastic display of faith to come to nothing because of lack of support from us? I understand the funds so far accumulated fall far short of the target. Will you - can you, help by supporting the appeal? If you have lost the form sent out with "The Bulletin" further copies are available from the Association's General Office.

Consider the implications. Successful restoration will prove to far more than the local populace that we mean business, that we are not just a bunch of starry-eyed preservationists. Successful restoration will realise the full potential of the Southern Stratford Canal. Successful restoration will pave the way for other extensions to the system, previously denied to us owing to our apparent lack of expertise.

Looking at Mr. Kinnersley's letter in the March "Windlass", and whilst appreciating that it would be unfair to attack on this page what is obviously a helpful letter, I would like to raise one point "for discussion". The fourth paragraph states in connection with charges at boatyards "Another point is that newcomers do not look only at charges. I believe many newcomers will look for higher standards of service and facilities than the traditional enthusiast (or do I mean the enthusiastic traditionalist) have tolerated or even enjoyed in many places so far".

Whilst accepting the point made, I do feel that it raised a broader issue. Simply, the appeal the waterways have for the public. I do not believe that the future appeal will lie in canals which have services and facilities (at least as far as the holidaymaker goes) on a par with the "world outside". The appeal lies in the difference between modern living and noise, and the quiet, rural, perhaps semi-primitive, life which gives people time and opportunity to "get away from it all" - now if "it all" is going to come to the waterways, where is the advantage?

I feel I should make it clear that the above remarks are based on the premise that the amenity side of the waterways is all that is being discussed.

QUIZ ...



Number 10.

1. Proceeding north from Harecastle Tunnel, on which side is the turning for the Macclesfield Canal?
2. How are the narrow boats which carry grain up the Grand Union loaded at Brentford?
3. Grand Union Locks; (a) what are the other change locks between Brentford and Tring Summit besides the one at Boxmoor?;(b) How many locks have side ponds in this length?
4. Where are (a) Thurne Mouth;(b) Heybridge Basin ?
5. Waterway organisations: what do these initials stand for; (a) N.B.C.C.: (b) A.W.C.C.?

Wychbold,

Answers please to John Dodwell, 19 Drill Hall Road, Chertsey, Surrey, by April 30th.

ANSWERS TO QUIZ NO.9.

1. Crookham Swing Bridge swings; North Warmborough Lift Bridge lifts. Both are on the Basingstoke Canal.
2. Birchills Junction, Netherton Basin and Wednesfield Junction have in common the fact that they are all on the B.C.N. They have another thing in common too; they are all sites for the small rallies to be held in the week prior to the National Rally.
most
3. The two lighterage firms which use B.W.'s Brentford Dock are Thames & General and K.Vokins.
4. People talking at an I.W.A. gathering about "Town" class and "Star" class would almost certainly be discussing the classes of narrow boats built for the Grand Union Canal Carrying Co., in the 1930's; e.g. "Alton" "Satellite".
5. Waterway organisations: S. & H.C.S. stands for the Surrey & Hampshire Canal Society, very much concerned with the Basingstoke Canal. Membership of 10/- a year can be obtained from Mrs. F. Woolgar, 56 Connaught Crescent, Brookwood, Woking, Surrey.
U.A.N.T. stands for the Upper Avon Navigation Trust, which, under David Hutchings (of Stratford Canal restoration fame) is starting to restore the part of Shakespeare's Avon between Evesham and Stratford "the missing link". Donations will be gratefully received at 10 Guild Street, Stratford on Avon, Works.
6. Grand Union Locks: Boxmoor Change Lock is (Surprise, Surprise!) at Boxmoor: no 64; Bushes Lock is no. 50 at Northchurch.



Events

NEWS

ACTIVITIES

ROUND THE WATERWAYS

17th April

A.G.M & OFFICIAL FILM OPERATION ASHTON

Notice is hereby given that the thirteenth Annual General Meeting of the London & Home Counties Branch of the Inland Waterways Association Ltd., will be held on Thursday 17th. of April at Cavell House, 2a Charing Cross Road, at 7 for 7.30p.m.

The Hon. Secretary and the following members of the Committee retire in rotation; Major Logan Brown and Mr. James Street, and offer themselves for re-election. Mrs. Gladys Spratt the Hon. Treasurer retires by rotation and does not offer herself for re-election, and Mr. Rodney Pepper wishes to retire at the A.G.M. Mr. Graham Palmer wishes to relinquish the position of Hon. Secretary. There has been one addition to the Committee, this being Mr. Peter Heywood who was co-opted during the year and offers himself for election. There has been one resignation, that of Mr. Hugh McKnight.

GRAHAM PALMER
JOINT HON. SECRETARY.

The Meeting will be followed by a showing of the official film of Operation Ashton.

APRIL 13th. (SUNDAY) TOWPATH RAMBLE, from Watford northwards. Meet outside Watford Met. 10.30a.m., stop for lunch at Hunton Bridge.

MAY 11th. (SUNDAY) TOWPATH RAMBLE along the Basingstoke Canal from the Wey junction probably as far as Brookwood. Stop for lunch in Woking. Meet either at Waterloo Station 9.45 in time to catch the 9.53 train to Byfleet and New Haw, or outside Byfleet Station 10.30a.m.

MAY 24th.-26th. SLOUGH WATER FESTIVAL AND RALLY OF BOATS. All details in the Programme.

MAY 3rd.-17th. CAMDEN FESTIVAL. See separate item for details.

JULY 6th. (SUNDAY) (Not June 29th. as previously announced elsewhere). Branch trip on the Kennet & Avon Canal 15 mile pound on the paddle boat "Charlotte Dundas". This is a date when she is due to change base, and we shall be able to cruise from Pewsey to Devizes, leaving Pewsey at 11a.m. A halt will be made at a convenient pub for lunch, and it is hoped to provide tea in the afternoon if this can be arranged. Accommodation is limited for this first ever Branch trip on this section of the Kennet & Avon, and early booking is advised. Tickets, price 12/6 (exclusive of tea which will be extra if provided) from Tim Dodwell. Please send s.a.e.

JULY 26th.-29th. NATIONAL RALLY AT FARMERS BRIDGE, BIRMINGHAM. A Royal Rally, with H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh as Rally Patron. Mini-Rallies will be held during the week prior at Birchills Junction, Netherton Basin, and Wednesfield Junction.

Dates of Working Parties now appear on the separate Working aParty Page.

THE WELFORD ARM.

The Old Union Canals Society announces a Rally to celebrate the recent re-opening of the Arm. It will take place on May 17th. and 18th. at Welford Wharf and the opening ceremony will be attended by Sir Frank Price. Our Members are assured the Society will give them a warm welcome.

RIVER WEY.
***** The National Trust announces that for a period of about six weeks from

April 9th. the water level in the reach between Unstead and St. Catherine's Locks will be lowered so that repairs can be carried out to the weir at St. Catherine's, known locally as the "Riff Raff". Some reduction in water level is also expected in the reach between St. Catherine's and Millmead Locks during this period.

The Wey Cruising Club will be holding their Fitting Out Party and Cruise on the 26th. April. The Cruise will leave New Haw Lock at about 12 noon, and is expected to reach Guildford Rowing Club at about 6p.m. where there will be a party in the evening. Any members cruising in the area are cordially invited to join in.

Lock Manning. It is planned once again to operate the voluntary lock-manning scheme at weekends, principally covering Pyrford Lock, and including others at peak periods subject to availability of volunteers. This will commence from the Whitsun weekend 24th.-26th. May, and continue until late September. It provides an excellent opportunity for a pleasant day by the river with a chance to perform a useful service. NAMES PLEASE TO:- Martin Steiner, 4 Arundel Gardens, Winchmore Hill, London, N.21. Telephone 01-886-3884.

TIM DODWELL.

KENNET AND AVON CANAL.

***** The swing bridge problem at the eastern end of the Kennet which was reported previously as possibly causing a hold-up to restoration plans, are at present a definite, if temporary, block. The Ministry of Transport has stated that no further extension of the Kennet & Avon eastern "cruise-way" section will take place because opening of the bridges would cause delay to lorries carrying materials from the south to the M4 construction sites. When the motorway is completed it is thought that the new feeder roads, which can incorporate new bridges with adequate headroom (they will have to cross the railway in any event) will take over as the main traffic routes from the south, and the roads carried by the swing bridge will be reduced to minor importance, but this will be some time ahead.

In the meantime the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust and the I.W.A. are not accepting the Ministry viewpoint lying down, and a meeting with the Ministry and Berkshire County Council, who had already voted to support the restoration scheme financially, to see what could be done.

On the centre section the "Charlotte Dundas" is due to begin regular operation at Easter. To cover the section fully the base

will be switched between Devizes, Honey Street and Pewsey. Details of charter trips and scheduled runs are available from Mr. R. Dunsdon, 52 Devizes Road, Swindon, Wilts. (Please send s.a.e.) For details of the proposed Branch trip in July, watch the list of forthcoming events in future issues of "Windlass".

TIM DODWELL.

THE REGENT'S CANAL DOCK.

British Waterways Board announced on February 9th. that they will terminate the loading and unloading facilities for shipping at the Regent's Canal Dock by May of this year. They stated that over the last ten years the number of ships handled had dropped from about 25 per week to two. This decline must have been very rapid in 1968, for which detailed figures are not yet available, because the number of shipping departures in 1962 was recorded as 407, compared with 388 or about $7\frac{1}{2}$ per week, in 1967. However, the actual shipping tonnage handled showed a greater decline, from 210,000 tons in 1962 to 160,000 tons in 1967.

The decision came as a great disappointment, particularly since the Board's 1967 Annual Report also recorded a working surplus for the Dock of £14,000, compared with a deficit of £20,000 in 1966. However the 1967 Report did warn of "additional problems in 1968". The Board said they had approached a number of shipping lines regarding their possible use of the Dock, but without success. There has also been virtually no use of the facilities for discharging direct from ship to canal craft in London in the past few years. Much of the former trade to the Dock now passes Harwich, Ipswich and Felixtowe, using the new roll-on, roll-off ferries, or through the new container port of Tilbury.

The Board have announced that the Dock entrance lock to the River Thames will continue in use as before. It will remain open for the use of commercial and pleasure craft passing between the Thames and both the Regent's Canal and the River lee via the Limehouse Cut now directly joined to the Dock. It is also understood that warehouse facilities will continue to be available lighterage firms using the Dock. Could it be here that the Dock could continue to have a future?

492 60

A recent press announcement gave news of the revolutionary new LASH carrier, or lighter Aboard Ship; a 45,000 ton ship that will carry, as the cargo, 73 400 ton barges. Without the need to dock, the LASH will swing the barges overboard, which will then be towed away by "pusher" tugs. Two such 20 knot ships and 500 supporting barges will be available from September this year and the service will call at the Medway on the way from New Orleans to Rotterdam. The British agents have already expressed the hope that the barges can be tugged from the Medway as far up the River Thames as Brentford. For a shipment from St. Louis, 1000 miles up the Mississippi, to Duisburg in Germany a time of only 19 days has been quoted and at lower rates than by any other means. Even if our canals cannot accommodate these barges, let us hope that at least they will be encouraged to use the River Thames and save London streets, in particular, from the ever increasing congestion.

But whatever the commercial future of the ten acre Regent's Canal Dock, its use by pleasure craft should not be in doubt. London has almost no facilities for non-tidal moorings, for either visiting or home-based sea-going yachts. For inland craft the Dock is centrally placed between London's rivers and London's canals and is about midway between two exciting new developments, the Lee Valley Regional Park and the Woolwich-Erith Riverside Project, both of which make extensive use of existing navigable waterways.

O.S. TURNER.

ACTION!

Following recent visits to Stratford on Avon and Harvington I have been re-reading "Narrow Boat" for the twentyteenths time, in which the Upper Avon is described as unnavigable and the South Stratford gently mouldering away. Today the South Stratford has been won back and the Upper Avon is now in the long and arduous process of being made fit for boats once more.

Others such as the Stourbridge, have also been won back, while more, such as Well Creek on the Middle Level, are threatened. Others yet again have still to be rescued - the Basingstoke is one. It is entirely due to the enthusiasm and sheer hard work of volunteers that so much has been accomplished. A thriving Association is one in which all of its members take an interested and active part. Funds are limited, numbers are small; but these limitations can be overcome by each

one of us making a little more effort than just paying our subscriptions, and reading "Windlass", even in little ways.

Ask your local library to buy each waterway book as it is published- most librarians welcome suggestions for purchases. If you don't own a boat but hire one for the holidays, fly the Association burgee; you may have a car, but do you sport the I.W.A. car badge? Do you tell your local newspaper about your cruises? they may be interested. Never neglect any opportunity, however insignificant- of gaining good publicity for our cause. And if no other activity appeals to you, come to the Branch Annual General Meeting and say what you think ought to be done!

GORDON WEBB.

CAMDEN AND THE WATERWAYS.

The London Borough of Camden holds an annual festival which brings together the amateur and professional artistic interests of the citizens of the Borough. This year the London & Home Counties Branch is co-operating with the St. Pancras Civic Society and the Regents Canal Group to publicise the Regents Canal, and to show what can be done with the canal today.

Two illustrated talks will be given as part of the "Fringe Events" of the Festival, each from 7.30-9.30p.m. in the Kentish Town Library:-

Friday 9th. May, "London's Canals" by Oliver Turner, Branch Vice-Chairman.

Friday 16th. May, "Camden and the Regents Canal" by Raymond Harris, A.A. Dipl., F.R.I.B.A.

From May 3rd. to 17th. there will also be a Photographic Exhibition and Display during library hours on weekdays. We want to have Branch Members present to help distribute literature and to answer questions. Will any Members who can help, either during the day, particularly on Saturdays, or during the evenings please contact Mrs. Diana Gurney, 31 St. Mark's Crescent, London, N.W.1. phone GULiver 7268.

O.S. TURNER.

RIVER LEE AND REGENT'S CANAL. LOCK OPENING TIMES, SUMMER 1969.

British Waterways Board Have again consulted with the interested cruising clubs and with the Branch about their special opening times to facilitate the passage of craft between the River Lee and the Regent's Canal. This the third year of these special openings and it is hoped that it will soon be found possible to open at least the Regent's Canal and Hertford Union manually operated locks at all times, following the example of the Hanwell Flight, which is not now locked.

The times below include both the normal Sunday openings, from March 31st. to October 26th. in addition to the special times, to facilitate use by readers. Note that all locks are closed Bank Holidays unless stated.

RIVER LEE.

Old Ford. Normal opening; Mon.-Fri. 6a.m. to 8p.m.
Sat. 8a.m. to 6p.m.
Special opening; Sunday, July 20th. and Monday September 1st. 4pm. to 8pm.
Tottenham, Stonebridge, Pickets End, Ponders End.
Normal opening; Mon.-Sat. 8a.m. to 6.30p.m.
Special opening; Sundays April 27th.; May 25th.; June 8th. 22nd.;
July 6th. 20th.; August 3rd. 17th. 31st.; September 14th.
28th.; October 12th.; 12 noon to 4p.m.
Bank Holiday Mondays; May 26th. and September 1st.
12 noon to 4p.m.

REGENT'S CANAL AND HERTFORD UNION.

All locks. Normal opening; Mon.-Fri. 8a.m. to 5p.m. Saturdays 8a.m. to 12 noon.
Special opening; Same dates as for River Lee, 4p.m. to 8p.m.
Hertford Union, Old Ford, Sturts, City Road.
Special opening; Saturdays June 7th.; July 12th.; August 9th.;
September 6th. 12 noon to 5p.m.
Kentish Town, Hawley, Hampstead Road.
Normal opening; (in addition to all locks above) Fri. & Sat.
5p.m. to 8p.m. Sunday, 8a.m. to 11a.m. 5pm to 8p.m.
Special opening; Sundays May 11th. June 22nd. and July 20th.
11a.m. to 5p.m.

B.W.B. TIDAL LOCKS.

Grand Union Canal, Brentford. Mon.-Fri. During the period 6am. to 6pm. lock 100
and 6am to 10pm. Lock 101, two hours before to three
hours after high water.
Sat. & Sun. During the period 6am to 10pm. Locks 100
and 101, two hours before to two hours after high
water.
Regent's Canal Ship Lock, River Lee Bow Locks.

According to tide; exact times before and after high water cannot be given, as the opening times vary with individual tides. Intending users should check with B.W.B. (Dock: 790-3444; Bow: 987-5661).

O.S. TURNER.



Working Party Page

SUNDAY APRIL 13th. SLOUGH ARM.

Meet at Mansion Lane Bridge (by the Iver Boatyard) 10a.m.

This is a joint working party with the G.U.C.S. in preparation for the Slough Water Festival and Rally of Boats. Here we have to prove that this is a WANTED waterway, not only by holding a successful Rally, but also by completing the task of improving the physical condition of the canal for the benefit of walkers and anglers, so that it becomes a DESIREABLE waterway.

The specific objects on this occasion will be to clear and level the Rally Site, cut back towpath hedges, and clear debris from the channel - all essential for the success of the Rally.

We need a good turn out to get the work done, so bring your axes, saws, shovels, grapnels and waders if you have them. Transport available from Slough Station by prior arrangement with Graham Palmer.

MAY 10th.-11th. UPPER AVON.

This is the "Number One" restoration project in the country, actually under way at the present time. The London WPG was one of the first large groups to go and help - we think we set a record. By May substantial work on the lock sites should be well under way; help us to set the record again with a record attendance. If you count yourself a waterways enthusiast you can't afford not to take part in "Open up the Avon" by giving it your support to the maximum of your ability.

Details for this visit from Graham Palmer.

A MYSTERY !

Reports have reached us of an I.W.A. working party group cutting back overgrowth on the G.U. towpath near Coppermill Lock, on February 15th.

No official working party was scheduled for this date.

If anyone knows anything about this, would they please contact Graham Palmer, address below, as soon as possible.

MORE HELP WANTED ON THE AVON.

Help is urgently needed at Harvington, as the base must be ready by May when the equipment arrives. This is an emergency call; don't wait till the scheduled May working party; get over there as often as possible. Further information from Graham Palmer.

Active ... or apathetic ?

If you are prepared to work for the future of our waterways - - - Read

Navvies Notebook

Subscription for twelve months 5/- post free from G. Palmer 4 Wentworth Court, Wentworth Ave, N.3

A Visit to

THE MADDER VALLEY

by GORDON WEBB

After the Rally at Reading "September Song" made her way upstream against the Thames Current, and instead of going through the lock at Clifton, took the weir stream which branches off to the left.

The stream winds along in a lost and lonely fashion for the next three quarters of a mile, and is deep enough for quite large cruisers. Gladys and I navigated to the Plough Inn and tied up at the private landing stage belonging to the landlord, and walked up through the garden for drinks. The inn serves the village of Long Wittenham, and we walked along the High Street, past Robert Gibbings' cottage, and came upon a whole new waterway; one which is navigable for all kinds of craft, and which has not yet been spoilt by "development".

Arriving at Madderport, whose old buildings are attractively grouped about the wharves, the towpath may be reached by going down the ramp near the dock office, at the back of the railway terminus. Or steps lead down to the towpath just by the town bridge opposite the China Clipper Inn. The towpath is in good order throughout (no working parties needed here!) and, in fact, the whole navigation is very creditably maintained. Nearly on the outskirts of the town is an old house with boat house and landing stage, and as the last buildings are left behind you come to the only lock on the river, attractively situated beside the Moonrakers Inn. The lock is very similar in construction to those Thames locks above Osney. The proprietor of the inn runs a river-side tea garden, and it would be pleasant to sit here watching the boats come round the rather acute bend and through the lock.

A small stream comes in nearby and there are a number of skiffs, randans, and such, moored by the boat house used by the local rowing club. Now the river winds past Much Madder railway station, past the inevitable rubbish dump and past a boat builder's yard, where there was a cabin cruiser on a launching trolley at the head of the slipway. There is also one of those wonderful old white weatherboarded water mills, fed by another little stream running into the main channel.

Just near the mill the railway branches into two lines, one of which crosses the river by a hand operated bridge, which must be swung to allow the passage of any craft with more than three feet briggage. Application must be made to the railway authorities, but as trains are very few in number nowadays, no trouble is usually experienced. Around another acute bend is the most favourite spot for picnics - Temple Island - although it is rather overgrown; but there is a ruined Doric temple (erected by Brigadier Sir Jasper Gammon-Hogge) which looks most fetching by moonlight; a ghostly if romantic spot!

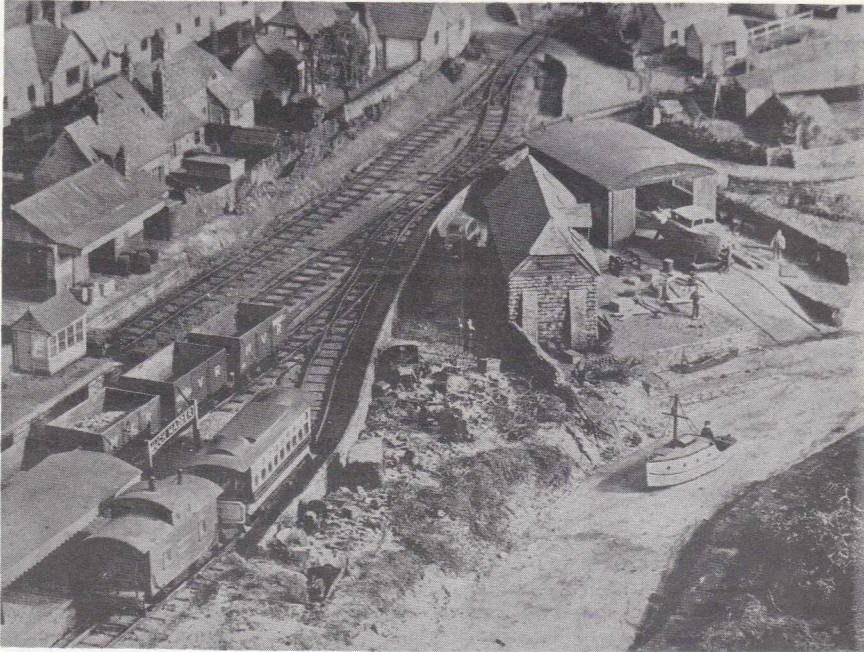
Now the valley narrows and the hills begin to close in; the river passes behind a brickfield, while the railway clings to the side of the hills, passing through a tunnel and across a trestle bridge at head-spinning height. There is quite an intimidating waterfall which forms an effective bar to further navigation. Up the hill the small market town of Gammon Magna sheltering in the shadow of the walls of a ruined castle, hard by the Red Lion, and where there are many old houses to gaze at, or you can, if time is not too pressing, walk all the way back to the Plough Inn at Long Wittenham.

As far as I can gather few inland waterways enthusiasts have seen this valley, but those of you who have been to Long Wittenham by water may well be wondering where it is. Turn right along the High Street, when you come out of the Plough, and a few hundred yards along the High Street you come to the Pendon Museum of Transport.

There you will find the Madder Valley - in fascinating miniature - and all those pubs, mills, boathouses, castles, houses, river, lock, hills and railway which I have tried to describe, reproduced most beautifully and faithfully to the scale of $\frac{1}{4}$ millimetres to the foot, which brings out the average model human figure to just under an inch. And the whole

valley can be found occupying a space no larger than 18ft. by 11ft.

It was built, over the space of about thirty years, piece by piece, by the late John Ahern, and where miniature railways are spoken of, is internationally famous. I hope you will go and see it. The Museum is open in the summer months on Saturdays and Sundays at 3p.m. and an illustrated brochure can be obtained by writing to Roye England, Pendon Museum of Transport, Long Wittenham, Berks., by whose courtesy I am able to reproduce the photograph.



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Letters to the Editor

Lewisham, S.E. 13.
March 15th.1969.

Dear Editor,

How refreshing was the second part of Josher's Column (March Edition, Page 2) the need to "THINK ON" now is so vital, for where are we going with our canals now that the basic network is secure?

The word "Cruiseways" fills me with horror, can Josher's vision of "hot-dog and ice-creams vendors" be far away now? Have we fought for and created a Broads like set-up? In a few years time will the ice-cream vendors do a flourishing trade at Bulbourne to the queue of pleasure boats waiting to descend Mafas flight?

The unique atmosphere of our canals is difficult to describe - heaven forbid that they become fully commercialized pleasure-boat wise, or that atmosphere will vanish. It seems that having saved a basic network, converted them from canals to "cruiseways" (how I hate that word) we are in the process of destroying the charm of the canals and creating something of the packed Broads nature.

Is this what we want?

Pleasure cruising will continue to grow, of course, but a large part of canal charm is surely the working boat. It is the working pair, designed for the canal, that distinguished a canal from a "cruiseway". Beautiful and remote though the Oxford Canal certainly is, the absence of working boats detracts from its wonderful charms.

We all know and have debated the difficulties of the working boats and their small payload, but nevertheless in spite of all the gloomy forecasts dating from 1948 they still exist and work in the economic nightmare of 1969. As long as they do a canal will be a canal rather than a "cruiseway".

I personally would like to see the I.W.A. do more to encourage and help the commercial carriers, for as pleasure boating increases so do their problems. When the last pair ceases to operate we will have lost our canals, and replaced them with something else which I think Josher sees in his worst nightmares.

Yours sincerely,
R.T. PUTNAM.

Ealing, W.5.
March 16th.1969.

Dear Miss Johnstone,

Josher's column in the March issue of "Windlass" reveals the truculent style of writing that has characterised public statements of spokesmen for the I.W.A. since its earliest days. We ought not to be engaged in a war, even one of words; we ought to be presenting a rationally constructed, reasonably argued, and above all factual case for the retention and appropriate development of all inland waterways.

"We are all being turned into pre-digested, processed, pigeon-holed, cellophane-wrapped automatons", writes Josher. Were we? What, all of us? "Faceless Minions of the Ministry". A phrase nicely calculated to lose us any friends we may have in that quarter. Does Josher know of any proposals to build bingo halls (with or without garish lighting) along any stretch of canal in this country?

The same issue carries a letter from Mr. H.J. Kimmersley of B.W.B. in which he makes the point that newcomers to canals may expect services of a higher standard than those to which we are accustomed; he is, I think, quite right. In any event, development of the canals and their environs is bound to continue. I welcome this kind of letter

from the Board, a discussion letter, as Mr. Kimmersley calls it, and if this kind of interchange of ideas is to continue, we must create an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding. This is exactly what Josher's article fails to do. I react to it with despair and gloom, and the aim of our Association is to dispel such emotions.

Yours sincerely,
GRAHAM A. HARE.

Truly one man's meat is another's poison.- Editor.

London, S.W.1.
February 11th.

Dear Editor,

Thank you for sending me my first issue of the Windlass - very interesting. While I whole heartedly support your wishes for a reciprocal licensing arrangement, I think you are being a little hard on that much maligned body, the British Waterways Board. The construction of a marina at Banbury appears to me a very positive and welcome assurance of maintenance on the Oxford Canal, and by choosing the middle I would hope they were attracting traffic from both ends. I took a party in a narrow boat from Willow Wren last year over the whole length of the Oxford, and noted amongst other things that the swing bridge at the Southern end appears to be open more than one would be led to believe, as there is a marked decline in rail traffic, and several boats were using that part of the canal south of the Duke's Cut. There is no shortage of water here, and the locks are in good condition. I agree that vigilance is necessary, but I think we should give credit where it is due, and encourage the development of this fine waterway.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN FOSS.

THE EDITOR WRITES: My intention, in the editorial of February, was to query the wisdom of a giant marina one day's travel from Oxford, (hardly the middle). A smaller project, in Oxford, or at Thrupp, would enable another smaller project to be constructed on a waterway which badly needs facilities and the use which the bringing of facilities would encourage. After all it is as silly, when there is very little jam, to try and make it cover the whole loaf as it is to put it all on in one dollop right where the butter is thickest.

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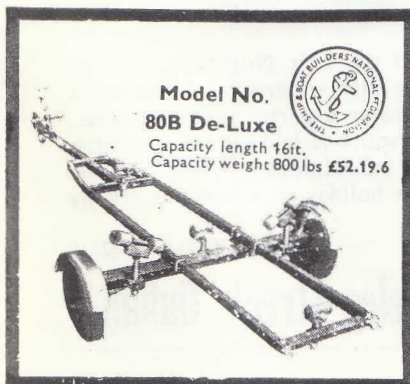
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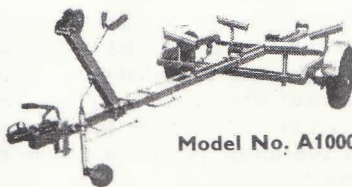
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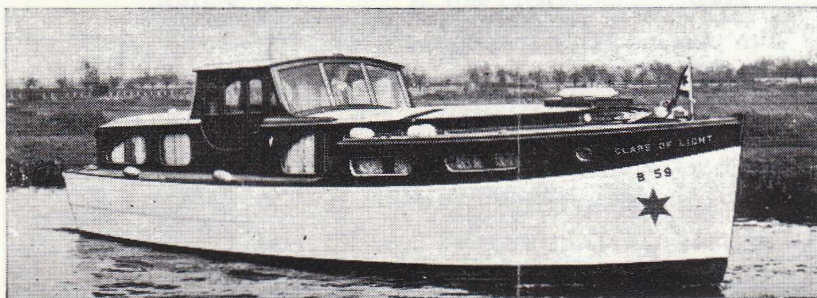
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