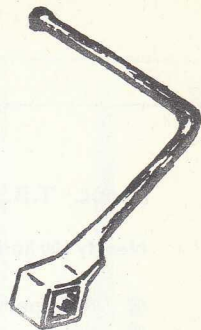


windlass

June 1969
no. 78 1/6



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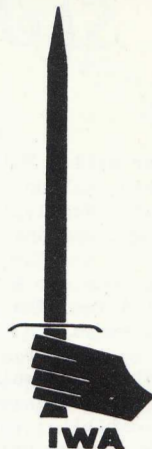
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From the Editor's Cabin

I have heard recently of one or two members who have left the Association because they no longer have a boat, and this saddens me considerably. Saddens because it has been said, and written in our journals over and over again, that we are a campaigning organisation, not a boat club. One does not need to have a boat to take part in IWA activities; many of our members do not own, nor hire a boat. Rallies are held not to entertain ourselves, but to convince a town or an authority that the waterway concerned should be retained or developed; we go on working parties and man information stands to clear and restore a waterway and tell the general public our aims, not to chat up our friends. That we are entertained by these activities is excellent; but it is not the first object of the exercise. Those who imagine it is delude themselves. So take a look at yourselves. Did you get off your boat at the last rally and man a stand or sell a programme? Did you stop talking about old times at the Boat Show stand to talk to that stranger tentatively looking at a map? Did you find yourself unable to give up one weekend of cruising to attend a working party? Watch it, you may be slipping into the frame of mind where should you give up your boat you give up the IWA as well because you will have missed the satisfaction of full participation. And both you and the Association will be losers.

*** **

Readers and contributors to 'Windlass' please note that the July issue will be early, as it must be at the printers before I go on holiday. This issue is likely to appear late owing to the necessity to carry a report and picture of the Slough Rally. So if you wish to write for the July issue, do it as soon as you get the June one. There will be no issue for August. As you read this June number, you will note the absence of 'Josher's Column' and the Quiz. Josher is away, and (over
COVER PICTURE: The Water Festival site at Slough. Photo; Slough Observer.

SLOUGH

water festival and rally of boats » may 24-26

If Slough doesn't know it has an amenity in it's canal now it never will. This was the Rally which had everything - boats of all shapes and sizes, music, gaiety, colour, activity, pure entertainment and campaign publicity, and, inevitably, rain. A Water Festival indeed, with a charming Festival Queen, Yvonne Jaques, 21, a resident of Slough, and one of the Red Cross members in attendance.

Multi-use of canals has ever been the battle cry of the IWA and a new one can be added to the list now, for one of the successes of this Rally was the Art Exhibition. The many lovely paintings and drawings on view revealed what a fertile subject waterways are for the artist. There was an angling stand, demonstrating multi-use again; the Regent's Boat Club and 'William' from Beauchamp Lodge showed how much can be done for youth on the waterways. The IWA stand was always busy - sometimes frantically so; children were well catered for with sideshows; there were boat trips running busily; trade stands and exhibits; the Grand Union Canal Society, Slough Residents Association, the Slough-Thames Link stands; Bric-a-Brac, balloons, and music - brass bands, steel band, live, and fairground music on tape.

Saturday night saw a rousing get-together for the boat crews, when a brass ships bell and other items were auctioned in inimitable fashion by Rally Secretary Jim Street. The judging of the Knitted Hat Contest took place, and the parade of mannequins, male, was a sight to be seen! The winning entry was knitted by Iris Stephens.

Sunday began appropriately with a religious service, ended with the accustomed finale of film show and fireworks. In between there was the waterborne inspection of the assembled craft by the Mayor of Slough, the Lady Mayoress, Miss Joan Lester M.P. Mr. Illyd Harrington, Capt. Munk, and other distinguished guests, to the accompaniment of raucous hooters and whistles from the fleet. Later came the judging of the Festival Queen, and her cruise along the moorings, carrying the sword, symbol of the IWA, and wearing the sash and crown especially made for the occasion. All the time the music played, balloons ascended, tripping boats passed up and down, and everywhere there were children. Children eating ices, playing hoop-la, delving into the lucky dip, voraciously selling programmes, in boats, out of boats, wanting to get into boats.

Some 5,000 people went to Slough Water Festival and Rally. I wonder what they thought of it all? The quote of the day came from a mother being towed along by an eager child: 'You don't want to go down there; there's only more boats'.

Yes, Dear Madam, only more boats; that is what a canal is for. And angling, and walking along, commerce, pleasure, amenity, for us, and you, and your child. What are you going to do about it?

FROM THE EDITOR'S CABIN. contd.) our Quiz Master John Dodwell has had exams. Both features will be back next month. This issue is, in fact, one of the thinnest (in number of pages only I hope, not interest) for a long time. The Rally has taken up a lot of people's time.

** *** *** *** *** *** *** *** **

Congratulations to Tim and Liz Dodwell on the birth of a son, and to David and June Rayner on the birth of a daughter, a sister for Julie and Andrew. All are reported to be doing well.

** *** *** **** *** *** *** **

I heard of a good publicity idea recently; a member has a large map of the waterways both in his waiting room and in his office. There must be many of our members who could do likewise; doctors, solicitors, dentists, are three that come to mind. Waiting for an appointment is always a bore, so why not give people something more interesting to look at than last year's copies of 'Punch'? It could produce some new members too.



Events

NEWS

ACTIVITIES

ROUND THE WATERWAYS

JUNE 14th. Annual General Meeting of the IWA at the Headquarters of the English Folk Dance & Song Society, Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London, N.W.1. at 3pm. Nearest underground - Camden Town; 74 Bus route; street parking allowed. Tea and Biscuits available after the meeting.

JUNE 22nd. TOWPATH RAMBLE, along the Basingstoke Canal westwards from Brookwood as far as Aldershot. Meet outside platform barrier at Waterloo Station at 9.35 to catch the fast 9.45 to Brookwood, or at Brookwood at 10.30. Stop for lunch at Frimley Green or Ash Vale.

JULY 6th. PEWSEY TO DEVIZES ON THE 'CHARLOTTE DUNDAS', leaving Pewsey 11am. and arriving at Devizes approx. 6pm. Full details appeared in the last issue. Tickets 12/6 each (tea 3/- extra and must be booked in advance) from Tim Dodwell.

JULY 26th.-29th. NATIONAL RALLY OF BOATS AT FARMERS BRIDGE, BIRMINGHAM. Under the patronage of H.R. H. the Duke of Edinburgh.

Preceded by mini-rallies from the 19th July at Birchills Junction, Wyrley & Essington Canal (B.C.N. Society); Netherton, Dudley (Staffs. & Worcs. C.S.); Bentley Locks, Wyrley & Essington Canal (Wolverhampton Boat Club); and Daw End (Tamworth & Swarkestone B.C.).

An elaborate programme of events and activities has been planned, to include fancy dress of boats, canoe and dinghy races, boat handling, ropework competition, tug of war, Old Time Music Hall, and events for children. The Association of Waterways Cruising Clubs offers facilities for mooring boats on their way to Birmingham.

This is the 200th anniversary of the B.C.N. and much of it is 'remainder waterway'. We cannot afford to lose a mile of this vital system. SO COME TO THE RALLY AND MAKE IT THE BIGGEST AND BEST EVER.

Don't forget, attend a mini-rally en route if you can.

OCTOBER 5th. (SUNDAY) RIVER WEY. As there is now no public tripping boat available for a long distance trip on the river, we are planning to ask members with boats to carry Branch members from Guildford to New Haw. This will probably be linked with some publicity connected with 'an adjoining waterway'. Further details in due course, but please note the date. Tim Dodwell will be glad to hear from volunteer boatowners, for whom this event could make a pleasant weekend trip at the end of the season.

IMPORTANT NOTICE - RIVER WEY HANDBOOK.

We regret that four errors have crept into the new (1969) edition of the River Wey Handbook. In the list of Public Houses and Hotels on pages 24 and 25 the telephone number of 'The Anchor' at Pymford should be 42507 and that of 'The Rowbarge' at Guildford should be 73358. The hotel in Guildford is 'The White Horse' not the 'White Hart'. In the advertisement on page 33 the telephone number for 'The Anchor' should also be altered to 42507.

Will all members please amend their copies. We are taking steps to correct the telephone numbers in existing stocks as far as possible, and apologise for any inconvenience that has been caused.

TOWPATH RAMBLE.

***** A party of six set out from Byfleet on May 11th. joining the Basingstoke Canal at Scotland Lock, the first available access point. Even in decay there is something rather heroic in its weird mixture of beauty and squalor. It is very much to be hoped that something positive will emerge from all the various reports and discussions of the authorities involved. So fascinating is the canal that Woking was not reached until 1.40 - a close shave indeed for lunch-time refreshment. The afternoon was spent quietly proceeding as far as Brookwood in

time for the 5.23 fast train to Waterloo.

PETER M. WARD.

KENNET & AVON CANAL.

A new arrival on the navigable section at Reading is the BWB tug 'Alder' together with a new steel workboat, while the K & A Trust dredger has had steam raised, and is reported to be in operable condition. When it was first acquired from BWB many people questioned what would happen to it. Now they have their answer - thanks principally to a small band of dedicated volunteers.

A number of improvements to be carried out on the navigable sections at Reading and Newbury have been announced, including dredging, building of landing stages and improvements to paddle gear. These should considerably assist navigation and remove some of the more awkward peculiarities of the river.

There is to be a Rally at Newbury for trailer-borne craft on June 14th/15th. (details from I. Kirkwood, 21 Russell Road Newbury) and for portageable craft a trip from Newbury to Tyle Mill on Sunday July 13th. (Details from R.O. Radbourne, 5 Frymley View, Hayse Hill, Windsor, Tel. 63978).

The Trust is to run an information post at County Lock on summer weekends and bankholidays to welcome boats off the Thames. Lock windlasses will be available, and copies of the guide 'Reading Cruiseway' (and other publications) on sale. Copies can also be obtained (2/6 post paid) from R. Denyer, 34 Springfield Park, Twyford, Reading, Berks. A similar guide to the Bath end of the canal will shortly be ready for those who wish to cruise the western end. Both guides include details of slipways for trailed boats.

TIM DODWELL.

RIVER STOUR...

The River Stour Trust, which has just had its first Annual General Meeting, is starting a vigorous publicity campaign and membership drive. The Publicity Officer (Peter Harrison, Tawney Tower, University of Essex, Colchester) has a supply of attractive posters 13"x10" and members with access to suitable sites such as boats, caravans, shops, factories, libraries, etc., can help by displaying them. The Trust, now a registered charity, needs energetic members. Subscriptions can be paid by covenant which helps the Trust, and details are obtainable from the Treasurer, Miss Doreen Barratt, 40 Second Avenue, Frinton on Sea, Essex.

The Trust has an ambitious programme of stands at local events throughout the summer, and has issued the first number of its journal 'The Lock Lintel' (from which the foregoing information has been extracted).

CANOE TRIP.

It is planned to organise a canoe cruise for canoes and similar craft from Manchester to Marple in conjunction with the Marple Rally of Boats. The route taken will be via the threatened and semi-derelict Rochdale, Ashton and Peak lower Peak Forest Canals which will mean portaging round 17 of the 27 locks between Manchester and Marple (Lock 16 on the Ashton now actually WORKS) and the whole of the Marple Flight, although it is hoped to arrange transport at Marple.

The journey will take two days to complete, and thus there are two alternatives. 1) To canoe from Manchester to Audenshaw on Sunday June 22nd, store the craft at Audenshaw and continue on the Saturday of the Rally (June 28th.) or 2) To canoe from Manchester to Fairfield on Friday June 27th. camp overnight and continue to Marple on Saturday June 28th.

The choice will be with people taking part and they will be informed of the final decision in ample time. Normally boats arriving at Marple Rally after 12 noon on Saturday would be ineligible for Rally awards, but the committee has agreed to waive the rule for entrants on this cruise.

Small boat owners wishing to take part or who would like more details should write to W.A. Lear, 5 Chatsworth Road, Droylesden, Manchester M35 6JT, stating which of the two alternatives would suit them best, better.

STOP PRESS. Action Group Organiser Gordon Webb has now been co-opted to the Branch Committee.

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Working Party Page

Get Involved

You will notice that in most issues of 'Windlass' there is a page devoted entirely to working party activities, yet it could be said that the Editor is catering to a minority who?, those who actually attend working parties.

Out of a Branch membership exceeding 1,600 less than 10% actually attend. I am fully aware that some of you are not able to come and help for various reasons, be it financial, health or just family commitments. Even taking this into account there do not seem to be enough of you represented. We are not asking you to make the supreme sacrifice, just one weekend per year.

That's all we really ask of you, because if you turned up just once and worked we would really make a significant impression, it could mean that we would be able to turn out a force of about thirty people every weekend, or over one hundred a month; with this sort of support apparently impossible tasks become excitingly easy. The sky would be the limit, we could be an irrepressible force for the good of the waterways. But if we are to continue with the present support, it will mean plain hard slog-ging struggle against national stupidity and apathy.

From the above please do not get the impression that I am disappointed with the present working party - they have my sincere admiration for the way they turn out month after month with a very limited amount of new blood to augment their efforts. In all

weathers and in all conditions the same band of dedicated enthusiasts sweat, swear, strain and toil on your behalf, on behalf of the waterways and the vision of a complete and working system.

Do you think you could possibly give up just one of your weekends to help? The work is generally interesting, requires as much or as little thought as you wish to put in, can be extremely arduous, but you will not be asked to do a job which you are not physically fitted for. But you will have gained satisfaction, and a sense of belonging to a group of people whose work is constructive as opposed to destructive, and will in the course of time see many new waterways from an entirely different angle.

We do not work away with a worried frown and a jutting chin - we believe that our work should be enjoyable too, and I think generally manage to achieve this happy state of affairs. As with so much connected with our interest, you will gain from our waterways exactly what you put into them, and I don't mean rubbish!

I am by no means saying that if you don't attend a working party you are of no use to the Branch or the IWA, there are many other people who are working equally hard on behalf of the waterways, in other less spectacular tasks - but this is your opportunity to help without having to know all the academic ins and outs of the waterways, and I happen to know just how few are helping in other directions too!

The Basingstoke, Upper Avon, the Cheshire Ring and the Kennet & Avon will have to rely heavily on voluntary work if they are ever to be placed firmly back on the waterways map - this will not happen without your support, which is more than urgent - it is absolutely vital.

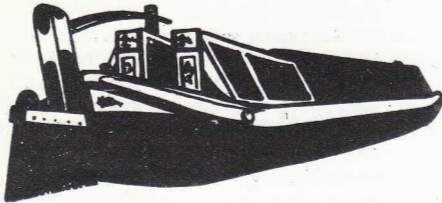
Whenever we want to reopen a canal, one of the main objections put forward is that we are all talk - if you want to translate words into action now is your chance. If you don't take it very soon many of the excluded waterways may be lost forever, and of course that will be someone else's fault.

Please write and let me know if you are prepared to give up one weekend's gardening, painting or TV. Don't let the thought that you will be just one of hundreds that reply put you off, because, as with so many appeals put out by the Branch and the Association, your letter will probably be

the only one that plops onto the doormat.
GRAHAM PALMER.

WORKING PARTY DATES.

JULY 12th./13th. KENNET & AVON CANAL AT BATHAMPTON. A weekend visit to the western end of the canal to clear defelict craft and other obstructions from the channel in the long pound above Bath. Accommodation will be at Batheaston Church Hall, and the usual communal catering arrangements will be in force. Further details from Tim Dodwell.



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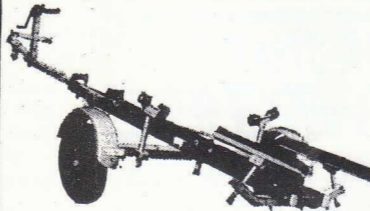
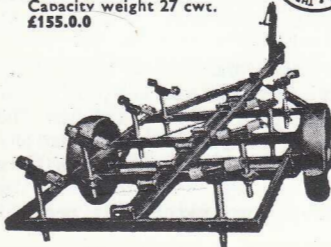
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Letters to the Editor

Hillingdon, Middx.

May 16th.1969.

Dear Madam,

Commercial Carrying.

I read with interest the appeal in May edition of 'Windlass' to support commercial traffic, and would like to suggest an additional approach.

There must be many members who are in a position to draw the attention of manufacturing or distributing companies to the advantages of Canal transport. Your appeal contained a very brief mention of the oil traffic to be instituted by Alexander Duckham & Co.,Ltd., from Ellesmere to Aldridge, and I enclose a copy of the news release for your fuller information. You will see that this project is strictly business-like, and will stand or fall on cost-effectiveness. This seems to me to be the most effective long-term approach.

Members who are concerned with transport arrangements for their own Companies or employers, or who have suitable contacts in other Companies, may well be able to identify cases where canal transport has similar advantages. Clearly the traffic must be selected to meet the requirements, e.g. waterside to waterside or nearly so, amenable to rapid handling, and not perishable within the time scale involved. I am sure there must be many cases where these conditions could be met, if a little imagination were applied, and if one could get away from the common assumption that speed over the ground is the most important criterion.

The same issue referred to the possibility that B.W.B. may concentrate on cruising, to the neglect of commercial carrying. This at least would indicate that B.W.B. were applying commercial criteria to their operations, since it is obvious that cruising contributes very largely to their revenue. There is no business reason for B.W.B. to go out of their way to subsidise a dying commercial traffic. It is up to interested parties to show that commercial traffic is alive and kicking. In the case of the oil traffic with which I am concerned, B.W.B. officials have been very helpful indeed.

Madam, I suggest that members everywhere be invited to think on these lines, to keep an eye open for suitable opportunities, which should be assessed on strictly business lines. Our members constitute a potentially unique intelligence system for locating such opportunities, which if suitably handled, could provide a 'take-off boost' sufficient to re-vitalise commercial carrying. This in turn would encourage good maintenance by B.W.B. and influence B.W.B. decisions on retention of navigability, such as on the BCN system.

Yours faithfully,

J.R. FENWICK.

*** *** *** *** *** *** ***

British Waterways Board, Melbury House, Melbury Terrace, N.W.1.
6th May 1969.

Dear Madam,

Graham Hare - and even Josher - seem to find my contributing to 'discussion' in your column helpful. So may I comment further on two points.

On your point about Banbury v. Oxford v. Thrupp etc., we tried hard for another site in Oxford but had great planning difficulties and no sign of local authority interest. By contrast, Banbury were keen to give renewed prominence to the canal as a feature of the town. We have leased their Sea Cadets a site at the other end, and have hopes of seeing a movement of improvement spreading along this urban length of a largely rural canal. Our project there is in some ways an experiment with a boating centre in a town setting, and those who say it is too costly or will fail must hold the dismal view that such projects cannot form part of the urban canal scene in future. If they are right, then a lot of bold talk about transforming canals in towns must be wrong.

On the point Josher took about services versus the semi-primitive life, of course it is a broad issue - I think one of the biggest and most difficult we and other amenity bodies face. The National Trust are wrestling with it - and different country-house owners in different ways. In unanswerable terms, it is, How do you 'manage' minority pleasures when more than a minority want to participate in them? In practice, it is Can we find ways for more people to come to our waterways and - here in a more developed way, there in an individual way - find the distinctive pleasures which water and history and a combination of 18th. and 20th. century planning and enterprise can offer them, in groups or alone as they wish? I believe we must do different things in different places (and nothing new in many places) but it is other people's ideas on this subject I am interested in. If, for example, the Broads have gone wrong, where precisely have they done so - in accepting too many people on to the waterway, or not organising it rightly? Is the Thames Conservancy doing better in coping with large and growing numbers?

We are trying to learn from other peoples mistakes and successes (as well as from our own), because although canals are different, they are involved in social and planning trends which we cannot contract out of - and many would say, should not want to.

Yours faithfully,

D.J. KINNERSLEY.

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'SLOUGH'S CANAL - THE FUTURE?'

Published by the Grand Union Canal Society
and the IWA. 2/6

The Slough Canal Study Group have produced this booklet in an attempt to convince both the Borough Council and the BWE that they should think again with regard to their plans for the future of the canal.

The report includes sections on the present state of the canal, possible future developments and amenity uses. Several design schemes for the development of specific areas such as Langley lakes and the Stoke Road basin are described and illustrated. No reference is made to commercial carrying.

The authors, who include architects, civil engineers and representatives of various local societies have attempted to analyse and suggest a solution to the sometimes conflicting interests of anglers and boaters. The main value of reports such as this is that they are a very effective counter to the 'fill them in' brigade, besides which they enable us to present our thoughts in an orderly and well reasoned manner. This is always a prerequisite for a successful campaign.

DAVID COOPER.

Copies of the Report can be obtained from: Bob Hampson, Halfway House, Cassio Bridge, Watford, Herts. Price 3/- post paid.

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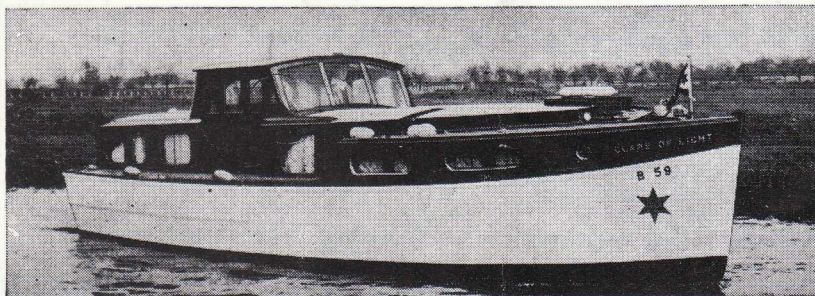
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