Governing Council

Richard Woodward - Chairman
Tel 01384 825680
e-mail richard.woodward@hometyre.co.uk

Gill Reynolds - Secretary

Caroline Whorton - Treasurer

Jon Jones - Vice-Chair/Outside Events/AWCC

Ivor Chambers - Work Parties

Situation Vacant - Health and Safety

Jeni Hatton - Trading Company
e-mail: fair.rosamund43@gmail.com
Tel: 07974 302979

Tony Friar - Moorings & Site Manager

Situation Vacant - Site Co-ordinator & Projects

Office
Tel 0121 550 1355 or 07761 555 353
e-mail coombeswood@btconnect.com

www.hawnebasin.org.uk

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Caption Competition

A bottle of wine for the winner
Last issue’s Competition Winner

"Do you think this flowerpot will be in flower for the next Halesowen in Bloom?"

Peter Wilcox
Editor’s Wotsits

Here we are again, another Christmas coming up. Here’s hoping you all have a happy one, and a great New Year.

Looking forward to 2017, your editor is planning some life changes. I became editor of *Interchange* in June 2013, and I’ve managed to get out four issues a year since, thanks to members sending in their news and views. I have decided that it’s time for a bit of a rest, and so I am happy to announce that Mick Fitzgibbon of *n.b. Rose of Arden* will be taking over from me. He can be contacted by e-mail at wirepoppy@hotmail.co.uk, and he’ll also need all your contributions. He will also be sending the ‘round robin’ notes.

There are also a few other ‘jobs’ up for grabs between now and November, if anyone wants to talk to me about taking them on.

In other news, the Cabin has been busy hosting various events. We’ve had a fun-filled Hallowe’en event for the Junior Trust, including a spooky boat trip, *Freedom’s* AGM, an amazing ‘thank you’ get-together for the Duke of Edinburgh team, Christmas lunches, the AGM, the Christmas party, visits by the Green Party forum and other outside organisations who find our Cabin comfy. Don’t forget it’s also available for you to use – it’s YOUR clubhouse.

*Jeni Hatton*  
*n.b. Fair Rosamund*

**Editorial Policy**

*Articles will only be edited for grammar and spelling.*

All articles submitted with a name will be published unless they are of tone or content which might be offensive or contentious. Any content published cannot be taken to be the view of the Governing Council or the Editor.

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**RECYCLING BINS**

*PLEASE NOTE:* we have a bin for paper and cardboard, one for mixed glass and one for metal and aluminium cans and plastic bottles. We can’t take other plastic containers or sheet plastic - SORRY

*Front cover photo: Wintry Remembrance*  
*Sheila Campbell*
Chairman’s Ramblings

Sorry it’s a very short Chairman’s Ramblings this time, but there is just too much to do and not enough time in the day.

Thank you to all of you that attended our AGM last weekend. It is always pleasing to see so many in attendance and taking an interest in the Trust. However, we do genuinely need to get more of you involved in the running of the Trust.

Due to work and other commitments, Jeff Carter has stood down from the Governing Council and that now leaves us with two spare seats. At this point I would like to thank Jeff for the hard work and support he has given and, although he is not totally disappearing, his advice will be missed.

The Governing Council has the power to co-opt members during the year but we need the volunteer to co-opt – i.e. YOU? Please chat to the members of the Governing Council on what is required and what YOU can offer. Some areas of expertise required are Health & Safety Officer, Bid writing, Basin Management and, as usual, the Social Group needs more help.

As the year draws to an end, 2016 has been another great year for Coombeswood Canal Trust and 2017 is showing lots of opportunity to be as good.

With that I will wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Richard

* * * * * * * * * *
Coombeswood Canal Company Shop

If you’re planning a big job on your boat, winterising or repairing, or going up the slipway, think ahead and let us know what you will need. We’ll make sure it’s in stock for when you need it, and it will probably be cheap as chips, too! Have a browse next time you’re at the Basin – you’ll be amazed at what we’ve got and what we can get! Batteries, leisure and starter, now available at discount for multiple orders.

Your shop will always do the best for YOU.

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STOP PRESS!!!!
Want To Learn First Aid and become a qualified First Aider?
Like To Be Able To Offer First Aider Services to Trust Events?

Sunday 29th January 2017
FIRST AID COURSE IN THE CABIN

Contact Gill Reynolds to book your place
This is a great one-pan family meal that’s tasty and healthy too. If you like more spice, add some ginger and chilli to the vegetables at the start. You can also add boiled eggs at the end to bulk it out.

Ingredients

- 1 tsp rapeseed oil
- 1 onion, roughly chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp medium curry powder
- 250g/9oz basmati rice
- 500ml/18fl oz vegetable or chicken stock
- 200g/7oz smoked mackerel or smoked peppered mackerel with skin removed and flaked into large pieces
- 80g/3oz frozen peas
- 1 lemon, juice only
- 2 tbsp roughly chopped flatleaf parsley
- sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
Method
Heat a large pan until medium hot, add the oil and onion and stir well. Cover with a lid and leave to cook gently for 10 minutes until the onion has softened. Add the garlic and curry powder and stir fry for 1 minute. Add the rice and stir to mix, then add the stock. Stir well and cover with a lid. Bring to the boil over a medium heat, then turn the heat down and simmer gently with the lid on for about 15 minutes, checking that it doesn’t dry out. When the rice has absorbed all the stock it should be tender. If not, add a splash of boiling water then cook for a further 5 minutes and check again. Stir in the flaked mackerel, peas, lemon juice and parsley and mix carefully, as you don’t want the mackerel to break up too much. Season to taste with salt and pepper and cook for 1 more minute to make sure it’s hot through then serve.

Mick Granger          n.b. Unknown No. 3

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Social Club Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.01.17</td>
<td>IWA: Edwin Fasham – boat design</td>
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<tr>
<td>28.01.17</td>
<td>Pub Games Night – bring a team and join in.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.02.17</td>
<td>Inter-Club Quiz with teams from DCT, BCNS and others. Come and make a team.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.02.17</td>
<td>IWA: speaker to be arranged</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.03.17</td>
<td>Paddy’s Race Night – up for a flutter. Irish theme, buffet and prizes</td>
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<tr>
<td>29.03.17</td>
<td>IWA Annual General Meeting with a talk from Phil Clayton</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.04.17</td>
<td>IWA Meeting – Montgomery Canal</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.04.17</td>
<td>End OF Season BBQ – Please order your packs in good time. We’ll provide salad, rolls and sauces.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22/23.04.17</td>
<td>Maintenance weekend – bacon sarnies in the morning both days, BBQ Saturday evening and Eat-up lunch on Sunday</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jodie’s Friday Film Nights to be arranged. Watch the window for details.</td>
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SIGN-UP LISTS IN CABIN. PLEASE BOOK TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT
Annual General Meeting of Coombeswood Canal Trust held in the Cabin, Hawne Basin, Hereward Rise, Halesowen, West Midlands B62 8AW on Saturday 10th December 2016 at 2:00pm.

Present: 77 members in good standing, as listed on the sign-in sheet held by the Membership Secretary

Apologies: Carol and Adrian Smith; Charley Johnston; Phil and Oz Mansell; Pat Walker; Alan and Sandra Cull; Dave and Ann Dent; Jenny Maxwell; Mick and Jackie Warren; Juliet Clarke; Brian Talbot; Derrick Brown; Kathleen and Martin O’Keefe; Pam Pugh; Mary and Gordon Ingleson; Andrew Saunders; Tracey Saunders; David Chambers; Liz Roach; Tiggy and Parry Ireland; Maggie Jones; Dave and Sue Necklin.

Notes

1. Approval of the Minutes of the 2015 AGM (held on 6th December 2015) and published in the Winter 2015 edition of Interchange. It was proposed by Dave Pearson and seconded by Jeff Carter that the Minutes of the 2015 AGM be accepted. Approved unanimously.

2. Matters arising from the Minutes: None had been notified to the Meeting.

3. Governing Council Report:
• **Review of Activities**
  
  o Negotiations still ongoing with CRT over lease renewal as the Trust intends to ensure the lease is right before signing
  
  o Volunteers and Partnerships:
    - Donations – £2,000 from CRT Waterway Partnership for Youth Project
    - Youth Engagement – Over 100 young people involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award residential
    - Nominated for and won a Living Waterway Award, which is a national award and involved us competing against local councils and other large organisations. GR showed the award to the meeting, to great applause. Reports went out in many publications, thus raising the profile of the Trust
  
  o *Atlas, Malus, Hawne* and *joey* – *Atlas* rear deck improved and weed hatch installed thanks to TF
  
  o Local groups using facilities – IWA, CRT, local business watch. Green Party and performance groups. Also catered for some private parties.
  
  o Trading Company continues to make a healthy contribution (£23,008)

• **Financial Challenges Update:**

  o Mooring Fees - Price held. (About 50% of Trust Income)
  
  o About £11k spent directly on charitable aims and objectives
  
  o Youth Project Expenditure was £8,226 and this project is now making revenue
  
  o About £30k was added to pot for “Big” projects
  
  o CRT have proposed significant increases in rent for arm (Lease renewal in progress) 12% from Oct 2015 and 50% in 2018.
DMBC yearly review on business rate rebate for charities is ongoing so we cannot assume we will remain free of business rates.

Aging infrastructure around the Basin is necessitating work which may have to be contracted out due to its nature.

**Forward Plans**

- Looking at new funding opportunities for covering the post of Youth Engagement Officer
- Lease renewal negotiation is ongoing
- Separating negotiation on the section beyond the stank from that for the arm
- Renewed drive to maintain Dudley No2 Canal through Leasowes Park in co-operation with other local interested parties
- Project for towpath improvement ongoing through to Windmill End

**Opportunities – Short Term**

- Work parties to keep the Dudley No2 free from Rubbish. Monthly work parties with *Hawne* and *Ringo* along the arm. As usual, *ad hoc* trips to remove any reported obstructions to navigation
- Promote the Dudley No2 as an asset to the community:
  - Halesowen in Bloom 2017 and Boat Plant Pot plans
  - Visitor moorings and facilities at Hawne Basin to encourage boat traffic along the canal.
  - Open Weekend 2017
- Grant applications for Youth Projects going forward
- Liaison with local groups with similar interests

**Opportunities – Medium Term**

- Promote Project for Towpath Improvements along Dudley No2 from Gosty Tunnel to Hawne Basin.
The next stage is to pull funding together for the project.
- Partnerships for Further Improvement Works along the Dudley No 2
- Discussions underway with groups such as Community Pay Back for involvement with Towpath improvements
- Lottery Funding opportunities will be taken up where appropriate.
- Restoration beyond the stank: lease is still under negotiation

- **Opportunities – Long Term**
  - Promoting the extension of the Dudley No2 Canal towards Leasowes Park. This will obviously require considerable funds, but the benefit of connecting the canal network to the park will boost both canal and park as visitor attractions. Canal and River trust are supportive of the project
  - Factory owners have given up part of their lease
  - Negotiation with CRT over surrendered section are ongoing but they initially offered a 25-year lease

- **Opportunities for You to join in:**
  - Sub-Committee for restoration of Dudley No. 2.
  - Site Management Sub-Committee
  - Volunteers for Work Parties – Basin & Canal.
  - Volunteers for Social Group Catering, ideas for events and talks etc. Also needed will be volunteers to act as Directors on the Board of the new company.
  - Volunteers for project liaison (Towpath Improvement).
  - Volunteers are needed to work on the Heritage Boats, maintenance and crewing.
  - Governing Council is now two members short and, as each member has a defined job, may need to co-opt people in the course of the year.
Chairman’s Thanks to Governing Council

RW spoke about the way every member of Governing Council has their own particular roles, and gave his thanks to each as follows:

- Caroline Whorton for her work as Treasurer, dealing with the Accounts, working with Gill on the D of E and general office management
- Gill Reynolds for her work as Secretary, starting and maintaining the Youth Project, working on Funding Bids, negotiating leases, and steering our involvement in Halesowen in Bloom. (Halesowen got a Gold!)
- Jon Jones in his role of Vice Chair, his work on the Volunteer Scheme, maintaining the Display Stand and taking it to Outside Events, forming part of a panel when needed for investigations
- Tony Friar for his work as Moorings Officer, keeping the slipway bookings organised, sorting out use of the Work Areas and dealing with repairs and maintenance round the site as needed
- Ivor Chambers for his organisation of and work on Work Parties and for his liaison with CRT resulting in the removal of graffiti down the arm
- Jeni Hatton for representing the Trading Company and Social Club at Council and for taking the Minutes at meetings
- Jeff Carter for his work as Health and Safety Officer, his advice on Employment Law and his assistance when needed with investigations. RW recorded a special Vote of Thanks to Jeff, who is standing down from Council.

4. GU tabled the accounts, copies of which had been distributed. He said he would go through the highlights and take questions from the floor. If anyone wanted to contact him outside the Meeting, his e-mail was available. He reported that the Trust had a good financial year with £33,000 added to the bank. The covenant from the Company was not as high this year, but that was because the Company had paid higher than usual maintenance and repair costs, particularly in the area of Pest
Control, but a covenant of £23,000 was still good. The Youth Project is now earning income and the accounts were good from all angles. Expenditure was mostly on repairs and maintenance. Last year we had the big expense of the cladding to the Cabin, partly funded from a grant, but this year there were many small projects. Wages rose because of the Youth Worker post, for which we are seeking funding. Where the lease is concerned, GU has included a reserve for unpaid rent for when the lease is finally settled.

That the Profit and Loss Accounts for the year ended 31st July 2016 be approved:

It was proposed by Roy Kenn and seconded by Andy Kallender that the accounts be accepted. Approved unanimously.

5. Appointment of Auditor – Governing Council had considered the appointment of an Auditor, and had agreed unanimously to invite Graeme Underhill of Groundbreakers Ltd to act as Auditor for the Trust. This nomination was proposed by Christine Turner and seconded by Joan Kenn. Approved unanimously.

6. Members of Governing Council Standing Down:

Richard Woodward – Standing for re-election
Jon Jones – Standing for re-election
Ivor Chambers – Standing for re-election
Jeff Carter – Not Standing for re-election

7. There being no nominations for Governing Council RW called for any objections to the persons re-standing and it was proposed by Joan Tovey and seconded by Marion Chambers that RW, JJ and IC be duly re-elected.

RW reminded the meeting that the Council had the power to co-opt further members during the coming year if needed.

8. Any Other Business

None had been notified, but David Pearson thanked the Governing Council for the hard work it does on behalf of the Trust.

The meeting closed at 2.30 p.m.
More DODGEY Experiences
Part 2.

Continuing on from my last ramblings in the previous issue, and having completed the BCN Challenge, it was now time for a more relaxing and sedate cruise. Yes, the time had come for us to join one of the BCN Explorer cruises. Having left Hawne, Keith and I set off for a rendezvous with all the other participants at the top of the Wolverhampton 21. After being greeted by our hosts Stuart and Marie Sherratt, it was off to the local ale house to meet and get to know the others who were also on this cruise.

Next morning we set off for what was to be a very enjoyable and educational week cruising the north-east quarter of the BCN. I will not spoil it for those thinking of going on one of these cruises. All I will say is if you haven’t done one, do so. The hosts are great, the company is good and all is done at a leisurely pace culminating at Titford Pump House for a final meal and sing-song.

After spending a few more days back at Hawne it was time to head home. Owing to things like Doctors and Dentist appointments etc., you know the sort of things that become more regular as age encroaches, I would be leaving Hawne mid Thursday morning and I was due to pick up a friend at Banbury on the Sunday afternoon. For this first part I would be single-handed as Keith was gadding around somewhere in China. After leaving Hawne, it was a straight run for 27 miles to that awkward lift bridge at the top of the Lapworth Flight. Next day I was up at the crack of dawn, did the Lapworth and Hatton Flights then on through Leamington before mooring up as darkness fell. A very long day and a hell of a lot of locks.

Another long day on Saturday saw me half way over the Summit of the South Oxford. This meant that Sunday would be a reasonably easy run into Banbury where I arrived mid-afternoon, happy but kn*****ed. Once my friend had joined me we took three days to get from Banbury to Thrupp, a journey that can be done in a long day. Along the way we explored things I had never stopped to look at before. It is surprising what you pass without realising what there is out there. Once back at Thrupp it was time to get sorted out ready to give Dodgey a fresh coat of paint, a process that will be ongoing into next Spring as time and elements beat me this year.

Cont’d
And finally.....
I am often told that I ought to be on Facebook. Well, for those of my generation who do not and cannot comprehend why Facebook exists: I am now trying to make friends outside of Facebook while applying the same principles.

Therefore every day, I walk down the street and tell strangers what I have eaten, how I feel at the moment, what I have done the night before, what I will do later, and with whom. I show them pictures of my family, my dog, and of me gardening, taking things apart in the garage, watering the lawn, standing in front of landmarks, driving around town, having lunch, and doing things everybody does most days. I also listen to their conversations, give them the “thumbs up” and tell them I like them.

And it works just like Facebook. I already have four people following me: a police officer, a private investigator, a psychiatrist and a suspicious looking bloke with his hand down his pants.
Have a good Christmas and New Year – I will see you all in the Spring.

Alan Ross (aka 1066)  n.b. Dodgey

I hope that you are enjoying the selection of books, jigsaws, DVD’s and CD’s available in the clubhouse (I certainly am).

Remember they are there for your enjoyment
If you have any books or jigsaws that you don’t want please donate them to the clubhouse.
I am planning to have a stall at the Open Weekend in May, selling books and jigsaws (and maybe CDs and DVDs too).
Because we are constantly changing the stock in the clubhouse, all surplus stock will be put on the stall. Any and all donations would be gratefully received. Please leave donations in the clubhouse next to the bookshelves or pass to myself or Jackie Vowles. Thank you.
Liz Roach  NB. Indulgence
Work Party Rumblings

The work party held on 23rd October saw eight volunteers turn out to help. We took work boat *Hawne* to the Hollis Bridge area and Old Hill Iron Works Arm, clearing floating rubbish in the reeds, collecting seven dustbins full of plastic chip trays, plastic bottles and beer cans. We also used grappling hooks under Hollis Bridge, which resulted in bringing up the usual collection of old car parts.

20th November work party saw six volunteers come to work on the arm. Now that most of the leaves have come down it’s time to start work on overhanging trees. We started cutting back the branch left from last year by the railway bridge and also started to clean up the area round the outside of the tunnel tug house; this will need a lot of time to make it look anything like. We used grappling hooks under Gosty and Wright Bridges, which again brought up the usual collection of old car parts and one small bike.

The next scheduled work parts are **18th December**, **22nd January**, **19th February** and **19th March**. We hope to see you turn up and bring dry weather with you please! Jobs to be done: continue working by the tug house, paint out graffiti under Waterfall Bridge and the usual collecting of floating rubbish along the arm.

We are all boaters, and it is up to us to keep the arm clear so we don’t have any problems when navigating along it when out cruising - unless of course you fancy cruising through a linear tip to make your lives miserable. (Please remember that every work party, duration of which is 4 hours, counts towards your 20 volunteer hours if you’re a moorer.)

*Ivor Chambers*  
*Work Party Organiser*
A Rough History of Hawne Basin, our neighbours and our Canal

Part Three - Doom and Gloom

1876
A triple murder took place at a cottage in Coombeswood. A man killed his wife and two young daughters with an axe. Luckily for him, or perhaps not, he was found Not Guilty due to insanity, and spent the rest of his life in a lunatic asylum.

1917
Lapal Tunnel closed due to roof fall. At least one more major roof fall has occurred since then and parts of the tunnel were infilled when the M5 was built.

March 1929
A disaster occurred at Coombeswood Colliery in which eight men were killed. They were Edward Barnsley, Joseph Chance, Harry Edwards, John Hargreaves, James Harris, Edward Jukes, George Parkes and John Westward. Just eight men out of the tens of thousands who died in this country digging for coal, the coal which created our canal and then our Basin. May they all rest in peace.

1944
The original Coombs Bridge was demolished, allegedly due to the threat of invasion by German troops. I find this theory hard to accept because, by 1944, the threat of invasion had been overcome. So, what was the real reason?

1963
Lapal section of the Dudley No. 2 Canal was formally abandoned.

1964
Dudley No. 2 Canal from Hawne Basin to Windmill End, designated a water supply channel only i.e. giving the potential to infill or to pipe sections of the canal.

1965
Canal infilled west of Lapal Tunnel when Manor Way was upgraded.

1971-72
Canal east of Lapal Tunnel infilled.

To be continued……

Roy Kenn

n.b. Placidus
Summer on The Glass Barge

At the beginning of this year we decided to sell our house in Eastbourne and move permanently onto the boats! It went on the market 2 weeks after Christmas and we completed the sale on 30\(^{th}\) March. This meant that we stayed in the basin until all this was settled and eventually took the two boats (Enchanted Moon and The Glass Barge) out under Burton Bridge on 25\(^{th}\) April 2016. We had also stayed long enough in the basin to win the inter club Quiz in the cabin on 9\(^{th}\) April!

We had friends join us on the top of the Stratford Canal, to help us with the boats through the single locks at Lapworth. While they were with us we had sunshine, rain, hail and even snow! They said they enjoyed the experience, but they have not been back since!! We arrived in Long Itchington on the weekend of the Beer Festival so stopped to trade there and enjoy the atmosphere. We had to be in Crick by the end of May, as we had booked a gazebo space at the festival, but decided to go on down past the junction and get in a couple more sales spots at Braunston, Stoke Bruerne and Blisworth before returning to the Leicester Arm. It took all day to get both boats up the Watford Locks one at a time and as always it was windy and difficult to steer the boats across the pound below the staircase. On the way up to Foxton I had a very close encounter with a kingfisher who flew past Enchanted Moon in a bridge hole, which was lovely. Two days trading at Foxton locks, just taking The Glass Barge down the locks, and a couple of days with friends before going back to Crick.

Although we had not been able to persuade the organisers to let us have the boat in the marina for selling, they did let us take it in to unload all our gear (and load up again after the weekend). It was all very hard work transporting all the stock and the gazebo from the boat and we also had to find somewhere to leave Enchanted Moon, as we didn’t want to pay to moor both boats at the festival. We are glad we tried boat show, but not sure if we will do it again.

There were now three weeks before we needed to be in Paddington Basin for a Floating market so we needed to get a bit of a move on if we were going to arrive in time. We also need to fit in a trip back to Eastbourne to attend to business at the house we rent out to students. On the way we
managed to fit in a trading stop at Marsworth and then Berkhamsted. Berkhamsted is a good place to get the train back to Eastbourne, as you can travel without going into and across London, so Andrew did the trip while I stayed and opened the Gallery for a couple of days.

On the next bit of the trip to London we had an interesting experience when Andrew slipped on deck in bare feet and ended up having 9 stitches in his foot! Fortunately, we only had another 3 locks to go and we managed with him staying on The Glass Barge and me going ahead in Enchanted Moon and doing the locks.

Paddington Market was an interesting experience, as it was held in the very end of the basin, so that they opened the fan bridge to let us in and out.

There were about a dozen trade boats in the basin for the weekend including The Village Butty, where we had a communal meal in the last evening.

While in London we had several visitors, including my sister, Ruth, and our older daughter, Lucy, who likes the city life more than the canal life!

On the way back up the Grand Union we gave a lift one day, to the Netherlands ladies Ultimate Frisbee team, who were in England for a competition, but the matches had been rained off and so were walking along the canal. We also managed to sell them some jewellery while stopped for a lock.
In Rickmansworth we met up with the Tillergraph reporter, who interviewed us for the article that appeared in the August issue. As another trip back to Eastbourne was necessary we booked The Glass Barge into Apsley marina for a week while we went back to do some decorating work on the student house.

More visitors joined us for a few days, before we were due at the Linslade Canal Day at the end of July. This was an amazing event for us last year and proved to be just as good this year, with record sales in the one day. We also have more friends who live in Linslade who we met for a meal while we were there.

The next booked event was Blisworth Festival. This is a lovely festival that involves the whole village as well as the canal. The people are lovely and it is nice to have time to socialise with the other traders in the evenings. From here we headed slowly back to Birmingham for the floating market at the end of September and then on the basin for a well earned rest.

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MAINTENANCE WEEKEND.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY – April 22nd/23rd 2017

Due to popular demand – and because it was a rip-roaring success!!! I am organising another MAINTENANCE WEEKEND on the above dates. Each day will begin at 9am with bacon sarnies kindly donated by Jeni and Graham, AND, on Saturday, we have our end of season BBQ in the evening. Not to mention our lovely ladies in the kitchen who will be delighted to serve you lunch on both days.

I would like to say it won’t be quite as physical as this year – but I'm making NO rash promises!!

Do come along and join in the fun – because it is fun – and help get the Basin all ship shape in readiness for OPEN WEEKEND in May.

Hope 2017 is a good year for all.

Pam Kallender n.b. Enchanted Moon and The Glass Barge

Sheila Campbell Volunteer Co-ordinator
A HARD WORKING PAIR

*Atlas* and *Malus* have frequently been seen this year, plying their trade around the BCN. The difference now from fifty years ago is that the 'cargo' is young people. ........they are all participants in the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Residential run by Coombeswood Canal Trust.

Over the past twelve months over one hundred young people have taken part in ten residential runs. The popularity of the trips means that the boats are now earning an income, and the surplus is going towards much needed maintenance, repair and improvement. The boats are jointly owned by the Trust and BCNS, who contribute to their upkeep. The new fenders (seen in the photo) have been made and fitted by Joe Hollinshead, and are our most recent improvement.

Huge thanks has to go to the volunteer skippers who give their time, knowledge and expertise to enable the trips to run. Places are already being booked for next year so we are looking forward to the continued, success of the partnerships we have developed with CRT, Black Country Living Museum and The Dudley Canal Trust.

There will be regular work parties over the winter to carry out repairs and maintenance so if you have a few hours to spare please VOLUNTEER to join in so that our beautiful heritage boats can continue to journey around the BCN.

Please contact Gill Reynolds at the Trust if you want to get involved.
Letter to the Membership

Dear Everyone

Pam and I hope that you will be feeling enough of the Christmas Spirit to give a hearing to a plea from two dear, sweet, little old ladies (well two out of three ain’t bad!!).

For the past ten years (in the case of Christine) and umpteen (in the case of Pam) we have been feeding the “five thousand” every weekend during the non-cruising Season, and providing goodies for numerous buffets and – we have to say – enjoying doing it. However, there comes a time in everyone’s life when bits start to drop off and things no longer work as they should and unfortunately, during the past year, this has been happening to both of us.

If there are any members out there in the wide world of the Trust who would be kind enough to share this job – i.e., take over the kitchen for every other weekend or even once a month to give us a break - that would be wonderful. The duties consist of shopping, devising a “special weekend dish” and desserts, cooking and cleaning up and totting up the cash at the end of the weekend. This usually takes three days – Friday (shopping) and the Weekend (cooking etc.)

If no-one can come forward to help us in this respect we both feel – VERY RELUCTANTLY - that we will have to give up the Kitchen at the end of this Season. We really don’t want to have to do this as we enjoy working together, devising dishes, and being rude to our customers!! However, we physically cannot carry on as we are doing as, even if we are not dear and sweet, we really are little and OLD!!

Here’s hoping you can help us.
Cheers, have a great Christmas.
Lots of love – PAM AND CHRIS

(Editor’s Note: Please contact any of the Social Committee or Pam and Chris direct if you feel you can help. It would be a shame to lose the Saturday and Sunday lunches.)
Our First Christmas Lunch at Hawne Basin

As some of you may know we brought our boat NB Colehurst to permanently moor at Hawne Basin in January this year. Some of the moorers were known to us but many more were not, and still are strangers to us but we are getting to know more & more gradually.

We have attended one or two social meetings and a lunch or two but the one that really impressed us was the Christmas Lunch. The effort that went into, firstly decorating the Cabin, that was amazing. It looked wonderful. The lovely holly wreath on the door was my first sight that welcomed us as we entered the room.

Then the actual lunch was so good you would not have had better in many restaurants. I had turkey. It was plentiful, tender & succulent. Brian had the pork & that was equally as good. The variety of vegetables was exceptional and each one was cooked to perfection …… how did they manage that? Oh & not forgetting the dessert - excellent!

Being new we left booking this lunch rather late and nearly didn’t get a place. I’m so glad we did and next year we will be the first to put our names down for a super Hawne Basin Christmas Lunch!!

Thank you all who cooked, served and decorated but especially the cooks, Chris, Pam and Dee.

Brenda & Brian Ward

n.b. Colehurst

** GIFT AID **

Thank you to all of you who have signed a Gift Aid form. I would like to take this opportunity to ask anyone else who is eligible to sign a Gift Aid Declaration to please do so.

The money we can claim back from the tax man is worth the effort on your part and on our part. It can amount to a substantial figure which all helps to build up the funds for projects and keep our costs down. Remember – it won’t cost you a penny, but it could save you pennies If you pay income tax (i.e. you pay tax on earnings, pension, savings etc.) you can sign the form – VAT and Council Tax do not count.
The Gift Aid Declaration can be cancelled at any time. If your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income you can cancel your Declaration. Please also notify the Trust if you change your address.

If you are unsure whether or not you have already signed a Declaration form you can contact me on 07931 317347 or email Jackie.vowles@yahoo.co.uk and I will let you know your current status.

Thank you all for your continuing support.

Jackie Vowles

n.b. Myrmica

**Poets’ Corner**

I’m sitting in the garden  
With a lovely cup of tea  
Relaxing in a favourite spot  
My book upon my knee,  
When suddenly bursts upon my ear  
The most appalling ROAR –  
Oh! Someone in the neighbourhood  
Is using a chainsaw!  
Its shriek and whine goes on and on  
And reaches a crescendo  
Destroying all my peace and quiet  
With no *diminuendo*.  
Ah! Now it’s stopped.  
Thank Heaven for that.  
But now a cloud comes up.  
Oh, blow! A fly comes buzzing round,  
It plops into my cup!!  
I’m fed up with the great outdoors  
It really has too many flaws.  
Enough of outdoor life for me,  
I’m going inside to watch T.V.!

Pat Harman
Halesowen in Bloom

Following on from our contribution to the Gold Award-winning entry from Halesowen, the Trust has been asked to be part of the entry for 2017.

Coombeswood Canal Trust received a special mention from the judges for the work done around the Basin to encourage bees, bugs, birds and wildlife in general. You may have noticed the new fruit trees planted along the island...(all of which have been sponsored by members), the bug houses, built by our Junior Club members, bird boxes and herb gardens, all of which are designed to attract wildlife. Next year’s plan includes the installation of bat boxes, as we have a thriving bat population in the area.

We welcome any ideas that will improve the attractiveness of our gardens and green spaces, and need VOLUNTEERS to help prepare the flower beds in April and then keep the Basin looking tidy and well cared for.

Work will start in April at the maintenance weekend, organised as part of the preparations for the Open Weekend in May, but please feel free to get stuck in before then if you have some time to spare.

Contact Gill, Caroline or Sheila if you want to help make the Basin look great !!!!!

Gill Reynolds

n.b. Alchemy
COOMBESWOOD CANAL TRUST
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Membership is renewable annually on 1st August

TITLE: ___________________ FULL NAME: ________________________________________________________________

ADDRESS: ____________________________________________ ____________________________________________

________________________________________

POSTCODE: ___________________________________________

TELEPHONE No: ______________________________ EMAIL: ___________________________________________

BOAT NAME: ________________________________________

JOINT MEMBER

TITLE: ___________________ FULL NAME: ________________________________________________________________

ADDRESS: ____________________________________________ ____________________________________________

________________________________________

POSTCODE: ___________________________________________

TELEPHONE No: ______________________________ EMAIL: ___________________________________________

Membership Fees

Associate Membership £25.00  - Associations, Organisations and Companies

Individual Membership (18+) £8.00  )  – Individuals and Families

Joint Membership £14.00  )

OVER 60 Membership £6.00

Joint OVER 60 Membership £10.00  Full-Time Student £6.00

Full copies of the Rules of the Trust are available on the website or from the Trust Office. The information on this form will be recorded on a computerised database. In accordance with the Data Protection Act (1984) members may examine their entry at any reasonable time by prior arrangement.

Membership Paid: £ ___________________

I wish to make a donation: £ ___________________

Total Enclosed: £ ___________________ Please make cheques payable to

‘Coombeswood Canal Trust’

Signed: __________________________________________ Date: ___________________

Skills I/we can offer the Trust: __________________________________________

Trade/Profession the Trust can ask for quotes: __________________________________________

Please return this form and your payment either to the Trust Office or by post to:

Caroline Whorton, 21 Hyperion Road, Stourton, Stourbridge DY7 6SD

UK Taxpayers may like to increase the worth of their contributions by signing a GIFT AID DECLARATION. Please contact us by either the email address or telephone number above and we will be happy to send you a form. If you wish to set up a yearly Standing Order with your own Bank to pay your membership, our Bank Details are: The Co-operative Bank, PO Box 250, Delf House, WN8 6WT, Acct No. 65566440, Sort Code 08-92-99
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