INTERCHANGE

Spring
2017
Governing Council

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‘Interchange’ is printed free by Keightley Print Limited 0121 561 3628
Our thanks to them.
The Editor’s Meanderings

Michael Fitzgibbons
Interchange Editor

Well, here I am – the new editor for the Trusts quarterly members magazine. With this edition I am taking over the editorship from Jeni Hatton, after her remarkably long stint as editor. However, Jeni will be keeping a watching brief on my fledgling attempt and offering helpful advice as I get into mastering my first edition as editor.

I think everyone would agree, Jeni's time as editor is something that should not be allowed to pass, without being acknowledged in these pages. As an occasional writer for magazines and a blogger who is enjoying a break from blogging, I am well aware of how difficult it can be to fill pages. So it should be noted that Jeni has done sterling service for the Trust and its members.

However, because the trust is its members, so the newsletter should reflect the interests and ideas of the membership. So, like Jeni did previously - I will chivvy you all, from time to time, for input. Which in turn, I will try to bring it all together, into some semblance of meaningful order. So its over to you – you can consider yourselves chivvied.

Obviously, we all share a common interest in boating – but it does not stop there. We all have other hobbies and interests away from the waterways. For instance, I'm interested in Amateur Radio, Photography, Genealogy and Astronomy. So come and share with us, what floats your boat, so to speak?

Send any contributions to me at WirePoppy@Hotmail.co.uk

Front cover photo: ‘Autumn on the Dudley Number Two Canal’ By Mick Fitzgibbons

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 should not be taken to be the view of the Governing Council or the Editor.

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
Chairman’s Ramblings

Richard Woodward Trust Chairman

Time flies and we now have a new editor for 'Interchange' but one thing is always consistent, I'm late providing my copy again!

Well I think things are warming up weather wise and in anticipation of the new boating season (that's sure to ensure snow this weekend) I noted spring flowers are blooming around the basin. 2017 is beginning to look as if it will be another busy year for the trust. After Easter it will be no time at all until our Open Weekend at Hawne Basin. The organising team is already well advanced. But there will be plenty of work to spruce up the Basin and the Canal ready for our visitors.

The first Duke of Edinburgh trips are due out over Easter and places are filling fast. With a second wave of trips planned over the summer holidays. It's a pleasure to see the young people (and some slightly older crew) enjoying boating on Atlas and Malus.

The more observant amongst you visiting the basin recently, will have seen that we have added another boat to our fleet - we now have a working dredger. Once this is commissioned and up and running the Trust will have a much safer way of lifting heavy objects out of the canal for our work parties. The dredger will also enable the slipway crew to lift the track for occasional maintenance. We will also be exploring other work opportunities for the dredger, such as urgent waterways clearance. Think of the Staffordshire and Worcester Canal stoppage. The canal was closed earlier this year after a bridge strike, while awaiting the deployment of a dredger.

Last but not least, we will also be collaborating with Halesowen in Bloom once again this year. Our collaboration is helping to raise the Trusts profile within the local Community.

Right I'm off to earn some money before it starts raining again, hope to see plenty of you over the open weekend.

Regards, Richard
Work Party Wanderings

Ivor Chambers Work Party Organiser

The work party on the 18 December 2016 saw seven volunteers turn out to help. Starting with painting out the graffiti under Waterfall Lane Bridge on both sides of the canal (see the before and after photos) How long it will stop like that is anyone’s guess, but it looks good hopefully will be for a while. This was done in conjunction with CRT. Who have cleaned all the graffiti from the brick works on the bridges along our arm. When the graffiti removal was finished the party returned to the old tug house, where we commenced work on clearing the overhanging trees.

22 January I was unable to attend in bed with flu. Adrian Smith very kindly stood in for me. The party carried on by the tug house area. This time working on the offside of canal, clearing overhanging trees and rubbish. Two trips with Hawne to the joey boat which is filling up with branches. The party collected seven dustbins of bottle and cans as well as a concrete post and a length of wire fencing. Ten volunteers turned up on the day including Adrian.

19 February, I took Hawne up to the tug house again and recommenced clearing the site of the overhanging trees. Once again ten volunteers turned out to help with the work. Making significant progress on clearing the site. I will be talking to Ian Lane in the near future regarding the clearing of brambles and planting of endangered wild flowers on site. The joey boat is fully loaded and I have arranged emptying in early April by CRT. This will be done on the way to the BCN clean up, which Hawne and the joey are booked to attend. CRT intend to put up an information board on the old tug house wall to explain what was there. If anyone has any photos of the tug house in good condition please let me know. I only photos in a poor state of repair.

My thanks to everyone who braved the cold on the last two work parties
The British and the Weather.

The British are supposed to have a preoccupation with the weather. Any lull in the conversation and the topic of choice instantly changes to the very variable weather that we endure. Unless you are a boater and then you might fall back on the finer points of bucket and chuck it -v- pump out toilet systems. But I digress. The endless parade of storms across the United Kingdom this winter have left flooding, gale damage and sadly a few deaths. It will be providing conversation for boaters for some time to come.

So I thought I would start my own Boaters Weather Forecast Service so here are my predictions for Spring 2017. Made by consulting my seaweed, pine cone and Noah's Almanac. However, I also use the latest technology in the form of a Jeff Owen 'analogue weather rock.' (Just hang a large pebble on a string) I have deduced the following meteorological conditions will be prevalent at the start of spring.

The spring weather forecast is that it will be Rainy, Stormy, Sunny, Cloudy, Hot, Cold, Dry, Wet, Windy, Hurricanes, Typhoons, Sandstorms, Snow-storms, Tornadoes, Humid, Foggy, Snow, Hail, Sleet, Drought, Wildfire, Blizzard, Avalanche and Mist. During the afternoon it could turn changeable.
Coombeswood Canal Company Shop

If you’re planning a big job on your boat, winterising - 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, are now available with a discount for multiple orders. Your shop will always do the best for YOU.

Boat Bitz

Boat Bitz is where you can share ideas of useful boating items with fellow trust members. However, the usual Interchange publication rules will still apply.

We have on board the boat a device called a Remoska. Which is a highly efficient mini-cooker. It consists of a Teflon lined pan and has a heating element which is fitted inside the lid. The Remoska has a minimum number of controls, just a simple on-off switch. There is no form of heat control and yet the Remoska actually cooks better than an oven. It is without doubt considerably cheaper to run than a traditional oven.

The major point for use of a Remoska on a boat is that it is amazingly economical at just 400 watts. So it will work on boats with a small inverter. We cook almost everything on the boat or in our motorhome using the Remoska. The Remoska cooks between 190/220 degrees or 190C/345F Gas Mark 5 and 220C/425F Gas Mark 6. You can bake in a Remoska. Puff pastry rises like a dream and sponge cakes stay moist. The Remoska probably cooks the best roast chicken you have ever tasted. A typical 1.5kg 3lb chicken will cook thoroughly in a little over an hour.

The Standard Remoska cooks for 2-4 people. You can ‘roast’ a joint of meat or vegetables. You can ‘bake’ potatoes ‘grill’ chops, bacon and sausages and you can ‘fry’ eggs. You can ‘bake’ a cake or bread. As a couple of Yorkies, we even cook Yorkshire Pudding in the Remoska.
You may like us have a water filtration system aboard your boat. If you have purchased either a full water filtration system or purchased any replacement cartridges for an existing filtration system from Pure Water Online Ltd. And if you did this prior to December 2016 you will need to be aware of the following information.

Anyone in the UK who has reason to suspect that they were supplied with ineffective filters by Harald Charters while he worked as an employee of General Ecology or later, as an independent distributor in the UK. Known as Pure Water Online Ltd. Are to be refunded and compensated by General Ecology the filter system manufacturer.

Those who purchased the “Nature Pure QC “ system, expecting to be protected from bacteria and viruses but were supplied with the wrong canister, and will receive a full refund at today's price of £288 for the system and additionally receive four filters of their choice, approx value £350, free of charge.

Purchasers will need either their receipt or system serial number to receive their cash and canisters. Please contact General Ecology directly with the information requested to claim your payment and canister choice, or with any questions to:

info@generalecology.com

General Ecology have also stated in a press release that Pure Water Online Ltd no longer have distribution rights for their products.

Articles and advertisements for the General Ecology products were carried in the following publications. Canal Boating Times: October 2016, RYA Magazine: September 2016, Practical Boat Owner: September 2013, Canal Boat Magazine: Transform Canal Water into Drinking Water.
Where and What Conundrum?

This is the first one in an occasional series of 'Where and What' conundrums. Intended to be something a little bit different. Rather than waiting until the next issue. The answer will be given at the bottom of the 'Events Page.'

The first question is where is it and the second question is what is it? This conundrum has been set by - Les Pitt.

Maybe you have an idea for a waterways related 'Where and What' conundrum of your own, that you could share.

News Snippet

I would like to give a large thank you to those members who have donated dead batteries to the Trust. These have raised around £300 so far, please keep them coming. Any lead/acid battery is suitable it can be a starter battery, service battery, car battery even the batteries in house alarms. The can recycling is also raising funds, but there is a small problem with what is being placed into the recycling bin. Please this is for drink cans only, the recycling centre are very specific on what they take. There have been plastic bottles, food tins, pickled onion jars, food trays and even an aerosol can. Please DRINK CANS only. Again a big thank you and please keep the batteries and cans coming. - Les Pitt.
# Social Club Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20.03.17</td>
<td>IWA Annual General Meeting with a talk from Phil Clayton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.04.17</td>
<td>IWA Meeting – Montgomery Canal.</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<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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<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Jodie’s Friday Film Nights to be arranged. Watch the club house window for details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.04.17</td>
<td>Next work party will hopefully finish off clearing the rubbish and last few trees around the area at the far side of the tunnel, hope to see you then.</td>
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**SIGN-UP LISTS IN CABIN. PLEASE BOOK TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT**

The answer to the 'where' is Lock five of the Wyrley Branch Canal.

The answer to 'what' is the culvert replacing Lock 5 of the Wyrley Branch Canal.

As Les Pitt says 'Something different and hopefully interesting.'
Coombeswood Caption Competition

The canal towpath and its various users seem to have become something of a vexed issue amongst our community of boaters. Whether its cyclist travelling at high speed. Boaters leaving 'Git Gaps' between boats on popular moorings. Dogs leaving their own special calling card. Our 'Fishermen Friends' with their huge poles. Which are so long, that they can block the canal and towpath at the same time.

The jobs never finished until the paperwork is done.

So in an effort to lighten up the towpath angst. This time the Coombswood Caption Competition (CCC) has a doggies theme. Its open to everyone except the editor. My caption for illustration is below the picture. The winner chosen by the editor and will receive a bottle of Spanish (red or white) wine.

Previous CCC winner. Peter Wilcox with:- 'Well, 57 wasn't too bad but let's see if they have improved it!'
1908 Coombeswood Colliery Opened. They built their own basin, which was just outside of our fenced section of towpath. The pit was nationalised in 1948 and closed in 1953. It was also known as Golden Orchard Colliery. The railway sidings were extended to our Basin, which was also increased in size to its present shape and size.

1912 The trans-shipment sheds were built, and lasted until 1970 when they were demolished for safety reasons.

1926 Lapal Tunnel was officially closed. New Hawne Colliery closed, following the General Strike.

1938 Rowing boats were available for hire from Mrs Beards, whose base was near to Mucklow Hill. This ceased shortly after the war started. The last (illegal) entry to Lapal Tunnel from the western side which I have been able to trace was by Arthur Truby and his friend Ted, who were using one of Mrs Beards’ boats. The tunnel mouth was bricked up shortly afterwards. In 1946 Halesowen Council began to operate a similar scheme of boat hire.

1946 The IWA was formed by R. Aickman, L.T.C. Rolt, F. Eyre, C. Hadfield, R. Kirkland and W. Luard. The Midlands Branch of the IWA was formed two years later.

1948 British Waterways was formed, resulting in our canal being nationalised.

1949 The earliest example of an ‘awareness’ cruise along the Dudley No. 2 canal which I have found went from Heyward Wharf to Windmill End on n.b. *Primrose*. On board were C.H. Taplin and family, prospective M.P. Mr H Soref and Robert Aickman, no less, IWA National Chairman.
1965  ‘Last Chance’ cruise from the public wharf, near to the Black Horse, to Parkhead. Graham Laucht was on board.

March 1967  The first 24-hour cruise around the BCN took place. It was the brainchild of Stan Clover. At least one boat visited Hawne Basin.

July 1967  Stewarts and Lloyds canal-to-railway traffic ceased.

October 1967  Two weekend cruises around the BCN remainder waterways took place.

*To be continued*........

Roy Kenn  

*n.b. Placidus*

*Recipes*

Everyone has a favourite food and like everyone else, we also experiment with recipes from around the world. Well here is a simple recipe for our secret snack. We love malt loaf such as Soreen - but take a few slices and toast them. Then smother in butter eat while still hot with a nice cup of tea. Warning: Some of our friends have become quite addicted to this scrumptious little snack.
You may be aware that the Canal and River Trust has moved away from automatic licence renewals. The Trust now requires boaters to make a fresh application for each licence. This means that you have to formally accept the trust's current version of its terms and conditions at the time of licence renewal.

Most boaters will just blindly renew their boat licences online. While others will check and amend the licence renewal form sent out by the Trust, before returning it. But, just how carefully do you read that declaration you are signing at the bottom of the form. For instance, are you bothered that you are accepting that CaRT can revoke your licence for any reason that the trust deems to be fit. Even the smallest breach of the licence conditions. That you have agreed to without reading all 23 pages of them.

Are you comfortable that you are giving CaRT and its agents permission to board your boat. In circumstances additional to that provided in law. For which the law would require a search warrant. It appears that most boaters are simply not bothered. About checking the form, just signing without reading the licence conditions.

The current financial downturn and the government's 'austerity' policy was supposed to have turned around the massive losses incurred by the banking crisis. However, lots of businesses are still feeling the pinch including The Canal and River Trust.

CaRT has published in its last report that it will miss once again its latest charitable giving target. Which had been set at recruiting 22,500 ‘Friends’ who are regular donors by the end of its current financial year. This is just one of the Trust’s long term objectives. Which is currently being operated as a sort of lost leader (Because it is costing far more to fund than it has so far raised) was to recruit 100,000 ‘regular donors’ and to be exceeding £10 million or more of charitable income a year by 2022. The Trust has so far missed all its recruitment targets in the last four years.
In The Back

In the back is where you can share your opinion upon any waterways issues with fellow trust members. The usual Interchange publication rules will still apply.

You would have to have been asleep for the last decade or more - not to be aware of the changes taking place along the towpath. It started some years ago under British Waterways. When the requirement to have a cycling permit to use the towpath was abolished. At the time it was mooted that it cost more to administer than it raised. It was also widely ignored as a requirement by cyclists, and was never managed in any serious way.

More recently under CaRT, longer and longer sections of towpath are being upgraded, with an all weather surface. Generally it is something welcomed by everyone. We have all experienced muddy, rutted towpaths in winter, that would be better described as a quagmire. But there have also been significant drawbacks to this upgrade. Sometimes the upgrade has surfaced the towpath from 'Edge to Hedge'. Leaving no room for boat pins to be knocked in - without piercing the new surface or laying mooring lines all the way across the hard surface.

In places it has turned the towpath into a 'velodrome' that has encouraged cycling at high speeds. Some cyclist are using resurfaced lengths of the canal to conduct cycling time trials – using an on-line system called Strava. A look on Strava highlights individual cyclist recording times in the high 20 to the low 30mph range. CaRT it seems have little enthusiasm for making the towpath safer for primary user such as boaters, walkers and fishermen. Especially from the exploits of the high speed 'Lycra Louts'.

If nothing else, the canal towpath and its associated heritage should be protected as far as is practically possible. Bridges and tunnels and a myriad of other items make up this valuable heritage asset. Now CaRT and Birmingham City Council, want to narrow the canal through Edgbaston tunnel and widen the towpath for cyclists. However, there has been an overwhelming rejection by boaters of the plans. Almost nine out of ten boaters responding to an online poll on the online canal magazine 'The Floater' website. Mick Fitzgibbons
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

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