

# BROADSHEET

November 2022

*Debdale Lock*



*Photo Tom Morgan*



[www.swcanalsociety.co.uk](http://www.swcanalsociety.co.uk)

Volume 64

 Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Society

Number 687

# **Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Society 2021-22**

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## **Committee Meetings**


Committee meetings held at the Bonded Warehouse, Stourbridge starting at 7:30, and are held at least 10 times a year, members may request to attend.

**Printing:** Rotary Printers Ltd, Stourport. On Severn. 01299 823839 [studio@rotaryprinters.co.uk](mailto:studio@rotaryprinters.co.uk)

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## Editorial

It has now been a year since I took over editing Broadsheet, and hopefully you will be happy to keep me a while longer. It is very much about what you would like to see in the Broadsheet so any recommendation and contributions are greatly received.

In starting to pull this edition together I visited the Archives at Dudley to look through earlier editions of Broadsheet. Unfortunately they don't have copies from before 1966, but in the couple of years that I was able to look through in the time I was there (I was pretty much kicked out because they wanted to lock up), I found a wealth of articles and content that I would like to revisit in part or in full. In this edition and given that it is fast approaching Christmas I will be reprinting the Christmas Ghost story from the children's page of December 1967. I can only conclude that children of half a century ago were more robust and less prone to nightmares. I also have some curiosity regarding the identity of some of the content authors Mrs

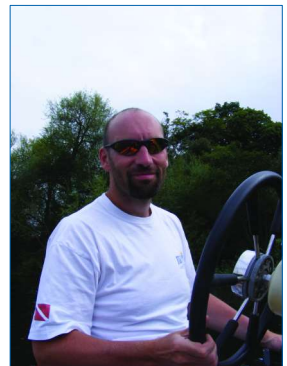
'Laurel'. Uncle Lyn and Tow Pat'er, although I do have my suspicions regarding some of these.

At the time of writing we are very much in autumn with the Bonded Warehouse several weeks in the past. This for me usually represents the end of the boating season, although we still have the meetings at Bradmore to sustain us through the winter.

Having mentioned the Bonded Warehouse and older copies of the Broadsheet, the cover of one depicts lock 11 of the Stourbridge Sixteen pre-restoration with the current state of some of the 16 it doesn't feel like we are to far away from a similar state.

I hope that you enjoy this edition.

**Max**







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## Chairwomans's Remarks

The usual mutterings of a quarterly newsletter in the winter – where has the time gone, the weather? Summer cruising and rallies seem distant, even the autumnal SNT Rally seems eons ago. I write as Bonfire Night has just passed, the clocks have given us all an extra hour in bed, and the weather seems to have taken a turn for the worse. Seemingly the only bright patch on the horizon is Christmas.

Thankfully as a Society things do not stop for winter. Whilst the weather is unpredictable we do have Society Meetings to look forward to, and some time over the winter to get organised for future plans.

The eagle eye amongst you may have spotted some changes to the Committee Structure. Pauline Farnell, who I'm sure many of you will know, has joined the Committee to cover the role of Advertising, Marketing and PR. One of my goals as Chairwoman is to increase the membership of the Society. Other than encouraging more users of the canal, walkers and boaters alike, to champion the Staffs and Worcester and the Society, I would like to be able to offer member benefits such as discounts with various businesses based on the Staffs and Worcs. Between Pauline, myself and other members of the committee I do hope

that we can offer these benefits by the time renewal rolls around in April next year. If you have any ideas or contacts or what benefits you would like to see, please do drop me a line.

Another change to the Committee, is not a new member but a change in role. I am pleased to advise that Adam Capewell will be making the role of Work Parties Officer his own (whilst still having input into the website alongside the Editor of Broadsheet). Over the winter we should be able to get a few dates in the diary for spring, to arrange work parties, whether it be litter picking on the towpath, a general tidy up and tidying up the canal itself. Again, if there are any areas of the canal that you feel particularly need some TLC from us and from CRT do let me know.

I'll touch more on this in a later article regarding the Regional Update from the West Midlands User Forum, and from conversations I had with CRT at the Aldersley Event.

I mentioned earlier about those that walk the canal and how we can attract more people who aren't boat owners to become members. I have spoken with a couple of members about organising historic walks along the canal. Not the whole 46 miles, but sections, sharing

knowledge with those who walk the canals but may not understand the significance or heritage that they pass every day. I already have one (willing?) volunteer, based at the north of the canal, but as yet nobody for the mid or south section. Should any of you feel that there are certain areas of interest or topics that need to be shared, again, please do drop me a line. This will raise the profile of the Society and also act as a rallying point for those regular users of the towpath to advise us and CRT of any issues along the length of the canal.

Following on from my thanks in the last issue, an update on the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event at Bratch. The final Rally Committee Meeting has taken place, all the finances have been totted up, and whilst I'm sad to say that we made a loss on the whole endeavour, it was a loss of only 7 pence! That's right, 7 whole pennies. Which bearing in mind that the bar sadly were unable to be there (and would have pushed us into profit), it is incredible. We also did well on Society Sales from books kindly donated by Ian Braine, and also a few new members too. These sales and memberships have not been attributed to the rally running costs, so all in all a very successful event. So much so, that we are planning another Staffs and Worcs Rally for next year. The first weekend

after the August Bank Holiday is the planned date, so do please add this to your calendar now, as I'd hate you to miss out.

Finally, this is your Society, and whilst as a committee we are looking to start new initiatives, we very much need your input. What or whom do you want to see at Society Meetings, what topics that you're interested in or would like to find out more about? Is there anything that you would like to see the Society doing? Are there any events or traditions that have happened in the past that it might be appropriate to revive – an annual dinner for example, cruises? I'm always available via e-mail, phone, or at the Bradmore meetings to chat and hear your thoughts on what we can do as a Society.

I look forward to seeing you at Bradmore Meetings and updating you in the Spring on what we have accomplished as a Committee over the dark winter months.

Rhian



## Did you know? Part 4

### The fourth of a series of articles about the earliest days of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal

By Julian Souter

In the last edition of the Broadsheet, I had a look at the very earliest cutting of the canal from Compton to Dimmingsdale and challenged the received wisdom that James Brindley built his first lock at Compton. In this article I'm turning my attention to some of the obstacles encountered during the construction of the canal and how Brindley, John Fennyhouse Green, the Under Clerk of the Works and his boss John Baker, the Clerk of the Works, dealt with them(1). It is interesting how Brindley, the company surveyor, involves himself in what might seem to us fairly mundane matters. As for all previous articles, my primary sources of information can be found in the Stafford Record Office (currently closed for building works) that include eighteen Day Books and three Brindley Order Books left to us courtesy of John Fennyhouse Green.

As one might expect many obstacles are encountered during the cutting of the canal and the building of locks, bridges, aqueducts and culverts. They include such diverse issues as the

weather, trees, rock, quicksand and moles!

Moles are a source of both aggravation and conflict in the building of the canal. In March 1767, a mole catcher is needed "to be sent down a catching below Botterham" while on 16<sup>th</sup> September of the same year at Stourton not only has there been slippage with more expected(2) but moles in the banking must be caught and paid for. Brindley's order includes, "if any neglect is shown about the moles being Caught Green is to give Orders for their being taken and pay for them". Brindley is pointing his finger at John Baker here as he suspects that he (Baker) doesn't understand the importance of avoiding mole damage to the works – or perhaps it's a case of false economy. At any rate, Green is ordered to sort the pests out if Baker, his boss, doesn't!

In early January 1769, one item in a long list of Brindley orders concerns moles causing damage between the aqueduct at Broadwaters and Wolverley Court Lock as well as in

(1) My original intention was to examine problems caused by poor workmanship but I will include this in my presentation 'Unlocking the past' at Bradmore on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 instead.

(2) Strong piles are to be used and the bank faced with rock sufficiently high to prevent a flood.

the banking from Wolverley up to near Whittington. About eighteen months later (September 1770) Brindley makes sure that his orders are copied to Mr Baker, it would appear because he does once again does not trust the Clerk to the Works to carry them out especially as far as moles are concerned. We are at Acton this time and Green is ordered to pay 2d to anyone catching a mole and is to apply to Baker for a catcher to be employed. However, if Baker is "remiss" in not providing

Brindley also knows how to tackle the various obstacles that they encounter including, in March 1767, underground rock in the common

below Swindon where the canal must be cut down to the rock and the towing path side of the canal sloped 1 to 2 "unless the rock is very strong". Also in March, his orders include the felling of trees before the canal is set out at Swindon and a month later the marked trees must be "fallen". In June, a great ash root at Houndell (Wombourne) needs to be cleared out of the way. This might appear to be a relatively trivial, if not obvious, issue that one might assume would be dealt with by the men on the ground, but it is a good example of Brindley's attention to detail.

## **Martin Brookes**

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Brindley also orders that when the cutting from Coven Heath towards Forster's Summit comes to a 10 foot depth, the contractors must bore down to the bottom of the canal every 20 yards and to record the depth at each place down to the rock. Alternatively, where the rock is already bared, they must bore down through the rock to the bottom every 40 yards and to observe the thickness of the rock at every boring; Green is deputed to oversee operations. These are the preparations for the Narrows (Pendeford Rockin'). We later learn that the rock in Forster's summit (the name of the landowner – Forster Bridge resting right in the middle of the Narrows) is to be cut 15 feet for the width of the canal, with 5 feet for a towing path; the cutting through the rock is to be perpendicular.

As for quicksand, near 'the foot road' to Pendeford where the sides of the canal have given way (another hazard encountered in cutting the canal), they must be "piled and wared" with the space between the piles and the ground filled with ivy; also if there is a danger of running sand on gravel in the moors above the same foot road, the canal must be set out wider in order to provide enough spoil to cover the sand or gravel with a 3 foot layer of earth;

(3) Rough stone.

and finally the moors towards the Aurtherley summit must be bored to assess whether or not there is quicksand there. If there is additional payments will be needed for the cutters.

In September 1767 we're at Gothersley where there has been a bad slippage of the sides of the cutting. In this instance Brindley assesses that it will be cheaper to alter the route of the canal and so orders Green to set it out accordingly. Slippage has also occurred at Stourton with more expected: strong piles are to be used and the bank faced with rock sufficiently high to deal with a flood. Brindley has the answers to deal with these problems.

In February 1768, Brindley gives orders regarding the cutting through Horsley Rock. Some rock is to be laid at the bottom of the river and "faced up with burrs(3)" with the land on the other side of the river cut so that it maintains its current breadth, an excellent example of using and reshaping the existing natural waterway. About a month later, Brindley is concerned about problems at Dunsley where loose rock, soil and shattered rock are causing problems and a brick wall is needed to provide support. An arch at the end of the tunnelling with a



parapet wall is needed to prevent soil at the top falling into the canal and another piece of rock is to be underbuilt. There is more shattered rock at Austcliff in March of the same year where the rock that will not withstand the battering (sloping) is to be bored down until solid rock is reached. A similar issue presents itself in late May 1768 when Brindley directs that brick is to be used to strengthen the soft and shelly rock in the arch at Cookley Tunnel and to

prop up the arch where the rock is not strong enough.

In January 1769 at Whittington where there is another example of the side having slipped, "skabled"(4) stones are to be used to make a burr wall against the houses there. Water ingress at the lower end of Cookley Tunnel and an opening in the bottom of the canal at Austcliff Rock need to be addressed, the former by removing burr stone on top of the arch and claying of the space that

(4) The word "scabble" means shaping stone with an axe or hammer. In these records "skabled" therefore most likely means roughening the surface of the stone to give it better grip.

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will then be refilled tightly with burr stones and the latter, using Brindley's favoured technique, to be "well rammed" with clay.

There are, of course, plenty of obstacles to deal with when Brindley is not around. One such is in February 1770 when the culvert at Wightwick Lock suffers a catastrophic failure. Green is sent for by Baker because it has "blown up". Baker takes charge here, although it is Green we suppose who supervises the repair work. Davis, a bricklayer, and his men at Cross Green are sent down to deal with the issue; Will Perry, another contractor, and "4 or 5 of his people" are also called on to clear up the rubbish. Baker is going to order a boat with lime and bricks to the site. Baker's opinion is that the culvert had been made too small but we have no way of telling if this is so as Green does not return to the issue.

Finally we turn to the weather and its impact on the construction of the canal. Rain, wind, frost and snow are all recorded by Green in his Day Books, underlining the kinds of conditions that they have to work in over the years. Green records in his 6<sup>th</sup> Book the Severn Way on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1767 that there has been "the highest Flood in Kidderminster known in the Memory of Man". It

was also in November that severe flooding brought down Brindley's Bollin Aqueduct on the Bridgewater Canal which required his immediate attention. Christine Richardson in her excellent biography *James Brindley Canal Pioneer* (Waterway's World Ltd, 2004) also records that the weather in the autumn of 1767 was "destructively bad" with the year ending "with terrible weather – snow drifts, freezing temperatures, the Thames un-navigable in the centre of London, and generally the worst conditions for nearly thirty years." We can detect the impact of this period of dreadful weather in Green's on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1768 when Brindley makes a recommendation to the Committee regarding the repair of the bank at the tail of Flotheridge Pool being made "in the most substantial manner" following recent damage to the culvert, banks and navigation.

Another good example of the impact of the weather is in November 1770 following a considerable amount of rainfall that has caused problems at Church Brook at Acton, Shutt Hill where a large breach has occurred where troughs have been laid to carry water for puddling around the lock, Park Gate Lock where the rising water has made the horse road along the Park Side dangerous and Teddesley Hey where the bank has been cut through at the quarry by

some of Featherstone's men when the canal was dry. Green has a long staff made by the barrow menders and ironed by the blacksmith to measure the depth of water. He shuts down the valve at the trunk at Wood Bank and draws up the valve in the trunk at Park Side (both marked on his 1772 rough plan of the canal). Therefore instead of the water being drained off by Wood Bank Brook, it will now run along the  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile or so and drain off at Park Side instead. Job done!

These then were some of the obstacles encountered in the construction of the canal as well as

some of the techniques used to overcome them.

In the next Broadsheet I hope to write about the people who drove the project forward including key members of the Company of Proprietors, names such as Perry, Jesson and Littleton that peer at us through the mists of time and who will be, perhaps, a little less shadowy by the end of the article. I will also include them in my presentation at Bradmore on 13<sup>th</sup> February next year.

Presented by: JOHN TURNER



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## Anderton Boat Lift will reopen in March 2023 after £450K repair package

CRT have confirmed Anderton Boat Lift, will reopen to boats in spring after a major £450,000 repair package this winter,.

CRT will start emergency repair works in mid-November, with the aim of reopening the lift by the end of March 2023.

Over winter, CRT will be delivering two key repair projects. Two giant hydraulic ram cylinders, which each propel a caisson transporting boats up and down, are being given a much-needed overhaul. The large metal tank caissons will be detached from the rams and propped up about two metres above ground level to allow the 20-year-old cylinder seals to be replaced, the ceramic rams re-polished and re-set, and 12,000 litres of hydraulic oil to be changed.

Each of the lift's ten sets of gates will also have two new 'fall and arrest' safety systems installed, which act like a giant seat belt in an emergency. Following identification

of the safety issue in the summer, new designs have been engineered, approved by Historic England and manufactured. Once the repairs have been carried out, the lift will have a short recommissioning period of about two to four weeks before it is once again available to carry boats.

Fran Littlewood, CRT project manager, explained: "The Anderton Boat Lift is a unique structure and one of the Wonders of the Waterways. Because of its uniqueness, every operating element is a one-off and needs to be designed specially to work within a structure that is nearly 150 years old. This is its charm, but also brings huge challenges when parts need replacing.

"This winter's work will allow the lift to return to operation in time for Easter and the start of the 2023 summer boating season. However, we are very aware that it is over 20 years since the major restoration project. Reopened by King Charles



when he was Prince of Wales, it has successfully been carrying boats for two decades. But now the lift requires some significant work to bring it up to modern day operating standards, including the introduction of a new wireless computer control system, targeted steelwork repairs and a full repaint. The Trust has applied to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a £5 million grant and we should hear whether we have been successful with our first-round application before Christmas.

“If the bid does succeed, we can then start designing this next major phase of works which will ensure a secure future for the lift as a historic

working monument for decades to come. If all goes to plan, the lift will be fully open to boaters during the 2023 and 2024 boating season, before closing in autumn 2024 for an 18-month programme of works, reopening again in spring 2026.”

The Anderton Boat Lift Visitor Centre will continue to welcome visitors throughout this winter at weekends – Saturdays and Sundays, 9.30am – 4.30pm. The Trust’s popular Santa Cruises will run in December.





## Canal & River Trust West Midlands User Forum

Words: Rhian Dobbs

Images: Canal & River Trust

The above forum took place at Tittford Pumphouse on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September this year. Myself, the Vice Chair, Secretary (Ann Pollard) and one of the Vice Presidents (Chris Dyche) attended on behalf of the SWCS. There were also representatives of various other canal societies and interested parties in attendance.

It was an interesting evening with some lively discussions. However, my take away from it was that CRT were honest as to where they could have done more, and the challenges they face with regards to budget constraints and manpower.

The talk opened with an overview of everything that CRT had done with

regards to promoting the waterways before and during the Commonwealth Games. I honestly believe that with the coverage they garnered through events, promotions and visibility during the games (canals in the opening ceremony anyone?) that any marketing budget was money well spent. Their expenditure was negligible and while benefit might be harder to quantify they did state they acquired a significant number of volunteers and supporters from this. We should also realise that they are still very dependent on government funding so are probably wise to maintain visibility with Government and the Civil Service.

The second part of the presentation focused on planned works for the Midlands Waterways and their



associated costs. The biggest talking point was by far dredging and vegetation. No surprise there. CRT did admit that during the changeover from one contractor to another, that they had dropped the ball somewhat on ensuring that vegetation was kept down. Dredging (which also falls under the Environmental side of CRT not just Engineering) and available budget is also a big issue for boaters and CRT alike. When looking at the cost of planned works and the available budget, whilst budget constraints may seem like an old chestnut, it is sadly true. However, one positive is that whilst being one of 6 regions that competes for central budget the West Midlands is punching above its weight in being allocated (from memory) about 30% of the national budget, but then we may have more miles of canal than others and much of it urban areas.

Whilst in discussion about varying issues with regards to vegetation and spot dredging and other issues on the canals, we need to work hard on notifying CRT. It was noted that when reporting anything that precise locations would be very helpful, for example using What3Words. This is why our Lengths Scheme is very important in order to keep CRT on their toes.

Other specific examples were brought up, one being Titford Pools. Whilst the pools have been dredged, that budget was made available by the Highways Agency in order to clean up the pools (as a result silt

rubbish and contamination from the M5), but sadly that budget did not extend to dredging the access waterways to the pools. Yes it seems futile to dredge the pools and not the access to them, there is only finite budget available. There were also other works mentioned where dredging or works have been undertaken, with budget from outside CRT being maximised to deliver works on the waterways. Whilst it is of no comfort to those trying to access Titford Pools, it does explain the constraints that CRT are working under.



Other examples of work undertaken (available in the slides) show just how expensive things are and how the allocated budget doesn't go a long way. The outcomes with regards engineering work might not be what we all want but the transparency of CRT was welcome in sharing what they have achieved within set limitations. As always there more that can be done, and work parties in partnership with CRT is definitely a future option. Something I discussed with CRT both

at the Forum and at the Aldersley Junction Event

Sadly we were running out of time and the Environmental Section was informative but short. Invasive species, their eradication and new scientific methods to do so were enlightening, along with updates on a few projects that benefit wildlife and therefore the canal in general – another aspect of maximising budgets from various sources.



The final presentation was on Boaters Needs and Challenges. The main focus of this was Maintaining the waterways for boating, Providing facilities and Services, Helping Boaters facing difficulties and Understanding Boaters. By this point it was late, with very little time to discuss much past the Boaters Census. With regards to Helping Boaters, we were advised that the Chaplains were active and what could be done to support boaters.

On the providing Facilities, we'd pretty much run out of time but I did briefly speak with CRT at the end of the presentation. From personal experience on the Staffs and Worcs there are very few facilities particularly in the northern reaches.

A catch 22 situation from my viewpoint – much of the canal is rural, but this is exactly where you need more water points and facilities.

One of my bug bears as well, is the lack of provision for the disposal of waste from composting toilets. Whilst there are private schemes in London addressing this, I believe that with a move towards greener boating that this is an issue that needs to be addressed on a national level.

After a brief Q&A session the meeting was concluded. One comment by CRT was that maybe they should have invited more people. I think that this would have been a good idea, better publicised by CRT, possibly more time for the meeting (although I do appreciate the representatives spending an evening updating us), and more representatives from a broader spectrum.

My final thought is that the evening was informative, but sadly to wait for the Forum once a year to update users isn't enough. It was raised with CRT that keeping users updated with priorities (accepting that priorities change) may improve feelings between CRT and all users.

The slides from the evening can be found here <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/meetings/51655-canal-and-river-trust-west-midlands-user-forum>

## Letters

Hi

Good to speak with you at the 250th Anniversary Weekend.

Thank you for another very good edition of the Broadsheet. So, it looks as though Compton Lock may not have been the first to be built after all!

On the back cover of the magazine is a map of the S&W Canal. It would be good to have the former Stafford Branch / Rover Sow Navigation included. You can see the Branch Canal on Westall's 1908 Map which I have attached. **What do you think?**



Best wishes

David  
(D.J.Jones: SRL History & Research)

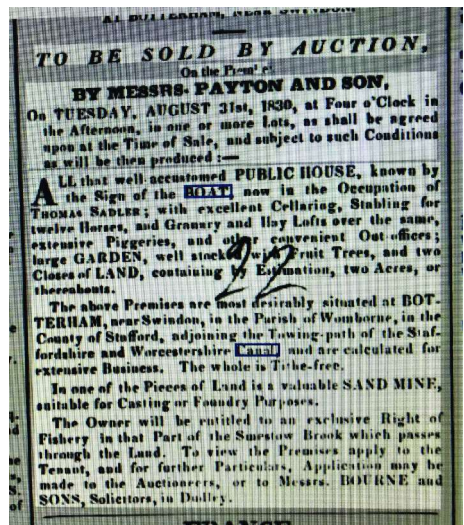
*ED - Indeed I agree, I will look at updating the map for the next edition.*

Hi, Max

Having passed the cottage below Botterham staircase the other day and seeing it covered in scaffolding etc. I found this in the Wolverhampton Chronicle and Staffordshire Advertiser from 11 November 1830. Thought it might fill a corner in Broadsheet.

Regards,

Phil



*ED - Thanks that adds a little more to the history of the building after wrote about in February's Broadsheet*

## Titanic Brewery Launch New Stafford Riverway Link Ale



ale as a way to help raise the project's profile and to progress further. I personally think that this an exciting opportunity to restore a piece of Stafford's history while at the same time bringing additional tourists into the town which will help our local businesses."

The Stafford Link will be a guest ale in the local Titanic premises and a contribution from sales will be donated to the Riverway Link project.

SRL Chair, Paul Bryan said, "We really appreciate and welcome the input from the Titanic Brewery, who have given our project great support over the years. We look forward to that continuing into the future. We hope that local people enjoy this ale and that it also encourages them and other local businesses to find out more about our restoration work and to get involved."

The local Titanic Brewery and the Stafford Riverway Link restoration project have joined forces and launched a new ale, Stafford Link, that will be available in Titanic's Stafford premises, The Sun Inn on Lichfield Road and The Bod Stafford cafe bar in Weeping Cross, where the launch took place and the first pints of the new ale were sampled. The ale is a pale gold, malty bitter with a hint of grapefruit.

Brewery Director Dave Bott, who was presented with a Lifetime Membership certificate on behalf of the Titanic by Riverway Link Chair, Paul Bryan, said, "We're happy and proud to have been able to work with the Riverway Link team over a number of years now and see this







Do you have an article  
you would like to submit for  
inclusion in **Broadsheet**?

**The deadline for Issue 688 is  
Friday 27th January**

## **PHIL JONES**

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## A Christmas Ghost

*The following is reprinted from the December 1967 Broadsheet about 6 months after the reopening on the Stourbridge 16. It seemed to be appropriate for the season. I will admit that I suspect I have missed a number of the allegories and potentially don't have a full grasp of the events to which they refer.*

It was Christmas Eve the Chief Bod crept wearily to bed. He had stopped up late preparing his Christmas Gift for his friend the Queen of MoT. He was giving her a Flagon of Vintage Canal water (1967) and he knew she would like it because it would never turn The Breathalyser green although it might cause it to Rot and fall off the end of the tube. He had been addicted to the Stuff himself for years, Categorically denying that it caused Hallucinations, and always kept some brewing in a Traditional Canal Pot by the side of his Very Old Bed.

Be that as it may, he slept Very Uneasily and was not really surprised when, in the early hours of the morning, he suddenly became aware of a presence by his bedside. The Spectre was Tall and Distinguished and dressed in the ceremonial robs of the P.M.'s Foot & Mouth Brigade, famous for its motto "Footum in Cakehole ad Infinitum." The Chief Bod, recognised, the

costume immediately because he had several times thought of joining the Brigade himself.

"What do you want?" demanded- the Chief Bod from under his Very Old Hat which he had forgotten to take off when he went to bed. The Figure looked somewhat chastened, answering reproachfully "Now, don't be like that. A Fit of Shivers or even a Teeny-Weeny Scream would be more suitable." Then drawing himself up frowning in a Terrifying Fashion he sonorously pronounced "I am the manifestation of the, God of Agriculture and Fish!" adding conversationally "I'm called that, you know, because I always appear to be doing something. Got it?"

He looked fierce again and continued "You are accused, of causing the very Old Locks to be opened and thus releasing the Contaminated Boatmen of Brummagem into our Clean and pleasant Country side!" ("That must be



the Bit on the Right as you go down" thought the Chief Bod.

"You are therefore Condemned to do penance, which will be to stand by the Very Old Tollhouse ceaselessly filling the Top Lock with disinfectant from a B.W. Bottomless Bucket. This you will continue to do until such time as the Queen of MoT shall transfer all Road Transport to the canals, ----- and you call that a Castle in the Air\*" He paused to let this information sink in and added kindly "Don't hurry, you've got plenty of Time. "

But all the same it was a Good Job that the Chief Bod always slept in his Very Old Canal Overalls and Boots because the next, instant he found himself standing in moonlight by the Very Old Tollhouse. Indeed, it happened so quickly that his Very Old Hat got left far behind and it was Half a Minute before it whizzed out of the blackness and settled on his head.

Before he had properly Gathered His wits (which were a Bit Sparse anyway) he incautiously moved forward, tripped over some

\*Castle in the Air may be defined as an impractical project or daydream

'Shapeless Object and lost his balance. As he toppled forward, he realised with horror that he, was looking down into the B.W. Bottomless Bucket, and then he was falling ----- Falling ----- Falling was there really no Bottom ? ----- The Disinfectant was Choking him ----- then everything went Black.

It seemed that Several Eras had passed before the Chief Bod dimly realised that he was still alive. But the Clammy Finger of the Deadly Disinfectant still seemed to envelope his face. He drew a Deep Breath and instantly regretted it for he choked again. But wait, the taste was Familiar, was it --- ? he cautiously opened his eyes, --- yes, indeed it was! He was lying face downwards in his Traditional Canal Pot of Vintage Canal Water by the side of his Very Own Bed.

Well if that affects that old Canal Soaker, the Chief Bod like, that I wonder what it will do to the Queen of MoT?

Uncle Lyn.

## 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Aldersley Junction

The commemorative event planned by Canal & River Trust took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> September. A spokesman for the trust said: "Aldersley Junction has a rich history, 250 years ago the Birmingham Canal at Aldersley Junction was completed. It was also time to celebrate James Brindley as we approach the 250th anniversary of his death."

Members of the Tettenhall Transport Heritage Centre dressed up as James Brindley, Sir Edward Littleton and John Baker who arrived at the junction on board Aquarius with Glyn and Rosemary.

Commentary on the proceedings was provided by Phil Clayton

The event had small collection of stands including our own, BCNS, CRT,

Roses & Castle and puppet workshops.

The whole event was filmed by Andy Tidy and can be relived here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oz30dl4OLDk>



## VOLUNTEERS WANTED

### LENGTHSMEN

Is there a stretch of the canal you can keep an eye on and report any issues?

### NAVIGATION ISSUES

Spotted any issues that you think need raising with CRT?

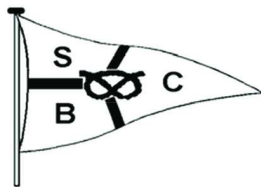
Contact - Ann  
[sunbeam2@btinternet.com](mailto:sunbeam2@btinternet.com)

### REPRESENTATIVES

Would you be willing to attend waterways events and represent the society even if only for a couple of hours?

Contact - Rhian  
[dobbsrhian@gmail.com](mailto:dobbsrhian@gmail.com)

# STAFFORD BOAT CLUB



**DO YOU NEED TO PAINT YOUR BOAT OUT OF  
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# Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Society

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM



Please return to:

Mrs Judith Gray Membership Secretary

29 Verity Walk,

Wordsley,

Stourbridge,

West Midlands

DY8 4XS

wharfinger@blueyonder.co.uk

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION (1st April-31st March)

Please tick appropriate option

☐ Single Membership £15.00

☐ Family at the same address Membership £15.00

☐ Junior (up to 18 years of age) and those in full time education £1.00

- New members joining 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> August pay the full rate
- New members joining between 1<sup>st</sup> September 31<sup>st</sup> January pay half the above fees.
- New members joining between 1<sup>st</sup> February & 31<sup>st</sup> March pay the full rate for up to 14 months membership.

Full Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Post Code ..... Telephone .....

Email .....

<https://swcanalsociety.co.uk/privacy/>

Bank details for electronic payments: Lloyds Bank.Sort Code: 30-99-83 Account no: 02673373

Payment made by BACS/Bank Transfer ☐ Payment by Cheque/Cash ☐

I wish to receive Broadsheet by post ☐ I wish to receive Broadsheet electronically ☐

### GIFT AID DECLARATION

☐ I am a UK tax payer. I would like the Society to treat all membership subscriptions and donations I make as Gift Aid Donations until I notify you otherwise.

Note: You must pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax equal to the amount we reclaim on your subscriptions & donations. Remember to notify us if you no longer pay tax or wish to cancel this declaration

WATERWAYS INTERESTS. Please Indicate

- |                                  |   |   |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angling | <input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing               | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boating | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Archaeology | <input type="checkbox"/> Walking                |
|                                  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Work         |

Boat Name (if applicable) .....

## **Diary Dates**

### **Bradmore Meetings**

*A series of talks and presentations, usually waterways orientated but with occasional eclectic contributions on a variety of other subjects - open to the public free of charge.*

*Meetings held at the Bradmore Community Centre, Birches Barn Road, Wolverhampton starting at 7:30pm*

#### **November 14th**

Andy Tidy "Hatherton Canal from above"

#### **December 12th**

Curling organised by Rosemary Phillips with Bring & Share supper

#### **January 9th**

Bob Williams & Peter Buck "The Lichfield & Hatherton Restoration Trust"

#### **February 13th**

Julian Souter "Unlocking the past" - a focus on the construction of the Staffs & Worcs canal between 1766 and 1772 and the people behind the enterprise.

#### **March 13th**

David Brown "Dams & Reservoirs", covering water supply, how they are built, what can go wrong and how society addresses the risks, followed by an overview of the S&W reservoirs, Calf Heath, Gailey, Dimmingsdale, Pool Hall, Springslade, Pottal and Hatherton.

#### **April 10th**

Chris Dyche. Subject tba.

## **Local Events**

**Saturday 17th December from 12 mid-day until 8.00pm.**  
The Bonded Warehouse hosts the Victorian Christmas Festival

## **Electronic Broadsheet**

*We are now making all future copies of Broadsheet and loose inserts available electronically. This would be by "opting in" for those members who chose to receive Broadsheet electronically.*

*There is no intention of discontinuing the sending out of "hard copies" to other members.*

*Please contact Steve Gray by email to [wharfinger@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:wharfinger@blueyonder.co.uk) with your name and email address if you wish to "opt-in".*

*Note:- email addresses will only be used for the communication of society information and will not be passed to any third party.*



# Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal

46 Miles and 43 Locks  
From Stourport Basins  
To Great Haywood Junction

