

❧ CLOGS & GANSEY ❧

Newsletter of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal Society

No. ~~32 Autumn 2013~~ [▲]

Registered Charity No. 1156266

The Charity Commissioners have just sent us the following: We are pleased to tell you that LEEDS & LIVERPOOL CANAL SOCIETY has achieved charitable status and has been entered onto the Register of Charities with the Registered Charity Number 1156266. The decision to register LEEDS & LIVERPOOL CANAL SOCIETY was based on the information you supplied during the application process. We are satisfied that LEEDS & LIVERPOOL CANAL SOCIETY is established for charitable purposes only for the public benefit.

Thanks to all the members who have helped in putting the application together, and in particular Harold Bond, who has overseen the application. As a Charity, we should be able to access funding more easily for projects, such as *Kennet*. It will hopefully give us more credibility with the public and encourage more donations and volunteers.



Ice breaking in 1940. I think the photo is on the Leeds side of Skipton, and the gentleman in the foreground is one of the Bateman brothers, who were in charge of the eastern sections of the canal. The photo is one of a series taken of ice breaking in 1940 by John T Hey of Skipton, who was one of the early pleasure boaters on this section. The negatives were passed to me recently for copying, and although most were well known, there were a couple of 'new' ones.

Society News

Kennet and other Events

We are beginning to make arrangements for next year, when ***Kennet*** will be travelling into Lancashire. We also expect to drydock ***Kennet*** sometime next year as well. **CAN YOU HELP?**

The current ***Kennet*** events are:

April 5th/6th Saturday-Sunday - Final Preparation of ***Kennet*** - from 9-30am (Sunday dependent on how much we achieve on the Saturday)

April 19th/20th – ***Kennet*** visits the ELWY Boat Club Rally at Bank Newton

May 3rd to 5th – ***Kennet*** open at Skipton Waterways Festival in the canal basin

June 5th/6th – Visits from Hyndburn Schools

June 7th - ***Kennet*** open at the Hyndburn Heritage Day

June 9th - Visit from West End School (2 crew members old primary school)

June W/c 16th – Burscough Schools Week

June 21st to 22nd – Burscough Heritage Weekend at Burscough Wharf

July W/c 14th – CRT Sefton Explorers Schools Week at Litherland Wharf

Other visits are being finalised and ***Kennet*** will be going into dry dock for Survey, Boat Safety Certificate and bottom blacking. More information to follow and keep updated on the web for ***Kennet***'s movements – http://www.llcs.org.uk/html/kennet_project.html#calendar

All the above wouldn't be possible without our volunteers who continue to contribute so much. Life for our volunteers would be so much better with more volunteers to spread the load. There are always plenty of opportunities to help both moving and staffing ***Kennet*** along with helping the 'backroom volunteers' – if you are interested in helping then please contact us:- Email: friendsofkennet@gmail.com Tel: Harold Bond on 01535 630597

Promotion, Website, and Sales

We need someone to help with promoting the Society, such as by sending out Press Releases, as we have not been too good at this to date. We also need someone to look after sales on ***Kennet*** and at other events. Please can we have a volunteer or two! It should not take too much time, and will help making things a bit more efficient. Also, member Brian Townsley has been looking after our website for some years. He has now converted it to a more recent internet standard, and we need someone to take on the 'servicing' of the site. It is a comparatively simple job which can be done from home. Please contact a committee member, if you can help with any of these jobs, and thanks to Brian for his work over the years in keeping us on the web.

Make your web browser Everyclick!

Now we have Charitable status, we have registered with Everyclick.com, where, if you register your cause as the **Leeds and Liverpool Canal Society**, we earn 1p for each search, as well as commission on online shopping transactions. It doesn't sound much until you think how many searches we might do between us, and it is free money!

For new users: Go to www.everyclick.com where you can set up a fundraising account for **Leeds and Liverpool Canal Society** (don't use &). And finally...beware of other search engines 'taking over' your default search facility – make sure you always search via Everyclick.

L&LCS AGM Sat 8th March 2014 Barnoldswick Library

Apologies; 27 Present, 44. Minutes of AGM held 9th March 2013. No matters arising. Proposer – Rob Martin, Seconded – Colin Thunhurst. Acceptance vote – unanimous.

Reports were given by the President, Chairwoman's report, Treasurer, Secretary, and Membership Secretary. Currently we have 162 Members; 3Hon. 23 Life. 136 Ordinary. There was then a report on Kennet, with a big 'Thank you' to all to everyone who has been involved this year.

Vote for the Adoption of the new objectives for the L&LCS as outlined in the 'Adoption of a New Rules' document. Proposed – John Denny. Seconded- David Shuttleworth. Vote – unanimous Approval of the new rules for the L&LCS as outlined in the 'Approval of New Rules' document. Proposed – David Shuttleworth. Seconded – Rob Martin. Vote – unanimous.

Elections of Trustees and Officers for 2014/15. Nominations received; Chairperson 1, Secretary 1, Treasurer 1, and 5 Trustees. Chairwoman Freda Childs – Proposer Gaye Gerrard, Seconded – Ken Watson. Treasurer Ken Watson – Proposer Ian Hacking. Seconded – Ken Barnes. Secretary Margaret Hammond – Proposer Katey Bond. Seconded Cris Shave. Trustees Harold Bond, Ken Barnes, Cris Shave, David Morley, Lynton Childs, Mike Hustler and Harry Belshaw. Voting was unanimous.

AOB

Society Leaflets, there is now a new redesigned leaflet available for distribution. If you require any, please contact a committee member.

Do you have any old-type blankets, suitable for use in *Kennet's* front cabin. Also old 'working shirts' required to fit out the cabin as it would have been when worked by two men. A stationary cupboard with a double door required is need for storage of *Kennet* and other Society display material at the ELWY Boat Club. Thank you to ELWY for the offer of storage space.

Date of next AGM, Saturday 7th March 2015 at Barnoldswick Library.

Thanks to everyone who attended, also to the ladies who help with the refreshments, and to the Barnoldswick Library for use of the premises.

L&LCS Summary of Accounts for year ended 31/10/13

Income		Expenditure	
Balance brought forward	£ 9,868.10	Kennet Operational costs	£ 1,464.04
Subscriptions	£ 605.00	Promotional costs (Soc.)	£ 356.00
Donations	£ 4,990.10	Kennet Restoration (HLF)	£ 1,279.01
F of K Donations	£ 1,156.00	Learning Programme (HLF)	£ 1,238.80
Merchandise	£ 160.00	Administration	£ 417.59
Gift Aid	£ 1,562.40	Merchandise	£ 400.00
Miscellaneous	£ 11.16	Miscellaneous	£ 15.00
Unbanked cash	£ 16.00		
		Total expenditure during year	£ 5,170.44
		Surplus for the year	£ 3,330.22
Total Income during year	£ 8,500.66		£ 8,500.66
		Balance to carry forward	£ 13,198.32
		Comprising:	
		Co-operative L&LCS/F of K	£ 13,157.32
		Nat West L&LCS	£ 25.00
		Cash float for next event	£ 16.00
Total including balance brought forward	£ 18,368.76	Expenditure + Balance	£ 18,368.76

Recently, there was some consultation on the proposed towpath improvements between Leeds and Bradford. I cannot find an email, with details of the consultation, asking the Society to comment. Did anyone else receive such information? Fortunately, the Horse Boating Society were able to comment, as did our member David Blackburn. Their comments are below.

The Horseboating Society Response to the Leeds & Liverpool, Leeds to Bradford Towpath Consultation

HBS Activity

The Horseboating Society, HBS, operates horse-drawn boats nationally but primarily in the north-west currently. One horseboat *Elland* has her home mooring at the Thwaite Mills Museum in Leeds. The HBS has been horseboating on the L & L since 2007 when we attended the World Canals Conference in Liverpool. In 2012, we horseboated from Leeds to Liverpool. We attended events en route at Armley, Saltaire, Skipton, Burscough, and Liverpool and on our return at Burnley and Hyndburn/Accrington. In 2013 we were invited to attend many of these events again. In 2014 we shall be attending the Saltaire World Heritage Site Celebrations for the 3rd time.

Leeds to Bradford Towpath Works

We request that the towpath works allow our passage to Saltaire and beyond in order to attend the event at Saltaire in April. We request that the towpath works are not called ‘improvements’. This term was mostly dropped from the ‘Towpath Guidance Document’ in favour of alternatives such as works, project, resurfacing etc. It was recognised that different types of users have varying needs or desires and any works are unlikely to be considered as ‘improvements’ by all user groups.

We request that the HBS guidance document is taken into account as listed in the Towpath Guidance Document. It can be found on the homepage of the HBS website, www.horseboating.org.uk We recognise that it needs updating having been presented to the BW Chief Executive in August 2005. Please note that BW is listed as one of the partner organisations which joined together to write the document, and it was on the BW intranet from 2005.

HBS Representation

We have been in regular attendance at the British Waterways and now Canal & River Trust User Group Meetings and have been on a contact list with a named representative for many years. We attend several regional meetings but also the national user group forum.

Towpath Surfacing

The HBS is a corporate member of the Inland Waterways Association and we are aware of its Towing Path Policy. It recommends using different materials in town or country locations ‘appropriate’ to the changing environment. The Bridgewater Canal celebrated its 250th anniversary in 2011. For 250 years, towpaths throughout the national system have had varying materials used along the length of any canal. This still remains the case on most of the canals of the national system, providing variety not uniformity of surface.

The HBS recognises that this practice is not merely a heritage feature of the waterways, but the practice remains an important requirement for walking (or running) on towpaths today. Essentially towpaths were designed as long distance paths for people and canal horses to walk

on for consecutive days. There is a need to only hard surface minimal areas, and walkers need the opportunity to walk on softer terrain for much of the time, when doing more than just a short distance walk. Concussion to the body through the joints occurs with miles of hard surfacing, and feet can become very uncomfortable and over heated on hard surfacing over lengths of distance and time. Medical opinion states that concussion causes damage when walking too much on hard surfaces, and this is magnified for people running for exercise. Tarmac, bitmac, spray tar and chip are hard surfaces, maybe suitable for high speed cycling and short walks, but not suitable for distance walking or running.

There has been a recent trend to start hard surfacing some areas of towpaths, presumably due to the increased use by many cyclists, causing erosion of the towpaths. However an assumption is being made that all walkers will want to walk on the new hard surface. Any set tar product is a hard surface to walk on.

Towpath works need to take the views of many organisations or individuals into account. It is absolutely true that many cyclists are delighted with a hard surface so that they can travel quickly to their destination. Many walkers making just a short walk can be pleased too with the surface that does not have mud due to erosion. However, a great many walkers are alarmed by the speed of cyclists and the number of 'near misses' of a collision between walker and cyclist. Informal and formal complaining has grown rapidly in recent years.

The HBS was part of a working group looking at towpath conflict between users, with specific reference to conflict with cyclists, due to the increasing number of complaints received by British Waterways. The remit of the group was to make recommendations to British Waterways on ways to reduce conflict. The group, made up of reps from all types of users, were unanimous in not wanting hard surfacing as the default towpath surface. It is recognised that smooth hard surfaces enable cyclists to travel very fast, reducing the pleasure of other users, like walkers and anglers, and even motor boaters when on the path beside their boat.

The HBS often has a crew of 6, with 4 walking, and just 2 needed on the boat. Therefore we are predominantly a walking group on the towpath. In 2012, we travelled the full 127 mile length of the L&L Canal towpath. Several crew commented on the hard surfacing, finding miles of it unpleasant to walk on. All softer terrain is a welcome relief from the hard.

Canal enthusiasts often refer to the wish to keep variety on the canals rather than have standardisation of features whether that be the towpath surface, or piddlegear etc. Therefore to continue the same type of hard surfacing is undesirable. It is an opportunity to recognise the change from town location to any country scenery. By using sympathetic materials, the 'sense of place' is enhanced.

These factors mean variety which requires a different consideration of towpath surfacing. There would appear to be several choices. For example, one choice could be to improve drainage, to level any awkward surfaces, and to use maintenance methods of filling holes rather than a total resurfacing of the path. Alternatively, surface materials as used on bridlepaths could be used, as these paths serve as multi-user routes but rarely use any products including tar. Countryside Services will have much experience in choosing appropriate materials. The HBS has travelled on many different canal towpaths and many of them remain still as surfaced with grass, or

with aggregate like local crushed stone. These surfaces are part of the surrounding landscape rather than being a contrast to it. The path complements the location, and is part of it, rather than being at odds with it, passing on through with a uniform material regardless of its location.

It is being in harmony with any country location that gives pleasure to the crew of the HBS. To spread tar based surfacing in country locations is taking town materials into the country, urbanising the country environment. The tar spray and chip looks like a black urban pavement as rainwater and bicycle wheels remove the grit or stone chips. Even when new, such a surface cannot blend fully with the country environment, which should be celebrated and enjoyed. Once the tar base is exposed, the look is of a black roadside pavement. People want to get out of town, to feel in the country.

British Waterways contacted the Horseboating Society offering a consultation about a 'palette' of surfacing materials to be used in the future. This palette is what is proposed in the BW/CRT Towpath Guidance Document to which the HBS contributed. It would appear to us that this 'palette' should be considered for Leeds to Bradford, rather than proceeding with the same hard material for more miles. Unfortunately more black tarmac has been laid in recent years near Leeds, with much increased cyclist activity at high speed. We feel black tarmac encourages users to see it as a road, which encourages fast cycling. It is useful in the area of Rodley to warn all users that the towpath is shared with motor vehicles. HBS believes it should only be used in such locations. Tar spray and chip is little different in its hardness from tarmac, just more visually pleasing with the coloured chip, and it gives more of a parkland feel, which might encourage cyclists 'to drop the pace and share the space'.

We wish to be involved in the consultation exercise considering resurfacing. It seems very regrettable to us that much of the L&L is getting hard surfaced merely due to application of town standard surfacing to suit cycling. As the 'Cool Canals Guide' authors were quoted in a national paper, 'It will be a disaster for the canals if they are all tarmacadamed and cyclists take over.'

The consultation also needs to consider the siting of any new surfacing. For example, cyclists often prefer to be farther away from the water. Walkers and boathorses can walk safely fairly close to the water, but no provision has been made in work so far to leave a level grass or soft walking surface for walkers.

In conclusion, we ask CRT to consider all opinions through this consultation and to consider the alternatives. We feel sure that the expertise is there, either with CRT already, or with Countryside Services and National Parks maintaining multi-user routes in country locations. The L&L Canal is promoted as a trans-Pennine canal going through wonderful countryside. We really need to emphasise its character!

Towpath Width

The towpath stretches from 'the hedge to the water's edge' that is across the entire level surface and the washwall is even part of its construction. Some of the consultation is using confusing terms. The surfaced path of the intended two metres is not the towpath. The towing path is all of the level surface, usually built originally to allow two boathorses to pass in opposite directions. Hard surfacing should not extend beyond 2m, as soft terrain should be left for mooring boats and for walking.

Dear Cllr Carter

I too was concerned to see your report in the *Yorkshire Post* of 27th Dec and also two other items of press coverage in the *Ilkley Gazette*.

I agree entirely with your safety concerns but also the fact that this grand scheme would appear to also conflict with CRT (BW) policies and statutory designations as I know them.

Firstly parts of this length of canal in Leeds are classified as SSSI and the approval of Natural England would be required because of potential pollution from the 'tarmac' surfacing long term. Other natural features are also going to be disturbed with a 2 m wide path as reported

The length concerned also contains a number of Conservation Area designations from memory at Rodley in Leeds and all the Bradford length and the use of tarmac in these areas would be seen as detrimental to the character of the conservation areas. BW always had a policy of adopting natural materials appropriate to the geology of the area for towpath surfacing and only used 'hard' surfaces in the most used urban areas.

Some of the other works proposed, ie bank protection, are clearly needed to keep the towpath safe for current pedestrians and cyclists because of erosion encroaching into the surfaced area in places. I have attempted to find more details of the proposals on the CRT website but it appears to be silent on the matter so the consultation would not appear to be very effective.

Regards

David Blackburn

Copied to Leeds & Liverpool Canal Society



Kate, from Chrysalis Arts, sent me this photo of C&RT men replacing the gates at Eshton Road Lock this winter. Anyone else with photos of events on the canal?

Emails to the Editor

L&LC clothing and costume

Sandra Nolan, from the Burscough Heritage Group wrote:

I am continuing to do research on Leeds & Liverpool Canal Costume, as member of Inland Waterways Craft Guild for costume.

I have discussed with other Guild members that the frilled flowered bonnets of the late 19th and early 20th Century women appears to be different somewhat up north. As a member of Burscough Heritage group, I have managed to get a few local canal women pics, and their bonnets do differ, quite plain and frilled at the back, not on top. Do you by chance have any evidence on costumes, or can point me in a certain direction(in the nicest sense!) I am continuing to research and really enjoying it, particularly the difference in north of the country for bonnets, shawls and footwear,also mens clothing.. Maybe there is some differences west to east of Leeds & Liverpool Canal? I have noticed a distinct resemblance to the local pit women clothing in shawls, pinines and clogs.

Does anyone have any further information about L&LC clothing? Obviously, we have the gansey pattern available on the internet, but it would be good to have more details about other types of clothing. I was given some bonnets and blouses when I lived on Pluto in Burscough in the 1970s, and I gave them to Liverpool Museum, where I am hoping Sandra can trace them.

The Craft Guild does have regular meetings at The Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port, where there is a group who knit, crochet, etc, on a regular basis. We are hoping that some of them, and some of our members, will arrange a workshop on **Kennet**, or give demonstrations whilst we are at events. Can you help? Check the contact details for **Kennet** events, and Sandra can be contacted by email at: mymanfro@yahoo.co.uk.

Melling Pottery

Paula Ziane contacted me with more details about the pottery which featured in **Clogs & Gansey 15**.

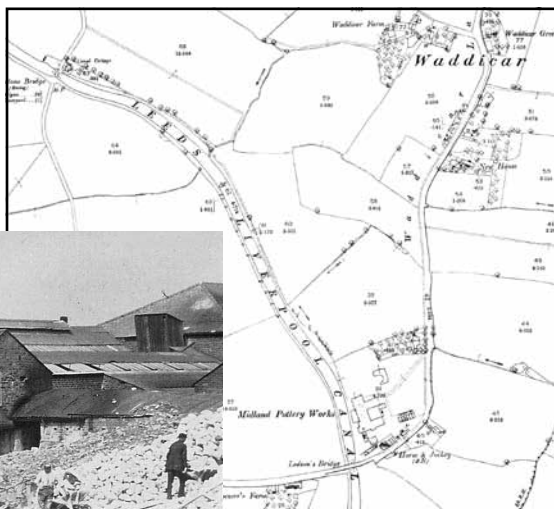
I recently found your article about Melling Pottery (aka Midland Pottery), and the information provided by Denis Ayres... (in Newsletter of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal Society No.15 Spring 2005).

*I lived in Melling from 1950-1976, and I have a small booklet called **Exploring Sefton's Footpaths: Melling from Maghull Station**. It contains a brief note about the canal-side pottery at Melling, and there are a couple of interesting 'snippets' that could be added to the information that you already have.*

It seems that it was opened in the mid-19th Century and was established on the site of a small local pottery by the Service family, as a relief works for their Glasgow plant. (Presumably J Macintyre & Co who operated the pottery in the late 1880s, purchased it from the Service family?)

As already mentioned in your article, the pottery provided jars for the jam-making industry which was strong in the area. At times Hartley's Jam Factory (in nearby Aintree) required 20,000 jam pots in a day. In addition to jam pots, beer bottles, spirit jars, vases, water vessels and rustic jugs were also produced. It was the only stoneware pottery in the district. Clay was shipped from Teignmouth in Devon to Liverpool's Stanley Dock, and then by barge to Melling.

I did wonder if the Hartley connection came through the use of canal transport, as the jam factory was originally in Colne, and Hartleys moved to Aintree to be nearer the sugar refineries in Liverpool.



Boatfamilies website

This website, www.boatfamilies.org.uk, run by the Ormskirk & District Family History Society, has a wealth of information about L&LC boat families, and is certainly the best place to start any research into people who worked on the canal. Keith Jenkins wrote:

FYI, alongside our latest update we've added a 'Documents' section (found at the top of the Site Information page) which contains the divorce details of William Miller Crook, a Bootle boatbuilder whose family were based at Riley Green – you're probably familiar with them. An entertaining case containing some mildly shocking 'particulars of adultery'.

Member Jim Haydock has recently sent me a copy of a description of the boatyard in the mid-1950s. Originally in manuscript form, I have digitised it and put it into pdf format. I need to check that the family are happy, but I hope to add it to the L&LC related material which can be downloaded from my website: <http://www.mikeclarke.myzen.co.uk/Downloads.html>.

Mike Clarke's website

For those interested, I have recently added a number of new items which can be downloaded. Amongst these are a series of resource booklets about different aspects of the canal, and they contain historic and archive documents related to the canal's history, water supply, building and maintaining the canal, warehousing, **Kennet**, and boat operation. There are also copies of some of the new **Kennet** display material, looking at locks, cargo movements, and changes to the canal and the industries it served over the last 200 years. There is also a booklet with a variety of historical articles about places along the canal. They are all designed to help volunteers who staff Kennet at events, giving them background information so that they can answer their own, and visitors' questions.

Also on the website are copies of the various walks and information leaflets which we provide for the public on **Kennet**, as well as a number of historical documents, such as the canal's byelaws, and a brief introduction to the traditional boat painting on the canal.

Church Boatyard

Michael Walmsley wrote, asking about this boatyard, to which I replied:

I have never found definitive evidence for the location of the boatyard, but I would locate it opposite Church swing bridge, as in the photo below. The stone coping would have been used for tying up floating craft, and on the Leeds side of this you can find the remains of a slope into the canal which would have been the side slip. I have looked at the census for canal workers around Church, and suspect the Church boatyard closed around 1870 when the boatyard at Whitebirk was enlarged.

He responded:

Thank you for taking the time to respond and to do it so quickly. Your response does coincide with my assumptions on location. Census records also indicate some decline in boatbuilding although in 1871 both George Ward, age 47 is still listed as a boat builder along with his son Thomas, aged 21. They are still resident at the Boathouse. In 1881 however they have moved to nearby 'Dineley' (Francis Street-Dineley Street, Church). George is still listed as a boat builder and his younger son George (Junior) is also now listed as a boat builder. Thomas his older son has however married, moved from the family home and is now listed as a carpenter. In 1891 George Senior and George Junior have moved to Victoria Street (near Henry Street, Church) but are both still listed as boatbuilders - perhaps indicating that some boatbuilding, maintenance or repair work was still being undertaken in the area. By 1901 George Senior had died (1899) and George Junior had moved to Victoria Street, Clayton le Moors. George Junior was now listed as a carpenter.

Committee member Harry Belshaw also had a family member working at this yard.



This was the site of the boatyard, on the off side of the canal on the Burnley side of the swing bridge. The stonework close to the bridge was the wharf where boats were tied up, and the slip was closer to the camera. It was possible to see some cobbles and hard standing there when this photo was taken around 1990.

Sennicar Bridge, Aspull

Hugh Potter, editor of *Narrowboat* wrote that he thought I might be interested to see some photos, where the writing on the back says Sennicar Bridg. The date is '1958/9'. He was unsure of the location as that bridge (61) is not now a stone arch. The photos came from a Mr Duckworth, and probably are correctly captioned. I suspect the bridge was replaced as a result of this accident, or more probably because of the traffic serving the open cast mine nearby. I have a series of 1954 BW photos of the bridges near here, many of which were already affected by subsidence, so not in the best of condition.



These are two of the photos by Mr Duckworth that he sent, showing a Wimpey excavator which has fallen into the canal. I have some 1954 photos showing open cast mining in this area, together with photos of some of the bridges. I suspect that BW were worried about the strength

of their bridges, and asked for a wooden structure to be built to carry the excavators over the canal, and thatb is what has collapsed. Below is a photo of the open cast site.



One of the 1954 photos of canal bridges near Aspull. Note the steel plates used to support the arch and to stop it splying.



Barry Atherton of Glossop wrote to Hugh Potter at *Narrowboat* regarding the use of narrow boats on the L&LC. Hugh then contacted me, and I have put the two pieces of correspondence below.

Hazel and the Salt Union

After reading Colin Edmondson's excellent article on the River Weaver (Summer 2013 *Narrowboat*), I was prompted to write in the hope that your readers might help solve problems which have been puzzling members of the Wooden Canal Boat Society for a while.

Hazel, last year's winner of the Ken Keay Rose Bowl Award presented by the Historic Narrow Boat Club, is in the process of being fitted out, as funds allow, as the 'Wellbeing Boat'. She will provide holidays on the canal network for groups of disadvantaged people.

The history of ***Hazel***, her registration as ***Mull*** for the Salt Union in 1914, her sale to Agnes Beech of Little Leigh in 1929 and her subsequent life in the 1950s onwards as a pleasure boat has been well documented. However, the period from 1914 to 1929 was a blank. As a volunteer who has worked on ***Hazel*** and had already researched the Salt Union records for details of my family, I offered to see what I could find about ***Hazel***. I had searched some of the records for details of my grandfather Ralph's vessels. Born in 1870 he had worked as a captain of Salt Union flats from the 1890s until the late 1920s. He was last in my line of Atherton flat captains on the Weaver, stretching back to my five-times-great-grandfather John, born in 1715. The Atherton family had been landowners on the east bank of the Weaver at Winsford from before 1500.

In the Salt Union records, held by Chester Archives, there is a large leather-bound ledger Register of Salt Deliveries (Cheshire) 1909–51 (Ref. DIC/SU/4/4), and it is here that I found ***Hazel***'s early working life. The horse boat ***Mull*** made her first trip on 8.12.1913 as a pair with ***Coll***. Subsequent checks on the Runcorn register show ***Mull*** and ***Coll*** registered on 11.9.1914, some 9–10 months after they started work. It also shows they were sold as a pair to Agnes Beech on 18.4.1929. ***Mull***'s name was changed to ***Hazel*** on this date and ***Coll***'s to ***Elaine***. Between 8.12.1913 and 13.4.1916 ***Mull*** and ***Coll*** made 42 deliveries of common salt. Forty were to W. Blythe & Co, and two were to Clayton Analine. The loads carried by the pair ranged from 52 to 58 tons. The trip to Blythe's from loading to discharging was around 5 days.

Other pairs of horse boats had been delivering to Blythes from the beginning of the register. A sample from 1911 shows: ***Ayre & Skye, Elba & Egina, Hayti & Cuba*** and ***Birnier & Baring***. These pairs carried an average of 52–53 tons. This trade seems to have stopped around 1916, with very few narrowboat entries after this in this register. A report on the Salt Union Fleet, 1924–35, showed a lack of any narrowboats at this time. This leaves the question of what happened to the Salt Union narrowboat fleet after 1916–7. Where did ***Mull*** and ***Coll*** work until 1929?

The Salt Union had subsidiary companies, Mersey Weaver, Manchester Barging Co and the Ship Canal Carrying Co. Was the narrowboat fleet transferred to these companies at this time? If so, I have not been able to find any specific documentation on this, so any information would be welcome. As ***Mull*** and ***Coll*** were still registered to the Salt Union when sold, would they have had to be re-registered if transferred to one of these companies?

The next problem is more worrying. W. Blythe & Co was, and still is, a manufacturer of inorganic chemicals and, during the first World War, explosives. It is based at Church, near Accrington on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal. As the salt register shows if any transhipment

has taken place, it is possible to deduce that the Salt Union boats went from loading, straight through to Church Wharf without transshipping at any point. This means that the Salt Union boats were capable of using the shorter locks on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal.

Robert J. Wilson's book *Knobsticks* mentions that the Salt Union had a fleet of 'short' narrowboats capable of using the L&L and Huddersfield Broad canals. From the information so far, it seems *Mull* and *Coll* and the other boats mentioned may have been this 'short' narrowboat fleet.

Hazel, at around 69ft 10in, is no 'short' narrowboat today, so this leaves us with a big problem. Past owners such as Colin Scrivener and those who have known her for a long time, say there are no signs of obvious alterations to her size.

Is it possible that after 1916 when the Blythe contract seems to have stopped (perhaps salt delivered by rail was faster with the country at war), that it was worth 'stretching' *Mull* and *Coll* to give extra carrying capacity for their new duties? They were nearly new boats, so I do not know how viable this would have been.

Since this original research into *Hazel's* past, other information has come to light. Professor Timothy Peters has transcribed canal boats registered at Leigh 1878–79 and 1879–1934 for Wigan. In this list I have found four of the Salt Union boats which supplied Blythe's. These were: *Cuba* formerly *The John*; *Hayti* formerly *The Mary*; *Egina* formerly *The Exe*; and *Elba* formerly *The Lyd*. All were registered in 1885 and were transferred to the Salt Union 1899. All had belonged to Thomas Raynor & Co of Wincham and all were registered for the Leeds & Liverpool Canal as well as the Bridgewater and Trent & Mersey. All these vessels were 'dismantled' by the Salt Union, rather than broken up or scrapped. *Egina* and *Elba* were dismantled in 1921. *Cuba* and *Hayti*, as *The John* and *The Mary*, had previously been registered in Manchester, so must have been older boats. They were dismantled in 1913, the year *Mull & Coll* came into service. Could *Mull* and *Coll* have been the replacements for these two old boats which were capable of using the Leeds & Liverpool canal locks?

Mike Clarke's reply

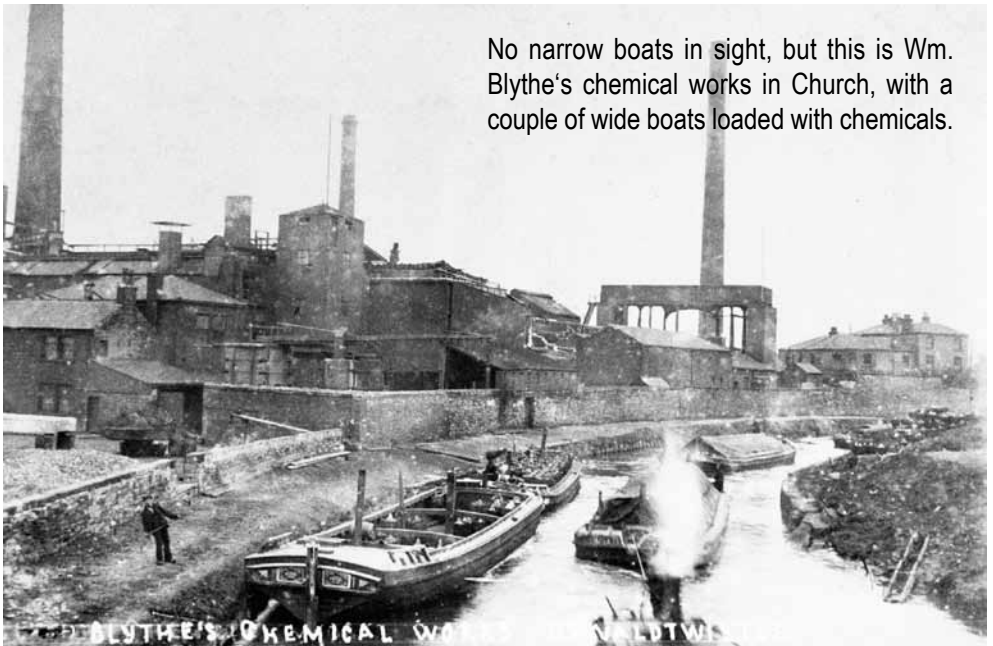
Re *Hazel*, there were certainly a number of narrow boats working onto the L&LC, as well as the other northern canals. I have found Black Country narrow boats for carrying chemicals in the register of boats on the A&CN prior to the First World War. On the L&LC, Wigan Coal & Iron Co also had several pairs, as did some carriers on the Rochdale and Calder & Hebble. Chemicals, and related materials seem to have been one of the main cargoes carried by narrow boats on wide waterways. Salt from Cheshire was one cargo, as noted below. Several boatmen from the Midlands moved north where the wages were probably more reliable than on narrow canals.

I wrote the following for *Aspects of Accrington*, published in 2000: Also in 1881, there were four boats tied up at Church, the crews mainly coming from the Burscough area. As general cargo boats would usually have been tied up here, this was to be expected. There was one boat with Joseph Taylor from Newburgh (near Burscough) as captain and there were three crew members. Normally this would suggest that the boat was a flyboat. These worked non-stop, often towed by a steam tug in Lancashire, with one or two of the crew sleeping on the lengths between the flights of locks. However, here the others in the crew are Joseph (22), Samuel (20)

and Margaret Taylor (18), all born in Runcorn. Joseph is described as mate, while Samuel is down as steward. Perhaps this was a family group, with the three from Runcorn taking the chance for a holiday on their uncle's boat. Samuel is certainly the only steward I have found in the census as working on a canal boat! Family members having a holiday on board was not unusual on the canal, while there are also recorded instances of European emigrants making their way from Hull to Liverpool by canal to catch a boat to America. . . .

At Rishton in the 1891 census, there was recorded a 'boat on canal'. The crew were waterman Noah Colelough, born Wolverhampton, Mary Colelough, born Stoke Prior, Thomas Colelough, born Runcorn, and mate, Joseph Moores from Manchester. Also on board was Joseph Horsfield from Hyde, who was the boat's owner. He was a well-known boat owner, whose fleet of boats was based on the Bridgewater Canal. They continued to trade until the 1960s, with the firm's headquarters at Runcorn. By then they were all narrow boats, but, in the earlier days, the fleet certainly included wide boats. This was probably one of them, though he may also have had shortened narrow boats which were capable of working through the sixty feet long Leeds & Liverpool locks. Narrow boats were usually seventy-two feet in length.

The Colecloughs came from the narrow canals of the midlands to work on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, as did several other such families at the end of the nineteenth century. The improvement to cargo carrying services on the canal through the 1880s and '90s encouraged narrow boatmen to make the change at a time when traffic on some narrow canals was beginning to decline. The Salt family was another family attracted to East Lancashire by better work prospects. They originally worked on the shortened narrow boats which brought salt from Middlewich to the chemical works in Church. When Blythes decided to have their own boats, the Salts were asked to move to Church to become boatmen on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal.



No narrow boats in sight, but this is Wm. Blythe's chemical works in Church, with a couple of wide boats loaded with chemicals.

Foreign Vessels on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal

Geoff Wheat

Most people think of the short boat when working boats of the Leeds & Liverpool are mentioned, but what of the other types of vessels that worked on the canal. At the Leeds end of the canal craft of Leed's Electric Light worked to Redcote power station at Armley with 70 ton cargoes of coal. They also delivered coal to the Whitehall Road power station on the River Aire going via Leeds basin and Arches lock under Leeds station, carrying between 80-90 ton of coal. These craft were Yorkshire keels built at Yorkshire yards at a size that could work into the Leeds and Liverpool.

Another type of craft were the West Country keels that worked the Calder & Hebble Navigation. They were used from time to time to bring wool from Leed's Aire & Calder warehouse. The wool had been brought from Hull on large Aire & Calder craft and was then transshipped to warehouses in Shipley and Stockbridge (Keighley).

At the Liverpool end, 72 foot long flats owned by Richard Abel, Bates, and Lever Bros were used. Abel and Bates owned wooden (dumb) Mersey flats and carried between 80-90 ton to corn mills above Liverpool locks and Bootle, the canal being able to take craft drawing 5 foot draught up to Bootle. Lever Bros packet (power barge) was similar to packets like *Ellesport*, *Ellesbrough* and *Ellesweir* complete with wheel steering and dodger (see Edward Paget-Tomlinson's *Britain's Canal and River Craft* pictures 120,121 and 122).

On the Leigh Branch box boats loaded coal at West Leigh and Bickershaw tips for the Manchester area. Also Runcorn narrow boats built with up to 6 or 7 planks deep to load up to 30 ton for the gas works at Sale, Lymm and Runcorn. Narrow boats from the Trent & Mersey also loaded coal on the Leigh Branch for the salt works at Middlewich. Other craft from the Bridgewater canal were 'statters' or 'bastard' boats built like a narrow boat but up to 68 foot long and 14 foot wide. This type of craft was common on the Bolton & Bury Canal. One craft of this type which worked regularly between the Leigh Branch and the Bridgewater was boat *Armistis*, skippered by Sammy Bridge. She was about 50 foot long and 9 foot wide and would carry about 30 ton. Another type of craft was the short narrow boat which carried salt from Middlewich and Northwich to Wm. Blythe's chemical works at Church, crewed by Joe Salt and his family who later settled in Church and worked horse boat *Katherine* for Wm. Blythe's.

Other unusual 'visitors' were a West Country keel from the Calder & Hebble which acted as a floating shop and had arrived via the Rochdale canal. Landing craft for the 'D' day landings that were bound for Liverpool for loading onto ships, and during the late 50's small fishing boats built on Tyneside for North Wales ports.

And finally not to forget Tarleton on the Rufford Branch which had sailing flats that worked around the North West coast.



200th Anniversary of Canal's Completion in 2016

It may seem a bit premature, but your committee and C&RT are beginning to look at ways of celebrating the 200th anniversary of the completion of the canal from Leeds to Liverpool. As you can see from the inscription on Brittonia Bridge below lock 84 (historically Lock 20 at Wigan), the locks there opened at the end of October, when a flotilla of boats traversed the whole canal. Pottery Road Bridge has a similar inscription, but more difficult to see behind the iron girders used to widen the bridge.

Memories of a Wartime Canal Boatwomen

A new book will be available by Easter, with the memories of Nancy Ridgway, the only female volunteer captain of a boat on the canal towards the end of the 2nd World War. There is an introduction looking at the story behind the boatwomen training scheme on the L&LC, with a good number of photos. The book is being published for the National Waterways Museum, who obtained the transcript of Nancy's story, and will cost £4.99. Copies will be available on *Kennet* during the summer, but we will only have around 30 copies for sale, so first come, first serve.

Mike Clarke's Web Site

Over the last few weeks, I have added quite a lot to my web site. In particular, if you go to the downloads page <http://www.mikeclarke.myzen.co.uk/Downloads.html> there are pdf copies of much of the display material we use on *Kennet*. Of special interest are a series of booklet about different aspects of work on the canal, with transcriptions of historic documents. A bit of reading should help answer the public's questions at events and on *Kennet*.

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