

CLOGS & GANSEY

Newsletter of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal Society

No.24 Autumn 2009



A recent photo of **Clitheroe** carrying sand for Wood, Hall & Heward on the Grand Union in London. Over the years, several L&LC boats have worked in the London area, with a further example on the back page.

AGM: 2-00pm, Saturday, 7th November

This year our AGM will be at Café Cargo at Foulridge, upstairs in the renovated canal warehouse. One subject which will come up for discussion is the cost of subscription. This has not been increased since the Society was set up twelve years ago, and we would like to simplify the scheme. The committee has suggested fixing a standard individual charge of £6-00, with no unwaged or family membership, then the £25-00 for corporate membership, and a life membership. One reason for the increase, besides inflation, is that with **Kennet**, we need to have a little more money in the kitty to pay for routine items and for changing the legal form of the Society when the new Charity regulations come into force next year. It could be worth our while to become a charity at that time. Please come along to the AGM to discuss these proposals, or contact the Secretary beforehand to raise any points which you feel are important.

Those who would like a walk beforehand can meet at Foulridge Wharf at 11.00am, for a visit to the County Brook feeder. Lunch afterwards in the café.

Events and Happenings

Editorial

Almost Autumn, and another edition of *Clogs & Gansey*, the 24th in the series. I am always looking for articles or notes to include, and would like to thank Alan Holden for his contribution to this edition. Apologies for those who looked up the index on my web pages, but there was a fault with the file, and I have not had time to up-date it yet.

Committee Members

As in the previous edition, we are looking for new committee members. The committee meets four times a year, and we would like to have more members directly involved. We could do with someone to look after sales and to organised a stand at events along the canal, and we also need someone to publicise what we do and to organise events, such as social meetings and talks. We try to keep workloads to a minimum, so the jobs should not be too onerous. Let a committee member know if you would like to become involved.

Heritage Open Days, 12th-13th September

On the Saturday 12th, we will be opening *Kennet* to the public at Reedley Marina as the heritage feature of the canal festival there. We will need volunteers to man the boat during the day, and there is a meeting on Thursday 10th September to tidy the boat ready for the event, and to talk about what is needed for the future development of *Kennet* as a way to promote the canal and to record its traditions. Would volunteers, either for moving the boat from Worsley to Reedley earlier in the week, or for looking after visitors on the Saturday, contact Cris Shave on 01535 631975 or ivy.house.shave@btinternet.com.

On Sunday 13th, there will be guided walks at Shipley. At 1.45pm, we meet at the junction with the Bradford Canal for a look at the first lock and then along the towpath to Shipley Wharf. *Apollo* will be operating boat trips, one of which arrives at the junction at 1.45pm. Ring 01274 593188 for details of boat trips. At 3.00pm there will be a second shorter walk to inspect the various buildings that make up Shipley Wharf, looking at the various phases of development, and the bye-traders premises in Wharf Street.

Recent Developments

Recently there have been a number of new canal enterprises on the Leeds & Liverpool. Associated with Reedley Marina and Barden Mill, the Kingfisher Café is currently open from 11am to 4pm, with a summer extension to 11pm on Friday and Saturday, for drinks, meals and light refreshments. Contact them on 01282 420333 for up-to-date information.

At Foulridge, Café Cargo has now opened in the old warehouse from 8-30am, with food served until 9-30pm, and the premises licenced until 11pm. They also have a function room for all sorts of events. More information on 01282 865069.

There are several new hireboat fleets: Canal Boat Cruises at Riley Green, 01254 667412; Ellerbeck Narrowboats at Heath Charnock, 01257 480 825; and Canal Boat Escapes, 0800 3213541, based at the new Lower Park Marina. Wigan Boats Canal Cruises are offering

Last year, at Gargrave when returning **Kennet** to Greenberfield, Harry Belshaw turns to drink, while Mike Clarke prays for a safe return.

a restaurant boat service in the Douglas Valley, and more details can be obtained from 01257 421804. Altham Marine Services are based at the old coke oven site near Clayton-le-Moors, 01254 383900, while Lower Park Marina now has its new off-line moorings available, 01282 815883.

Would anyone be interested in compiling a full list of boat and other canal services for the next issue?



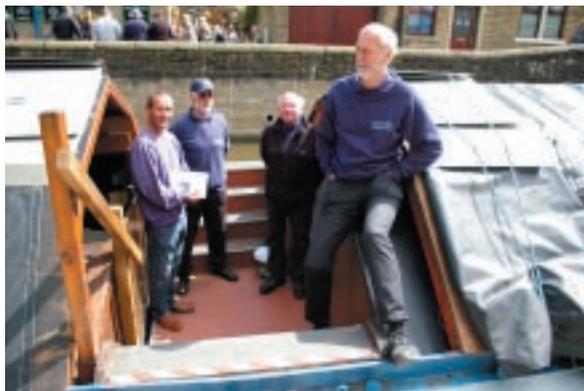
Skipton Festival, May Bank Holiday

Our visit with **Kennet** to the Waterway Festival was very successful, with around 1000 visitors to the boat over the three days, and over £200 raised towards the cost of **Kennet** by donations. This made the event well worthwhile, but we could do with a little more help with looking after visitors. Just an hour as a volunteer gives the regulars a chance for a break.

Membership

Our membership stands at 161 at the moment. It is easier for us if you pay your subscription by filling in a standing order. We would like to welcome Will Manning, Richard Young, David Whatley, Sam & Sue Marriott, David Schofield, Hannah Holliday, Virginia Sanders, Mr & Mrs Robinson, A J & A Martin, John Farmery, Alison Jennings and Donald Gerrard.

Can those members with an email address please send this with their subscriptions, or email it to Cris Shave (ivy.house.shave@btinternet.com), as we would like to be able to keep members informed about the movements of **Kennet**. Hopefully, it will also make it



easier for people to come along and help when moving the boat, or if there is an event which has been notified to us with short notice.

Cris Shave stands guard on **Kennet** at Skipton, ready to welcome visitors, with Paul, Mike and Harry lurking in the background.

Short Boat Kennet

Update 30th July, 2009, Cris Shave reports

Before signing the lease for **Kennet**, it was thought wise to have a survey which was done in July, courtesy of Worsley Drydocks and Mike Carter. The last survey was six years previous, and Mike found that there was significant thinning in some small areas under the engine, and there was also bad pitting on the water line.

Kennet is now out of dock awaiting another docking week commencing 23rd August in order to carry out some plate and pad welding to the hull so it can obtain a positive hull condition letter. Help will be required that week to finish off the painting once the welding is complete — please let me know if you can assist and when.

The current plan is to move the boat back to Reedley Marina starting on 7th September so please let me or Mike Hustler know if you are available to help, and when, so we can draw up a plan of action. It is hoped to do the trip in three days so the boat is available for the heritage day at Reedley Marina on Saturday 12th September. Volunteers are required to man the boat between 11am and 5pm for this day. again, please let us know if you can volunteer for an hour or more.

A pre-application is being made to the Heritage Lottery Fund and we should get a response by the end of August, to go onto the next stage of a full application. We do need to decide exactly what we hope to achieve, and what improvements need to be made aboard **Kennet**. There is a meeting at 7pm on Thursday 10th September on board **Kennet** at Reedley Marina to discuss this. Come along early, from 5pm, to help tidy up the boat for the weekend.

British Waterways NW business unit have made it clear that once we sign the lease for **Kennet** we will have to pay the full rate for the mooring at Greenberfield along with BW licence and of course insurance. Approx £ 2,700 per annum for the three items. However, Reedley Marina have offered us a free mooring which will significantly reduce our annual overheads.

As mentioned above, I have arranged a meeting for all the volunteers and any new people that wish to get involved with **Kennet** on Thursday 10th September in the Kingfisher Café Bar at Reedley Marina 7.00 pm. We really need people get involved with the grant/funding process, and with contacting local authorities and for public relations.



A rather grainy photo of **Kennet** at Wigan in 1971, pictured by Richard Pearson.



Two photos of **Kennet**. Above a recent view at Greenberfield. On the right, an early 1990s view above Blackburn Locks — Asda has now replaced the buildings on the left. Note that the sheets could be removed from the stern of the hold at this time; the present rather inconvenient set-up was added because of vandalism.



We already have much interest from local authorities along the canal. Mike Clarke has been in touch with Thwaite Mills in Leeds, who are keen for us to visit there. We already have an informal partnership with Shipley Wharf, and the education project there; Craven Museum are being kept informed; the operators of Bill Hunt at Blackburn are sure that we can work together on projects there; and the Liverpool Biennial project are also keen for us to go the that end of the canal. The links are already being established, we just need someone to co-ordinate contacts.

Kennet is now on the National Historic Ships Register, and her details should appear shortly on their website. Details have also been sent to NarrowBoat, who are publishing a list of BW heritage boats and what is happening to them. There would be scope for setting up a meeting of all the groups to co-ordinate a national policy, and to put pressure on BW to offer more support.

For offers of help, please contact Cris Shave on 01535631975 or 07831636155 or by email at ivy.house.shave@btinternet.com



The display area is being opened out again, so that visitors can see the full width of the hold, something which often surprises them.

British Waterways Restructuring

The following is the statement about its restructuring recently made by British Waterways:

British Waterways is announcing to staff, customers and stakeholders the results of a major strategic review which it believes will form the basis for the continued renaissance and long-term sustainability of the 2,200 miles of canals and rivers in its care. The key proposals are to: increase efficiencies; open up new funding and partnership opportunities; create closer links with local communities and; start a gradual move over the next decade towards the waterways achieving a 'third sector' trust or charitable status.

As a first step, BW is proposing an internal restructure of its operations in England and Wales with the creation of 11 smaller, 'hands-on' waterway units, the removal of a layer of management and, subject to consultation with staff and trade unions, approximately 100 redundancies from office staff. Together with other planned changes these proposals would enable approximately £10m per annum to be redirected to waterways maintenance.

The newly established 11 waterway units in England and Wales will focus solely on delivering BW's core maintenance programme to ensure high levels of efficiency and customer service. Whilst the units will be more evenly balanced in terms of waterway length, number of waterway structures and customer base, the exact boundaries between each will be the subject of a customer consultation. Certain functions currently carried out in existing waterways units, such as managing moorings, developing partnerships and carrying out major engineering projects, will be undertaken by specialist teams.

In the revised structure, additional focus will be put on working with volunteers and local communities, whilst the creation of a new regeneration directorate will build on the ability of the waterways to kickstart regeneration and contribute to social inclusion. The directorate's aim will be to develop new relationships with community stakeholders and funding bodies at both a local and national level.

Robin Evans, BW chief executive, comments: *In the last decade we and our partners have successfully eliminated a massive backlog of safety repairs on our canals and rivers, we have generated record levels of third party and commercial investment, and the network is bigger, busier and in a better shape than for generations. The waterways are visited by millions of people each year and offer a huge range of public benefits, including leisure, health and wellbeing, flood mitigation, wildlife havens and investment opportunities. This is an extraordinary change from the 1950s and 1960s when, with the exception of a few enthusiasts, the waterways were largely looked upon as derelict ditches and a public health risk.*

Despite this turnaround the waterways today still face serious challenges. The global downturn has reduced our ability to earn additional funds for the network, public funding will come under considerable pressure for the foreseeable future and we are already short of the money required to maintain the network properly. With this in mind, our absolute priority must be to maintain investment in the waterways and this means reducing spending elsewhere. Our proposed new structure will both redirect important funding to essential maintenance work but also make us much more responsive to customers and partners.

In the longer term, British Waterways believes the time is right for some fresh thinking about what the waterways mean to Britain and how their sustainable future might be secured. Next month it will be launching a public debate on the role of Britain's former industrial canals and rivers, highlighting their considerable modern-day contribution to society and seeking views on its proposals for how they should be used, run and funded in the future. Central to the debate will be BW's view that the time is now right to consider the option of changing its structure to turn it, by 2020, into a third sector 'public interest company' or trust. Such a change could: stimulate far greater participation in the waterways by volunteers and other individuals; enhance openness and accountability for communities and waterway users; create opportunities for new sources of income such as grants and donations and; ensure the historic network is held in trust for the nation.

The waterways are still likely to require public funding some time into the future, however BW believes that in the long term this could evolve from annual deficit funding into a contract with Government. This would allow BW greater certainty in planning future expenditure and give Government a clearer understanding of the public benefits, such as flood control and public open space, which the waterways deliver.

Robin continues: *Over the last year, at our Annual Meeting and elsewhere, waterway stakeholders have told us that we should get closer to local authorities and communities and adapt ourselves to be more responsive to volunteers. Many organisations have shown how this approach can add to their stability, both financially and practically. I believe that the best way to embrace this is to start the gradual process which could see the ownership structure bring a greater sense of belonging and responsibility to communities and individuals, and eventually move into the third sector.*

For full details about the planned new structure and BW's 2020 Vision, please visit www.britishwaterways.co.uk/twentytwenty.

Editor's Comments: Are They Yours?

While having much sympathy with BW's difficulties, and the problems of running a government-controlled business which does not sit comfortably under any particular Ministry, are BW capable of developing into a Trust? When Greenberfield Lock House was being sold off a few years ago, I had a long correspondence with Robin Evans regarding the long-term effect this type of sale would have on the canal. I pointed out that not only would it adversely affect the conservation of the canal's heritage, but it would also limit any future canal developments. The current idea for creating a Canal Trust would certainly have benefitted from having a property portfolio including such small canalside buildings which could be used in many ways for promoting the canal environment. Although the idea of a Canal Trust has many benefits, British Waterways' recent property management methods have, to my mind, shackled the possibility of creating a dynamic organisation, focused on providing opportunities and benefits to the general public.

What do you think?



Above: The River Aire in flood at Leeds in 1946. Compare this with the picture on the right which shows normal river levels. Below: The result of a storm in 1900 on the Morton canal feeder.



THE KEIGHLEY NEWS, SATURDAY, JULY 14, 1900.

VIOLENT THUNDERSTORM.
CLOUD-BURST OVER MORTON.
ENOIGIOUS DAMAGE.
RAILWAY TRAFFIC IMPEDED.
EXPLOSION IN A BINGLEY FOUNDRY.
HOUSES STRUCK IN KEIGHLEY:
GREAT DAMAGE BY FLOODING.

A simultaneous, in which no excessive quantity of rain fell, passed over a large portion of the West Riding on Thursday. Lightning did a considerable amount of damage throughout the district, and at Otterley a cow was struck while sitting in her stall, while at Wetherley four cows were killed. They were terrified, and a young cow was hurled in the debris of some workshope, the walls of which were swept down by the torrent. From every direction come reports of fatal deaths to low-lying villages.



Flooding and the L&LC

It is easy to think of freak weather conditions as part of global warming, but such incidents have always happened, as these illustrations show.

The earlier, bottom left, was the result of 4 inches of rain falling on the catchment for the Morton feeder, near Bingley, in 1900, with the canal feeder weir destroyed, along with some mill buildings.



The 1946 photos are of River Lock, Leeds, and the road approach to the canal warehouse. The full story is told in the report on the right. I have seen the river almost as high in the mid-1970s. On that occasion, you would not have been able to sail under the road bridge.

Today the canal forms an increasingly important part of the land drainage system as more land is built upon or tarmaced over. I feel that this aspect of the usefulness of canals is often overlooked when considering the government's grant to BW. Certainly, few people think of canals as an important drain, but without them there would certainly be more flooding.

21st September, 1946.

On Friday the 30th September, following torrential rainfall the River Aire at Leeds rose to such a height as to cause flooding at Leeds Basin. This occurred at about 3.30 p.m. that day when the water swept through Arches Lock into the Canal. The Tail Gates were open and Head Gates closed at the time. The Inside Head Gate was forced open by the flood water, the strut to the Gate having given way under the pressure. The offside Gate remained in the closed position. The height of the flood water was above the Lock Gate Ladders. From local information the River was about 5'6" above normal level. The whole of the Leeds Basin, the Dock Yard, and the Transport Warehouse were flooded.

38 tons of Parcel Sugar and 10 tons of Bulk Sugar, also 40 reels of paper in the warehouse were damaged. There will be some salvage with regard to the sugar, but the paper will be a total loss.

Two Sunken Boats which were lying in the Arches Lock Basin on the inside prior to the incident were forced to the offside by the flood water. These are owned by the Leeds Corporation Electricity Department, and are to be broken up at the earliest possible moment.

Hiders sustained a considerable loss in timber and damage to Pumps. An area of ground in the Dock Yard was washed out apparently due to the underground let off blowing from the Dock.

Very little damage was caused to the Arches Lock Gates.

Foulridge Tunnel Construction

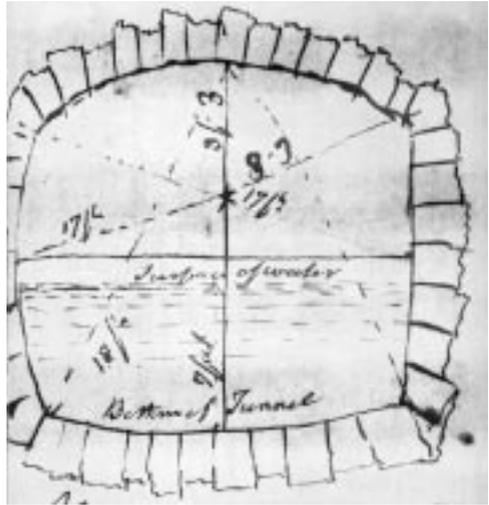
From John Rennie's notebook 8, National Library of Scotland

John Rennie was not established as a canal engineer in 1791, and though he was working for the Rochdale and Lancaster Canals, he was still looking around at other canal engineer's work to get ideas. The following are remarks on two visits to the construction of the L&LC at Foulridge. About half of the tunnel was built as cut-and-cover, where a deep cutting was made and the tunnel stonework erected and then covered. These notes give some idea of how the work was done, and the sketch shows the way the curvature of the walls was set out.

Leeds & Liverpool Canal - Tunnel - September 25th 1791

The wall is arched with stone about 18 inches or 20 inches thick, water 7 feet deep. The soil I saw is mostly a soft loamy kind and is obliged to be supported with wood on each side. But when sudden rains come, it often, in spite of the wood, slides in and the expense of getting it out again is very great.

They have hitherto taken out too much earth at one time so that the masons could not follow them as fast as should have been done, but now they take it out by 8 yards at a time which is the length made for the arching. The top of the work is covered with large logs of timber and there are gins erected for lowering the stones and lime for the building as it is wanted. The centres of the arches are ingeniously enough constructed.



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Dimensions of the canal head level

Depth of water, 7 feet; width at bottom, 17 feet; width at top, 40 feet.

Water in rest of canal [25 filled up??]

October 9th 1791

The locks are to be 66 feet long and 15 feet [9 inches?] wide. Their locks are all built of stone and at a medium cost £80 per foot of run or £800 for a 10 foot lock. Their road bridges cost from £60 to £80 a piece as the banking may be at their ends.

Common digging about 3d to 3 1/2d per yard cube.



Moving House by Steamer

(The following letter was published in the last edition of *NarrowBoat*.) I was very interested to read Mike Clarke's article on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal Co's fleet (Spring 2009 *NarrowBoat*). My parents' house in Wallasey was bombed in May 1940 and we moved to Burscough to live at the canal yard house. My father was an engineer for the L&L Co.

In September 1940 we moved again – to Briars Yard, a mile up the canal. Until then this had been the home of Mr Moss, a director of the L&L Co who was retiring and vacating the house. We moved all our house contents by boat, in fact the L&L steam boat number **40** included in the fleet list. I don't think many people have moved house by boat, let alone by steam boat!

Briars Yard was a canal maintenance yard, long since closed. It was made up of a two-storey carpenter's shop and a two-forge smithy.

Just up from the house was a boathouse in which was kept *Waterwitch*, the L&L inspection launch. The boat has long since gone but the site of the dock can still be seen, now filled in.

Waterwitch was scrapped in the early sixties, after having been converted to internal combustion engine for its last years. The original power had been steam, the same type as had been fitted to barge **40**. The photograph of it was taken at Briars Yard in the 1950s

when it was in its last days of steam.

I once went on *Waterwitch* to watch the Grand National at Aintree – on a director's cruise in 1947. Sadly, I did not back the winner!

Rodger Dawson, Latham



Above, **Water Witch** with a party aboard,
Right, Is this **40** at Skipton?
She was built in 1908 by J. Hodson, taken over by Canal Carriers, Shipley, c.1945, and derelict at Leeds in 1960 following sale by Glovers



The Lost Jemie

Alan Holden

Through summer, after the Skipton Festival, I set sail westward down the Wigan Locks and on to Worsley via the Leigh Branch, to spend a week on dry-dock, then westward again along the Duke's Cut to Preston Brook. Coming off the 'Big Lad's' canals of the north, it is like going into another country. Once through the Preston Brook Tunnel, you are on the Trent & Mersey Canal; the start of the narrow canals with their different costumes and traditions. No talk here of going for tide, of floods and ebbs, or five-rise locks.

On the trip, I went down the Anderton Lift and onto the River Weaver. The first time I had been on the Weaver was forty-plus years ago when in British Transport Waterways I had delivered bentonite and vermiculite ex overside from ship at Salford Docks for transshipment into narrow boats for final delivery to the Midlands.



Two views of **Derwent** lying derelict on the Weaver. Some interest has been shown in restoring and returning her to the Leeds & Liverpool Canal.

It was a nostalgic trip down to the now deserted Weston Point Docks and the bottom of the abandoned Weston Canal that once connected with the Runcorn flight of locks and mad a broad-beam connection to the Bridgewater Canal. The short-sighted abandonment of the Runcorn flight in the 1960s, cut off easy access for broad beam boats to the River Weaver.

Returning up river to Northwich, I was taken back to years ago when I loaded concrete piles in boat *Atherton* for the Engineers' Department, for bank protection work that was



Don descending Runcorn Locks, possibly around 1950. Alan has sent me this excellent photo without caption, Hopefully, a better copy will have survived.

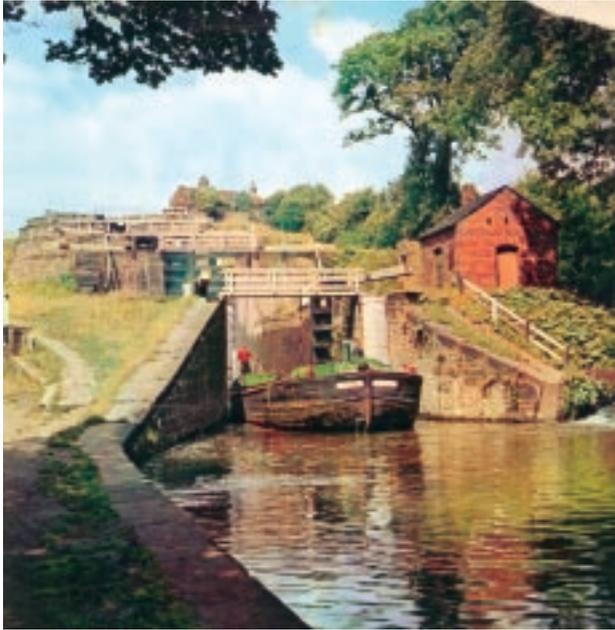
being done around Newborough and at the top of Wigan Locks. This load, as it was not sheeted up, meant we had to avoid using the Ship Canal as the wash from a tug or ship could have sunk us, so the trip was down the Weaver, to Weston Point, then up the Weston Canal and Runcorn Locks and on to Wigan via the Duke's Cut.

At Northwich, I came across the ex-Canal Transport boat **Derwent**. It had been taken off the Leeds & Liverpool Canal to become a bunkering boat to fuel the dredgers and tugs on the Weaver. I can remember seeing her from time to time all those years ago — the lost *Jemie*.

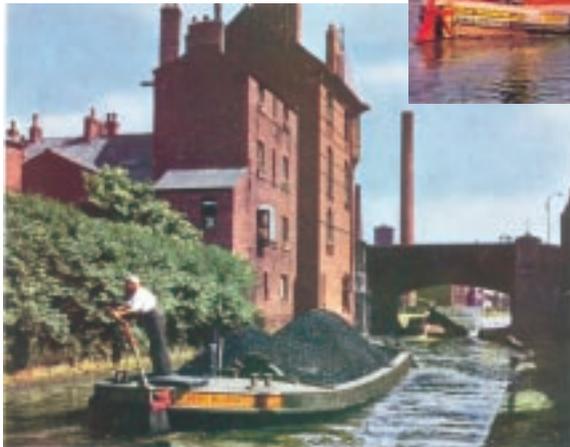
She now lies at Northwich, with an uncertain future, and unless restoration of her is made, it seems she is doomed never to return to the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, to become another lost *Jemie*.

Note: A *Jemie* was the name given to L&LC boats on the Bridgewater. On the A&CN they were called *white boats* because of the colour scheme, particularly the white side decks, which made them easier to see at night.





This picture of **Thomas** at the bottom of Bingley Five-rise appeared in a calendar for 1964. Member, David Lowe, asks was this a posed photo, or was it taken when there was still coal being carried onto the Skipton Pool. There were certainly deliveries to Skipton in 1959, but when exactly did the coal trade up the Aire Valley cease. Does anyone have any suggestions or further information?



Two more calendar photos, these taken by J I C Boyd, around 1960. The upper shows a Dean Waddington boat approaching the top of Wigan Locks, while, on the right, is a view of Albert Blundell's boats at Patricroft on the Bridgewater Canal.



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Two photos taken by David Marsden when he worked for BR, recording bridges c1960. The top shows the embankment at Rishton Reservoir, which was once a wooden viaduct. The lower is of the viaduct at Botany, near Chorley.

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Tam & Di Murrell's boats

We had three L&L shortboats (plus 1 long one - *Cadellis*). Probably pushing it to say it was carriage, but when the New Covent Garden Soup Co. moved to new premises in Acton in 1989, they bought a 40 foot cooling tunnel from Germany. They then found they could not get it into their factory by road. Helicopter had been suggested, but they then came to us and we breasted *Mersey* and *Ribble* and welded rsj's across them. The tunnel was craned on athwartships at the nearest point where there was road access (and no bridges between us and their site!). We simply motored gently along to their quay, using our Bantam pusher tug to give perfect control of the operation, winched it off on rails and into the back of the factory.



Ribble was at one time BWB's tripbout *Fair Lady*, and *Mersey* still had the name *Arthur* at the fore end from John Lily's ownership.



Chris Poole is currently looking into the possibility of removing **Thomas** from Castleford Weir for restoration. Some locals are keen to keep her there, but a compromise could be achieved.