

Summer 2014

[www.athlone.iwai.ie](http://www.athlone.iwai.ie)

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## Chairman's Musings



Every year I feel blue leaving the river after the end of season cruise in company. Then again every year I look forward to the start of the season with the first CIC. This year's CIC in May was a navigational adventure as we were guided by Pat McManus through the Woodshoal from Hodson Bay to Portrun, opening up a new route on Lough Ree. We have a series of events lined up for the season from gentle CIC's in June and in September to the more adventurous rally in August plus partying at our 60th birthday in July and the October winter book launch. I hope you will join us when you can.

Dunrovin is still on our agenda, upgrading of old swing moorings, meeting with the local authority and Waterways Ireland, engaging with the canal restoration group, developing the website, getting new members and communicating with members through Facebook, texting and email and producing the well loved Aerial. If you have any issue or bright idea do contact your branch.

Safe boating,

*Siobhan Bigley*

Chairperson



Aine Naughton with Sam Herraghty on Dunross

Athlone Branch is

# 60!



Come and celebrate.

There will be a party on Saturday 12th July in Athlone Golf Club, Hodson Bay with a drinks reception, barbeque buffet, music and dancing. Contact Niamh Herraghty and book your ticket as numbers will be limited. Phone or text: 086 846 1564 or email [niamhherraghty@hotmail.com](mailto:niamhherraghty@hotmail.com)

St. Hilda's Day Out

Sheila Herraghty

On Friday 30th May 9 boats, plus the Viking Ship assembled at Sean's Bar for 1.30pm. There were about 55 to 60 guests from St. Hilda's waiting for us. Each boat took two guests and a carer. The remaining guests boarded the Viking Ship. It was a beautiful day and we set off up to Hodson Bay in unison led by the Viking Ship. Our two guests were Aine and Sheree, who sang the whole way up the river. They were both thrilled when Sam allowed them to take turns at the helm. On arrival at Hodson Bay there were refreshments and photographs on the quay wall. A great day, enjoyed by all.



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# Shannon Rally Itinerary Jul. 25th to Aug. 3rd

## Friday Eve. - Lough Ree Yacht Club

- Meet and Greet
- Finger food and collect rally pack

## Saturday - Lough Ree Yacht Club

- Fleet Ecumenical Service and Official Opening
- Commodores Cheese and Wine Reception

## Sunday - Lough Ree Yacht Club

- Sailing,
- "Saints & Scholars" Fancy Dress for children and adults (substantially home made costumes are encouraged)
- Music

## Monday - Cruise to Lakeside Marina

- Starred competitions
- Get to know your neighbour
- Ad-hoc music in the bar

## Tuesday - Lakeside Marina

- Conclusion of starred competitions
- Barn dance in boat shed

## Wednesday - Cruise to Hodson Bay

- Land and water sports at Bay Sports
- Table Quiz in Hodson Bay Hotel

## Thursday - Cruise to Shannonbridge

- Children's talent show in Luker's

## Friday - Shannonbridge

- Commando competition
- BBQ and Music

## Saturday - Cruise to Ballinasloe

- Talent show for adults in Shearwater Hotel

## Sunday - Ballinasloe

- Cocktail reception
- Closing Dinner
- Prize Giving

All this plus lots more fun events!

Log on to :

[shannonrally.iwai.ie](http://shannonrally.iwai.ie)

to enter on line

# Cruise in company May Bank Holiday weekend

## Siobhan Cluskey

Although the weather this May Bank Holiday weekend was often overcast and blustery the Athlone branch Cruise in Company was a great success as old friends and new met up at the start of this year's season. The fleet assembled at Hodson Bay on Friday night all looking forward to the planned activities. On Saturday, after a briefing by Pat MacManus, the fleet travelled via Wood Shoal, a new passage for many. Upon arrival in Portrunny the group were treated to cheese and wine hosted by the commodores, Siobhan Bigley and Paul King. This began a night of chat and catching up by the light of a glorious fire which sat in a safe and eco friendly fire pit. People took time to relax and this soon turned into a sing-song led by the many talented musicians present. The bay in Portrunny rang with song and the night sky glowed with the light show provided by Peter (Leo) Lee from Kayber.

The following morning the fleet moved on to Lecarrow where a friendly game of boules was played on the grass (this is becoming a regular feature) also draughts was played, adding to the enjoyment. Later on in the evening a barbecue was held and some people even ventured to the local hostelry.



On Monday it was time to return to our respective marinas. Leaving the shelter of Lecarrow everything was calm and tranquil. However, once we entered the lake we were met by wind and wave which led to a thrilling spin home for many. But in the rally spirit people kept in contact with one another and everyone assisted each other getting in to port. The end of another successful Cruise in Company.

## Membership Benefits

### REPRESENTATION

The IWAI is the respected voice of Ireland's inland waterway users, lobbying and advising government bodies, the waterway authority, as well as other bodies on all matters connected with the waterways including navigation, facilities, moorings, heritage and future developments.

### IWN MAGAZINE

Members receive the Inland Waterways News magazine published quarterly. The magazine is packed with boating information and articles on all aspects of the navigations, reports, association, waterways, and branch news.

### BOAT RALLIES + CICS

Boat Rallies and regular Cruise in Company events are organised by the Athlone branch. These are fun social events for all the family on water. Rallies are family oriented fun events with activities for all ages including games, competitions, watersports, training and boat handling fun events on the major rallies over a week. Once you are a member of a branch you can participate in any of those events.

# Cruise in company June Bank Holiday weekend

**Trish O'Reilly**

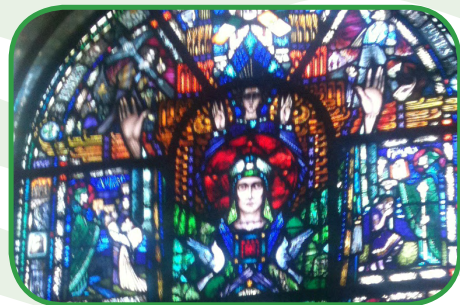
The gathering began on Friday night at Hodson Bay Harbour with 10 boats and it wasn't long before you could hear the chatter of old and new friends and smell barbeques cooking. A lovely summer evening.

On Saturday we moved into Athlone Town where the fleet grew to 20 boats. The weather was beautiful and the mood was high. A local history walk around Athlone town was organised while the lads played boules. The craic was mighty. Commodores Jenni and Paul Fletcher hosted a cheese and wine on Saturday evening which brought everyone together. Soon the guitars came out and we were entertained into the early hours of the morning. The fleet cruised to Killinure Chalets on Sunday and, as always, the best steaks in Ireland were served! Once again the guitars appeared and rounded off the evening. All in all a great weekend. A big thank you to Jenni and Paul.



*Above: Alan Tomlin, Rosemary Lee, Kevin Clabby, Barbara Tomlin, Siobhan Cluskey and Sarah Jane Macken enjoying the delights of Athlone.*

*Below is a selection of the fleet at Killinure Chalets.*



*Hidden Athlone, a town steeped in history.*

## Historical Athlone

One of the highlights of the CIC was a walking tour of historical Athlone. We were ably led by Donal O'Brien who guided us in a visit to three churches, all of completely different character, featuring stained glass, Romanesque features and Celtic art. We were also led down backstreets and alleyways with wonderful names such as 'Paradise Row' never visited before by many of us and all of which held hidden gems and delights. A wonderful way of discovering new jewels in Athlone's crown. Your challenge now is to find the house with the original eighteenth century glass, the home of the Libertine and the link with the Titanic – all in the heart of Athlone.



### PARTICIPATION AND IMPROVEMENTS

Funds are raised to improve existing navigations and to restore derelict ones. Work parties are a very social way of participating in this work. In addition there are mooring points on the navigation system that members can moor up to.

### WEB FORUM

The IWAI hosts an active web forum discussing all matters related to boating and enjoying the inland waterways. Everything from advice on navigations, moorings, water levels, boat and engine maintenance, equipment, restoration projects, buying a boat, waterways heritage, rallies, cruise in companies and training are popular matters for discussion.

### SUPPORT THE AIMS OF IWAI

Supporters of the IWAI include users of the waterways such as boaters, anglers, walkers, canoeists, kayakers, sailors, watersport enthusiasts, waterways residents, boat builders, marine businesses and people interested in the heritage of Ireland's waterway network. Your continued support is important to us, please REJOIN, you can now join on the IWAI's new online system, IWAI Online365, go to [www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie) and click "join/renew" at the top of the page.

# Join us for the 54<sup>th</sup> Shannon Boat Rally

Siobhan Cluskey

This year the annual Shannon Boat Rally will be hosted by the Athlone branch with Kevin Clabby as Commodore. The rally fleet will assemble in Lough Ree Yacht Club and then proceed around the lower lake, finishing with the closing ceremony in Ballinasloe. Full details of the rally are available on our Shannon Boat Rally website [www.shannonboatrally.ie](http://www.shannonboatrally.ie) and application forms are also available on the site with the option to apply online. We are also offering a discount for entrants to apply and pay before June 13th which is €115.00 as opposed to the full fee of €130.00. If you have not attended a rally before please have a look at our itinerary and know you will be more than welcome. It is a fun filled week but as our theme this is Saints and Scholars we are also hoping provide an educational element with a guide to VHF etiquette and safety awareness as well as an exceptional ten days enjoyment on the water.



## Cookery Corner

### SIMPLE GOULASH

#### Ingredients:

- 1 pack of minced beef
- Salt and pepper
- 1 onion diced
- Glug of red wine ( if available)
- Ragu traditional spaghetti sauce
- Grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 small box of elbow macaroni
- Shredded cheese

#### Method:

Cook macaroni and set aside. In an oiled pan brown the seasoned beef and add onions and cook until translucent. Add spaghetti sauce. Simmer for 15 minutes. Add macaroni and serve topped with Parmesan cheese.

### ORANGE CITRUS VINAIGRETTE

#### Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Dijon-style prepared mustard
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1/8 teaspoon cracked black pepper
- Salt to taste

#### Method:

Combine the orange juice, vinegar, mustard, honey and pepper in a container with a tight-fitting cover. Cover and shake well until combined. To store, refrigerate for up to 1 week. Shake well before serving.

### TIPS & TRICKS FOR THE SHIP'S GALLEY

#### Uses for Coffee Filters...

- Coffee filters make excellent covers for food in the microwave.
- If you break the cork when opening a wine bottle, strain the wine through a coffee filter.
- After frying, strain oil through a sieve lined with a coffee filter.
- Hold tacos. Coffee filters make convenient wrappers for messy foods. They soak up all the grease.
- Use them to strain soup stock and to wrap fresh herbs to put in soups and stews.
- Use as a disposable "snack bowl" for popcorn, chips, etc.
- Use them to sprout seeds. Simply dampen the coffee filter, place seeds inside, fold it and place into a plastic bag until they sprout.

### PLEASE SHARE

Have you got a favourite recipe or cookery tip? Please email to: [maevекelly@gmail.com](mailto:maevекelly@gmail.com) for inclusion in the next Aerial.



# Lifeboats

## Lough Ree Lifeboat Station

**Liam Sherringham**

In our almost two years in existence, the recent search and recovery operation on Lough Ree, has been the largest and longest search in which the Lough Ree Lifeboat has been involved.

From the time our own RNLI Volunteer Lifeboat crew made the initial rescue of John Trimble and David Warnock, right through to the recovery of Daryl Burke, the effort, commitment and determination of all the organisations involved shows that a local tragedy can very quickly become practically a national effort for resolution.

The Coastguard Helicopter, Rescue 118, was rapid in its response, relieved by Rescue 116 at one period. Athlone Sub-Aqua were the first divers, joined almost immediately by the Garda Water unit and other local Sub-Aqua clubs, and then by clubs from around the county, and finally the Navy divers. With the exception of the Garda and Navy units, all these groups are also volunteers. Search and Rescue groups also attended from Dublin, Northern Ireland and River Boyne.

Civil Defence units were involved on the water and walking the shoreline. The Inland Fisheries personnel were doing likewise and had electronic scanning apparatus on their boats. The local angling clubs were out in force and were joined by many visiting anglers, all searching the shorelines. Teams of search dogs were provided by the PSNI and Search & Recovery units.

Baysports, of Hodson Bay, put their premises, with their excellent facilities, at the disposal of the search parties. The Hodson Bay Hotel very generously accommodated the families of the 3 fishermen. Local businesses and individuals, and the business community of Portadown, donated food and refreshments for the search teams. The local media are to be commended for constantly asking if they could provide any assistance.

Accidents will happen, unfortunately, but when they do, the response that was witnessed over the 17 days of this search operation shows that the spirit of this country still lives.



## Athlone Branch AGM

8th November 2013

**Kevin Clabby**

The branch AGM took place at Lough Ree Yacht Club and was very well attended. Outgoing chairman Kevin Clabby gave an account of the busy programme of events of the past year and included an update on the Dunrovin project which at the time had been parked by the Executive of IWAI due to cost.

The following were elected as officers of the branch for the coming year: Chairperson Siobhan Bigley, Vice Chairman Kevin Clabby, Secretary Brian Corcoran, PRO Dave McCabe. The position of treasurer was not filled but since the AGM Niamh Herraghty has agreed to take the treasurer's position. Paul King is joining the branch executive also. The branch plans to hold a number of Cruises in Company and a mid-summer party to celebrate sixty years of the branch and the IWAI.

### Officers of the Committee



*Siobhan Bigley  
Chairperson*



*Kevin Clabby  
Vice Chairperson*



*Brian Corcoran  
Secretary*



*Niamh Herraghty  
Treasurer*



*Dave McCabe  
PRO*



*Paul King  
Membership*

# Green & Silver 2013 Part 2

Nora Sleator

Staying aboard when possible during our stay in Dublin was a great experience. One thing it did reinforce was the knowledge that boats and cars don't mix. Most of the time we travelled by bus, made easier by the fact that Louis had his brand new free travel pass, and also that the 15B passes the end of our road and brings us right in to the Basin. When bringing a lot of baggage this wasn't possible so our logistics officer (Mary) came into play again, ferrying us in and out. Parking for any length of time was almost impossible.

Walking over to some of the many restaurants around the Basin and enjoying Sunday Brunch was just one of the really pleasant experiences. Louis managed to take part in some of the activities organised by the Dublin Rally Committee, visiting the Lord Mayors coach and the National Maritime Museum in Dun Laoghaire.

The Rally linked in with the Dublin Docklands Summer Festival, a weekend of celebration on Grand Canal Dock that took place on Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th May with entertainment and competitions of all kinds on water and on land, organised by Waterways Ireland and the Docklands Business Forum, in association with Dublin City Council. This brought a great buzz and lots of visitors along with a mention in the Irish Times. The Heritage Boat Association also took the opportunity to hand over the proceeds of their "River Rats" calendar to the Irish Cancer Society. Fair dues to those that took part and the artist involved, it was a terrific production. The barbeque that night was hampered by somewhat inclement weather but our chefs, Mick Kinahan and Declan Enright remained undaunted and bashed on regardless. Thanks guys.

Moving out along the Grand took a lot longer than coming in! The move up to Mespil Road took place mid-week, with Louis on "Walkabout" accompanying Kate on the "Elizabeth Rose", along with the "Busy Bee". The food market at Lock 4 appealed greatly to the hungry travellers having come all the way from Ringsend! For some of the stallholders it was the first experience they had of seeing boats actually moving through the locks. We joined the barges which had moved out earlier and settled in for the next few days. Later on that evening Louis, Niamh and I helped "Aqualgia" move out, and a few others move on towards Portobello. This turned out to be a slightly surreal experience, walking from lock to lock in life-jackets and carrying lock-keys, waiting at pedestrian lights while office workers were making their way home beside us giving us rather odd glances while passing by. Niamh was photographed by some American tourists who were fascinated by the activity, her red hair, green jumper and unpronounceable name. I hope they didn't go back home and tell everyone this was a regular occurrence. The water levels were well controlled by Waterways Ireland



*Walkabout at Mespil Road*

resulting in the Railway Bridge, which is the lowest on the canal, proving no problem. The weather was kind to us and we were able to enjoy the experience of talking to our missing crew member, Clodagh, by Skype to New Zealand, from the deck, while enjoying breakfast on the Saturday morning. Memories of trying to find public phones along the Shannon River to assure my mother that we were still afloat seem so distant now. Technology has made communication along the Waterways a totally different experience.

Sunday morning, having made arrangements with WI, we experienced a very quiet and pleasant trip up to Portobello, where we enjoyed the company of friends, who live around the corner, for the afternoon and were joined by "Affaja" which was to travel out with us the following day. A crew change took place as the First Mate had to work and so Niamh managed to get time off and join Louis for the journey to Hazelhatch.

Monday proved to be one of the worst days of the entire journey for a number of reasons. Leaving Portobello at 07.35 the weather turned extremely wet and chilly. Niamh and Louis spent much of the morning as a source of entertainment to the commuters at the Luas stops who were befuddled that we do this for fun. The first problem was experienced at Lock 1 where the amount of rubbish floating behind the gates meant that they could not be fully opened. This was repeated at Lock 2. The sight of large black plastic bags full of rubbish floating among other unmentionable objects was really sad.

The next hurdle was the Naas Road bridge. Previously not a problem, this has now



*Caption*

been reinforced underneath by sprayed concrete, which has resulted in a major restriction to the curve of the bridge. Louis and Niamh inched "Walkabout" through by hand, moving from one side to the other to avoid small bumps in the concrete. The entire proceedings of course disturbing the multitude of spiders which grew bigger and more numerous as they passed through, or so Niamh would have us believe! Louis says they were all on her side of the boat.

The water levels were high due to the large number of Heritage Boats that had passed through the day before. There was therefore a wait for the level to be lowered, in order to get under the water pipe at Lock 5 and then it was time to clear the weed out of the water filter at Lock 7, the procedure being made easier by being able to tie under the double bridge and stay dry. "Affaja" continued on ahead as they were hoping to make it to Sallins that day. By now the three vanloads of WI workers had lock control down to a fine art and progress through the locks improved greatly. Weed proved to be something of a problem as the barges had cut a lot of it on their way through. Reaching Hazelhatch at 2.45, Mary arrived to bring the wet, tired crew home to hot showers which were greatly appreciated.

The following week-end being the June Bank Holiday, Captain and First Mate headed down and proceeded to wend our way west again. Catching up with "Elizabeth Rose" and "Busy Bee" at lock 13, we worked our way towards Lowtown. Water levels were high resulting in having to rack off water before we could proceed onwards. We appreciated how much more we could see of the countryside from the deck of "Walkabout" as we had been much lower down when travelling in the Elysian. The view over the Lyons Estate was particularly lovely as we could now see over the walls. The weather got bad as we moved towards Sallins, mooring up on a lovely well-kept piece of bank on the south bank in the teens of rain. When it stopped we realised why it was so empty – access to the road and village was impossible as we were locked in! Having moved across to the other bank the three crews got together for a nightcap, toasting Clodagh who was celebrating her 20th birthday out in New Zealand.

Kate decided to stop and go back a short distance to do some painting so we continued to head west along with "Busy Bee" the following morning. The weather had improved and meeting up again with assistance from WI, progress was good. The water level before Lock 17 was low and we grounded briefly when trying to come alongside the jetty below the lock. It was such a lovely day we tied to a tree for lunch just short of the Blackwater feeder, and stopped again for ice-cream in Robertstown. Reaching Lowtown at 16.20 we settled on the new short-term moorings above the lock. A major improvement from the last time we were there.

The commitment to spending every week-end en route was at this stage starting to drain the energy levels, and transport to and from the boat beginning to become problematic again, so we agreed to stay in Lowtown until the First Mate (myself) finished work on the 19th June and we were free to complete the journey without any further stops. Bank Holiday Monday was a leisurely day strolling around having a look at all the new facilities before packing up and heading home for the last time.

Look out for part three - the conclusion in the next issue of the Aerial.



## RANDOM FACTS ABOUT...

### *The Grand Canal*

In total the main line of the canal is 131 kilometres (81 mi) with 43 locks, five of which are double locks.

#### Disasters

In December 1792, there was a major accident on the Grand Canal. A passage boat left Dublin bound for Athy. It seems that one hundred and fifty people, many of them drunk, forced their way onto a barge, in spite of the captain warning them that the boat would capsize if they did not leave. Near the eighth lock, five men, four women and two children drowned when the boat capsized. The rest of the passengers escaped.

On the evening of Saturday, 6 April 1861 in Portobello Harbour, a horse-drawn bus, driven by Patrick Hardy, had just dropped a passenger on the canal when one of the horses started to rear. The horses backed the bus through the wooden rails of the bridge. The bus, horses and six passengers inside the bus, plunged into the cold waters and were drowned. The conductor was able to jump clear and the driver was pulled from the water by a passing policeman.

#### Ownership

Until 1950 the Grand Canal Company had ownership of the canal, when the Transport Act, 1950 transferred the canal to Córas Iompair Éireann. This situation continued until the Canals Act, 1986 gave it to the Office of Public Works. Under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, a new all-Ireland body called Waterways Ireland was established in 1999 and assumed responsibility for most inland navigable waterways including the Grand Canal.



# Branch Notice Board

## Party time...

**Saturday 12th July:** There will be a 60th Birthday celebration with drinks reception followed by a BBQ and music and dancing. Venue is Athlone Golf Club, Hodson Bay. Tickets available from Niamh Herraghty, and either Siobhan Bigley, Jennifer Corcoran or Niamh can be contacted for further information.

## And - of course...

**25th July to 3rd August:** Shannon Boat Rally. See page 2 for the full itinerary.

## Don't forget...

**September:** Cruise in Company to Lecarrow for 'Pudding and Porter'. Commodore is Brian Corcoran. Keep an eye on the website for more information.

## Plus...

**Thursday 23rd October:** There will be a launch of the 60th anniversary book written by Brian Cassells held in the Aiden Heavy Library in Athlone at 7pm.

## Pencil in...

**October:** End of Season Cruise in Company. Keep an eye on the website for the date.

## Very important...

It's in all our interests to lobby our local councillors regarding the proposed Waterways Ireland Canal Bye-laws. Contact Siobhan Bigley for pre-printed postcards. It's very simple to sign your name and post them off.

# RNLI Round Lough Ree Fundraising Cycle

**Brendan Finnegan**

Inaugural Lap of Lough Ree Charity Cycle in aid of Lough Ree RNLI Lifeboat.

On Sunday, 30th March 2014, the local Fundraising Branch of the RNLI Lifeboat Station on Lough Ree held their first "Lap of Lough Ree" 85k Cycle. Departing from The Bounty Rugby Club, the cyclists went clockwise around the lake heading north, up the Roscommon shore before 'cutting the corner' in Knockcroghery and going to Lanesboro, where they had a pit stop and were treated to some delicious food and cakes. Back on their bikes, they continued South East to Ballymahon, before turning South and heading for home and back to The Bounty. The first cyclists back surprised us all at how quickly they completed the Lap. They admitted that they hadn't stopped for cake!

The organisers of the cycle would like to thank our various sponsors, all the Volunteers, The Garda and Motorcycle Outriders, Athlone Sub Aqua and everyone who took part, especially those of you in the IWAI. All of whom helped make the cycle the success it was. We look forward to welcoming you all back in 2015 for the 2nd Lap of Lough Ree.

We are currently in the process of planning our Annual Open Day which will take place during the summer, and look forward to welcoming you all to the Station. Date and full details to follow.

If you would like to kept up to date on the various goings on with Lough Ree RNLI Lifeboat, please visit our facebook page or contact us on [loughreernli@gmail.com](mailto:loughreernli@gmail.com) to be added to our mailing list.

## ATHLONE BRANCH IWAI MEMBERSHIP FEES:

(Note that membership is from January to January)

- Single Membership: €44.00
- Family Membership: €55.00

