

Athlone Aerial

NEWSLETTER OF ATHLONE BRANCH INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND
January 1998.



A Very Happy New Year!

The next meeting of the Athlone Branch of I.W.A.I. will take place in Sean's Bar, Main St, Athlone on Monday 12th January at 8.30pm.

Coming Events:

Jan 16th:

Pat Lawless will give a talk about "Sailing Single Handed Around the World" in the Shamrock Lodge Hotel at 8.30pm.

Jan 24th:

Royal Canal Music Night in Pat Newman's, Kenagh. A Bus will leave Sean's Bar at 8.30pm. sharp. Contact Damien Delancy at 0902 75620 to book your place. A great night's entertainment is guaranteed. If you can't come, send a spot prize to support this worthy cause.

Jan 30th:

Dublin Branch Dinner Dance. Contact 01 2895593.

Feb. 20th:

Walter Borner's lovely slide show of the Shannon, in the Jolly Mariner at 8.30pm.

March 20th:

Ruth Heard's Film Show and Harry Rice Competition, in the Shamrock Lodge Hotel at 8.30pm.

April 15th - 17th:

Easter Weekend Cruise in Company. Get your boats ready and help others to get ready also. More details nearer to the event.



Great News

The following is from the Irish Independent Newspaper as follows:-

"Bridging links with the Past"

"The new state of the art bridge linking two counties is to be named after a man who devoted his life to waterways.

The bridge, spanning the River Barrow and linking Counties Carlow and Laois, will be called after the late Bill Duggan from Carlow.

He was associated with Carlow Rowing Club, the Irish Amateur Rowing Union and the Inland Waterways Association.

The bridge will help to alleviate chronic traffic congestion in Carlow town and provide a new by-pass route to the midlands."



Membership Subscriptions.

Yes, it is that time again - comes around real quick, don't it! £12. is the amount due and we would be real pleased to receive same as soon as possible, pardner.



AGM Report

We had a good attendance at our AGM in December - but we would still have welcomed more members attending. However those who came made our meeting interesting and lively.

The following officers were elected for the coming year:-

Chairman - Harry Nugent
Vice-Chairman - Declan Walsh
Secretary - Evelyn O'Connor
Treasurer - Sean Fitzsimons
Development Officer -
Dave Pragnel
Hon. Auditor - Reggie Redmond

Chairman's Report

On behalf of our members of the Athlone Branch of IWAI, I wish to thank our President Mr. Liam Darcy his committee and the Council members for their assistance and guidance over the past year.

1997 will be remembered as the year that saw the passing of some of our most dedicated members, Mrs. C. Rice and Mr. G. Cox, R.I.P.

It will also be remembered for the completion of phase 1 of the new Marina in Athlone, I must congratulate the Westmeath Co. Co. and the Urban District Council and all others for their input into this fine project. I was informed today that phase 2 will be completed by 1998 to the same high standards as phase 1.

I wish to thank and congratulate all members of the various committees involved throughout the year and in

particular the whit-end-of-season rally, peoples regatta, and especially Mr. Denis Tracey the Commodore of the Shannon Rally that was so very successful.

Branch Matters.

The branch committee had a busy year dealing with a variety of matters ranging from water pollution, planning applications, rallies etc. We are constantly in communication with the various Co. Cos. in our area and with the Lough Ree Conservation Group, to establish their future projects and plans and to put forward our views and plans that would be in the best interests of our waterways. The direction the Branch and Association should be taking in relation to these matters can only be achieved by its members voicing their views and putting forward their proposals. Consequently we need your support at our monthly meetings.

Development Plan Lough Ree

A submission from the branch was forwarded to Athlone Chamber of Commerce who are undertaking a study for a Development plan for the Lough Ree area. Our submission included new and upgrading of harbours, sanitary facilities and improved pump-out stations and the Glasson harbour project. This plan would appear to be similar to that of the Shannon Corridor study in 1994, I only hope that this study is more fruitful.

Pump-out Stations

The new bye law has now been fully operational since July '96, but the law itself has failed us. There is only one (1) to be established at Athlone when phase 2 of the new marina is completed. Considering there are 100's of cruisers and yachts moored or berthed in the Lough Ree area leaving the proposed Athlone station non viable to yachts is not satisfactory for our members. We have endeavoured to persuade County Council to improve the situation but to no avail, but we will persevere until we achieve our goal.

Safety

Unfortunately water related sports always claims its casualties, and again this year being no different, we should be ever

vigilant in our approach to safety, whether it being maintenance of boats, wearing of buoyancy aids, or good seamanship in open waters and harbours.

There has been an increase in jet skies and power boats in the Lough Ree area as a result of being banned in some other lakes. Their seamanship in harbours and in open waters has caused some concern. The direction the branch and Association should be taking can only be achieved by its members voicing their views at the monthly meetings.

ISA/IWAI Scheme.

ISA and IWAI are co-ordinating to establish whereby personnel may be trained and or tested to qualify for a certificate of competence with international recognition. We hope this will be finalised early in '98. Capt. S. McNamara is our representative to Council for this scheme.

Harbour Hoggers.

Over the past few years there has been a large increase of privately owned craft on our waterways and not all of these owners/skippers are members of our Association. This has given rise to some owners using public harbours/quays as their own berthing place. These have become known as Harbour Hoggers.

In 1992 a new bye law was enacted to enable craft to berth or moor at the same harbour/quay for NOT more than 5 consecutive days and NOT more than 7 days in any one month. This association has become embarrassed by some of our members blatantly disregarding this law. This is not confined to our area but has become very prevalent on our waterways. We have been in touch with the Shannon Waterways Authority and we have assured them that we do not condone our members actions. If some members wish to get information on berthing or mooring facilities please contact the committee or other members who may advise them.

Dunrovan.

The late Mrs. Cynthia Rice, R.L.P. passed away in August 1997 and in her will she bequeathed the property of Dunrovan at

Coosan Point to the Athlone Branch, I.W.A.I., with some stipulations.

- a. If we accept it, it is to be used as a club house/meeting place
- b. if we accept - any developments taking place - as many of the existing trees shall be retained.
- c. The property CANNOT be sold by I.W.A.I.
- d. If we do not accept it the property will be sold and that we will get one seventh of the proceeds.

There is a sub-committee at present sitting and Feb'98 an EGM will be held and the committee will be putting forward its proposals for members to vote on.

If members wish to make proposals, please submit them in writing to me by 20th January '98 to enable the committee to examine all facets. The property is presently occupied.

Conclusion

The foregoing is only just a part of the workload the committees gets through. We are constantly seeking experienced and new members to advise and assist. The direction the Branch and Association should be taking can only be achieved by taking account of YOUR views and proposals.

I personally wish to thank and congratulate the work and support the branch officers and members who attended the monthly meetings, the Rally committee, the Aerial committee and the ladies who always come up trumps at our social evenings, for making my year a very pleasant one.

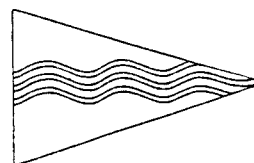
Harry Nugent, Chairman, Athlone Branch.

Treasurers Report:-

The following two pages are the report as compiled by Reggie Redmond, Hon. Auditor, ably assisted by Sean Fitzsimons, Hon Treasurer.

Our membership was up to 154 last year, but there is plenty room for more, lots more.

ATHLONE BRANCH I.W.A.I.



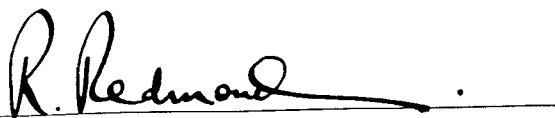
Income & Expenditure A/c - year ending 30th September 1997

INCOME	1997	1996
Subscriptions	£ 1,890	1,863
Film shows	29	-
End-of-Season Dinner	-	40
Surplus on Sales	167	780
Deposit Interest	70	215
	<u>£ 2,156</u>	<u>2,898</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Athlone Aerial (inc. postage)	£ 551	597
Stationery	-	87
Loss on Film Shows	-	62
Insurance - I.W.A.I.	609	548
Capitation Fees - I.W.A.I.	228	222
Audit Fee - I.W.A.I.	30	30
Harry Rice Competition	30	38
Donations	119	-
Bank Charges	54	54
Sundries	58	194
Depreciation on Computer	320	-
	<u>£ 1,999</u>	<u>1,832</u>
		1,066
Transfer to Development Reserve	-	1,000
Surplus to Accumulated Fund	<u>£ 157</u>	<u>£66</u>

Balance Sheet as at 30th September 1997

ASSETS	1997	1996
Bank - Current A/c	£ 749	713
Bank - Deposit A/c	567	558
Building Society A/c	9,268	9,207
Cash on hands	-	1,411
Debtors	96	265
Stock for sale	1,182	1,225
Prize Bonds	105	105
Computer & Printer 20		20
Additions 900		
Depreciation 320	600	
	<u>£ 12,612</u>	<u>13,504</u>
 <u>LESS LIABILITIES</u>		
Creditors	£ 518	1,567
	<u>£ 12,094</u>	<u>£ 11,937</u>
 REPRESENTED BY		
Accumulated fund at 1.10.95	£ 6,344	6,278
Surplus for 1996	157	66
Development Reserve	5,400	5,400
Simpson Bequest Fund	193	193
	<u>£ 12,094</u>	<u>£ 11,937</u>

Certified Correct



Reginald Redmond, B. Comm.
Hon. Auditor

End of an Era

The following article appeared in the Sunday Times newspaper lamenting the passing of the Morse Code as the official international language of distress:-
"The code, invented 165 years ago by Samuel Morse, an American painter, led directly to the development of the telegraph and has helped save thousands of lives. The international emergency code word SOS - dot, dot, dot, dash, dash, dash, dot, dot, dot- will become the stuff of history. It will be replaced by the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) - an automatic position-signalling system routed through satellites with built-in two-way radio.
The loss of Morse is being mourned by radio operators across the world. It has been used by ships and travellers in distress and spelt out defiant radio messages from London to the French resistance during the second world war"
"Morse was invented in 1832 — since then thousands of ships, including the Titanic, have sent out the SOS call.

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EPA - Licensing of Pig Units.

We understand that the EPA have contacted the owners of large pig units with a view to establishing a register of these units for licensing.

The large units, ie over 1,000 sows, are being targeted at first. By March 10 these units will have to be licensed. By June 9, units of 700 will be licensed.

The licensing process is very detailed, information on pig numbers, slurry production and disposal and efforts made to reduce odour are required before license is granted.

We, in the Inland Waterways hope this is a first step in containing this source of pollution of our waterways and we welcome this development.

Zebra Mussel

Further to our article in last month's Aerial concerning this invader of our waterways a lively discussion took place at our Council Meeting concerning ways of dealing with this mussel, which is very difficult to remove from whatever surface it attaches itself too.

It has been discovered that the mussel lessens its grip under water, so one way to get it off the boat could be to run a rake, with a net attached (to catch the dislodged mussels), along the vessel's bottom underwater. Do remove the mussels, as it is useless to leave them in the water. Remove them and drop them into salted water, or leave them to die naturally out of water.

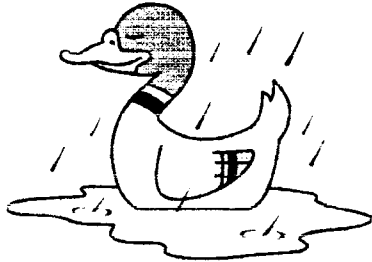
The question was asked "Are they eatable?" No they're not!
Pity, what a different attitude would be taken - monster to millionaire-maker!



Athlone Aerial

NEWSLETTER OF ATHLONE BRANCH INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

February 1998



Yes! Even the ducks have had enough.

The next meeting of Athlone Branch, I.W.A.I. will take place in Sean's Bar, Main St., Athlone on Monday, 2nd February, 1998 at 8.30pm.



Membership Fee £12. now due - First red X!!

Coming Events

Feb. 20th - Walter Borner's Slide Show. Anyone who has attended Walter's previous shows, know what a treat his slides are. The evening is always a lovely reminder of the summer time Shannon in the midst of winter. Definitely not to be missed. Come to the Jolly Mariner at 8.30pm.

Feb. 21st - E.G.M. at 11.00a.m. in the Prince of Wales Hotel, Athlone.

See details on enclosed Notice.

Feb. 21st - Royal Canal Music Night in the Lough Ree Inn. It's a great night's entertainment and for a good cause - don't miss it. Please bring a spot prize with you.

March 20th - Ruth Heard's Film show from the Archives of the Inland Waterway's Association. Also this is the evening of the presentation of the Harry Rice Cup.

So please get your works of art ready and send to Rosemary Furlong, Coosan, Athlone before the end of February.

This competition is open to everyone, sailors of any age may enter!

April 10th - 13th.

Easter weekend Cruise-in-Company.

Hope you have your boat ready. It has been a while since we have had an Easter Rally, but this year it is falling later into the season. It will be nice to see this rally happening again.



Snorting in Keenagh!

Well it had to happen, some even got stoned on the bus coming home. These dreadful occurrences happened to the motley and loyal crew, who innocently set out to Keenagh to raise funds for the Keenagh Branch, RCAG. When gathering in Sean's Bar before departing by bus, snuff was bought and

was freely distributed to the crew before departure. The evening, in spite of such behaviour was a great success, the usual gang from Athlone ably assisted by Paddy Brady and his hapless and bemused passengers sang and slagged everyone in Newmans pub in Keenagh, and Bridie, in the bus home really stoned quite a few! Thanks to the Royal Canal Band for their music and songs and to the many people who did a turn at the singing and dancing. Pat, you passed your audition for membership of the R.C.B. Thanks to all who came.



Pat Lawless

"I don't know much about navigation, I never studied it, most people I knew who did, never went anywhere" sez Pat as he told us how he came to crossing the Atlantic three times and circumnavigating the world - all single handed.

From his early days, Pat had a longing to see the other side of the horizon, but he was in his early sixties before he got the opportunity to realise his dream of sailing across the Atlantic, single handed, to America, following the old trade wind route via the Azores - "go south until the butter melts, then turn right for America." His return journey was done in record time thanks to strong winds and the Gulf Stream. While most people would be content with that achievement Pat still had

the itch to go again, this time all the way around the world! His first attempt ended when rudder failure left him drifting without steerage off Africa. Fortunately he was rescued by a passing freighter en route to Capetown, but he lost his boat, which left him devastated. He hitched a lift on another freighter back to Limerick, but he still had the itch and before long started preparations for another attempt around the world.

Toyota dealers - O'Mara's of Limerick sponsored a new boat, and an energetic committee arranged the supporting programme.

At the age of sixty-eight, making him the oldest person in the world to attempt this feat, Pat set off on his second attempt to sail single handed around the world.

This time he was more successful, making stopovers in Brazil, Australia, Tasmania and Chile. On advice he decided not to round Cape Horn, but went north along the western coast of South America to Panama and through the canal to Florida. Fortunately he left Florida just before a hurricane arrived, and followed the Gulf Stream back to Ireland.

Pat's talk along with videos, kept us enthralled and amused for over two hours. The hospitality and prestige he received throughout the trip was impressive, being treated as a hero on local radio and T.V. and as an honoured guest of yacht clubs and navies.

"Were you afraid Pat?" - "No, it's very nice out there".

"Would you go again Pat?" asked the pretty teenager.

"I would, if you would come with me" sez Pat.

Even at seventy-one there's life in the old dog yet!

Athlone

There is not a lot happening in February, boating wise that is. Our inland waterways are full to overflowing with mighty floods, in some places doing dreadful damage to property and farm lands and animals, and in others, making an incredible wild beauty where the only movement is of birds, many of them visitors, who arrive and colonate these waters as their right.

But on land it is a different matter - especially in Athlone.

We mentioned the Golden Island Shopping Centre, which is now up and running, after a very successful Christmas season - 300,000 shoppers - and from the traffic holdups in the town, it seemed as if the bye-pass didn't exist.

However, the Centre is only the start of it. Work is still on going, and next April, the Cinemas should open, but in the area between the Centre and the Dublin Road, there is a huge development of more retail outlets and apartments, called Irishtown Central.

Dunnes Stores in Irishtown has received planning permission to expand its premises. If the government gives the go-ahead, we could have a new library, as a site has been chosen opposite Dunnes Stores, Irishtown.

Hotels.

We think, we cautiously say, that the building of the Silverlea hotel, at the new marina in Athlone, will go ahead. In January last, the Westmeath Independent reported that building is to commence at the end of January. Mr. Vincent Earls, Ballinasloe, one of the developers said the hold up was caused by

technical issues and 'other bits and pieces'. Mr. Earls said that an operator with a number of hotels around the country has been signed up.

Ballykeeran.

We all know the development at Ballykeeran, the hotel and the harbour. Well last year, the Barrett family bought the whole complex, and have registered a £2 million plan to renovate and expand the Lakeside hotel and marina. In the hotel there will be one of the biggest banquet rooms in the Midlands.

There will be The Lighthouse Restaurant in a new building attached to the Hotel, shaped like a lighthouse overlooking the lake and the Navigator Bar and Restaurant open 7 days a week and last but definitely not least - MV Goldsmith - the biggest ship built in Ireland for 20 years. This boat is a barge like structure and will have accommodation for 200 passengers with full bar facilities. It will sail on the Shannon from Carrick-on-Shannon to Killaloe. This will be a massive sight to behold, nothing quite like it since the Vikings visited us a few centuries ago!

We hope the final Phase of the development in connection with the Athlone Marina, that is the pump-out station and laundry, shower house and toilets will go ahead soon.

Some of you may have ventured to our local swimming pool, up in Retreat.

Now development has started on a new Sports Complex, on the Ballymahon Road, just beside the bye-pass road, which will also include a new swimming pool.

It may have taken many many years for anything new to happen in

Athlone, but now things are happening in spades.

The next decade will see enormous changes, which are at this time hard to judge, many older residents are sorry to see what looks like the death of Church St., but are just as glad to see the new development at Pearse St, on the Connaught side of Athlone, which will go a long way to bring back life to a street which had become so derelict.

Next summer, come and see for yourselves and let us know what you think from a river users view point.

Earls Court (Boat) Show

Sean Fitzsimons recollections-
At 8am. on Friday 16th January
2 car loads - 12 persons - left
Sean's on the Docks for London
for this scrumptious exhibition
of nauticalia.

We went Aer Lingus via
Stanstead, Liverpool St. to Old
Brompton Road. On the way we
loaded up with litres for home
and half-litres for the bedroom
party. We arrived intact at our
digs (a Mayo woman Mrs
Swift) and got settled in with
all people satisfied - £14.
P.P. Bed and Breakfast- and took
off for the show.

We had booked party tickets,
over 10 at £6 each and promptly
signed up as International
visitors, giving free entry as
often as you liked and we split
up.

The first person I met was Des
Leydon, and also met David

Dixon, Louis Sleator,
O'Malleys, Maddens and a Gang
from Galway. Old friend from
Cork and Limerick, Wm. Cannon
from Cushendall, Tom from the
Tall Ships, and sold 50 copies
of Green & Silver to the
British Inland Waterways, and
bought a life belt and life
jacket (I'm getting unsteady on
the old feet).

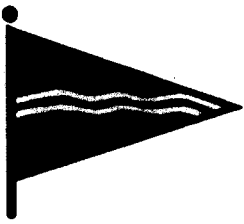
We met every hour on the hour
to the Guinness stand slap bang
in the middle of the show. They
sold 9,000 pints the day before
and they have the best barmen
in London, 10 of them all "Air
Traffic Controllers" on 2 weeks
leave. They even remembered us
from year to year by name and
our pub!.

We also met up with Fred and
Margaret Gildea, Gerry Monaghan
and Jackie. We ate Indian,
Chinese and British food, and
had a great late night party -
4am. in our room and were out
at a smashing session at a
Karioki where a 70 year old
stole the show.

The boats you ask? Well no one
bought one. I looked and saw a
50 footer for three quarters of
a million but sure mine is 60
foot so I gave up.

On the way home I mislaid my
Car Park ticket, but they were
very nice and I showed them my
air ticket stubbs and they
worked out the charge - £16 for
3 days. Then we all stopped at
Fuerys, Moyvalley for the piece
de resistance - Lovely place,
great food and a decent pint.

The show was something worth
visiting, maybe next year -
roll on the lotto!



Inland Waterways Association of Ireland

Cumann Uiscebhealaigh Intire na h-Éireann

Athlone Branch

Notice to Members

An Extra Ordinary General Meeting of Athlone Branch of the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland will take place on Saturday 21st February 1998 at 11.00a.m. in the Prince of Wales Hotel, Church St., Athlone.

Agenda

1. **Cynthia Rice Bequest details.**
2. **Sub-Committee Report and Recommendations.**
3. **Ballot on the options by the members.**

By order of Athlone Branch IWAI, Chairman, Henry Nugent, 20th January 1998.

Background Information

Under the terms of the last Will and Testament of the late Cynthia Rice a bequest was made which gave Athlone branch IWAI two options as follows :-

1. Cynthia gave her dwelling house with its appurtenances and grounds at Coosan Point, to the Athlone branch IWAI to be used in perpetuity by Athlone branch IWAI as a Clubhouse / Meeting- house for its members.
2. Cynthia further directed that if Athlone branch of the IWAI did not wish to accept the foregoing devise of the property at Coosan Point, that the property shall be sold by her Executor privately, and that the nett proceeds of the sale shall be divided equally between seven beneficiaries, one of whom is the IWAI.

Athlone branch were notified of the terms of Cynthia's will in September 1997, and a sub-committee was formed at the October 1997 meeting of the branch to examine the various implications for the branch in accepting, or not accepting the bequest, and to report back to the branch with recommendations.

The sub-committee report and recommendations will be presented to the members at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting on Saturday 21st February 1998 at 11.00am in the Prince of Wales Hotel, Athlone, and the members present will be asked to ballot on the options :- either (a) to accept the bequest of the property; or (b) not to accept the bequest of the property.

This is a very important issue for the branch, and all members are requested to make a special effort to attend the EGM. The meeting has been arranged specifically to deal with this one item of business, so that the members can be informed and can then vote on how they wish the branch to proceed.

Athlone Aerial

NEWSLETTER OF ATHLONE BRANCH INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND



Feeling like a March Hare?
Sorry, we haven't any.



The next meeting of Athlone
Branch, I.W.A.I. will take place
in Sean's Bar, Main St. Athlone,
at 8.30pm on Monday 2nd
March 1998.



!You Have Been Warned!

This is the final request for your
sub. for 1998, because we will,
with regret, have to stop sending
our Aerial to you if no
subscription is forthcoming
before our next Aerial in April.

To those of you who have paid
our sincere thanks.



March 1998

Coming Events.

16th-17th March.

Grand Canal 200 Tullamore. Details
below.

20th March.

Ruth Heard's Film show, based on
archival material from the I.W.A.I. and
always a must for nostalgia freaks. It
is also the evening when the Harry
Rice Cup is presented to the winners
of this competition. Remember to get
your entries in now, like immediately.
It's open to kids and adults, for stories,
poems or paintings based on your
experience of our inland waterways.

21st March.

This is lifeboat day in Athlone. Sean's
Bar has been for years the
headquarters on the day where the
volunteer flag sellers can get their
boxes and go out on collection
throughout the town. Volunteers are
needed., especially to man the new
Shopping Centre, so please contact
Sean's Bar if you can spare some time
during this day, (0902) 92358.

21st March.

An outing to Ballynacarrigy on the
Royal Canal. As usual a bus will leave
Sean's Bar at 8.00. Please phone
Damien Delaney 0902-75620 to reserve
your place on the bus.

22nd. March.

VHF Course. Details below.

10th-13th April.

Easter Weekend Cruise in Company. A
cruise in the Inner Lakes is suggested
for all you sailors who have your
vessels afloat and ship-shape in time.
Further details in the April Aerial.

VHF COURSE.

A VHF Course will be held in Lough Ree Yacht Club consisting of two lecture sessions.

1st Session - Sunday 22nd March from 11 am to 1 pm.

2nd Session - Sunday 29th March from 11 am to 1 pm.

Followed by an Exam for Licence on Friday 3rd April at 2 pm.

Course fee is £20.00 and Exam Fee is £15.00 making a total of £35.00.

Anyone interested should phone Damien Delaney (0902) 75620 A.S.A.P.

Grand Canal 200

The Offaly Branch in co-operation with the Tullamore based Grand Canal Bicentennial Committee invite all branches of the I.W.A.I. to travel by land and sea to celebrate the 200 hundredth anniversary of the arrival of the Grand Canal to Tullamore. The branch are liaising with O.P.W. and Offaly County Council to ensure that vessels of all sizes travelling to the event will receive every assistance. This event offers a unique opportunity to demonstrate the viability of Tullamore becoming a "major boating centre" (Brady Shipman Martin)

The Offaly Branch are particularly keen to welcome the return of any ex-working barges to Tullamore Harbour. Programs and registration

details are available from Offaly Branch (0506) 55831.

The festival will be throughout St. Patrick's week with the main events taking place on the 16th and 17th March.

A Navel Put-down.

The following exchange was overheard between the US Navy and the Canadian authorities.

Americans - "Please divert your course 15 degrees to the north to avoid a collision".

Canadians - "Suggest you divert your course 15 degrees to the south to avoid a collision."

Americans- "This is the captain of a US Navy ship. I say again, divert your course".

Canadians- "No, I say again, you divert".

Americans- "This is the Aircraft carrier USS Missouri. We are a very large warship of the US Navy. Divert your course now!"

Canadians - "This is a lighthouse. Your call."

Extraordinary General Meeting

This meeting was held in the Prince of Wales Hotel on Saturday, 21st February.

The attendance of nearly 60 people were seated in the lovely conference/ballroom of the hotel, and we would like to express our sincere thanks to Margaret Gildea, who allowed us to use the facilities free of charge. It was very much appreciated.

The notice may have come as a surprise to some of you, especially if you don't live near Athlone. So just to fill in the background - the property under discussion was willed by the late Cynthia Rice, RIP. This property is a beautiful site on the shore of Lough Ree, in the inner lakes. It has a converted Nissan hut called "Dunrovin" which was the home of the late Colonel Harry Rice, Cynthia's husband.

During their residence there, both kept the land in a beautiful condition - an Irish garden, with magnificent trees and shrubs, which screened the building from the water, yet allowed a beautiful view of the lake, in fact a perfect lakeside dwelling.

It was also the place where the germ of an idea was formed, which developed into the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland. There must have been great debates and discussions among the Rices' many friends.

After Cynthia's death, Athlone Branch learned that Cynthia had left this property to us in perpetuity or if we refused, the property was to be sold and the proceeds were to be divided between 7 groups, ourselves being one of the groups.

At our October, 1997 branch meeting a sub-committee was formed of Harry Nugent, Damien Delaney, Rosemary Furlong, Sean Fitzsimons and Reggie

Redmond Evelyn O'Connor and Declan Walsh.

The committee then got in touch with Cynthia's family and the executor of her will, with whom the general contents and conditions of the will were discussed. Then IWAI Council was informed of the bequest, and Council approved the formation of the sub-committee.

The land was then walked and the description is as follows:-
2 roods, 32 perches; and 2 houses, a one bedroomed house and a pad and some sheds, a forest and natural shrubs garden.

The committee then met with the Estate Solicitor, Mr. Egan.

The committee wrote to the Council's legal advisor, who advised that a trust would have to be set up to run the property if the committee should decide to keep the property.

Reggie Redmond then contacted the Tax people to see if we would be liable to pay Capital Acquisitions Tax. At the time of the EGM the matter rested as "we can't tell you until you actually own the property"! but we were assured (verbally) that we would get an exemption.

There were many meetings to discuss in full each item and in some cases legal clarification was required. The committee tried to understand what Cynthia envisaged for the branch when she made the bequest, and the committee's understanding was that the association should have a home/base/headquarters for meetings of the branch, and what better place than the place where it all started! At present there is a tenant dwelling in the house.

Some of the concerns of the committee were that if we should accept the property, the buildings could only be altered in a minimal way, the trees not

interfered with as little as possible, the shore frontage controlled, no overnight stays, no public use of the land or buildings and a tenant/caretaker resident who would provide security and maintenance for the property and give a modest income which could be used to offset the cost of repairs and maintenance and in general the property should be used as sensitively as possible to Cynthia's wishes.

To keep the property or not? The consensus of the sub-committee was to proceed with further investigations with a view to keeping the property, and the EGM was called as advised in the notice in last month's Aerial.

The result of the vote, after some lively discussion and searching questions from the floor, was a majority to go ahead with our investigations.

This will mean a further EGM, when the final decision of the sub-committee will be placed before the membership again.

All the work and investigations this bequest has caused has made us look closely at what we are about, and even if in the long run, we decide we can't keep the property, which would be a shame, Cynthia must be smiling at us as she has knocked us out of our complacency.

We will keep you informed of progress and if you have any comments to make, do feel free to write to us C/o Sean' Bar, Main St. Athlone.



Koosan Kitchen

*A lovely warm dish for a winter's day,
we hope you like it.*

Chilli Con Carne

Ingredients:

*1lb. Mince. 1 tbs. plain flour
1 chopped onion, Tin of tomatoes OR
6 medium tomatoes skinned
2 desert spoons. tomato puree
1 - 2 teaspoons. chilli powder
1 tin red kidney beans or equivalent
in dried beans, soaked overnight and
pre cooked.
5 or 6 mushrooms
1 tablespoon oil
Salt, pepper, parsley and mixed herbs*

Method:

*Fry mince, onion, mushrooms and flour
until browned. Add tomatoes and fry
until well mixed. Add beans (drained)
tomato puree, chilli powder, parsley
and salt. Mix well and cook for three
quarters of an hour on low heat or in
a medium oven. Stir occasionally.*

Serve with rice.

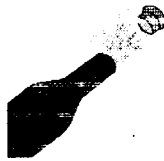


For Sale

Beeston Boiler in good condition -
Phone Sean Fitzsimons - 0902 - 92358

Athlone Aerial

NEWSLETTER OF ATHLONE BRANCH INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND



April 1998

Royal Canal News

Congratulations - We've got through the winter! An early spring, what more could we ask for - A long hot summer perhaps?

The next meeting of Athlone Branch, I.W.A.I. will take place in Sean's Bar, Main St., Athlone on Monday 6th April 1998 at 8.30pm.



Coming Events

10th - 13th April.
Cruise-in-Company - meet up at Ballykieran on Friday evening. It is hoped to visit Shannonbridge and then back to Hodson Bay - all depending on the weather.

29th May - 1st June
Cruise-in-Company - Ballykieran - Lccarrow-Hodson Bay.

27th June
Bar-B-Que at Hodson Bay
28th June
Peoples Regatta, Athlone.

24th July - 2nd Aug
Shannon Boat Rally.

25th September
Annual Dinner Dance and End of Season Rally.



We had two good outings, one in February to Lough Ree Inn and the other in March to Ballinacarrigy. Both events were very well attended and lots of money was raised towards the further development of the Canal in our local area. The visit to Ballinacarrigy was the first there, and was attended by a great crowd from Athlone, Keenagh, Ballymahon and new people from Mullingar and I believe a new place may be visited soon Moyvore. These evenings have become great social events and the music and talent is of world standard, and we defy anyone to disagree! Thanks to all who help to make the nights so enjoyable, from the Royal Canal Band to the singers and dancers, the ticket sellers, the spot prize givers, and Damien who masterminds the whole show.

DONT FORGET

ROYAL CANAL MUSIC NIGHT
SATURDAY 25TH APRIL
LOUGH REE INN, COOSAN PT.,
ATHLONE.

Ruth Heard Film Show

A good attendance was, as usual, very entertained by memories of the past on our waterways.

Ruth covered the years of '85, '86 and '97. Films of a visit to beautiful Lough Gill, of 'Lake Isle of Innisfree' fame, and the Tralee Ship Canal were also shown.

The presentation of prizes in the Harry Rice Competition went to the following:

Adult Section - 1st Ruth Borner; An Essay on "Observations through a port - hole of a Kingfisher catching fish".

Junior Section - 1st - Una Herraghty a beautiful article on all the activities she took part in on the river during the season of 1997. Full of photos to complement the written work, it was a work of art and information and fully deserved to win the Cup.

2nd- Andrina Sloyne - A letter

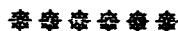
3rd - Valery Casey

4th - Zara Henshaw

5th - Isabel and Rowena Carroll

The last three winners were drawings.

Well done to all who entered, and although it is early days yet, do remember to keep this competition in mind as you enjoy the coming boating season.



I.W.A.I. Council A.G.M.

The following is our report of the activities of our branch during the past year as given by our Chairman, Harry Nugent:-

1997 saw the passing of two of our most dedicated members, Mrs. Cynthia Rice and Mr. G. Cox. R.I.P.

Branch Matters

The branch committee had a busy year dealing with a variety of matters ranging from water pollution, planning applications, rallies and

the late Mrs. C. Rice bequest. The branch worked in conjunction with the Lough Ree Conservation Group in putting forward our views and plans that would be in the best interests of our waterways.

Development

Through 1997 the branch had extensive meetings and discussions with our local Co.Co. and the Shannon Navigation Authorities, these meetings proved very fruitful for both sides and a lot of barriers were pulled down with the opening of ideas by each side. A submission from the branch was forwarded to the Athlone Chamber of Commerce who are undertaking a study for a Development Plan for Lough Ree area. Our submission included, new and upgrading of harbours, sanitary facilities, and improved pump-out stations. Also included was the Glasson Harbour Project.

Athlone Town Marina.

1997 saw the completion of the new Athlone Town marina. The council were going to charge for berthing, but after discussions, this was dropped, and when phase two is completed charges for use of the facilities will apply.

Harbour Hoggers

Over the past few years there has been a large influx of private boats on our waterways and not all of these owners/skippers are members of our Association. This has given rise to some owners constantly using the public harbours as their own berthing place and these have become commonly known as HARBOUR HOGGERS. This has become an embarrassment to our Branch and I would like to request that members refrain from this practice and to comply with the new regulations.

Dunrovin

The late Mrs. C. Rice RIP passed away in August 1997, in her will she bequeathed the property of Dunrovin at Coosan Point, Athlone to the Athlone Branch of the I.W.A.I. A sub-committee was established and its findings were put forward to the members at an EGM in Feb '98. The members elected to "Direct the sub-committee to proceed with all investigations required to clarify the implications for the branch with a view to accepting the bequest, and to incur whatever expenses that are required". The branch has handed over the portfolio to Mr. J. Lavery, Solicitors, Blackrock, Co. Dublin. A further EGM will be held in June 1998 to finalise the matter.



The Bridge at Clonmacnoise

All of us who have journeyed on the Shannon River have in our mind's eye the sight of Clonmacnoise as seen from the river, and that sight can only be called dramatic.

If, however, one approaches Clonmacnoise by road, especially the road from Athlone via Ballinahowan, the view is of the back of Clonmacnoise and of the opposite or west bank of the river and the idea of a bridge to cross over seems to be an almost expected item on the landscape, only it's not there.

And the west side of the river at present offers no clues to the whereabouts of a road or track which might have continued a journey beyond such a bridge.

We are all aware of the importance of Clonmacnoise as a centre of learning and commerce, a monastic settlement, and the then most important and central place in Ireland. The Shannon was and is the north/south axle, but surely the east/west axle didn't end in a cul-de-sac at Clonmacnoise!

About 2 or 3 years ago rumours started in Athlone about the traces of a bridge at Clonmacnoise being found.

As it has turned out these rumours were very true and a preliminary survey has been made of the river-bed just below the public jetty.

The survey was undertaken by the Irish Underwater Archaeological Research Team (I.U.A.R.T.)

The I.U.A.R.T. members came from sub-aqua clubs in Ireland and England who were then trained in basic underwater survey and recording techniques by the Nautical Archaeology Society. The divers involved came from Dolphin Sub. Aqua Club, Roscommon, Athlone SAC. - Derry McMahon; and Lisburn SAC. The team also had the help of O.P.W. people, John Ridley who directed traffic on the river, O.P.W. surveyor Gerry Woods, and the supervising archaeologist was Fionnbar Moore who is responsible for underwater archaeology for O.P.W. Advisors to the team were Colin Breen, Senior Fellow in Maritime Archaeology at Queen's University Belfast, Aiden O'Sullivan of Discovery Ireland, and Nessa O'Connor, archaeologist responsible for underwater archaeology at the National Museum of Ireland, all of these archaeologists dived at the site.

This survey was called a '*predisturbance survey*'. This involved searching the river bed by visual search and probe search. The visibility was very bad, as sediment was easily disturbed so divers had to probe using short blunt wooden dowel rods.

The first significant find was an oaken post protruding from the riverbed close to the Norman castle. A grid pattern was laid on the river bed and as objects were located, each position was marked on a plan, and as more discoveries were made across the river bed the outline of a support structure could be clearly seen crossing the river from the bank to bank.

The preliminary date of the items are around the 9th/10th century.

[To be continued next month.]

Athlone Sub-Aqua Club.

Recently in our local newspaper, the Westmeath Independent, an article was printed concerning the start of a fund-raising project to provide for new premises for the local sub-aqua club.

At present the headquarters for the club is based in a converted lifeboat the "Tigh na Mara", located just above the rail bridge in Athlone. This lifeboat has become inadequate for all the new and improved gear which the club has purchased over the years, so the need for larger premises is urgent.

The Athlone SAC was founded in 1972 and since then 500 divers have been trained and adults and children from the area continue to be trained. Apart from the sporting aspect of sub-aqua diving, the club has a long and proud association with search and rescue operations in the Shannon and other midland waters, and many times this service has been called upon by the community of the Midlands, especially in the tragic loss of a person, and the finding of a body can bring great relief to the grieving relations.

The club up to now has been funded by the subscriptions of members, generous donations from the people of the area, local Authorities, Lottery funds and local enterprises.

We in the Athlone Branch, I.W.A.I. have also benefited from the members of the club who provided us with stewarding of water based activities on the river, especially the annual Peoples Regatta,

the divers are always visible, ever ready to come to help anyone in difficulties, and without their presence these public festivals on the river would not take place.

The site for the new clubhouse will be built on land provided by the Athlone U.D.C. on the banks of the River Shannon in Athlone. The cost of the building will be in the region of £200,000 and the club has launched an associate membership scheme where subscribers pay £100. over 5 years. Already the club has raised £14,000 which was generously donated by Mallinckrodt - a large industry based in Athlone.

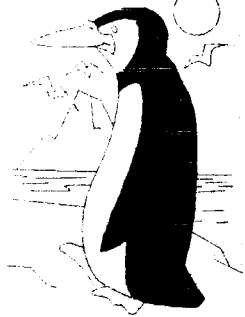
If you are interested in becoming an associated member you can write to Athlone Sub-Aqua Club, Tigh-na-Mara, Grace Rd., Athlone.

{Ed. -Little did Derry McMahon, founder member of Athlone Sub-Aqua Club, think how he would be involved in underwater archaeology. See the Clonmacnoise Bridge article. But that is not the first time members have been involved in rescuing historical artefacts from the rivers of the midlands. A big search for artefacts was done in the area of the ford on the River Suck, before the ford was removed as it was an obstruction to navigation on the way up to Ballinasloe - the completion of this navigation should be in 1999/2000.}



Athlone Aerial

NEWSLETTER OF ATHLONE BRANCH INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND



Forget about the Easter Holiday - it ran a close second to last Christmas, weatherwise!

The next meeting of Athlone Branch, I.W.A.I. will take place in Sean's Bar, Main St., Athlone, on Monday, 11th May at 8.30pm.



Coming Events:

29th May - Cruise-in-Company in the Ballykieran, Lecarrow and Hodson Bay area.

27th June - Bar-B-Q at Hodson Bay

28th June - Peoples Regatta, Athlone.

24th July - 2nd August - Shannon Boat Rally.

25th September - Annual Dinner Dance and End of Season Rally.



May 1998.

Masonite - In Trouble Already?

The following is the recent press release from the Environmental Protection Agency concerning problems with the Masonite factory near Drumsna, Co. Leitrim:-

"On 20th April 1998 the E.P.A. met with representatives of residents living adjacent to the Masonite factory near Drumsna, Co. Leitrim. The meeting was held following a request from the representatives and its purpose was to discuss the existing problems arising from the factory operation and to outline the remedial measures which Masonite will have to undertake to abate the problems.

Masonite Ireland Ltd. commenced production of moulded door facings at its plant near Drumsna, Co. Leitrim in July of last year. The plant is licensed by the Agency through an Integrated Pollution Control (IPC) licence which was issued in December 1995. Since start-up there have been many complaints to the Agency from local residents concerning noise, odour and dust emissions from the facility and recently these residents have formed the Annaduff, Jamestown and Kilmore Concerned Citizens and Inland Waterways Association to campaign for improvements at the plant.

The main points arising from the meeting were:

- The Agency acknowledged that there are ongoing noise and odour problems associated with the plant and accepted that these problems are affecting residents in the area surrounding the plant.
- The Agency also acknowledged that there have been unauthorised dust emissions from the facility on a number of occasions.
- The Agency listed the actions it had taken to enforce conditions of the licence including the serving of legal notices under the Air and Water Pollution Acts requiring the company to carry out a range of

improvements and the prosecution of the company in relation to odour incidents.

- The Agency outlined the improvement programmes agreed with Masonite Ireland arising from the legal notices including the timeframes for full compliance with all conditions of the IPC licence.
- The Agency confirmed that they are determined to ensure that the programmes are completed as agreed and that failure to resolve the noise, odour and dust problems will lead to appropriate further enforcement action.
- The local residents raised concerns of public health and the need for increased monitoring.
- The Agency have written to Masonite Ireland to re-emphasise the need to bring the improvement programmes to a timely and successful conclusion so that the facility can operate within the terms of the IPC licence."

Considering the serious nature of the complaints while the facility is, at present, operating at 40% capacity, we hope for the sake of the 270 employees, the environment, and the local tourist industry, that these problems are dealt with firmly by the Agency.



A Life on the Ocean Wave

by
Sean Fitzsimons

It all started in Sean's Bar - Pat Mc Mahon announced that he was going out to Tenerife to join Asgard for 2 weeks. As this was a long time ambition of mine, the next day I rings up Coisre An Asgard and got on to Christine, a very nice girl, who told

me that everything was booked up, but she would keep my name in mind.

Three days later Christine rang back with a cancellation and said she would ring again in 2 days. "No need, says I, I'm going!

On Departure day, I'm waiting for the train at Athlone Station - no train!, broken down!- one hour delay!

Panic! Grabbed a bus to Houston Station, got a Taxi - Plane one hour late!!! More **Panic!** Plane late - arrived Tenerife at 3.30pm - Coffee - Bed!

Granted lie in until 9am. and THEN it started.

Breakfast, then 3 of us got galley duty - 11am to 11am, and I mean clean the galley, then instructions from officers - Fire and Man overboard Drills, clean the sh-t out of the crows nest, watches etc. sorted out, at this stage I'm getting worried, but one of the gang is 4 months older than me Ha! Ha! Until I find out he is a professional Yachtsman from Howth and ferries yachts around the world! Our route was Tenerife to Las Palma, one and a half days, then Madeira, three days, then Lisbon, five days making 750 miles. We had a force 6 wind, two force 8 gales and one force 9 all on the nose. After 4 or 5 days I thought I was going stark raving mad and I wanted to go home!

Then I realised all of us were suffering, some more than others and from then on it was great.

We had 4 hour watches, which made sure you didn't get 8 hours sleep at night. We had a happy hour every morning at 9.30. You're wrong - it meant each watch got a section of the ship and you cleaned, scrubbed and polished the lot. We even had a

bar, everything from 7-Up to Brandy was 50p. but I drank very little as sleep seemed more attractive!!

St. Patrick's day was great, calm, sunny and hot. We had a parade with a fender like St. Patrick (which I brought home), shamrock, Harps, Balloons, a Service and a Hymn. We all swam in water 70 degrees warm and 3 miles deep in the Atlantic. With Drinks and a sing-song - it was great.

We went through a NATO navel exercise, got a wave from a helicopter and a sub . came up to greet us.

When on Las Palma, we visited the largest Volcano in the world, what a bang that must have been.

We saw some great sights, and I have great memories of night watch on a quiet ship - shush! - seeing stars on beautiful nights. Dolphins - we even caught a tuna fish and had it fresh for dinner, in fact the grub was plentiful and varied.

I got home and was sore for 3 days and kept waking up at 12 and 4 for watch. You ask would I do it again? Definitely. Actually twelve of us from Sean's bar are sailing out from Dublin to Portsmouth on the Russian ship "Mir" in August and my name is down for "The President" going to America next year.

God help my crew on the Lung. I am starting a Happy Hour this year! I strongly suggest you all go out and try it.

Capt. Sean "Blight" Fitzsimons.



Clonmacnoise Bridge

The brief introduction to the findings of the pre-disturbance survey by I.U.A.R.T. in last month's Aerial is continued here.

The very findings of wooden upright posts, across the river bed from the south bank at the Norman castle and a row of posts at the north bank seem to belong to the same structure - a bridge measuring about 116m.

Also found were a number of dugouts, some with tools abandoned in them. It could be speculated that these were used as ferries or in the actual construction of the bridge.

The pieces of joinery found at the site seems to date from the the 5th to 12th centuries A.D.

The conclusions made at this stage are that a bridge-like structure runs across the river in a north/south direction and that the wooden features found may be the top of an intact bridge sunken by its own weight into the bed of the Shannon.

It is also noted that the annals of Clonmacnoise make reference to a bridge there in the year 1158 AD.

There are many technical details mentioned in the report, which are in relation to the carpentry, the wood type (oak), and the joinery employed especially in relation to other sites and bridges excavated in England and the Continent dating from the same period as the Clonmacnoise site.

Of particular interest to boating activity in the area, the survey found that there was considerable disturbance to the river bed by the dropping and dragging of anchors, including breakage of a dugout and

the wash of propellers, especially reversing to come to a stop at the jetty, disturbing the placement of wooden items in and on the river bed. The survey team stated that there were 3 threats to the area, boating activity as shown above, evidence of metal detecting and unknown divers in the area.

Because this discovery is of great importance to our knowledge of bridge building in medieval times, it is hoped that further and more detailed excavations will take place, and that the many dugouts found will be protected from further damage.

Eventually it is hoped that an underwater video will be made of the area, and possibly a model of the bridge will be constructed to help us to see the type of workmanship which was attained at the height of Clonmacnoise's prosperity.



M.V. Goldsmith.

Michael and Kathy Barrett of the Lakeside Hotel & Marina on Lough Ree at Ballykeeran, proudly announce the launch of the **M.V. Goldsmith**, Ireland's largest inland passenger cruise ship.

Measuring 105 feet overall length and 19.5 feet beam, the M.V. Goldsmith cruises at 10 knots and boasts luxurious accommodation for up to 200 passengers, with full on board bar and catering facilities for small buffets or large banquets.

100% Irish built, managed and crewed, she is designed to sail anywhere on the Shannon, from Carrick on Shannon to Killaloe, and will offer an all year round service.

Sunday afternoon cruises will start at 12 noon from the docks beside Athlone Castle, taking an island cruise on Lough Ree, to arrive for lunch at 2.30 pm at the Lakeside Hotel & Marina, departing again at 3.45 pm via the Hodson Bay and arrives back in Athlone at 5.00 pm.

Fares £6.00 per adult; £3.50 per child under 12: or £15.00 per family (2 adults & 3 children).

Food Cruise will depart from the docks beside Athlone Castle at 8.00 pm via Hodson Bay to an island cruise on Lough Ree. Price per person £25.00 includes buffet and excludes beverages.

For further details contact 0902 85163 (telephone) or 0902 85431 (fax).

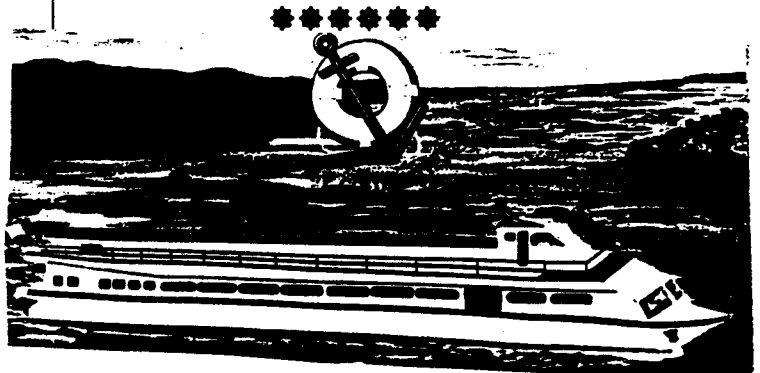
We wish Michael and Kathy every success in their venture with both the Lakeside Hotel & Marina and with the M.V. Goldsmith.

Recipe from Koosan Kitchen

June's Chicken.

6 Chicken breasts (skinned)
1 teaspoon black pepper
2 teaspoons paprika
3 ozs. butter
4 ozs. sliced mushrooms
20 oz. can condensed celery soup
4 ozs Gruyere cheese (grated) Cheddar will work as well.
Breadcrumbs Optional.

Rub chicken all over with pepper and paprika. In a casserole dish melt butter and fry mushrooms and chicken. Stir in soup and add milk if not liquid enough. Reduce heat and simmer for about half an hour until chicken is cooked. Or cover and place in oven and cook for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Cover with grated cheese and breadcrumbs and brown under the grill.



Athlone Aerial

NEWSLETTER OF ATHLONE BRANCH INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

June 1998

We wish you all a long, sunny summer, lots of fun to you who are going on some of the many rallies organised all over our inland waterways - good luck to the pot hunters, and our own best wishes to all those who want only to mess about on the river.

Coming Events:-

June 26th to 28th
Rally and Peoples Regatta
26th Friday - *relax aboard you boat.*
Saturday - 27th:-

1030 hrs. *Anchor at Coosan Point*
1045 hrs. *Meet at Public Jetty, Coosan*

1100-1200 hrs. *Tour of 'Dunrovin'*
1400 hrs. *EGM. Ballykeerin Hotel*
1900 hrs. *B.B.Q. Hodson Bay.*

Sunday - 28th

1200 hrs. *Depart For Athlone*
1300 hrs. *Athlone Marina.*

1300 -1800 hrs. *Peoples Regatta.*
Water related Activities
IWAI will participate.
Members wishing to enter events please contact Chairman or Secretary.

2200 hrs. *Fireworks Display*

July 24th to August 2nd -Shannon Boat Rally. Brochure enclosed.

Notice to Members

An Extra Ordinary General Meeting of the Athlone Branch of the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland will take place on Saturday 27th June 1998 at 1400 hours in the Ballykecran Hotel, Ballykeeran, Athlone.

A Deed of Trust in relation to 'Dunrovin' has been formed comprising of three (3) Trustees. Members wishing to nominate members to fill the three (3) trustee appointments should forward their nomination to Mrs. E. O'Connor, Secretary, IWAI, Athlone Branch, Kiltoom, Athlone, Co. Roscommon to reach the Secretary on or before 22nd June 1998.

Prior to the EGM the Executives have been granted authority to give a guided tour of 'Dunrovin', Coosan at 11.00 hrs. on Saturday 27th June 1998. Members wishing to take this tour should meet tour guide at 10.45 hrs. at Public Jetty at Coosan Point.

Agenda

1. Cynthia Rice Bequest.
(Background)
2. Sub-Committee Report.
3. Ballot.
 - a. Vote on Acceptance of Bequest
 - b. Vote on Deed of Trust
 - c. Vote in Trustees.

Dublin Rally on Grand Canal 1998

The following report by our own intrepid traveller - Mr. Sean Fitzsimons, just lately returned, thinner, from his voyage on the Asgard from the Canneries, is herewith printed for your instruction and edification.

"Dublin can be heaven..." as the song says and at rally time it certainly is. We had hired a Celtic Cruiser from Tullamore which was very fortunate as these 6 Celts were all lifted over the damaged 9th lock in a great organised operation by Murphy's transport. It's an ill wind that does no good, but the ensuing publicity was great - did you see page 3 in the Irish Times!

During the two weeks we got in - a reception by Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht and Isles Ms. Sile De Valera; a film night; Table Quiz in aid of Shannon Harbour Branch; a night out at the dogs; Poolbeg Boat Club (pints £1.60); the Ringsend Basin; a trip to Guinness Hop Store by boat (under O'Connell bridge with 3" to spare); a trip on the "Sligo Bay" with T.Ds., Senators, Planners, Dick Warner and IWAJ enthusiasts to explain to them our ideas o Dublin's Venice or St. Catherines Dock or Temple Bar afloat. I believe we caught their attention. Then on the 3rd. Saturday we were off at 7am for the lifting again and after a bunkering stop at Hazelhatch (no not fuel for the boats) we got to Sallins with 8 boats and Dick Warner again. We all agreed that it was great but little did I know what lay ahead. On Sunday, after the usual

ritual, we decided to try Naas. I have never been on such a beautiful stretch of Canal - five great locks, and on the banks hundreds of people walking, cycling, pushing prams and pony riding - it was heavenly. The harbour is 100 yards from the main street. We had a great night in a Pub with people and songs of my vintage and our great lock-keeper 'Martin' was a barman in the Town House Hotel and Bar xxx

My congratulations to Paul Kenny and his hard working committee but they must be disappointed by the almost non-attendance of Dublin members who were noticeable by their absence.

Come on, lads, if you fight for something you must use it when you get it, so next year "come and met me in Dublin on a sunny summer morning!"

P.S. On the way back on Monday, we had a picnic on Soldiers Island, do you know where that is on the Grand Canal?

Tall Ships

I heard that some of you would like to go on the tall ships.

Well twelve of us are going on the Russian Ship 'Mir' from Dublin to Portsmouth, cost about £350. one week all in and get yourself home.

If you have 2 the second person is at 50% and if you want to go on to Bremen it is also at 50%

I enclose an entry form below - all prices are in sterling.

BOOKING FORM Please send this form to:

Surname:

Address:

.....

.....

Postcode:

Voyage No: 1st Choice: *M.I.R.* 2nd Choice: 3rd Choice:

I do not suffer from any medical condition that is likely to affect my health on the voyage. Should this be the case I agree to supply a written statement from my doctor, giving details of the condition before I travel to join the ship.

Signature: Date:

TALL SHIP FRIENDS (GB) H/B SABAMATI
Scotland Bridge Lock, New Haw, Addlestone,
Surrey KT15 3HJ. *0044-1932-344084*
PHONE

Given Name:

Date of Birth: Sex:

Nationality:

Passport No:

Tel No: Fax:

Anniversary Mass

On 13th June, in St. Peter's Church, Athlone at 9.30am. Mass will be celebrated on the 1st anniversary of death of Gerry Cox R.I.P.

A Few Summer Do's

When using the VHF do use it sparingly. It is really for use in emergencies, and chattering about what to wear at the the coming night's BBQ aint an emergency! and kid's, call over to your pal's boat to make a date - do leave the VHF alone EXCEPT IN REAL EMERGENCIES.

When the holiday is over and its time to go home do have a proper berth for the love of you life, your boat! Would you abandon her where she's not wanted? Leave her where an official would take her away and then charge you a king's ransom to get her back?

Would you like to be called a - horror! - **Harbour Hogger?** Do remember you can only leave a boat at a public jetty or harbour for 3 days - things get sticky then and others still on their holidays get mad when they can't get into a berth because of abandoned boats and things get reported! So do look after the love of your life properly like she deserves - !

When you leave a place look around and see you haven't left anything behind, like money, litter, clothes, litter, toys, litter, children, litter,

Grandparents, litter, the dog, litter! **Do bring it home please!** or the nearest litter bin will do.

Really, the main things to bring with you on holidays on our rivers is a pinch of courtesy, a teaspoon of real information, and a big dollop of common sense and we guarantee a very happy time on the inland waterways.

The Zebra Mussel

Some of you will have already met Dreissena Polymorpha, our new arrival on the southern end of the Shannon, and not with any pleasure.

These mussels are very troublesome to industry, by attaching themselves onto the surface of inlet pipes, they also colonise ships bottoms and have no natural enemy in these waters.

They are spread around by being transported on hulls, and are thus carried into unaffected waters, by the movement of boats from area to area.

Foras na Mara, the Marine Institute has suggested that boat owners should help to curtail the spread of these pests:-

Before you move your boat:
Give the boat a high-speed run to help detach fouling mussels.

When you remove your boat:

- * Hose and brush down the boat.
- * Drain all bilge water, live wells, bait buckets, and waste.
- * Destroy and dispose of live bait.
- * Remove all weed from boat and trailer.
- * Clean down your engine.

Allow the boat to dry out and leave in sunshine for a week - longer if the weather is dull and wet.

Ensure that zebra mussels are not returned alive to the water.

Dry keep nets or dip them in hot water.

These mussels can survive for over a week out of water but in damp conditions, so always assume they are alive, and put them into the refuse sack, so they are put into land fills with the rest of our dry refuse. Flushing them down the loo is not a bright idea either.

For Sale

Brand new 5hp Johnson Outboard, complete with tank, etc., Long-shaft £650.00 Phone David 01-8255379.

For Sale:

M.V. "Scalpa"

Built 1920

37ft. Wooden Cruiser. Pitch pine on Oak. (37' x 9'3" x 3'6")

6 Berth. 70 hp Diesel. Enclosed Wheelhouse. Aft Deck. Wood burning stove.

Immense character and classic good looks.

Boat is under cover in Shannon Harbour

Requires TLC. Some deck planking needs replacing over the aft cabin.

Sale forced by change of circumstances. £10,000 No offers.

Contact Stephen Pile (h) 0404-40822

Skipped Charted Cruises on the Majestic River Shannon

Like to cruise the river Shannon, but without knowing anything about boats or boating or rules or charts but just being lazy and looked after?

Well you can, Paddy Brady, an experienced skipper, will take you on an idyllic cruise on his luxury cruiser. He knows where all the best places are, from craic and peaceful, from late nights, to laid back ease. His modern cruiser has accommodation of 2 double cabins, en suite and 1 Twin cabin en suite. If you are interested, phone Paddy at (00353) 01 8571498 or 086 2605600

L.W.A.L. Items

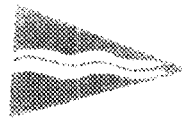
Do you need to purchase tie pins, scarves, flags, charts, burgees, etc., try Sean's Bar. Athlone - he usually keeps a good supply, just ask at the bar.

Reminder

If you intend going on the Shannon Rally, do bring something for the RNLI Auction. It's a great night's entertainment, apart from being a good subject to support.

The Palace Bar.

Many of you who visit Athlone, will have memories of the Palace Bar, the large building on the Square in Athlone. It's being pulled down even as we write, and a new building, covering the site of the Bar and the shop beside, will arise phoenixlike. The owner Paddy McCaul and partners, are building an even better bar and restaurant.



Athlone Aerial

NEWSLETTER OF ATHLONE BRANCH INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

The next meeting of Athlone Branch, I.W.A.I. will take place in Sean's Bar, Main St., Athlone on Monday, 7th September 1998 at 8.30pm.

Condolences

We wish to express our sincere sympathy to Mrs. Hartigan on the sudden death of Gerry, during the summer. May he rest in peace.

Hope you all had an enjoyable summer on the lakes, rivers and canals of Ireland. So the weather left alot to be desired - " what can't be cured, love, must be endured"!

A few words concerning Athlone, and how it looked this summer from the town bridge.

We had all the promise of developments of a hotel/apartment building on the site of the old Apparel Co. behind the new jetty, and on the Square, the promised development of the site of the Palace Bar and Byrnes Shop.

And what did we get - two eye sores, or to be more descriptive, two gaping holes, filled with rubble, exposed interior walls, waterfilled muddy pools, broken walls, in fact not unlike bomb sites. Both sights clearly visible from the town bridge and river.

Some hoarding could have made such a difference - but that's Athlone for you.

September 1998.

Coming Events.

End of Season Dinner Dance and Rally.

This will take place in the Ballykeecrin Hotel, Athlone on Friday, 25th September 1998 at 8.00pm for 8.30pm. Tickets - £14 each can be had from - Sean's Bar, Phone 0902 92358 or Harry Nugent - Phone 0902 89089 or Damien Delaney - Phone 0902 75620

End of Season Rally.

This will take place on Saturday and Sunday, 26th/27th September. Itinerary to be announced at the Dinner on Friday 25th.

Black Puddin' and Porter Nite!

This annual event of gastronomic delights partaken with copious amounts of Porter in a rural sylvan setting, i.e. Lecarrow will take place on September 19th. at the usual hours of commencement. Only Dublin Jackeens or Athlone Rednecks may attend officially, all others at their own peril.

38th Shannon Boat Rally 1998

The entry for the 38th Rally was the highest for a number of years - at 72. The weather whilst not brilliant was not as bad as one might imagine. No high winds and the rain at all the right times - night and meal-times.

We had a fantastic Bar-B-Q at Grange. (in the open, of course) thanks to Patsy Manley and team, and the general prize-giving was held on Cootehall Quay in the sunshine!

After meeting up in Rooskey, the boats went to Drumsna and it was when leaving here that the main P.R. exercise of the week took place as the fleet lined up outside Masonite for photos and media coverage of our protest against the plant.

Arriving at Grange we were pleasantly surprised to see that the new owners had quite extensive work in hand enlarging the harbour and providing jetties.

It was during the trip to Carrick that the "Funny Incident of the Rally" took place and Oscars were duly awarded by Commodore Tom Murphy for the "cock-up" of the week. It seems that "Samantha II" was towing "Aloma" (who had engine problems) alongside. Skipper Paul Gariand asked visiting skipper Michael Lynch to take the wheel while he went below. Michael followed instructions by carefully watching the temperature gauges but forgot to steer the boat! When bushes and trees started to appear outside the galley he discovered too late that he had run them both

ashore very neatly in a new harbour being dug by fellow rallyist Ray Kenny on the shores of Lough Boderg! The audience at the talent contest were brought to their feet by a ditty sung by Paul and Patsy which had as a refrain "Michael drove the boat ashore - Samantha Too ooh"

Up in Lough Kee the Rally was made very welcome at "The Moorings" by manager Des Gilletts. All were very impressed at the extended harbour and beautiful new finger jetties.

At the closing Dinner Chairman Paul Garland spoke about the Lough Tap bridge protest of the "Firedrake" over 30 years ago and exhorted us to ensure that "the struggle goes on!" I.W.A.I. President, Liam D'Arcy talked about Safety, mentioning that the Association hoped to have an input into the extension of Marine Rescue Service to inland waterways and told the gathering that power-boats, skiers, etc., would ultimately have to be controlled in some way.

The RNLI auction raised almost £2,500 - a new record and when the top awards were announced the attendance erupted into applause for a very worthy and popular winner as Tom Meegan and his family on "Misty Dawn" scooped the Premier.

As far as this reporter is concerned - the best rally for years.

Shannon Rally 1998

Results

Premier Award:	Tom Meegan "Misty Dawn"												
Open Boat Class:	1st David and Iarfhlaith Kelly "Odie III" 2nd. Lorna Keenan "Seedy Joe".												
Motor Cruisers over 30'	1st Ray Kenny "Eclipse" 2nd Paul Martin "Saryna Fair"												
Moror Cruisers 30' and under	1st. David Killeen "Lady Patricia" 2nd Richard Little "Steelaway"												
Barge Class	1st Cormac Kenny "76 M " 2nd Joe McCool "Snark"												
Overall Positions:	<table><tr><td>1. "Misty Dawn"</td><td>590 marks</td></tr><tr><td>2. "Eclipse"</td><td>573 "</td></tr><tr><td>3. "Saryna"</td><td>563 "</td></tr><tr><td>4. M. Groarke "Gen.Mayhem</td><td>540 "</td></tr><tr><td>5. Pat Nolan "Tinca Tinca"</td><td>526 "</td></tr><tr><td>6. "Lady Patricia"</td><td>521 "</td></tr></table>	1. "Misty Dawn"	590 marks	2. "Eclipse"	573 "	3. "Saryna"	563 "	4. M. Groarke "Gen.Mayhem	540 "	5. Pat Nolan "Tinca Tinca"	526 "	6. "Lady Patricia"	521 "
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4. M. Groarke "Gen.Mayhem	540 "												
5. Pat Nolan "Tinca Tinca"	526 "												
6. "Lady Patricia"	521 "												
Inspection of Boats:	1st "Misty Dawn" 2nd "Gen. Mayhem"												
Inspection of Open Boats	1st "Odie III" 2nd " Seedy Joe"												
Man Overboard	1st "Steelaway" 2nd Richard Murphy "Kri-Kri"												
Time Reliability	1st "Eclipse" 2nd Robert Maitland "Argonaut J"												
Mooring	1st "Tinca Tinca" 2nd "Misty Dawn"												

Results - Continued

Navigation	1st "Argonaut J" 2nd "Eclipse"
1st Mate	1st "Lady Patricia" 2nd "Leslie O'Hora "Bartragh Lass"
Rescue of Cruiser (over 30')	1st "Saryna Fair" 2nd "Misty Dawn"
Rescue of Cruiser 30' and under	1st "Steelaway" 2nd "Lady Patricia"
Doc Farrell Award	Billy Henshaw
Best Charter Boat	Donal O Siochain.
Ladies Boat Handling	1st Joan McCool 2nd Margaret Groark
Young Mariner	1st James Meegan 2nd Aisling Carroll
Novice Ladies Boat Handling	1st Evelyn Wickham "Cormorant" 2nd Hillary O'Donnell "Carraig Ban"
Waterways Quiz	Bridie Delaney.

More Millions

During the summer a report in the Westmeath Independent stated -

“Westmeath Co. Councillors have been informed that the overall quality of water in the county will be greatly enhanced when the £4 million Moate Sewerage Scheme is completed in the near future while the Athlone Main Drainage Scheme and the Treatment Plant in the town will have major knock on effects for water quality in Lough Ree and Lough Derg catchment areas”

The above is part of an intensive drive to clean up the Shannon. The firm of Kirk, McClur and Morton will liaise with the many government departments and County Councils involved - and with the E.C. to monitor how the funds are being used and, hopefully, to show by the use of very up-to-date monitoring programs, the reduction of pollution.

It has come as no surprise to the users of the Shannon, that the greatest source of pollution is nutrient enrichment of the water by run-off from Agriculture.

A laboratory has been set up in Roscommon, which will have the capacity to analyse 11,500 to 13,500 samples per annum.

Satellite colour coded maps will show land use, i.e. bog heather to pine forest, maps showing Run-off risk areas, also population trends, and animal density. In fact, all matters which could add to pollution of the river will come under close scrutiny.

The effect of the working of Bord na Mona, especially in relation to the bad seepage of peat into the river because of the lack of traps or badly sited traps, will also be taken on board.

It is to be hoped that all the money and effort will result in a better management of the Shannon and an enrichment of the lives of the people who live and work in the area, after all, people and their well being is the most important part of all this effort.

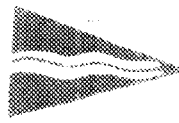
The River Shannon by Maeve Henry

This book has been recommended by Sean Fitzsimons who says “It has a lot of information and a great collection of photos (not big glosses) and should be on every boat bookshelf.”

It can be purchased in “Na Linte” bookshop, Main St., Athlone for £7.50 or from the publishers Conna Press, P.O. Box 5097, Dublin 7.

“Dunrovin”

During the Summer, we had the E.G.M. to discuss our decision in regard to the bequest of the late Cynthia Rice, R.I.P. concerning the property on the shores of Lough Ree. A huge crowd attended, 22 in all (out of a membership of 180 and rising) and the unanimous decision was that the Branch would accept the property - if any one is interested!



Athlone Aerial

NEWSLETTER OF ATHLONE BRANCH INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

The next meeting of Athlone Branch, I.W.A.I. will take place in Sean's Bar, Main St., Athlone on Monday, 5th October 1998 at 8.30p.m.

Coming Events:

A.G.M. ATHLONE BRANCH

The A.G.M. will take place in the Prince of Wales Hotel on Friday, 4th December 1998 at 8.00, starting with a wine and cheese reception. **Please attend.** Your branch undertakes many events during the year, it also acts as a watchdog, where developments affecting our inland waterways and lakes are commented on and our wishes are always brought to the attention of national and local authorities. Because things seem to be going along fine, is a result of many battles having been fought and won, in order that we can continue to enjoy our heritage.

17th October 1998.

The first of the Royal Canal Fund-raising Nights takes place in Ballymahon. A bus will be leaving

October 1998

Sean's Bar at 8.00pm. Please Phone Damien Delaney at (0902) 75620 to book a place on the bus. Don't leave it to the last minute or you'll be disappointed! We all know these nights are great craic, with Billy Henshaw, Larry and the Lough Ree Royal Canal Band, and hope to see as many as possible attending to start the season off with a great event.

End-of-Season Dinner

A very enjoyable evening was had by a good turn out of more than 70 people. The dinner was held in the new upstairs very large room in the beautifully refurbished Lakeside Hotel at Ballykeeran. The meal was of good quality, although there was some suffering caused to sensitive teeth by very cold baked Alaska!

We all recovered when Harry, our Chairman ran a wonderful raffle for lovely goodies - never was there so much cheating by so many!! Smiles and laughter all around.

VHF

It was remarked at our September Branch meeting that bad habits are now frequent with regard to the use of VHF. We have in the past pointed out the fact that VHF should not be used like a telephone.

It is a device to be used for calling for help - this is its main purpose and should, ideally, be its only purpose, or secondly for use to issue a warning of danger to fellow sailors in the area. It seems that young people were keeping up long conversations with friends in neighbouring boats, and not so young, were also using the channels for non necessary messages.

Well, now big brother is coming to sort you all out, and with that kind of irresponsible behaviour, you deserve it. The Department of the Marine will be taking a big interest in things now, as they are in charge of all inland waterways. So there!

Two items of interest were brought to our attention recently concerning our inland waterways, the first under the auspices of the Heritage Council, and the second an item in the Irish Times, September 23rd 1998 by Kevin Myers:-

Consultative Document on the future of Ireland's Inland Waterways.

We received this document, which is published by the Heritage Council, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny. If you are

interested in the waterways, you could get a copy of this Document. We are also advised that a seminar will be held on November 24th in the Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly where a consultative document will be discussed. This will be of immense interest to those who are interested in the future development of our waterways, particularly where involvement of government is concerned.

This document will consist of all our observations made on the consultative paper.

The consultative document covers all waterways in the Republic, and shared waterways with Northern Ireland, it comments on those waterways under the control of Ducas- (the new name to use where we used to use "OPW"), The Corrib, which is at present under the control of the Corrib Trustees, all canals and canalised parts of rivers.

The Heritage council has decided to refer to the a strategic document on inland waterways commissioned by the Waterways Service of the Office of Public works from Brady, Shipman, Martin "National Canals and Waterways Strategy", (BSM Strategy). This was widely acclaimed as a well thought-out and workable strategy plan for the waterways.

The Heritage Document lists the recommendations from the BSM Strategy in appendix 1.

This document is well worth having, it is concise, covering all our areas of problems and a lot of our aspirations for the future of the development of waterways, as well as the conservation of our treasures in buildings, and our

natural heritage in flora and fauna indigenous to the waterways.

If you feel you have some points to make concerning our inland waterways and would like them to be included in the discussion document, please send them by 30th September 1998 into the Athlone Branch, I.W.A.I. or directly to The Heritage Council, Phone 056 70788, Fax 056 70788, E-mail: heritage@heritage.iol.ie

Lough Key - Complaints?

The following are the areas of complaint Mr. Myers made in his column in the Irish Times -

- * Berlin Watchtower - Moylurg tower, "What purpose has Moylurg, other than to reassure us that whatever visual brutality a totalitarian state could manage under German communism, a free state can manage equally well in an Irish democracy?"*
- * Wind-farms. - The siting of a wind-farm on the western hills of Lough Ree, the sound of speeding boats and water-skiing, all are alien to the peaceful beauty of the lake. - well yes, but people using the waterways, is not a bad thing. And are wind -farms all that awful? Surly they are less of an eyesore than the ESB Pylons we are accustomed to.*
- * Harbour Hoggers and Quay Creeps. We have been moaning about this activity for ages in our Aerial, but, like our behaviour in miss parking our cars, we are a very selfish people. To add insult*

to injury, there are laws available to remove such offenders but as Mr. Myers points out "No threat of fine or cruiser-clamping awaits those who abuse the public waterways of Ireland, where the writ of Me Fein still seems to run". He mentions that "the criminal boats have a little note attached to them - no doubt spurious - declaring that long-stay mooring has been authorised by a particular person in authority". A further example where adequate law is not used as it should be.

- * Ivy covered trees. "Coillte has the responsibility for Lough Key Forest Park; yet ivy grows on many of the old trees there. Ivy is deadly for deciduous trees; like the wind-farms, it catches the mid-winter winds which would otherwise pass through the bare branches of the host trees, which are then plucked from the ground." This was the cause of the loss of half-a-dozen standing beeches being felled in Donadea wood last winter!*
- * Pump-out stations and holding tanks. We, in the Inland Waterways have high-lighted the necessary for pump-out stations in the various county areas bordering the Shannon, both in the sites and the numbers required. It is like getting blood out of a stone, but to learn that where pump-out stations are available, the poor sailor -man can't off-load, because the cretins who should know better, have not bothered to empty the holding tanks! How Irish!*

Dear Reader, if you have come across any of the harbour hoggers or quay creeps, with attached excuse of a note, or if you have been left longer

with boatpoo because shore facilities are not being maintained as they should be, please let your branch know - immediately - this type of behaviour has to be nipped in the bud now, once and for all.

Vacancy

The bod who types this newsletter has given notice of quitting come December, 1998. If you have a few hours to spend a month, 10 months of the year, July and August are your holidays, the Athlone Branch would be glad to hear from you. Maybe you would like to attend our monthly branch meeting and get to know the set-up, if so, we would like to hear from you at our October meeting.

A Pat-On-the-Back

Published in the "World Wide Waterways" magazine, Spring 1998 were the results of a survey of 500 members and other interested individuals, commercial organisations, or associations, who were asked for information on heritage waterways are judged by their managers, operators and users worldwide.

The results were that Canal du Midi, France came 1st, Kennet & Avon, U.K. came 2nd, Shannon-Erne Waterway, Ire., came 3rd! Not only that, but the Royal Canal was 4th,

Shannon was 11th and the Grand Canal was 13th. This was a marvellous result. We hope that in another 10 years time we can hold or improve on this, but if matters mentioned above continue, ... well it's up to us all.

Anyway, well done Shannon-Erne Waterway - you deserve it.

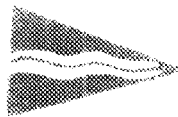
Zebra Mussel.

As it is now the time when many of you will be lifting out your boats, and if not, your dinghies, please check out for fouling by these mussels.

Remove them or leave them out of water for at least 3 weeks, as in damp conditions, they can survive for this length of time.

If you are prepared to physically to remove them, make sure they cannot re-enter the waterway.

Another way of spreading them, is if water is transferred from infected waters to un-infected waters, as the young form are microscopic free-swimming mussels, which may survive in a small pool of water, like in the bottom of your lake boat. So act as if your are handling a contagious disease, maybe we can contain the spread of these mussels for a while.



Athlone Aerial

NEWSLETTER OF ATHLONE BRANCH INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

November 1998

The Next Meeting of Athlone Branch, L.W.A.I. will take place in Scan's Bar, Main St., Athlone on Monday, 2nd November, 1998 at 8.30pm.



Coming Events:-

A.G.M. Athlone Branch.

The A.G.M. will take place in the Prince of Wales Hotel on Friday 4th December 1998 at 8.00pm. starting with a wine and cheese. Please attend this important meeting as input from our members is very necessary for the continuance of the Branch. We are looking forward to your presence and your ideas.

Royal Canal Outing:- The second fund-raising event of the season will take place in the Lough Ree Inn, on Saturday 21st November 1998. As usual a great night of music and craic will be in abundance for your enjoyment, so please continue with your generous support for this worthy project.

RNLI - Christmas Card Sale and Coffee Morning.

This event will take place in Sean's Bar, Athlone on Saturday, November 28th, 1998 from 11 am.



Wet bikes

We were very pleased to see the article by Brian J. Goggin in the October, 1998 Inland Waterways News raising the issue of Jetskis, i.e.. wet bikes and their potential danger to other waterway users. Last December, the Aerial mentioned this danger, and asked that members contact their branch, if they witnessed bad behaviour on these skis. It is a fact that jetskis have caused four deaths this year, the last two, both in October, one in Spain and the other in Cyprus. Both young women, both killed outright, the first by getting her back broken, the second, a passenger in a pedalo, who died of massive injuries caused by an underage youth on a jetski. And now, we believe, there are plans to introduce a 4 seater jetski which will have larger fuel tanks, and will be 50% heavier than the two seaters around at present. Just for once, could local authorities, get their act together and bring in controlling laws BEFORE there is a DEATH on our waterways. If you don't, the wringing of hands after such an accident will be very hypocritical!



A New Prize

We were told at our last Branch meeting, that Dr. Alf Delany, had offered a silver cup as a prize, so I.W.A.I. Council suggested it should be given as a perpetual trophy and asked the Branches for suitable ideas to which this cup could be given as a prize. It was felt that Rallies are well catered for already and that, some other competition could be devised. Maybe for a person or a branch who did something extraordinary in the year in relation to the aims of the association. We would like to hear from you, dear member, any suggestions for a competition or activity to which this generous offer from Dr. Delaney could be given. Please let us know any idea you might have by getting in touch with either the Branch meeting or writing to the Branch at Sean's Bar, Main St., Athlone.

Ulster Canal.

It has been on the books that something should be done about the Ulster Canal, especially in view of the great success of the restoration of the Ballinamore/Ballyconnell canal.

Studies have been made by the relevant authorities and they came up with 3 suggestions:

- A. Restore the Canal as it used to be.
- B. Restore, but enlarge the locks.
- C. Bypass the lock and build a bigger lock on the Bypass, and preserve the original locks.

The "C" suggestion was accepted and now progress depends on the politions giving the go-ahead.

The smallest lock on this canal is the smallest in the country, only 11ft 8 and a half inches or 3.6 meters wide. Apparently a cost cutting exercise at the time, which ment that lighters from other waterways could not use the canal, and certainly helped to make the whole enterprise uneconomic.

It would be lovely to see another canal system restored, they are such peaceful places to spend a holiday.

The Med. Voyage

Once again, our friends, Mick and Ruth have sent an account of their travels in the Med. this past summer and we thank them for a very interesting article, especially welcomed by a very grateful editor!

TUNISIA TO MALTA:

By the end of February we had completed our winter maintenance, anti-fouling, and provisioning, we were ready to go, even though the Mediterranean in spring is not to be relied upon - weather wise. We completed the required circuit of visits; the marina office to settle accounts; police and customs; and not to mention a quick goodbye to our winter companions in Monaster. Our last task was to top up our Diesel tanks with diesel at 20p.a litre!!

We enjoyed a light north-west wind throughout the first night at sea and made good progress towards Malta. Through out the next day the wind gradually increased still from the north-west and our progress was really impressive with a constant 5 - 6 knots. There was only one problem, we were due off the South east corner of Malta at around 2100 hrs. but the situation was complicated by the fact that there is an off-lying rock, unlit, which I wanted to rise before darkness fell. We succeeded - just about- but then we lost the rock in the darkness against the shore lights before rounding it and changing course for Valetta. Reasonably happy that we know where we were viz a viz this rock the unforeseen happened. It was totally dark by now. Suddenly it was like a sun blazed-noon with a boat (origin unknown, but presumably

a patrol boat) drew alongside us switched on a powerful search light and proceeded along a parallel course, no communication, no identification, just this great bloody searchlight totally blinding and disorientating me. After several attempts to raise them on Ch. 16 without success, less technical and more immediate action was called for - "Turn off that ***** light" shouted with full force across the water. Click, darkness, silence and within moments the Vrummmm of powerful engines and we were left to sort our selves out and resume course to Valetta. We learned afterwards it was probably Maltese Coast Guards on Anti-Drug patrol. At the time we found it quite frightening and I feel there has to be a better way of doing their business.

It was about 0200 hours when we arrived in Valetta, though by now, well into our second night at sea, we were quite tired, the sheer magic of the surroundings gave us both a great lift. Valetta and indeed Malta is absolutely steeped in history. The harbour is totally fortified with ramparts, battlements, cavaliers, forts and castles. The whole harbour is floodlit with yellow suffused lights. St. Elmo's fort light stabs a white loom of light every 15 seconds over the scene. As we sailed into the harbour it did not take much encouragement for the imagination to conjure up scenes of Knights defending desperately against the Ottoman invaders. This was made more surreal when the next instant St. Elmo's light became an anti-aircraft spotlight with screaming Stukas diving on shipping barely afloat, entering the harbour. Ack, Ack guns mingled with the screams of Knights and Turks in a whole mixum-gatherum of scenes

recalled from boyhood tales , history, TV. and films. As we moored to the Custom house quay to clear into Malta my head was spinning - and I was not sure whether it was tiredness or just a case of imagination run riot!

We cleared customs and immigration and had to leave Grand harbour to moor in Marchaxxnet, Selima Creek, - try pronouncing that after a few pints! After a good 12 - 14 hours sleep normality seemed restored - almost! We booked into the Marina for 2 months and started to explore Malta.

The Grand harbour in daylight, was still Grand but a little frayed at the edges. We were like two kids let out from school - after the simple life in Tunisia we went to the cinema and were shelled shocked by the sound and drama of "Titanic", amused and delighted by the "Full Monty". We read English language newspapers, both the British variety and the "Malta Independent". We delighted in the variety of goods available in the shops. We explored the island on the 1950's public buses and enjoyed the various museums and choral and orchestral concerts - most available free or a minimum cost. In short we had a ball!

As I said before Malta, because of it's location at the cross-roads between East and West, between Europe and Africa is steeped in history, but the Maltese seemed to have survived the various invasions, among them the Carthaginians, Romans, Visigoths, Arabs, Spanish, French, Italian, Russian and British. The island is very small, for its prominent role at various times in history and one fact stands out in my

memory - it's the 4th densest populated state on earth!

MALTA TO SICILY - AND ITALY (BRIEFLY)

By April 20th the wanderlust had risen again and the weather forecast was good so we set off in the afternoon , having cleared ourselves out, and aided by a good south-east wind made good progress towards Sicily. We were tied up , in the hometown of Archimedes - he of Eureka! fame, by 1100 next morning, While in Syracuse, the weather was mixed with a few days of high winds and this resulted in moving to different locations within the bay as the wind changed direction. But for all that we enjoyed our stay, exploring the old town with its beautiful square and churches. The old Greek temple to Apollo took a little too much imagination for me to envisage and appreciate but an interesting place for all that.

We proceeded through the Straits of Messina along the north coast of Sicily. This was still early May and the country side was still green and beautiful before the onset of the summer heat. We visited the Aeolian Islands off North Sicily where Ruth climbed to the crater of an active volcano - well semi-active, it steamed and smelt awful! We visited a wonderful museum in Lipari. It was made up of very large rooms. On the walls were very big enlargements of photos of various archaeological "digs" and then the scene was reconstructed in the room with the artefacts that were recovered from the dig. The whole thing covered Neolithic to Greek, Roman and modern times, all heaped on top of each other as various conquests were completed and fell away.

From Palermo we took a bus west to view a complete Grecian temple and amphitheatre. But the highpoint for me was travelling along through valleys at about 70 m.p.h. in a bus with panoramic windows on mile after mile of modern road raised on stilts. There we were about 50 - 100 ft. above the valley floors looking down on farms and olive groves as we speed along. It was like being in a low flying plane and getting a panoramic view of rural Sicily. An unexpected pleasure!

From Palermo we retraced our steps back through Messina towards the toe and heel of Italy. Coming out of Messina straits the Q.E.2 kindly altered course for us as we sailed along in a brisk breeze.

We did not particularly like this part of Italy. First of all there were horrendous stories of muggings, etc., among the yachtie community. The harbour situation was weird! Big modern marina complexes complete with offices, etc., built for some years, no doubt with European money but not being operated at all. Occupied by local boats (Harbour Hoggers!) and seemingly just left there. The explanation we received was that Europe, Italian central government and the local powers (Mafia??) could not agree - and hence the current situation. Overall the area is not particularly pretty and you always felt that things were not quite kosher.

GREECE AND THE ISLANDS

On May, 29th we started a 29hour passage across to Paxos in Greece in calm to very light wind conditions. When we arrived in Lakka there were 20 boats anchored in the bay, 17 German, 2 American and 1 Irish- a

huge change from what we experienced 20 years ago when most boats seemed to be sailing under the British Flag. We enjoyed a month sailing through the Ionian visiting the various anchorages on it's different islands. In truth Greece had not changed all that much over 20 years. There were much more supplies available in the shops and there was a general air of prosperity. Eating out was still relatively cheap, with wine and evening meals costing £4 - £8. One thing certainly had not changed in Greece - the menu. Yes, the menu singular! As your scribe described it one evening in his cups - "The national menu of Greece is carved in stone and has universal application". Each establishment offering stuffed tomatoes, stuffed vineleaves, mussels, etc. After a few evenings out a home-cooked meal was a real treat. But by now the temperatures were rising with 38 - 40c common in the shade. The navigator/cook declared the galley closed so the options were eat out or salads. This cruising life has it's down sides! Seriously, it got very, very hot in July and August with swimming to cool off becoming a necessary occupation.

Originally it was our intention to enter the Aegean sea via the Corinth Canal however having decided not to arrive in Turkey until the beginning of September, it seemed logical to go the long way around via the Peloponnese. This is the ancient land of Sparta. Our greatest difficulty was finding bottom in the anchorages before you hit the shore. Its no fun pulling in anchor and chain, even with a winch, if the depth is more than 30/40 ft. The gusts off the hills into the anchorages can be fierce, 50 m.ph. is nothing exceptional. The big fear was of being blown ashore

before getting the anchor up. So, our enjoyment of the Peloponnese was qualified. The scenery was rugged and beautiful but it didn't pay to relax too much.

We spent July and part of August in the Saronic. This is the area immediately south of Athens and east of Corinth - that's the place St. Paul was always writing to. This is probably the most developed region, with many flotillas of hire boats. Consequently anchorages on occasions were crowded but swimming off shore in deep water was very pleasant and cooling and also necessary in the very high temperatures. Our awning, made in Ireland, and modified in Tunisia, came into it's own and really helped cool things down, it's amazing the difference an awning makes particularly if there is a breeze blowing through.

By this time the Meltimi was blowing almost constantly. The Meltimi is a northerly wind that starts in mid June and blows until end of September from what is almost a stationary high pressure over the Balkans towards low pressure over the East Med. Normally it blows force 5 - 7, but if you happen to sail on the sheltered side of a mountainous island you can have gusts of 7 - 9 hitting you. Of course through most of this the sun shines - but it's not to be sniffed at! Anchorages must be carefully chosen to keep out of trouble. On a few occasions we were holed up for 4 to 5 days waiting for the wind to drop but apart from that we had no problem in the Aegean. However for anyone thinking of taking a boat in July or August in this area all I can do is repeat advice we received from a Brit - "The Aegean in July and August is

not for those seeking an easy sailing holiday".

TURKEY.

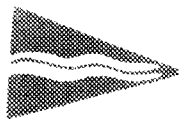
By Sept. we were cleared into Turkey at Cesme. It took 4 long, hot, frustrating hours to get the necessary paper-work and stamps but since then we have had no problems. We have had good sailing down the coast with the prevailing north-easterly winds. Occasionally we slip into some of the smaller Greek anchorages just to vary the scene. This is of course irregular but frequently done - just remember to fly the correct courtesy flag - we saw one German boat come into a Turkish port with a Greek flag flying - how to make friends and influence people!

As I write this, we are in Marmaris Marina, we will winter here. Before closing down totally we may well go for a few short trips.

It's been a long time since we left Tunisia at the end of February. We have put 2,300 miles under the keel without major mishap. We have enjoyed the summer and at this stage feel we are old hands at the game. We look forward to the developing social scene here in the marina. By the end of October all the hire fleets will be winterised and live-a-boards will settle into a period of socialising and winter maintenance, interspersed with trips local and foreign. It's a hard life!

ED. -We sympathise with your hardships really we do! Thanks anyway - it's great to hear how the other half lives, er struggles!





Athlone Aerial

NEWSLETTER OF ATHLONE BRANCH INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

**A VERY HAPPY
CHRISTMAS TO ALL
OUR MEMBERS**

Annual General Meeting

The A.G.M. of Athlone Branch, I.W.A.I. will take place on Friday, 4th December 1998 at 8.30pm. in the Prince of Wales Hotel, Athlone.

We hope as many of you as possible will attend and to loosen your tongues for lively debate and intelligent input, as always, we will commence the meeting with a wine and cheese reception.



For Sale

"Romance" - Jaguar 25
Bilge Keel version of this popular, spacious 6 berth family cruiser. 9 hp. outboard, Hull in immaculate condition. Lying - Killinure point.
Price - £9,800. O.N.O.
Contact:-
Dan O'Connell - Ph.(0902) 73884.



December 1998

Coming Events:-

9th December.

The Old Athlone Society are holding a lecture entitled "The Medieval Wooden bridge at Clonmacnoise" by Donal Boland.

The lecture will take place in the Royal Hoey Hotel, Athlone at 8.30pm.

12th December.

The next Royal Canal Fund-raiser will take place in Clondra. A bus will leave Sean's Bar, Athlone at 8.00p.m. Earlier time of leaving is because we are picking up people from Keanagh and Ballymahon, so please book your place on the bus by ringing Damion Delaney at (0902) 75620.

In the next Aerial we hope to give a full programme of the year's events, including Walter Borner's wonderful slide show and Ruth Heard's nostalgic films from the archives, plus much more, so watch this space in January!

With Sympathy.

It was with great sorrow that we heard of the sudden death of Frank Farrell on the 28th October, 1998. Our sincere sympathy to Frank's two sons, his brothers and many friends in the inlands waterways world and in business. May he rest in peace.

We would also like to express our sympathy to Denis Treacy on the tragic death of his son. R.L.P.

Athlone Developments

In a previous Aerial we mentioned that the town was afflicted by a double eyesore, that of the site of the demolished Palace Bar/Byrnes Hardware Shop and the site of the Apparel Company. One of the sites, where the Palace Bar used to be, is now well on the way to being built on and the roof timbers are in place and maybe, Paddy McCaul and Partners will be opening their new Pub/Resteraunt soon. We wish them all the best.

However no luck with the other site, unless, we can do something with the large lake of rain water which has a lovely brown cliff face on the east side, with the western aspect open to the River Shannon.

The rumours at present seem to indicate a shrinkage of hotel and an increase of apartments.

Surely local authorities have the power to prevent such eyesores being inflicted on the populace! What ever about locals when such a state of affairs can be afflicted on tourists - well it seems anything goes. When we think how long Athlonions have accepted the eyesores of the Ritz Cinema and the awful site at the docks, it is probably too soon to moan about an ugly site which has been in existence for only a season or two. Personally one would hope the whole Tidy Towns Committee would resign in protest. But would anyone care?



New County Manager

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome the appointment of a new county manager for Westmeath. Ms. Ann McGuinness will replace Mr. Jack Taaffe, who retired after many years of service.

Ms. McGuinness is to be doubly congratulated, as she is the first woman to be a county manager in this country.

Ms. McGuinness' grandmother, Brigid Butler was a south Westmeath woman, so Ms. McGuinness has a good knowledge of the county and also has a love of the Shannon and Lough Ree where she and her husband Neil have spent many happy holidays on the river and inner lakes of Lough Ree. We wish her every happiness and success in her new career.



May we remind you that you can obtain a copy of "Green & Silver" by Rolt at Sean's Bar, Athlone. Price £16. - a very nice stocking filler for Christmas.



The Heritage Council

In August 1998 the Heritage Council published a discussion document which was circulated extensively throughout the Island of Ireland and all interested in the inland waterways of Ireland were asked to submit their concerns about the future development of our inland water ways. Submissions were to be sent back to the Heritage Council by 30th September, 1998 and on the 24th November a meeting was convened at Tullamore Court Hotel. The meeting was fully booked out.

72 submissions were made, 69 in writing and the respondents are broken down as follows:-

- 13 Local Authorities,
- 6 Government Departments
- 6 Government Agencies
- 4 Regional Authorities
- 2 Regional fisheries boards
- 2 Marketing Groups
- 3 Boat Hire Interests
- 15 Individuals
- 7 Voluntary Waterways groups
- 6 Heritage bodies/NGO's
- 3 Local Development/partnership bodies
- 3 Angling bodies
- 2 Walking interests

The contents of the submissions can be divided into:

- 37 general issues
- 9 specific environmental concerns
- 17 single issues.

Some of the headings covering the submissions were summarised., and a few examples were -

1. Organisational Management - Inland Waterways Authority, Overall Development Framework.
2. Resource Management - Funding; waterway systems; Extension of waterways system.
3. Usage Management - Zoning of areas for different uses; Non boating activities; users form; Heritage; Marketing and tourism potential. Waterway Corridors; Maintenance of

On the day of the meeting 110 delegates attended and it was very gratifying to see that 16 members of I.W.A.I., both from council and branches

attended. Not to mention 7 members of the Royal Canal Amenity Group.

The Agenda for the meeting was as follows -

A welcome from Ms. Freda Rountree, Chairperson of the Heritage Council. Ruth Delaney, Heritage Council, gave a background to the consultative document, Beatrice Kelly, Heritage Council gave a summary of the feedback to the document. There were 3 Workshops, one in the morning and two in the afternoon. The delegates were divided into 4 groups and each group discussed and gave suggestions on each workshop. The workshops had the following titles "Organisational Management of the Inland Waterways." This was the morning workshop. Workshop 2 -"Resource Management" and Workshop 3 - "Usage Management"

Each group had a chairman and a secretary who, when the discussion was ended, set out the recommendations and suggestions from the group for submission to the council.

The whole day was highly organised, with no time wasted. About 5 minutes before the end of discussion time, a warning came so that all suggestions, could be agreed with the secretary of the group for presentation.

A great help to the discussions, was the presence of members from U.K. Inland Waterways, and from Northern Ireland waterways who gave invaluable guidance to the input as they have already travelled this road and could advise on pitfalls to be avoided.

All the ideas and suggestions and recommendations will be published in a policy document which will be presented to Government.

We hope that because of the great cross section of representation at the meeting all areas of interest will be represented in the final submission.

The Rally of '98

The rally of '98 was convened in Lecarrow harbour on a brilliant September weekend.

I speak of the by now famous Lecarrow Blackpudding and Porter Rally held on the 19th. September.

There were 69½ boats attending and all were checked by the Garda with sniffer dogs, and shore passes issued.

The first important event was the Wine and Cheese plus a barrel of Heineken (sponsored) in the festival marquee and then the shock announcement that the commodore Mr. Joe Egan was to be impeached for his conduct with Ms. Erica Hensey, who looked very chique in her two-piece rig-out. Clothing samples were taken and big cigars were handed out as Joe's insignia were stripped from him. Ouch!

All then proceeded to Coffey's to a night of music, singing and general bullshit. Tons of Blackpudding were consumed, thanks to Ms. Christine Hensey, followed by a candle(1)lit dinner on the harbour quay with various entertainments.

Sunday morning started with Bloody Marys, Buck's Fizz, and Bombay oysters (Eggs and Sherry).

Then all back to Coffey's for the post-mortems, and more porter and Hash Browns by Ms. Coffey.

The Liars and rescue of cruiser (at the bar) competitions took place followed by the event of the weekend, the Russian Ambassador, who arrived by helicopter to present certificates to the Sean's Bar crew of the S.T.S. Mir, signed by Captain Victor Antonov, Master of the Mir. He also made them all Hon. Russian Citizens and re-named them, Ivan, Vladimir, Tolstoy, Stalin, Norinsky, Petrova, etc., etc., and we called him Paddy.

Prize winners? -

Pudding Queen - Linda Guildea (Congrats on new arrival!)

Demoted Commodore - Joe Egan

Singing Comp. - Jack McGregor (Scot).

Capt. Wining Football Team - Patsy Mullin.

Liars Comp. - Fred Guildea.

Tug-of-war-team - Johnny McGonnigal. Capt.

Best Actor - Sean Fitz, (Russian Ambassador.)

Photo Comp. - Clicker of the year - John Keane.

Bungee jump - Sam Herraghty.

Barge Race - B. Thomson

Best Boat - E. Hensey

Main Swimming Race - L. Dwan.

Sponsors:- Timmie Donovan, Sean's Bar; Liam Dwan; J. McNeill; Eric Hensey; P. Mullin, Atlantic Shipping; J. Harris; J. Coffey; P. McCaul, Shamrock Lodge.

P.S. We got pictures of Patsy Mullin polishing his cranium! Private viewing can be arranged - £100 or nearest Euro equivalent. Funds towards next year's "Rally of the year".

