

The Ditchcrawler – Autumn 2022



These photographs, taken after the removal of Boathouse No.15 during August 2022, offer two views along the Club Arm which were not possible for well over seventy years! Thanks to all concerned with this work, which is greatly improving our home moorings whilst giving the residents of Norwood Avenue far more appealing views to the rear of their houses. More volunteers are needed to help with this work, see Page 6.

COMMODORE'S LETTER

Hi Everyone,

Our sailing season has been decimated with acute water shortages, Lock Flight closures together with a reluctance to sail on the part of many club members who are fearful of running aground when meeting oncoming boats. Thankfully, on Saturday 17th August 2022 we managed to stage a barbeque on the Club 'triangle' where around forty members and guests were in attendance. Fortunately, we were blessed with excellent weather and the gazebo (see below) offered shelter from the sun rather than the rain!



Club members 'Chill out' on the triangle



Bob may be excused for 'nodding off' following an intake of food and drink, after all it was his birthday! Many happy returns Bob!

A good time seemed to be had by all present. It was nice to 'let the world go by' for the afternoon.

Thanks to all who helped with this event.

Our next event, the 'Laying Up Supper' is at 7-30 for 8-00pm on Saturday 22nd October 2022 with live entertainment from Carl Dee Rome also a light supper. Tickets are £10-00 each.

Thanks, John Fenton, Commodore

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Due to the lack of water and the ongoing closure of the locks both at Marple and Bosley which are not scheduled to reopen for the foreseeable future, this letter is rather brief. Thankfully, the Trent and Mersey Canal has recently re-opened suggesting that we have passed the 'low water' mark. C&RT have stated that they will not be offering any discounts on the licences they have issued for this year. I sympathise with those members who have ventured off the Macclesfield - Peak Forest summit, awaiting rainfall to permit their return. There are several Club Officer vacancies which need to be filled at our AGM on Sunday 30th October 2022, see the following Pages 10 -14, also the Club website.

John Fenton, Chairman

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES NEWS

Membership Services Director's Report

We are very pleased to welcome the following new members to the NCCC:

New Members	Boat name
Ken and Andrew Bellis	'Castaway'
Philip Chadwick	'Sandpiper'
Edward & Henry Doust	
Chris & Deborah Kelly	'Hirondelle'
Ron & Kathryn Moores	'Sandpiper 1' N.B. this is a different boat to 'Sandpiper'
Alan Stabler	'Winnies Destiny'
'Newish' Members	
Gary Bratchford	'Trafalgar'
Stephanie Fletcher & Neil Harrison	'Das Boot'
Martin Mallett & Sally Furphy	'Jasmine'
Nigel & Heather Stanley	'Royal Oscar'
Phillip & Helen Young	'Dragonelle'

The Club is remaining open each Friday Evening, thereby offering our new members the opportunity to meet with the other Club members over a 'drink and a chat'.

Pam Russell, Membership Services Director.

URGENT !
MAIN FRONT GATE
WOULD ALL MEMBERS PLEASE
ENSURE THAT THEY SECURE THE GATE
WHEN LEAVING THE PREMISES.

Marple Aqueduct

Many local boaters don't realise that England's tallest stone aqueduct is located 'on our doorstep', permitting the Peak Forest Canal to cross the River Goyt flowing some ninety feet below. Designed and overseen by the canal builder Benjamin Outram, with Thomas Brown as his resident engineer, it was commenced in 1794 and completed in 1800, employing some 6000 cubic metres of masonry. The three semi-circular arches each span around 18 metres, at 22 metre centres. The lower parts are of red sandstone from the nearby Hydebank Quarry. The upper parts are of white stone from a quarry at Chapel Milton. Whilst the abutments widen in well proportioned curves, the skilful use of architectural features such as the circular piercing of the spandrels, spring courses, arched rings and pilasters of ashlar stone, oval piers and stone of different type and colour have created a graceful structure which is superlative in its class. George Borrow a Victorian travel writer described it as one of the seven wonders of the world! To date, the structure has required extensive repairs and rebuilding work on two occasions, each being at one hundred year intervals.



View from the South West end



Rebuilding work in progress during 1962

Recently, overgrown trees have been removed, which together with improved walker access linking the canal with the River Goyt, enables visitors to fully appreciate the structure. A short distance up the valley from the point where the aqueduct crosses it, the River Goyt is joined by the River Etherow. Finally, from a boater perspective, when navigating the Peak Forest Canal northwards from the Whaley Bridge Terminus, upon reaching Marple Aqueduct the accompanying River Goyt has descended some 300 feet in relation to the canal!

Thanks to Bill Wilkinson (Narrow boat 'Horny Toad') for providing this information.

In 1860, frost damage had to be repaired by Charles Sacre, Chief Engineer of the then railway company owners, whereupon two-inch diameter tie bars were inserted to strengthen the structure. During the next century on 9th January 1962, part of the outer face of the North-East Arch collapsed. At the time this closure threatened the future of the entire Lower Peak Forest Canal, where the nearby Marple Lock Flight was impassable. When the estimated cost of repairs was revealed, it was feared that the aqueduct would be demolished. Local pressure groups together with the Inland Waterways Association lobbied for full restoration and thankfully an agreement was struck whereby the shortfall between the restoration and the demolition costs was met by Cheshire County Council. Soon afterwards and perhaps not before time, the structure was listed as a Grade 1 Ancient Monument.

Max Longton Obituary

Max, who was a long-standing Club member, Director, past Commodore, Inland Waterways Association, Macclesfield Canal Society, and Shropshire Union Canal Society stalwart died peacefully at his home on August 17th 2022, following a prolonged illness. The Club remains indebted to him for the legal advice he volunteered during the formation of the Limited Company, which at the time was invaluable, together with his ongoing support regarding subsequent legal matters.

Max was educated at Stockport Grammar School, after which he gained a Degree in Law at Manchester University, initially

practising at Guildford before returning to this area.

He undertook further study at Manchester Metropolitan University, willingly offering legal advice to many

Companies, Clubs and Canal Societies. Few will be aware of the extent of these activities; such was the low-profile way in which Max operated.



Max enjoying a 'day on the cut'

He took the lead role in organising the IWA Rally in Manchester during the late 1970's, where an attempt was made

both to increase the awareness of the city centre canals and their leisure potential also to improve their generally 'run down' conditions.

This campaigning has helped to deliver the much-enhanced city centre canal

corridor that to this day many come from far and wide to enjoy, though sadly even more of us who hail from this area often take for granted.

We have lost a fellow Club member who was a good friend to many of us and who devoted much of his time both to the Club and the waterways he sought to enjoy. I feel sure that you will join me in expressing our deepest sympathy to his wife Jean, daughter Christine, son David and his grandchildren at this sad time.

John Suggitt

HELP REQUIRED!

DURING THE FORTHCOMING WEEKS, THE SMALL VOLUNTEER GROUP WORKING WITHIN THE CLUB ARM IS ATTEMPTING TO PILE AS MUCH OF THE BANK AS IS POSSIBLE, PRIOR TO WINTER SETTING IN.

EACH WEEKDAY BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 10-00 AM AND 2-00 PM, THEY ARE IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE WITH A VARIETY OF JOBS AND WHERE REQUIRED, TRAINING WILL BE PROVIDED.

**IN ORDER TO ADVISE YOUR AVAILABILITY, PLEASE CONTACT:
ERIC ROBERTS TEL. 07856 348092
MIKE ROBISON TEL. 07975 686707**

N.B. THIS WORK IS GENERATING ADDITIONAL MOORING FOOTAGE, THEREBY PROVIDING THE CLUB WITH MUCH NEEDED REVENUE.

**ERIC ROBERTS, THE DIRECTOR OF LAND & WATER SPACE, N.C.C.C.
(Next Saturday Work Party is on 8th October)**



The above photographs show how a mooring alongside a recently piled section of bank may appear. This fine landscaping work is a credit to our Club members Paul and Helen, the owners of 'Blackstar' and it doesn't take much imagination to envisage how the whole of the Arm could be transformed into a very desirable haven were all our moorings to undergo the same standard of 'makeover'. In short, this offers an appropriate manner in which to complement the work described on the previous page in the 'appeal for volunteers' with further piling work.

Here is a letter sent from a 'young sea-fairer' to his gran, in which he describes his maiden voyage upon joining the Merchant Navy.

Hi Gran,

I set sail from a grey, fog enshrouded London, down the murky Thames and out into the English Channel. Then across the heaving, turbulent waters of the Bay of Biscay, recalling now memories of cold biting spray on a seasickness flushed brow, and the imagined shame of being a sailor seasick, past the historic shape of the Rock of Gibraltar into the sun speckled azure waters of the Mediterranean Sea.

And so, after a few days enjoying the feel of the Sun on a shorts clad body as I worked to clean and paint the ship, with only the occasional sight of hazy land, the familiar throb of the Engine ceases as we our arrive at anchorage at Port Said and await our Suez Canal Pilot.

In the stillness of a hot, humid early morning the Pilot comes aboard with his motley crew of about 12 dusty Egyptians, and we edge out way into the Suez Canal, our 12 Arab Helpers, in their long (once white) robes admirably obstructing the seamen, thus introducing me to quite a few new words to me from the 'Seamans' vocabulary'.

At once we feel the oppressive heat, and with only the occasional command of the Pilot, "Starboard or Port Wheel" we glide on between the banks of sand, see an Arab Village, children, goats, dates on a palm tree nearly close enough to pick. We pass a beach, British soldiers bathing in the heat. They shout greetings when they recognise our MN Red Duster.

It is now mealtime and I realise the Egyptian Authorities know our crew did not need help from these Nightgown clad souls as I watch them wolf their meals, perhaps save some food to take home, and Gran, I feel ASHAMED of my thoughts upon first seeing them.

There is a Roar from our Starboard side, and three jet planes appear as if from the sand, climbing rapidly in tight formation, an impressive sight.

Then we enter the Bitter Lakes, we anchor to allow the North Bound Convoy of ships to pass, before proceeding out of the Suez Canal, and South towards Australia, New Zealand, and Tasmania.

Keep well Gran, I will be home in about 3 months

Continued

The above letter sent by a 15-year-old in 1950 is published Verbatim.

The Ship in question was the Scottish Star 2, a fast, modern cargo 12 passenger vessel described as a Liner, meaning the ship did regular cargo voyages to the same destination.



The 10000 Ton Scottish Star 2, was Powered by two Doxford 5 Cylinder oil Engines

The boy made three voyages on this ship, the first being as he describes in his letter.

The second voyage being round the World **Westwards**, across the Atlantic Ocean, through the Panama Canal, south westwards via the Pacific Ocean, crossing the **International** date line, to Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, thence Northwards, back through the Suez Canal.

The third voyage being round the World **Eastwards**, South through the Suez Canal to Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, homeward via the Pacific Ocean crossing the date line, the Panama Canal, and the Atlantic Ocean. Crossing the international date line means that the ship gains or loses 24 hours timewise, thus on the second voyage the boy went to bed on Sunday evening and woke up on Sunday Morning.

Did the Planes he saw later bomb and shut the Suez Canal in the Arab/Israeli War? By coincidence, the Scottish Star 2 was part of a Convoy of Ships, (see **internet Yellow Fleet**), which entered the Suez Canal as the War began. The canal was shut for many years, and the Convoy of ships therein was moved to anchor in the Bitter Lakes during this time of closure. The Scottish Star 2 was abandoned, became derelict and was towed out of the Suez Canal as an 'insurance loss' many years later.

In this era the crew on this ship would have been around 40, tasked with manning the derricks to load/unload cargo, painting the ship, etc. Currently, the second biggest ship in the world, which travels between China and America crossing the Pacific Ocean has a crew of 15!

Thankfully, the 'young sea-fairer' is still with us, but these days in well-deserved retirement he plies the more 'tranquil waters' of the Macclesfield and Peak Forest Canals! Look out for him whilst you are sailing (see below), salute him as you pass for you are in good company! Ed.

Thanks to Roland Dotchin, the skipper of 'Taylor Maid' for this interesting article.

THE NORTH CHESHIRE CRUISING CLUB LTD

Dear Member

I am pleased to invite you to the Annual General Meeting of The North Cheshire Cruising Club Ltd., at the clubhouse on Sunday 30th October 2022 at 2 pm.

You will find the following papers included below:

- Agenda
- Nomination form for full members to put their names forward for Director positions
- Nomination form for Officer positions
- Proxy forms

Nomination/Proxy forms to be returned to me, duly proposed and seconded by full members, by Saturday 22nd October 2022.

Please note that the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held November 2021 will be available to view at the Clubhouse at this year's AGM.

Members may nominate themselves for any of the following vacancies.

However, monthly Director meetings are held via the computer package called "zoom". Please ensure that you are fully conversant with the package before nominating yourself. You will also need to be confident in sending and receiving e-mails.

Director positions open for nominations:-

- Company Secretary
- Finance Director
- Premises Director
- Director without Portfolio (Bar)
- Director without Portfolio
- Commodore: As the incoming Commodore becomes a Board member on appointment, we need to ratify this position at the AGM

Officer positions open for nominations:-

- Commodore (Vice)
- Commodore (Rear)
- Food Safety officer
- Health & Safety (advisory)
- Minutes Secretary
- Quartermaster

Continued

Resolutions and Any Other Business

We hope we can conclude the essential business of the Limited Company quickly and that we have a productive and efficient general meeting, where a healthy debate is welcome and where we also display respect for each other. The Board decided that any resolutions raised for the debate during Any Other Business must be submitted to the Secretary before 22nd October 2022. Resolutions will be time limited and may be subject, at the Chairman's discretion, to a hand vote to indicate the strength of support from the members present. Such voting is not binding on the Board.

Associate Members

Associate members are welcome to attend the Annual General Meeting but will not be able to take part in the formal part of the meeting, including voting.

If you have any questions about arrangements or roles, please contact me or any other Board member.

Thank you.

Pam Suggitt

Company Secretary/Returning Officer

For The North Cheshire Cruising Club Ltd

16th September 2022

NORTH CHESHIRE CRUISING CLUB LTD AGM

To be held on Sunday 30th October 2022 in the Clubhouse at 2 pm

AGENDA

- 1) The Chairman welcomes members to the AGM
- 2) Apologies for Absence.
- 3) The Minutes of the AGM held November 2021
- 4) Amendments, if any, to the Minutes
- 5) Proposer and Seconder invited to accept the Minutes
- 6) Matters Arising from the Minutes
- 7) The Chairman's Report
- 8) The Secretary's Report
- 9) Report and the presentation of the Accounts
- 10) Questions on the Accounts
- 11) Proposer and Seconder invited to accept the Accounts
- 12) Proposer and Seconder invited for the re-appointment of the Auditors
- 13) The Land & Water Space Director's Report
- 14) The Membership Services Director's Report
- 15) The Premises Director's Report
- 16) The Director without Portfolio's Report (Bar)
- 17) The Director without Portfolio's Report
- 18) Elections to be introduced by the Secretary/Returning Officer

Continued

DIRECTOR NOMINATIONS

- A) Company Secretary
- B) Finance Director
- C) Premises Director
- D) Director without Portfolio (Bar)
- E) Director with Portfolio
- F) Commodore

OFFICER NOMINATIONS

- G) Commodore (Vice)
- H) Commodore (Rear)
- I) Food Safety
- J) Health & Safety (advisory)
- K) Minutes Secretary
- L) Quartermaster

- 19) Resolutions
- 20) Any Other Business
- 21) FORMAL CLOSE OF AGM BY THE CHAIRMAN

THE NORTH CHESHIRE CRUISING CLUB LTD

Nomination Form

I am willing to let my name go forward from Sunday 30th October 2022 to serve as

DIRECTOR of the abovenamed Company, subject to the Articles of the same.

I confirm that I am familiar with the computer package "zoom" and am confident to send and receive e-mails.

Signature _____ Date _____

Address _____

Boat _____

Proposed by _____ Boat _____

Seconded by _____ Boat _____

This form to be returned to the Secretary of the NCCC by 22nd October 2022

THE NORTH CHESHIRE CRUISING CLUB LTD

Nomination Form

I am willing to let my name go forward from Sunday 30th October 2022 to serve as

_____ OFFICER of the abovenamed Company, subject to the Articles of the same.

Signature _____ Date _____

Address _____

Boat _____

Proposed by _____ Boat _____

Seconded by _____ Boat _____

This form to be returned to the Secretary of the NCCC by 22nd October 2022

THE NORTH CHESHIRE CRUISING CLUB LTD

Notice is hereby given that the **Annual General Meeting** of the Company will be held on Sunday 30th October 2022 at 2 pm at the Clubhouse, High Lane, to transact the following business:

To receive and adopt the Accounts of the Company for the year ended 30 June 2022 together with the reports of the Chairman, Secretary, Auditors, and the other office holding Directors.

To elect a Company Secretary, Finance Director, Premises Director, Director without Portfolio (Bar) Director without Portfolio, Commodore, Vice Commodore, and Rear Commodore. Food Safety Officer, Health & Safety Officer (Advisory), Minutes Secretary, Quartermaster.

To re-appoint Edmunds & Co., as Accountants of the Company

To transact any other business which may lawfully be transacted at an Annual General Meeting

A member entitled to attend and vote at the meeting may appoint a proxy to attend and vote in his stead. A proxy need not be a member of the Company.

By order of the Board

THE NORTH CHESHIRE CRUISING CLUB LTD

Form of Proxy

I _____ being a person entitled to attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting of the above Company to be held on Sunday 30th October 2022 **hereby appoint** _____ to be my proxy to attend the above meeting on my behalf and to vote on any resolution as he/she may think fit, or to such effect as I have indicated on the back of this form.

Signed _____

This proxy must be lodged with the Secretary by handing it to her or posting it to the NCCC, The Wharf, Buxton Road, High Lane, Stockport, SK6 8AA, by 22nd October 2022

To the NCCC Membership

Thank you all for the support and good wishes you have been kind enough to offer me during my recent hospital visit.

I'm feeling better now and hope to see you at the Club shortly.

Kind regards

Ruth Sellars, Jaberge 11

CHRISTMAS BRASS BAND CONCERT AT THE NCCC

SUNDAY 18th DECEMBER 2022 AT 7-30 PM



TICKETS AVAILABLE SHORTLY



AWCC News, including a Summary of the AWCC N.W. meeting, held at the Watch House C.C. Stretford, during the evening of Thursday 8th September 2022.



The AWCC NW regional Meeting was attended by thirteen people, representing ten of the seventeen North West Region Boat Clubs, apologies being received from three people. This, the first meeting held following the summer recess is summarised as follows:

Minutes of the May 12th 2022 meeting were agreed (these being available upon request).

The Chairman highlighted the fact that most North-West waterways are closed due to lack of water, repairs are often of a poor quality and maintenance is minimal. The significant increase in paddleboarders, canoeists and cyclists, many of whom are unregulated adds to the list of difficulties boaters are currently encountering. C&RT are proposing a further 4% increase in license fees in October this year, this being in addition to the 4% introduced earlier this year.

A proposal was made that those helming broad beam craft (9-0ft wide and above) should undergo specialist training, in a similar fashion to drivers responsible for Heavy Goods Vehicles present on our roads. This is an attempt to regulate the broad beam craft which ply from Wincham Wharf on the Trent and Mersey Canal to the local Marinas.

The manned Locks on the River Weaver are understaffed which may lead to delays.

The Anderton Lift is closed until further notice due to a component failure and the discovery a misalignment of one of the hydraulic rams. Matters are not helped by the fact that all maintenance records which were held at C&RT's Northwich Headquarters appear to have been discarded when this facility closed.

The toilet blocks on the Bridgewater Canal at Worsley and Preston Brook are now operational, access being possible using a British Waterways Key.

Again, on the Bridgewater Canal, towpath improvement work is in progress at Walton near to Warrington.

Progress is reported on the long-term Montgomery Canal reclamation, where a grant has been forthcoming to continue with restoration work south of the England – Wales border.

Though membership of the British Canoe Federation entitles Paddleboarders and canoeists to insurance cover, it is not easy to ascertain whether this is held by those using the canal.

It was reported that lithium batteries contributed to a fire on board a large craft in Holland which was destroyed not long after it had been fitted out. Those charged with updating BSS requirements are aware of this problem.

To date, an attempt to launch a Macclesfield-Peak Forest Canal user group has not met with success. Faced with no representation from C&RT, the inaugural meeting scheduled to occur at the NCCC headquarters on the evening of Friday 5th August was cancelled.

AWCC North-West are scheduled to meet with C&RT NW at Anderton on the afternoon of Friday 20th November 2022. Should you have any concerns, these should be highlighted in order that they may be added to the agenda. Please advise me prior to the next AWCC NW meeting which is scheduled to occur during the evening of Thursday 10th November 2022.

John Suggitt, Vice Chair AWCC North-West, AWCC Rep. for NCCC, N/B Evenlode

THE CLUB SLIPWAY IS ALMOST FULLY BOOKED FOR 2022. VERY FEW DATES REMAIN AVAILABLE

You may wish to consider booking a slot during 2023.

Many of your boating requisites are currently on sale at the Club as follows:

These include diesel oil, smokeless coal, kiln dried logs, kindling, propane, and butane gas, all offered at competitive prices, see the Workshop notice board for details.

For further information please contact Hazel Bowker on Tel. 01663 763595

Autumn Edition Brain Teaser

What is the name of the family who reside at Ramsdell Hall (alongside the Macclesfield Canal at Kent Green) and what is the name of the Professional Football Club they own?

Solution to Summer Edition Brain Teaser

The fourth Macclesfield Canal Arm is located after the right hand bend at the south end of the 'mile straight' at Buglawton and the start of the embankment at Dane in Shaw on the approach to Congleton. It measures 43 yards long and incorporated a wharf which served the nearby quarries at 'Over Rainow' and 'Cloud'. **Ed**

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Moorings within the Arm may be coming available. Please contact our Moorings Officer Dave Hood, telephone number 07825 335146 / 07837 542115.

When re-licensing your boat, would you kindly do so through the Club as we will benefit financially. For further information on the current procedure, please contact our Licensing Officer Jaqui Kilburn, telephone number 0161 442 6353 / 07714 352991

Finally, my usual appeal for 'hardcopy' or 'electronically formatted' contributions for the Winter edition. Don't be shy!



YOUR



Ditchcrawler



NEEDS YOU!



*Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the material included in this edition of 'The Ditchcrawler' is both accurate and reliable, the NCCC Limited Officials can accept no responsibility for any claims made by the contributors. **Editor.***