Forth & Clyde Canal Society

CANAL NEWS

Autumn/Winter 2022 £1.50 FREE to Members ISSUE 179

ANOTHER GREAT CHARTER SEASON ON THE CANAL



AGM

Saturday 19th November
Southbank Marina
Kirkintilloch 11am

Visit our new interactive website at **www.forthandclyde.org.uk**

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



Serenading at Maryhill

Call for members to get involved with boat maintenance

WELCOME to this addition of the Canal News, doesn't time fly, it does not seem that long since the last copy date.

Since the last Canal News, we have continued with our crew training, however the numbers are smaller than before covid, that said it is good to see our members starting to become involved again. We have been joined by several of new members and they have joined the crew group.

The charter numbers have been steady with Voyager visiting lock 21 at Maryhill on a couple of occasions and Maryhill, our boat, visiting The Kelpies.

Maintenance on the boats is ongoing. Maryhill requires a deflected assembly fitted in front of her new cooling pipes, as the current arrangement did a grand job of collecting water lilies on one trip.

Voyager awaits the end of the charters when her cutlass bearing on the propeller shaft is to be replaced. Also requiring replacing are the engine mounts as they are starting to show signs of wear.

Gipsy Princess. A small team have started to complete the painting of Gipsy Princess, for months she lay just with the rust killer, which turns black, all over her sides and roof which made her looked as though she had been abandoned by us. As I write this chat the roof has had the first coat of the "topcoat" which will be followed by a 2nd.

The next main job is to get her Passenger Certificate issued again.

The slipway has been well used this year, on most occasions one boat down and the next one up. We are already seeing enquires for its use next year.

We really require more members to get involved with both the sailing and maintenance of the boats, the problem is we all had a 2-year gap due to covid, and got 2 years older and less agile to the things we enjoy? It not just our society where the number have fallen away, as are clubs of any sort including golf and bowling clubs have the same issue. If anyone has an idea as to how these problems can be resolved, then please research them and then advise how they can be taken forward.

We had our summer BBQ which once we managed to get all the coals burning it appeared to have been a success, no one got food poisoning maybe because you all cooked your own food, it even stayed dry. When will we do the next one? At New Year if Voyager is back in the water after her repairs, there may be at short cruise.

What's on the horizon? Well, our AGM will be in November; however, this year Voyager may not be available for a short trip after the meeting as she could still be up the slipway for her repairs. We are also planning to restart our winter talks in the New Year, the details of which will, I believe, be in this edition of the Canal News.

In early next year we may also do a long members trip which will take about 4 hours, to see all the improvements which have been carried out on the Glasgow Branch i.e., the new bridges at Stockingfield junction and near the clay pits, and the changes at the Applecross area.

Stewart Procter
Chairman

Front Cover: 'Maryhill' and crew at the Kelpies. See page 15.

Editor's Note

Our AGM will celebrate a full year's cruising, following two years of hit-and-miss Covid lockdowns. Do come and join us.

In this issue we cover Society charters including our first on-board proposal, romantic! Ospreys on Banton Loch, campaigning in the 1970's, and canal history plus canal news items and Society News. Please do send in your canal news stories, with plenty of pictures. Canal News is your mini magazine, so do please contribute and enjoy.

Paul Carter, Editor

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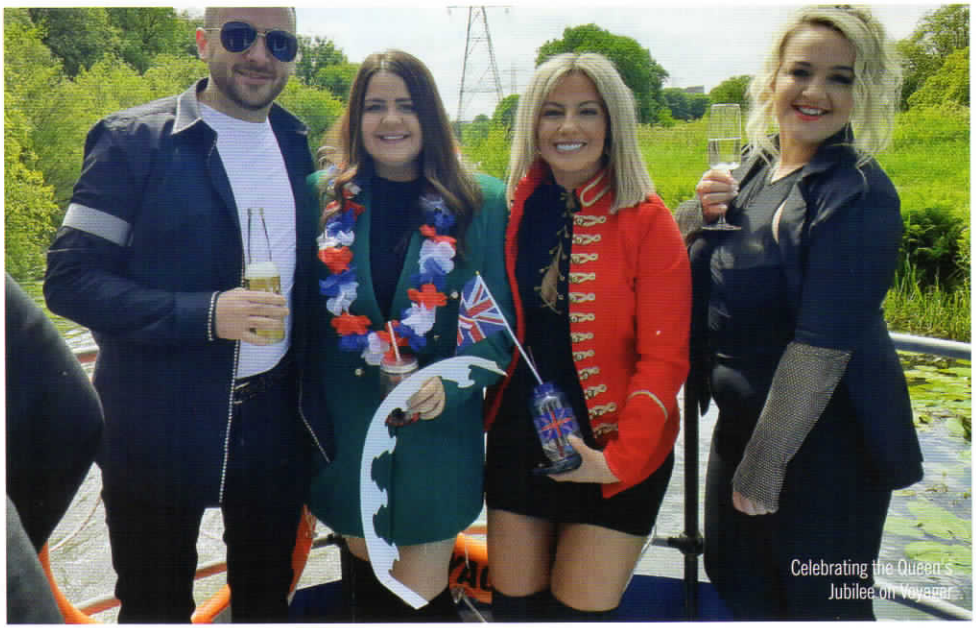

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Celebrating the Queen's Jubilee on Voyager

Queen Elizabeth II

Scottish Canals are truly saddened to learn of the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and recall that "It was an honour to receive Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh at the official naming of the Queen Elizabeth II Canal in 2017".

The Queen Elizabeth canal is the new stretch leading alongside the Carron River from The Kelpies to the new Sea Lock in Grangemouth.

A service of Reflection to honour the Queen's memory was held at The Kelpies on Sunday 18th September, led by Martin Fair, former Moderator of the Church of Scotland. Local lone piper Euan Thomson played 'A Salute to Queen Elizabeth II'

Busy Charter Season

We had a very busy charter season with more enquiries than we could handle this summer, coping with the pent-up post Covid demand. We certainly need additional active crew members, and a dedicated team to bring Gipsy Princess back into service. Please volunteer.

Stockingfield Reopens

The canal at the iconic new Stockingfield Bridge in Maryhill has been open to navigation for some months now. The towpath reopened in August following a two-year closure. Completion of a £200,000 resurfacing project has upgraded 1.2km of towpath approaches to the new bridge.

Project Manager Alistair Hamilton said "These sections of the towpath are well used by walkers, joggers and cyclists and we are sure they will notice a vast improvement in the surface". The new £13.7 million bridge was scheduled to reopen in September, but this had not been confirmed when Canal News went to print, and canal side artworks are continuing.

Bowling High Line

The plan to create a new linear park along the old railway viaduct has now received planning permission. This will transform the former rail line into a fully accessible linear park and pathway, forming a direct link between the Forth & Clyde Canal towpath and the National Cycle Route to Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.

The original viaduct was built in 1896, abandoned 1960, fell into disrepair, and has been partly restored since. This includes turning the old archways into commercial units. The new work includes vital repairs to the metalwork and full repainting.

Lock Flights Closed

The main eastern and western lock flights were closed for a period at the beginning of September due to low water levels in Banton Loch, a sandbank in Hillend reservoir and leaking locks. The eastern flight had already been closed for much of the summer due to major repair works to Lock 8, earlier work in March having proved insufficient. These have caused major disruptions to holidaymakers and boat owners during the main cruising season. For two successive years Banton Loch has been kept at a low level at the start of Spring, causing canal lock capacity problems.

Blue Green Algae

Blue green algae has been recorded at a number of points, including Lock 17 near Bonnybridge and Banton Loch / Townhead Reservoir. The algae can produce toxic substances that can pose a hazard to humans, pets and livestock. Scottish Canals have put up notices and informed health authorities.



Glasgow Loves EU waves their flags at Hungryside Bridge

NEWS IN BRIEF

The Falkirk Wheel

After a busy season The Falkirk Wheel will be closed for its annual 'MOT' and maintenance during November.

Dandelion Success

The Dandelion floating garden has entertained communities along the canals this summer. Starting on the 20th June the garden called in for public events at Hamiltonhill Clay Pits, Lambhill Stables, Kirkintilloch, Auchinstarry Marina, Polmont, Linlithgow, Broxburn And Ratho before finishing at Edinburgh on the 1st July. The garden was then 'in residence' at The Kelpies until mid-September.

Musical performances, free grow-your-own herb pots and a community artist plus gardening advice were all part of the show.

Auchinstarry Festival

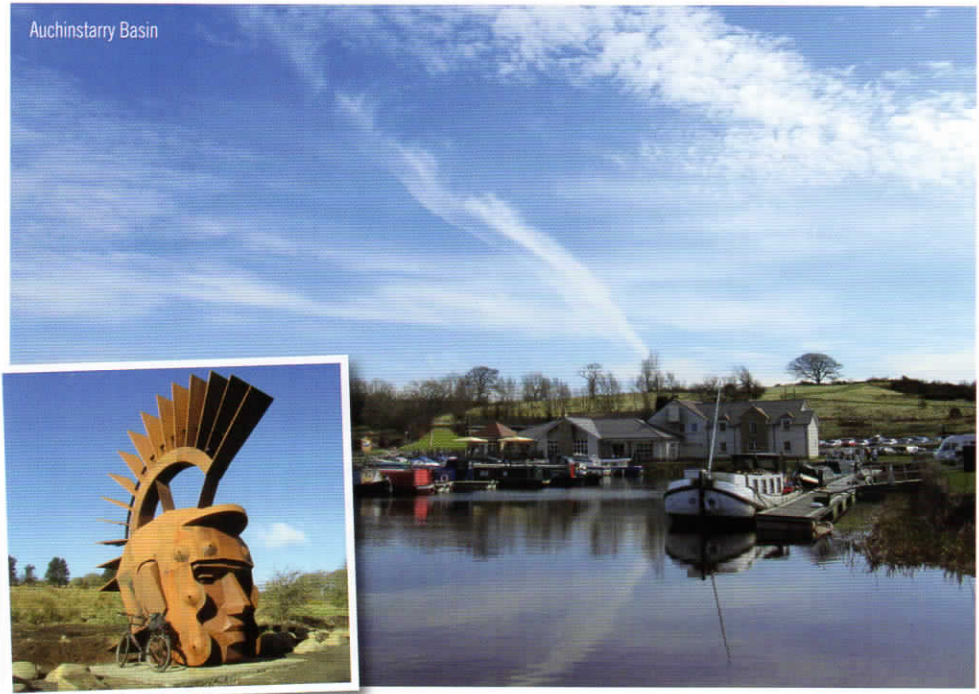
A mini canal festival was held at Auchinstarry Marina on 12th June. Unfortunately, high winds prevented any activities on the water but there were plenty of visitors to the various stalls, and a visit by the Kilsyth Civic Queen and her entourage.

Society AGM and Cruise

The Forth and Clyde Canal Society AGM will be held in the Society offices at Southbank Marina, Kirkintilloch, on Saturday 19th November 2022, starting at 11am. A letter, including the agenda for the meeting, inviting you to the AGM is enclosed with this magazine. If you have not received a copy,



Dandelion team at the Helix Park in Falkirk. Photo: Andrew Cawley


Auchinstarry Basin

please contact the Membership Secretary who will arrange to send one to you.

As usual after the meeting there will be refreshments. There may be a short cruise on Voyager if the works, requested by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, have been completed and there is no ice on the canal.

Scottish Waterways for All

The canals' umbrella organisation has reorganised. There will be a main committee and three sub-groups. Subgroup 1 will include Canal Societies, Trusts, Charities and the Third Sector. Subgroup 2 will include Navigation Operations and Boaters.

Subgroup 3 will include volunteers, Training and Events. The AGM will be held on October 20th, 6pm at The Falkirk Wheel.

Standing Waves

Dr Monchil Terziev, research associate at Strathclyde University is researching Solitons (standing waves) on the canals.

These were first identified by John Scott Russell on the Union Canal in the 1800's. Monchil is trying to find if solitons occur on Scotland's canals today and already has one sighting from Linlithgow Union Canal Society. He gave a presentation to the FCCS committee on September.

Roman Renamed

We hear that Roman centurion statue Silvanus, situated near the canal above Craigmarloch and know locally as 'metal heid' has a new name. Local have renamed him 'Spikeyheidicus'.

FEATURES



A first for FCCS as couple get spliced aboard the Maryhill

OVER the years we have taken wedding parties to the reception, had receptions on board, and even had a wedding take place on Voyager. However, we have never had a proposal made on board, until now, that is. The story didn't start like that, it was a Christmas gift from Laura to her partner Ronnie and was originally to have been a cruise on Maryhill on 29th of March 2020.

They both work locally and often had lunch at Southbank Marina and were both quite taken with Maryhill. And then Covid happened. Move on two and a half years and Laura got in touch to rearrange the booking which was now going to be on the 10th of September 2022.

As the date got closer Ronnie asked Laura for the email address for FCCS bookings on the pretext of finding out the route Maryhill would take. He got in touch, explained what he wanted to do, and between myself and the crew for Maryhill we put things in place to allow him to make his proposal. Ronnie arranged for both his and Laura's families to be at Southbank Marina before Maryhill returned, where they were waving and, as hoped, Laura was a bit perplexed by this, and as she turned to speak to Ronnie, she found him on one knee with a ring in his hand.

Thankfully she said yes, and it was all captured on camera. The day was made all the better by the weather which turned out to be a beautiful Autumn day, as the previous two days had been torrential rain.

The crew on the day were Dave & Janette Connell and Stewart Procter.

by Robert Irvine



Charter a Society Boat

The Canal Society has a fleet of three boats available for charter. Each boat comes fully crewed. Our boats are an ideal way to enjoy a family celebration or enjoy a cruise for your organisation. Each boat has a galley to organise your own catering.







VOYAGER

Up to 45 passengers or maybe 40 if you are catering. Hourly rate of £135 first hour.

GIPSY PRINCESS

up to 25 passengers or maybe 20 if you are catering. Hourly rate of £110 for first hour.

MARYHILL

up to 6 passengers. Each charter is considered on its merits and the lowest figure would be £80.

Charges are reduced for second and subsequent hours at progressively reducing rates and a full day charter may enjoy a discount. Charities, youth groups and other eligible organisations may be considered for a reduction on the final figure calculated.

The boats are generally based at the Stables Restaurant, Kirkintilloch G66 1RH. Cruises can also start at Southbank Marina in Kirkintilloch, Spiers Wharf in Glasgow and Auchinstarry Basin, Kilsyth, by special arrangement. One way trips are also sometimes available to Glasgow, Auchinstarry and the Falkirk Wheel, and are advertised on our website.

PLEASE CHECK WEBSITE FOR CURRENT COVID-19 GUIDELINES

Telephone bookings to Robert Irvine 01236 735533
Further information www.forthandclyde.org.uk

FEATURES

Barging and Blundering: Campaigning in the 1970s

Society founder member and current President Guthrie Hutton remembers campaigning before FCCS



The first canal rally Ruchill Street, Glasgow, August 1973

AS ONE of the few campaigners left from the early days, our esteemed editor asked me for some recollections, so here goes. They start, for me, when I returned to Scotland in 1962 after seven years in Australia. Within a month I came across the canal and thought it looked great.

Thereafter I saw it from passing vehicles and on foot exploring the grittier bits of Glasgow. At the time the papers were full of stories reporting its imminent demise, which I found hard to believe, surely nobody could be that stupid! They were. Politicians droned on about creating pleasant urban water parks, but what we got were drowned culverts, cut down lock gates, reduced water levels, weed, decay, dereliction and dirt.

I worked for the BBC and concluded that it would be good to make a film, although that was not actually my job.

I walked from one end of the canal to the other, to get to know it better, but then life generally took over, I was posted to London and the idea got parked. Back in Glasgow in the 1970s I teamed up with a group of colleagues at the BBC and we made the film. In doing so I met campaigners working for canal restoration, and joined.

Work parties were fun, hauling rubbish out of the water with grappling hooks in readiness for boat rallies – the smell was highly distinctive.

The first rally I recall was at Ruchill Street, but as the 1970s progressed the events

got bigger with rallies at Kirkintilloch, Bishopbriggs and Maryhill and famously in 1976 at all three over the course of one holiday weekend.

The boats – 'Dik's barges' – were old sunk tubs that Richard Davies had re-floated. They could be driven with an outboard slung from a purpose-built bracket, but weed was a constant problem and so to move the boats over distance we sometimes towed them with my Land Rover.

It was risky because the rope could snag on any number of hazards on the towpath edge and when it did the boats whipped round at speed and crashed into the bank.

Equally, the Land Rover could be pulled into the canal and to avoid such problems people ran behind, ready to keep the rope clear.

We had silly moments. On one dark night a call to 'throw the rope' was answered by both the people on the bank and the boat. Hopes sank with the rope, but mercifully it was fished out with one sweep of the barge pole.

Also, an attempt to take the rope across a road bridge was doomed to inevitable failure, and at 2.00 o'clock one morning we had to abandon the Land Rover, a pick-up truck and the boats between Glasgow Road Bridge and Kirkintilloch. The boats were kept on the old Hay's slipway at Kirkintilloch. We beached them by hauling them fast with the Land Rover and as they rode up on their bow wave they grounded. It didn't do the vehicle's clutch much good, but thwarted the vandals.

On one occasion a British Waterways engineer inspected the old rust buckets to ensure they were safe, carefully selecting the smallest hammer in his arsenal to tap the hulls gently and give them the OK.

That's how it was, we all did what we could to keep the canal in the public eye and persuade officialdom that a restored canal could again be a great asset.

And in the late 1970s the tectonic plates of political will began to move. Council planners started the process of preparing a Forth & Clyde Canal Local (Subject) Plan and we got involved, keen to maintain momentum, but that, as they say, is another story (the editor will be pleased!).

Many thanks Guthrie. Morna Gourlay (Chambers) will continue this series on campaigning in the 1970's in a future issue.



All aboard Richard's barge

FEATURES



Wildlife in action: Local Osprey tucks in to a fish supper

THESE great pictures of an Osprey flying were sent to us by a keen Kilsyth photographer Malcolm Gillies. He pictured the Ospreys this summer plucking a trout from Banton Loch (Sunday name Townhead Reservoir). The Loch is a major supplier of water to the Forth and Clyde Canal. A lade brings water to the loch from the Garrell Burn and Johnnie's Dam (Sunday name Birkenburn Reservoir) and another lade takes water down to the canal at Craigmarloch, Near Kilsyth.

Ospreys have been breeding at nearby Carron Valley Reservoir for the last few years. Your editor has enjoyed swimming there, with a pair of ospreys circling overhead. Imagined bird conversation "Worth a try? Nah, too old, too tough". It is just a short three-mile hop over the hills from Carron to Banton Loch.

A fishing Osprey is a wonderful sight as it circles, hovers, and plunges. As it strikes the water the bird holds its wings high and thrusts its talons forward to grasp the fish.

Almost immediately the bird rises back out of the water and turns the fish to face the front and lower wind resistance. Then, with the help of spiny scales on its feet and strongly curved claws, it grips the fish securely as it carries it back to the nest and waiting hungry chicks.

Ospreys are striking looking birds. They have slightly longer bodies than buzzards and have much longer, almost gull like, wings,

up to 1.5m span. Their wings are very light-coloured underneath, adding to their gull like appearance, and brown on top. Near the nest is particular they give a shrill 'pieu, pieu, pieu' call. The nest itself is a great pile of sticks, usually high in a tree. Summers are spent devouring Scotland's juiciest fish. Winters are spent fishing in the warmth of West Africa.

It was not always like this. Gamekeepers and egg collectors had exterminated the Osprey in Britain by 1916. Ospreys returned to visit during the 1950's and then successfully nested and reared a brood at Loch Garten in Speyside in 1959.

At first conservationists tried to protect the birds by keeping them a secret. Soon the RSPB had a better idea, set up a popular visitor centre, and relied on the public support gained by 24/7 vigilance for protection. By the 1980's there were over 20 breeding pairs in Scotland, and now over two hundred. A real success story.

Malcolm also photographed Kingfishers along the canal feeder lade. A much smaller fish hunter. We have had reports of Kingfishers along the canal, loch and lade system this summer.

A few years ago, on a school cruise in Maryhill, an electric blue Kingfisher flashed by. An awed small schoolboy said "Hey mister, that was just like one of they fairy lights on top of a Christmas tree". A great description.

Thanks Malcolm, and everybody please keep sending your wildlife pictures and stories to Canal News.



IN FOCUS

'Together We Make Maryhill' Cruise a positive experience

By Iona Craig



Cruising under Stockingfield Bridge

'TOGETHER We Make Maryhill' had received some funding to provide opportunities for the community to come together and combat isolation.

We decided that a great way to do this would be to offer a wee trip along the canal - a prominent landmark in the Maryhill area. The FCCS were very helpful in discussing options with us and creating an experience which suited our needs.

We opted for four "there and back again" trips on The Voyager across two Saturdays, with one day starting at The Voyager's base and the other starting at Lock 21 in Maryhill. The trips were open to anyone, and we had all ages come along - from babies to people in their nineties.

Everyone was delighted at the opportunity to travel along the canal and see places they know well from a different perspective. It was a chance to spot wildlife and appreciate all the greenery. Despite having lived their whole lives beside the canal, it wasn't just children who had never sailed along it before! Those on the two sailings which left from Lock 21 were particularly excited to see the new Stockingfield Junction. We've watched it take shape over the past couple of years but, with the towpath closed, we haven't been able to admire it up close. Now that it's almost ready to open, we really enjoyed getting a closer look and sailing under it.

We had so many comments across all four sailings about how much people enjoyed the trip and the opportunity to get up close and see the canal. It helped them to really appreciate this local landmark, which is a defining feature of Maryhill. We're very grateful to the FCCS for welcoming us and providing an excellent service!

IN FOCUS

Author's Cruise

Charter for Christopher Somerville, Walking Correspondent of the Times.



AT THE beginning of June, we were delighted to take journalist and travel writer Christopher Somerville and his wife Jane on a 2-day research trip onboard "Maryhill".

Christopher wanted to see the area surrounding the Forth and Clyde Canal and in particular the geological features created by previous mining.

He was also keen to visit the Antonine Wall, Grangemouth and the iconic Kelpies. The Scottish weather was kind and passengers, and crew, had a great two days travelling to the Kelpies. Chris and his wife Jane were impressed with our volunteer crew and the facilities onboard Maryhill as well as the lovely scenery.

He promises we will be mentioned in the book he is presently working on. You can find out more about Christopher on his website www.christophersomerville.co.uk

He has published many books, walks and maps which are well worth investigating.

Christine Hammell

Emily's First Canal Trip

Emily (7) my first canal boat holiday (from Emily's logbook)

AUTHERLEY Junction to Great Haywood and a little bit of the Trent and Mersey Canal.

27th July The weather is sunny and today we go to Penkridge and do 11 locks.

When I woke up there were swans around the boat. I got to feed them lots of bread. We then sailed through Tixall Wide and I helped to open lots of locks on the way to Great Haywood where we filled up the water tank. We then went down the Trent and Mersey canal going through two locks before mooring at Wolsely Bridge for lunch. We then turned the boat round and headed back to Penkridge (on the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal). We went through 5 locks before the rain came on. It was so heavy, Daddy got soaked and Auntie Christine slipped and nearly fell in the canal. We stopped for dinner at The Boat Inn.

After dinner we play bingo and Yahtzee.



Thanks to Christine Hammel, Emily's auntie, who also enjoyed the canal trip.

IN FOCUS

Memories of growing up in a Lock Keeper's Cottage

By Karina Gallagher



I WAS born on 15th January 1962 in the lock keepers' cottage at Lock 35. My father (Robert George Munday - died 6th January 2022 aged 95) was the lock keeper before the canal was closed to boat traffic and some of the sections were filled in.

Subsequently, he continued to work for British Waterways as a banksman. My brother (Robert Francis Munday) and I grew up in that house and have many fond memories of living there.

Our mum (Theresa Munday née McGreskin - died 10th September 1995) was a very sociable character and loved to have people around. She threw legendary Hogmanay parties and fed anyone who came through that door!

Although I don't remember it, my dad used to keep chickens. My mum told the tale of a particular hen called Gertie. Gertie was my dad's favourite and would always make a beeline for him when he was feeding them. Unfortunately, one time when my dad was unwell and mum had to take over the feeding, Gertie was singularly unimpressed. She made straight for her and started pecking at her and chasing her! Mum didn't appreciate this one bit. When Gertie's time was up, mum had no problem plucking and stuffing her and I'm told she was particularly tasty.

Given that I had lived in the canal cottage for 24 years, when I saw this event being publicised, I realised that apart from a short trip on a boat at the Falkirk Wheel with my dad some years ago, I hadn't actually been on a sailing trip along the canal!

I was absolutely delighted to be able to rectify this and enjoyed the trip immensely. My thanks to the Canal Society for the tour and history, and to Glasgow Loves EU for setting up the event in May 2022.

When Karina mentioned to skipper Robert, that she had grown up by the canal he asked her to let us have a story. Please everybody, keep the stories coming in.

IN FOCUS

Book Review

Scotland's Canals and Waterways

Guthrie Hutton. Stenlake Publishing. 2022. £11.95

GUTHRIE Hutton has written many excellent canal books over the decades and all his experience has been brought together in this new volume which covers the history of all of Scotland's Canals.

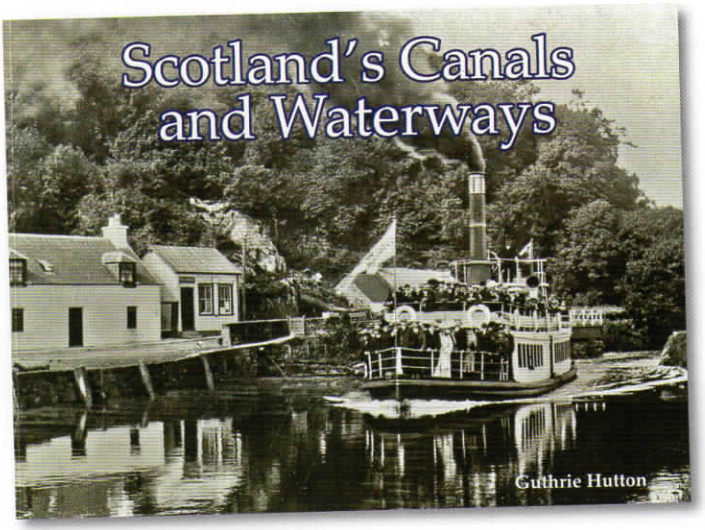
The book is in familiar Stenlake style, one picture plus a write-up on each page, in landscape format.

Guthrie takes us on a delightful historical tour from our own Forth and Clyde to the Monkland, Paisley, Crinan and Caledonian Canals. He even manages to squeeze in the Dingwall, Aberdeenshire and Galloway canals plus river navigations. The Union Canal forms a fitting final section, along with present day pictures of The Falkirk Wheel.

The pictures are all good and very evocative. Your editor had not seen many of them before, and some are old favourites.

Guthrie's write-ups for each picture are full of interest and provide great background. This is a book for everyone with an interest in Scotland's canals, and also a great 'starter' volume since it covers them all.

Editor's Note. Guthrie has been a central figure in restoring Scotland's canals since the early days of canal campaigning. See his article on the 1970's on page 10 in this issue. Guthrie has been President of the Forth and Clyde Canal Society for many years.



SPLASHBACK From The Canal News Archives

Forty Years Ago

Sea to Sea Inflatable Rally Proposed, Fishing News, Ferry Boat Futures, Wildlife Meeting and Drambuie Marathon were the main stories plus loads of News items.

Thirty Years Ago

'Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council' was our front-page story, IWAAC was set up in 1968 under the Transport Act and had an important role. '

Gipsy Princess' carried 1500 passengers in the year, including many school parties. Guthrie Hutton did an article on the M80 threat, a battle we helped to win.

Twenty Years Ago

'Seasons Greetings' was our front-page welcome in the December issue, which was actually a big plug for our New Boat Fund, which led to Voyager. Autumn Rambles, Forth & Clyde Volcanoes, mini submarines by David Holgate (see obituary opposite and Motorway Madness (M80) were our main stories.

Ten Years Ago

'Boats in Southbank Marina for Kirky Festival' was our front-page. We also carried articles on the Wee Ferries on the Clyde by our late and much-loved Frank Quinn, and Canal Walk No. 17, one of a series of 26 published in Canal News.

From the Photo Archives:

Back in the 1970s, Donald MacKinnon far right, can you name the others? Thanks Morna.



In Memoriam - David Holgate

I WAS saddened to read in Canal News that David Holgate had died. A proud son of Maryhill, he was a stalwart of the society and although physically slight was highly intelligent, which made his failing eyesight in later life particularly galling.

Davie helped at many of the society's activities and I have fond memories of him when we were pushing to secure funding for the Millennium Link.

At the petition signing events he had a way of quietly approaching people, clipboard in hand, imploring them to sign, and usually succeeding. I never did figure out how he did it, but it worked.

He came on the towpath walks that we organised, but unable to cover the whole distance on foot, brought along his little collapsible bicycle to help keep up with other walkers, he was certainly game. He and his wife latterly lived in Drumchapel and I still have a community calendar from there for 2003 that he contributed pictures to.

An early transport enthusiast, he photographed trams and buses, and parts of the canal before and after closure. These are now important images. But it is a measure of the man that, when I set about writing this, I looked for a picture of him, and found none.

I guess his legacy is not in an image, but in what he did and the contribution he made. Para Handy would have described him as 'A good man gone', a sentiment that I can readily endorse, so thanks for everything Davie, the society and the canal would have been poorer without you.

Guthrie Hutton



SOCIETY NEWS



Festive cruise along the canal

Charters

Despite being unable to sail due to Covid until early in 2022, in the year from October 2021 until the end of September 2022 we managed to run 31 charters, 24 on Voyager and 7 on Maryhill. Two of Voyager's charters were as stand-ins for Gipsy Princess as she is still to be re-licenced by the MCA.

Even the limited number of charters proved a challenge as several crew members have not returned since the Covid restrictions were lifted, but we were very fortunate in that some new members having joined the Society and have been very keen to crew our boats.

Boat Maintenance

As our chairman will have mentioned elsewhere in the magazine, boat maintenance is an ongoing process and has been carried out by a very small and dedicated group of members, a lot by our new members.
As noted above Gipsy Princess still needs to have her Passenger Licence renewed, and it is hoped to have that done by the end of the year.

MCA Licences

Voyager successfully had her licence renewed with only a few minor items to be dealt with to satisfy the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA). While Gipsy Princess is nearly ready for her MCA inspection we won't know until after this is carried out what further items are required, if any, to allow her Passenger Certificate to be issued.

Crew Training

Members met on 18 Wednesday evenings between 30th March and 31st August. In total over that period there were 183 attendances, an average of 10 each evening.

A number of subjects were covered, from boats systems, rope handling, boat handling and paperwork to mention a few.

Boat Safety Scheme

Our smallest vessel, Maryhill, is subject to Boat Safety Scheme Certification. This is a 4-year certificate, and she is due for inspection and renewal in 2023.

At present we are not expecting any difficulties in going through this process.

Members Cruises

There were 6 members cruises held between April and September on the 1st Wednesday of the month. Unfortunately, these cruises were not as well attended as hoped with the exception of the September pizza cruise which proved to be a success. In addition to the Wednesday members trips there was a members cruise on Sunday 24th April.

Slipway

In addition to slipping our own boats, there were 6 private boats slipped in 2022 giving a welcome income to the Society. There are already a further 6 private boats booked for 2023.



Starting young

SOCIETY NEWS



Annual General Meeting

The 43rd Annual General Meeting of the Canal Society will be held on Saturday 19th November 2022 at the Society's offices at Southbank Marina, Kirkintilloch.

The meeting will start at 11am. Refreshments will be available after the meeting. It is hoped to go for a short sail on Voyager, but this will be dependent on maintenance requested by the MCA being completed.

Membership

Despite a small influx of new members over the last year our numbers are dwindling.

The Membership Secretary has been notified of a number of deaths throughout the year and, in addition, there are a number of members who have not renewed their membership for 2022.

Finance

The accounts for the 2021/2022 financial year do not close until the 30th of September so final figures were not available when Canal News went to print but expenditure will exceed income this year, not helped by the break-ins to our containers earlier in the year.

We have seen a significant increase in our costs this year, fuel up by 100% and insurances up by 15%.

The mooring fees and navigation licences have been pegged at 2½% over the last 5 years but are due to be revised for April 2023. Scottish Canals, like everyone else, will have seen a significant increase in their costs so we expect that the mooring fees and navigations licences to rise above 2½% for 2023.

Events

Sunday 12th June – There was a member's BBQ and we enjoyed seeing some members

who were not regularly on members cruises or at crew training.

Saturday 19th November – Canal Society AGM. Southbank Marina, Kirkintilloch, at 11am. Tea & biscuits will be served after the meeting. There will be a short sail on Voyager if she is back in service and weather (ice) permitting.

Monday 2nd January 2023 – New Year Get Together. Southbank Marina, Kirkintilloch, at 12 noon. There will be a short sail on Voyager if she is back in service and weather (ice) permitting.

Thursday 23rd February 2023 – Tommy's Talk. The Forth and Clyde Canal, Then and Now, by Society Founder Member Tommy Lawton. Advance notice.

Canal News SOS

We need new blood on Canal News. Our present Editor Paul has been doing the job for the last 9 years, on top of 3 years (and 15 issues) back in the early 1980's.

He is getting good help from committee members, in particular Robert, Stewart and Christine. However fresh faces would be good, whether for reporting or even taking over as Editor.

The Editor has to basically write at least half of each issue, cajole others into writing the rest, source pictures, put the whole thing together (with help) and get it designed and printed. Please get in touch with Paul if you are interested in getting involved.



Gartsherrie Branch of the Monkland Canal. See next issue.

ABOUT US

Forth & Clyde Canal Society Officers

Chairman Stewart Procter

Secretary / Company Secretary
Christine Hammell 0141 561 1953

Treasurer / Membership / Bookings
Robert Irvine 01236 735533

President Guthrie Hutton

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Enjoy our Canal Informatrix

Keep in touch with us in a variety of ways:-

WEB SITE Visit our website www.forthandclyde.org.uk for latest news, events, and background information. Contact our webmaster if you wish to help, at our email address.

E-MAIL ALERTS keep up with the latest events etc. Join our email circulation list by contacting our webmaster on secretary@forthandclyde.org.uk

make friends with us on **Facebook**

Join us on **Twitter**

JOIN US AND HELP SAVE THE CANAL

- Campaigning
- Boats
- Socials
- Walks
- Volunteering

Come and enjoy our many activities from boat crewing and maintenance to talks and walks.

Annual subs

Family £25
Ordinary Member £20
Student or Pensioner £12

Contact

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KEEP UP TO DATE: for updates and information go to www.forthandclyde.org.uk, make friends with us on Facebook, join us on Twitter and look out for email alerts.

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