

GERMANY

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IWI at Finow symposium

IWI will attend an important symposium to be held in Eberswalde on the historic Finow Canal north of Berlin, on February 9. The background to the Finow Canal, and the issues faced by all the smaller waterways in the Federal Republic, are presented here. Read also the economic perspective presented by Peter Linssen on p. 7.

THREATENED WATERWAYS' IS THE subject of the Symposium organised by the association Unser Finowkanal and its president Prof. Hartmut Ginnow-Merkert. Delegates from across Germany will assemble in the Paul-Wunderlich-Haus in Eberswalde to discuss how the current challenges to the *Bedrohte Wasserwege* could be overcome.

The organisers are delighted to be receiving international support, and three IWI corporate members will be present. Linssen Boating Holidays will be represented by Dr Lorenzo Guendel of Puur Yachtcharter (which has bases on Lake Müritz, at Zehdenick on the Havel and Lake Constance); vice-president David Edwards-May will attend; and the Saale-Elster Kanal association's president Michael Witfer will make a presentation. Meetings have been arranged with mayors of several communities along the Finow Canal, on Tuesday 10th February. We look forward

to hearing the positions of all parties involved, and hope to report a positive outcome.

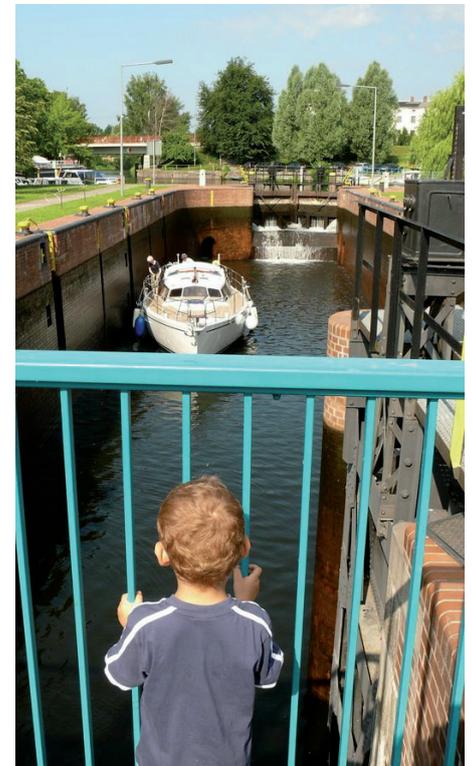
National and local issues will be on the agenda. The national issue is the financing of maintenance and operation of recreational waterways, if they are handed over by the Federal Government to the *Länder*. Government policy is to maintain only intensively-used waterways, and to 'resolve the competition for resources in the management of secondary versus main waterways' by improving cooperation between the Federal and *Land* levels.

'Remainder' waterways

For legal reasons this requires 'declassification' of the waterways, which would remain State property. The Federal Government has offered to pay half of the €30 million investment still needed to make the Finow Canal fully and sustainably operational. Brandenburg, for its part, needs the commitment of the local municipalities along the canal to cover the other 50%, also using some Federal economic development funds. Then there is the ongoing operation and maintenance without any Federal contribution. A detailed study of the costs was supposed to be undertaken in 2015, but support for this study is understood to have been withdrawn. It appears to be the local level that is most reluctant to commit funds to the canal.

For the *Länder*, the transfer of responsibility for waterways implies a host of responsibilities and liabilities in an area where there is no experience at the local level. The so-called 'tertiary' waterways are thus under threat of closure if the local authorities fail to agree on the funding of maintenance and operation.

Location of the so-called 'tertiary' waterways of Germany. Those marked in red will be represented at the Eberswalde conference. Other threatened waterways (green) are the Spoy Kanal (Briene Lock) giving access to Kleve, and canoeing rivers and mill streams in the Black Forest. The future of Güdingen lock on the Saar (grey) has been secured. High-ranking delegates are expected from all over Germany. © DEM-TRANSMANCHE



A vocation is born contemplating a yacht, dreaming of voyages to exciting places, at the impeccably restored Stadtschleuse in Eberswalde. © MATHIAS B.

The risk is similar to that faced by the 'Remainder waterways' in the UK in 1968.

Voluntary labour

The local issue is the opposition of Federal staff to use of voluntary labour to man the locks. After restoration in 2003, 10 of the Finow Canal locks were operated by a municipal working group.

Lock-keepers were recruited from among the long-term unemployed in the area, who received one day's training by the waterway authority, and then worked for one season only. As Hartmut writes in his letter on p.7, the WSA staff council only grudgingly accepted this scheme, despite the fact that the jobs had already disappeared, then opposed a pragmatic extension of the scheme to use voluntary labour on these 10 locks.

There is some good news from Germany, however, suggesting that solutions can be found. This is the change in position of the WSA responsible for the river Saar. The authority agreed in 2014 to fund restoration of Güdingen lock on the upstream length of the canalised river. This example underlines the importance of getting round the table and working out solutions to seemingly inextricable situations. ■

[see Letters p. 7]



AGM in Milan

IWI had the biggest ever attendance at its AGM, in Lombardy Region's Palazzo Sisterna in Milan on August 31, 2014. Secretary Dave MacDougall summarises the proceedings.

IWI's Annual General Meeting at the World Canals Conference venue opened with a presentation by David Holder and Duncan Hay on behalf of Syracuse, New York, USA, the Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor and the New York State Canal Corporation, supporting their application to host the World Canals Conference in 2017.

Motions were passed (a) to accept the treasurer's report for 2013, and to accept Mike Reid's resignation and appoint Norman Smith as Treasurer, (b) to change the postal address for IWI to the Folkestone, UK address (as on p.1), (c) to elect Roger Squires, Bob Sears, David Wadham, Colin Becker and Katie Boyd-Wetter as Council members of IWI for a 3-year term, (d) to amend our WCC organizers' handbook to include an educational component as a requested item at a World Canals Conference.

We have hired a webmaster to manage our IWI website and we are seeing improvements.

Michel Raffin, president, and Hélène de Morsier, vice-president of the Alliance des Rhodaniens, gave a brief presentation on the objectives of their organization and their work, particularly on the Rhône in France and Switzerland, but also tours to waterways throughout Europe.

It was approved to include more academic or educational oriented articles in our newsletter and

magazine. Members are encouraged to provide this type of article to Dave MacDougall, Secretary for consideration for the newsletter and magazine. WCC 2015 will be hosted in Ghent, Belgium. WCC 2016 will be hosted by Scottish Canals in Inverness. The host for 2017 will be announced at the end of the 2014 conference, based on a recommendation by the selection committee and approval of IWI Council. ■

Two new Council members

were appointed in January. **Peter Linssen** represents the two Linssen group companies (see Peter's letter about the Finow Canal, p.7), and is involved with marketing and strategy. He was an individual member of IWI from 2010, then signed up Linssen & Linssen as corporate member (with the trading name Linssen Boating Holidays). The company not only builds vessels for recreational boating, but also promotes a Europe-wide network of hire boat bases. Peter brings his knowledge and experience of the boat building and hire boat businesses to Council. **Barbara Sheridan** is first vice-president of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association in the US. This independent citizens association is actively involved in conservation of the natural and historical environment of the C&O Canal and the Potomac River Basin. Barbara has had many years' experience working as part of this volunteer organization, and has also been a regular delegate at the WCC in recent years, starting in Serbia in 2009, also participating in pre- and post-conference tours. Barbara presents the delicate issue of charging to use the C&O Canal's towpath on p.5.

Adieu Sonia

Sonia Rolt died peacefully in hospital on 22 October after a short illness, at the age of 95. Her death has meant the passing of the last of the 'idle women' who was still actively involved with the canals. The historic photo shows Sonia in about June 1945 drawing political slogans ('Vote Labour' and 'A fair deal for boaters') on the cabin of her GUCCC motor Phobos. It was her political activism that attracted her to the newly founded IWA in 1946. Contrasting with her life 'on the cut' married to boatman George Smith, she was able to give articulate representation for saving canal carrying and improving the lot of the working boatmen. It

was through her time on the IWA committee that her relationship developed with canal author and IWA co-founder Tom Rolt. Her interests encompassed all heritage, and she became a member of the Landmark Trust. She supported IWI from its foundation, and was an enthusiastic participant in several of the continental tours organised by founder Ron Oakley, and twice attended the WCC. In her 96th year, Sonia attended the Hay Literary Festival in May, where the 70th anniversary of her late husband Tom Rolt's great work, Narrow Boat, was celebrated in style. Then as late as August, Sonia gave an interview to Canal Boat magazine, which appeared in its November issue.

For those who knew her, her energy and passion for life never ceased to amaze, and remained with her almost to her end. **A memorial service for Sonia will be held at St Paul's Crypt in London, on May 14 at 2:30 pm.** TIM COGHLAN

Sonia Rolt at the opening parade of boats at the 2006 Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally.



Delegates were taken for a memorable boat trip on the Naviglio Grande on the second day of the WCC (here passing a pontoon for small craft). DEM

Syracuse NY

was confirmed as the venue of the WCC in 2017 during the closing session of the Milan conference, following a decision by the selection committee formed this year by Rory Robinson, Roger Squires and Linda Barth. The 2017 conference will explore and celebrate inland waterways as 'agents of transformation: once mothers of cities and ports, transformers of landscapes and builders of nations; now foci for revitalizing communities, makers of power and suppliers of essential water'.

New business alliance

One of IWI's corporate members, a constant supporter and supplier of services, Euromapping, has been wound up. Fortunately, the publishing and consulting activity developed by David Edwards-May since 1990 will now continue as part of Transmanche Consultants of Lambersart (near Lille), also a supporter and corporate member of IWI. David's work will continue as part of Transmanche, evidenced by the recently published 5th edition of the **European Waterways Map and Directory** (see p.7), with separate French and German editions (the latter published by Delius Klasing as an Edition Maritim title). So the important work will be carried on with David still being a core part of that. Good luck to David and Transmanche! ■

Welcome to new members

Corporate

Inland Waterways Association of Ireland Ireland
McMullan & Associates Inc. USA

Individual

Sharon Leighton USA
Magnus Rönmark Sweden

IWI Newsletter is a digital document distributed to members by e-mail every few months.

A print-out is available on request for members who do not have e-mail. The magazine **World Wide Waterways** continues to appear separately.

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editor@worldcanals.org +33 603 600098

Please note that comments and opinions expressed in IWI's publications are those of the authors, named or otherwise, and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Association as a whole.

President's notes



As I sit in my office and look out over the winter landscape outside my window as the temperature slowly rises for the day from an overnight low of -25° C, I can't help but think that canals and winter don't necessarily go hand in hand!

Many watch as boats are put away or stored for the winter, canal reaches are drained, dams set, and it gives the sense that the canal is going into a long winter sleep only to wake again in the spring. Many turn their backs to the canals during the winter months. Well, that may be the common thinking and happen in some places, however, in many communities in northern climates the reality can be much different. There canals just change uses and have a new vibrant life.

Canal operators/organizations, recreational groups, municipalities, service organizations, volunteer groups participate to make this change happen. It can also be a father or mother out clearing a small patch of ice on a canal somewhere so their kids can skate and play ice games. These activities get people outdoors, physically active, coming together as groups, opportunities to socialize and most important give the canal another life while introducing new people to the canal. It allows people to get on the canal without a boat or other means. They get to see some of the perspectives that users and boaters of the canal see. It is a unique opportunity not only for canals to have another life, but to add a new dimension to the profile and importance of a canal. So, what types of activities take place on the canal? The obvious ones for us in Canada are skating for enjoyment and exercise, playing hockey and speed skating. But many other events and activities happen on the ice surface. Winter carnivals with a myriad of activities either individually are as part of a larger event, such as snow sculptures, figure skating performances, curling events, concerts always with the winter food fares, i.e., hot chocolate or in Ottawa 'beaver tails' which are a great favourite. There can be other events that certainly attract people to the canal to see events even if they do not participate including ice racing for cars, motorcycles

and 'Ski Doos'. The list is almost limitless, and here I've only only talked about the canal proper and not the wonderful opportunities that towpaths offer, for things like cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and such where snow conditions allow.

This certainly hasn't been a recent phenomenon. There are countless pictures of events on frozen canals. Events previously mentioned like car and motorcycle races, hockey matches, curling, speed skating and just fun skating in the clothes of yesteryears or things not so common now such as dog sled and horse races on the ice.

So what about today? Well in so many places this tradition flourishes or is again awakening to a new generation of budding ice stars. Places like the Netherlands where it has been a strong tradition to skate on the miles of canals, including in Amsterdam. Another location that is well known is the Rideau Canal Skateway and its winter festival called Winterlude, which takes place on the canal section through the centre of Ottawa.



The Rideau Canal Skateway in Ottawa

There is skating in Buffalo on their 'Ice at Canalside' on the footprint of the old Erie Canal. Then there are the hopes that there will be skating in the near future on the Lachine Canal. Those who attended the WCC there in 2002 will remember our visit to the Lachine Canal, though that day there was no ice. The only issue related to winter skating is climate change and some are predicting that with the rising temperatures (hard to believe they are rising here today) will over time impact on the

severity of winters and see a gradual warming of winter temperatures. It could mean perhaps less skating and perhaps longer boating seasons, so canals may be well positioned either way?

It is not a joking matter, however, today winter activities on the canal where it is possible, when temperature and ice conditions allow, is an excellent way to pass those winter months and be out on a canal. Operators of canals should ensure that they are in a position to reach out to those guests with the hope and objective of having them come back in the navigation season and be a supporter of their canal. Providing an ice surface can be expensive to ensure a good and safe skating experience. However, it does provide opportunities for partnerships, sponsors, business/revenue opportunities, marketing and tourism initiatives and building support in the community for the canal, its heritage and importance to the economy and area. These are certainly high expectations, but opportunities that are available in what is normally considered the off season.

DAVE BALLINGER, JANUARY 2015

Canal du Midi research

New corporate member Denis McMullan (CEO of McMullan & Associates, Inc.) will visit the archives and a number of the oldest structures on the Canal du Midi in May. He hopes to find answers to questions that arose when he started working on the restoration of Chesapeake & Ohio canal aqueducts. Denis hopes to get under early aqueducts and obtain an understanding of how they were built, using what kind of mortar, and above all what technique to make them watertight. He was familiar with a number of Irish canal aqueducts that had used at least 12" (30 cm) of clay, not only in the trunk floor but also in between the two wythes of the parapet walls. Similar to the Roman wall techniques that were used on the Midi, according to the literature, but no mention of clay used on the Midi aqueducts. He will be accompanied by David Edwards-May, who currently has an assignment on the Midi with Michel Cotte (preparing the future management plan for the Canal du Midi, as required for UNESCO-designated World Heritage sites). VNF's Canal du Midi archivist Samuel Vannier will open some of the precious files, including drawings and engineers' correspondence.

Ideally, mortar samples would be taken, but Denis is not too optimistic about his chances of scraping off and taking samples back home to analyse! According to VNF's Jacques Noisette, VNF would not have stored samples of mortar when restoration works were performed.



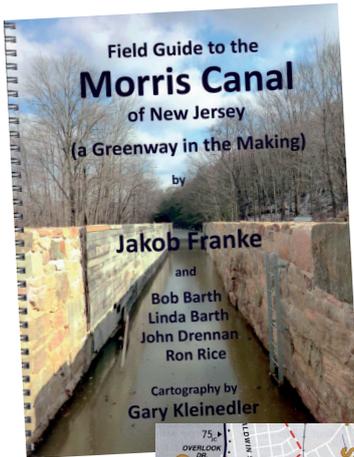
Vauban's Cesse aqueduct © ARNOLD & ELS

Also interested in this project are members Mike Clarke and Nicholas Hammond, who have both investigated the various ways that English canal engineering was inspired by the earlier French experience in the 17th century. The Duke of Bridgewater visited the Cesse aqueduct on the Canal du Midi while he was studying engineering at the Académie in Lyon in 1753-54, and used it as evidence that the Barton aqueduct over the Irwell, of very similar dimensions, was feasible. This was contrary to the accepted opinion of the engineering establishment in England at that time. He did however experience problems with the lining at Barton. *À suivre!* ■

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

Morris Canal Field Guide

Members Jakob Franke and Linda Barth (along with co-authors John Drennan and Ron Rice, and cartographer Gary Kleinedler) are to be congratulated on publication of the first comprehensive **Field Guide to the Morris Canal of New Jersey**. The easy-to-use, 8.5 by 11-inch full color guide includes a brief history of the canal, a table of significant features, glossary and bibliography. It covers the 102-mile canal in 23 sections of about 4.5 miles each. Each section has points of interest (with GPS data), a list of facilities, directions, historical commentary, a detailed map, and photos, both historic and current.



This long-awaited publication is a mile-by-mile, turn-by-turn guide for following the Morris Canal from Phillipsburg to Jersey City. Users are invited to see how the Morris Canal Greenway is developing.

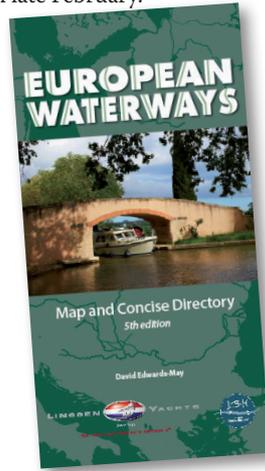


Copies may be ordered and paid for by PayPal on the site www.morriscanalguide.com. Or directly from either Jakob Franke, 424 Tappan Road, Northvale, NJ 07647-1418; 201-768-3612 jf3J@columbia.edu, or Bob Barth at 201-401-3121; bbarth@att.net. The price is \$25 plus \$5 shipping.

Europe map, 5th edition

Transmanche Publications published in late November 2014 the 5th edition of the European Waterways map and directory by David Edwards-May, building on the contents elaborated with Euromapping's staff members over 20 years. This follows the merger of Euromapping and Transmanche, which also took place in November. The map is available on the new web site transmanche.net/shop, or through other stockists such as french-waterways.com, Imray or IWA. In January Delius Klasing published the German edition of the map and directory, in the Edition Maritim series of inland waterway maps and guides,

to be ordered from <http://www.delius-klasing.de>. Finally, the French edition, with translation by former *Fluvial* editor Richard Walter, will appear in late February.



The new edition was sponsored by the Linssen companies.

Tom Grasso defending Port Byron

The Port Byron Erie Canal Heritage Park, including valuable heritage of the enlarged Erie Canal (1851) and 1895 tavern is becoming practically a full-time occupation of Tom Grasso. As president of the Canal Society of New York State, he is partnering with the project 'owner', the New York State Thruway Authority, and is struggling to ensure that the result will do justice to the heritage, with proper interpretation and not just facilities for motorists and a few token signs. The concerns are illustrated by this view of the asphalt laid out through the site, and through both the lock chambers. The hard-top may have been dictated by Thruway standards, but was this the right choice for a full appreciation of the site?



Grand Canal exploration

Norwegian members Edith and Snorre Dag Bronder will make a personal exploration of China's Grand Canal in March 2015. They are learning Chinese, and have made detailed preparations for their northbound tour along the canal, with assistance from Dr Xingming Zhong. IWT's president has written to the conservators of the Nangwang heritage site at the summit level in Shangdong Province,

to try to obtain access to this unique site, not open to the general public. The tour includes Hangzhou and its canal museum and boat tour, Gong Chen Qiao, Tangqi Guang, Ji Qiao, Wuxi (boat tour), museum, Yangzhou (Zhenjiang, Gaoyou, canal boat trip), Gaoyou, Huai An aqueduct, three locks boat tour from Qingjiangpu to Chuzou, Xuzhou, Jining, the Nangwang watershed, old canal bed and associated structures, side ponds, Dragon King Temple, Grand Canal Museum, Liaocheng boat tour and museum, and Linqing (old bridges and locks).



CroisiEurope revives paddles

The family company CroisiEurope, based in Strasbourg, has launched the *Loire Princess*, a unique vessel in having four independent engines, the two central paddles as in the historic paddle steamers, and bow and stern thrusters. The design was dictated by the particular characteristics of the Loire up to Angers, which meant that the 95m long vessel's draught had to be no more than 70 cm! Since there are no locks on the Loire, the extra width of the paddles was feasible, without affecting the carrying capacity. Total beam is 15m. The vessel will usually operate throughout the 120km from Saint-Nazaire upstream to Angers, but in times of very low flows, cruises may be limited to Ancenis.

Artways network planned

David Edwards-May has been signed up by two barge-owners (one French, the other Belgian) to research and lay the foundations for a permanent network of 'cultural inland vessels'. Provisionally named Artways, the network would build on the founders' experience with their three unique vessels. These are the *Colporteur* with the submarine *Axolotl*, already present for the Roubaix reopening in 2009, the *Hydroplane* with its inflatable balloon, and the *Fairy*, fitted out as a permanent gas-fired pyrotechnical exhibition. All three vessels will be together for one of the main events of Mons 2015 European

Cultural Capital. This is at the western end of the famous Canal du Centre in Belgium. In view of the complexity and cost of mobile displays and shows like these, it is felt that others throughout Europe with equivalent ambitions would be interested in joining a network that could pool technical, legal and commercial resources and attract sponsors and institutional funding. Please contact editor@worldcanals.org with any ideas you may wish to share.



French-Waterways.com expands

Member french-waterways.com is a comprehensive online portal with information about self-drive boating vacations, luxury hotel barge charters, small ship river cruises, waterside property and boats for sale. Now, as part of the website's 2015 re-launch, waterways expert and cartographer David Edwards-May will take the editorial helm of the authoritative 'practical navigation' section (the foundation of the site over 10 years ago) based on his guide *Inland Waterways of France* together with James and Ruth Newcombe's notes compiled from thousands of kilometres of own-boat exploration. They will resume cruising aboard their motor cruiser *Grehan* later this year.

Running the marathon for IWA

David Edwards-May is preparing to run the London Marathon on April 26 to raise funds for the Inland Waterways Association (UK), of which he has also been a member for 47 years. IWA invited members to apply to take the place offered by the organiser Virgin Money. The challenge now is to raise up to £5000, which will help to make essential investments in equipment for the Waterways Recovery Group. To sponsor David for this event, members are kindly invited to visit the fund-raising page <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/DavidEdwardsMay> ■



NEWS

INTERNATIONAL New age of ship canals?

Ship canals have been much in the news in recent months. As works near completion on the enlarged **Panama Canal**, to be opened in 2016, Egypt has started works on a second **Suez Canal**, to by-pass the existing section that is limited to one-way traffic. With these two canals soon to be capable of handling the demand for the cost-saving 'short cuts', avoiding the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn, it came as a surprise to hear of the ground-breaking ceremony for the future **Nicaragua Ship Canal**, a truly 'mega' project that is being built and funded by the Hong Kong Nicaragua Canal Development Investment Co. (HKND), headed by Chinese entrepreneur Wang Jing. It is expected to take five years to complete at a cost of \$50 billion. The ceremony was held just before Christmas at Brito, on Nicaragua's Pacific coast. There is no lack of opposition to this project, especially regarding the impacts on Lake Nicaragua, 8264 km², at an altitude of 33m. Protests are continuing. The canal, first envisaged under the USA-Nicaragua Bryan-Chamorro treaty of 1916 to compete with the Panama Canal, would be nearly 280km long, of which 80 km across the lake. Finally, Kazakhstan is promoting the **Eurasia canal**, also called the Manych Ship Canal, that would run through existing reservoirs in the Kuma-Manych depression in Russia, from the Caspian Sea to the Black Sea. This is a 'higher-capacity' alternative to another Russian project, which involves doubling the Volga-Don Canal. (Both routes are shown on the new map.)

FRANCE Local authorities for SNE project

Only one step short of turning the first sod of excavation of a new canal is the erection of signs announcing the works. This was done in style by the four *départements* on the route of the Seine-Nord Europe canal – Nord, Pas-de-Calais, Somme and Oise – on 3rd February. The four presidents also signed a binding agreement to see the project through to completion. The four Councils have committed €500 million towards the cost of the canal, with some funds already released in their 2015 budgets: Nord 40%, Oise 20%, Pas-de-Calais 26% and Somme 14%. These contributions from local authorities amount to roughly 10% of the projected cost. The EU share will be 40%. The four *départements* have been pressing for the project to be completed as a vector for economic development in their regions. Construction will employ between 10 000 and 12 000 workers over a period of 6 years.

Politicians pose beside the new sign



Sambre-Oise reopening in sight

Local authorities are increasingly impatient to see the repair works completed on the failed aqueducts of the Canal de la Sambre à l'Oise. But the end of the tunnel is in sight. Funding of the works, for a total of €12 million, has been agreed, and the canal could reopen in 2016.

Arzwiller reopened May 2015

The Arzwiller inclined plane, closed since July 2014 after its second failure in two years, is expected to reopen in May this year.

New locks projected on Upper Rhône

The Brégner-Cordon hydropower dam on the Upper Rhône is to be bypassed by a pair of locks with a combined lift of 18m. The locks are subject to environmental and socio-economic impact studies to be conducted during the first semester of 2015. The works are part of the investment programme of the Compagnie Nationale du Rhône.

USA C&O Canal charge planned

The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park plans to start charging entrance fees for the entire length of the park to offset federal budget cuts, and to generate additional funds for improvements. The Canal's yearly budget has been reduced by more than a million dollars since 2010, while the number of full-time employees at the park has dropped by more than 20% (to around 70). The canal, which runs for about 185 miles from Washington, D.C., to Cumberland, Md., is part of the National Park Service. An annual pass to the park would cost \$30 a year.

New York canal leader dies

John R. Jermano, director of canals for the New York State Canal Corporation until 1995, passed away peacefully on December 19, 2014, aged 77. John oversaw the rebirth of New York's canals. He had a vision of how to re-energize and re-brand the canal system that included working closely with the Rideau Canal, the Trent-Severn Waterway and Quebec Canals in Canada, and his policy is still followed today. Canals have lost a true friend. ■

Personal impressions on the Milan WCC

Although China or perhaps Germany can lay claim to ownership of the first 'canals', Milan and Leonardo perhaps identify, for many, as the promoters of the key influences in the development of European waterways. The concept of creating a waterway to link Milan with the Italian Lakes, and so gain access to the building stone the lakeside quarries offered, way back in the 1250's, was a remarkable achievement. Likewise Leonardo's mitre lock gate design, with its wicket sluice gates, has been a key component in the development of modern canals both in Europe and the USA. Although the 'end of conference' organized walk was not initially included in the main conference schedule, it gave the delegates who joined it the opportunity to see for themselves the remains of Milan's former Ring Canal and, more especially, Leonardo's lock itself. The latter offered for me 'the icing on the cake'. The Conference programme itself offered a very good overview of the area, which claims to be the 'birthplace' of European waterways, as well as providing stimulating presentations from a range of speakers from around the world. **ROGER SQUIRES**

It was very interesting to see and hear the very diverse and passionate viewpoints that took place during some sessions regarding the canals around Milan and whether they should be restored and opened. For delegates it did provide an insight to the issues and the strong

feelings of the various parties taking part in the discussions. On reflection it was very positive sign that there is this discussion going on and that many of the citizens of Milan appear to be engaged. Many of us would like to see the canals come to life again particularly after our cruise in the early evening down the Naviglio Grande to experience a classic example of what happens when there are canals with water and boats. The shoreline was lined with restaurants, stores and lots of people. **DAVE BALLINGER**

Thanks to a many enthusiastic Navigli Lombardi specialists and as many presentations, we learned that canals from the rivers Ticino and Adda towards the Po River, have historically linked Milan to the Adriatic Sea and that workers and artisans formerly lived on the banks of the Navigli. We were also reminded that the Naviglio Grande, about 50 km long, served as an export and import route. Leonardo da Vinci designed locks for the system, and the works of this illustrious man were a thin blue line throughout the WCC programme. Fortunately we had the chance to transpose in our minds the many theoretical lectures into a 'real life' understanding, with numerous field visits. This all was covered with a sauce of excellent food and wine of the Regione Lombardia. The WCC was an excellent invitation to learn more about and come back later to this beautiful Italian region! **RUDY VAN DER WEEN** ■

The other Venice revealed

WELL THE TITLE SHOULD REALLY be the 'other parts of Venice', which in many ways is a whole different world that many don't see or know much about. This is where our member, architect Francesco Calzolaio comes in. For some readers his name may sound familiar as he was the guide to those who were on the pre-WCC trip last August through the Venice Lagoon. Amongst his many talents he is a booster of the Venice lagoon and getting tourists out of Venice proper and onto the lagoon; exploring its history, way of life and many villages and attractions.

Much of the background on the Lagoon can be found in the article in our September newsletter. However, in attempting to get more visitors out of the city proper, Francesco and the association 'Venti di Cultura' are proposing a series of overnight cruises around the lagoon visiting the different attractions, villages and sites. Seeing and experiencing how the water is the way of transport amongst the villages and the city.

Francesco's idea is to visit the sites like Sant'Andrea Fort, which guards the harbour entrance, and the Arsenale which represents the naval history of the Venetian Republic, then on

to the Monastery at San Francesco del Deserto, Lio Piccolo with its farms, then on to the villages of Torcello, Burano, Murano and Mazzorbo.

All of these site visits would be part of a cruise on specialized cruise boats that would carry a limited number of passengers and would have all of the comforts found on a small cruise ship, including a chef cooking local specialties, upgraded accommodation on board and a cruise director. Guests would experience being on the water, tying up and seeing the important attractions, while at the same time learning how this part of the world carries on its day-to-day business by water. It is also a great contrast to the monoculture of Venice itself, with the lagoon offering more natural settings, aquaculture farming, a more 'laid-back' lifestyle, with intact villages, undiscovered restaurants and dining opportunities. This would be a wonderful bonus for those who want to have an extended stay in the Venice area. Imagine tying up to a wharf for the evening in a small village and being able to wander around unhindered by

WCC Ghent rates

The programme for the World Canals Conference, on September 7-10, 2015, will be posted on the conference web site www.wccghent2015.com by the end of February. Arrangements have been finalised with all partners, and only minor tweaks may now occur.

WCC registration rates for the four-day event, from 7-10 September 2015, are

	up to July 1st	normal rate
– Standard registration	€395	€445
– IWI Members	€345	€395
– Spouse/accompanying	€250	€275

Full registration includes technical visits: boat trip in Port of Ghent (to Terneuzen or Evergem), to Harelbeke and the Westhoek (Koksijde & In Flanders Fields) plus the social programme: boat trip on Ghent's inland waterways, welcome dinner, gala dinner, and lunch in the Koksijde Casino. Payment on line will be possible (except by American Express).

The one-day registration fee is :

- standard registration 75 € per day
- IWI members & students 50 € per day

One-day registration does not include the social programme. See p. 8 the excursions designed to offer a full pre-conference and post-conference tour experience, while staying in the same hotel in Ghent. ■

throng of people, seeing the local handicrafts, visiting a small pub-style restaurant, sitting in the village square or green space and walking alongside the mini canals that interlace the village.

It is this experience and opportunity that Francesco and his potential investors want to bring to tourists visiting Italy and specifically Venice by taking a 7-day live-aboard cruise, so that they have a broader experience, while getting to know Venice in its multiple facets, not only the main sites that are shown in the brochures. If you would like more information on the lagoon and why Francesco is working on bringing it to a broader audience in a unique yet conventional way in Lagunalonga, go to www.lagunalonga.it ■ **DAVE BALLINGER**





Location of the Finow Canal and its 12 locks, by-passed by the modern Oder-Havel Canal and the Niederfinow lifts. The 'Langer Trödel' section of the canal, from the junction to Liebenwalde, with another lock that has just been restored, is to be reopened to recreational traffic this year.

Why we should support the Finow Canal

Contributions to the 'threatened canals' debate (see our feature on page 1), from members Prof. Hartmut Ginnow-Merkert and Peter Linssen.

WHEN I BECAME INVOLVED in the Finow Canal in 2011, I was struck by the negative position of many officials, civil servants and politicians. When they lump the commercially non-viable canals into the 'tertiary' category, in their minds this means 'only good for tourism'. Why only? In these regions that have lost their traditional industries, do we have another economic option?

In 2012, I asked Volkmar Ritter of the Eberswalde municipal working group (KAG), who was in charge of the pool of lock-keepers drafted from the unemployed registered at the job centre, whether I could do some part-time lock-keeping as a volunteer. He was then having to face budget cuts affecting his lock manning scheme. And in the background there were complaints from local authorities funding the scheme: 'what do we get in return?' He talked to the waterway authority (WSA) director, and they together managed to get me and a good friend of mine, Dr Jürgen Clausnitzer, into some form of a contractual agreement, without pay of course.

We did a lot of positive campaigning, made friends with the boaters, told them stories of the Finow Canal, listened to their stories, started a youth project or two and just tried to provide a good service.

Many of our unemployed friends liked their job as much as we did. It was a great social experience for the two of us, and as academics it was more of a concern for us to be accepted by our unemployed 'colleagues' than the other way around. We were constantly talking to them by cordless phone in order to coordinate traffic.

When we tried to do this again in 2014, we were blocked by a strict veto from the WSA staff

council. No matter what Mr. Ritter or the WSA director said, the council's *nein* governed the situation.

For 2015 the KAG operation with a new team of Job Centre recruits will continue. But the 'no' for us volunteers is permanent.

That's why our association Unser Finowkanal is promoting the Finowkanal pilotage programme. In 2014 we accompanied several motor yachts, passenger vessels and other craft cruising through the canal.

What the passengers seem to appreciate is our tales of the historic facts and anecdotes of the canal and its industrial heritage.

But to tell the truth, I would rather be working as a lock-keeper at the Leesenbrück lock again! ■ HARTMUT GINNOW-MERKERT

Economics of canals

AS NEWLY APPOINTED MEMBER OF IWI's council, I would like to draw member's attention to an upcoming event that I feel is important for our common cause. Organised by Prof. Hartmut Ginnow-Merkert of the association Unser Finowkanal, the symposium on threatened waterways (*Bedrohte Wasserwege*) will show that several regions in Germany are threatened by Government funding cuts.

Leesenbrück Lock, the fourth down from the top, in the village of Marienwerder, is where Hartmut Ginnow-Merkert and Jürgen Clausmann were voluntary lock-keepers during the 2013 season.

© HARTMUT GINNOW-MERKERT

The inland waterways are 'bread and butter' for countless individuals and companies in the tourism sector, and it is the same for the company I represent, along with all the other partners in the Linssen Boating Holidays network. That's why we had to be there on February 9! Dr Lorenzo Guendel of Puur Yachtcharter, who has sent many clients cruising on the Finow Kanal, will officially represent the 11 partner companies of Linssen Boating Holidays as well as Linssen Yachts BV, in support of the continued maintenance and operation of the historic Finow Kanal as a premium boating destination for our international clientele. Numerous happy Puur guests and Linssen owners have sailed the canal and enjoyed its beauty and rich history. Our organisation including our distribution, service and charter partners throughout Europe has every intention of continuing to promote exciting boating destinations like this. I am pleased that IWI will also be represented by our vice-president David Edwards-May.

A study of recreational traffic of the Willems-route (a similar canal on the Belgium/Netherlands border) has demonstrated that the crews on passing pleasure craft spend as much as €110 per person per day! Local trade thus profits enormously from the boating community.

Every Puur Yachtcharter guest and Linssen owner visiting the region is welcome potential for trade and employment!

We hope to be able to contribute to the awareness of the economic importance and tourism potential of the Finow Canal, both the canal itself and the surrounding area with its fascinating industrial archaeology, seen and experienced from the deck of a pleasure craft. The preservation and accessibility of sites like this are extremely important for all of us in the inland boating industry and community.

It is our mission to help 'spread the word', especially as the difficulties encountered by Unser Finowkanal in their campaign are clearly echoed in many parts of the world. Congratulations to Hartmut Ginnow-Merkert and his colleagues in Unser Finowkanal for having lobbied successfully to give this event a profile that would have seemed unfeasible not long ago. ■ PETER LINSSSEN



Brittany, Belgium, Serbia, Belarus? Where next?

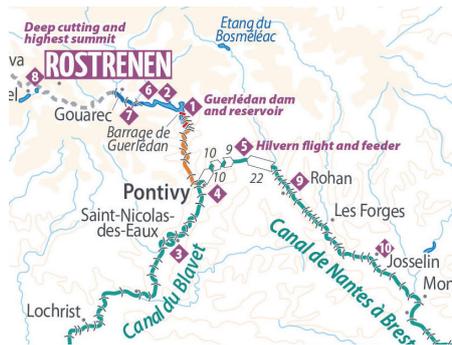
Treasurer Norman Smith has participated in several tours since 2012. He introduces a number of planned tours and suggests how they could be packaged to meet the aspirations of different categories of members.

MIKE REID, to whom I would like to pay my personal tribute for his work as treasurer for our first 20 years, has regularly described to me the core activity of waterways tours led by founder Ron Oakley, with his wife Joan, from 1975. The activity was then part of IWA. David Edwards-May helped to plan the first tour in Alsace, just a few years after opening of the Arzwiller inclined plane; at that time, works were also nearing completion at Gambshiem dam and lock on the Rhine.

Forty years later, I have personally only experienced the most recent tours: the one organised by Tom Grasso of the Canal Society of New York State in Belgium in 2012 (with Euromapping), and those organised by David Edwards-May of Euromapping: SW France in 2013 and Italy in 2014. There is no doubt that specialised visits with presentations by key personalities and engineers make fascinating tours, and the company is always very friendly and entertaining. But what is the future of these tours, and how could they again produce revenue for the association?

I have discussed this with Tom and David, and I wonder whether we shouldn't be thinking of two different categories of tour? The economic perspective of members and participants from North America suggests the extended programme (11-12 days) as offered by Tom since his first tour in Northern and Eastern France in 2001, but many participants from the UK and possibly elsewhere in Europe cannot easily devote as much time to a tour that is (a) not so far from home, and (b) may be just one of several planned in a year. There is also clearly a budget issue, with UK participants (for example) unwilling to pay a premium for four-star accommodation.

I would personally suggest that we organise more frequent 'quick-fix', almost 'cheap-and-cheerful' tours, using utilitarian accommodation, much as Ron Oakley did for all those years, while longer tours could continue to be offered to the mainly North American clients who need to 'capitalise' on the investment in the transatlantic crossing. Tom has in the past attempted to appeal to all, by splitting tours into modules so that European participants could join for one segment. But there have not been many takers. All options are open, and I would be grateful to members for their comments! Preliminary plans for 2015 and the following years are presented here. ■ NORMAN SMITH



Guerdan dam and lost canal

June 2015

This is a 'quick-fix' tour proposed by David through Transmanche, and will soon be available on line on www.transmanche.net. It may be considered as a short preview of the CSNYS tour planned in 2016, which Tom surveyed in 2013. This is to take advantage of the complete draining of Guerdan reservoir for the first time since 1983. The photo shows a lock cottage exposed the last time the reservoir was drained. That was more than 50 years after the dam was built. The tour is mainly oriented to the UK market. The programme includes twice going down to the bottom of the reservoir to walk along the old canal, discovering its features, the Blavet valley and a former slate quarry, and many other sites of interest. All accompanied by the local Tourist Office, which has a special authorisation to allow members of the public into the bottom of the reservoir, otherwise forbidden by the regulations!



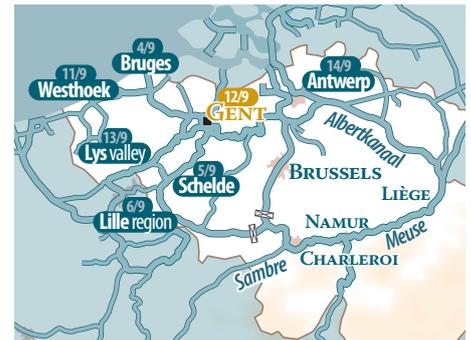
Ruined lock cottage revealed in 1983 when the reservoir was last drained.

WCC 2015 tours

4-14 September 2015

Conference chairs Rudy van der Ween (City of Ghent) and Philippe Monsieur (NautiV) will have all conference and tour details on line on February 20. For advance planning, here is the information on the pre- and post-conference excursions. The idea is to book hotel nights before and after the conference, staying in Ghent, and returning to Ghent each night. Delegates may book as many excursions as they wish, at a flat rate of €85 per person per day (except for Saturday 12th, €35). The prices include coach travel, boat trips, meals and visits, but drinks are to be paid extra.

The destinations are located on the small map below: Friday 4 Sept – trip to the art city of Bruges; Saturday 5 – trip to the river Scheldt region; Sunday 6 – trip to the Lille region (France); Friday 11 – trip to the Westhoek (Nieuwpoort), Saturday 12 – remain in Ghent for the Ode Gand event (€35 only because no transport needed, but on your own for meals and drinks); Sunday 13 – trip to the river Lys region (Kortrijk, etc); Monday 14 – trip to the art city of Antwerp.



Iron Gate revisited

Late April, 2016

Krsta Pakšovic has long been dreaming of a quality tourist product boating through the Iron Gate; now Aquastar (who also run a hotel at Kladovo) have invested in a comfortable and fast passenger vessel, the *Aquastar Maxim*, and a 5-day, 4-night tour to the Iron Gate is possible under better conditions than when we cruised through part of the famous Danube gorge before the WCC in Serbia. Krsta hoped to set this up for this spring, but time was too short. This would also be an attractively-priced tour, with the first and last nights in Belgrade and the other nights in Kladovo. Includes whole-day cruise down the Danube from Belgrade to Tekija (9 hours). Many new sites visited, including a spectacular viewpoint over the gorge.



Brittany with CSNYS, June 2016

This is the tour that remains to be confirmed by Tom Grasso, depending on developments in the coming months. A decision will be taken by the summer. The 12-day, 11-night tour will offer a complete experience including all major sites on Brittany's waterways, with accommodation in Nantes, Rostrenen and Saint-Méloir-des-Ondes or Rennes (to be confirmed). ■