

CANADA – NOVA SCOTIA

Shubenacadie revival

EXCITING THINGS ARE HAPPENING along the southern portion of the Shubenacadie Canal in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, on lands designated as the 'Canal Greenway Park'.

The Shubenacadie Canal/Waterway stretches from Halifax Harbor northward to the Minas Basin on the Bay of Fundy, a distance of approximately 70 miles (115 km). Between the harbor and the Minas Basin there is a series of seven lakes, the Shubenacadie River and infrastructure constructed as part of the canal, including nine locks and two Marine Railways.

In 1826 the first attempt to construct the canal was begun. It included five locks near the Halifax Harbor portion of the waterway, within the present Canal Greenway Park lands. Faulty construction of some of these locks, as well as financial problems, became a concern and in 1831 work on the Canal ceased. Under new management/owners construction resumed in 1854. This time the works included two marine railways, one of which replaced the five locks cited above. The decision to construct the rail systems was made following a visit to the Morris Canal in New Jersey by the Chief Engineer, Charles Fairbanks, who also adopted the method of constructing locks on the Morris Canal.

For the several years, the Shubenacadie Canal Commission, along with funding from Halifax Regional Municipality has been busy carrying out archeological investigations, concept design and final design of the Canal Greenway Park.

Excavation, inspection and design of restoration for the underground turbine chamber: The existing chamber housed the Scotch 'Reaction' Turbine which powered a series of shafts, gears and a large diameter cable drum used to haul a boat cradle and its cargo from Halifax Harbour to Sullivan's Pond, a distance of approximately 450m.



The intent is to reconstruct, where feasible, elements of the canal and include them within a new municipal park setting. Key activities to date include:

- Restoration of the **underground turbine chamber** (see above photo and caption).
- Design, construction and installation of a full-scale timber **boat cradle** on the Greenway Site. The cradle is 36 ft (11m) long, 12 ft (3.7m) high and constructed of primarily 6x6 in (15cm) and 8x8 in (20cm) douglas fir timber. Design drawings were based on actual drawings produced for a boat cradle on the Morris Canal.
- Design and construction of the **inclined plane** (marine railway): the boat cradle was installed on a section of steel rail placed on what is believed to be the original inclined plane.
- The **Canal Greenway Park**, designed by the Municipality, will include a central park, stone patio, landscaping, benches and interpretive displays. A portion of the Trans-Canada Trail (hiking and cycling) abutting the park will be included. Works are to be completed in 2016.

A tender is also about to be awarded for a two-storey, heavy timber frame **flume house**, to be located over the turbine chamber. This will include a portion of the elevated timber flume. Construction will commence in the early spring.

Portions of the original **tailrace** have been excavated and inspected. A future tender will include reconstruction of portions of the tailrace, including a mortared brick/stone wall with an attractive, arched opening. The wall was part of the former Starr Manufacturing Plant located on the Canal route.

The Shubenacadie Canal Commission is also planning to reproduce the mechanical infrastructure that powered the turbine/cable drum.

The replica boat cradle built on plans produced by students at the Community College is hoisted on to a length of track built on the alignment of the original inclined plane.



Students from the local Community College fabricated the four flutes of the turbine and are now working on the centre rotor. Investigations are under way to assess options for the gears and cable drum, including 3-D modelling and styrofoam construction.

The Shubenacadie Canal Commission has been pursuing this landmark project since 1999. IWI congratulates the commission and looks forward to seeing its completion. ■

GERMANY

Pressure for Finow Canal transfer to local authorities

The Federal Government in Berlin has made a uniquely attractive offer to the local authorities along the 400-year old Finow Canal. If they accept to take over ownership and operation of the canal (excepting the locks at each end), all the canal's structures will be fully restored at a cost of no less than **€75 million**.

The association Unser Finowkanal has been very busy in recent months canvassing local mayors and elected council members to persuade them to accept the offer.

As one might expect, such a gift does not come without strings attached. And in this case, the condition is an urgency that does not fit well with usual practice in local council decision-making.

Concerns are increased by the strange secrecy surrounding not only the committee meetings preparing the local council decisions, but even the results of an in-depth study of economic feasibility of maintaining and operating the canal in the future. It is thought that many politicians do not appreciate how attractive the canal and the Mecklenburg/Brandenburg waterways in general have become for waterway tourism, and not only for the popular traditional 'muscle-powered' activities. Canoes and rowing boats could still use a canal with abandoned locks. ■

IWI at Düsseldorf Boat Show

As we go to press, IWI completes a unique experience, manning its first ever stand at a major boat show. This is part of the current efforts to boost membership.

Council member and Membership Secretary Paul Ayres led a committee of four Council members who were present for all or part of the Düsseldorf boat show, Europe's biggest, from Saturday 22nd to Sunday 31st January. The initiative followed lobbying of the BOOT 2016 organisers by Peter Linssen. As a result, the director of the show Goetz-Ulf Jungmichel generously allocated stand space to IWI free of charge. In a letter thanking the organisers, president Dave Ballinger commented that 'this was the first larger-scale activity in Germany to promote our organisation'. IWI had previously attended the Pâques-Boat show at Saint-Jean-de-Losne in 2008.

Attendance at such an event always produces a host of new contacts and opportunities, as well as knowledge about new developments.

On the first day, we learned that our member and stand neighbour **Linssen Boating Holidays** had concluded a joint marketing and sales agreement with Locaboat Holidays (see p.5), while **Linssen Yachts** (now also welcomed as a new member) will build the new steel-hulled *pénichette*, putting an end to the 40-year-long series of models built in GRP. On Tuesday 26th, a reception was held to mark the introduction of a new holiday product, the **Lagunalonga cruise** with skipper and chef Francesco Calzolaio in the Venice Lagoon, and a new 'Traveller' yacht designed by Linssen Yachts for its Flanders hire base, with a bicycle garage in the stern.

It was a surprise to find on our stand on the first day a complete box of guides (in German) to the **E-70 waterway route through Poland**, from the Oder at the German border via Bydgoszcz to Gdansk and the Kurolian Lagoon. We have asked the Polish publisher for information on this apparent gift. It appears to be a promotional exercise supported by the Polish regions through which this route passes. Member **Unser Finowkanal** is also working closely with the Polish authorities on common initiatives promoting their destinations as waterway heritage.

Netzwerk Deutsche Wasserweg conducted a survey of visitors on our stand on Friday 29th, to gauge interest in the campaign for the secondary waterways to be 'decentralised'.

We made contact for the first time with the specialist publisher **Jürgermann**. We have long been aware of this fanatical canoeist who claims to have clocked up 65 000 km paddling German waters. We acquired his canoeing map as a useful reference document.

IWI's stand at BOOT 2016 in Düsseldorf on January 29. From left to right: Peter Linssen, trainee Jenny Ruff, Paul Ayres, David Edwards-May and James Newcombe of french-waterways.com



From the Delius Klasing stand we picked up a supply of the German edition of this map, added to our stock of publications acquired by Transmanche Publications from Internat Ltd. Sales were not the purpose of the stand, but helped to defray costs.

On January 29 we learned that an agreement had been concluded between waterway tourism professionals in **Bourgogne-Franche Comté** (the new French region) and **VNF** at the national and regional levels, to improve the situation of the Canal de Bourgogne and the other central waterways. Mike Gardner-Roberts of Burgundy Cruisers presented details of the agreement, designed to put an end to the rapid decline in numbers of hire boats and private boats using the Canal de Bourgogne in particular. The system of lock operation with boats accompanied by mobile lock-keepers is the principal difficulty encountered during the season, since it results in frequent delays. The habit of emptying locks systematically after a boat has been locked upstream, even if a downstream boat is announced, is also wasteful and increases delays. VNF has undertaken to improve the level of service with existing staff.

We welcomed new member Mieke Vleugels who manages the 5-gold-anchor **Wetterwille yacht harbour** at Loosdrecht, and she told us about developments in the Netherlands, where some former navigable routes are being reopened, but with doubts as to whether non-electric motorised craft will be authorised.

Iron Gate tour May 4-9, 2016

We invite members to book now for an exceptional tour in Serbia including two cruises on the Danube: downstream from Belgrade to Donji Milanovac, then (2 days later) back from Kladovo through the Iron Gate to Donji Milanovac.

May 4 arrive Belgrade and check into the modern, convenient Nevski Hotel near the historic centre. **May 5** coach tour to major sites on the Vode Vojvodine waterways, Bečej, Vrbas and Zrenjanin (riverside brewery). From 18:30 to 20:30, open IWI meeting with Danube Propeller. **May 6** early morning departure by taxi (or tram) to the Sava quay to board the *Aquastar Maxim* to Donji Milanovac, continuing by bus

to Kladovo, dinner and night in the Aquastar Danube. **May 7** visit the archeological museum in Kladovo, then two groups: visits to two unique vineyards, one with its cellar in natural caves, with lunch and wine-tasting, or a unique adventure driving in a 4WD vehicle up to the craggy cliffs overlooking the Danube gorge at Strbac, including some time for walking the trail at the top (picnic lunch only for this group, max 12 people). Dinner and night in hotel. **May 8** return by boat from Kladovo to Donji Milanovac, then continue by coach to Belgrade, to arriving hotel at 20:00. **May 9** free time in Belgrade before return flight. Price **€650** in twin/double rooms, **€830** in single rooms. Deposit 40% payable on line, www.transmanche.net.

DBA rally in Briare

DBA The Barge Association is holding its main annual rally this year in the port of Briare, one of the most popular on the French waterways. The rally will take place on July 8-10. ■

Welcome to new members

Corporate

Aquamatrix	UK
Dalslands Kanal AB	Sweden
Jachthaven Wetterwille, Loosdrecht	Netherlands
Lach GmbH & Co KG	Germany
Linssen Yachts	Netherlands

Individual

Ralf Hennings	Germany
Bill Holdsworth	USA
Denis McMullan	USA
Peter Nijhof	Netherlands
Marika Schnitker	Netherlands
Maria E. Vann	USA

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.

Editor : David Edwards-May

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



WE ARE INTO A NEW YEAR with all of its expectations and optimism for the future.

Perhaps no better example is the recent COP21 summit on climate change. While there are still some out there who question the validity of this phenomenon of changing climate, I think it is hard to say there is not something going on. There is presently as I write the severe flooding taking place in the mid-western United States, and in the northern UK, all of which seems to be more the norm than the exception these days.

An example close to home is that we had a green Christmas with record-breaking warm weather right up to Christmas Day. In fact on Christmas Eve it was warmer here than in Santa Barbara, California.

So what does this all mean for inland waterways? It actually has many implications, from perhaps longer navigation seasons over time,

to the need to reexamine water management practices, procedures and structures to deal with the more intense weather events we are now experiencing. This can be from extreme dry periods to long and intense periods of precipitation. The list can go on and it is easy to try and simplify.

However, what is important at this point as evidenced by the COP21 meetings and outcomes is that the time to act is now. This includes scientific based research and facts, a course of action, agreement on the outcomes and some way to enforce and have adherence to the agreed course of action over a reasonable time frame.

As you read through this newsletter, you will see some of the accomplishments taking place by our corporate, non profit and individual members. In addition, you will see that there are still challenges that are also being worked on. They include examples such as; the Finow Canal, the IWA campaign to bring all remaining waterways in England and Wales under the Canals and River Trust. These are to name a couple, but I urge you to read through the newsletter. Learn about the others and in particular some of the initiatives IWI has undertaken

this past year such as; our successful organizing and bringing together a first time meeting of the six World Heritage Site Canals in Ghent Belgium last September.

IWI also as an organization has been doing some housekeeping by working on a number of fronts to make our organization more relevant and sustainable into the future. We have had a subcommittee working on memberships and our profile as a relevant international waterways and canals organization. The committee is presenting their findings and recommendations to our Council. Also, we had a report from a subcommittee who looked at our webpage and internet activities to ensure our face on the world is still professional and seen as a creditable and relevant international authority. This report has been rolled into the membership recommendations. There are a number of organizations who also are involved with inland waterways and do a great job of that, however, this is usually country or continent specific or a subcommittee of a larger organization. IWI is the only organization whose sole purpose is inland waterways on an international scale. We want to continue

IWI is the only organization whose sole purpose is inland waterways on an international scale

and improve as the 'go-to organization' or authority for all matters related to inland waterways from an international perspective.

Part of that action is raising our profile on the commercial side of our mandate and at the same time becoming better known in all of Europe, as we have done in China. To this end, we are going to be at the Düsseldorf boat show in January with our own stand and volunteer members talking to boaters, marine operators, the marine industry and other interested visitors.

So, like the COP 21 and the many other changes we are seeing in the canal and waterway industry, IWI is moving forward, reinvigorating itself to suit these changing times. For me this is the sign of a healthy organization that wants to be current, understands the needs of its members and its mandate into the future.

On a final note, as we look forward to spring, it's time to think about tours. These have always been an important aspect of life as a member of IWI, and offer unique opportunities to share memorable experiences on waterway sites with other members. Please consider joining the tours associated with the WCC in Inverness (p.8), or the Iron Gate tour on the Danube in early May (p.2). ■

DAVE BALLINGER, JANUARY 2016

UK Saving water on the Basingstoke

New member AquamatiX is applying the latest Internet Of Things (IOT) technology to create a 'smart canal', based on 14 smart battery-powered water level sensors which measure level and flow in lock bypass channels. The project was commissioned by the Basingstoke Canal Authority, which faces a major water management challenge. The canal's only water sources are two small rivers and rain falling in the catchments. It therefore has to capture as much rainfall as possible, which means knowing where all of their water is and how to maximise rainfall capture. The sensor measures the water level every 20 minutes and then sends 12 readings once every 2 hours via the mobile phone network. If the sensor detects a high rate of change in sequential readings, it increases its reporting rate.



The water level sensors are unobtrusive, and most users of the canal will be hardly aware of their presence.

AquamatiX are also automating two back-pumping stations which will be controlled based on the level in the upstream pound. Rainfall data is captured via a web-service linked to a series of weather stations influencing the canal system. The position of discharge gates is tracked by means of a smartphone which enables calculation of the daily mass water balance, approximation of inputs minus outputs, and the level measurements are used to roughly calibrate the volume and run-off assumptions. The system is hosted on the WaterWorX platform which supports desktop and mobile browsers.

The whole system is being delivered for a much lower cost than a traditional telemetry system would cost and is very easy to expand.

Aware of the Basingstoke Canal's water supply difficulties for 40 years, we wish the company and its directors every success in marketing this unique system. ■

IWA presses for transfer of EA navigations to CRT

WHY IS THE IWA SUGGESTING TRANSFER of the navigable waterways managed by the Environment Agency (EA) to the Canal and River Trust (CRT)?

The EA, due to a chronic shortfall of funding in recent years, has been criticised for reduced services and reports of lack of maintenance on assets such as locks, gates, dams and navigation channels. This is leading to an ongoing deterioration of the assets and service. In addition, the Agency has had to deal with the severe flooding that has been experienced and is being experienced now in parts of the country, on rivers and waterways under its responsibility. Public safety becomes the immediate and longer-term priority, as it should be.

This type of critical action usually includes the redirecting of funds to where they are most urgently needed. The result over time is the Agency's other commitments – unless directly connected to the issue(s) at hand – fall by the wayside and out of the government's and in turn the agency's priorities. So beside the pruning of budgets, and looking for more efficiencies within organizations, these crises add to the financial dilemma facing the EA.

Since the dramatic change of British Waterways to the Canals and River Trust (CRT) of a few years ago the question that seems to be a natural today: should the non-CRT inland waterways now become part of the CRT?

The scenario of ongoing reductions of funding for departments and agencies within the UK government is certainly not very different from what we have seen elsewhere, whether in Europe or North America. Financial demands on most governments today and amidst their

ongoing sensitivities and concerns about taxes means that departments and agencies must meet severe reductions to their appropriations. In addition, they must increase revenues dramatically and “pay for service” opportunities to help offset costs and pressure to the government's bottom line. Also, government priorities change based on a different governing philosophy and/or different funding priorities.

IWA's figures show a stark difference in available monies and expenditure for navigation within each organization

Certainly having efficient and effective organisations is part of sound canal and waterway management. However, when a chronic lack of funding and investment in prime assets and infrastructure begins to happen, other options need to be considered. One solution being put forward by IWA is to amalgamate the EA's navigation responsibilities with those of the CRT. With a firm and set funding formula for a defined number of years the thought is that it would allow the agency as part of CRT to have a long term strategy, funding stability and the ability to deal with the things it had responsibility for. This solution would only work or make sense if there was a funding and allocation commitment by the government that went with the transfer (cf. the German Government's proposal on the Finow Kanal, p. 1). Not only the required resources but also the agreed expertise would have to be transferred as part of the package. Otherwise the idea would make no sense. Not only would that part of the agency be crippled but it would severely damage the CRT.

So where are we presently with this idea? IWA has been promoting this as a possibility for consideration by the government. In many ways it makes sense as the organisations are similar in mandate when it comes to navigation. The CRT is a successful model and if you look at it strictly from a funding perspective, the CRT funding according to IWA, 'in the three years since Canal & River Trust was formed it has had a secure funding from government of almost £40million per year rising to £50m in 2015/16.

'The Environment Agency, meanwhile, has had its capital investment for navigation cut from £10.7m (2012/13) to £3.5m (2014/15) and now faces yet further reductions.'

Looking at the money spent-per-mile comparison from IWA '...in the year to 31 March 2015 CRT spent some £118million on “general waterways maintenance” including major works, dredging and spending on routine maintenance, equating to around £65 500 per waterway mile, while the EA spent £11.7million, or £23 400 per mile, on capital and operating expenditure for navigation.'

These two examples from IWA show a drastic difference in available monies and expenditures for navigation within each organization. They also are an excellent example and reason for the government to give this idea serious consideration as a possible option to deal with the funding shortfall issue of the EA as it relates to its navigation mandate.

However, it would take some delicate discussions and negotiations on both sides to ensure that the right amount of resources (both financial and human) and assets are part of the transfer.

The interest and capacity to take on the job and mandate within CRT must be there, they must be agreeable and it is considered doable. This should not be a forced fit, but an agreement of common goals and objectives initially leading to an amalgamation. This proposal must not put either organisation at risk, in other words one is not at the expense of the other.

IWA agrees this is an idea that needs to be looked at further, ensuring that it does not detract from the work of CRT, and that it offers real 'added value' to the current efforts of the Environmental Agency.

DB WITH THANKS TO IWA FOR INFORMATION AND BACKGROUND



The River Nene with its characteristic guillotine lock gates is one of the waterways managed by the EA, along with the river Thames.
NBAREANDARE.COM

Top of page: the header of the home page of the Environment Agency's web site

INTERNATIONAL**More research needed on E-40 route**

A waterway between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea is feasible, but detailed environmental evaluations are needed. This was the main conclusion of the final conference of the project 'Restoration of the E-40 Waterway on the Dnieper-Vistula Section', on December 16. The conference in Lublin, Poland, was preceded by an ecological forum attended by about 70 specialists from Belarus, Poland, and Ukraine, who discussed the potential environmental risks associated with development of the waterway. An international consortium headed by the Maritime Institute in Gdansk had been studying the conditions for navigation along the waterway E-40 that links the ports of Gdansk and Kherson. However, environmentalists believe that additional analysis is needed to determine how the use of the E-40 waterway will impact on the flow regime and biodiversity of the rivers Vistula, Western Bug, Pripjat and Dnieper. Several sections of these rivers have been designated as wetlands of international importance.

A Bug bypass canal would be almost 160 km long and cost around €2 billion. The bulk of the sum is expected to be provided by the EU. The authors of the study estimated that the canal could be paid off within 30 years. It should attract logistics companies from Poland, Belarus, Ukraine and other European countries thanks to the lower costs of inland water transport.

The concerns voiced by the environmental organizations in Lublin were taken into consideration in the resolution. The document calls for a thorough evaluation of environmental impacts for the entire E-40 waterway and presents measures to counter negative environmental consequences. For details, see the project's web site <http://e40restoration.eu/en/>.

St. Lawrence Seaway traffic 2015

With water temperatures well above the 10-year average, the St. Lawrence Seaway closed its 2015 navigation season ice-free on December 31st. 36 million tonnes of cargo transited the waterway during the season, with grain, at volumes well above the five-year average, leading the way. The Seaway once again proved to be a key asset for farmers as they shipped their crops to markets at home and overseas. Grain volumes on the Seaway amounted to 10.8 million tonnes. The Port of Thunder Bay, the principal point of entry for grain into the Great Lakes/Seaway System, reported its second-best season in 15 years. Combined with grain exports from other ports such as Hamilton, Duluth and Toledo, agricultural commodities have become increasingly important to the Great Lakes/Seaway System. Terence Bowles, President and CEO of The St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation (SLSMC), noted that 'the Seaway continues to serve as a vital trade artery, enabling cargo to move to more than 50 countries across the globe.'

One of the new locks on the canalised river Mukhovets in Belarus, at the heart of the Baltic Sea-Black Sea waterway

**EUROPE****Locaboat partners with Linssen**

Locaboat Holidays and Linssen Boating Holidays have teamed up as the 'European Boating Holidays Alliance', enabling customers to discover new boating destinations in Europe while continuing to book a holiday with their familiar boating holiday company. Locaboat, one of the European leaders, came up with the idea of the *Pénichette*® in the late 1970s. This boat, designed specifically for waterway tourism, soon established itself as the benchmark craft for its original design and its innovative technical features. Today, Locaboat offers a fleet of 380 boats. Linssen Yachts, established in 1949, has also made a name for itself in the boating sector. Linssen Boating Holidays is their marketing umbrella for 12 independent hire companies in nine European countries to offer exclusive boating holidays on Linssen motor yachts. What makes LBH stand out in the market is the variety and uniqueness of its destinations. Guests can sail to destinations that are not available in other catalogues. LBH partners are now officially authorised booking agents for Locaboat Holidays for the Locaboat-Linssen, *Pénichette* and Europa cruisers. In return, Locaboat Holidays are authorised booking agents for the LBH network and will offer cruises to their customers who are looking for different destinations, or want to book a Linssen that is not available in the Locaboat fleet.

The move creates maximum synergy so that both companies can offer their customers a larger number of boats, in various sizes and with different types of accommodation, as well as an extensive selection of exclusive and exciting destinations throughout Europe.

EU project follows WCC Milan 2014

Since the WCC 2014 in Milan, there have been positive results in an area visited during the post-conference tours: the international rowing centre (*Centro Remiero*) was opened on Lake Pusiano, and the Ecomuseo Martesana on the Naviglio Martesana (Gorla and Gorgonzola). The rowing centre, which was visited in September 2014 by participants in the WCC post-conference tour before its official opening, is now a reality. It will be soon be followed by other initiatives by the municipality of Bosisio Parini whose Mayor is to open an interactive museum on Lake

Pusiano navigation. This is one of the so-called 'minor lakes' of the Brianza Region, a vast rural area which extends between Milano and Lecco. Municipalities associated with the Naviglio Martesana also plan to open an ecomuseum with community participation, to enhance the canal's tangible and intangible heritage. Connected to the ecomuseum is the reopening of navigation along the Naviglio Martesana including in the city of Milan itself. There is widespread backing for this programme as numerous and active associations and urban committees support reopening of the canal.

Another initiative, if officially approved by the EU/European Regional Development Fund, will give more strength to the proposed the reopening of the canals in Milan and projects like the Ecomuseum. It is the project entitled 'green and inclusive innovations in the leisure and hospitality industry, promoting quality-oriented growth and sustainable exploitation of natural and cultural heritage in European regions dominated by water' submitted under Interreg Europe 2020, 1st call, objective 4.1: 'Improving natural and cultural heritage policies'. The lead applicant is the Association Regio Water in South Holland. Regional partners are the City of Milan in Italy, Tipperary County Council in Ireland, Vidzeme Planning Region of Latvia, Pons Danubii in Slovakia/Hungary and the Province of South Holland.

FRANCE**Seine-Nord Europe Canal go-ahead**

On the day of the COP21 agreement in Paris, it was announced that the Canal Seine-Nord Europe will now be built, with works planned to start in 2017. The EU's 42% share of funding the first phase of works from 2016-2020 was notified to the project authority VNF on December 12. Work is expected to start at the south end and to proceed northwards, in two phases. The Somme aqueduct, pictured here, would be part of the second phase.





The Nivernais log-raft train reaches Paris on July 5, 2015, preceded by the tug-boat Triton. The rafters slept in the bivouacs, to reproduce the conditions experienced by generations of rafters. © DR

The informal group campaigning for the canal, **Le Canal Seine-Nord, C'EST MAINTENANT** wrote that this was the 'point of no return'. The new president of the new region Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie, Xavier Bertrand (former health minister and minister of labour) pins great hopes on the €4.5 billion project for job opportunities and development in the region, which has a high unemployment rate. Funding is also in place for the second phase of works, from 2021 to 2024, with the same percentage of EU funding, and the canal should be partially opened in 2023. Related projects in Flanders and Wallonia (in particular restoration of the Pommerœul-Condé Canal between the Escaut (Scheldt) and the Nimy-Blaton-Péronnes Canal) are also expected to be completed by the same date.

A challenge for the engineering group to be awarded the contract for designing the canal will be to build in solutions for adaptive reuse of the existing Canal du Nord. There are fears that the canal may become little more than a series of fish-ponds.

Weir demolition on Tarn avoided

The association Tarn eau vivante reports that Escalère weir, essential to maintain the possibility of navigation on the river Tarn, earned a reprieve when the commissioner in charge of the public inquiry refused to allow the hydropower production company Rouleau Guichard to demolish the weir. The operator is now submitting an alternative project which would allow them to lower the weir by 0.75 m, which would also make navigation practically impossible. Another operator, Domia, is submitting a competing project for a new hydropower plant on the left bank of the Tarn, leaving the lock intact on the right bank. The association remains vigilant, however, because the EdF subsidiary SHEMA, which has just taken over the hydropower plant at Villemur-sur-Tarn, plans to install a new turbine in the lock chamber there. The association's president Gilles Franqueville gave a presentation on the Tarn at the WCC in Toulouse. Our post on this subject on IWI's Facebook page [Inland Waterways International - IWI](#) has been the most popular (more than 200 page views).

Log-raft from Clamecy to Paris

Descendants of the log-rafters of the Morvan region who supplied Paris with timber and firewood for four centuries successfully completed a voyage that reconstituted the epic voyage, last made commercially in 1877. The raft train reached the Bercy quayside on July 5, 2015, after a journey of 267km, taking 21 days and crossing 64 locks, via the Canal du Nivernais and the rivers Yonne and Seine. The initiative was organised by the association Flotescale, set up for the purpose in 2011. Daniel Griveau, vice-president, observed that hundreds of spectators were massed on the banks at each stage of the voyage. One school even asked parents to supply a picnic lunch to their children, to be sure not to miss the passage of the log raft train.

UK Rapid progress on Cotswold Canals

Described by the Cotswold Canals Trust as the UK's premier waterway restoration project, the Stroudwater Navigation and Thames and Severn Canals ('36 miles, 56 locks, 240 years of history') are seeing intensive restoration activity, regularly reported on their Facebook page [Cotswold Canals Restoration](#). It is fascinating to see work undertaken on so many different structures over the months since the page was started. Phase 1A of the restoration, to be completed within a few years, includes 6 miles of canal from 'The Ocean' at Stonehouse on the Stroudwater Navigation to Brimscombe Port, east of Stroud on the Thames & Severn Canal. This means rebuilding 11 bridges, new weirs and a flood gate and restoration or reinstatement of 10 locks.

USA Canal transfer from thruway to power

NY governor Cuomo plans to transfer the New York State Canal Corporation from its current parent body, the Thruway, to the New York Power Authority. The reason for the change appears to be the ferocious opposition of the trucking industry to payment of tolls that serve to fund the canal. Considering that the canal costs \$80 million annually, the canal could cost the average NY taxpayer about \$5 per year. At first sight, one wonders why it has to be piggybacked by the power

authority, with its totally different mission and agenda? However NYPA does generate hydropower from some stations on the canal system and has substantial financial resources. The Canal Corporation leadership and the majority of staff think this transfer is good for New York State Canals. Amongst other things the perception is that the organization will have more autonomy and fewer burdensome restraints on their initiatives.

Food good to eat on sunk steamboat

In 1856, the Steamboat *Arabia* left the banks of Kansas City on a routine supply trip up the Missouri River. On board were 200 tons of precious cargo en route to 16 different towns along the frontier. Unfortunately for the steamer, a fallen walnut tree was waiting just below the surface of the water, hidden from sight thanks to the glare on the water from the setting sun. The impact instantly tore the hull and the boat sank in minutes. Thankfully, everyone on board was able to swim to safety, except for one poor mule who was tied to the deck and forgotten in the chaos.



The soft river bottom quickly engulfed the boat in mud and silt and in just a few days, it was swept away entirely due to the force of the river. Over time, the river shifted course and for the next 132 years, the *Arabia* was lost to the world until it was discovered in the 1980s, 45 ft deep underneath a Kansas farm. With no air to cause spoilage, thousands of items were recovered completely intact. Jars of preserved foods were still totally edible. One brave excavator even tested it out by eating a pickle from one of the jars and found it to be still fresh. Today, the artifacts are housed in the Steamboat *Arabia* Museum in Kansas City. [Story posted by member Dennis Furbush, to whom we are grateful regularly sharing information, ED]. ■



WCC programme targets businesses

Scottish Canals says it is pulling out all the stops to make this year's World Canals Conference the best ever!

SCOTTS BUSINESSES ARE BEING URGED to get involved with the prestigious World Canals Conference which is visiting the Highlands of Scotland in September 2016. **Scottish Canals** is calling on organisations across a range of sectors, including engineering, construction, tourism, heritage and environment, to benefit from the £300,000 economic windfall that the 300 international waterway experts, academics and business leaders from 20 countries will bring to the four-day event in Inverness.

Running from Monday 19th to Thursday 22nd September, the conference will take place at the gateway to the majestic Caledonian Canal, at the Eden Court Theatre and conference centre. It will offer public, private and third sector organisations the opportunity to showcase their expertise to potential customers and partners across the UK, Europe and beyond.

The conference, which has been hosted in the past by Milan in Italy, the Grand Canal in China and Montreal in Canada, will celebrate innovative thinking and cutting-edge delivery across a range of disciplines including sustainable tourism development, regeneration, heritage management, climate change and engineering, within the iconic landscape of the Scottish Highlands.

The flagship event will also showcase the many attractions of Scotland's 137-mile canal network, from the creation of the Kelpies, the largest equine sculptures on the planet which have attracted over one million visitors since opening in 2014, to the Falkirk Wheel's role as the world's only rotating boat lift and another iconic tourist destination.

Steve Dunlop, Chief Executive of Scottish Canals, said: 'We're absolutely thrilled to be

hosting the 2016 World Canals Conference and it couldn't come at a better time. Scotland's historic inland waterways are in the midst of a renaissance and there are a huge number of exciting projects taking place on the nation's canals, from the water to the banks and beyond.

'With just months to go until the conference kicks off, we're taking this chance to tell businesses up and down the country that if they want to get involved, either as a speaker, sponsor or delegate, now is the time.

'The conference is shaping up to be the best yet and the feedback we've had so far has been incredibly positive. The event offers businesses a unique opportunity to export their knowledge, expertise and specialism overseas and to make valuable contacts which will hopefully translate into new contracts.'

Each day celebrates a different theme:

- Technical challenges and innovation
- Growing tourism and commercialising the assets
- Waterways as a driver for regeneration
- Safeguarding the heritage of our waterways.

Before, during and after the conference delegates will get the opportunity to explore the beautiful sights and industry of the Scottish Highlands with organised trips to locations such as Glen Ord Distillery, Cawdor Castle, Loch Ness and the beautiful town of Fort Augustus as part of the Caledonian Canal – as well as Edinburgh, Glasgow, Falkirk and Crinan in Argyll and Bute.

The event also includes a Gala Awards Dinner to recognise international excellence in asset management, community engagement, training and volunteering.

For more information on how to register, become a speaker or sponsor, please visit www.wccscotland.com. ■

For the pre-and post-conference tour options and prices, see p. 8

Social programme

Accompanying partners will enjoy a full programme during the four days of the conference. Visits marked by an asterisk are with the conference delegates.

Monday 19th September

Visit **Glen Ord Distillery** on the edge of the Black Isle west of Inverness, watching the distillers at work, and tasting a 12-year-old Glen Ord single malt. Lunch in the charming market village of **Beaulieu**, at the Old School, an award-winning shop and café. Then visit **Urquhart Castle***, magnificently situated on the shores of Loch Ness. Once one of Scotland's largest castles, it witnessed considerable conflict throughout its 500 years as a fortress. Cruise back to Inverness along the legendary waters of **Loch Ness*** and into the Caledonian Canal.

Tuesday 20th September

The day's first stop is **Fort George**, one of the most outstanding fortifications in Europe. Strategically positioned on a promontory jutting into the Moray Firth, the fort was designed on a monumental scale. Guided tour followed by some time to explore further, perhaps visiting The Highlanders Regiment museum or walking the huge boundary walls, while keeping an eye out for the Moray Firth dolphins! **Cawdor Castle**, a magical, fairy-tale castle, dates from the late 14th century and has a strong connection to Macbeth. We'll discover the castle and its three gardens before stopping for lunch in the Courtyard Café. Follow the beautiful nature trails through the castle grounds or make the most of the luxury shopping opportunities. Join conference delegates for a visit to the Caledonian Canal in the pretty village of **Fort Augustus***, at the southern end of Loch Ness. Meet a Victorian engineer beside the impressive canal lock flight, take a short walk along the canal to spectacular Loch Ness views and explore the new canal visitor centre.

Wednesday 21st September

The day starts with the **Moray Firth Dolphin Cruise**, a two-hour boat trip. The estuary is home to a variety of sealife and birdlife, as well as to the world's most northerly population of Bottlenose Dolphins. The dolphins are wild animals, so sightings are not guaranteed. After lunch at Eden Court Theatre, visit the **Culloden Battlefield***, site of the last hand-to-hand battle fought on British soil. Walk through the battlefield with a guide, explore the visitor centre's interactive exhibitions and imagine what it was like to be at the centre of the action with costumed presentations and the Battle immersion theatre.

Thursday 22nd September

Inverness is a vibrant hub for the Scottish Highlands. Tour the **Scottish Kilt** making workshop, a fascinating insight into the history, tradition and culture of the kilt from its origins to the present day. The rest of the day is free to explore, e.g. the Botanic Gardens, a riverside walk through the River Ness Islands, or Inverness Museum and Art Gallery. The city centre offers a great mix of specialty shops (the old Victorian Market), and popular high street brands. Kingsclub Spa at Kingsmills Hotel is an optional morning add-on, to enjoy a luxurious morning recharging. The 'soothe' package offers the use of the Leisure Club and Mezzanine Lounge, a 30-minute spa treatment and a Spa Platter lunch in the Kingsclub Restaurant.. ■

The best of Scotland's canals and related heritage

THE OPTIONAL TOUR PROGRAMMES presented here are designed by Scottish Canals (with their partners) so that WCC delegates can plan their optimum itinerary *à la carte*, based on city centre departure/drop-off, transportation in executive coach and all associated costs, including professional guides, boat tours and meals as described. All prices include VAT (at the current rate of 20%).

Tour 1 - Edinburgh

Panoramic tour of the New Town and Old Town along with the Scottish Parliament building. Then visit Edinburgh Castle, one of the highlight attractions of the city. Tour ends in the city centre for time on your own or to enjoy the optional traditional pub lunch (two courses). Rate **£73** per person, two-course traditional lunch: **£21** per person (drinks not included). **September 13, 14, 23, 24** 09:00– 13:00 **Pick-up and drop off:** city centre at Rabbie's Café, 6 Waterloo Place.

Tour 2 - Glasgow

Half-day tour of the city starting at Glasgow Cathedral, then passing the Tollbooth Steeple. From here follow the River Clyde into Pollok Park to visit Pollok House (sometimes called the 'Downton Abbey' of Scotland). Travelling back to the city centre, stop to admire the Kelvingrove Art Galleries. The tour ends in the city centre for time on your own or to enjoy the optional traditional pub lunch. Rate **£73** per person, two-course traditional lunch **£21** per person (drinks not included). **September 13, 14, 23, 24** 09:00– 13:00 **Pick-up and drop off:** city centre at 266 George Street, Glasgow. N.B. Minimum 10 participants for tours 1 and 2.

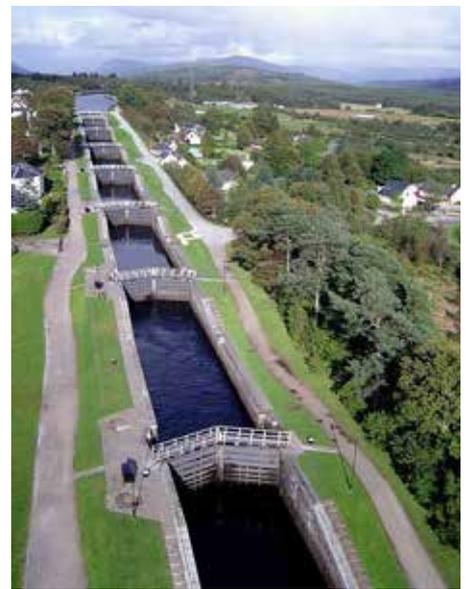
Tour 3 - Linlithgow, Falkirk Wheel and the Kelpies

Full-day tour to Linlithgow Palace, the Falkirk Wheel and The Kelpies (tour can depart from Edinburgh or Glasgow or both locations depending on interest). Linlithgow Palace is the birthplace of Mary Queen of Scots. View the building from the outside and enjoy the beautiful grounds (entrance optional). We continue to the popular Falkirk Canal basin: board a boat and enjoy a trip along the canal and through the famous Falkirk Wheel, the impressive boat lift linking the Union Canal and the Forth and Clyde Canal. Lunch at

the Falkirk Wheel Café before continuing the short distance to the Kelpies, the world's largest equine sculptures. Optional guided walking tour inside the sculptures. Back to the starting point in late afternoon. Rate **£95.00** per person (not including Linlithgow Palace entrance or guided tour inside the Kelpies). **Pick-up and drop off:** city centre Edinburgh plus Glasgow depending on demand. **September 15, 25** 09:00– 18:30 **Editor's choice: combine this tour 3 with tour 5 to see the best of Scottish Canals!**

Tour 4 - Sea lochs of Clyde estuary

Transfer by coach from Glasgow city centre to Greenock for a special 3-hour boat cruise. Discover some of Scotland's stunning west coast scenery, with a chance of sighting dolphins...



Neptune's staircase of 8 locks at Banavie.

Tour 5 - West coast and Crinan Canal

Two-day tour to the Trossachs, Loch Lomond, Crinan and the West Coast, including the southern end of the Caledonian Canal and Ben Nevis, starting from Edinburgh. Tour ends in Inverness on Saturday evening, while the WCC social programme starts on the Sunday.

September 16

The tour will start from Edinburgh (via Glasgow if required) to Loch Lomond. The first stop is at Luss to explore this picturesque village. Continue to Fyne Ales for ale tasting. On to Inverary for lunch (on your own) and time to explore the town. Then continue to the Crinan Canal, which has 15 locks and is crossed by seven bridges, six swing bridges and a retractable bridge. Optional tea and scone at the Crinan Hotel before continuing to Oban (night).

September 17

First to Glencoe with its majestic scenery and a visit to the Glencoe visitor centre, continuing to Fort William for lunch. In the afternoon, stop at Neptune's Staircase, a series of eight locks on the Caledonian Canal (photo above). Nearby is the Nevis Range mountain resort, where we take Britain's only mountain gondola, 650m up to the top of Aonach Mor. Walk the trails to panoramic viewpoints, or just relax in the restaurant and bar with breathtaking views. After one hour on the mountain, back down the gondola and proceed to Inverness along the shores of Loch Ness, arriving 18:30. Rate **£292** per person sharing double/ twin rooms. Min. 10 passengers. Single supplement **£58**. Based on a minimum of 10 passengers. Optional tea/coffee/scone at Crinan Hotel **£8**. Price includes transport in executive coach, guide, night in the 3-star hotel in Oban, Fyne Ales tour and tasting, entry to Glencoe Visitor Centre and the Loch Ness cruise. ■

