



The quarterly newsletter of the National Community Boats Association Autumn 2007

With Acknowledgement to the Goole Times

gooletimesonline

The pioneering work of Sobriety Project director Bob Watson MBE was praised last week at a three-day canal conference that attracted delegates from all over the world.

More than 170 delegates, guests and volunteers attended the 2007 World canal Conference, hosted in Liverpool by the Inland Waterways Association (IWA) between June 13 and 15. The conference featured a number of speakers and covered a wide range of topics, but focussed on the value of partnerships involving volunteers and the community sector alongside professionals when designing and delivering waterfront regeneration.

But it was the closing speech on Friday by Bob Watson that really inspired guests at the conference and attracted praise from the IWA conference organiser Jude Palmer. She said: "if the conference inspires just one person to replicate some of Bob Watson's work, then it will have been worthwhile". Bob said this week that his closing speech, 'The Inland Waterways – Access for All Is Not enough', aimed to "make everybody wake up and realise that the waterways are a fabulous resource to solve social and community problems".

And speaking to guests at the conference, he said: "Despite excellent work by some members of the National Community Boats Association, I believe that we have hardly begun to realise the contribution that the waterways can make to solving social and community problems.



"social inclusion is not only about providing wheelchair ramps and towpaths with good surfaces; it is also about actively inviting, including and involving excluded people in the pleasure and excitement that draws us to the canals and rivers of Britain. "More than that, it is then about using the waterways to improve health and employment prospects, increase training opportunities, reduce crime and bring many people living on big estates in cities their first experience of the countryside. It's the seeking out and the follow up that makes the difference." Speaking to the [Goole Times](#) this week Mr Watson said: "This was the first time I have been to the World Canal Conference. Many people said that the speech should have been delivered at the start of the three-day conference, because it was what people wanted to hear and created an atmosphere for social inclusion"

* A party to celebrate Bob Watson's recent award of the MBE from the Queen is to be held in the Waterways museum tonight (Thursday). Speaking to this newspaper earlier this week, Bob confirmed that there will be a hog roast on offer to guests, as well as boat trips to honour Mr Watson's work so far.

A Bit about Clare Porter a Director of NCBA

I became involved in Community Boating in 2000 when I enrolled on a course called 'Waterways Work for Women' (WWW) being run by The Waterways Museum and Adventure Centre, as it was then known, and home of the Sobriety project. I was lured by the mention of 'excitement and adventure' in an advertisement for the course run by my local paper. The course lived up to its promise and I entered the equally adventurous world of community boating. After completing my CCBM and gaining CCBM instructor status I started working for the Sobriety Project as a boat handling tutor and went on to become the WWW co-ordinator.



My career path then remained in the Voluntary and Community sector in Hull working in a variety of roles on funded projects with different organisations. I am now currently training with the National Energy Foundation based in Milton Keynes to undertake Domestic Energy Assessments. I volunteer regularly at the [Sobriety Project](#) and am one in their pool of boat handling tutors. In May I completed my training onboard the Humber keel Sobriety which will enable me to skipper this barge on non-tidal waters.

I am actively involved on the Management Committee for Preston Road Women's Centre. My other interests include cycling, gardening, T'ai Chi and live music.

Regional Moderators & Senior Trainers

The Training Director and Training & Development Officer met recently to review the application forms for these essential posts. Eight candidates have been successful and these newly appointed (or old faces renewed) will be visiting a project near you in the very near future. With the increasing demands from the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) for ever more diligence and quality control these posts have become even more essential than they ever were.

Who	Mark Freer	Peter Hulse	Doug McClone	Paul Sperrin	Barrie Hall	Banny	Jim Marshall	Ken Watson	Patrick Titman
Trainer	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Moderator	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Region	N	N	N	N	Mid	S	S	S	S
Project	Bradford MEP	Swinton Lock	Adams Ark	BMEP	Baldwin Trust	Canal Boat	Pirate Club	Canal Boat	Accessible Boating

Bob Ratcliffe, the lead director for training is also a Midland's moderator

Situations Vacant:

The NCBA has two volunteer opportunities available. The function of both is to help enhance the profile of both the NCBA on the national stage and member projects locally. Neither role is particularly onerous and the commitment is flexible. Working mostly from home, travel expenses would be available where necessary.

- Volunteer Press Officer. Please make contact with the [chairman](#)
- Volunteer Webmaster. Please make contact with the [editor](#)

Help British Waterways –

To help us by using the locks properly .We have received the following request from BW – I am sure we already comply, however it's just a gentle reminder. “We are currently experiencing situations where boaters are causing lock gates to slam shut causing a shudder and a loud ‘bang’. This normally occurs when the gates (both upstream and downstream) are ajar by a couple of feet and rather than boaters gently closing them manually before opening the paddles on the other gates, they allow the force and flow of water to do it for them. The result of the gates slamming together is that this shock loads the welded joint between the gate collar and the threaded spigot and nuts, which retains the gate to the heel posts. This in turn causes the weld to crack and eventually, following repetitive banging, the lock gates fail completely. Last summer’s failure of the collar at Hunsdon Lock is an example of this. This situation is simply overcome by people taking a little longer to fill or empty the lock chamber. If the gates are open slightly and a boater is at the opposite end of the lock cracking the paddle only a few notches will allow the water to slowly fill or empty the lock chamber, allowing the gates to move slowly to the closed position. Rather than ‘banging’ together, this is called ‘kissing’ together! The Paddles can then be fully cracked open, without any potential damage to the collars. Thanks for your help in communicating this to your skippers and self hirers. We are not pointing the finger of blame at anyone or any organisation, so we will be promoting this message as widely as we can; both to private pleasure craft owners and hire boat organisations.” Many thanks *Mark Blackwell*

St John Ambulance, Northampton

We have two boats: Northamptonshire Crusader on the River Nene (Becket's Park) and the Mountbatten Crusader GUC, 'Mountbatten Crusader' is based on the Grand Union Canal at Bridge 48, Gayton Junction. Both boats cater for the needs of the elderly and people with special needs as a **free** service. Well over 2000 passengers are carried each year! In addition we assist local schools, scouts, guides and youth with educational trips. A group of explorer scouts is about to start a boat management course as part of their Duke of Edinburgh's Award. We have 48 active crew volunteers including 8 Boat Masters. Our in-house training comprises Crew Competence Course (up to Boat Master Level), Fire Safety & Wardens Course plus First Aid at Work. We wrote our own training manual and competence records in 2002 and the level of training and skills is well received by the MCA inspectors at the audit.

The icing on the cake is that most of our crew are retired people from all walks of life, putting something back into their communities. As with B & Q, age is no barrier and our pool of experience is a tremendous asset.

Dan Reid

Trevor Roberts (NCBA Director)

I have a background which is sited within Community Safety with a particular focus on supporting young people to develop their true potential. I have seen the value of navigating a canal boat along the waterways to support the personal, social and skill development of young people. I am developing a social enterprise which enhances the natural environment of the canal through the support of a young person's personal development.



I therefore see the need and role for a National Community Boat Association to support similar projects but even more so because of the variety and uniqueness of individual boat projects.

A New Directors as Elected at the AGM

Born 1946. Educated Loughborough Grammar School and BBC Engineering College.



Worked in BBC Radio from 1964 – 1999 as Recording/Editing Engineer, Outside Broadcasts and London Control Room Engineer, transferring in 1989 to Studio Management/Music Balancing then Head of Facilities Scheduling Unit, Broadcasting House and accepted a voluntary redundancy offer in 1999.

Boating: Helped look after BBC Narrow Boat from 1985. Joined LNBP upon retirement. Attained CCBM and Skipped the Project Boats. Responsible for day to day running of the Project's Boats and also H & S as had been a Safety Rep with the BBC. Became a Trustee of the NCBA.



Hobbies/Interests: Restoring Classic Cars (especially Morgan's) Badminton, Cycling and Fell¹ Walking

Domestic: Resident of Chesham, Bucks Two children, male 34, Cellular Telephone Systems Engineer, marrying in August female 32, Marketing Exec, single so far

Coming Soon: a Regional Meeting Near You

Regional meetings are coming your way soon – just these few lines are to alert you about the directors plans to reinstate the regional meetings. Full details to follow shortly.

Saturday 20 th October Monday 22 nd October Saturday 27 th October	Regional Get-Together's	North South Midlands
Saturday 29 th September:	Y-Afloat Centres	National Meeting

¹ [He means this literally, as he has now fell when walking and has a broken ankle Ed]

The views of the contributors and Editor are personal may not therefore be those of the NCBA

Ian Hearn (NCBA Director)

In 2001 Ian Hearn, an early-retired company director, joined the Leicester based Baldwin Trust, a community boat charity staffed entirely by volunteers. He trained for crew duties on NB St Clare, which operates pleasure cruises on the Soar Navigation for people with disabilities and other special needs. In



2002 Ian joined the Management Committee as Chairman and was elected to the Board of Trustees. Ian has just stepped down having completed 5 years in office and now has responsibility for fundraising.



Whilst Chairman Ian led the Baldwin Trust's successful bid to acquire 2 derelict narrow boats from the local council in order to expand and broaden the Trust's activities. One of the boats was restored by Baldwin volunteers and the other was worked on by the inmates of Gartree Prison in a unique co-op with the Inside Out Trust that was sparked off by NCBA networking.

Ian became more closely involved with the NCBA in 2004 and was elected a trustee/director at your 2005 AGM, bringing to the Board the benefit of his wide-ranging business experience. Ian is active within his village community and is a member of the Leicester Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers.



Diesel news

Derogation has ended and at the time of compiling the CUT no clear indication as to precisely how this will affect NCBA craft has yet to emerge. It is clear that red diesel can still be used in the grace period (assuming you have a source that will still supply it) until November the first 2008. Just a few of the members may have links with Holland and may therefore need to ensure they retain receipts for their purchased red which is stored in the normal fuel storage tank. Fuel stored in supplementary tanks will attract duty in Holland and a possible fine. Many questions remain unanswered:

- What will happen to craft with paid skippers and
- fuel used primarily for heating: the
- longevity of the red stain left by red diesel: are
- charities to treated differently: which
- revenue rate will be applied to charities
- many other issues have still to be resolved with Customs & Revenue.

IWA & NCBA

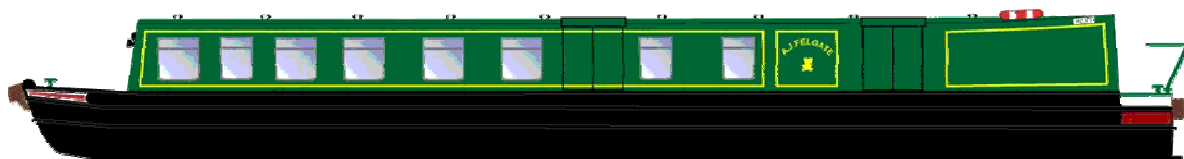


At a recent meeting with the IWA, NCBA has agreed in principle, to help asses IWA members who have a need for a formal qualification to overcome the new Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) requirements for training. An additional benefit for NCBA will be the larger National Voice when negotiating matters with the MCA.

There's Money Out There [somewhere]

In 2006 young people submitted a bid to the Youth Capital Fund to have the 'Walsall Enterprise' Narrow boat completely repainted externally. They were successful and the boat looks like brand new – deservedly so. She is the newest addition to the Truman fleet being offered to us in 2005. She is a day trip boat with ramp and wheelchair access into a large cabin with big picture windows giving superb views of the canal. This is the boat that young people help to crew. Once they are CCC trained they come out on day trips to put their new skills to practice. Some young people are getting really good with groups and at the tiller – I think they are after my job!

In April 2007 young people submitted three separate bids to the Youth Capital Fund to make improvements to the boats. All three bids were successful which is fabulous news.



The Narrow Boat A J Feldgate

- The first bid was to purchase a mobile phone and two way radios for each boat so that young people would be safer.
- The second bid was for a video DVD camera and laptop for groups to record their journeys and eventually produce our own promotional DVD.
- The third bid was the big one. £20,000 to fund major refurbishment work on the 'Felgate1 residential boat. At present there is no access through the engine room to the back deck to steer. The only way is walking the gunwales or stopping the boat to get passengers off and back on again at the back end! That should be a thing of the past for next season. Over the winter the existing skipper's cabin will be gutted and a replica boatman's cabin built with access door through engine room. A steel bulkhead will have to be completely cut out and replaced by a wooden one about one foot further forward; the diesel tank modified and the list goes on So huge thanks to the young crew members for submitting these bids and to the panel of young people for approving them. Huge thanks also to Walsall Youth Service for their support. Congratulations to you all



Judy Hodge [Truman Enterprise Narrowboat Trust](#)

Your/Our Web Site

By now your entry on the [NCBA Web Site](#) should have been updated, if not, it is because the editor has not received back the amendments requested from you in the summer. It would be very nice, if you went to the site and checked that the entry is as you want it to be. If I have goofed it up, my apologies, let me know and in the immortal head teacher manner “I will try harder next time”.



James Bryan

11 Oakley Road
Leagrave
Luton
Bedfordshire
LU4 9PT

Telephone/Fax: 01582-560832

Mobile: 07973-816674

E-Mail: cpo-james.bryan@tiscali.co.uk

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN – AUTUMN 2007

Since I last wrote to you I have been making sure that action proceeds apace on the plans that evolved from our recent review period. As a result we are changing the way our current funded projects are managed in order to take participating members right to the heart of the delivery process. The two major projects, Y-Afloat (involving young people in community boating) and the Prisons Project (facilitating the reunion of offenders with their families) are scheduled to be completed next year. I am confident that these NCBA initiatives will considerably benefit all the participants and anticipate that they will spawn ongoing positive spin-offs for community boating and its partners.

I can now announce a series of events that will lead up to an NCBA national conference towards the end of 2008. The first of these events will be an informal national get-together for the designated Y-Afloat Centres at the end of September. This will be followed by 'top' 'middle' and 'bottom' regional gatherings for all members in October, details of which will be announced shortly.

We are also pursuing an opportunity for the NCBA to be represented at the Earls Court Boat Show in the first two weeks of December. Assuming that we can secure acceptable terms, this will provide members with an excellent platform from which to promote their individual projects under the NCBA banner. Whilst there will be no cost to members for this service we will be calling for volunteers in due course to assist with staffing the event throughout its 9 day duration.

In connection with a report being prepared by the Inland Waterways Advisory Council (IWAC) on the vexed issue of waterways funding Bob Watson has contacted members with a request for information and I urge you all to respond as fully as possible. Community boating ranks high on the list of activities with unexploited potential so it is important for us and our future in the bigger waterways picture to use this opportunity for having our views properly represented.

I am pleased that the action being taken to revitalise the NCBA is starting to arouse fresh interest amongst members, resulting in a healthy interaction that was hitherto sadly lacking. Please keep the pressure on us to perform with your flow of comments, suggestions and criticisms – it is your input as much as anything that helps me and my colleagues to stay focused on the issues that are most relevant to you. Successful 'associations' need active members as well as strong leadership. The NCBA is no exception.

James Bryan

Chairman