

# THE LEGGER



THE JOURNAL OF THE DUDLEY CANAL TRUST  
SPRING 2011

No. 220

# DUDLEY CANAL TRUST

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Front Cover: Boats at Birchills by John Williams  
Back Cover: New logo of Dudley Canal Trust (Trips) Ltd.

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## Editorial

So there I was in the car, with the A-Z on my lap, idly contemplating product branding and how some like Apple, the bite perhaps hinting at forbidden knowledge and Nike, a tick and "Just do it", are instantly recognisable. So where in the scheme of things a boat flying over a tunnel on a school blazer like badge would fit in, and what kind of story it tells. Then Janet said, "Where are we?". I look up and gaze at a landscape that might as well have been the planet Mars. "Willenhall" I say confidently, the silence that followed spoke volumes, eventually Janet curtly said, "Look in the book". I dutifully open the A-Z and find a page where tiny streets formed a writhing mess of worms. "Page 22" says Janet, which looked even more complex. I decide to play my trump card and say, "Where are we going?" To which the curt reply was "Willenhall, now where are we?". I get defensive about my utter failure as a navigator and raise my voice, "I don't know!" At this point Janet mutters something under her breath, pulls over and locates our position in the universe. We proceed and after another slight directional faux pas on my part, eventually arrive, late.

A few conclusions might be drawn from this story, don't try and go to Willenhall, Robert's directions might have been clearer and perhaps, most importantly, I am sometimes not as clever as I think.

Gavin Lawson  
Editor  
legger@live.co.uk

Comments, Complaints, Ideas, Letters, Articles and Pictures are welcome  
Deadline for the next edition Tuesday 10th May.

## Competition

'Learning & Access Hub' is not a good name for our new building but calling it a visitor centre would bar us from applying to most funding bodies. We need an appropriate and recognisable name. Please send your suggestions, as many as you like, to June Hodgetts and the winner will be awarded a prize, yet to be decided but not a boat trip!

Mike Duley

# Chairman's Notes

In the last edition of *The Legger* I spent some time on the subject of the 'conversion' of British Waterways (BW) into a charitable trust, or to use the current terminology 'The Third Sector'.

As the April 2012 deadline for this great event approaches, the waterway press is full of diagrams, and not a little speculation, on how this is going to work. It appears that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) have been given the job of advertising for interim trustees to oversee the transition from nationalised industry to charity. Closer to home, it would appear that there will be local or, if you like, regional panels of 'experts' to represent the many and varied waterway interests in their area. It seems that people will be invited to sit on these regional panels. Naturally they will have no power but their views will be taken into consideration. It will be interesting to see, over the next few months, which organisations are invited to nominate a representative. I wonder if an organisation that has a track record of canal restoration and improvement over almost 50 years and contributes £30,000 each year into a fund to maintain its chosen length of canal will take precedence over the butterfly spotters.

I mentioned in my last notes that The National Trust was being looked at as a role model for the proposed Waterway Trust. Hang on, haven't we already got a Waterway Trust! I'll keep quiet about it. I am probably the only one to have noticed!

At the risk of labouring a point I need to lift a couple of paragraphs from my notes in the last edition of *The Legger*.

*"However, there is one very important attribute that can be lifted straight out of the National Trust's constitution to the benefit of our canal heritage. It is that the historic buildings and land that The National Trust owns are inalienable to that organisation. This means that if they find themselves short of a few quid, they can't sell off a stately home to pay the bills. The insertion of such a clause in the constitution of the proposed British Waterways Trust would stop a repeat of the disgraceful sale of unique, and in some cases listed, historic buildings that are then found new uses which owe nothing to their canal heritage. I have in mind a boat gauging station containing two dry docks in Tipton that was sold for conversion to housing with flagrant disregard for the existing safeguards for the sale of historic buildings in public ownership laid down by the Government. I hope we can expect the*

*new managers of our canal system to have a higher regard for our heritage than has been shown hitherto, and that the constitution of the new authority will prevent this irresponsible behaviour."*

Many of you will remember the attempts made by DCT to secure this unique grade 2 listed building as a maintenance base for our fleet after finding out that BW had sold it to a housing developer. The scheme failed at that time because the new owner, who was very happy to offload the liability of a cyanide soaked listed building to anyone who wanted it, was not prepared to let us use the basin that connected the dry docks to the canal because he wanted to build houses on it. Docks that you can't get boats into are about as much use as an ashtray on a motorbike.

The situation was made worse by being in the wrong borough. When we objected to the housing proposals the Sandwell planning officer told his committee not to take us seriously because every historic building in the borough had turned out to be a mill stone around the council's neck and that in any case the canals had no future, and that the adjacent Factory Locks were going to close in the near future.

Of course they believed him and we had no right of reply.

At the time we had earmarked £100,000 to excavate the connecting canal basin and bring the docks back into use.

Since then planning permission for housing on the basin has expired, the developer has disappeared (well BW can't find him) and the Factory Locks conservation area has been extended to include the connecting canal basin and all the surrounding land, making it very difficult to build on, especially if it threatens a listed building. So why don't we have another go?



Gauging Station, Factory Locks, Tipton by Gavin Lawson

Hell bent on selling everything in sight, and still without any consultation, BW put up for sale the Lock Cottage and several parcels of land at Parkhead. The entire area at Parkhead from the Dudley Southern Bypass to Pear Tree Lane is in a conservation area and all the land is in the ownership of either the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley (Dudley MBC), DCT or BW. Having a conservation area in the exclusive ownership of the organisations who should have the well being of the area at heart is, to say the least, convenient and implies a degree of control over and above the protection afforded by conservation area status. To then find that one of the partners has arbitrarily put property and land up for sale without even consulting the other partners does not imply any real commitment to the area. Because we hold our biennial boat gatherings at Parkhead and do our best to encourage other events, we were not prepared to run the risk of significant areas of land falling into the hands of a potentially hostile landlord who resents thousands of people a day milling around outside his front door. We have had trouble with hostile landlords in the past and have settled the matter by buying the land from them.

Hence, DCT is now the proud owner of the Lock Cottage, in which we have an extremely pro canal tenant, the toll office, all of the land from the cottage to the viaduct and the land on the offside of the bottom lock. Negotiations have been protracted because BW tried to make us contribute to the maintenance of the towpath fronting the land we now own. We declined on the grounds that we already contribute to the upkeep of the canal and its environs to the tune of £30,000 pa. They also declined to give us a right of access across the lock gates to the land on the offside of the canal. That matter has also been resolved in our favour.

So that, dear members, is why we can't afford to have another go at the Tipton Gauging Station. In any case with our commitment to our proposed Learning & Access Hub at Todds End we need to hang on to all the money we can.

The saga continues!

About two years ago BW proposed a scheme to improve the quality of, and access to, the Dudley No 2 Canal towpath from Parkhead to Gosty Hill Tunnel. They approached Groundworks Black Country to manage the work and apply for the grants. In turn we were approached, because of our track record of achieving canal improvements in the face of adversity, to see if we would use The Trust's good name to apply

for the grant. Because the proposed work would improve the Dudley Canal and encourage more people to use it, how could we refuse? We were successful in our application and £500,000 was awarded to this project.

The allocation of the grant was, however, subject to various legal agreements being in place between The Lottery Fund, DCT, Dudley MBC, on whose land some of the access improvements are to take place, and BW. All of the agreements were in place months ago except those involving BW. We have come very close to having the grant withdrawn but BW finally produced some documents that we could sign at the very last minute.

I think that I can best make this point by quoting from an email I found it necessary to send to BW a couple of weeks ago.

*"Perhaps this would be a good time to remind you that the Dudley Canal Trust involvement in this scheme has been to lend our good name and track record to the funding application which we believe was successful as a result of our involvement, and may well have failed without it. We are now seeing a real, very real, risk of this scheme falling flat on its face because BW have found it necessary to complicate every issue at every opportunity. So far we have been asked to sign documents that have made us responsible for everyone who falls down and grazes their knee on the towpath for the next 25 years and make it our responsibility to make your contractors aware of any underground services under your towpath before they start work. This indicates to me that the people drawing up the documents do not understand the situation. They certainly don't understand the Dudley Canal Trust if they thought that either of these documents was going to get a signature on it. Do they really think that we don't read them first?"*

Of course there was more, but that seemed to do the trick!

All the legal agreements are now in place and we can look forward to a much improved towpath by the summer.

We have also made it clear to BW that while the towpath improvements are taking place a little dredging wouldn't be out of place. Watch this space.

A final word to British Waterways. Welcome to 'The Third Sector'. You have a lot to learn, but we are here to help.

Vic Smallshire

# Transport Trust Red Wheel Award

I am delighted to announce that the Dudley Canal Tunnel has been granted a Red Wheel Award by the Transport Trust. These awards, which are not given away lightly, are awarded to buildings, structures or places that have played an important role in the history of transport of Great Britain.

The Dudley Canal Tunnel was completed in 1792 and by 1840 was carrying 41,000 boats a year. By 1962 the canal was derelict and abandoned by Act of Parliament. After a decade of voluntary work The Trust restored the canal to full navigable standard in 1973, and has subsequently turned the once derelict waterway into the busiest canal in the country.

The award also recognises the continuing and growing importance of the tunnel and associated limestone mines in attracting tourists to the area. The first tourists can be traced back to the 1840s. Today the DCT carries 85,000 passengers a year through the tunnel and adjacent limestone mines on its four electrically powered narrow boats. The award, which takes the form of a plaque 0.5 metres diameter, carrying an appropriate citation, will be unveiled by Tony Hales, Chairman of BW. The ceremony will take place at the Todds End (Tipton) end of the tunnel at 12:30pm on Friday 1st April 2011.

Vic Smallshire

## Social Events

All meetings are held at Blowers Green Pumphouse, Peartree Lane, Dudley DY2 0XP and start at 7:30pm. Non DCT Members welcome.

15th March 2011

Dr Jeremy Pritchard - Darwin and the Black Country

13th April 2011

**DCT Annual General Meeting**

17th May 2011

Dave Fuszard - Restoration of steam engine 6023 King Edward I

# Work Parties 2011

All Work Parties start at 10am.

Sunday 20th March  
Tipton. (Park on Todds End car park)

Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th April  
BCN clean up. Salford Junction. Working from Cuckoo Wharf,  
Cuckoo Road, Birmingham.

Sunday 17th April  
Tipton. (Park on Todds End car park)

Sunday 8th May  
Batsons Wharf, Tipton.

Sunday 19th June  
Parkhead Locks, Dudley.

Sunday 3rd July  
Location TBA

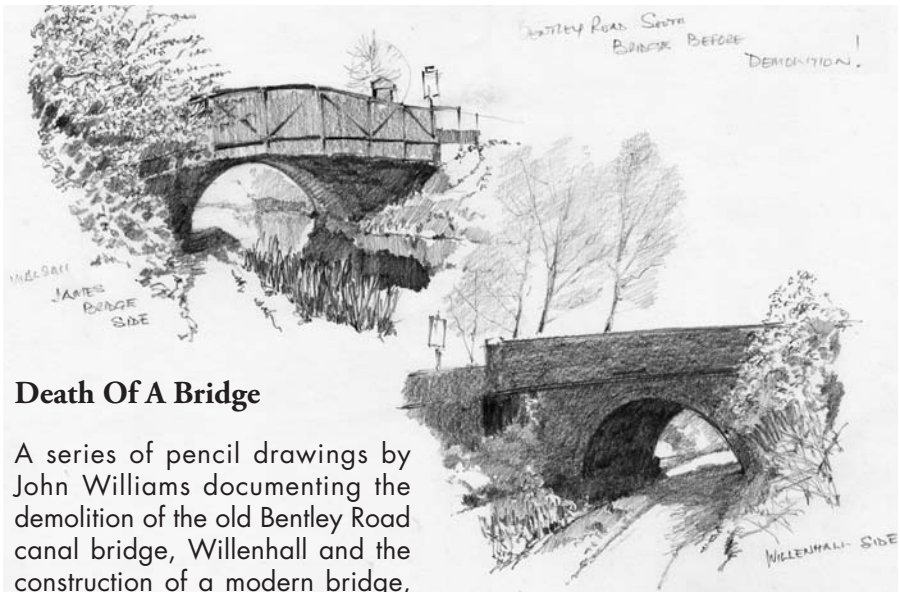
Sunday 7th August  
Location TBA

Saturday 3rd September  
Joint Work Party with BCNS and Tipton Community Association, from  
the BCLM to Factory Junction.

Sunday 30th October  
Location TBA

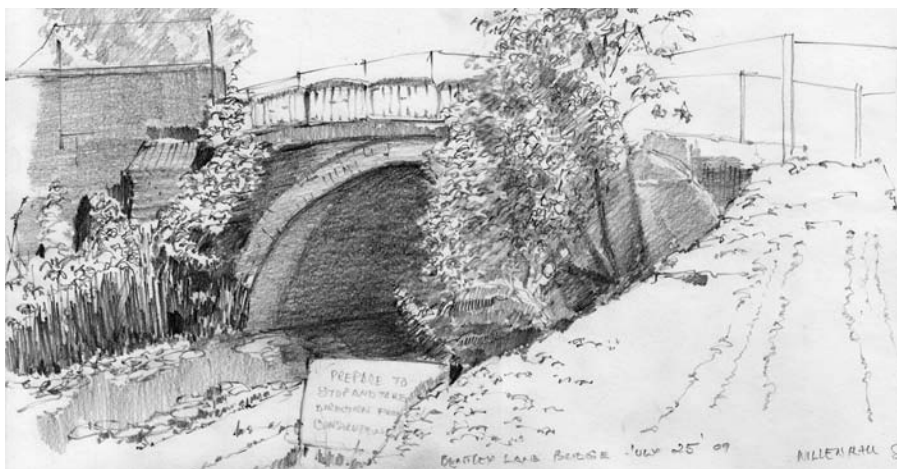
Members wishing to participate in our Work Parties can phone John Rudge on 01384257164 or turn up on the day. We will be most grateful for any time you are able to spare.

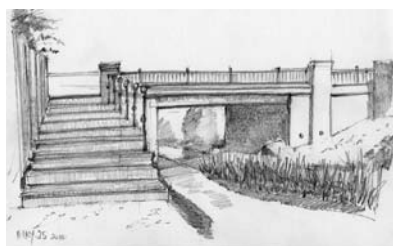
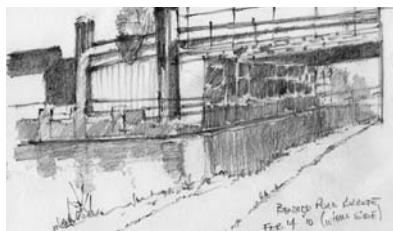
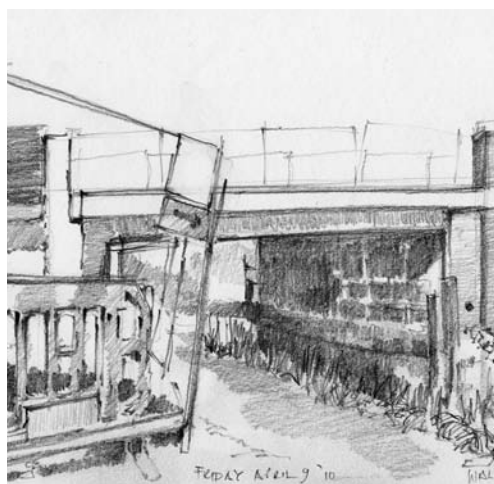
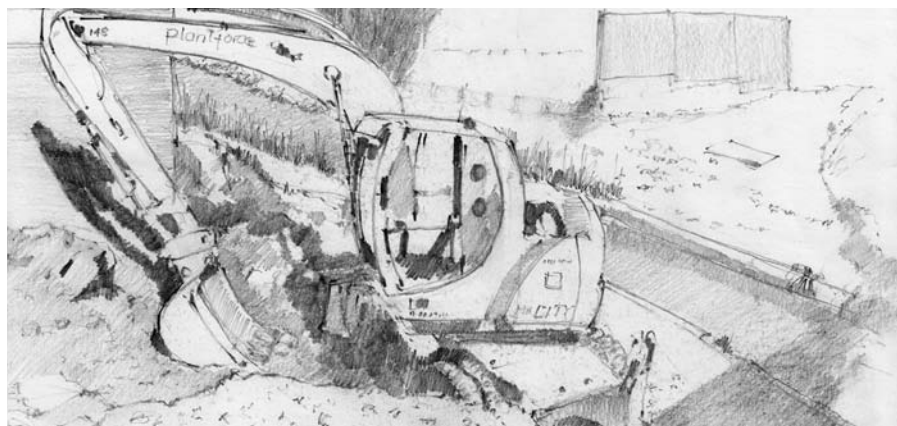
John Rudge



## Death Of A Bridge

A series of pencil drawings by John Williams documenting the demolition of the old Bentley Road canal bridge, Willenhall and the construction of a modern bridge, from June 2009 to May 2010.





# Progress Report - Learning & Access Hub

Not much to report this time although a lot of work is going on in the background. We should hear in the next month if our applications to two funding bodies, for a total of £800,000, have progressed to the next stage. It is a longwinded process and it is vital that all the boxes are ticked at each stage. As you will appreciate getting over what we want to do and why we want to do it in the twenty minutes allotted is not easy and we use a combination of a PowerPoint presentation, similar to the one shown to trust members last year, plus a commentary tailored to suit the particular application. We are sometimes asked to leave a visual reminder of our project and the 'storyboard' included in this *Legger* is what we left with one funding body. The full size version is upstairs at the Pumphouse.

By the end of September this year we must have completed the following:

## **Heritage Activity Plan**

What is actually going to take place in the L&A Hub and how that will benefit the local community and the region. The plan needs to encompass the needs of schools, colleges, ethnic minorities, craft and local community groups and organisations, businesses and local government bodies. Our employed experts will be pointing us in the right direction but all the contacts need to be made by DCT members so if you have any contacts, relatives or interests within such an organisation, please let June Hodgetts or myself know.

## **Business Plan**

Probably the easiest bit as we are already a successful commercial body. The plan will show how we will market and promote the Heritage Activity Plan and the facilities at the L&A Hub to satisfy the requirements of the groups listed above and maintain commercial viability.

## **Design of the Building**

Although we have a good idea of the internal contents and layout of the building, we are awaiting suggestions from our architects as to the external appearance and features. The vague sketch that has appeared

in various literature to date bears no resemblance to what we will end up with but merely illustrates the site and scale of the building. At some point late summer we will have the final design proposals and members will have an opportunity to comment. Bear in mind that whatever is finally chosen will not appeal to everybody.

Mike Duley  
Chairman, Project Steering Group

## **From The Towpath**

Our new season has started somewhat late this year due to proposed work in Castle Mill which did not materialize in January. However, February is upon us and we are opening for the new season with lots of changes.

The shop has been redesigned and redecorated with new smaller fridges and freezers and an Ice Cream kiosk has been constructed alongside our catering unit for the 2011 season. This will enable customers to be able to access the tills quicker and make their experience better.

The boats have been to dry dock and had their 2011 livery painted and are looking good thanks to the hard work of the Towpath Team. The Limekiln at the back of the ticket office has been cleared out ready for some restoration work to begin.

Most exciting of all is our new website which was launched in February where you can now follow Dudley Canal Trust Trips on Facebook and DCTrips at Twitter by logging in via the icon at the bottom of each page on our website: [dudleycanaltrust.org.uk](http://dudleycanaltrust.org.uk)

We look forward to welcoming you all to our new site and hope you will follow our news and updates.

June Hodgetts  
General Manager,  
Dudley Canal Trust (Trips) Ltd

# DUDLEY CANAL TUNNELS

## & THE FAMOUS LIMESTONE MINES

### A unique journey into history

ACCESS  
CANAL NE  
THE BLACK

BENEATH YOUR FEET....

**THEN**

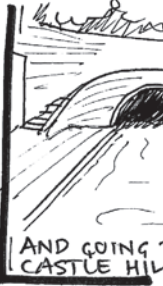
LIMESTONE & FOSSILS...



...MINES & CAVERNS



BIG ENOUGH TO FIT....



AND GOING TO CASTLE HILL

# EVOLUTION

IN 1963 CANAL ENTHUSIASTS SAVED THE CANAL....



PRESERVED FOR THE PEOPLE

... AND IN 1970 THE DUDLEY CANAL TRUST BEGAN

TODAY THE TRUST HAS 300+ MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS



**NOW**

**THE FUTURE**

A LEARNING & ACCESS HUB IS PLANNED, A SENSITIVELY DESIGNED BESPOKE BUILDING

- TICKET OFFICE
- GALLERY
- EVENTS SPACE
- CAFE
- SHOP
- OFFICES
- WORKSHOP
- ACCESS
- PARKING
- LANDSCAPE
- BRIDGE

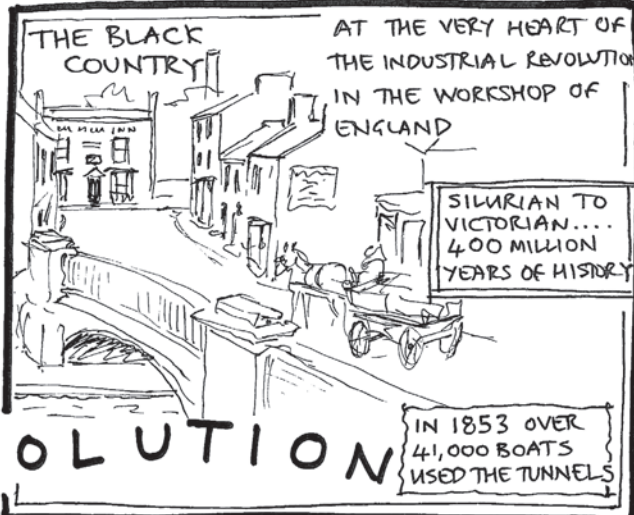
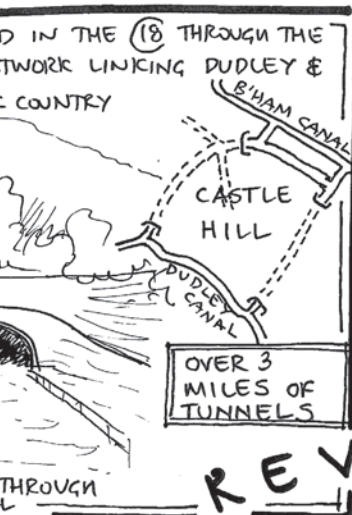


A NEW FRONT DOOR

THE BENEFITS:

- ENHANCE & MAINTAIN
- INSPIRE & DELIGHT PEOPLE + EVENTS
- INTERPRET THE PAST + AUDIO VISUAL MAGIC
- CREATE ACCESS FOR ALL THE COMMUNITY
- ENGENDER PRIDE IN THE

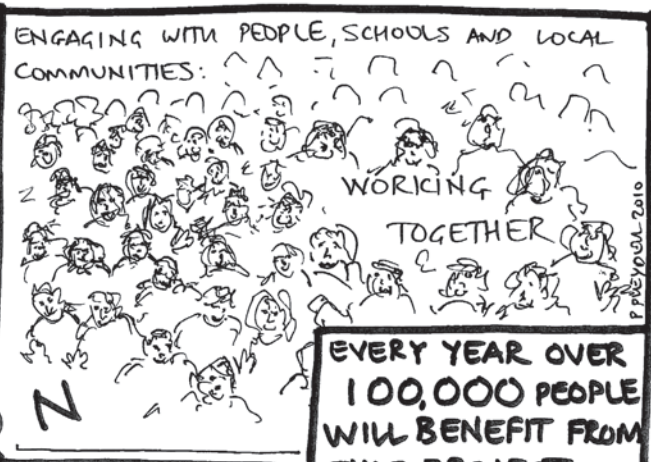
INSPIRE



# REVOLUTION



IN A UNIQUE ASSET  
PEOPLE THROUGH ACTIVITIES  
WITH DISPLAYS + ARTIFACTS  
HALL + A CENTRE FOR  
THE PAST & THE PRESENT



# INSPIRATION

# Breaking The Ice

A few repairs were needed on Sagitta's hull over this winter period so the dry dock at Caggy's boatyard was booked for the second week in January 2011. In December 2010 the weather turned nasty with the coldest winter during that month since records began, with around 8" of snow. The ice on the canal at Parkhead was around 5" thick! Thick enough for the kids to go skating on, well not literally, but strong enough for them to walk across the basin just in front of the Pumphouse! As Christmas came and went things were beginning to warm up; by the first week in January we were in for a much needed thaw and the ice and snow outside my front door at Parkhead was starting to recede. Saturday 8th January was coming up fast and we were getting concerned if we could get Sagitta to Caggy's on time because of the thickness of the ice. So, after much deliberation, it was decided to have Bittell towed through Dudley Tunnel on the Friday before, as it was the shortest and wettest way to Tipton. We all met up on the boats at Todds End the following morning. With the engines fired up and running, the stoves lit and the kettles on we set off at 11am. Bittell was playing scout in search of ice to break, but the little tug was disappointed to find the ice had got that thin that I was considering turning Bittell around thinking it would not be needed today! However, I decided to push on to Factory Locks to see how things were. Looking down the flight I could see that the locks and New Main Line were quite badly frozen, so our decision was to take the two boats down the three locks. Sagitta had a hard time at the first lock. As Wayne steered the boat into the lock Della was having problems trying to close the top gate due to very large lumps of floating ice. As the lock slowly drained down the crew had to break up the compacted ice which was jamming the sides of the hull against the brickwork so as to get the bow of the boat to rub against the bottom gates to make sure the stern cleared the cill. By now Bittell had been tied up to the bollards at the bottom of the flight. The ice had got thicker as we descended. Bittell's crew set locks 2 and 3 then walked back to assist Sagitta down. John scooped out lumps of ice from behind the gates so that they could be opened fully and we eventually got Sagitta into lock 3. Again, compacted ice between the sides of the hull and the brickwork of the lock chamber caused us problems by jamming the boat; Sagitta was stuck fast again!

So with boat shafts and crowbars we managed to free up the boat and get it out of the bottom lock. The joys of winter boating!

We were just sorting things out as photographers Malcolm Ranieri and John Toy turned up to take some pictures of boats breaking the ice; well they weren't disappointed as the ice on the Main Line was a good 3" thick. We got the tug rocking and rolling and, as we hit the ice with lots of throttle, the ice was breaking and lifting in the air like large garden slabs. Lumps of ice were flying over the bow, with some bits finding their way into the front cabin. We were only doing around 1mph but the noise was tremendous. Della and Wayne watched from the stern of Sagitta as Heidi, John and myself violently rocked Bittell from side to side; the little tug was doing its job as it was designed to do 77 years ago. It was a good job we had only got half a mile to go. As Bittell winded outside Caggy's yard, Sagitta was just coming around the corner. Then came the difficult manoeuvre of reversing Sagitta into the boat yard. With Della on the tiller, Wayne helping and a few gentle nudges from Bittell they reversed the 71' 6" boat under the tight bridge and in between the moored boats in the basin. Slowly going forward, Sagitta squeezed into the dry dock with inches to spare. Bittell then came into the basin and tied up for a while. After a rest, a well earned cup of tea and cake plus a chat about the journey down, we all got back onto Bittell and made the return journey to Todds End with no problem at all.



Photo: Malcolm Ranieri

On Sunday morning the boatyard staff drained down the dry dock and power-washed the mud off the hull. It was around lunchtime before the DCT volunteers could begin scraping the old paint and rust off the hull, which was very hard, dirty work. Ros brought sandwiches and cake and, with cups of tea flowing constantly and lots of banter, we got on with the task ahead. Our volunteers worked their socks off during the afternoon, going home with black faces and fairly cold.

During the week ahead a small team carried on scraping the hull of Sagitta. On Tuesday Brendon from the boatyard started welding up some of the rubbing rail that had been broken off under the water line. He also had to weld some strengthening supports on the skeg to stop it from bending again! By mid week our volunteers had cleaned off the hull, even the very tight area around the bow was done; we could have done with a very small person to squeeze around this part of the dock, but we managed it somehow. Now the job was starting to get easier; as Brendon finished off the welding, we started to paint the hull black. By Friday we had put on three coats of paint to preserve this old hull, and it was looking good.



Photo: Steve Bingham



*Photo: Steve Bingham*

On Saturday morning DCT volunteers met up at Caggy's boatyard to check the paint was dry enough first and then to witness the flooding of the dock. We reversed Sagitta out of the dock with Pauline pushing it away from the other moored boats in the basin so as to not scrape off our new paint which was still soft underneath. Thankfully all the ice had totally gone from the cut, quite a difference from our journey a week ago. The trip back was uneventful which is just what we hoped for. Sagitta is now moored by the tunnel gauge at Todds End where a few more maintenance jobs are needed to be done ready for the 2011 season.

The DCT Committee would like to thank all the volunteer members who put themselves out and had time off work to do this very dirty but worthwhile job of preserving a 76 year old hull.

Wayne Sivions, Della Sadler-Moore, Ros Clarke, Heidi Yardley, Pauline Farnell, John Rudge, Roger Adams, Chris Round, John Woodward and myself.

Steve Bingham

# Sagitta Diary

2010 was Sagitta's 75th birthday (b1935) and the first full season DCT boated her around the canal system promoting the Trust. Steve Bingham in his article in *The Legger No 214* outlined Sagitta's provenance and technical specifications. I would also like to thank Alan Hazeldine for his kind introduction to me as 'Sagitta Coordinator' published in *The Legger No 218*.

Sagitta attended eight events during 2010: Coventry Basin, Crick Boatshow, Braunston Festival, Beale Park (IWA National) via the tidal Thames, Tipton Festival, DCT Open Weekend, The Festival of Water and Light Merry Hill, and her final sortie was The Stourbridge Open Weekend, having successfully navigated through the lowest bridge on the network. At all venues Sagitta was open to the public, with volunteers demonstrating the workings of the boatman's cabin and, in the hold, narrating the pictorial display of the development of the Dudley Canal over the years. I can only estimate 2,000 people passed through Sagitta from the clickers used by the volunteers, but I am fairly sure this is a gross underestimate.

2010 also saw considerable maintenance and technical developments to Sagitta, predominantly the 'big boys toy' stuff: a new alternator and leisure batteries, a new toilet (the 'electric chair'), craned out at Watford for minor repairs and re-fitted with LED lighting throughout. One unanticipated aspect of the coordinator role was that of 'taking a look' at the hull whilst Sagitta was still in the water. This happened on Friday 13th August at Cowroast en route to Watford. The light was failing and I was just about to set the lock - the rest is history. My post-inspection pose is overleaf; note my windlass was not lost, but my shoes remain on the bottom of the cut. This I am told by the committee was 'beyond the call of duty' of the coordinator.

Also behind the scenes DCT volunteers saw the need to make the boatman's cabin more authentic. Donations poured in and include: curtains and lace, lace plates, a mirror, a teapot and knitted cosy, a coal scuttle, an iron and crockery. Wayne Sivions donated an authentic Buckby can and a barrel with stand, both of which were repainted by another DCT member John Ganner, and were displayed on top of Sagitta for the first time during the DCT Open Weekend. My thanks go to everyone who has donated items, all of which contribute enormously to the public's experience of working boat life.

The 2011 season commenced with an exciting 'icebreaking' trip from Todds End to Caggy's boatyard in Tipton, where she went into dry dock for hull maintenance. Further sorties for Sagitta are as follows:

22nd to 24th April  
Ellesmere Port (Historic Narrowboat Owners gathering).

29th April to 2nd May  
Open to the public. Todds End, Tipton.

28th to 30th May  
Crick Boatshow.

11th & 12th June  
Stoke Bruerne Gala Weekend.

25th & 26th June  
Braunston Historic Narrowboat Gathering.

29th to 31st July  
Burton on Trent (IWA National).

13th & 14th August  
Foxton Locks Festival.

27th to 29th August  
Open to the public. Todds End, Tipton.

10th & 11th September  
Black Country Boating Festival, Windmill End, Netherton.

17th & 18th September  
Tipton Festival.

24th & 25th September  
BCLM. Historic Boat Gathering.

15th & 16th October  
Stourbridge Open Weekend.

From the list above you can see we have increased our destinations, and our openings to the public. On this note I would like to invite you all to come and be active volunteers in the DCT Sagitta experience. Support and training will be provided. Sagitta is going to be moving a considerable distance this year; you are welcome to join in for a few hours to a few days. We have a fully functioning loo, an excellent stove and plenty of space for beds in the hold, lots of locks conducive to a healthy walk along the towpath, a guaranteed laugh or game of scrabble after a days boating.

I would welcome very much for you, as members who receive *The Legger*, to join Sagitta in any way you feel you can, but I would also ask you to pass on information contained in this article to anyone you feel is interested. This is a rare opportunity to be involved in an historic narrowboat which has such enthusiasm, support and investment by volunteers. More volunteers are needed and I am willing to discuss opportunities with anyone who wishes to contact me.

Just to leave you on an even more positive note, in February Sagitta's hold was re-wired thanks to our secretary Alex Parker, and Jo Hollingshead fitted the new fenders and replaced the strings, alongside teaching me how to manage the strings and fenders. What a privilege to be party to such expert knowledge transfer in this world of technology and superficiality. For anyone who wants to see Sagitta, with her recent developments she is proudly moored opposite the newly refurbished cabin of the DCT Tripping Company at Todds End.

My contact details are as follows  
Email: [dellasadlermoore@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dellasadlermoore@hotmail.co.uk)  
Mobile: 07736 061258.



Stuff on the roof by Della Sadler-Moore



A damp Della by Eddie Hunt

# Bittell Diary 2011

9th & 10th April  
Annual BCN clean up, Salford Junction.

30th April & 1st May  
Coombswood Open Weekend, Hawne Basin, Halesowen.

11th & 12th June  
BCNS Boat Gathering, Pelsall.

25th & 26th June  
Historic Narrowboat Gathering, Braunston.

10th & 11th September  
Black Country Boating Festival, Windmill End, Netherton.

17th & 18th September  
Tipton Canal Festival.

24th & 25th September  
BCLM Historic Working Boat Gathering.

1st & 2nd October  
Festival of Water & Light, Waterfront, Merry Hill.

15th & 16th October  
Stourbridge Open Weekend.

4th & 5th November  
BCNS Bonfire Canal Rally, Smethwick.

Bittell will have to be moved before and after these events. Any DCT Members wishing to help crew on Bittell are welcome to come along. Contact Steve Bingham on [ste.bingham@talktalk.net](mailto:ste.bingham@talktalk.net) or phone me on 07964151552.

Steve Bingham

# The Book Of Bob

## The Tale Of The Lock

### Chapter the fourth

1. And it came to pass that Bob the Boatyman was aboard his boat upon the waters in a land that was known as Tipton.
2. He came unto that place that is named the Factory, where mighty locks stood on the road to the City of Wolverhampton which is in the land of Dingle.
3. The boat of Bob did enter the lock and it came to pass that a chariot wheel which had been cast aside into the waters didst come to lodge betwixt the boat and the wall of the lock, and the boat became stuck fast.
4. The boat of Bob could not move. Neither up, nor down, nor to the front, nor to the back.
5. Bob did labour for many hours but he could not set his vessel free.
6. Bob didst despair and called upon the servants of the waterways for aid and succour.
7. And the number of the waterways was 08004799947.
8. And a servant of the waterways didst reply, "I thank thee for thine interest in the waterways, but I knowest not of the place named the Factory, have thee a nice day".
9. Again Bob called upon the servants of the waterways.
10. And another servant of the waterways didst reply, "I thank thee for thine interest in the waterways but I knowest not of the waters in the land of Tipton, have thee a nice day".
11. And for a third time Bob did call upon the servants of the waterways.
12. And yet another servant of the waterways didst reply, "Bob I know thee of old and I would tell thee that the lords of the waterways have squandered the gold of the waterways."
13. "The rulers of the nations have denied the lords of the waterways gold from the taxes of the people and so have cast out many of the servants of the waterways. We cannot aid thee until a week next Tuesday".

### Chapter the fifth

1. Whereupon, a great rage fell upon Bob. And he did mightily smite the towpath with the shaft of the boat, and the shaft was split asunder.
2. And Bob did let forth a mighty oath.
3. Darkness fell upon the face of the earth and Bob was sore afraid.

4. The voice of the Lord came unto Bob and sayeth, “Bob, why doth thou take my name in vain?”
5. And Bob did fall to his knees and did tremble greatly.
6. “Lord forgive me for I know not what I do, the servants of the waterways have denied me thrice in my hour of need, I am bereft and without hope or salvation. The lords of the waterways knowest not their ass from their elbow”.
7. The Lord sayeth, “Bob my faithful servant, thou hast been sore tested and I will forgive thee”.
8. And lo the darkness was made light and the boat became freed.
9. Bob once more spaketh to the Lord, “My lord cannot thou makest the lords of the waterways to mend their ways and follow the paths of righteousness?”
10. And the Lord spake thusly, “Would that I could Bob, but I can only work miracles”.

Here Endeth The Tale Of The Lock

Story and translation by Jeffrey Hudson



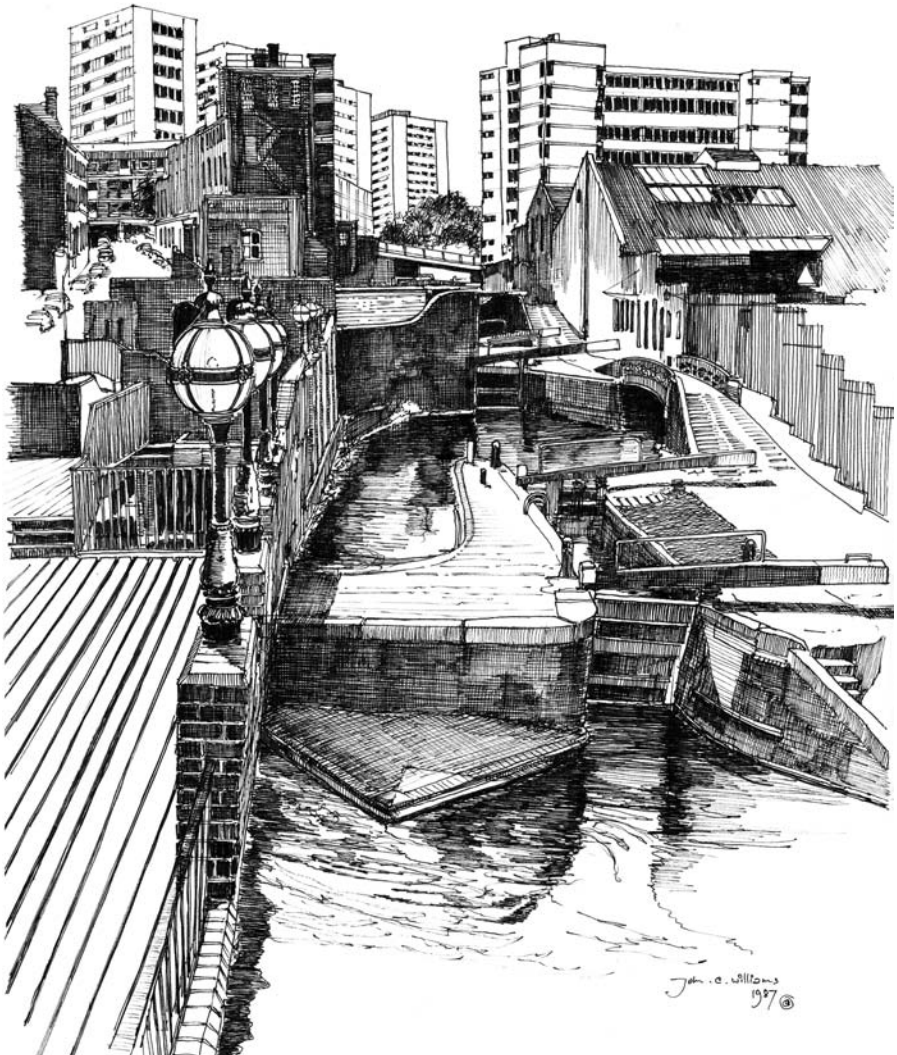
*On Strange Effects by Stroke of Lightning by Olaus Magnus 1555*

## Membership Matters

We have got to that time of year when we send out membership renewal forms. Membership reached another all time high last year and I hope we can get more new members again this year, so invite your friends to join. I’m sure they will enjoy the benefits.

Richard Jones  
Membership Secretary

# Painting The Cut



Farmers Bridge Locks 1987

John Williams has documented the Black Country for many years with pen and pencil. His work can be seen regularly in the Saturday edition of the Express & Star. Born in Darlaston in 1933 he attended Walsall School of Art and has had various jobs throughout his life but continued to sketch the passing of industry. He is currently working on a new book of drawings of Willenhall, to be published later this year.

# DUDLEY CANAL TRUST

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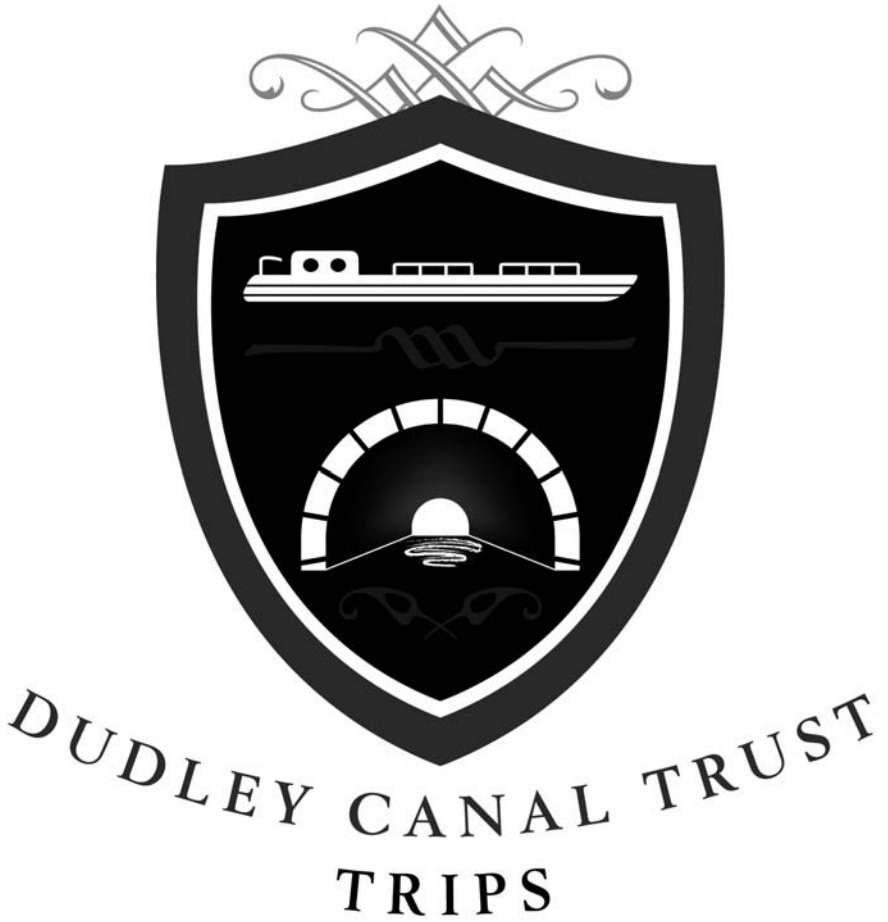
Tick here if you wish to be informed of working parties

Helping at events

Boat moving

Please include a phone no. or an email address

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