

CBOA NEWS

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First load of sea dredged sand to Knostrop

The first load of sand was loaded at Albert Dock, Hull in the middle of September into CBOA member Branford Barge Owners' *Farndale H* for delivery to the Canal and River Trust's Knostrop wharf, Leeds. It is believed that wharf was last used in 1986; the last traffic to Leeds was oil to Bayfords at Fleet Lane, which finished 2012. This is a traffic that CBOA has been working towards for some considerable time, to remove lorry traffic off the roads and reduce the dependence on land quarrying locally. The grit sand is sea dredged from an area off East Anglia in the North Sea. Andy Collins, MD of CBOA member AC Marine Aggregates Ltd hopes that owing to an extremely positive response the tonnage will significantly develop from the expected 1000 tonnes per week to at least double in the not too distant future. A second barge, the Humber Barges' *Fusedale* will be deployed in the movements of the aggregates with any significant volume increase. Andy Collins is also hopeful of getting backloads out of Knostrop.

The grit sand was suction dredged by the 5116gt Dutch flagged *Scelveringh* and unloaded by a conveyor direct from the River Humber outside of Albert Dock into an area leased to AC Aggregates inside Albert Dock. See more about this on page 3.



Branford Barge Owners' *Farndale H* approaching the A19 road bridge at Whitley Bridge with 400 tonnes of grit sand for Knostrop wharf, Leeds (Maik Brown)

From the Chairman



It doesn't seem like 14 years since John Dodwell and I met Andy Collins of AC Aggregates Ltd to discuss Andy's vision of getting marine aggregate into West Yorkshire and especially his wish to use a greener form of transport. Andy's view (which proved correct) was that although more expensive than land-won aggregate, supplies (and possibly quality) of quarried material would dwindle as quarries became depleted and planners would be less willing to approve extension of existing or new quarries.

Many meetings with Crown Estate (owners of the material), dredger companies and port/wharf operators eventually led to the first material being landed in Albert Dock, Hull around five years ago serving the local market. Although a number of potential inland wharves and terminals were to be investigated, it wasn't yet time to take it further inland but eventually by mid last year the second part of the project – to barge material inland – could be

progressed. The CRT wharf at Knostrop, protected by Leeds Council, was ideal to serve Leeds except that all the outside storage space had been let. However one of the tenants kindly agreed to surrender a portion of their leased area adjacent to the wharf. It took nearly a year to sort the leases etc but on 23rd September CBOA member Branford Barge Owners brought a 400 tonne cargo up to Leeds – the first freight load to Leeds since the ASD steel deliveries in 2008, and the oil deliveries to Woodlesford in 2012. Difficulties with depth in a couple of places (despite dredging) have to be resolved but we have to salute our member AC Marine Aggregates Ltd for persevering for so long with what has been a joint venture with CBOA, and we and our local operator members have been very pleased to have been of assistance. Hopefully the tonnage will gradually increase such that two barges (or more) will be needed to satisfy demand in Leeds. It would be remiss not to thank Max Rathmell and Helen Miller in the planning department of Leeds City Council for their vision too – in ensuring wharves (and railway sidings) are protected in a way similar to that pioneered in London. Wharves and sidings have also been protected in West Yorkshire generally. It's also very pleasing to note the support for this movement from Richard Parry (Chief Executive of the Canal & River Trust) and Tom Riordan (Chief Executive Leeds City Council).

We are very pleased to welcome new Trade member Deans Marine Services of Hull. John Dean senior was an active member of the IWA's Inland Shipping Group, and it will be good to work with John (junior) as we develop business in the Humber area and connected waterways. It's also pleasing that Jason Nicholls of JN Marine Co Ltd is now a Trade member, operating on the Thames and the Mersey/Manchester Ship Canal and potentially the River Weaver.

We are also very pleased to welcome new Trade member S Walsh & Sons of Rainham who have a fleet of tugs and barges operating mainly on the Thames. See page 8 for more about the company.

Members may be aware of the proposal to move 25 million tonnes of ash (one million tonnes per annum) from Gale Common near Whitley Bridge. The Aire & Calder Navigation is close and ideally suited for this type of movement assuming that the material can be conveyed to a simple loading staithe (we think it can, though the M62 is in the way) and it could also be an ideal cargo in containers for a flat top barge service such as that being pioneered by our member Blue Line Logistics in Belgium. We have made our views known to the planners in support of local concerns regarding the large number of HGV lorries which would otherwise be needed. We'd like to enter into a detailed dialogue with the owners of the material as to whether or not barge transport would work – logistics, costs, grants etc.

We have also made representations to the government along with other bodies such as the Inland Waterways Association and British Marine concerning the proposal to raise fuel duty on red diesel to the level associated with white diesel for use in propelling commercial inland waterway vessels. Agriculture, fishing and railway traction have already been exempted and (like the railway operators) we have pointed out that the imposition of this extra cost could have the perverse effect of driving traffic off water on to road thus increasing emissions – the opposite of what is intended. We understand the need to improve fuel efficiency and use cleaner propulsion and don't need a 'stick' to persuade us! As previously noted there is increasing interest in greener forms of transport and we cannot rest on our laurels claiming the moral high ground without doing what we can to clean up our act whether that be by investing in cleaner diesel engine technology and fuels, or by switching to electric or even hydrogen (or any bi-mode combination) in the future. With my professional railwayman's hat on I'm keeping abreast of what's developing on the railways in this respect, our European representative Paul Ayres is watching what's happening overseas, while our diesel expert Bernard Hales advises on the latest thinking using fossil derived fuels. See page 9 for the CBOA response.

We are pleased with a planning decision by Islington Council following representations from CBOA that where water transport could be used in connection with a waterside development not only should there be a feasibility study but it must be satisfactory to the council. All too often such studies are commissioned to provide an end result which assumes that water transport is not feasible or viable. On planning we have also strongly supported the extension of Upton Pit for two years thus ensuring the River Severn (and our member Thompson River Transport) continues to move a substantial tonnage for a little longer. We have also supported a potential movement of quarried material along the Calder & Hebble Navigation.

Following a suggestion from a member we are establishing a 'members' only' area on our website where material such as committee minutes etc will be posted. All members with an e-mail address will be sent a password to access the area.

COVID-19 means new ways of working for many people and organisations and CBOA has been no different as committee members have kept in touch using internet technology. It was clearly not possible to hold our AGM as planned at Anderton in September, and the situation in the future is not at all clear as regards public meetings. Your committee has, therefore, agreed that we should have a simple AGM to deal with the official business and this will be on-line during December, see below. Members will be advised by e-mail how to log in (which has now become almost routine for many) and hopefully we will be able to revert to a normal (or 'new normal' whatever that is to be) next year.

David Lowe
Chairman

Annual General Meeting

This will be held online during December, the notification and details of which will be sent to members via email. If you would like notification by post, please contact the Chairman.

UK News

Knostrop sand traffic (continued from the front cover)



The grit sand is then loaded into the *Farndale H* with a 360 clamshell machine on the wharf

This traffic is the culmination of many years' hard work by various groups. It started with Leeds City Council's minerals planning policy decision to safeguard from unsuitable developments a number of wharves in the City, including ones at Knostrop and at Stourton so they could be used to unload aggregates and other cargoes. Behind this lay a wish to see more use of marine dredged aggregates in Leeds and West Yorkshire rather than from inland quarries with

Farndale H being loaded at Hull (Maik Brown)

consequential road haulage. Marine dredged aggregates from the North Sea are viewed as a sustainable activity as deposits are replaced naturally at sea. This is not the case with land based supplies. Each barge will take 18 or more articulated lorries carrying up to 28 tonnes off the crowded M62. Barges emit 75% less CO2 than heavy lorries and cause considerably less dust, noise and hazard than lorries. Barges will help Leeds City Council in its efforts to reduce air pollution and improve the well-being of its citizens.

AC Aggregates' Andy Collins said that he was grateful to the CBOA and their member firms for enabling his company to turn into a reality their hopes to improve the environment by using "green" transport and enabling the use of aggregates from a sustainable source.



Farndale H approaching Knostrop lock (Maik Brown)

Richard Parry, Chief Executive of Canal & River Trust, said "I am delighted that the Aire and Calder Navigation is being used to import marine-dredged aggregates into Leeds. Freight operators are already using our canals in the region, including on the Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation, with all the environmental benefits waterborne freight brings. We plan to construct a 10-acre inland port further along the Aire and Calder at Stourton in east Leeds. This site would initially move 200,000 tons a year of marine aggregates."



Farndale H being unloaded at Knostrop, Leeds (M Brown)

Tom Riordan, Leeds City Council's Chief Executive said "Using barges to transport goods brings with it a range of extremely positive environmental benefits, which is why as a council, we've worked incredibly hard to both protect and safeguard our waterways and wharves in Leeds through planning policy. Not only will one barge journey take the equivalent of 18 articulated lorries carrying 28 tonnes off the road on a daily basis which is huge, it will also play its part in reducing carbon emissions and air pollution. If we are to make Leeds carbon neutral by 2030, there is no doubt that alternative and greener transport options such as barges are going to have an important part to play."

Dr. David Hilling MBE, 1935-2020

The following is kindly provided by the writer Joseph Boughey.

Dr David Hilling, who died on 27 March, was a Vice-President of CBOA. He had a long career studying modern freight waterways and advocating their development.

David was born in Eastbourne; his father was a travel agent, working for Thomas Cook. He spent wartime in Tredegar in South Wales, and then moved to Bristol in 1947. Bristol was then a busy port, and he became interested in the study of ports, freight handling and waterways, and even joined the Bristol Channel Sea Scouts! He studied geography at Aberystwyth, and specialised in the development of ports and freight handling. Graduating in 1957, he carried out research in the University of Sheffield until 1961, when he became a lecturer in the University of Ghana until 1966, and became interested in the transport problems of developing countries; much later, he gave public lectures about Nigeria's extensive inland waterways. His Ph.D. was on the development of Ghanaian ports. He retained an interest in Africa, and wrote later that "it had been the experience of travelling in Africa, often over great distances, sometimes with considerable difficulty and by different modes that had stimulated [my] life-long interest in transport". He returned to Britain in 1966, and until retirement in 1996 he taught geography, specializing in maritime studies, at Royal Holloway and Bedford College, with many publications.

1966 was a pivotal year for inland waterways freight, with the rapid decline of traditional canal carrying by narrow boat; the prospect that BW would focus on a small group of larger commercial waterways; and the beginnings of modernized handling approaches at ports and inland, that made the future of older carrying craft and methods unlikely to survive on a large scale. This was not an expected area of future academic interest, but David's interest in port development led him to examine freight waterways and ports in Britain, Africa and mainland Europe. His 1996 study *Transport and Developing Countries*, opened with inland water transport, which he described as "the neglected mode", and explained its environmental advantages for both freight and passengers. He stressed that transport modes are interdependent, especially linkages to and from ports. Referring to media coverage, he noted that water transport sometimes has a "romantic image", but "there is a danger that water transport is dismissed as being no more than romantic."

In 1974 he joined the Inland Shipping Group, which Charles Hadfield had formed in 1971-2 to campaign for the development of larger freight waterways; he would be heavily involved for 30 years. He was attracted by proposals to develop Barge Carrying Vessels like LASH (Lighter Aboard Ship) and BACAT (Barge Aboard Catamaran), and was very supportive of the introduction of the latter to the Humber ports. He was very disappointed when these were withdrawn, and indeed the whole idea of these innovations foundered. Union opposition at Hull presented one problem, but also problems of manoeuvring, and regulations for vessels that did not, of course, apply to containers. David wrote *Barge Carrier Systems Inventory and Prospects* in 1977, for which he was awarded the Vivian Bulkeley-Johnson Salt in 1978 for his contributions to inland waterway transport.



David Hilling at the 2005 Braunston Historic Narrow Boat Rally (Tim Coghlan)

He would later Chair ISG, and was involved with its successors, the Inland Waterways Freight Group and Sea and Water. I encountered David first in ISG in the 1980s, when it was clear that his enthusiasm was tempered by expertise. To those, like myself, who were far less knowledgeable or expert, David always listened, aiming to validate any useful points, when it would have been easy to dismiss them. At the time I became involved, fewer members were involved in carrying than previously, and there were some, now deceased, whose enthusiasm lay more in the details of particular craft, but David dealt with these courteously, gently moving the agenda on. His own contributions always presented much to think about: incisive, practical and thoughtful. He was always good company at the annual meeting and accompanying visits. He was sanguine over later setbacks to some initiatives in waterways modernization.

After retirement in 1996 Royal Holloway University made him an Honorary Research Fellow, and he remained active in transport geography but with diversifying interests. He assisted the Greenwich Maritime Institute on their MA in Maritime History, and took an interest in Greenwich's and Deptford's maritime heritage. Echoing the "romantic image", he was a keen and expert enthusiast for the steamer *Waverley*. Until 2009, he worked for Saga on "cruise enhancement lectures", and became interested in cruise shipping by sea (mostly in the Mediterranean) and by river. Although not a pleasure boater, he was interested in smaller waterways, partly for freight possibilities, and later in life for the enhancement of his local waterway in Berkhamsted.

David became involved with the European River-Sea-Transport Union after it was established in 1997, and became its UK Vice-President; he also joined Inland Waterways International. He was on the DEFRA/DTLR Freight Study group that reported in 2002. He was appointed a Vice-President of the Inland Waterways Association in 2001, and was awarded an MBE in 2004 for services to inland waterways. He joined the Commercial Boat Operators Association in 2008 and its Committee in 2013. He became Vice-President in 2019 and was CBOA's link with several European waterways organizations advising the committee about them.

Parliamentary matters

Barry Sheeman, MP, (Labour/cooperative, Huddersfield) asked the Secretary of State for transport, what steps had been taken to increase the use of the River Thames in a) commerce, b) transport, c) construction, and d) freight sectors. The reply from Rachel Maclean MP (Parliamentary under-Secretary, DfT) replied that the matter is devolved to the Mayor of London and that policy on what types of services operate on the River Thames would be a matter for the Mayor.

CBOA's John Dodwell emailed Barry Sheeman, commenting that the reply was disappointing and attached the file of CBOA member GPS' Parliamentary Review document which detailed very well the river freight activities CBOA member GPS is involved with. John also said he would welcome the opportunity of telling him more about what is happening with freight on the Thames in London. For example in addition to spoil from various tunnel excavations being taken downstream, aggregates are taken upstream to various wharves as far as Wandsworth; and there is the daily traffic of containerised domestic waste residue taken downstream. John would also appraise Barry Sheeman of freight activities in Yorkshire. He replied, thanking John for his contact and said he was "...working with an expanding team of individuals, all of whom wish to see commerce and the transport of goods moved more substantially to the River to improve air quality, reduce congestion across London and innovate a much underused means to mitigate the environmental impact of the capital's construction and infrastructure projects." He also said the Chair of the relevant group on the Commission would be in contact with John in due course.

There were several comments made in both Debates and Written Answers that included the benefits of waterways, including use for freight. The best perhaps being that Rebecca Pow (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) in recognising the benefits for tourism and leisure, also "...through starting to get freight back on to the waterways. With the move to net zero and to cleaner air, this is actually a huge asset, and we are starting to realise that canals can have a rebirth as transport links." An article was posted in *Towpath Talk* on how CBOA welcomed Rebecca Pow's comments, where Chairman David Lowe pointed out the benefits of CO₂ reduction using water transport, removal of particulates from brakes and tyres and great achievement with the Thames spoil removal by barge during railway development and the Thames Tunnel. See <http://www.cboa.org.uk/news.html> for the CBOA press release.

Blue Line news

On the Peel Ports web site, News section a Q&A session is featured with CBOA member Antoon Coillie, Director of Blue line Logistics, Belgium. Within 6 years he has developed and built the *Zulu* ro-ro Pallet Shuttle Barge system into a successful working concern. As featured in previous issues of CBOAN, the *Zulus* are one man operated flat top barges with no accommodation (single day travel) capable of handling most goods whether palletised, ro-ro or requiring lifting. Peel was keen to get Antoon to explain the benefits of the *Zulus*.

Antoon explained that the Manchester Ship Canal is a superb artery for moving goods between Liverpool and Manchester and from hubs along the M6 and M60. He sees his service as providing a low carbon solution to deliver products directly into the North West and avoiding road miles – helping businesses reduce on their transport costs and carbon emissions.

Wherever there is road congestion and waterways, the waterways can provide a viable alternative to road transport he says. This is exactly the situation with the MSC linking Liverpool to Manchester.

Antoon also wrote on the gcaptain.com website a very forward thinking if perhaps slightly radical article to the effect that a ‘tsunami’ is gathering pace for change to inland waterway vessels over the next 10-15 years. Sustainability is the force for change he says, requiring a radical re-think about inland waterways vessels. Larger vessels requiring large terminal infrastructures has been the trend, meaning a reduction in the number of waterways they can operate, and now with lowering river levels is problematic.



Zulu 02 with palletted cargo (Blue Line Logistics)

The largest vessel size possible for the waterway to decrease the cost per tonne has been the norm, without considering energy consumption. Now we are faced with a need for low or zero emission propulsion which cannot give performance with traditional vessel design. Manoeuvring also takes additional power effectively pushing water sideways, especially in confined waters; this means a smaller vessel is more energy efficient on canals. Low emission propulsion exists for smaller engines, but not for larger. Larger vessels mean a drop in use of the smaller waterways and he quoted examples in the Netherlands with Class II /Class III waterways where they parallel motorways. Euro 2 diesels are still being fitted into vessels, in an ageing fleet with little forward thinking it seems. A similarly ageing skipper base on solo owned dry-bulk and container vessels [Netherlands] will also become obsolete!

Hence the need to modernise, use low emission propulsion, automate and re-activate smaller canals and vessels (even autonomous – no crew), digitise the system for traffic planning and operation and provide 24 hour operation and it must be unaffected by unnecessary ‘red tape’. Add all this up and you have a huge leverage effect on the economy, provide demand for new vessels, equipment, spawn new industries with employment and provide sustainability of our logistic chains.

Upstaging the logistics is what DB Schenker is doing with road transport with 250 digitally connected DB Schenker land transport hubs in Europe, their online facility being able to easily match hauliers to customer requirements – lorries can fill up their trucks with just a few clicks, they say.

Antoon finishes by asking if major shippers are more and more subscribing to the international sustainability targets, not by 2050 but by 2030, will these shippers use logistic chains that have not been adapted to provide sustainable solutions?

In the UK however, there is a view that scrappage of older vessels is not necessarily good for sustainability as it does not count the environmental cost of the additional CO₂ production with new manufacture and also the necessary recycling of the old. Inland vessels tend to have a useful life of several decades.

Welcome change in thinking

The following words is a view from a potential customer to water transport; it is interesting how the 'driver' for using water is now seen as the necessity to reduce the carbon footprint, not cost as being the foremost concern. The additional transshipping is not seen to be a concern either.

"We are looking across our operations to try and identify potential ways to reduce our carbon footprint – one area of which is the amount of CO₂ generated through inbound HGVs bringing raw materials into our sites.

"At one of our works, we are discussing with a potential supplier for material to be brought along the canal and then delivered a short lorry leg into our works, rather than the current distance that it needs to travel on road networks / motorways. In order for this to happen we are looking at a short access route for a single track road or conveyor between the canal and highway."

Transport decarbonisation and NOX reduction

The Government has started the first stage of this process with the issue of the paper "Decarbonising Transport - Setting the Challenge" in March. It outlines the emissions issue and what needs to be done. Rail and road freight are well covered, but there seems to be little or no cover of inland waterways. This is something we should be inputting to in the future.

In a major push forward, Maersk and Nyk Lines produced plans to set up a new research organisation dedicated to providing decarbonisation solutions to the shipping industry. "A highly specialised, cross-disciplinary team will collaborate globally to create overviews of decarbonisation pathways, accelerate the development of selected decarbonising fuels and powering technologies, and support the establishment of regulatory, financial and commercial means to enable transformation," Maersk said in a statement. Partnerships will be established with companies and institutions that could contribute and attract funds for development and to accelerate the development of selected decarbonising fuels and powering technologies. Leadership is required to drive the transition and for resources to be committed.

According to www.logisticsmanager.com there has been a 24% increase in the number of business demanding that suppliers publish environmental data. The study, carried out by the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) said that more businesses were using its environmental disclosure platform to measure environmental impact, risks, opportunities and strategies related to climate change, deforestation and/or water security issues. The CDP includes companies such as Sainsbury's, Nike and Airbus. Global corporations have great power to change purchasing strategy across the globe; emissions within the supply chain being 5.5 times higher on average than a company's direct emissions. Water transport can be one of the factors making a significant carbon reduction in the supply chain.

Dual fuel operation is being planned by Train operator Grand Central. Tests with LNG (methane) tanks next to a diesel tank shows fuel cost savings of around 20%, carbon dioxide reductions of between 25 and 40% and particulate reductions of 50% or more. Biogas in the future would be an improvement, with the operator preferring tri-mode with electric also.

Although electric traction for freight trains are only about 5% in the UK due to 'missing links' in the route, it is acknowledged in Europe that electric haulage is the optimum. In time UK electrically hauled freight will increase but until then water freight is advantageous. Perhaps this also will push the need for low carbon/carbon free barge propulsion as we are seeing this enter the customer procurement itinerary.

An Eminox exhaust treatment system was fitted to a class 159 diesel multiple unit on the Waterloo to Exeter St Davids route. It was found that NOX emissions were down by 80%, CO and particulates were down by 90%. The Eminox system uses an oxidation catalyst and filter to remove this content. There seems no reason why a similar a retro-fit could not also be applied to barge engines, or even small tug and narrow boat engines.

Action for Yorkshire Transport however warns that electric road vehicles are not the panacea for carbon reduction as might be believed. Only 33% of electricity in the UK is 'renewable' to induce carbon reductions and the vehicles are heavier causing more emissions from tyres and brakes, road abrasion etc. Also being heavier more power is needed to propel them. A substantial amount of carbon is produced in their manufacture and in their batteries which need replacing a number of times during the vehicle's lifetime. Scrappage also produces high carbon emissions. This could favour water transport with a suitable low carbon propulsion source. Action for Yorkshire Transport says the whole of emissions including all particles need to be taken into account.

This was corroborated by another transport action group agreeing that the primary health impacts of all small particle emissions are not being considered. A paper was submitted to Bradford Council and whilst much is made by central and local Government of the effects of promoting electric fuelled vehicles, it said "...they [electric vehicles] do not currently address the major impacts of small particulates arising from road surface, tyre and brake wear, and it is these particulates that are injurious to public health."

A group of large Japanese companies has met to form a consortium to build the infrastructure to develop and launch large electric vessels (approx. 500t quoted), seemingly using batteries which are charged while berthed. In the UK we understand that a northern carrier is reported to be interested in electric propulsion for vessel transport in estuarial waters. The seven Japanese companies in the consortium are planning initially to build an oil tanker...

A report in The Engineer carried an article about a project called RiverCell/ELEKTRA a pusher tug craft being developed with zero emissions by the Technical University (TU) in Berlin that will be powered from batteries and hydrogen fuel cells. It appears that the hydrogen fuel cells providing 192kW will be used to complement the batteries' charge capacity to provide almost double the day's range to 130km at 8.5km/hr. The hydrogen reservoir will be 740kg at a pressure of 500bar (500 times atmospheric pressure) in six tanks. Solar panels also provide 2.5kw of power. (500bar might seem a lot, but a large ground excavator's hydraulics can run up to 1000bar). With a maximum speed of 10km/hr it cannot be licensed for the sometimes swift River Rhine as 13km/hr capability is mandatory.

John Spencer from CBOA member GPS Marine informs us that his company is looking at 3 initiatives on emissions reduction using a catalytic convertor and exhaust emissions filter (either/or/both), and hydrogen treated vegetable oil (Green D+) as a drop in replacement for gas oil. See page 14 for a full report.

iRecycle in London are also looking at reducing emission to zero with their vessels.

A shipping investment company, Rhenus-Arkon-ShipinvestGmbH has ordered four 90m diesel-electric hybrid coaster vessels with catalytic convertors and gas after treatment units.

The Dutch company Portliner have developed two vessels, 52m and 110m length to use Vanadium Renox Flow Batteries (VRFB), which looks like it is the first fully electric freight barge. They say that hydrogen still needs a good number years before it becomes technically and financially feasible for inland navigation. Also from safety viewpoint a lot of progress needs to be made (high pressure, up to 700 bar). Their proposal for zero emission propulsion is to use the VRFB which has competitive operational efficiency and investment cost. It does not overheat (thermal runaway – a term for heating which causes increase in further heating) causing fire/smoke risk as can lithium-ion batteries when under heavy current drain and VRFBs can be scaled up by using larger electrolyte tanks with increasing cost efficiency. With VRFBs the electrical energy is stored in a liquid electrolyte at atmospheric pressure and temperature. The electrolyte is fed into fuel cells to provide electric power for propulsion motors, the 'spent' electrolyte then saved for subsequent re-charging. Almost no degradation with the electrolyte occurs they say, with almost indefinite re-use. The vanadium electrolyte is non flammable and the fuel cells can be discharged completely without damage, unlike lithium-ion which can be damaged, and VRFBs are unaffected by operational or charging temperature. Lithium-ion are not easily recyclable; VRFBs are, the vanadium being extractable and possible other components. A 20 year life cycle is projected for VRFBs they say. Sounds like everyone should have one.

British Ports Association report on 'cold ironing'

Recent research shows that there has been no shore to ship electricity installations (cold ironing) without public funding or subsidy. This is to reduce emissions when berthed. Reasons given are high capital costs, high UK electricity cost compared to cheap marine fuel and a lack of consistent demand. Several recommendations have been made for the DfT, HM treasury and the industry to engage with the recommendations that have been put forward.

New CBOA London operator member - S Walsh & Sons

CBOA is pleased to announce that another large barge operator in London has joined membership of CBOA. S Walsh & Sons of Rainham operate mainly on the Thames and have a fleet of 5 tugs and 15 barges with a carrying capacity varying between 500 tonnes and 1,500 tonnes. The company recently placed an order for a new pusher tug which is being built in Holland. One of their major current contracts is taking tunnel spoil away from the Eastern end of the Thames Tideway Tunnel. (Other CBOA Members cover the western and central sections). The firm takes the spoil to land raising/landfill sites at Rainham, Mucking and Pitsea.

S Walsh & Sons became part of the GRS Group in 2017. Based in Nuneaton, Warwickshire, GRS are one of the country's largest traders and transporters of construction aggregates, building products and waste materials.

S Walsh also use lorries and rail and handle about 3m tonnes a year. S Walsh says "Our barge fleet enables us to move large volumes in and out of London in single trips. This means customers can be sure that their logistics are carried out as efficiently and as sustainably as possible."

UK Ports Conference 24th-25th November 2020

The 12th Annual UK Ports Conference will be held at the Marriott Hotel Regents Park, London. CBOA members can receive a 10% discount using the code 404CBOA. **Please note that this is a revised date due to COVID-19 situation.**

The UK Ports conference will provide you with complete insight on the biggest challenges facing the industry and explore how the sector can respond. Attend to hear opportunities for ports and how to deliver port development and infrastructure to support these and secure growth. Join ports industry leaders to take away the latest insight on trade patterns and the implications for ports, understand how to improve air quality and improve port connectivity. Across the two days ports will share their plans for development and you will also receive guidance on how to plan for and deliver port infrastructure.

Benefits of attending:

- Receive the latest trade and shipping updates and explore how ports can respond
- Explore how to reduce emissions and improve air quality at ports
- Hear how to plan for, and deliver, port development – including considering master planning, asset management and new technologies
- Consider how to improve port connectivity and receive the latest updates on plans for updating national infrastructure
- Discuss the implications of Brexit and how the port sector can be prepared
- Understand how to plan for long term port improvements including the latest updates on planned investment from ports
- 6+ hours of networking with senior port professionals.

To find out more about the event see <https://bit.ly/2WLIjJy>

You can register for this event online, via email conference@thewaterfront.co.uk or by calling 0207 067 1597 – save 15% or more on group bookings!

Red diesel Consultation – CBOA calls for equal treatment with rail

The Commercial Boat Operators Association has submitted its response to the Government's Consultation about increasing fuel duty for non-road activities, as proposed and subject to consultation in last March's Budget. The Government's objective is to encourage some businesses (e.g. those using construction machinery) to stop using red diesel and so reduce air pollution.

CBOA is dismayed that it is proposed that water freight should be treated differently from rail freight. The Government proposes to exempt rail freight from the fuel duty as it fears the resultant costs increase would drive traffic onto roads – the opposite of what the Government wishes. Ports and docks will also be affected, increasing their costs also.

Said David Lowe, CBOA Chairman: "The reasons why rail freight should be exempted from the fuel duty are just as valid for the barge industry. I am amazed the Government did not realise that. Since the Budget announcement, we have engaged in talks with Treasury officials. We have now submitted our formal response to the Government's consultation and hope our arguments carry the day. We do not want the Government to pour cold water on the barge industry."

David continued: "At a time when we are seeing signs of a revival in barge use – viz more construction related traffic in London and a new Hull/Leeds service taking sea-dredged aggregates – this is not the time to hit the industry with extra costs." The proposed fuel duty increase from 11p a litre to 58p a litre would be an increase of over 400%. The impact on operating costs varies per vessel but would be between 5-15%. In an industry with low profit margins, these costs would have to be passed on. This could well result in customers deciding to move to road – which would be a classic example of the "law of unintended consequences."

The barge industry would be affected in various ways. Those operating on inland waterways would have to pay the whole increased fuel duty. Those operating on tidal waters would continue to enjoy the Maritime Voyages 100% Relief. However, both groups would suffer from an increase in VAT from 5% (on red diesel) to 20% (on white diesel). Although recoverable, business would have to find the cash to pay the extra VAT before they got it back. In one case, this could be as much as £102,000 per quarter. This problem would evaporate if the CBOA's call for equal treatment with rail – exemption – is met.

"The barge industry is not resting on its environmental credentials," said David. "Some of our Members are fitting more efficient engines and using hydrogen treated vegetable oil (Green D+) as a replacement for red diesel. This reduces overall emissions by about 86% and much reduces the carbon output per litre of fuel used."

The CBOA is particularly concerned about the potential impact on the working narrow boats in the Midlands (and elsewhere) who supply domestic fuel and other products to those living in boats or near a waterway. They face an increase in fuel costs from 55p per litre with the existing fuel duty to 102p per litre with the new duty – an 85% increase.

Profile: The 23 years of Wood, Hall & Heward Ltd – as seen through the eyes of Gerry Heward

I blame Tim Wood. It was his phone call in 1995 that set the whole thing off.

We had both worked for Tam & Di Murrell on the canal in London for many years from the late 1970s through the 1980s. Towards the end of the 80s I decided to leave the boating world and study for an MBA at Henley Management College, now Henley Business School. I completed my MBA at the end of 1989 and started working for a small software company in London. Transition successfully completed I thought – until that call in 1995.

It's strange how time distorts reality.

"Gerry, its Tim" – "oh hi how are you?" – "very well, how are you?" – "I'm OK thanks" – or something along those lines.

"There might be an opportunity to acquire a couple of ex BW workflats on the river in Staines, do you think it's worthwhile?" - **first major mistake** - "Yes, sounds like a good idea to me". – **not** – "you've got to be joking, having spent 10 years up to my neck in dirt, diesel and oil in cold wet places I've now got a respectable job selling software to major telecoms companies".

And a weekend, not long after that phone call, finds the two of us in the river with pumps, plywood & plastic pumping up two sunk workflats off the river bed at the back of an island in Staines.

So we are now the proud owners of two workflats. And the plan is? Well we don't really have a plan – so much for the MBA! We've satisfied ourselves that our skills for raising sunk boats is still intact and in good shape.



Tim by this time had established a workshop at Springwell Farm in Harefield, owned by Charles Hall. So we managed to secure a tow down river from a passing narrow boat to Brentford and locked our newly acquired workflats through Thames Lock and the Gauging Lock in Brentford onto the Grand Union and headed for Harefield.

Initially we did not really intend to be involved directly with the canal but were more interested in looking at more unusual engineering projects where we could exploit Tim's engineering skills & expertise. And so the Tailored Engineering Partnership was formed.

By 1997 Charles Hall was taking an interest in the projects Tim & I were working on and suggested we formed a limited company and so Wood, Hall & Heward Ltd was established on 8th May 1997 – Tailored Engineering already existed as a limited company.

At about the same time a major new infrastructure project started installing optic fibre cables under the towpath around the UK. Towards the end of the 1990's large construction companies that had their own in-house marine divisions started to dispose of these functions. The bigger navigation authorities such as British Waterways and The Environment Agency started to reduce their own in-house maintenance capability and contract out maintenance and repair work to third party contractors.

These changes resulted in contractors coming onto the inland waterways with little or no knowledge of the navigations. Their approach tended to be to try and use their road based equipment in the normal way only to find access was often difficult to impossible and that this approach tended to damage the waterway environment which was unacceptable.

This presented an opportunity for a company to offer a 'floating plant hire' service and so Wood, Hall & Heward Ltd focused on providing floating plant and equipment in the form of workboats, barges, tugs, pontoons etc. together with competent boat skippers to companies carrying out maintenance and infrastructure work on London's canals & rivers. This also helped WHH Ltd maintain a fleet of craft in working condition should a commercial freight opportunity emerge in the London area.

Over the years we have acquired more craft, taking advantage of our engineering expertise to repair, refurbish and adapt or modify craft to suit the needs of contractors working on the inland waterways. Our operational knowledge, experience and reputation have secured a steady flow of business for the last twenty years.



In broad terms the company provides workboats and operators to Infrastructure Maintenance companies, Construction & development companies and Navigation Authorities & their contractors. Typical examples of the types of projects we are involved with for CRT are lock gate replacement, towpath renewal and bank protection. For our Construction & Development customers we are involved with construction work, repair, maintenance and refurbishment of waterside residential and business premises and associated plant and infrastructure. On the infrastructure maintenance side we are involved with rail and road bridge repair and maintenance, high voltage cable repair and maintenance, optic fibre cable installation and Bazalgette's Northern Outfall Sewer.

Of all the various modifications and adaptations we have made to our craft over the years we have found that mounting hiab cranes on our barges has been very popular with our customers and opened up new opportunities for our craft. Having started, a few years ago, with one 3 tonne Viper hiab we now operate 10 hiabs from 3 tonne to 37 tonne. Initially we mimicked the 8 wheeler grab lorry by mounting a hiab in the middle of a barge for muck away etc. However we soon discovered that being able to lift things was in great demand and our bigger cranes have lifted lock gates, bridges, trees, telegraph poles, cars etc.

All our boats are road transportable which means we can operate all over the UK and we have undertaken work in Kent, Somerset, the Leeds & Liverpool Canal and also Scotland.

As Health & Safety regulations become stricter the provision of adequate site welfare has become more important. We operate 5 shallow drafted, shallow sided, open pontoons which are capable of carrying standard welfare facilities, drying rooms, decontamination units and office units. These welfare pontoons allow us to move standard container sized units along the canal and through the bridges and tunnels easily.

We have found the Bantam tugs, originally built by Jones at Brentford, to be very reliable, simple and easy to maintain and very versatile in operation. Having started with one Bantam tug many years ago (see picture of *Scouser*) we now have 6 operational Bantams and a further 3 waiting to be refurbished. We have also built 3 min-tugs (14' by 7') with a fourth under construction as these too have proved very versatile in handling big barges and easy to road transport to other sites.



Bantam Scouser and Dutch barge arriving at Kings Place, London with construction materials.

Over the last 20 years or so we have seen a number of changes on the canal network, particularly in the London area. Perhaps the most noticeable is the amount of regeneration and redevelopment that has taken place along the canal. Some of these projects we have been involved with, either moving materials to site or construction waste away for disposal. The result of these developments, however, has slowly but surely reduced the number of places where we can load and unload barges.

This is becoming a major issue for WHH Ltd as barge operators on the canal. Despite Government rhetoric and both central Government and GLA policies to encourage greater use of both rail and water for freight transport there is little evidence of these policies being implemented on the canal.

We continue to struggle to convince local borough council's planning departments and transport departments of the benefits of retaining access to the canal to reduce the burden on the road network. Similarly we have had little success in convincing developers to retain access to the canal once the development is complete.



Having said that, after the events of 2008, we are now beginning to see a return of canal side developments in the London area. I am pleased to report that a number of these developments in west London have used the canal for the delivery of materials and the removal of construction waste for disposal. And so a steady stream of business continues for Wood, Hall & Heward Ltd despite some of the obstacles we have to negotiate along the way.

Loaded EA pan at Little Venice. (All photos courtesy Gerry Heward/WHH Ltd)

Committee Profiles – David Lowe

At a meeting earlier in the year it was decided that committee members should be invited to submit their profiles. This is something many organisations do to provide some visibility of committee members.

So, we start this off with our Chairman, David Lowe:

David's interest in waterways was aroused by towpath walks with the family from an early age, followed by hire boat holidays from around 1960. In 1971, following a successful musical career in London, David started a pleasure and freight boat business (Apollo Canal Carriers Ltd) purchasing his first freight barge in 1972. He owned, operated, or managed a number of freight craft and was soon acting as an agent for water freight businesses. Some 10,000 tonnes a week of freight was moved on the northern and east midlands waterways directly or indirectly through David's efforts. This was in addition to operating up to three passenger and restaurant boats (including a pioneering waterbus service) on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, and a boatyard with moorings and boat building. In the 1980s David became a director of Water-Link Ltd which operated a tug and a fleet of former British Waterways dumb barges and in association with directors of this company and colleagues subsequently formed the present Humber Barges Ltd which owns two 500 tonne barges and is based in Wakefield.

The Inland Waterways Association awarded David the Bulkley-Johnson Salt for 'an outstanding contribution to the furtherance of commercial waterway transport' on two occasions, the Alfred Ritchie Cockerel for the best working boat at the 1981 National Rally, and more recently the Richard Bird Medal for his efforts and support which were considered to have brought significant benefit to the Association over a sustained period.

David joined the then Commercial Narrow Boat Operators Association and was soon appointed to its committee to represent the northern region of the enlarged body to be known (from 1999) as the Commercial Boat Operators Association. He served as Secretary from 2007 and Chairman from 2012 of the Association sitting on a number of waterway groups. David is licensed by the MCA as a Boatmaster (freight and passenger), and is a member of the Canal & River Trust's Freight Steering Group, the dredging and stoppage sub-groups, and a past member of its Yorkshire & North East Advisory Board. Following a parallel career in the railway industry, rising to a senior level, he now offers rail and waterway consultancy and continues his musical interests.



David with his 62' short boat Wye at Greenberfield locks in April 1973 carrying steel from Leeds to Liverpool which was first load over the L&L summit since 1965. The bobble hat was his trademark (David Lowe)

Regional News

AIL at Keadby

A Siemens part for the power station at Keadby, Stainforth and Keadby Canal, being transhipped at the old Railway Wharf, Keadby in June. The 155t transformer, originating in Korea had been transhipped at Goole.

Another similar load was taken up the Trent to Cottam Power station, above Gainsborough.



(ALE Heavylift Ltd)

Boston Energy Facility to use water transport

A proposal to build a new energy from waste facility on the Riverside Industrial Estate, next to The Haven, south of Boston has included plans to use water transport according to the consultation literature. Originally the plan was to use road transport; this was then changed to using an onsite batching plant for aggregate using delivery by ship/barge wherever possible. Consequently a wharf has to be built at an early stage to accept the anticipated 132 shipments of aggregate. Potentially thousands of lorry movements would be removed from the roads as a result of using water transport.

The refuse derived fuel (RDF) will also use water transport for delivery to site, as will removal of the resultant ash for use in the construction industry. The site will generate 102 megawatt, 80 MW to be supplied to the national grid; the balance of the power generated will be used on site including that needed for carbon capture.

Cory gets Riverside Energy Park grant

In April the Secretary of State granted development consent for Cory's London Riverside Energy Park proposal. Cory says that there is a 'significant capacity gap in its [London] ability to dispose of and treat all of its waste' with over two million tonnes of London's waste is currently either landfilled or sent overseas.

Cory plan to use a variety of green technologies which will expand its capability to supply low carbon renewable fuel to London homes and businesses. Using energy recovery, solar, anaerobic digestion, battery storage and combined heat and power infrastructure will provide this. Cory will also be able to treat 805,000 tonnes of what is currently non-recyclable waste, minimising use of lorries and also landfill; this will produce up to 96MW of low carbon renewable electricity. Cory extensively use barge transport for waste shipment, the service will be expanded for the Riverside Energy Park. The project will create at least 75 new jobs with apprenticeship opportunities in engineering, river logistics and business management throughout the development.

COVID-19 up-trends

Although in the main life as we knew it slowed down or stopped, *Rix Owl* was very busy at the end of March with fuel oils for Bankside, River Hull. This seemed to be due to tanker drivers not working coupled with cheaper prices causing increased demand for tank filling.

The coal boats were continuing their vital supply of fuels (see also page 17). There was a report of an attempt to stop an operator from either working or leaving the boat but this was resolved.

Nelstrops Flour Millers (Stockport) apparently had increased their barge usage and with quicker turnaround times. The trend for baking at home during the lockdown may well have caused some of this extra demand. Meanwhile the River Severn aggregate traffic by CBOA member Thompson River Transport continued unabated.

The oil traffic to Rotherham using member Mainmast's 600 tonne vessel 'Exol Pride' re-started soon after the lockdown ended.

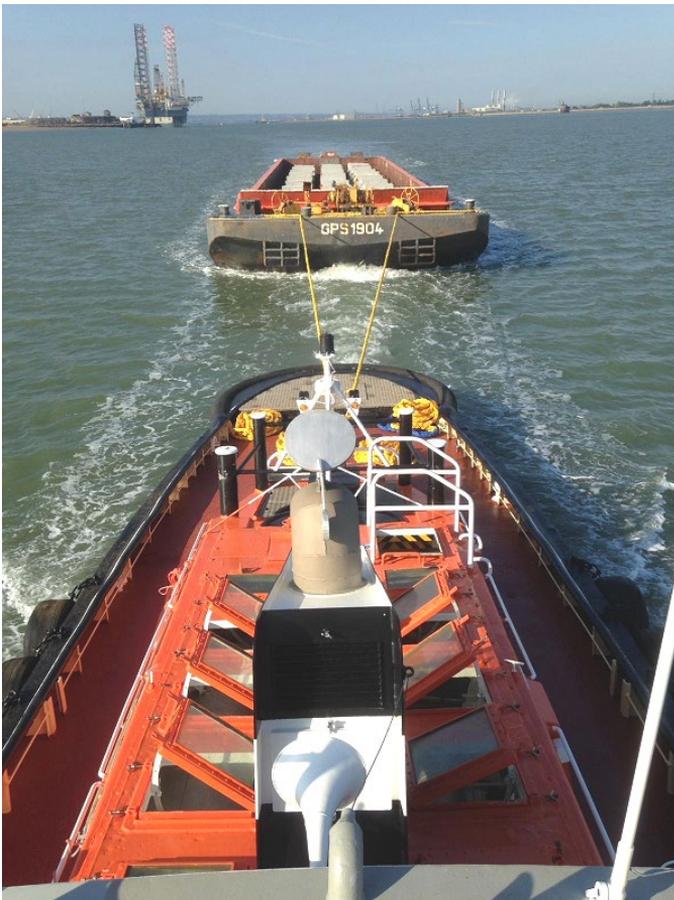
On the Upper Rhine the traffic continued, but proposals were discussed for reducing 24 hour lock operation with the reduction in traffic, notably at night. A comment was made that a benefit would be that crews get more sleep with night closures!

GPS Marine elects for Green D+ in Thames fleet

The following was kindly provided by CBOA member John Spencer, Managing Director of GPS Marine:

GPS Marine operates 14 tugs, 50 dumb barges and two self-propelled tank barges. Most of these vessels operate exclusively on the Thames, where they are engaged on contracts for the transport of construction related goods and the supply of fuel to international shipping and other vessels operating on the Thames and Medway.

In early 2019 GPS Marine started to engage with Port of London Authority (PLA) in connection with its "Clean Air Strategy". At about the same time, through membership of the National Workboat Association, the company also became aware of National Government initiatives in connection with the DfT "Clean Maritime Plan". There followed a period of trying to understand the aims of these plans and the UK's commitment to Net Zero Emissions by 2050. It became obvious at a very early stage that the



GPS Vincia at full power on Green D+ with no visible exhaust (GPS)

technology to achieve net zero emissions in the maritime sector is at an embryonic stage and that where such technology exists, it is unaffordable, largely untried, potentially unreliable and it is not supported by the necessary port infrastructure. As a business that counts sustainability as a primary marketing tool, GPS Marine's board decided to commit the business to understanding what is currently possible in terms of improving environmental performance and to trial the available technologies with a view to early adoption of the most promising and viable technologies.

The options (short of re-engining the fleet) were to trial retrofitting of catalytic reduction (CRT), selective catalytic reduction (SCRT), diesel particulate filters (DPF) and alternative fuels. A grant was obtained from Cross River Partnerships to assist with the manufacture of an SCRT system which will be installed in the tug GPS *Anglia* (1,200 bhp), whilst the Tideway Project provided a CRT and DPF system that will be installed in the GPS *Ionia* (600 bhp). The total cost of these systems including installation is put at £150,000 and £70,000 respectively. Clearly, cost would be a significant factor in retrofitting these systems in 14 vessels, and even with the main engines so equipped, exhaust emissions from auxiliary engines will remain untreated.

Research into biofuels revealed that there are two basic types of biofuel that can be used in diesel engines, these are fatty acid methyl ester (FAME) fuel and hydrogen treated vegetable oil (HVO). FAME is considered to be a "first generation" biofuel, and is currently added to diesel intended for the inland and road vehicle market. FAME however has several intrinsic problems, amongst them is that it causes degradation of "rubber" hoses, is prone to oxidation and hydrolysis, is prone to premature waxing, increases the NOX content of exhaust gases and, most critically for the marine application, is extremely susceptible to microbial contamination and growth even when small quantities of free water are present in storage tanks. HVO, by contrast is stable and suffers none of the drawbacks of FAME fuel. The hydrogen treatment of vegetable oil produces a product that contains no sulphur and is made up exclusively of linear and branched paraffins which cause the fuel to burn readily and cleanly, the concentration of NOX in exhaust gasses from engines burning HVO is significantly reduced compared with those burning marine diesel. On a molecular level HVO is almost identical to fossil derived "gas to liquid" (GTL) fuel.



The immaculate engine room with polished brass and copper piping in GPS' Vincia (GPS)

Having made the decision about which type of biofuel to use, GPS Marine's superintendents were required to establish whether all HVO fuels are the same and which product to opt for. All HVO fuels mix homogeneously with marine gas oil and can be readily mixed with MGO. HVO is a drop in replacement for gas oil and, therefore, requires no modifications to be made to a vessel's machinery, but not all HVO fuels are the same. GPS Marine decided to use a fuel called Green D+, supplied by Green Biofuels Ltd, which conforms to BS EN 15940, and is standard HVO enhanced by the inclusion of a plant

derived additive system that chemically reduces NOX in exhaust gases to N_2 , whilst oxidizing incomplete products of combustion (HC, PM and CO). Burning Green D+ has been proved to produce the following benefits in terms of emissions: -

- Reduce NOX by approx. 30%
- Reduce particulates by more than 70%
- Reduce green house gas emissions by over 90%
- Assist regeneration processes in exhaust gas treatment systems



Vincia at work (GPS)

Green D+ is 100% plant derived and is therefore a fully sustainable fuel. In fact, the feed stock for Green D+ is exclusively waste vegetable oil and does not contain palm oil. According to UK government statistics, the field to wake carbon footprint of HVO is carbon negative by more than 2.3 KG of CO₂e per litre of fuel burned.

Originally, GPS Marine intended to trial Green D+ in the 460 bhp tug GPS *Illyria*. However, problems associated with obtaining supply by road to coincide with the vessel's itinerary meant that it was never possible to carry out a change over to Green D+.

In order to get a tug changed over to Green D+, it was decided to wait until the life extension refit of the tug GPS *Vincia* was complete so that the new fuel could be used in a vessel whose tanks and fuel systems had been completely cleaned, and whose engines had been completely rebuilt. The added benefit was that because the tug was not in service, it was relatively easy to arrange for her to be bunkered by truck.

Having trialled 100% Green D+ in the GPS *Vincia*, and used blends of HVO and MGO in the GPS *Anglia* and GPS *Racia*, GPS Marine has taken the decision to change the Thames fleet over to run on 100% Green D+. In order to make this a reality, the company purchased its second self-propelled tank barge and is modifying her from a lube oil barge to a bunker barge, exclusively for the supply of Green D+. In 2019, GPS Marine's Thames based fleet consumed in excess of 2.5m litres of marine gas oil and it is primarily to supply its own fleet that the business is introducing the concept of a dedicated 120,000 litre capacity bunker barge to supply Green D+ HVO. An important by-product of GPS Marine's decision to use Green D+ in its own fleet and to provide a barge to deliver it, is that Green D+ will become available as a viable and available alternative to marine gas oil for other vessels and operators on the Thames that want to take a significant positive step towards reducing emissions from their vessels and improving air quality in London.

Terra Marique unloading on the beach

CBOA member Wynn and Sons' Terra Marique demonstrating her capabilities with unloading a 128 tonne electricity transformer on a multi axle trailer running on a laid track way on the beach. The Terra Marique is 80m x 16.5m with a cargo deadweight of 1350 tonnes and is an inland and coastal vessel, specially strengthened for taking the ground for loading and unloading. The transformer was loaded in Rotterdam and destined for National Grid's substation at Trawsfynydd. Terra Marique then refloated and departed on the next high tide.



Wynn and Sons' Terra Marique at Black Rock Sands in North Wales (Wynn and Sons)

She is seen here beached on Black Rock Sands in North Wales. The alternative of using road transport for this AIL movement would have been a much longer road movement to final destination. National Grid was also keen to avoid the disruption that would have been caused through the use of Porthmadog Harbour, the traditional port for access to Trawsfynydd power station and substation.

Wynn's are keen to encourage this method of unloading where wharves are too far away and as a way of reducing the mileage these very heavy loads are required to travel on the road network, reducing hazard, congestion, highway wear and the carbon footprint. Similar operations have been carried out in Hampshire and Pembrokeshire in the last 18 months, taking every care of the environmental considerations in these ecologically sensitive areas being one of Wynn's tenets.

Tideway Tunnel

The construction of the Thames Tideway Tunnel often described as London's 'super sewer' that we have covered in several previous issues of CBOA News, is expected to be completed in 2024. Starting in 2010 with the building of a 16-mile-long tunnel from Acton in West London to Abbey Mills in the east intercepting the existing sewers to prevent millions of tonnes of raw sewage spilling, untreated, into the river every year.

One of Tideway's key construction commitments was to use river transport for material delivery and spoil removal wherever possible, reducing lorry movements considerably. They are achieving at least 90% of its tunnelling material being transported by river instead of by road Tideway says, making for a huge reduction of carbon footprint and reduction of road safety risks and traffic.

What is more, Tideway is confident that in future, its work will influence the way in which businesses consider sustainable options for transporting goods and materials.

In the press

In praise of the coal boats



The Narrow Boat Trust Thames coal run; at Braunston bottom lock after loading at Braunston Marina. CBOA member Nick Wolfe's boat *Aldgate* is seen in the distance below the second lock.

May's issue of *Towpath Telegraph* was full of admiration for the working narrow boats carrying coal, gas and diesel for retail supply. They were able to carry on whilst other suppliers of fuel such as marinas had to close. The coal boats were seen as essential, the magazine said and they are seen as a vital service for live-aboards on their boats.

Working all year round they are the 'ears and eyes' of the waterways the magazine said, also reporting navigational issues where necessary. Good naturedness prevailed, minding those who were vulnerable and even supplying fuel to some who could not pay at the time.

Gale Common ash mountain

The *Yorkshire Post* carried a feature on the 10th June about the contentious nature of the ash at Gale Common beside the Aire and Calder Navigation. CBOA officers have been inputting the North Yorkshire County Council about the planning application from EP UK Investments to extract up to a million tonnes a year of fly ash from the closed coal-fired Eggborough and Ferrybridge C power stations. This ash is stored at Gale Common near Knottingley. Presently EP UK has permission to remove 30,000t annually to be used for making breeze blocks, cement and in road construction.

CBOA, the *Yorkshire Post* reported, is saying that the ash should go by barge to Leeds, Goole and towards Wakefield, Rotherham and Gainsborough where it can be handled there. The local residents say that 260 lorry movements a day could travel on local roads, before going north on the A19 to the M62. CBOA is criticizing the apparent choice of road as the only viable option by the EP UK. Costings should be re-visited for using barges, and evidence is needed to show why they can't use clean green transport says John Dodwell of the CBOA. One 600-tonne barge could take 22 27-tonne HGVs off the roads, while dramatically reducing the amount of carbon dioxide emissions – even fully electric traction does not deal with the other emissions from brakes, tyres etc John said.

Heck Parish Council has also objected with the potential traffic and fumes is recommending "considering using the canal as a greener option." The head of planning services at North Yorkshire County Council is reported as saying that all detail with submissions made will be taken into account before a decision is made.

Towpath Talk in August also carried a similar article in which Chairman David Lowe quoting similar arguments. Recycling the ash is good concept David said, but a green transport solution needs to be thought through properly. "The owner's attitude forces us to ask the planners to make sure we have a discussion which can make a drastic difference to the lives of local people" David was reported as saying.

'Waterways need to regain their original purpose as transport hubs'

So reports Simon Kuper of *The Times* he points out that as a 'remake' is needed in cities and towns after the COVID-19 outbreak; the need is now to return the waterways to service. Sadly many urban waterways are now play spaces or have become waterfront apartments or 'hipster' restaurants.

In order to reclaim the streets from cars and lorries, administrations must shift more traffic back to the waterways, but silently and cleanly this time using electric propulsion. He agrees that water transport is slow, but so are lorries when stuck in traffic! The worldwide annual ferry transport is 2.1 billion passengers with London planning to double its annual passenger total to 20 million by 2035. Agreeing that this may now be offset with home working settling in, however the demand for goods deliveries is steadily increasing, requiring more transport.

Similar thoughts about the current and potential use of waterways were voiced in a podcast by Sean Thorne, the radio presenter of *Fun Kids Live*, acknowledging that we "...have more than 2,000 miles of river based commercial navigations and canals" and "...freight vessels continue to carry cargo safely and unobtrusively on some of them. He quoted that one 600 barge can move the equivalent of twenty-four 24 tonne lorry loads, with lower emissions, noise and visually unobtrusive – "a powerful combination of the environmentally friendly and the socially acceptable" he said.

Waterways World feature freight

May's edition of *Waterways World* carried photos and text on three carrying traffics. The first was CBOA member Mainmast with the *Exol Pride* carrying oil on the Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation when the traffic re-started, (featured in CBOA News Issue 19, Autumn/Winter 2016). The second was the York contract restoring the Guildhall (featured in the previous issue of CBOA News). The third was the announcement of the carriage sea dredged sand from Goole to Leeds by CBOA member Branford's, featured on the front cover of this issue.

Overseas News Battery leasing available

The Port of Rotterdam has announced that the Company ZES has introduced leased exchangeable container batteries for inland vessels. Ultimately 20 charging stations will be introduced to form a national grid. An inland vessel can travel some 50 to 100 km on two charged ZES-Packs, initially focussing on container inland vessels. The ship *De Alphenaar* will be the first this year to use ZES-Packs carrying beer from the Heineken brewery in Alphen aan de Rijn to the port of Moerdijk. Carbon emissions can be reduced by 1,000 tonnes per year without any NOX particle emissions. With over 1/3 of all goods and 80% of bulk transportation taking place in the Netherlands via inland waterways this is a significant advance towards decarbonisation used with all inland shipping.

By 2030, the company expects that around 150 inland vessels will be powered by the new battery containers.

Future of Biogas Europe 2020 Summit

To be held on the 11th & 12th of November 2020 in Berlin, this 2 day event will provide a forum for all parties active in the field of anaerobic digestion of organic matter and renewable energy production in the form of biogas. Key topics will be Market Overview, Upscaling Biogas Production Through Cost Effective Methods, Decarbonising the Grid: The Use of Biogas as a Greener Alternative, Boosting the Integration of Biogas Into the Transport Sector, Promoting the Benefits of Biogas Production in the Agricultural Sector, Applying Strategies for Feedstock and Sustainability, European Regulation in Biogas, Successfully Achieving the Methanation Process, Discussing and Applying New Technological Advancements in the Industry.

Bonn & Mees unload big boats

These 3 inland vessels, 135m x 22.8m are being lifted from a ship in Waalhaven that had sailed across the Arctic Ocean as a shorter route from China, to be fitted out by various shipyards locally.



(Port of Rotterdam)

C-MAT online maritime courses

C-MAT, the Centre for Maritime & Air Transport Management at the University of Antwerp is offering online courses covering Maritime Supply Chains. The University appears to aim at economics and business management and not navigation training.

CESNI engine noise standards

The European committee for drawing up standards in the field of inland navigation (CESNI) last year requested information from operators about noise and vibration from vessels. A report has now been produced listing 132 vessels of various types and also includes archived information from inspection bodies. The report moots whether noise levels should be reduced by 5dBA for new builds from the current specified limits.

CBOA for Members

MSRS update

A recent change in the Modal Shift Revenue Support (MSRS) scheme is to increase the value of removing HGV journeys from the roads and therefore to increase the potential MSRS grant available. However there is an anomaly in that lorry miles removed from motorways (other than those that are congested) have a *minus* value (albeit very small). This is said to be because the MSRS values are principally calculated with modal shift to rail in mind – and that more freight trains on the railways means fewer paths for passenger trains.

This is not a problem for the inland waterways so we hope that the value for water freight will be changed to a plus amount. These DfT grants are paid towards running costs where the cost by water (or rail) is greater than by road, but cannot be used to make the alternative mode cheaper than road haulage! Sadly in England, currently there are no grants available towards capital costs such as wharves, handling equipment, or barges, but we are hopeful this may change. We have members who specialise in MSRS so please do consult us if you want guidance or more information on these water freight grants.

MCA ML5 Medicals

Members will recall that some time ago CBOA arranged Nationwide Medicals to provide ML5 medical examinations for the MCA Boatmaster Licence at a lower cost than that generally charged by GPs. We have been approached by another provider, Just-Health, which is willing to offer the same examination at a reduced cost from the norm. For further details visit www.just-health.co.uk/seafarers-medical-ml5 or call them on 01282 936900. They appear to have several clinics in the north east and west, and some in the midlands and south east.

Please remember that the CBOA is not recommending either provider and members should not take this information as an endorsement.

Renewal of Boatmaster Licences.

Because of COVID-19 and despite an extension of BMLs until 30th September some members may have ended up with less than the required 50 days of service in five years to enable re-validation of the licence.

The Maritime & Coastguard Agency has been very helpful, and hidden away in the regulations is an opportunity in this instance to be re-validated either by a simple re-assessment (which can be by telephone) or by attending a course or courses depending on individual circumstances. The local MCA office should be consulted for advice.

Hammersmith bridge indefinite closure

The Port of London Authority (PLA) has issued notice that 133 year old Hammersmith Bridge on the River Thames is closed until further notice to all navigation, thus severing Thames into two. Further more serious cracks appeared in the cast iron supports after the summer heat wave, with the possible risk of collapse it is thought. Whilst road traffic had been stopped last year, foot passengers are now not allowed to cross either; a temporary ferry or foot bridge may be put in for them. It is not known when navigation may again be permitted. Although there is probably no regular freight under the bridge, the passenger services in that reach have been stopped.

Smaller craft still have the Grand Union and Regents canals for access between London and the middle Thames.



CBOA NEWS

Views expressed are not necessarily those of CBOA.

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Advisory Services

72 Grandison Road, London,
SW11 6LN

We are one of the leading authorities on moving goods off the road and on to water. Our clients and contacts include industry, national, regional and local government.

Water freight can be cheaper than road, it beats urban congestion and is the most environmentally friendly means of bulk transport.

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