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Leeds champions use of wharves

A change in council control has not changed the commitment of Leeds City Council to protect vital wharves. Councillor Richard Lewis, executive member for development and regeneration in the now Labour-controlled council, is working with CBOA and Network Rail on plans for protecting wharves and railway sidings announced earlier in the year.

Cllr Lewis told CBOA News: "The council is working with the owners of sites and interested parties to ensure any development is appropriate, and although not all sites may be suitable for longer-term use as freight depots it is hoped that where possible these may be retained. It is hoped protection for these wharves and sidings will

continue into the final proposals due later this year."

A consultation on the council's proposed Natural Resources and Waste Local Development Framework received an overwhelming level of support for protecting canal wharves. A single barge can carry up to 750 tonnes of goods, taking 35 lorries off the roads, reducing the impact on the environment.

Making the earlier announcement the then leader and executive board member for development of the then Conservative-controlled council, Andrew Carter, said they believed it "vital" to preserve wharves that could be used by companies to bring goods into and export waste out of

the city. The council proposed giving canal wharves and railway sidings protection under planning regulation to protect them from "inappropriate" developments.

Traditionally there has not been sufficient protection for sites adjacent to the canal and rail sidings and as a result they have been lost to 'higher value' uses such as housing.

Since that announcement Leeds city planners have invited CBOA and the British Waterways property team to discuss safeguarding sites. CBOA emphasised that wharves need to be safeguarded so barges can unload and hope protection for the wharves will become a reality.

Having a whale of a time

This is the huge whale skeleton that was found when Bay Wharf at Greenwich was being excavated. It's a rare North Atlantic right whale weighing around half a tonne, seven metres long and up to 4m wide.

Says Tim Bradley, project manager at Pre-Construct Archaeology: "When the archaeologist on site phoned to say he had found a whale I thought he was joking!"

After going on show at the museum of London it is being taken to its new home at the Natural History Museum.



Tracey Heath, curator at the natural History Museum surrounded by the bones

From the chairman



The news that the waterways run by British Waterways are to be handed over to a charitable trust comes as no surprise, giving the amount of speculation on the subject. The talk of engaging with users/stakeholders

is real enough and CBOA has been much involved. Much detail needs to be worked out. This not only includes how the new entity is to be governed (with talk of a council derived from users etc) but also the nature and length of the suggested long term contract with Government which will replace the annual grant. In essence, I draw comfort from the idea of a 10-15 year contract replacing the annual uncertainty of what the grant will be. Sensible long term maintenance planning becomes a possibility – whether that is by a charity or BW matters less to me than whether it actually gets done. However, there is also mention of altering the commercial waterways. Details are sparse and we shall be on our guard against anything adverse.

In our reply to the last Government's draft policy Waterways for Everyone, we acknowledged the need periodically to review the list of commercial waterways but stressed the need to guard against an assumption that just because a waterway was not being used, then it had no future. We used the Severn as an example, where our members Thompsons River Transport (see Profile) restarted traffic after a 10 years gap.

Page 11 reports that we have asked for a meeting with the new Shipping Minister and that he has agreed to meet us. We understand that congestion solving is top of his list – after spending cuts, of course. The aim will be to talk about all the UK's waterways – BW's account for a small fraction of the total tonnage.

The Magnificent Seven

In a first for very many years, seven narrow boats loaded 110te of small stone/gravel at Paddington basin on July 5 for delivery to A & R Rothen and Sons of Atherstone, writes Richard Horne. The operation was part of the contract for Rothens to remove stone placed in the basin to protect the old wall from movement while building took place.

The stone then had to be removed. Paddington basin is unusual in that the bottom was not puddle: it was originally brick lined because there was no towpath and horse boats were shafted out of the basin using

the boats' long shafts against the bottom.

Once Rothen's had dredged the basin bottom with a grab and loaded the boats they set off for their first night's stop at Cowley. There the boats re-grouped after separating some distance in the long Cowley pound from Little Venice. The following overnight stops were Northchurch, Soulbury, Stoke Bruerne and Rugby, all arriving on time at Mancetter near Atherstone on Sunday 11 July.

Unloading was by using the grab of a grab-lorry into a farm tractor and

trailer for a short run local delivery. Being the biggest boat (high sided), *Victoria*, a GU Royalty class motor, looked the least loaded but was in fact the deepest drafted, being loaded the most. With the water levels slightly down on both the Northern Oxford and Coventry canals, we were all dragging the bottom in places and *Victoria* needed to be 'snatched' sometimes to get over obstructions.

It was a pity that operators did not know beforehand of the stone requirement at Paddington: the stone could have been loaded at Denham direct from the pit and taken to Paddington by boat to avoid lorry transport, thus relieving road congestion in London.

The other boats were: *Archimedes* and *Ara* (GU Star class motor and butty), *Themis* and *Callisto* (both GU Woolwich Star class motors) and *Arundel* and *Joe - BCN108* (2003 built Northwich pattern motor and *BCN* joey boat).



The Magnificent Seven at Paddington Basin.

What the change to low sulphur gasoil means

Changes in regulations to reduce pollution from all forms of transport will affect all inland waterways craft from the end of this year, writes CBOA treasurer Pete Hugman.

EC regulations will bring all inland waterways craft and indeed all 'non road mobile machinery' in line with the fuel regulations for road vehicles. From 1 January 2011 all gasoil supplied to inland waterways vessels will contain a maximum of 10 parts per million of sulphur, currently 1000ppm. This has been the standard for several years for road diesel.

CBOA have been active in checking the facts and have been involved with discussions with the DfT and fuel suppliers. The good news is that as this type of fuel has already been used by lorries and buses for several years all the initial minor problems have been ironed out. The introduction of low sulphur fuel could have been expected to cause some problems with lubrication of fuel pumps and valve guides, but due to the extra 'lubricants' added to these fuels this is no longer expected to be a problem.

However it is extremely important that only fuel fully compliant with EN590 or BS 2869 A2 standards is used: the old standby of using cheap imported 'Russian' fuel could well lead to problems in the long term.

There are exceptions for vessels inland that go to sea but it is not yet clear where the limit will be. More information will be available before the regulations come into force.

Bio-fuel complication

The complication will be the possibility of gas oil containing bio-fuel being supplied from January 1 next year. Current gasoil does not

contain any bio-fuel and there is no requirement for its inclusion in the new regulations. The complication arises due to the ways low sulphur gasoil can be produced. It may be a specifically refined low sulphur gas oil with a minimal bio fuel content or road diesel with red dye added, the latter will then contain 5 - 7% bio fuel.

It will not be possible to identify which of these options you are being supplied with and it may well alter from week to week.

The bio-fuel element will have three effects:

- In the short term it may lead to a reduction in the life of existing rubber components in contact with the fuel, such as oil seals and flexible hoses
- Over a longer term fittings and pipework containing copper, tin and lead may deteriorate and will speed up the breakdown of the bio fuel
- A significantly increased incidence of bacteria growth in all fuel tanks both on the vessels and at storage facilities.

Since it will not be possible to

identify which fuel you are using it is strongly recommended that you implement an uprated good housekeeping regime for your fuel system. This should include

- Regular checks on all components to identify any developing fuel leaks before they become a problem
- Replace suspect fittings, particularly copper pipework and fittings during regular maintenance (copper seals are not affected)
- Inspect and clean all fuel filters at a regular and initially short interval
- Clean all water and contaminants from the inside of fuel tanks and ensure they do not build up
- Do not allow fuel to stand in any tank for longer than 6 months. If this is likely to occur you are advised to seek further advice and the use of a fuel additive may help

Further information can be found at:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/environment/off-road-equipment/pdf/offroad.pdf>

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/environment/fuel-quality-directive/pdf/fuelquality.pdf>

<http://www.ivr.nl/fileupload/publications/low sulphur/IVR-LOW%20SULPHUR%20FUEL%20IN%20INLAND%20SHIPPING%201-1-2011-UK.pdf>

The CBOA believe that this advice is correct but cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions.



A John Whitaker tanker making its second journey to the Fleet (near Leeds) oil delivery. Rix petroleum stopped deliveries to Fleet in March this year and Whitakers have taken up the contract, making two trips a week. Photo courtesy Malcolm Slater

Press watch

Union Transport is taking delivery of three new ships this year to deliver steel from mills in Belgium to ports on the east coast of Britain according to **Coastal Shipping**. The company has been transporting steel for some 25 years and the ships have been built in consultation with Arcelor Mittal. One of the features is a strengthened bottom to meet the demand for loading and discharging aground in UK ports, where there is a considerable tidal range.

Union Gold, Union Silver and Union Bronze are fully fitted for trade on the Rhine and inland ports including Liege, Paris, Thionville and Lyon. This new class of fleet emphasises the trading advantages of sea/river navigation.

Cory's four new purpose-built tugs is "nothing short of a major event" **Maritime Journal** reported. Named *Recovery, Resource, Redoubt* and



Reclaim (seen here passing under Tower Bridge) they are the first new tugs to be built for the business in more than 10 years. With their extremely low air draft – 4.3m - and low water draft they are designed to handle heavy barges in the tideway. They have a maximum draft of 2m when pulling loaded barges.

BBC Look North carried an interview with CBOA secretary David Lowe who explained why the Leeds wharves need to be safeguarded (see also story p1). He said barges can reduce both congestion and

pollution. So wharves rather than houses needed to be waterside.

Residents of a new development at Chesterton who feared that expanding a boathouse would turn their neighbourhood into a building site said if it did go ahead, they wanted the 'vast majority' of building material to be delivered by barge, according to **Cambridge News**.

The gravel run to Atherstone (see p2) attracted the attention of Del Brenner. Writing in **Narrowboat World** he said "The construction carbon footprint of this development... could have been reduced by 75% if only someone had thought of using the waterway which is only a few feet away from the site... It is nice to see Paddington Basin again being used for what it was built for, and being of practical use rather than relegated as a decorative pond for property development."

Removals and Storage contacted CBOA chairman John Dodwell for their piece on *Torrent* taking ash from Drax power station on a trial run and delivering it across the sea to Waterford. Each journey would take up to 40 lorries off the road. (CBOA News Spring issue). They quoted him saying there were nine inland wharves and docks in Yorkshire and the Trent valley where ships can load pulverised fuel ash.

A new magazine, **Logistics Connect**, carries a couple of stories about the potential for freight on inland waterways. In the first they ask if freight will return to the Norfolk Broads with Capita Symonds carrying out a feasibility study into the movement of raw cane sugar from Great Yarmouth to British Sugar's factory at Cantley. They looked at both waterway and rail options: rail involved very

high capital costs. The company is carrying out further work on the waterway option.

A piece on modal shift merited a double page spread in the magazine. It featured an interview with Freight by Water's executive director Peter Ward, giving him a platform to spell out the potential of water freight. He said the challenge for the water freight industry is that it is a very fragmented industry of ports and operators. The **Financial Times** has followed the debate around BW being taken out of state control and turned into a charity under plans put forward by its management (see also 'From the chairman', p2). BW chairman Tony Hales told the FT that while they had to be realistic about the outlook for any public spending settlement they were optimistic it would present "real opportunities" to find a new approach for managing Britain's historic canal and river network. The plan was believed to have the support of Caroline Spelman, the Environment Secretary. **Lloyds Loading List** carried a major report on Peel Ports in its Freighting Update. Stephen Carr, the company's head of business development

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Wharves in the news

for the Mersey, said that instead of treating Liverpool as a pure city port, land constrained, they were looking at the port and the Manchester Ship Canal as “a 44-mile waterway from the entrance to the Mersey to the heart of the population”.

He said Peel was not only “aggressively pressing on” with plans for a deepwater river container terminal but had significantly increased the scale of its original plans from a 600,000teu terminal handling 6,000 – 6,000 vessels to a 1mteu a year capacity terminal serving up to 13,000teu vessels.

By mid July barge traffic on the ship canal had already matched the whole of 2009’s volumes.

However Michael Finn, CEO of CSAV Group Agencies (UK), said the cost of a slot on a feeder vessel from the south to Liverpool plus the additional lift costs at both ends would exceed what it cost to rail the box to the north-west. He also said the wharves along the canal would only have value if cargo went into them for storage and repacking. And reducing emissions did not necessarily come from using a feeder ship into Liverpool or barging.

Graham Fraser, CEO of CMA CGM gave the alternative view that Liverpool needed to invest and develop its facilities with the river terminal an obvious and logical enhancement. They operate a weekly west coast feeder with 750teu to 1,600teu vessels linking Le Havre, Liverpool, Belfast and Dublin and offer connections to their French Asia Line. They have been working with Peel to move more loaded volumes onto barges.

Minister backs ‘super-sewer’ plans

Environment secretary Caroline Spelman is supporting plans for a ‘super-sewer’ under London for Thames Water. The Thames Tunnel project will run through 14 London boroughs and reduce the amount of raw sewage discharged into the River Thames - currently occurring some 50 times a year.

A Defra spokesperson says the final decision will be taken by the secretary of state.

Spelman said: “A tunnel continues to offer by far the most cost effective solution to the unacceptable problem of raw sewage being regularly discharged into the Thames. This is a large and complex project and I recognise that it comes at a significant cost.

“I will ensure that Defra and Ofwat continue to scrutinise the costs and options to ensure that Thames Water’s proposals represent proper value for money.”

Thames Water has launched a consultation exercise on the need for the tunnel, the route and the

sites including temporary wharves needed to construct and operate the project.

Blackfriars project

Network Rail is taking more than 2,000 lorry journeys off central London streets by using Thames barges to deliver and remove materials from the Blackfriars station site. They say using the river is a key part of the work to create this new station with entrances on both Bankside and the north bank.

Some 14,000te of material to build the new station including a roof spanning the river will be delivered and 8,000te of material from deck and pier demolition will be removed. Begun as a trial in January the barge operation was developed in consultation with the Port of London Authority, Balfour Beatty and Livett’s Launches (see Profile CBOA News Spring 2010).

PLA chief executive Richard Everitt said moving building materials through the capital’s marine highway instead of London’s crowded roads would result in less poll



Veolia have taken delivery of a new barge to carry waste skips across Southampton Water to Marchwood. Nick MacWhirter’s innovative design for *Seagreen* provides the barge with self loading facilities. CBOA says the ability to load skips – a waste transfer unit in the waste management industry – is a welcome development.

Profile: Graham Thompson



This is the story of a highly successful entrepreneur who started life as a deckhand on coasters, ran a cross channel ferry business, owned 30 vessels of different types, turned his attention to inland waterways where he built up another good business... and a story about what might have been if...

Many years ago when former sea captain Graham Thompson was working on the Severn Navigation he met his wife Maureen. On marrying they moved to Devon where he started a cross-Channel ferry business between Torquay and the Channel Islands and a stevedoring company loading and unloading ships at the port.

They were a success, he sold them in 1991 and a year later he and his wife sailed to Australia to see her sister. There he got his next flash of business inspiration. They sailed down the Murray River on a paddle steamer.

"I knew just the place for one of these," he said, "the Severn Navigation, I felt I owed it something. Because of this river I meet my good wife."

So they returned, he designed and built the paddle steamer Oliver Cromwell and started the UK's first Rhine-style cruise business, on the River Severn. There are now two

of these vessels operating on the Severn.

Meanwhile he was working very closely with BW in the winter months dredging the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal and Gloucester Docks. The work suited his business because it meant the Oliver Cromwell crew could work in summer on the paddle steamers and in winter on the hopper barges, giving them year-round employment.

When in 1995 BW asked him if he was interested in buying the barges to keep on the navigation he said yes.

BW used to take three barges in the morning, go to Gloucester, dredge there with a bucket dredger and take the spoil back to Purton, near Sharpness. They were only getting one-and-a-half bargeloads a day because the crew on the tug pulling the three barges had to get off to drive the dredger. They were basically working only one hour a day.

So Graham Thompson bought six barges, converted three of them to motorised push barges and started Thompson River Transport.

He and his crew pushed the loading rate up to 12 boatloads a day and the costs down from £6 - £7 a tonne to 80 pence. "We saved BW quite a bit of money."

Next step was to work with BW improving facilities on the Severn by building Ashleworth quay because there was "no mooring whatsoever" for pleasure vessels between Hawsbridge and Gloucester. He negotiated with the pub owner and BW, got BW to knock the piles in and the pub to pay for the decking "and I designed the structure and my lads built it, all free of charge".

In 2004 he decided to sell English Holiday Cruises to concentrate on the opportunities he could see opening up for freight on the Severn.

Meanwhile his son John had joined the family firm. He had started working with his father during school holidays, spent five years in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers as a vehicle mechanic and left in 1990 to run Torbay Seaways & Stevedores, the company his father had founded in Devon in 1977. He has been involved with Thompson River Transport since the start.

"Dad has always seen the inland navigation of Britain as an undeveloped opportunity and after working on Europe's waterways he has always wanted to promote inland traffic over here."

By this time Graham Thompson had been negotiating with Cemex for



Converted at RWD Davies boatyard at Saul Junction the *Elver* went into service in 2008. With her squared off stern she can lift 15t more than her sister vessels.

seven years to transport aggregates from its quarry at Ripple to the Cemex screening plant at Ryall two miles upstream. Aim was to kickstart and revitalise freight transport again on the Severn. He won the contract. In the first five years Perch, Chub and Elver have transported a million tonnes. The contract was renewed this year.

There was more.

"It's not what you know but who you know," he says, "and I contacted skippers and receivers about the possibilities and got a very good response."

One potential customer back in 1995 had been a timber importer who wanted him to take timber to Worcester. Graham Thompson asked BW about long term wharfage facilities at Digles dock, they offered just a one year lease because the site was to be turned into a housing development.

He sat on the idea, sold the cruise business and reintroduced the idea. Worcester County Council persuaded BW not to jeopardise getting freight back onto the river and BW agreed to replace the lost wharfage downstream.

Graham Thompson bought a 550te vessel to make the journey from Avonmouth to Worcester, marketed the idea of the new port to interested shippers and receivers and got offers of work for 120,000 tonnes of regular traffic a year. Having found suitable land, negotiated the leases with the landowner and carried out ground surveys he once again approached BW for to honour their undertaking for wharfage.

BW refused to commit.

So after four years of trying to get it started he withdrew from promoting



the reintroduction of freight on the Severn.

"The business was there for the taking," he says. "If BW hadn't been such blithering idiots..."

He says BW don't dredge the Severn any more but get a machine to fan it around. Depth is now down from 14ft to the new 10ft requirement. "A 10ft draft ship went up the other day and got stuck - they're not dredging they're infilling."

"BW have done absolutely nothing for the freight industry on the Severn - we use no locks on the aggregates sailings yet they get money for every tonne we carry."

His hope is that in its new guise BW will once again employ people who know the business and can see the possibilities, not people who only know that water comes out of a tap. Avonmouth docks for example are very helpful, handling barges the same way they do lorries in that there are no extra dues because it's all included in the RHD (receive,



It takes about 30 minutes to load a barge by conveyor at Ripple. Discharge is via a 50te excavator at Ryall that feeds a hopper connected to a telestacker.

handling, distribution). And Cemex with its good continental experience would like to transport sand from Avonmouth to a site in the centre Gloucester for onward transport by road.

"It will all depend on the new BW management," he says. "There's no future for freight on the small canals but on the large navigations, yes. They could be viable again."

Regional news

Grain cargos on the up – and up

James Jackson Grundy, an ex ICI Packet barge, has returned to service in the north west carrying its first cargo - other than ships' stores - since 1980. She is complementing *Panary* on the run from Liverpool's Seaforth grain terminal to Frodsham on the River Weaver. And there are plans to introduce a third vessel.

"There's more cargo on offer than we can currently handle," says Mersey Tanker Lighterage's Nigel Bowker.

With the 250te *Panary* pulling the equivalent of 9 lorry loads and the 300te potentially able to pull more than 10, shippers are interested in taking more lorries off the road. However the latter boat is currently carrying only 230te because of silting on the river, reducing the draft to about 8ft.

The issue is complicated by the fact the Manchester Ship Canal operators occasionally have need to take water out because of flooding. Nigel Bowker is in "constructive discussions" with them.

Next year he will also introduce the 215te *Loach*, currently being used as a static training vessel, to the run.

Historic Canal Boats for Liverpool Boat Show 2011

Organisers of next year's Liverpool Boat Show are canvassing opinions and ideas for a showcase event for historic canal boats at the show next year. CBOA has been invited to contribute a display and a grain barge – depending on the draft at Albert Dock – for the exhibition.

Venue is Liverpool Salthouse Dock and the dates are 28 April to 8 May. Access to the site would be via the River Mersey and the Leeds and Liverpool Link Canal. The event would include the Inland Waterways Association promoting the benefits and restoration of inland waterways.

The organisers are hoping to lure actor and inland waterway enthusiast David Suchet to arrive on *Shad*. Events will include parades of both historic and modern boats, load carrying demonstrations and a tug of war.

Yorkshire maintenance plant

BW have told CBOA the auction of two tugs, four hoppers, five work boats, two cranes and one JCB - maintenance equipment from the Yorkshire area – will not impact on their ability to maintain

the local canal network.. With the exception of one tug that been involved in a fire all the plant was obsolete and had not been used for canal maintenance for some years. BW say they now rely more on contractors and their plant so the BW plant will not be missed.

BW say they still have three tugs, 14 hoppers and two grab dredgers which, combined with contractors' plant, are sufficient to meet their needs. BW says that relying more on contractors and their plant provides them with improved efficiencies and cost savings.

Stoppages and maintenance

CBOA was among the organisations attending a meeting with BW about the 2010-11 winter repairs programme. At the meeting BW confirmed:

- they will maintain repairs on the strategic north-south and east-west routes as much as possible throughout the winter
- closures will start on the second Monday in November and will reopen by the second Friday in March (two weeks of March bookings is important for the hire boat trade)
- the canals will remain open for the two whole weeks over Christmas period.

So no stretch of waterway should be closed for the whole time. CBOA also pressed successfully for three separate weeks of stoppages on the South Yorkshire Navigation to be combined into one week.

In addition since August CBOA has been pressing BW Leeds to deal with the building up of a hard shoal just downstream of Lemonroyd Lock on the Aire and Calder Navigation. This is impeding the oil tankers. BW



James Jackson Grundy. Photo courtesy PaulKirbridge

CBOA for members

agreed the CBOA request to repair weir boards on the next weir to raise water levels but had not done so by the time of going to press. Dredging work has been delayed because the only two dredgers in the area were broken down, one having broken down again.

After CBOA's vice-chairman John Jackson took Dean Davies of BW West Midlands on *Roach* along the northern Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal to show him the problems, spot dredging at some bridges was carried out. Unfortunately, the dredged material was put on the offside bank – and in some cases is being washed back in again.

Modal shift

Freight by Water has held three forums in the past few months for businesses and waterways operators to highlight how effective carrying freight by water can be. The first, in London in June, focused on a more effective use of the Thames for freight transport. This was followed by a forum in Liverpool in July focused on maximising the potential of the Mersey Ship Canal and adjacent waterways. In October they moved to Hull where CBOA treasurer Pete Hugman spoke about the ability of the connecting river and large canals to take freight.

At all the forums, emphasis was placed on the trend for fuel prices to rise and the fact that water freight is a more efficient user of fuel. Freight by Water is merging with the Freight Transport Association and will continue its work under the same name. A fourth forum is planned for Bristol early next year to focus on the Severn corridor and the Bristol Channel areas.

Braunston tunnel reopens

The obstruction caused by a landslide at the western end of Braunston Tunnel on the Grand Union Canal has been removed after CBOA among others won assurance from BW that the work would be carried out. It had created major navigational problems for loaded commercial boats and prevented passage by wide-beam craft.

CBOA-award winners Wood, Hall & Heward carried out the work of removing surplus material from the tunnel mouth the facilitate repairs to the bank. They providing two bantam tugs and skippers and the spoil was taken away by barge to an unloading point. It has saved building a substantial road track into the site.

To repair the bank BW used a material that is easy to install and allows vegetation to grow through it.

BW's Stuart McKenzie wins CBOA award

This year's CBOA Award of Excellence has gone to BW's Freight Operations manager Stuart McKenzie. Based in Leeds, he won the award in recognition of his 'energetic cooperation' with CBOA during the past three years.



Presenting the award CBOA chairman John Dodwell said: "His willingness to engage with the CBOA and his passing on of traffic enquiries are all tribute to his professionalism".

Special rate legal offer for members

Myton Law, the Hull-based specialist shipping and commercial law firm, is offering an exclusive deal to CBOA. The deal gives members half an hour's free legal advice and preferential rates for any work they do thereafter.

They deal with all aspects of marine commercial law including contract disputes, cargo claims, insurance issues, business terms and conditions, health and safety, environmental, personal injury and engine/machinery claims. They help ship owners and operators across the UK and Europe. Their experienced lawyers say they believe in plain talking and taking a pragmatic and commercial approach to their clients' problems.

For further information contact Scott Yates on 01482 382082 or visit their website: www.mytonlaw.co.uk

Award for John Branford

John Branford (*Profile: CBOA News Spring 2009*) has won this year's Inland Waterways Association's 'Vivien Bulkeley – Johnson Salt' award. Yorkshire-based Branford Barge Owners won the award in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the furtherance of commercial waterways transport in the UK.

Why the 'salt' award? Captain Vivian Bulkeley-Johnson, a merchant banker with Rothschilds, was a founder of the Willow Wren Canal Carrying Company and a former treasurer of the IWA. He donated the 'salt' - the ornate salt cellar reflecting the importance of what was once a costly condiment - to symbolise the high value of the achievement.

CBOA for members

CBOA AGM

As we went to press CBOA was holding its AGM at Frodsham, near the River Weaver. Members attending also enjoyed visiting Frodsham Wharf where two grain barges from Liverpool were unloaded and then went on a tug on the Manchester Ship Canal to Runcorn.

Meeting with Minister

The new Shipping minister, Mike Penning, has agreed to a request for a meeting with CBOA. Aim is to brief him on what CBOA does and discuss how the new government's policies can be shaped to help further growth.

Issues covered in the CBOA letter included how more freight on water to replace lorries and congestion on roads might be achieved, the environment for investment in new barges - including assurance that freight canals will be well maintained for at least 10 years and easing restrictions on Freight Facility Grants – and better liaison within Department for Communities and Local Government.

Rix Tankers had abandoned trying to operate on the canals because lock closures meant they lost more in unproductive time than they made the rest of the year while competing with road haulage. They have now double-skinned their barges for use on jobs around the UK coast.

CBOA chairman John Dodwell added in the letter that while the government said land use planning had a key role in delivering the government's integrated transport policy "we find regeneration policies

encouraging industry away from the waterside to be replaced by housing."

Watch out for a report of the meeting in the next issue.

Protection for domestic carriers

British Waterways have been trying to update/vary their operating agreements with firms that trade on their waterways, whether they are boat hire firms, sellers of souvenirs or cargo carrying narrow boats. They say they want to find out what services their customers need and then see if they can provide better services – in return for extra payment. CBOA secretary David Lowe has told BW the idea if extra payment is untenable: members carrying domestic fuel and other cargoes have no need of any extra services.

Brazil enquiry

Brazil's Biomass and Energy Industry Association has briefed CBOA about the use of pellets derived from sugar cane production that can be used as a high calorie, low humidity renewable energy source for power stations. The next harvest is expected to be 600 million tonnes – about 10% up on the previous year.

Europe at present produces 8.4mte and consumes 12.8mte. Aim is for 13% of Europe's energy to come from biomass by 2020 and so some 53-65 million te of biomass will be needed each year.

CBOA has offered to put the Association in touch with the many UK based firms known to be interested in importing biomass and offered its members' services in bringing biomass inland from the ports.

Dave Prior



The death of Dave Prior earlier this year has severed a link with the earlier days of our Association writes David Blagrove. Before our title change to CBOA Dave was a keen and active member of our predecessor organisation, the Commercial Narrowboat Operators Association and served as treasurer to both organisations for several years.

Dave came to the canal world relatively late in life, having for many years been involved with a much faster sort of interest, namely drag racing.

It was not Dave's style to stand on the periphery of things and, once inaugurated into the canal world he became deeply involved with various canal-related organisations, becoming Chairman of the Milton Keynes Branch of the Inland Waterways Association at a time when a National Waterways Festival was to be held in the New City and utilising the canal for supplying various loads of building materials to the Festival site in the weeks beforehand. He enthusiastically supported the principle of a MK-Bedford link, and it was perhaps appropriate that following his funeral a reception was held at a site that hopefully will one day be connected by navigable water with both the Fenland navigations and the main canal system.

We shall miss his larger-than-life presence at boat gatherings, and are all the poorer for his loss.

Foreign news

French river freight on the rise

In the first six months of the year, French river freight was up 9.3% in tonnage terms on the same period last year. Total freight carried was almost 29.4 million tonnes, according to figures from the French rivers and waterways authority, Voies Navigables de France. Container traffic increased by 3.4% to just over 2.1 million tonnes.

Multi-modal terminal for Le Havre

Meanwhile the Port of Le Havre Authority (GPMH) has announced it will build a multi-modal freight terminal for river and rail-borne container traffic. It will be equipped with two 200m berths for river barges and eight rail platforms.

Due to begin service in the second half of 2013 it will handle up to 500,000teu a year. In the longer term this can be expanded to 850,000teu. Operators will be River Shuttle Containers and Railink (both part of the CMA CGM group), Naviland Cargo and Novatrans (two combined transport subsidies of SNCF), and Logiseine.

Duisberg volumes also rise

Europe's largest inland waterways container hub recorded a 29% rise in intermodal container volumes to 1.1m teu in the first half of 2010, compared with the same period last year.

Throughputs of other cargo types including coal, iron and steel "grew likewise at a remarkable rate" according to Duisberger Hafen chief executive Erich Staake. "This development shows that we have largely recovered from the 2009 crisis and have even come close to our 2008 record year."

Open access at Antwerp

The Antwerp Port Authority (APA) has acquired a stake in DP World's open-access Beverdonk Container Terminal. Aim is to increase the share of barge and rail transport, giving the port greater presence in the logistics chain. It will also, the APA says, help take traffic off the road and promote inland waterway transport

Due to become operational in 2012 the terminal will have an initial annual capacity of the terminal will be 70,000teu, expanding to 300,000teu. Some 350,000 sq.m of logistics warehousing will adjoin the terminal to create an integrated, multimodal logistics hub.

The terminal will enable the port to make maximum use of the Albert Canal and optimize its connections with Limburg and Liege.

Europe's cleanest vessel?

Inland waterways cargo ship MV Anda has been fitted with an after treatment system to the engine exhaust that reduces NOx emissions by nearly 90%, according to tests carried out by TNO Industrie en Techniek. The owner is J Verdonk and even before this new system was added, the engines met EU Stage 111A, IMO and US EPA Tier 2 requirements for engine emissions.

The Q barge

An innovative new design of container carrying barge for the smaller waterways between Belgium and France is in its final design stages. The first is due to start building in November.

This new Q barge is 45m long with a 38m hold carrying 24teu. By extending the design to 58m the barge could carry 32teu. By extending it to 70m, the maximum

size allowed to Rotherham or Ferrybridge, it could carry up to 40teu.

CBOA's Pete Hugman says that while the design is not currently optimised for UK use it can be readily adapted. Cost of the initial Q barge will be around 1m euros.

Second beer barge for Utrecht

EU financial help has enabled this Netherlands city to launch a second vessel to service its restaurants. The new boat and crane are electrically powered by clean energy, with a full charge providing up to 10 hours' cruising.

Flemish inland freight rises

Above average growth rates were recorded on waterways in Flanders in the first part of the year according to Inland Promotion Flanders (PBV). Barges loaded between early January and late May rose by 3.7% and the number unloaded by 1.3% over the same period last year. Total volume of cargo increased by 7% to more than 27mte. Containers showed the strongest growth.

However tonnage carried is still below the level before the crisis.

Historic bridge bottleneck

The planned new link between the Rhine and the Seine in Belgium is being held up by a bridge in Tournai. The mediaeval Pont de Trous, destroyed in the Second World War and rebuilt for the passage of 1400-tonners, means traffic must alternate: passage width is just 10.5m and air draft 6.6m. By 2015 however 3000te vessels will need to pass through.

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If you would like to advertise in CBOA News please contact the chairman John Dodwell for rates.

News in brief

London's new transport strategy

London's mayor Boris Johnson has approved a new integrated transport strategy that recognises the importance of water freight.

Approved earlier this year, the new strategy incorporates increased use of the 'Blue Ribbon Network' – canals and navigable rivers in and around London. It also includes upgrading the Tube network, Thameslink and expansion in the capacity of suburban rail services.

The 'Blue Ribbon Network' is quoted as being "significant" for carriage of both freight and passengers. The strategy states that transporting freight (including waste) by water is a less damaging option environmentally and can help ease the impacts of congestion on the road network. It says barge transport provides significant reduction of CO² emissions, to which the mayor is committed.

"Investment in effective transport is vital for economic development," he says, "and for attracting and developing the business and wealth to lead the country out of recession."

The full document can be read at: <http://www.london.gov.uk/publication/mayors-transport-strategy>

Crossrail to highlight use of water transport

Crossrail is demanding that tenderers demonstrate they have explored the option of using water freight. They have set up links with Freight by Water and with the CBOA who can provide tenderers with the necessary information. A Memorandum of Understanding with the Port of London Authority says some 5m te of excavated earth will be moved by barge or ship down the River Thames. That will save 500,000 lorry journeys in central London.

Forty years on...



Exactly 40 years after the final delivery of coal from the Warwickshire coalfield near Atherstone to Kearley & Tonge's jam factory at Southall, the journey has been repeated. *Stanton* and *Renfrew* of 1970 fame plus *Archimedes*, *Victoria*, *Corona*, *Ara* and *Purton* took part. John Toy took the photograph.

