



# Weaver News May 2011



## Chairmans Report 2010

Annual General Meeting March 9th 2011 at Weaver Hall

2010 has been an unusual year for our Society.

Before I started this report, I referred back to my Report of 2009 and discovered that many of the headings I had made in that report were still relevant. This concerned me a little as it made me question whether we had achieved anything in the last twelve months, but as I worked through the various details, I realized our efforts were achieving some results and, I believe, we are still trying hard to achieve more.

The two major organisations with whom we most deal are British Waterways and Cheshire West and Chester Council. Both have been suffering major change during 2010.

**Cheshire West and Chester** are settling into their new role after restructuring, but **British Waterways** are in a tremendous state of flux, as this new charitable status is about to be imposed upon them, and both face massive cuts in funding which they are trying to accommodate.

In this environment, it is probably better not to try and accomplish major changes, as the path will be needlessly rocky until the tumult and the shouting have died, but despite this situation, I think we can be pleased with what we have accomplished.

First and foremost, **Riversdale Bridge** has been rebuilt with Navigational headroom beneath it.

This is the result of several years' endeavours and obviously we were not the major player, as a project costing £1.4m. is out of our league to handle. However, I truly believe that without our efforts and those of Cheshire FM, it is unlikely that the Sustrans funding would have come to Northwich at all and without our continuing pressure, the new bridge



headroom would not have been adequate for normal navigation without bridge opening. With an ever diminishing numbers of river maintenance staff, any unusual demand upon their services is likely to be difficult to accommodate. We do now still have to persuade British Waterways to remove a needless protection boom, to gain full access to the navigable water leading to Weaver Hall, the Bowling Green public house and dry dock.

We have been in congenial discussions with **NPL Estates** during the year, attempting to obtain more income for British Waterways by means of wayleave payments for a new brine pipeline they are constructing to create underground voids at Gadbrook for the storage of natural gas. In this we were not successful as the planning machinery was already too far advanced. NPL Estates are major landowners of land adjacent to the river and within the Weaver Valley, we are hopeful that these initial discussions between us will result in further beneficial co-operation.

The **navigation** of the river has improved this year, in that there are now landing pontoons installed above and below each navigable lock, primarily to assist with easy mooring whilst on passage. This is particularly useful for canoeists, who can now readily portage round the four river locks.

Replacement of the deteriorating upstream horse bridge above **Dutton Locks**, which gives access to the lock cottages, was commenced during the year and has now been completed. It is both wider than the bridge it replaced, allowing access for larger vehicles, and has greater headroom, allowing easier access for maintenance craft.

It is disappointing to report that, despite the enormous expense involved in the restoration of the small lock chamber at **Vale Royal Lock**, it has been, so far, unusable because of the poor condition of the swing bridge spanning the chamber. Colin and I were invited to inspect it whilst investigations took place, and it was obviously time expired and requires complete renewal, which is now in the British Waterways schedule. It is, however, pleasing to report that a temporary solution has been found by



spanning the lock chamber walls with a footbridge downstream of the bottom gates, which will allow the small lock to be used this season, with the consequent removal of the time restraints previously in place.

We were invited by British Waterways last summer to find **volunteers** to repaint the structures around Vale Royal Lock, and we fielded a team of ten volunteers who accomplished a great deal within the five hours we were present. More of this activity will no doubt be required, and I am sure Tim Turner (Manager – Anderton boat Lift) will be talking to us shortly more on this matter. Volunteers will obviously play a bigger part in the new British Waterways structure and it will be beholden upon us, I believe, to help in any way we can.

A project in which we took a supporting role was the provision of the new **mural**, unveiled last March at Anderton, as a gift to British Waterways from the Anderton Boat Lift Trust, prior to the Trust's closure. Its intention is to provide additional interest and visitor attendance at Anderton and to tell the story, graphically, of the genius of our local Engineers. It is 30'-00" x 8'-00" and is well worth a visit.

We were invited by our friends, the local Chester Branch of the **IWA**, to provide a stand at their Rally in Chester last Summer, commemorating the centenary of Tom Rolt's birth, (he was a Cheshire man). This we did. It was a successful undertaking.

Throughout the year, at the invitation of Cheshire West and Chester, we have been major partners in preparing a bid for Heritage Lottery Funding for a venture entitled **Saltscape**, which seeks to highlight the unique character that the Weaver Valley has acquired through its capability to not only extract salt from beneath our feet, but also to illustrate the enormous benefits that we now enjoy, because of its infinitely wide chemical potential. I could expound for hours on this subject, as I feel that even most of our local residents do not realize what a fascinating story there is to tell. I will, however, at this juncture say no more than to inform you that this bid has just been lodged with the Heritage Lottery Fund, in



competition with others from many different sources, and we shall not be aware of the outcome until July.

Last summer, Wendy Capelle, Manager of the local B.W. region, kindly asked us to meet her staff to discuss what our ideas would be for the redevelopment of the **Northwich Town Basin**, and we were given a full briefing on the size of their land holding and the constraints they had to observe.

We discussed this matter in depth in committee and submitted our suggestions, which, I believe, have in some measure have been adopted, a developer has been found, and a planning announcement is imminent.

In contrast, Cheshire West and Chester have today made an announcement about development of **Baron's Quay**, which they have not seen fit to discuss with us at all. (Reported later, ED)

Which organisation, I wonder, is embracing the new Big Society concept and is the more likely to win friends and influence people.

Now, to matters more concerning our members and membership.

Although not strictly falling within the time confines of this report, I must mention the recent death of our Life Member, **Bill Leathwood**. He was responsible for the operation of the I.C.I. carrying fleet on the River Weaver when he retired some 30 years ago, and his reminiscences of the river at that time were fascinating, as he recalled when he spoke to us of his experiences. He also donated his memorabilia to us, and it is being analysed by Colin and me to determine what shall be lodged either here at Weaver Hall or at Ellesmere Port Boat Museum, as we deem appropriate. He was also a charming man of great integrity, and his recent funeral was attended by several hundred mourners, including members of this Society.

I have been concerned that our Members may consider that they have not been receiving value for money, as our **Social Activities** in 2010 consisted of only two social meetings, plus our volunteer venture, although



there has been much activity behind the scenes, as I have attempted to show.

This problem is being addressed by our committee and plans are now being considered to combine social activities and talks with the Trent and Mersey Canal Society, the Broken Cross Boat Club and possibly other interested parties, as we have so much of common interest to share and such matters as the recruitment of volunteers and, perhaps, visiting areas of common interest, can possibly be brought under an all-embracing umbrella and achieve economies of scale.

Finally, I must pay tribute to my **committee**, who are a tower of strength and support to me, and without their encouragement I could not find the enthusiasm to continue in my post as Chairman. I hope we are about to ratify the committee memberships of Bob Osborne, who has been co-opted for some months and is hoping to make more Winsford residents aware of what a gem they have in their own backyard, and now, I am pleased to report a request from Councillor Andrew Needham that he would also like to join our committee, in order to try and further assist with our aims, something he has already been doing with his County Council activities. I find it particularly satisfying that our committee have such a profusion of skills, and at such a high level, which gives me the assurance to challenge any perceived shortcomings or misinformation with which we may occasionally be presented.

Our much vaunted **Big Society** needs organisations like ours. We can provide volunteers, paint structures, pick up litter, but much more importantly, we can provide unbiased professional advice, prepare business plans, marketing strategies and suggest different approaches and perhaps bring refreshing new ideas to an economy now viewed by most with despair!

For instance:- We have a river that used to transport over 1m. tons of goods a year and easily could do so again. We have a Salt Mine adjacent to the river producing 2m. tonnes of salt a year, all distributed by road, We have a vociferous local press reflecting local opinion that



potential new refuse incineration plants will create chaos on our local roads. We have fuel costs escalating at an unbelievable speed!! Water Transport is the most efficient and greenest method of transporting freight known to man.

Who is thinking outside the box? Someone should.

I ask for your continuing support. John Tackley, Chairman, River Weaver Navigation Society

## New RWNS web site

**River Weaver Navigation Society**

Home Membership Visit Heritage News What's On Society Magazine Books Links Contact

Hunts Lock at Northwich

**River Weaver Navigation Society**

The River Weaver Navigation Society was founded in 1997 and is dedicated to preserving, protecting and improving the River Weaver, from Winsford to its confluence with the Manchester Ship Canal.

Committee members regularly attend meetings with navigation authorities, local government departments, and other waterways organisations.

The River Weaver Navigation Society cares about:

**People and Recreation** - improving facilities for boaters, walkers, horse riders, cyclists and anglers.

**History** - preserving and protecting historical features; including locks, bridges and boatyards.

**Wildlife** - animals, birds, plants and trees all have their place in, on and around the river.

Click here to take a Trip down the Weaver.

Back

**Local News**

**New era for canals and rivers 30th March 2011**

The government has launched its three-month public consultation into the future of the inland waterways ....

Read More

Hover to pause

**What's On**

**Medieval Living History Weekend Davenport's Farm Shop 25th June 2011 - 26th June 2011**

Come and enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of Medieval Life ....

Read More

Hover to pause

**A TALK ON THE WEAVER MAKES FOR A BETTER MEETING**

CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS OF COLIN EDMONDSON'S TALKS AND BOOKS



The new society web site is up and running. Our Treasurer, John Hulme, took upon himself the task of looking after it, and it is the joint creation of John and his son, Ian, a gifted website creator. View it now at [www.rwns.co.uk](http://www.rwns.co.uk)

To quote our Chairman yet again; (there would be a lot less in this magazine without his input).

“I must say that I am delighted with its structure and content and think it could well be an example for other waterways Societies to emulate.

I realise that it must and should be expanded even more as our members make more material available, but the structure of the site makes this easily possible.

It is now up to all of us to ensure that it remains topical and updated on the River and its environs, and also to take every opportunity to promote it.

Thank you again, John, for ensuring we have such a wonderful promotional tool.

Our thanks also to Ann Gardiner, who created the original web site and kept it updated for so many years.”

---

## **Weaver Valley Partnership**

### **PRESS BRIEFING – DECEMBER 2010**

The Partnership Board was formed 6 months ago and in line with its commitment to transparency, this briefing gives a update on activities to date.

Since its formation last summer, the board of the Weaver Valley Partnership has been hard at work setting its priorities for Northwich. New plans for the regeneration of the town should be coming forward in 2011, starting with an announcement about the Baron’s Quay site before spring next year.



Geoff Hope-Terry, Chair of the Partnership, said “**Baron’s Quay** is the most important site in the town because it dictates everything else that happens, in planning terms. I think everyone knows that the financial crisis has had a severe impact on the original ambitions for this area, but we were determined to pull it back on track. Extensive discussions have been taking place with the chosen developer and we expect to come forward with new proposals in the next few months.

This will then unlock the potential for other sites across the town.” Whilst looking forward, Geoff also paid tribute to the large amount of work that’s gone on in the past. “The Partnership has inherited a number of excellent on-going projects and we’ve been very happy to bring them to fruition.” This includes the opening of the Weaver Valley Canoe Trail, the completion of the Riversdale Bridge project and the plans for Town Centre Design undertaken by Gillespies. This last piece of work is a good example of the way in which the Partnership wants to operate. “Having found the right organisation to undertake the work” said Geoff “the best way to move forward was to consult heavily with the public, which is what happened.

This has given us some really exciting design ideas which will hugely benefit the town. Geoff sees this as a blueprint for all future activities and funding is now being sought so that work can start next year.

Meanwhile, Geoff feels that there is one major issue facing the team which is to resolve the future warranties connected to the work undertaken to **stabilize the mines**. “This has been a huge task and a very impressive piece of work, led by our partners, the Housing and Communities Agency,” Geoff explained. “However, before anyone can build on the areas above the mines we need to ensure that adequate warranties are available, so that developers can get insurance cover at an acceptable price. That means we have to complete a two-year monitoring programme to check for any undue ground movement and although there’s still a year to go the results so far are very positive.” Following on from that, Geoff’s message to potential developers is that they should be talking to the Partnership about their ideas for Northwich. He points out “as we open up access to the river frontages it’s going to become a very attractive place to be, so now’s the time to start investing, before someone else



beats you to it.”

Other areas which are receiving attention from the partnership are the leisure and cultural facilities and the town’s road infrastructure. Geoff and his colleagues are working closely with Cheshire West and Chester council and, once again, they are looking at ways of consulting with local residents about what’s needed.

Geoff said “the Partnership can be considered as an umbrella-organisation. We don’t have direct access to funds and we’re not developers in our own right, but by bringing the various bodies together and using our influence, we can move things forward for the benefit of everyone who lives, works, visits or invests in Northwich.”

---

**Cheshire West and Chester Press release  
Baron’s Quay agreement to be catalyst for  
Northwich regeneration  
9 March 2011**

Cheshire West and Chester Council and Weaver Valley Partnership today (Wednesday) announce a major step forward in the long-awaited regeneration of Northwich. The two organisations are now leading on the Baron’s Quay redevelopment after mutually agreeing to end a development agreement with Wilson Bowden Developments, who were appointed by the former Vale Royal Borough Council in 2008.

The development agreement was mutually terminated due to the prevailing market conditions impacting on the viability of Wilson Bowden bringing forward the regeneration scheme as envisaged by the agreement. The move will enable the Council and the Partnership to develop a new retail and leisure scheme on the 40-acre site. Outline plans and artists’ impressions are expected to go on display as part of an engagement exercise with the community this summer, with planning applications submitted by the end of the year.

Baron’s Quay will act as a catalyst for other major investments crucial to the regeneration of Northwich. Other schemes now expected to come



forward include an £11m cultural and leisure centre and a multi-million pound redevelopment of the waterfront between the two town bridges. Councillor Herbert Manley, Executive Member for Prosperity, said: “The people of Northwich have been incredibly patient in awaiting the much-heralded regeneration of their town, and I am delighted to see their patience finally being rewarded.

“Moving forward with Baron’s Quay not only signals the start of this exciting development, but also enables us to forge ahead with one of the most ambitious town regeneration projects in the region.” The redevelopment of Baron’s Quay will dramatically open up this neglected riverfront area, creating a vibrant quarter where people can shop, enjoy leisure activities, socialise and work.

Building on designs and consultation undertaken last year, strong links with Witton Street, Weaver Square, the Market will be at the heart of its design to ensure the development complements the existing retail area by encouraging a natural flow of pedestrian traffic between the two.

Elsewhere, work is under way to identify a preferred site for a state-of-the-art **cultural and leisure centre**. The views of local residents on the site and design of the centre will be sought in the coming months, with a view to the centre opening in 2013.

Other major plans for the town centre include a scheme led by **British Waterways** to redevelop the waterfront between the two bridges. Meanwhile, plans are progressing on major housing developments at Winnington and Wincham urban villages.

A road gyratory design aimed at improving traffic flows around Watling Street, Chester Way and the two swing bridges is currently being developed. A community engagement exercise on the proposals will be held in the summer with a view to it being installed on a trial basis. This will allow the scheme to be experienced by residents and visitors so any specific issues can be identified and addressed before it is made permanent.

Geoff Hope-Terry, Chair of the Weaver Valley Partnership, said: “My thanks go to everyone involved in the Baron’s Quay agreement for their hard work in enabling us to move forward.

“We’re at the start of a very exciting time. It’s not going to happen overnight



and there's a lot of work to do, but I'm confident we have the right approach and the right ideas.

“It's a great demonstration of a successful partnership between us and Cheshire West and Chester Council.” Local Councillor Keith Musgrave, a member of the Weaver Valley Partnership, said: “The regeneration of Northwich has been talked about for many years. Thanks to the hard work of the Council and the Partnership, we are finally on the verge of it becoming a reality. “For far too long Northwich's potential has gone overlooked. But we will soon start to see some exciting changes which will reposition it as a key town within Cheshire and the North West.

“Baron's Quay is at the forefront of these regeneration plans and we are looking forward to engaging with the local community during the summer.”

---

## **Salt mines?**

Those of you who live in the Northwich area and buy the NORTHWICH GUARDIAN may have read with some dismay two articles referring to possible unknown top bed salt mines which could delay the regeneration of Northwich.

Your Editor spent an afternoon sharing his research material with Gina Bebbington, their reporter, who used the historical information supplied to write an article which should put minds to rest. There were only a few top bed mines in Northwich, all in the Baron's Quay area, and all but two are known to have collapsed long ago and been filled in. The locations of the two remaining ones are known and a borehole into each location should prove if it is still intact or has collapsed.

Alongside his Weaver research, Colin has been looking at the history of mining and subsidence in the Northwich area for the last eight years. He has also been helping British Waterways, with regard to the heritage and background to the historical subsidence problems in the area bounded by the River Weaver, River Dane, London Road and Hayhurst Street, which is shortly to be developed.



## **Freight vessel on the River Weaver**

On 6th January the Weaver Navigation saw its biggest visitor for some time. The 300ton motor barge 'Loach' came up the river on route to the British Waterways dry dock at Northwich for some routine maintenance and repainting. Unfortunately some silting up of the lock entrances at Hunts Lock in Northwich prevented the craft from reaching the dry dock. Nigel Bowker, a director of Viaduct Shipping, (the vessels owners) thanked British Waterways staff for their efforts in trying to make the lock operate saying " ....it was such a shame, we'd had a very easy trip up as far as Northwich and the waterways team made a gallant attempt at clearing the silt but unfortunately they were unsuccessful." Mike Carter from the Commercial Boat Operators Association said "...the dry dock hasn't been used by non BW craft for some time and there is some significant interest in this underused asset that can generate a welcome income for BW and we [CBOA] are working with BW to overcome the difficulties experienced at Hunts Lock that will then see the dry dock back in use soon"





*The 'Loach' unloading at Frodsham*

LOACH was built at Greenwich in 1968 for the famous Thames barging company London and Rochester Trading who traded as Crescent Shipping. She was the ultimate in modern coasting barges - the last of the breed going back to the spritsal barges of the Victorian era. She traded bulk cargoes around the Thames and East Coast rivers and across to Holland, France and Germany. Later she was bought by the St Paul's Trust in London who used her as a mobile training ship for disadvantaged young people on the Thames. She later moved to Liverpool where she became a static training ship in a similar role. Viaduct shipping bought her in 2010 and after a full engine rebuild and renovation she returned to trade in March 2011 carrying 300 tonnes cargoes of wheat from Liverpool to Sutton Mill Quay, Frodsham on the River Weaver.

(With thanks to Mike Carter and Paul Kirkbride of Viaduct Shipping)



## Marshall's Army Needs You

The Friends of **Marshall's Arm** are looking for volunteers to help with practical work in the Nature Reserve to maintain paths and help manage the woodland following the cut backs in council funding. If you would like to get fit while improving the Reserve contact 0160676058 or email: [audandrich@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:audandrich@tiscali.co.uk) or [tom@record-lrc.co.uk](mailto:tom@record-lrc.co.uk) for further information .

---

## New Bench

Residents within the Northwich area were asked to help select three local figures who have made notable contributions to the town to be incorporated into a new bench.

Part of Sustrans' Connect2 Riversdale Bridge project, the portrait bench will feature the three life-size local portraits chosen nominated by the local community, cut from sheet steel and installed alongside the bridge. The Connect2 project is developing new walking and cycling links in communities across the UK. It is funded in part from a £50million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, following a public vote in 2007.

Executive Member for Prosperity, Councillor Herbert Manley, said "We are looking to the residents of Northwich to share their views on characters and past and present that have made an impact on the town." "The 2-D life-size figures should portray three local people, heroes, characters or eminent figures."

"I hope everyone will want to get involved and encourage their friends and family, to help decide what and who epitomises Northwich Town. All nominations will be compiled before an independent panel decides the final three."

Each figure will be cut in CorTen sheet steel, which weathers naturally over time and requires minimum maintenance. The characters will be reduced to the two tones of black and white, simplifying the features while still retaining the essential characteristics that make the face recognisable. Peter Foster, Sustrans' Regional Director in the North West, said, "The portrait bench is a really exciting project, and will enable the people of Northwich to decide which faces they would like



to take a rest alongside.” “Perhaps weary commuters and local children will be able to take a break alongside a famous local sportsperson, or a committed local volunteer. I can’t wait to see who the people of Northwich come up with.”

As part of the national Connect2 funding, around 240 characters will be installed on benches throughout the UK by 2013. Figures chosen by other Sustrans Connect2 projects include Rob Brydon and a local park ranger in South Wales, a Pendle Witch in Burnley, and Olympic sprinter Darren Campbell in Sale.

---

## Transport Trust Award for the Anderton Lift

The Anderton lift was recently awarded a Red Wheel Plaque by the Transport Trust.



*The plaque was unveiled by the Town Mayor of Northwich, Councillor Mrs Alison Gerrard.*



The Red Wheel Plaque is awarded to a select number of sites which have demonstrated exceptional standards in the care and management of amenities and attractions associated with our nation's transport heritage.

The unveiling, by Northwich Town mayor, Councillor Mrs Alison Gerrard, was followed by a trip down the lift in the 'Edwin Clark' trip boat and a buffet lunch in the marquee.

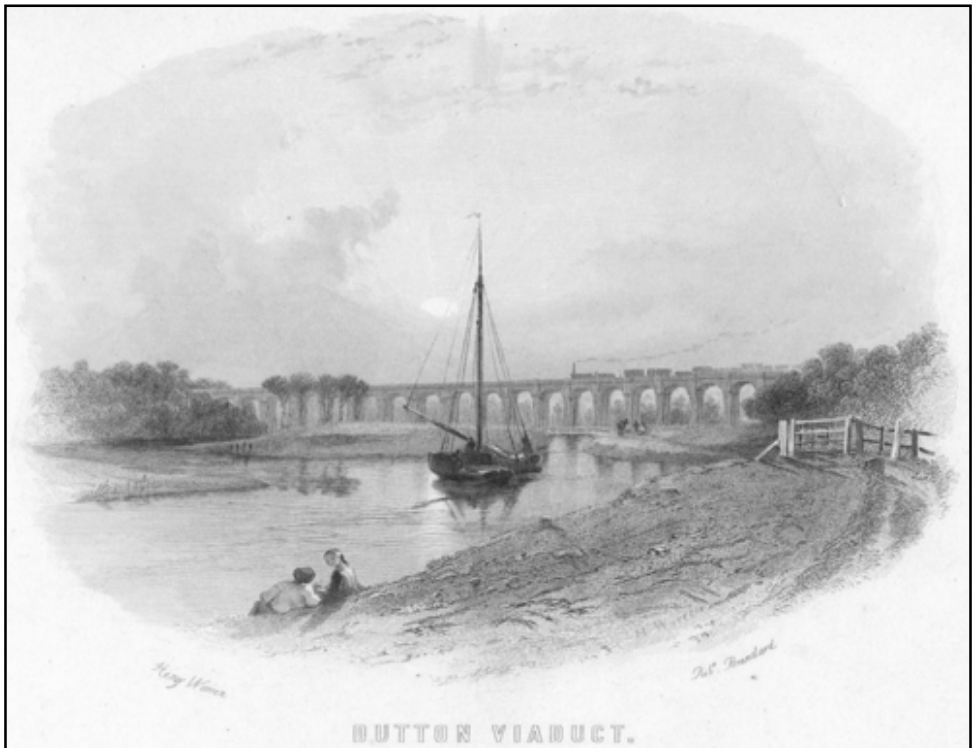
(also see photograph inside back cover)



## Another contribution from our anonymous 'Collector'

### Dutton Viaduct

When I came down to Cheshire in the mid 1990's, Dutton viaduct was one of my early views on the River Weaver, the viaduct is somewhat hidden and there do not appear to be many postcard pictures available. Built for the Grand Junction Railway, designed by ... there goes a question but I prefer Joseph Locke though the specification for the route including a viaduct across the Weaver valley has to be George Stephenson, opened on 4th July 1837. We only need to wait 26 years for the 200 year anniversary.





I have two copies of this view. One mounted and framed and this one in reserve. They can be coloured. The view is from Vol. II of Lancashire and Cheshire Past and Present by Thomas Baines and William Fairbairn, 1867. Lots of these books have been stripped apart and the vignettes sold on. This view did not make sense to me being an outsider. It took some time to realise how much had changed on the river.

On one of my many early Sunday morning walks, say about 2000, on this section of the Weaver and approaching the viaduct from Dutton locks I could see a man with what looked like a white ball with a long white stick by his feet. As I got nearer I realised it was a swan and the chap was using his mobile phone. I asked what was going on. He was a railway maintenance man working on the track on the viaduct. Apparently it is not uncommon for flying swans, when approaching the River Weaver above the viaduct not to see the electrical over head lines and can get caught by the lines and come down on to the viaduct. On this occasion when the workmen went on to the viaduct they found 3 swans on the viaduct, all walking about. They caught the swans and I assumed with the best of intentions heaved the swans off the viaduct hoping that they would pick up flight before hitting terra firma. This one, at his feet, did not. The swan was dazed but did not seem to be distressed but could not walk off. He was ringing his mates back at base, Acton Bridge, to find out if there was a Vet's about. I had no idea. We agreed to carry the swan towards Pickering's where he would be met by his colleagues with a vehicle. I was surprised at how light the swan was. It was not distressed at being carried. My last view of the swan was with the maintenance chap getting in the van. I still wonder if it was ever taken to a Vet's or ended up as right royal lunch.

**Anon.**

---

### **From the archives**

**1916** *Zepplin raid on 31<sup>st</sup> January last was in close proximity to Northwich*



## **Matt Wheeler leaves for greener pastures. Courtesy of the Friends of weaver Hall Museum.**

The Friends of Weaver Hall Museum and the Lion Salt Works said a final farewell to Matt Wheeler on Friday, 15th April 2011 as he prepared to move on to pastures new.

Matt, who has been the Curator of the Weaver Hall Museum and Workhouse on London Road, Northwich for the last six years is taking up a new position as Curator and Manager at The Irish Agricultural Museum in County Wexford, Ireland.

Matt was presented with an "Illuminated Address" that commended him for his work at the Weaver Hall Museum, the Lion Salt Works and Stretton Mill where he is also Curator.

Jenny Tyson, Chair of the Friends of Weaver Hall Museum, on presenting the Address said:

"Matt, we are sorry to see you go but wish you will well with your new career in Ireland. You certainly deserve this prestigious job at their national Agricultural Museum.





I would also like to thank you, on behalf of the Friends Group, for your commitment to the Weaver Hall Museum over the last six years and your many successes.

Your have transformed the Museum and its visitor numbers into a local attraction that everybody is proud of”.

David Roberts, Chairman of the Lion Salt Works Trust said:

“Matt, many thanks for the help and guidance you have given the Trust since the Lion Salt Works was taken over by Chester West and Chester Council.

You have been a breath of fresh air to our team and your skills, loyalty and dedication to your job are going to be missed not only at our local museums but throughout Mid Cheshire where you have worked closely with so many different organisations.

You are going to be a hard act to follow”.





Matt said:

“I have really enjoyed my last six years at the Museum but its success must be shared with my staff, the Friends Groups who are very supportive, and all those local organisations I have worked with. The last couple of years have been a particularly exciting time. Our local authority has changed and the former Salt Museum is now the Weaver Hall Museum and Workhouse giving it a remit as the local Museum for Northwich and Mid Cheshire.

Whilst I will miss all those at Weaver Hall, the Lion Salt Works and Stretton Mill, I am looking forward to my new challenges in Ireland”.

Since Matt became Curator six years ago, the Weaver Hall Museum has seen its visitor number increase through many innovative activities. There are regular New Exhibitions and Coffee Shop Displays, Afternoon Teas and Talks, Evening Events and trips to other Museums. Weaver Hall even has its own mini cinema, the Regalette, with film nights.

I would like to add my own thanks to Matt for all the support that he has given me in my research and for allowing me free use of photographs in their collection in my talks and booklets, and society members will no doubt join me in thanking him for the use of the Boardroom in which we hold our social meetings.

---

## **News by email, not snail mail**

The society is trying to collect the email addresses of all members who are willing to be contacted in this way. If you would like to be kept informed of events and do not already receive emails from us, please take a moment to send an email to our Chairman, John Tackley, at [jtackley@hotmail.com](mailto:jtackley@hotmail.com). The information will only be used for society purposes and will not be revealed to any third party.



## **ANDERTON BOAT LIFT Summer Events**

### **Circusology**

The Anderton Boat Lift is hosting a series of circus skills workshops on the following dates. June 1<sup>st</sup>, July 27<sup>th</sup>, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>.  
Times: 11am - 4pm

Families and visitors can participate in a fun day of circus skills including plate spinning, ball juggling, stilt walking and unicycling. Pre-booking not required although if you would like to combine your stay with a boat trip we recommend you give us a call in advance to secure your seat.

### **Falconry**

The Anderton Boat Lift is hosting three **Falconry** events on the following dates: June, Sun 19<sup>th</sup>, August, Sat 20<sup>th</sup> and Sun 21<sup>st</sup>.

### **'Upon Reflection', Hospice and Lift to benefit from artist's exhibition. 16<sup>th</sup> –30<sup>th</sup> May**

AN EXCITING EXHIBITION of affordable art displaying the versatility of local artist and broadcaster Diana Bernice Tackley whose passion for local inland waterways has inspired many beautiful watercolour, oil and acrylic paintings. Bernice hit the headlines last year when her 30' x 8' mural, now a permanent exhibit, was unveiled at the Anderton Boat Lift. There will be a wide variety of paintings on show, from representational to contemporary textured canvases, depicting seasonal landscapes, florals, figures, portraits and abstracts.

#### **MEET THE ARTIST**

Bernice, as she is known to friends but better known to her listeners as Diana Tackley when broadcasting with Cheshire FM, will be in the marquee painting during the exhibition giving visitors the opportunity to see her at work. There will be a raffle for her latest painting of the boat lift with all proceeds being divided between St. Lukes Hospice and the Anderton Boat Lift.



*Bernice with the painting which will be raffled during the event.*

Visitors are welcome to just browse or take advantage of the opportunity to purchase an original painting or print at a special exhibition price. Many of her paintings are in private collections in USA, Canada, Scandinavia and New Zealand as well as in the UK

Reflecting on the success of last year's exhibition, Bernice said 'I am really looking forward to displaying my work in the marquee as it is a marvellous space filled with natural light. So many people who visited the lift enjoyed last year's exhibition that I thought it would present a good opportunity for the lift and the hospice to benefit as well. St. Lukes Hospice needs every penny it can get and the lift is owned by British Waterways which is soon to become a charity.'

For further information please contact Bernice [bernice@dbtackley.com](mailto:bernice@dbtackley.com)  
Tel: 01606 76204 or Anderton Boat Lift 01606 786777



## Is this a 'wind up'?

British waterways would like one of our members to volunteer to wind up the clock at Navigation Road offices once a week. Any offers?

The clock was in existence by 1863, and the building on which it was mounted was suffering from subsidence and had to be knocked down in 1905. It was intended to lower the yard chimney by 20 feet and put the clock on top of it, but instead the present brick plinth was made. I have seen references to employee's wives being paid that little bit of extra pin money to wind the clock.



*The clock in its original position in 1885*

*The boat is the 'Miss Weaver', the survey boat belonging to the Trustees of the River Weaver Navigation. The scene has changed little except for the loss of the warehouse beneath the clock.*



*Following the unveiling of the Transport trust award the guests had the opportunity to travel down the Anderton Lift in the 'Edwin Clark' trip boat.*

---

## Stop Press

It is the intention to hold a boat rally on the River Weaver in the week following the Middlewich Folk and Boat Festival in 2012, probably the 23rd and 24th June. This will be a joint effort between the Chester group of the Inland Waterways Association, the River Weaver Navigation Society, the Broken Cross Boat Club, and, hopefully, British Waterways, who will be in the process of changing into a charity. The focus of the rally will be in the area previously occupied by the 'Floatel'. The last large rally in Northwich was in 1979.