

# The canal trips

<b>8-14 April 1978</b>		56' narrow boat "Juniper" from Barrington's at Stenson, Derbyshire On the Trent & Mersey, Caldon and Staffs & Worcester Canals <i>With Ian Jones, Rob Palmer &amp; Brian Dawson</i>		
Day	Section of canal	Miles	Locks	Hours
Sat 8 <sup>th</sup>	Stenson - Burton on Trent - Fradley Junction – Armitage	19.5	14	9.5
Sun 9 <sup>th</sup>	Armitage – Great Haywood Junction – Stone – Barlaston	23	14	11.5
Mon 10 <sup>th</sup>	Barlaston – Stoke – Etruria Junc – Hazlehurst – Cheddleton – Froghall	22.5	23	11.5
Tue 11 <sup>th</sup>	Return to Barlaston same journey	22.5	23	11
Wed 12 <sup>th</sup>	Barlaston – Stone – Great Haywood Junction – Penkridge	25	18	11
Thu 13 <sup>th</sup>	Penkridge – Great Haywood – Armitage – Fradley Junc	23.3	11	10
Fri 14 <sup>th</sup>	Fradley Junction – Burton on Trent – Stenson	16.3	11	7.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>72</b>
	<b>New routes covered</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>57</b>	

Near Alsager: Brian surveys the scenery, pipe in mouth; mooring at Armitage; leaving Stone top lock...



Entering the bottom lock at Etruria Junction; and a very sharp u-turn onto the Caldon Canal.....



Poynton-based narrow-boat "Sorceress" was on the dry dock at Etruria; the Stoke staircase locks are not the prettiest place on the inland waterway network!.....and then it snowed.....



These hardy souls ventured out occasionally from the warm cabin to work the lift bridges, while I steered the boat on the stretches in between; a hand sometimes appearing from within with a welcome mug of coffee!

Better weather later on the 10<sup>th</sup> near Hazlehurst Junction, and entering the locks there.....



So near yet so far; the short tunnel leading to Froghall Wharf has a slight dogleg bend just inside the entrance, and our boat became firmly wedged.....

Using some handy paving stones as additional ballast, and all of us moving to the front failed to make any progress, so we retired elegantly in reverse, and had to stern-haul for some distance back to the nearest turning-place.



Two more views at Hazlehurst, the prettiest section of the Caldron, on the way back. The former Leek branch canal passes overhead on the aqueduct..... and at Tixall lock back on the Trent & Mersey main line.....



Lastly, at Fradley Junction with its well-known Swan Inn, in much better weather..... and exploring Hazlehurst locks and the disused Leek branch on foot, on the way home at the end of our week's holiday.....



<b>23-30 Sept 1978</b>		40' narrow boat "Queen Penelope" from Simolda at Nantwich, Cheshire			
		On the Shropshire Union & Llangollen Canals			
		With Jonathan Riddell, Tony Parkins & Richard Jones			
Day	Section of canal	Miles	Locks	Hours	
Sat 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Nantwich Basin – Hurleston Jc – Barbridge Jc – Beeston - Wharton	9.5	6	4	
Sun 24 <sup>th</sup>	Wharton – Huxley (turn) – Hurleston Jc – Wrenbury – Grindley Brook	24.3	25	11.3	
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup>	Grindley Brook top – Ellesmere – Chirk Aqueduct end	24.3	2	9.3	
Tue 26 <sup>th</sup>	Chirk – Pontcysyllte – Trevor (turn) – Chirk – Frankton Junction	14.7	2	6.7	
Wed 27 <sup>th</sup>	Frankton – Ellesmere Basin – Prees branch – Grindley Br – Wrenbury	25.7	10	9.5	
Thu 28 <sup>th</sup>	Wrenbury – Hurleston – Nantwich – Audlem – Tyrley - Cheswardine	24	36	11.5	

Fri 29 <sup>th</sup>	Cheswardine – Norbury Junction (turn) – Market Drayton - Nantwich	29.5	27	11.5
Sat 30 <sup>th</sup>	Nantwich – Nantwich Basin End	1.5	0	0.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>64.5</b>
	<b>New routes covered</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>54</b>	

The budget only ran to black and white film at this time. Some of these views were kindly contributed by Tony: The motley crew (or rather, ¾ of it); passing Barbridge Junction, with its distinctive old warehouse.....



Pastoral scenery on the Llangollen Canal, and more reminders of the past at Ellesmere Basin.....



Congestion (and some confusion) at the Grindley Brook staircase locks.....



Working the lift bridges, and communing with nature.....



Approaching the short tunnel; a "Great Western" mooring at Chirk; and in the murky depths of Chirk tunnel.....



And so to the eagerly awaited crossing of Pontcysyllte aqueduct.....



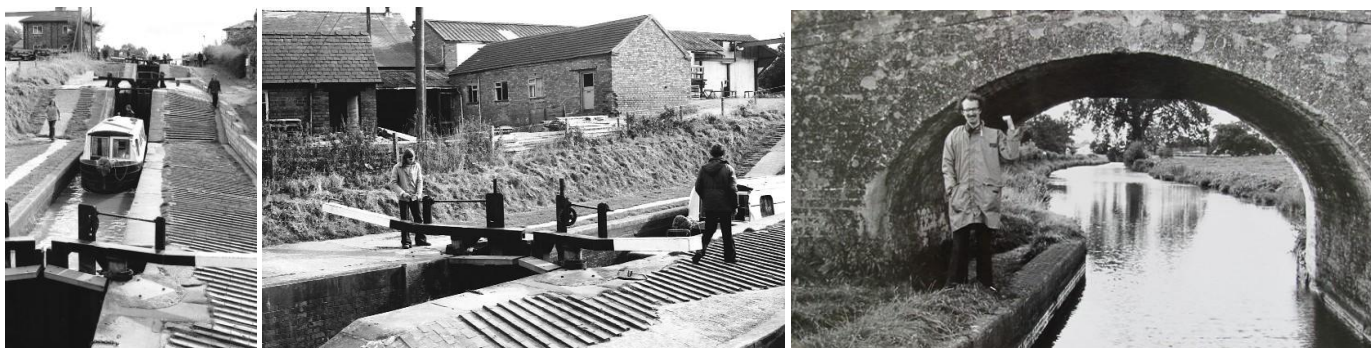
Trevor basin was as far as we could go on this occasion, as the remaining 4 miles to Llangollen were closed for maintenance or repairs. We walked the towpath to the town, and returned by bus. Then back over Pontcysyllte, through Chirk tunnel and across Chirk aqueduct.....



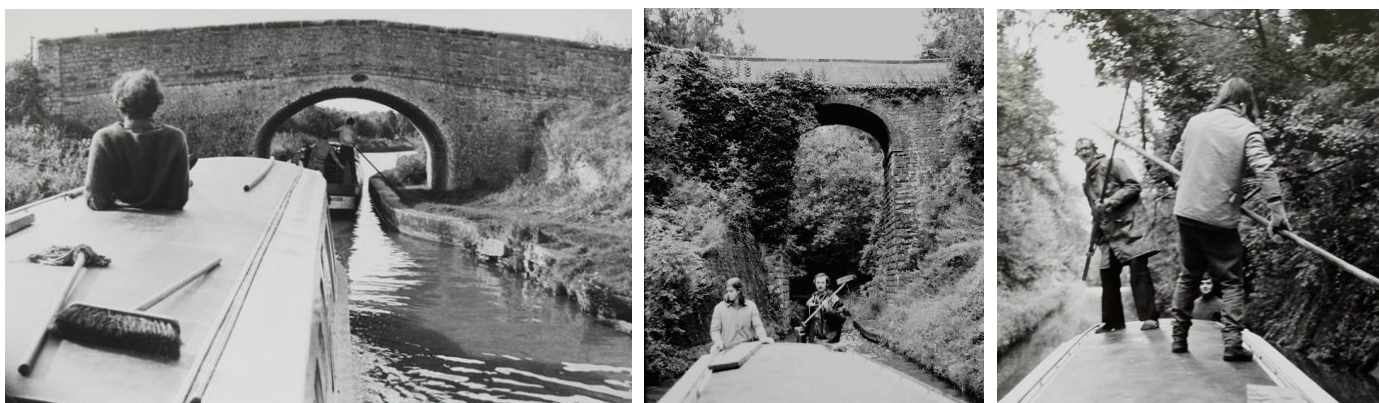
At Welsh Frankton, we stopped to explore the derelict first stretch of the Montgomeryshire Canal, since restored here. These views show the first lock, and the cottages at the junction.....



Then back through the Grindley Brook locks and down to the Shropshire Union main line, where we turned south towards Audlem locks.....



Watching others floundering in a bridge-hole, and a spot of silliness in the Norbury cutting, at High Bridge.....

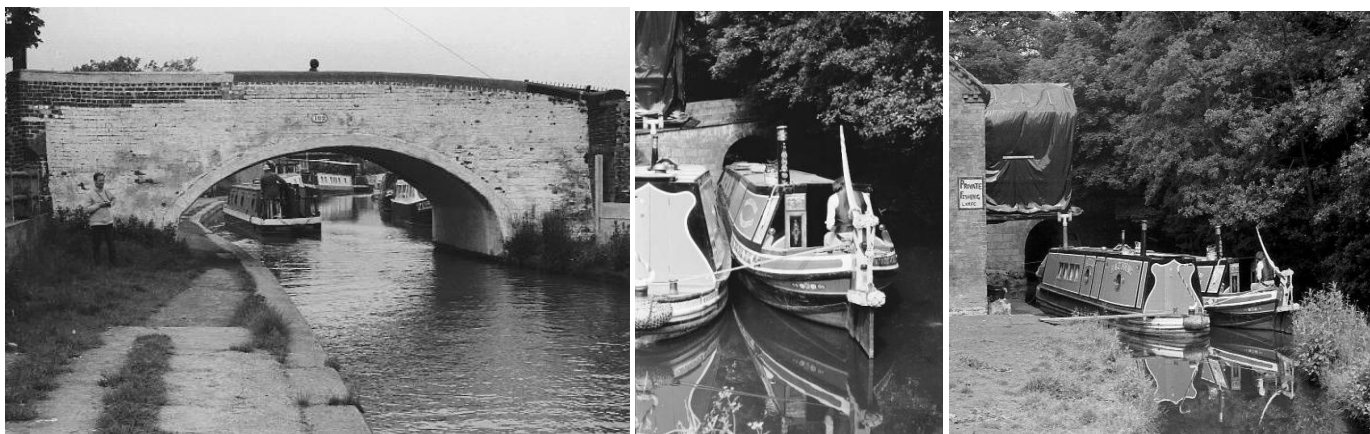


At Audlem locks we tried out the former boatman's practice of taking a turn with the stern rope around the bollard at the extremity of the top gate provided for that purpose. This (provided the rope did not break) both slowed the boat, and pulled the gate shut gently behind it. Tony looks distinctly worried here, but the technique worked well.....



<b>24 June 1979</b> Day trip on 70' horse-drawn butty narrow boat " <b>Birdswood</b> " from Froghall Wharf On the Caldon Canal <i>With Ian Jones</i>			
Day	Section of canal	Miles	Locks
Sun 24 <sup>th</sup>	Froghall Wharf – Consall Forge & return	7	2

This short but interesting trip enabled completion of the bit of the navigable Caldon Canal we had missed previously, through the Froghall tunnel. The pictures show Endon Wharf at bridge 169, and a hotel boat pair tied at Froghall Wharf.....



<b>18 Aug 1979</b>		Day trip on 70' narrow boat " <b>Royal Jubilee</b> " from Northwich	
		On the River Weaver and Trent & Mersey Canal	
<i>Day</i>	<i>Section of river or canal</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Lift transit</i>
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup>	Northwich – Hunt's Lock – Anderton Lift – Salt Works & return	8	2

These trips were being run in connection with the IWA's National Rally of Boats, on the River Weaver at Northwich. They provided a rare opportunity to ride on the Anderton boat lift in both directions, before it was taken out of use for rebuilding over many years.....



After the rally we visited the traditional Taylor's boatyard and dry dock at Chester (above right)

<b>22-29 Sept 1979</b>				
56' narrow boat "Alderbank" from Sovereign Marine at Defford, Worcs				
On the Rivers Avon & Severn, Staffs & Worcs and BCN main & old lines				
<i>With Jonathan Riddell, Anne Shingleton, Rob Palmer, Tony Parkins &amp; Richard Jones</i>				
<i>Day</i>	<i>Section of river or canal</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Locks</i>	<i>Hours</i>
Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Defford – Tewkesbury – Upton on Severn – Upton Marina	13.8	2	3.8
Sun 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Upton – Worcester – Stourport basin	23.5	8	7.5
Mon 24 <sup>th</sup>	Stourport – Stourton – Hinksford Lock	16.2	15	9.2
Tue 25 <sup>th</sup>	Hinksford – Bratch – Wolverhampton – Tipton – BCN main line – Soho Loop (part; turn) – Birmingham Cambrian Wharf	25.8	38	13
Wed 26 <sup>th</sup>	Icknield Port loop - Smethwick Locks – BCN old line to Dudley – Tipton – Wolvhtn – Aldersley Jc – Autherley Jc (turn) – Awebridge	23.5	29	10.3
Thu 27 <sup>th</sup>	Awebridge – Stourton – Stourport – Wood Green	21.7	29	11.7
Fri 28 <sup>th</sup>	Wood Gn – Worcester – Tewkesbury – Pershore (turn) – Defford Wh	42.3	6	10.8
Sat 29 <sup>th</sup>	Defford Road Wharf – Nafford Lock – Defford	5.2	1	1.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>68</b>
	<b>New routes covered</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>67</b>	

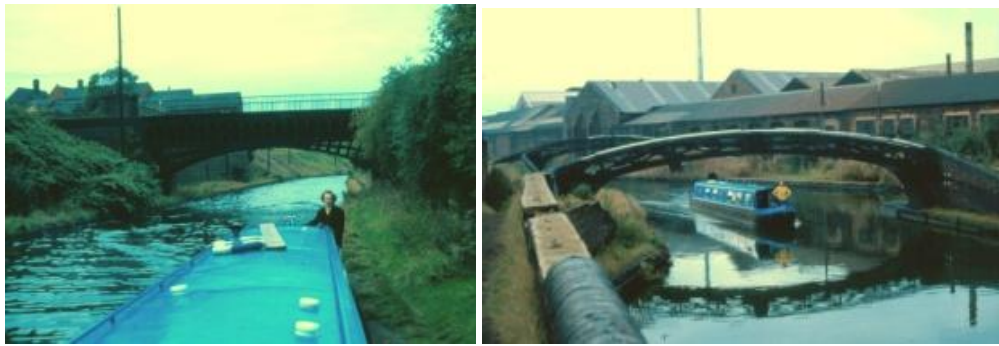
Another motley crew (somewhere on the Avon); Rob seems sensibly to have avoided getting in most of these pictures, perhaps he was always steering the boat. Once again, some of the images below were supplied by Tony. Approaching the Severn Valley Railway viaduct near Kidderminster.....



Working through the deep staircase locks at the Bratch, and gloomy weather on the Wolverhampton locks. This flight of 21 in the space of about 2 miles occupied us for around two and a half hours going uphill .....



More gloom on the BCN new line at the Engine Aqueduct, Smethwick, and coming into Birmingham.....



This was in the gathering dusk, having attempted to get around the Soho loop line. Grating along over increasing amounts of metal rubbish and building rubble, then getting barbed wire wrapped around the propeller, we abandoned this at a former wharf, turned with difficulty and went back to the main line the way we had come. Surprisingly after this, the Icknield Port loop the following morning was found to be deep and clear. We then turned onto the old main line, seen here crossing over the new line with the M5 motorway and the LMR main line railway for company; running along under the motorway, with a constant dull rumble of traffic overhead, and a brief stop above the Netherton Tunnel branch canal.....



We visited the Black Country Museum at Dudley conveniently by boat (the chapel interior seen here), then back onto the straight and wide new line to the top of Wolverhampton locks once more.....

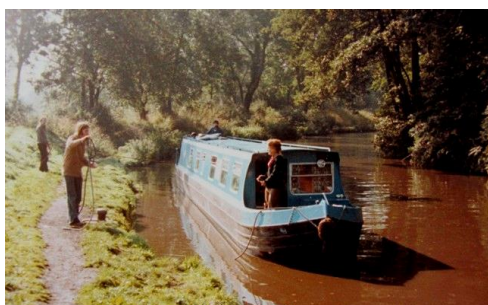


We had sufficient crew members to work the flight of 21 locks very efficiently going down, with one going ahead of the boat to set up the locks below, and one trailing behind to reset the paddles and gates after we had left. The others, apart from the steerer, worked them at both ends of the occupied lock, and so the boat could be driven out of one lock and straight into the next every time. We did not meet any other vessels coming up, and so were able to complete our passage of the whole flight this time in just under one and three-quarter hours. Allowing  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour for the two miles of stops and starts, gives just under 3 minutes for the actual operation of each lock, which were all very well-maintained and light to work. There was even time for a couple of photos, at the top lock, and passing under the former GWR and LNWR main line railways about  $\frac{1}{2}$  way down the flight.....





Regaining the sylvan tranquility at our mooring near Awebridge, and descending through the Stourport basins through to the River Sever in dazzling sunshine.....



Stourport again, and back onto the Sever, passing the power station. Early morning mist the following day; Jonathan was very keen on these early starts.....turned into a glorious sunrise as we came into Worcester.....



Working through the huge Severn lock at Diglis, Worcester.....



Continuing glorious weather at Upton on Severn, and back on the Avon at Eckington bridge.....



A few weeks later in mid-November 1979, I returned to the Birmingham area for a day, looking again at some of the places we passed by or missed on our trip; again the weather was good. Here are the Farmer's Bridge locks, beneath a modern office block; and on the new main line, with former toll and gauging pier.....



The Engine Aqueduct at Smethwick, and the old and new lines at the BCN summit level.....



Galton Bridge at Smethwick, and the west entrance to Gosty Hill tunnel, near Old Hill.....



And finally, Windmill End junction looking N, the south end of Netherton tunnel, and the Bumblehole.....



<b>11-18 April 1980</b> 40' x 12' wide cruiser "Dales Pioneer" from Bradford Boats, Apperley Bridge, Yorks On the Leeds & Liverpool Canal (including Leigh Branch) <i>With Ian Jones, Jonathan Riddell, Rob Palmer, Ian Tate, Brian Dawson + 2</i>				
Day	Section of canal	Miles	Locks	Hours
Fri 11 <sup>th</sup>	Apperley Bridge – Field locks – Dowley Gap locks – Bingley 3 rise	7.8	11	4
Sat 12 <sup>th</sup>	Bingley 5 rise – Silsden – Skipton – Gargrave – Foulridge	28.7	20	11
Sun 13 <sup>th</sup>	Foulridge Tunnel – Burnley – Accrington – Blackburn - Chorley	37	20	13
Mon 14 <sup>th</sup>	Chorley – Wigan locks – Leigh – Barton Aqueduct (turn) - Worsley	28	23	10.5
Tue 15 <sup>th</sup>	Worsley – Leigh – Wigan locks – Johnson’s Hillock top	28	30	11.3
Wed 16 <sup>th</sup>	Johnson’s Hillock – Blackburn – Foulridge – Greenberfield bottom	38.5	16	12
Thu 17 <sup>th</sup>	Greenberfield – Bank Newton – Skipton branch – Bingley - Shipley	27.7	23	11
Fri 18 <sup>th</sup>	Shipley – Dobson’s Lock – Apperley Bridge	3.3	5	2.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>75</b>
	<b>New routes covered</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>74</b>	

Bingley 3-rise locks in the evening, and working through the 5-rise there on a gloomy following morning.....



Nearing the top of the 5-rise staircase, and a typical Leeds & Liverpool swing bridge near Silsden.....



Another at Skipton, and out into the open country again near Gargrave.....



Overtaking a slow "tourist" narrow-boat at Gargrave; Jonathan operates the unusual L&L paddle gear near Colne, and relaxing after the effort.....

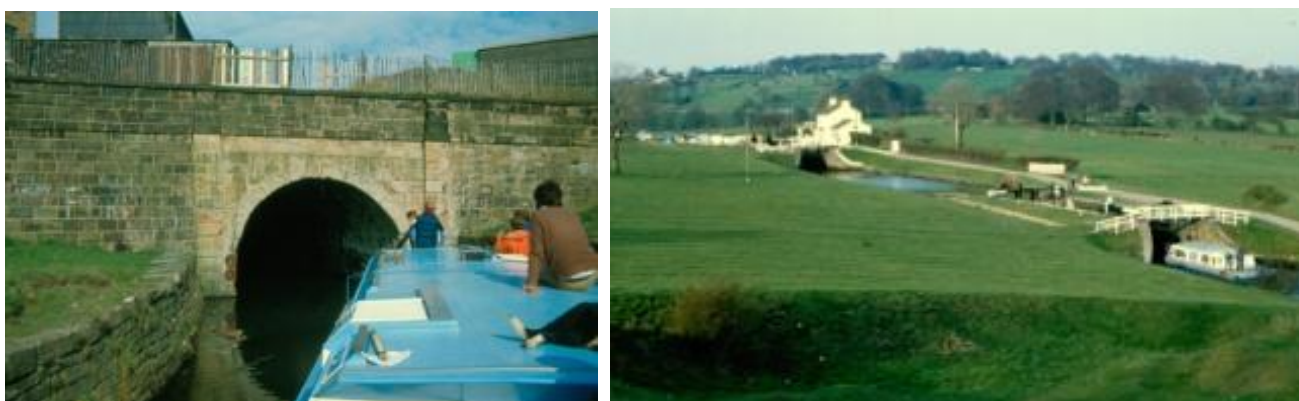


Crossing Burnley embankment, high above the town; passing the coal barge "Lune" amidst the scenic delights of Wigan.....



On our return passage of Foulridge tunnel, the boat propeller struck a large piece of floating timber just inside the west entrance, which stalled the engine and became firmly wedged. So our enterprising crew decided to resort to a spot of traditional legging, "walking" the boat along the tunnel wall to the further end. We had overlooked the fact that the tunnel used to have a steam tug plying back and forth, and that the walls were still coated with a layer of soot..... on emerging blinking into the sunlight we found we were all black from head to foot! Finding a convenient water point here, we hosed each other down thoroughly. Unfortunately but understandably, no one seems to have recorded this incident on film!

So here we are entering Gannow tunnel, and pleasant scenery at Barrowford locks on our return journey.....



<b>17 Aug 1980</b>		Day trip on 70' electric narrow boat " <b>Electra</b> " from Park Head, Worcs On the BCN Dudley Tunnel & Netherton Tunnel branches <i>With Ian Jones, Tony Parkins &amp; Rob Palmer</i>	
Day	Section of canal	Miles	Locks
Sun 17 <sup>th</sup>	Park Head – Dudley Tun – Tipton – Netherton Tun - Windmill End	10	6

We joined one of the occasional advertised day trips into the Dudley Tunnels complex.....



<b>24 Aug 1980</b>		Day trip on 70' narrow boats " <b>Maria</b> " & " <b>Fern</b> " from Princes Bridge, Manchester On the River Irwell & Manchester Ship Canal	
Day	Section of river	Miles	Locks
Sun 24 <sup>th</sup>	Blackfriars Bridge – Pomona Docks ( <i>round trip</i> )	4	0





It was unusual to see boats being worked through the old Hulme lock, under the railway arches and up to the Bridgewater canal level. This gloomy post-industrial scene has changed enormously in the last 30 years.....



<b>14 Sep 1980</b>		Day trip on the Mersey Ferry “ <b>Overchurch</b> ” from Trafford Wharf, Manchester On the Manchester Ship Canal and River Mersey	
<i>Day</i>	<i>Section of river or canal</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Locks</i>
Sun 14 <sup>th</sup>	Trafford Wharf – Barton – Latchford – Eastham – Liverpool Pier Head	36	5

At Trafford Wharf, with a busload of passengers arriving from Liverpool, and passing still-busy Salford Docks.....



Passing Barton Aqueduct and the road swing bridge; the Barton high-level motorway bridge, completed in 1960, in the distance.....

Barton Lock, beyond the motorway, and at Latchford Locks.....



By now, an extremely strong headwind made it unpleasant to remain outside, and these pictures were taken from the comfort of the vessel's saloon: swing bridge at Warrington; passing Ellesmere Port, and entering Eastham Lock:



And finally, out into the wide expanse of the River Mersey from Eastham Locks. Our destination at Liverpool Pier Head is prominent in the distance, on the right-hand side. We are following the container ship "Patria", registered at Schulau, Hamburg, which has accompanied us through the lock.....



<b>21 Sep 1980</b>		Day trip on the horse-drawn narrow boat " <b>John Gray</b> " from Leawood, Derbys	
		On the Cromford Canal	
		<i>With Jonathan Riddell</i>	
<i>Day</i>	<i>Section of canal</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Locks</i>
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup>	Leawood Pump House – Cromford Wharf	2	0

For some reason there are no pictures from this trip; I seem to recall it poured with rain throughout!

**27 Sep – 4 Oct 1980**

56' narrow boat "Alert" from Godalming Narrow Boats, Surrey

On the Rivers Wey, Thames and Kennet

With Rob Palmer, Jonathan Riddell, Anne & Paul Shingleton, Tony Parkins & Eddie Calvert-Harrison

Day	Section of river	Miles	Locks	Hours
Sat 27 <sup>th</sup>	Godalming – Guildford – Sutton Green (above Trigg's lock)	10.3	7	3
Sun 28 <sup>th</sup>	Sutton Green – Weybridge – Shepperton – Staines – Windsor - Bray	27.5	15	11.5
Mon 29 <sup>th</sup>	Bray – Henley – Reading – Burghfield (River Kennet)	31	14	11.3
Tue 30 <sup>th</sup>	Burghfield – Ufton lock (turn) – Reading – Tilehurst – Goring - Cleeve	28.5	19	11
Wed 1 <sup>st</sup>	Goring – Dorchester (turn) – Wallingford – Mapledurham - Shiplake	38.2	9	9.8
Thu 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Shiplake – Henley – Windsor – Staines – Sunbury (above lock)	40.5	15	12
Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sunbury – Hampton Court Palace (turn) – Byfleet – Stoke lock	23.5	13	8.3
Sat 4 <sup>th</sup>	Stoke – Guildford – Farncombe	6	4	2.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>69</b>
	<b>New routes covered</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>47</b>	

On the way to pick up the boat, we looked in at the Basingstoke Canal restoration works in progress near Deepcut, including a narrow-gauge railway along the towpath.....



The crew, minus Rob (who was presumably steering the boat!); Bray Lock, in the early morning of the 29<sup>th</sup>, provided the opportunity to work through manually.....



A single-unit diesel car and trailer cross the Bourne End railway bridge ahead of us; nearing the Marlow suspension bridge; Eddie polishing the brasswork.....





Hambledon Lock, waiting for the Salters river steamer to clear; Thames Lock onto the River Kennet



Tony is working Thames Lock manually, under the watchful eye of the lock-keeper; turning the boat below the derelict Ufton Lock on the Kennet, the then limit of navigation; a tranquil scene near Tyle Mill.....



Tyle Mill lock, and holding up the traffic at the swing bridge there; the merry crew at Sulhampstead Lock.....



1980 fashion icons; a warm day at Burghfield Lock; Cleeve Lock; traditional keeper's hut at Temple Lock.....



Rural tranquility at Cookham Lock; Maidenhead railway bridge, and Windsor Castle on the skyline.....



The crew are fooling around again; posing again, and lost in the maze at Hampton Court Palace.....



Back onto the River Wey at Thames Lock, Weybridge in continuing glorious weather.....



The Town Lock at Weybridge, and moored by the famous grain mills, with working boats.....



<b>20-27 Sept 1981</b>		55' narrow boat "Moonshine" from Clare Cruisers, Northwich, Cheshire		
"Cheshire Ring Plus":- On the Trent & Mersey, Bridgwater, Rochdale, Ashton & Peak Forest, Macclesfield & Shropshire Union Canals				
With Rob Palmer, Jonathan Riddell, Anne & Paul Shingleton, Tony Parkins, Eddie Calvert-Harrison + 2 p/t				
Day	Section of canal	Miles	Locks	Hours
Sun 20 <sup>th</sup>	Barnton – Anderton (turn) – Barnton – Preston Brook	9.5	1	3.3
Mon 21 <sup>st</sup>	Preston Brook – Runcorn (turn) – Dunham - Stretford - Worsley	34.5	0	10.3
Tue 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Worsley – Stretford – Manchester – Dukinfield – Marple Aqueduct	20.7	27	10.8
Wed 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Marple Locks – Whaley Bridge (turn) – Buxworth Arm - Poynton	18.8	16	9.8
Thu 24 <sup>th</sup>	Poynton – Macclesfield – Kidsgrove – Harecastle Tunnel south end	26.7	13	11
Fri 25 <sup>th</sup>	Harecastle south – Etruria Junction (turn) – Middlewich - Minshull	25.3	33	9.7
Sat 26 <sup>th</sup>	Minshull – Barbridge Junction (turn) – Middlewich – Marston	26	10	8.5
Sun 27 <sup>th</sup>	Marston – Barnton	2.3	0	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>64</b>
	<b>New routes covered</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>97</b>	

Waterloo Bridge at Runcorn, limit of navigation on the Trent & Mersey Canal; after a wet and slow passage of the Rochdale Canal through central Manchester, rural tranquility along the Marple lock flight.....



Following a British Waterways working boat on the Whaley Bridge arm; Jonathan attends to the daily ablutions; the crew at Bosley Locks; Neil Davies (third left) joined us for the day.....



Eddie entertains at Bosley, and takes a turn at the helm; sailing into the evening sun.....



More posing near Bosley.....



An approaching boat evidently took fright on seeing us at Congleton!; in the gloom of Harecastle tunnel....



At Harecastle south end; intrepid seafarer Parkins is sketched by Anne; evening near Marston saltworks.....



<b>29 Sept -2 Oct 1982</b>		69' narrow boat "Balmoral" from Anglo-Welsh at Aynho, Oxon	
		On the River Thames and Oxford Canal	
<i>With Rob Palmer, Jonathan Riddell, Eddie Calvert-Harrison + 2 (Elizabeth &amp; myself only for part-week)</i>			
Day	Section of river or canal	Miles	Locks
Sat - Tue	<i>Does anyone have a log of this part of the trip?</i>		
Wed 29 <sup>th</sup>	Oxford (Hythe Bridge) – Abingdon – Benson lock (turn) - Shillingford	23	8
Thu 30 <sup>th</sup>	Shillingford – Abingdon – Oxford (Hythe Bridge arm)	20	8
Fri 1 <sup>st</sup>	Oxford – Heyford – Somerton (Oxford Canal)	18	11
Sat 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Somerton – Aynho	2.3	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>63.3</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>New routes covered</b>		<b>38</b>	<b>20</b>

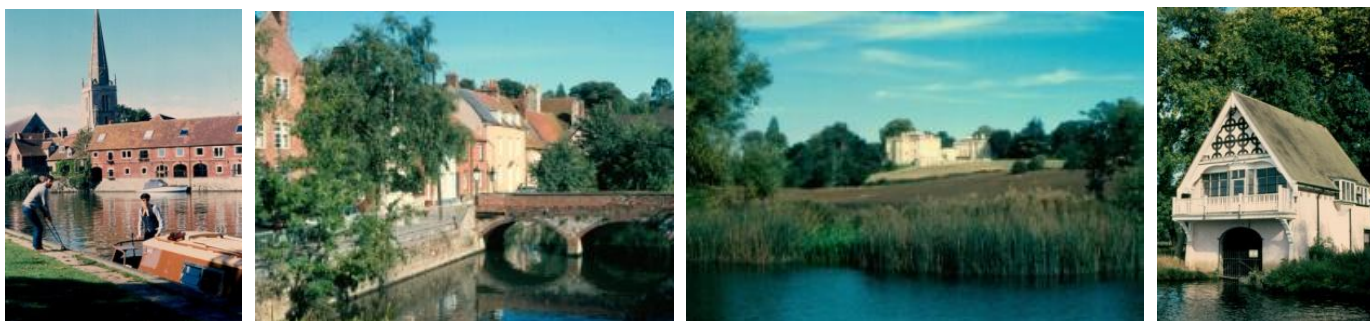
Shillingford – nocturnal visitors; Day’s Lock; Eddie mopping down on the move.....



Elizabeth steers through Clifden Hampden bridge; in Clifden lock; entrance to the Wilts & Berks canal at Abingdon.....



Mooring at Abingdon; passing Nuneham Park, with its boat-house.....



In traditional "Sunday Best" finery.....



Oxford – mooring on the Hythe Bridge arm.....



Swing bridge and lock on the Oxford Canal; visiting Stoke Bruerne on the journey home.....



<b>18-24 Sept 1983</b> 33' narrow boat " <b>Maestermyn Lady II</b> " from Maestermyn Marine, Denbighshire On the Llangollen and Shropshire Union Canals <i>Just Elizabeth &amp; myself this time!</i>					
Day	Section of canal	Miles	Locks	Hours	
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup>	Maestermyn – Chirk – Pontcysyllte – Sun Bank	12	2	7	
Mon 19 <sup>th</sup>	Sun Bank – Llangollen – Dee Weir (turn) – Trevor – Welsh Frankton	18	2	9	
Tue 20 <sup>th</sup>	Welsh Frankton – Ellesmere Basin (turn) – Grindley Brook top	17.5	6	9	
Wed 21 <sup>st</sup>	Grindley Brook locks – Wrenbury – Hurleston – Nantwich basin	14	13	9	
Thu 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Nantwich basin – Barbridge (turn) – Hurleston – Marbury	12.5	10	8	
Fri 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Marbury – Whitchurch – Whixall – Prees Branch	12	9	8	
Sat 24 <sup>th</sup>	Whixall – Ellesmere – Maestermyn	13	0	7	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>57</b>	
	<b>New routes covered</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>		

Crossing Pontcysyllte.....



Montgomery Canal milepost at Frankton Junction; warehouse & crane at Ellesmere; typical lifting bridge.....



Posing at Barbridge Junction; rural idyll near Nantwich.....



Wrenbury; and Povey's Lock.....



Staircase locks at Grindley Brook.....



Lock-keepers house at Grindley Brook; near Whixall on the last day.....



<b>22 – 28 Sept 1984</b> 58' narrow boat "Silver Swan" from Anglo-Welsh at Wootton Wawen, Warwicks				
By electric boat around the Avon Ring:- Rivers Avon & Severn, Worcester & Birmingham & Stratford Canals				
<i>Keith &amp; Elizabeth, with Tony &amp; Diane Parkins</i>				
Day	Section of river or canal	Miles	Locks	Hours
Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Wootton Wawen – below Bishopton Lock	5	13	4
Sun 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Bishopton - Stratford – River Avon – Bidford – Evesham ( <i>recharge</i> )	17.5	14	8
Mon 24 <sup>th</sup>	Evesham – Pershore – Tewkesbury – Upton on Severn ( <i>recharge</i> )	32.5	8	9.5
Tue 25 <sup>th</sup>	Upton – Worcester – Tolladine - Dunhampstead	17	17	8.5
Wed 26 <sup>th</sup>	Dunhampstead – Tardebigge - Alvechurch ( <i>recharge</i> )	12.5	42	8
Thu 27 <sup>th</sup>	Alvechurch – King's Norton – Hockley Heath – Lapworth (lock 4)	17	3	8
Fri 28 <sup>th</sup>	Lapworth – Wootton Wawen ( <i>recharge</i> ) <i>Delayed due to failure &amp; repair of lock 38; then our batteries ran out, so towed for the last two miles by the narrow boat "Buttercup"!</i>	7	33	5.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>52</b>
	<b>New routes covered</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>128</b>	

Stratford to Evesham on the River Avon.....



An unfortunate incident nearing Evesham: the channel was apparently to the left of the island, and the small blue sign in the background here said "keep right", that is to the right hand side of this channel. We ran aground on the mud,

which would not have been a problem with a conventional diesel-powered boat, but the electric motor simply had not enough power to get us off in reverse against the current. Tony waded in up to his waist and pushed; we used the long pole to no avail. Passing boats did not stop to assist. No mobile phones in those days, so we just had to sit and wait.

Eventually a couple of boatyard men appeared with a tractor high up on the east bank, a very long cable was run out by canoe, and we were winched off. We had just enough battery life to reach the designated mooring and very welcome overnight charging point, in the delightful surroundings of Evesham gasworks.....



Apparently we should have passed to the right of the island.... so why not put the sign ahead of the island, and to the right-hand side of it ???

Normal service is resumed.....onto the Severn at Mythe Bridge, Tewkesbury, then the Worcester & Birmingham Canal.....



with many locks, well-greased paddles (and hands!).....







Tardebigge Tunnel, and the famous guillotine-gated lock at Kings Norton.....



Then back onto the Stratford Canal, with its quaint split bridges and barrel-roofed lock cottages.....



The electric boat was an interesting experience, and in general our trip worked very well, but there were evidently a number of issues to be developed and refined further. We don't know for how long this experiment was continued, but have unfortunately not heard any more of it since, or encountered anything similar elsewhere – a great pity.

<b>3-10 Oct 1987</b> 40' narrow boat " <b>Water Wheel</b> " from Country Craft at Pencelli, Brecon On the Monmouth & Brecon Canal <i>Keith &amp; Elizabeth, with Jonathan Riddell</i>			
<i>Day</i>	<i>Section of canal</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Locks</i>
Sat 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Pencelli – Talybont	2.4	0
Sun 4 <sup>th</sup>	Talybont – Llangattock – Gilwern - Govilon	13.6	5
Mon 5 <sup>th</sup>	Govilon – Llanfoist – Mamhilad – Pontymoile basin, Pontypool (turn)	12.8	0
Tue 6 <sup>th</sup>	Pontypool – Goytre – Llanfoist	11.5	0
Wed 7 <sup>th</sup>	Llanfoist – Govilon – Gilwern – Llangynidr bottom lock	11.5	0
Thu 8 <sup>th</sup>	<i>(locks closed for repairs; day out by car)</i>	---	---
Fri 9 <sup>th</sup>	<i>(ditto, until evening)</i> Llangynidr Locks – Talybont	3.4	5
Sat 10 <sup>th</sup>	Talybont – Pencelli	2.4	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>10</b>



We called in to look at the well-maintained Abergavenny Junction station, and encountered this delightfully-distorted (but apparently stable) canal overbridge.....



Progress was slow, and not very scenic, towards the limit of navigation at Pontymoile basin, Pontypool. We turned and went off in search of groceries, also visiting Pontypool Road station, by now a shadow of its former complexity. On retracing our route along the canal back to Llanfoist and Llangynidr, we were conscious of the water level gradually dropping, and progress was now even slower. On Thursday morning we awoke to this scene at Llangynidr Locks, and had to moor here for almost two days, whilst repairs to a damaged gate were being carried out.....



It was but a short walk along the towpath to pick up the car from the boatyard, and we then used this to visit Brecon, the old bridge at Llangynydyr, the Big Pit mining museum (this view showing the pithead baths), Brynich canal aqueduct and the former Talybont-on-Usk railway station, now converted to residential use.....



<b>1-8 Oct 1988</b>		26' cruiser " <b>Lady Suzanne</b> " from Hick's Boatyard, Datchet, Bucks	
		On the River Thames	
		<i>Just Keith &amp; Elizabeth</i>	
<i>Day</i>	<i>Section of river</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Locks</i>
Sat 1 <sup>st</sup>	Datchet – Romney Lock	2	1
Sun 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Romney – Windsor – Maidenhead – Cliveden – Bourne End (turn) – Cookham – Boulter's Lock	13	6
Mon 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Maidenhead – Windsor – Datchet	7	3
Tue 4 <sup>th</sup>	Datchet – Staines – Chertsey – Teddington Lock (turn) - Kingston	24	7
Wed 5 <sup>th</sup>	Kingston – Teddington Lock & return ( <i>day in London by train</i> )	4	0
Thu 6 <sup>th</sup>	Kingston – Hampton Court – Sunbury – Chertsey – Laleham	14	5
Fri 7 <sup>th</sup>	Laleham – Staines – Old Windsor – Datchet	7	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>24</b>

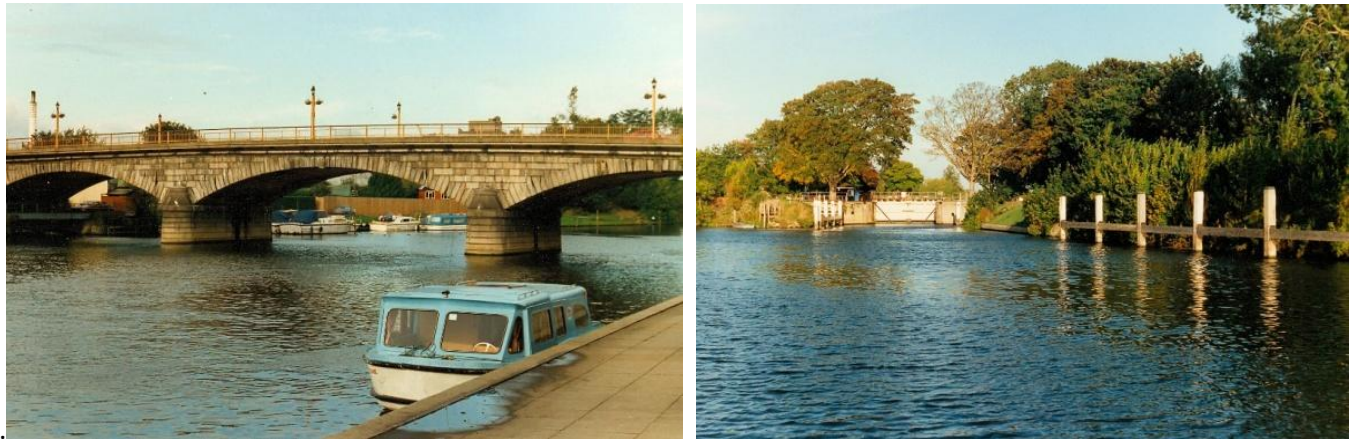
An old and somewhat neglected former college barge near Sunbury Lock, and a smart steam launch.....



Some hungry visitors.....



Back on familiar childhood territory for the first time in many years; at Staines Bridge and nearing Penton Hook lock....



**20 Sep 1991** Afternoon trip on restaurant boat **"Pride of Bellhaven"** from Ratho, Edinburgh  
 On the Forth & Clyde Canal  
 With Charles & Hilde Young, Rob Palmer, Ifor Jones, Iorwerth Jones, Tony Parkins,  
 Eddie & Connie Calvert-Harrison etc

Day	Section of river	Miles	Locks
Sat 20 <sup>th</sup>	Ratho – Almond Aqueduct & return	5	0

This was on the occasion of Charles & Hilde's wedding; an unusual and interesting floating reception venue, with stops at the impressive Almond Aqueduct. In the first group, left to right: Hilde, Elizabeth, Keith, Iorwerth & Connie.



Here are Ifor, Iorwerth, Eddie, Elizabeth, Connie, Charles and Hilde, and finally, Tony, Ifor, Rob, Connie & Eddie.....



Keith A. Jagers

Compiled in April 2011