

BOYNE BANTER

FROM MYLES BRADY



Myles Brady, Chairman; Maeve Brady; Sheila Wickham; Stephen Early, PRO and Brendan Byrne at IWAI Boyne Navigation stand at the Drogheda Maritime Festival in June

NEWCOMERS WELCOME:

Our restoration work on the Boyne Navigation depends on a continuous supply of interested volunteers who can devote some time to taking part in our regular workparties along the navigation between Drogheda and Navan. There is always work available to suit all abilities, and even if you feel that you cannot commit to regular attendance, you would be most welcome to occasionally join us for some rewarding work in beautiful surroundings, with pleasant company.

The welcome of course, also applies to volunteers who may have been involved in the past, and who might like to renew their contact and involvement in the restoration. On a practical note, the welcome includes a 'soup and sandwiches' lunch provided, with the compliments of the branch, by our always dependable volunteer catering

staff! Even if you cannot come for the whole day, we would love to see you at about 1.00pm for a chat, and to show off progress. Workparties take place generally every second Saturday, details of venues, dates and times available on our website, www.boyne.ie

RESTORATION PROGRESS

With the completion of the restoration of the sealock at Oldbridge, the work on the ground has continued on the next upstream canal section at Stalleen Lower. Initial clearance work around and inside the lock chamber has been largely completed. However, the main work in this area during the summer has been along approx. 150m of the canal entering the lock, between the horse-bridge and the lock. The original stone bank retaining wall along the north side of this stretch of the canal has been exposed, using a mechanical digger operating

from the bank above the wall, and major repairs, and re-pointing of the wall are in progress.

There has also been significant restoration activity on the Slane Canal section of the navigation recently. Following discussions with members of the 'Slane Community Forum' it was decided to carry out sufficient work to partially re-water this section of the navigation. The stretch west of Slane Bridge has been dredged and re-watered, with major input from the Office of Public Works, and water control sluices have been fabricated and installed in the concrete walls in the locks at both ends of the canal section. These walls were originally installed in the locks when the original lock gates collapsed.

FUTURE PLANNING:

Following submission of a comprehensive plan for installation of lock gates and removal of the concrete dam at the 'turf lock' on the upstream end of the Oldbridge canal section, to the Office of Public Works, owners of the 'Battle of the Boyne' Oldbridge Estate, in which this section of canal is located, the branch has received permission to go ahead with the work on site. This work will now go ahead over the next few months – further news in the next 'Boyne Banter'.

On the Navan canal section, a very large tree has fallen across the canal during the spring

storms. This section of the canal has already been completely cleared of fallen trees and undergrowth during spring of 2013 for use by the local fishing club. Arising from conversations with the landowner, it was agreed that the tree could be removed in the near future.

OTHER SNIPPITS

During August, on Saturday 16, and Sunday 24, the branch had a stall at both the 'Duleek Summer Fair', and at the 'Slane Village Open Day'. There was significant interest from the general public in our restoration work on the Navigation at both venues, and we had several expressions of interest in taking part in the work! We were very encouraged by the amount of voluntary contributions received at the two venues.

The branch has been in touch with both the Boyneside Trail Committee, and consulting engineers, Roughan and O'Donovan, concerning a proposed walking / cycleway along the river Boyne. At present, this committee is concentrating all efforts on the section east of Drogheda, which does not affect our restoration work on the navigation, but the branch is maintaining close contact with the design engineers on the proposals to extend the walking/cycleway along the Boyne Navigation west of Drogheda.

Photos: Seamus Costello



Offaly IWAI members on a visit to Boyne Navigation



Starting work on the Guard Lock