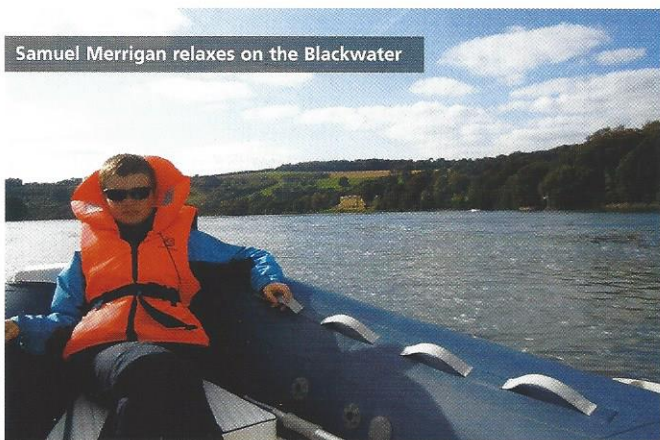


POWERBOAT BRANCH

FROM MARK MERRIGAN



Samuel Merrigan relaxes on the Blackwater

BLACKWATER RUN

The Munster Blackwater is Ireland's fourth longest river at 169km and has some fascinating features. The Powerboat Branch took a trip up the navigable section from Youghal to Cappoquin in early September to sample the delights. We were not disappointed! It is a treasure trove of beautiful scenery, wide water and ancient buildings along the shoreline.

We were honoured to be assisted by Ardmore Boat Club on our travels, thanks to Aidan Foley, Bill Flynn and others for their valuable expertise on this little-used and unmarked navigation.

The round-trip is about 45km with no obstacles of note and the opportunity to explore some

deep tributaries on the way when the tide is high enough. We departed in RIBs, jetskis and speedboats about one hour before high tide from Ferrypoint across the bay from Youghal town. The weather was beautiful and showed the valley up in its best light. We passed some beautiful old houses castles and ruins, some with histories which would fill IWV and then some!

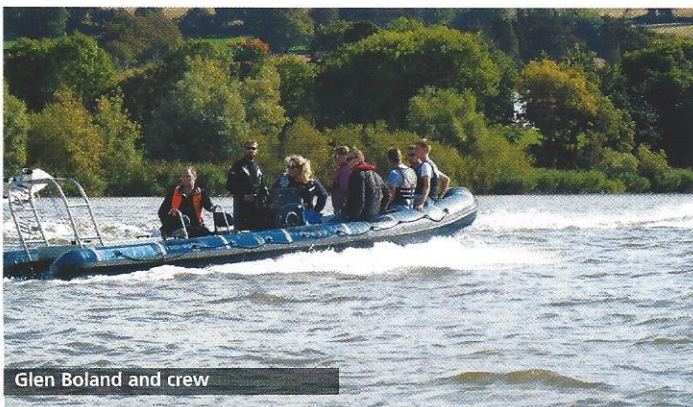
After a nice long and relaxing pitstop at Cappoquin for refreshments we headed towards Youghal on an ebbing tide. The water moves quickly and this allowed for some interesting speeds on the return journey. A convivial evening followed our action packed day on the Blackwater with plenty to discuss and recall.

PLAN SCUPPERED

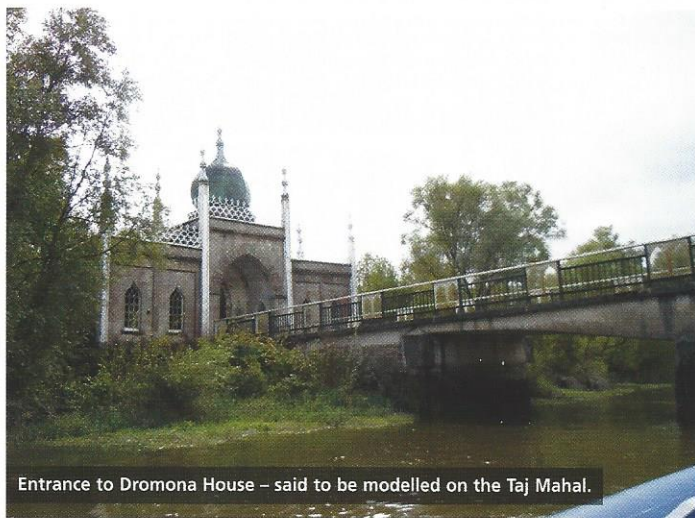
Day two's plan to head by sea to Ardmore was scuppered by winds and so plan B was another Blackwater run after an impromptu meeting of the committee near the slipway and some exploration of Youghal Bay.



Blackwater action!



Glen Boland and crew



Entrance to Dromona House – said to be modelled on the Taj Mahal.

We stopped at Villierstown Boat Club about 5km before Cappoquin, again in glorious sunshine, and were made most welcome by the members there which was fantastic, especially as it was unscheduled. It is a beautiful spot where a ferry used to operate and is now used for leisure and training. Another

great day on the water was followed by an efficient recovery at Ferrypoint.

The Blackwater should be on your bucket list of Irish waterways - it is a gem of a navigation.

Photos: Mark Merrigan

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