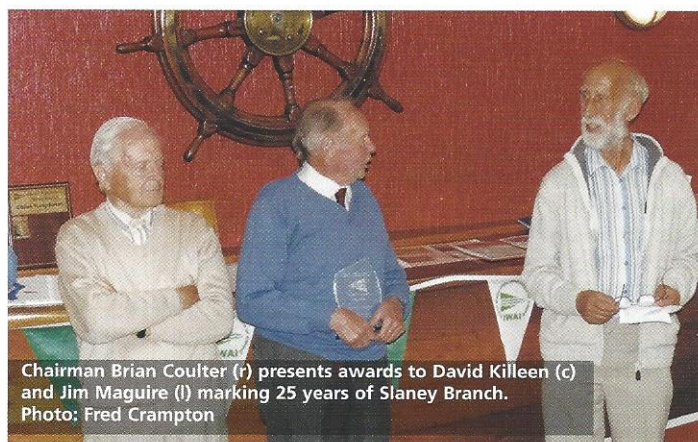


SLANEY SNIPPETS

FROM BRIAN COULTER & CATHERINE MALONE



Chairman Brian Coulter (r) presents awards to David Killeen (c) and Jim Maguire (l) marking 25 years of Slaney Branch.
Photo: Fred Crampton

SLANEY BRANCH – 25 YEARS

The Slaney Branch was founded in 1989 and to celebrate our first 25 years we had a great end of season family barbecue in the Wexford Harbour Boat and Tennis Club in September. We were delighted to have two of the founding members present – David Killeen, founding Chairman - currently our President - and Jim Maguire, founding Treasurer, a job he held for many years. Unfortunately Peter Miller, founding Secretary, and Michael Poole, founding PRO, were unable to attend on the night.

The idea of a Slaney Branch was cooked up between the late Cecil Miller and his good friend David Killeen while they were on a Shannon Rally in 1988. They organised a meeting in the Boat Club on 27 January 1989 and the proposal to establish a Slaney Branch was unanimously agreed. Cecil was keen boater and inland waterways enthusiast, and had already compiled the *Slaney Guide to the Tidal Section*. This charted the river from Wexford Harbour to Enniscorthy and was published in 1987. Sadly he passed away before the first AGM, but he left the legacy of Slaney Branch that has prospered to the present day.

To mark the special occasion David was awarded a plaque and Jim a presentation copy of the minutes of the first meeting. We all enjoyed a wonderful evening of stories and old photographs of the early days of the branch.



Slaney Cot
Photo: Darina Tully

IRISH TRADITIONAL BOATS

Last June, marine archaeologist Darina Tully gave a fascinating talk on Traditional Irish Boats including designs from the South-East in Wexford Harbour Boat & Tennis Club. Her talk covered the wide variety of traditional Irish boats ranging from small fishing boats, inland industrial craft, sailing workboats and various skin boats together with examples of important heritage craft. She described the unique craft found on the River Slaney including the extinct Slaney Gabbard – a sailing cargo boat – and the Slaney Cot which is still widely used today for fishing and competitive rowing.

Darina contributed to *Traditional Boats of Ireland* (2008) and has spent over two decades recording small traditional boats and fisheries. She coordinates Maritime Archaeology Studies at Saor-Ollscoil Na hÉireann and is Senior Tutor for the Nautical Archaeology Society in Ireland.

SLANEY CLEANUP

Volunteers from Slaney Branch met in July to clean up Kaat's Strand on the River Slaney. There



Clean Up Crew

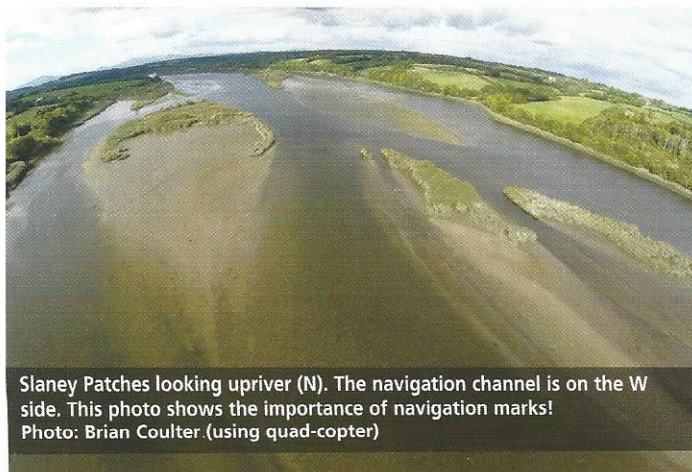
was 3 year's accumulated rubbish, most of it left on the beach by untidy, inconsiderate visitors, a smaller portion washed up by the tide. In September, the branch joined with Wexford Tidy Towns Committee and extended the cleanup for 1km upriver from Kaat's Strand. The branch has decided to keep the condition of this important beach under continuous review.

RIVER SLANEY UPDATE

Since marking the Slaney Patches, boating on the river has greatly increased. The Patches had been a 'scary' part of the river and up to recently, only regulars had been comfortable bringing their boats through this series of islands and sandbars. Now that the branch has laid 5 navigation marks, many boats are launching at nearby Killurin and heading upriver. Others are launching at Edermine and boating downriver with confidence. The Enniscorthy based Slaney Rescue and the

Wexford Branch of RNLi both find the new marks useful as they can now proceed through the Patches at full speed when necessary.

In September this year, the Slaney Branch organised a second Slaney Rally. Six boats went from the Boat Club to Killurin and picnicked there. The intention was to go as far as Edermine but a breakdown cut the journey short. However some of the boats went up through the Patches to check on a large area of water weed which had been causing difficulty to some boaters. In October, some of this weed detached, and when it got caught in the mooring chain of the upper mark, it caused it to drift over a kilometre down the river. The branch has since cleared away the weed from all of the marks and replaced the mark that was out of position. By relocating it 100m S of its previous position, the new transit now clears the river-weed bed.



Slaney Patches looking upriver (N). The navigation channel is on the W side. This photo shows the importance of navigation marks!
Photo: Brian Coulter (using quad-copter)