

BOYNE BANTER

FROM MYLES BRADY



Clearing the bank at the turf lock.



NEW YEAR - NEW VOLUNTEERS

Now that the New Year has arrived, the IWAI Boyne Navigation once again is appealing for new volunteers who might be interested in, and perhaps might become involved in the ongoing restoration work on the Boyne Navigation between Drogheda and Navan. The present branch members and volunteers who have been involved over the past few years have made a huge contribution to the restoration of this historic waterway, and the results of their efforts can now be seen at several points along the navigation, notably in Oldbridge, Stalleen, Slane and Navan. However, to maintain and even increase the progress and scope of the work along the waterway we are always looking forward to welcoming new volunteers to the effort!

Everybody is welcome, and there is always work to suit all abilities. On a practical level, our work parties are scheduled every fortnight, on Saturday, and dates and times are published on our website at www.boyne.iwai.ie. Keep an eye to the website, as our work location may change from workday to workday, depending on logistics, and progress at any particular location. Everybody involved will be entertained to a 'soup and sandwiches' lunch at 1.00p.m., courtesy of our ever efficient catering staff. All are welcome, and even if you cannot be involved in the work on the day, we would love to see you, and show you the progress on the restoration.

RESTORATION PROGRESS:

Restoration work over the past few months has been spread along the navigation; on the

Oldbridge section, at Stalleen on the next upstream section, and on the Slane section.

A short flight of stone steps was installed just upstream of the sealock at Oldbridge Lower, from water level to ground level, giving improved access to and from boats at this location. At

the upstream end of the Oldbridge section at the 'turf lock', a temporary earthen dam was installed just downstream of the location of the tailgates of the 'turf lock', allowing the lock to be dewatered, and measurements for replacement tailgates to be taken. Negotiations for the fabrication and installation of the tailgates are presently in hand. Work is also in progress at the 'turf lock', with the permission of the OPW who own the Oldbridge estate, to allow access from the towpath to the south side of the lock. As well as the work at the locks, maintenance of the Oldbridge canal section continued, with some clearance of fallen trees and debris. More clearance of fallen trees, and bank repairs will be carried out when the high winter water levels in the canal return to normal levels.

Work also continued, before the end of the year, on the repair and repointing of the stone bank retaining wall between the

'horsebridge' and the lock chamber on the next upstream section of the Navigation at Stalleen Lower. However, this repointing work had to be suspended due to the wet weather at the end of last year, and will be resumed as soon as the weather improves.

Following the installation of temporary water control sluices in the concrete walls in the locks at both ends of the Slane Canal section of the Navigation, the water level in this section of the Navigation is now being temporarily controlled at approximately working level until a major clearance of the canal and reconstruction of the lock gates can be undertaken.

On the Navan canal section, besides the very large tree which fell across the canal during the severe storms of Spring 2014, a further large tree has collapsed across the waterway close by, during the Autumn. Plans to have both trees cut and removed are in hands.

OTHER BRANCH ACTIVITIES

The 8th Branch AGM was held on Tuesday 2 December in Newgrange Lodge, Donore. A full Committee of four officers, and nine committee members was elected by a good attendance. We particularly welcome our new committee member from Slane, - Pat Doyle. The meeting was followed by a very pleasant supper featuring, among other delights, mince pies to mark the beginning of the festive season. Again, many thanks to our catering staff!

Photos: Seamus Costello



Steps above sealock



TV recording on the Boyne Canal.