

## Inland Waterways News

### One for your bookshelf

*Brian J Goggin*

OK, I'm biased; I admit it. The guy gave me a review copy of his book, the Royal Canal/M50 photo on our front page and two others aerial photos inside the newsletter — and a quarter-page ad as well. Of course I'm biased. But the book is really good.

**Ireland — *The Inner Island*** by Kevin Dwyer is a book of photos of Irish inland waterways: the Lee (well, he is a Corkman), the Munster Blackwater (including the Bride Navigation and the Lombardstown to Mallow Canal), the Barrow, the Grand, the Royal, the Shannon, the Shannon-erne and the Erne. What you get is about 150 pages of large colour photos.

Kevin Dwyer travelled all the waterways he covered — you can try working out which firms he hired from — taking photos from the land or the water: there are some lovely shots, like the bridge at Carrick-on-Shannon and the horse at Monasterevan, that would grace any book. But it's the aerial photos (which make up most of the book) that really make this book special: seeing, from above, places that you know from the water.

The photos were taken between June 1997 and November 1999. I'd say that a lot of them were taken in spring and autumn, because the number of boats is often quite small. And the weather seems to have been universally kind — but I suppose we wouldn't have had the photos at all if there had been heavy rain.

Here are a few of the aerial photos that really struck me. There's a photo of Inistiogue that makes the geography — and the charm — of the place immediately clear. Along the Barrow, the aerial shots show both the cuts (lateral canals) and the river, side by side, so you can see the stretches that you don't see from a boat. You can learn what's inside that wall at Goresbridge — and what a high proportion of the roofs of Bagenalstown are made of galvanised metal. There's a glorious photo of Milford: unless you get out and walk, you don't really grasp the layout from the water. And if you haven't been on the Barrow, this lot should convince you to go.

The aerial photo of Monasterevan is another triumph and there are some very interesting photos of Pollardstown Fen. Then it's into the air over Dublin docks and the straight line from Locks 1 to 8 on the Main Line of the Grand. There's a really nice tennis-court near the Leinster Aqueduct and you can try identifying individual boats at Lowtown. Then Tullamore, and Belmont Lock with the Brosna beside it, and so to Shannon Harbour on a sunny day.

On the Royal, you'll recognise the photo on our front cover: the Wonderful O of the M50 Aqueduct is on page 73. Maynooth looks well, and at Fern's Lock, I think I recognise boats from last year's rally.

You see the Shannon from the bottom up: the huge works at Ardnacrusha and Parteen — and the encroachment of jetties into the river at Killaloe. At Dromineer, Shannon Sailing looks very sheltered. Further north, I was struck by the photo of Meelick: such a lot of water all around. There are lovely field-patterns at Clonmacnoise, great bogs at Lanesborough, a lot of trees at Roosky and a lot of water at Carnadoe — and some boats going rather too fast near Carrick. Lough Key and Lough Allen are both included.

And so on to the Shannon-erne Waterway and the Erne, one of the most interesting parts of the book because of the complex interweaving of water and land. There's a picture of Ballyduff



Lock, for instance, with little lakes everywhere — and I hadn't realised that Ballinamore is on such a pronounced bend. Upper Lough Erne is half water and half land — and there's where we tied the dog at the hotel at Carrybridge. But the journey continues: Enniskillen, Lower Lough Erne and finally Belleek.

I can think of no excuse for **not** getting this book. The publication details are in Kevin Dwyer's ad on page 10. You can buy directly from him (he's selling prints as well) or through the bookshops: the book was available in any bookshop I checked. It's definitely worth buying — and I hope there's enough waterway left for a second volume: we might at last find out the secrets of the Corrib!

