

Inland Waterways News

Sean Murphy's *The Shannon Skipper*

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Sean Murphy of **Rayian** has written and published a slim volume that is, as he says, "one man's view of the river, its harbours, locks and bridges." His foreword begins thus:

Many people have asked questions over the years of what they would find if they went to a certain harbour. In this booklet I will attempt to answer some of the questions.

And that's exactly what he does, with coverage of locks and bridges as well.

The best way to think of this book is as a conversation, sitting at the bar, with an experienced boatman, who gives you the benefit of what he has learned over the years. The book is absolutely packed with information, a lot of which you won't find in any other publication. It's short, direct and to the point, and Sean tells it like it is. A few extracts will convey the flavour.

Mountshannon: *Do not moor overnight outside the wall in case of weather changing.*

Athlone: *You will find if the weir is flowing with any volume of water the boat will need an extra touch of power to keep a straight line approaching the lock or jetty.*

Lanesboro: *If you are going downriver look at the trees and the smoke coming out of the chimney of the power station, and if it is being whipped away by the wind and the tops of the trees are swinging, then approach the lake with caution.*

Jamestown: *The problem you must watch for is the flow on the river, which can be strong down under the bridge.*

There's much more about each of those harbours, and all the others, but I think you'll see the point: this is direct, straightforward, useful advice and we can probably all think of cases where boaters would have benefited if they'd known it in advance.

The book is available for €10 (€11 incl P&P) from Sean Murphy, The Cottage, Woodpark, Portumna, Co Galway. Well worth it.