

Lough Neagh Pilot

Brian J Goggin



Michael Savage is a member of the River Bann and Lough Neagh Association, a branch of the IWA. He has just produced the **River Bann and Lough Neagh Pilot**, a 104-page vade mecum that will be essential reading for anyone exploring those waters. In fact the **Pilot** is so well produced, and its contents so interesting, that it's worth reading even if you never go near Lough Neagh.

Michael begins at the Barmouth, the entrance to the Lower Bann from the sea, and follows the Lower Bann to Lough Neagh. Then he takes the north, east, south and west shores of Lough Neagh in turn, and follows up with chapters on the Blackwater, the Upper Bann and Coney Island.

For each area, Michael gives detailed directions, backed up with photographs (many taken from the air) and annotated maps. Directions cover navigation, interesting features and facilities for boats. The **Pilot** also has sections on safety, the environment, Lough Neagh Rescue, boat clubs, useful contacts and more.

Michael has taken an immense amount of trouble to get his information complete and correct. One indication of his passion for completeness is the comment about Portglenone Marina: "The buoyancy of the finger berths does not support more than two adults." That's the sort of information I'd prefer to have in advance, rather than discovering for myself through wet experience.

And here's another example. Discussing Ballyronan Safe Harbour, Michael shows an annotated chart and provides two aerial photographs. He also describes the harbour and the approaches, commenting on the starboard marker that

This starboard marker is nearly a third of a cable (60 metres) further west than shown on the Admiralty chart 2163 and cannot be seen approaching from the south.

His description of the marina includes the phone number, the type of fitting used on the water taps and that for the electricity connection and the facilities at the Community Centre and in the nearby village.

The book is a model of its kind, even to the extent of being printed on splashproof paper, and I have heard members of other IWAI branches wondering whether they should be doing something similar for their own areas.

The **Pilot** costs £20 or €30 plus P&P (with a discount for IWAI members). For more information, consult <http://riverbannloughneagh.org> or contact Michael on 0(044) 77-1536-8050.

