

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

FRIDAY 20th MAY - The ROYAL CANAL AMENITY GROU - PUBLIC MEETING In the NEW GIRL'S SCHOOL, OAKLAWN, LEIXLIP 8.00 pm.

Dr. Ian Bath will give an illustrated talk on the Royal Canal with emphasis on the restoration of the canal in County Kildare. EVERYONE WELCOME.

SSATURDAY 28th MAY (and during the following week) - The I.W.A.I. WATER BUS "CLONSKEAGH" will operate from LOUISA BRIDGE, LEIXLIP. Full details at above meeting **sted on posters in Leixlip. Or telephone** Terence Mellagh at 973946.

SUNDAY 29th MAY - ROYAL CANAL AMENITY GROUP 12th LEVEL RALLY - BLANCHARDSTOWN to LEIXLIP and return.

10.00 - 10.45am 10.00 - 10.45am BOATS ASSEMBLE ABOVE 12th lock (Navan Road) (Lock-up car and trailer parking available for those arriving BEFORE 10.45 am)

11.00 SHARP DEPART BLANCHARDSTOWN

1.00 pm LUNCH (Picnic) at Confey near Leixlip  
AFTERNOON The choice is yours - Either relax at the lunch stop where there will probably be organised run for the kids or Explore further along the level, via the Rye

4.00 pm Depart Confey

END or RALLY.

N.B. DINGHIES AND LAKE BOATS can be launched at the 12th lock. The NEW SLIPWAY is available for larger boats, e.g. day cruisers, wishing to join the rally.

SUNDAY 19th JUNE WATER SPORTS DAY on the 10th level at ASHTOWN organised jointly by the R.C.A.G. and NAVAN ROAD COMMUNITY COUNCIL. BOAT TRIPS, CANOE EVENTS, FISHING COMPETITION, ETC., ETC.

ALSO Throughout May the I.W.A.I. Water Bus will continue to operate from Granard Bridge (Between Castleknock and Blanchardstown). For details of schedule telephone Dublin Tourism 01- 747733. To hire the Bus for private parties telephone Terence Mellagh 01-973946. The Water Bus will return to the Royal Canal later in the summer and, hopefully, operate for a time from MAYNOOTH.

The R.C.A.G. boats "Royal Talbot" and "Royal Granard" will operate every Saturday and Sunday afternoon, throughout the summer (EXCEPT 29th MAY) on the 10th and 12th levels. Posters giving full details are on display locally.

9th LEVEL

In addition to the work being done by C.I.E. (see page 2), the 1st Dublin Boy Scouts have offered their services to help restore this level. They will undertake general tidying and clearance of the waterway and towpath.

# ROYAL CANAL NEWS

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SUPPORT NEEDED

A question frequently asked by I.W.A.I. members, particularly those not living close enough to the Royal Canal to be able to join the various work parties, is "How can I help with the restoration of the Royal?" Th. simple answer is "By joining the Royal Canal Amenity Group". The Group has a rapidly expanding membership and its activities are equally rapidly spreading along the canal from Dublin westwards. Very soon the County Kildare stretch of the canal will be the scene of considerable activity and already there are tentative plans for work to commence west of Mullingar (see news item).

All these projects will stretch the Group's resources to the limit and new membership subscriptions and donations are urgently needed to ensure that the present momentum is maintained. The first goal is to reopen as a navigable waterway the 37 miles of canal between Blanchardstown and Killucan by the Spring of 1979. This involves the restoration of five locks, two of which have double chambers, so a fair amount of money has to be raised in the immediate future, if the work is to be completed by the target date.

The majority of I.W.A.I. members will certainly wish to be directly associated with this scheme of voluntary restoration which will ultimately provide an additional 95 miles of inland navigation. Your support is urgently needed so please complete the Application form below to become a member of the Group or send a donation to the Membership Secretary (Mrs. Nason). YOUR subscription, big or small, will help to ensure that the Royal Canal will live again and be preserved as a through navigation between the Liffey and the Shannon.

PLEASE DO THIS NOW!

## ROYAL CANAL AMENITY GROUP MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Please complete this form and send with your **subscription** to:-  
Mrs. N. Nason, Brook Lodge Navan Road. Castleknock, Co. Oublin. (Cheques should be made payable to the Royal Canal Amenity Group.)

**Please indicate with X membership grade required**

ORDINARY £1  FAMILY £2  GROUP £2

JUNIOR (under 18) 50p  LIFE £15

I enclose cheque/P.O. for £.....

Name:.....

Address: .....

Date: .....

## BANKER'S ORDER

To: Bank • .....

Branch: .....

Please charge to my/our account end pay to the BANK Of IRELAND, 8LANCHARDSTOWN, CO. DUBLIN for the credit of the ROYAL CANAL AMENITY GROUP (Account No. 18483055.

The Sum of €.... Sum in words:.....

Commencing now and thereafter on each 1st of November until further notice.

Name & Initials.....

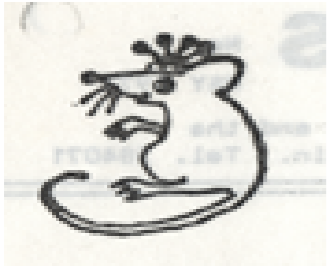
Bank please Quote

Signed:.....

Address:.....

Date:.....

## ROYAL CANAL WATER RATS



On the 2nd and 16th April, the Royal Canal Water Rats resumed hostilities on junk, garbage and other objects lurking in the way of the smooth flow of the Royal Canal in Dublin. This time their efforts were concentrated on Liffey Junction, with some difficulty, as it was not possible to drain the lock completely.

Cable spools, plastic moulds, concrete fence posts, pallets, window frames, et al were laboriously hauled out. The odd grappling hook gave out under the strain and splashed back into the depths with its burden, but nothing daunted, the stalwart Rats gritted their teeth, flexed their muscles, dug their heels in, and started all over again. It is reliably reported that Rats involved are beginning to sport chest expansions of at least a few inches. On future forays to the canal, to be held on alternate Saturdays, it is hoped that demolition helmets - to protect Rats on the bottom from the occasional U.F.O. will be available, also stronger ropes, and even a lorry equipped with a crane.

The number of home-made rafts which have been found on the bottom would indicate that quite a sizeable number of kids yearn to mess around in boats, so plans for a canoe club are well under way and could provide a healthy and enjoyable recreation for children in the area.

The Rats were delighted to hear from Mr. A. Brennan of Ratoath Estate, Cabra West that the local Boy Scout Troop has chosen the Royal Canal Clean-up as their project in the Community festival to be held in June - July. Their help will be very much appreciated in the coming months.

As long as people are attracted to the Royal Canal, to observe the wildlife, to enjoy its waters and to walk along the towpath, the canal will be a living entity, A relief from the monotony of urban living, and the interest and concern to maintain it will continue. This is the ambition of the Water Rats and the reason for their efforts.

### LOCK HOUSE VACATED

It is saddening to see that the lock cottage at Liffey Junction (7th lock) is now vacant, the windows bricked up, and the little gardens rapidly deteriorating. It is understood that Mr. Keogh, the bank ranger, has moved to a larger cottage nearby. Hopefully the lock house can be preserved as it is one of the very few remaining examples of original Royal Canal architecture of its kind left in the City.

### WESTMEATH SUMMER WORKCAMP?

Nearly all the locks in the flight leading down from the summit level at Coolnahay to Ballynacargy (26 - 35) are densely overgrown with trees and bushes. Being situated below the Ballinacargy dam, the locks are of course practically dry. For some time the desirability of removing all the overgrowth in order to help preserve the masonry has been in the minds of those concerned about the future of the canal. Now, it appears, it may be possible for this task to commence in the very near future for, at the suggestion of a worldwide organisation concerned with voluntary work camps, the Royal Canal Amenity Group is exploring the possibility of such a camp being organised on the Coolnahay flight. The I.W.A.I. Council has already agreed to give financial assistance if required, thus considerably increasing the possibility of the project being approved for this summer.

### 9th LEVEL

A start has been made by C.I.E. to restore this level, following a request from the R.C.A.G. some time ago. All the overgrowth has been cleared, the decayed lock gates removed and general tidying of the lock area carried out prior, it is hoped, to the installation of a temporary wooden weir to maintain water in the level

### THE ROYAL CANAL

I stood upon this lovely hill  
And looked down the valley far  
To where the silver ribbon  
Went slowly on its lily green  
It passed by banks of lovely green  
A sight so fair to see  
And slowly went its winding way  
Down towards Killashee.

A boat came slowly round the bend  
Sailing peacefully  
Drawn by two horses  
It came slowly towards me  
The helmsman upon the deck  
Was singing an old song  
Smoke curling from its funnel As it  
gracefully sailed on.

And then it passed up through the lock  
Lock number forty two  
And sailing on beneath Ards bridge It passed on  
from my view.  
I often sit and wonder  
Why those who rule our land  
Could be so dense and foolish  
To close this waterway so grand.

Tom Rogers~ Lock Keeper (retired), 42nd lock.

### ROYAL CANAL CANOE CLUB FORMED

The quiet and peaceful waters of the Royal Canal make an ideal location for instructing novices in the handling of a canoe. Furthermore, the restoration of levels is rapidly increasing the water space available and already the touring canoeist is being attracted back to this scenic waterway. With this in mind, the Royal Canal Amenity Group decided to sponsor the formation of a canoe club in the Ashtown - Blanchardstown - Clonsilla area.

The club, to be known as the Royal Canal Canoe Club, was formed at a public meeting held by the Group on Friday 22nd April. It is intended to affiliate to the Irish Canoe Union and to put on a water-sports display at Ashtown on Sunday 19th June (see forthcoming Events, page 4). Those interested in joining the club should contact either Alan Nason, Brook Lodge, Navan Road, Castleknock (Tel. 383444) or Jim Forde, 20 Glendhu Road, Dublin, 7 (Tel. 304391).

### BOAT SLIP NEAR LEIXLIP

The slipway was completed in February, and an Amenity Grant has since been received from Kildare County Council. The completion of the surfacing of the approach road and trailer park is in hand, gates are to be erected, and the whole area fenced. The slip is already in use but the official opening ceremony will be held over until the whole project is complete. The accompanying map should help you locate the slip which is on the north bank of the canal, about 1 mile N.E. of Leixlip.

