



# **Neath and Tennant Canals Trust**

**Quarterly Newsletter – No. 127**

**March 2009**



Neath Canal Restoration at Resolven receives Civic Trust '25 Years of Restoration in Wales Award' - March 2009

## News.

### **Civic Trust Award.**

Over 100 buildings and public spaces have received Awards, Commendations and Mentions in the 50<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary Civic Trust Awards. The winners were announced to an audience of over 480 at the Emirates Stadium, London on 18<sup>th</sup>. March 2009. The 50<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary celebration was hosted by Griff Rhys Jones, President of the Civic Trust. There were 6 Civic Trust award Winners in Wales:

#### Special Awards Winners -

Neath Canal Restoration – 25 Years of Restoration in Wales Award.

Allt-y-Bela – 25 Years of Restoration in Wales Award.

Bodysgallen Hall Hotel – 25 Years of Restoration in Wales Award.

Drift Park, Rhyl – Hard Landscaping Award.

#### Commendations –

Nant Clwyd House, Ruthin, Denbighshire.

#### Mentions –

Blaenavon World Heritage Centre.

What are Special Awards? – each year, a series of prestigious Special Awards are awarded to outstanding schemes. These are given to schemes which show excellence in a specific category or field and are sponsored by supporters. Winners receive a plaque and certificate. The Neath Canal Award was sponsored by Cadw and the Welsh Assembly Government.

### **Thomas Dadford.**

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, new rulings have been applied to trip boats carrying 12 passengers or less. All boat crews have to be trained and tested in boat handling, health & safety etc. After many phone calls, meetings and discussions over the winter months with the various bodies qualified to train and assess, Gareth Hughes has agreed to become our trainer and assessor. He will attend a course in London at the end of April and then he will then be qualified to train ‘Thomas Dadford’ crew members and award them the necessary certificate. Gareth will also be qualified to train other people who wish to use the canals. We will be contacting all boat crew members as soon as Gareth is qualified and able to start training.

This means that the ‘Thomas Dadford’ will not be starting public trips at Easter this year. Trips will not start until the crews have been trained and members will be notified of the starting date when it is known.

There are also a number of maintenance issues involved with the boat e.g. the engine, which will have to be resolved before boat trips can commence.

## **News (cont.)**

### **Insurance**

All our insurances for the coming year have been paid – covering the Trust and the boat.

### **Neath Canal at Resolven.**

The Trust is keeping an eye on the state of the Neath Canal at Resolven. One of our members reports that it needs quite a lot of maintenance and there has been a towpath ‘wash-out’ near Crugiau Lock. Ty Banc Cottage remains empty.

### **In the Press!**

The canals are constantly being featured in the local newspapers with some beautiful colour photographs being published recently, sent in by readers. The most recent photograph appeared in the Western Mail last Saturday – Resolven Basin.

### **Aberdulais Basin.**

Aberdulais Basin has recently been de-weeded and the surrounding grass cut. The Trust rents the Basin from the Tennant Canal Company.

### **Aberdulais Falls.**

The National Trust Site at Aberdulais Falls reopens for the summer season soon ( it only opens at weekends in the winter)

### **Tonna.**

The new wall and artwork recently built for the Tonna Woodland Project, near St. Ann’s Terrace, Tonna, looks excellent and greatly enhances the area.

### **Catch the Bus!**

The Neath Canal is widely featured in a new publication relating to access to interesting places which can be reached by bus. It is called – ‘Walks, Waterfalls and Hidden Wonders.’

### **Neath Canal Navigation.**

Our Chairman, Peter Ricketts, has been nominated by the Trust to serve on the Neath Canal Navigation Committee for another year. He was duly elected at their Annual General Meeting held recently.

### **Aberdulais Aqueduct.**

Negotiations are continuing regarding the restoration of this important structure.

### **Ynysbwlllog Aqueduct.**

The rebuilding of this new structure across the River Neath was completed last year and it is hoped the official opening will be held soon.

## **More News.**

### **Meeting.**

Our Chairman, Peter Ricketts recently attended the Western Valleys Strategic Regeneration Area Stakeholder Scoping Meeting as this affects the future of the Neath and Tennant Canals.

### **Exhibition.**

There was an excellent exhibition recently at the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery of the work of Winifred Coombe-Tennant. Of particular interest to us, as canal enthusiasts, was a gouache of Aberdulais Aqueduct, painted in the 1920s.

### **Website.**

Don't forget to look at the Trust's website. We have been complimented on its quality on many occasions.

### **Lock House, Tonna.**

Lock House, Tyn-yr-heol Lock, Tonna was featured recently on the cover of Astley, Samuel & Leeder's national magazine. A different area of Britain is featured in each issue.

### **Merlin.**

Have you been watching 'Merlin' on BBC television on a Saturday evening? They are making the next series at the moment and are filming at the Neath Abbey Ruins. It will be interesting to see if the Tennant Canal is visible!

### **National Waterfront Museum.**

A Family and Local History Research Day will be held at the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea on the 25<sup>th</sup>. April 2009. The Trust will have a stand there so come along and support us. The exhibition is open from 10 am to 4 p.m and entry is free.

### **Neath Canal.**

Before boat trips can start again on the Neath Canal the rubbish which has collected over the winter months will have to be cleared. In the area around B&Q/Morrisons a number of small trees/branches have fallen into the canal and there are shopping trolleys and traffic cones in a number of places. The towpath between Neath and Tonna continues to attract walkers, joggers and cyclists in ever increasing numbers.



Can you identify this stretch of canal in the Neath/Swansea area? If you can, send your answer to the Editor (address on the back page or send an email) A draw will be made in the April Committee Meeting and the winner will receive an OS Map of the Swansea/Neath Area -

( OS Explorer 165 – Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot – Scale 1:25,000)

Don't forget to send in your photos or 'Letters to the Editor' for inclusion in the newsletters.





**From the archives – Replacing the Lock gates at Resolven.**



Before Resoration – Lock at Clyne (above) Lock at Tonna (below)

**Neath and Tennant Canals Trust.  
Council of Management 2008 – 2009.**

**Chairman:** Peter Ricketts. Tel: 01792 360688

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**Social Secretary:** Vacant.

**Publicity Officer:** Hywel Jenkins.

**Newsletter Editor:** Ted Porter.

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Jean Morgan  
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Articles, letters, photographs etc. are always needed to keep your newsletters interesting. All contributions should be sent to the Editor:

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- by the first week of the month of publication i.e. March, June, September and December.