
IHAI	BULLETIN		



Greetings to all our members around the island of Ireland and abroad.

We hope all our members and their families are well and are keeping safe observing all the recommendations to prevent the spread of Covid 19. The board of IHAI have been meeting regularly via Zoom. Unfortunately much of the discussion has been about cancelled or postponed outings and events. We are not alone in this respect. A recent copy of the AIA journal tells a similar story of many postponed events throughout GB.

ILEN Heritage Boat

It was good to see the Heritage Award winning boat, the schooner Ilen, featured on RTÉ News at the end of August. It is well worth having a look back at Jennie O'Sullivan's report online. The Ilen was also featured in the "Wooden Boat" magazine, in the Mar/Apr edition, with a beautiful photograph on the cover of the boat in full sail. Some great photos of the Ilen can also be seen at Afloat.ie.

Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration

Meath County Council (MCC) have announced a plan for the Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration. Details of the proposed stages for this development can be seen on the MCC website, under Heritage Projects. We are informed by MCC that funding is now in place to proceed with the design of the route and to bring the proposal right through to the planning stage.

The Boyne Canal/ Navigation is probably one of the best kept secrets of our Industrial Heritage outside county Meath. Almost forty years ago Canon Cyril Ellison wrote his book "*The Waters of the Boyne and Blackwater*".

This is an informative book about the history of the Navigation, including the mills and canal structure along the route from Drogheda to Navan.

Anyone interested in this location should keep a close watch on the development plan and contribute to the public consultation stages over the coming months. There have been various efforts over the past forty years to improve the canal ramparts for fishing and walking access. The Boyne Canal Action Group have been very active in restoring the canal and its structures.

A Tour of the Boyne Canal/Navigation

When we are once again permitted, it would be well worth taking a tour by car, bicycle or by just walking the Ramparts. The industrial heritage history along the route from Drogheda to Navan is well worth a visit.

Drogheda is a good starting point to see the notable railway viaduct which carries trains at high level across the river valley. The railway station has many original buildings worth visiting.

From Drogheda a new board walk has been built along the south bank of the Boyne, under the main support tower of the new Boyne Bridge. This is very close to the first lock on the Boyne Navigation. The river is tidal to this location and the Boyne Canal Action Group have restored the



lock completely here. The walkway continues to the gates of Oldbridge House which is a busy interpretive centre which celebrates the Battle of the Boyne. A short distance further along this narrow road can be found the Obelisk Bridge. Near this bridge, a section of the canal ramparts is open to walkers.

The next stop on the tour is at Slane, where another section of the canal ramparts is open to walkers. It is worth walking a short distance along the canal bank, east from Slane Bridge, to view the bridge first and then to see the extent of Jebb's Mill on the north side of the river. David Jebb was instrumental in building the canal to transport his flour from his mill to Drogheda, for export.



Following the river toward Navan it is worth stopping at the Broadboyne bridge near Stackallen. The lock at this point is overgrown, but the original lock keeper's house has been maintained and is still lived in. A short distance further east along the road, the ruins of the mill are visible, close to the point where the canal boats had to cross the river. Back at Broadboyne bridge, the canal ramparts are walkable from here to Navan. The 8km from here to Navan is a very interesting walk (or cycle), passing Rowley's Lock and Athlumney Mill.

The end of the canal is at the rear of Spicer's Mill. The original mill at the confluence of the Boyne and Blackwater has been converted to apartments.

Somerville Bridge is well hidden now as it has been widened and flattened since Richard Evans, the original canal engineer, built it in 1792. The history of this bridge is recorded by three label stones on the parapet.

In Navan there are many other notable industrial heritage sites. The railway line linking with the Drogheda line is still in use by Tara Mines/Boliden to transport lead and zinc ore to Dublin Port. The Navan rail viaduct and station are worth visiting.

The canal was originally to be constructed on to Trim but did not get approval to proceed beyond Navan.

If time allows, it is worth following the river to view Kilcarn bridge and also one of the oldest masonry arch bridges, Newtown Bridge, in Trim.



To fully appreciate the industrial heritage of the Boyne, Canon Ellison's book is well worth reading. Sadly however, it is no longer in print. Perhaps Meath County Council might consider a reprint to highlight the new Greenway and its history.

I hope you enjoy your tour of the Boyne Valley.

Bygone Days 3

Can you identify the location of this members visit and what they were looking at?



Finally, the answer to the 'Bygone Days' memory test in the last Bulletin is former Radio Éireann transmitter station at Moydrum, Co. Westmeath