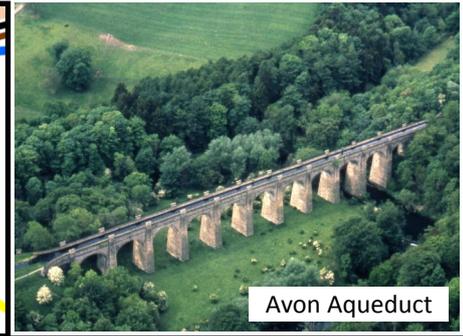
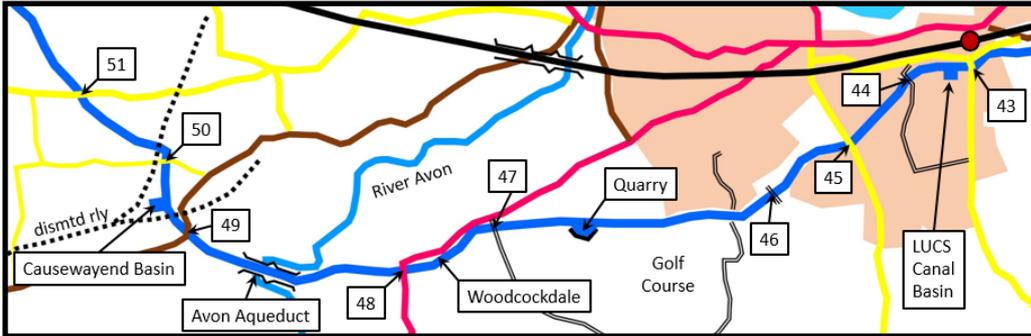




Your journey to the Avon Aqueduct and Causewayend Basin



Your journey along the Union Canal today became possible with the re-opening of Preston Road bridge (No 45) in 1992. At that time it was blocked at various locations after it became a “Remainder Waterway” in 1968. Prior to that the canal had lain idle since commercial traffic ceased in the 1930s. When new housing estates south of the canal in Linlithgow were built the original humped canal bridge at Preston Road was replaced by a culvert in 1965 to make the road safer. Its 1992 re-opening was as a result of campaigning by LUCS and others.

The remaining blockages were later to be removed as part of the £85 million Millennium Link project to restore the Union and Forth & Clyde Canals and provide the Falkirk Wheel as a new connection between them. Previously the two canals were connected by eleven locks at Falkirk. In 1933 these were closed and filled in.

Follow your progress along the canal by the features on the map which are described below

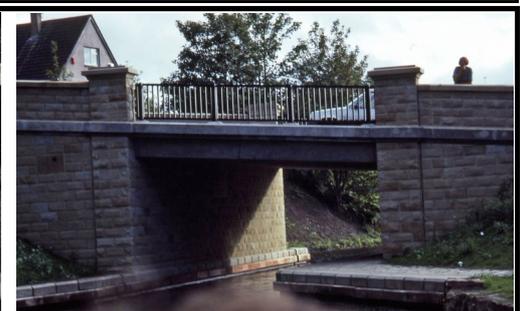
Miles from LUCS Basin	Feature	Details
0	Canal Basin	When built around 1820 the basin was originally a coal depot with two cottages and two stables for four horses. The iron pillar by the tea room was part of an old crane. The house in the trees is Canal House which was the Canal Engineer’s house. It is now privately owned. On the north side of the basin is Learmonth gardens and its dovecote built in the 16th century for the local Baron Ross to ensure he had a fresh pigeon meat through the winter. It has 370 nesting boxes.
	Leaving the basin	To the south is Rosemount Park, a public park. The house by the north bank used to be an Inn and a row of canal workers' houses. Beyond these can be seen the 17th C Town Hall, behind that the 13th century Parish Church of St Michael with its 1960's 'Crown of Thorns' and behind that the Royal Palace of the Stuart Kings where Mary Queen of Scots was born.
0.2	Bridge 44 - Friarsbrae	East of this bridge north of the canal is a house with a false window, which some say is be from the days of Window Tax. The bridge is one of the original 62 fixed bridges: each of these usually has its number in the centre of the arch. West of the bridge is a winding hole to turn boats around. This may be so-called from the term “wynd” - to turn or it to be derived from the use of the wind to assist turn the boat
0.5	Bridge 45 - Preston Rd	When this new bridge - opened in 1992 to replace a culvert, the canal was given a dog-leg to provide sufficient height under sloping road above. To the West of this bridge can be seen Linlithgow Primary School and behind it St Joseph's RC Primary School. To the west of them is Linlithgow Academy.
0.8	Bridge 46	This is an accommodation bridge that enabled farmers to get to their fields when the canal was built. It is called Katie Shaw’s bridge. To the south between here and the old quarry can be seen the golf course: to the north, an overflow weir just beyond the water pipes crossing the canal. To the north is the Edinburgh—Glasgow railway viaduct and Grangemouth petro-chemical plant.



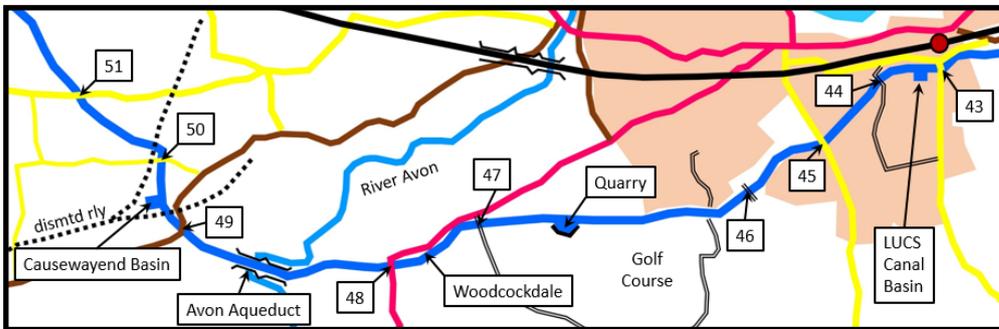
Preston Road—Culvert



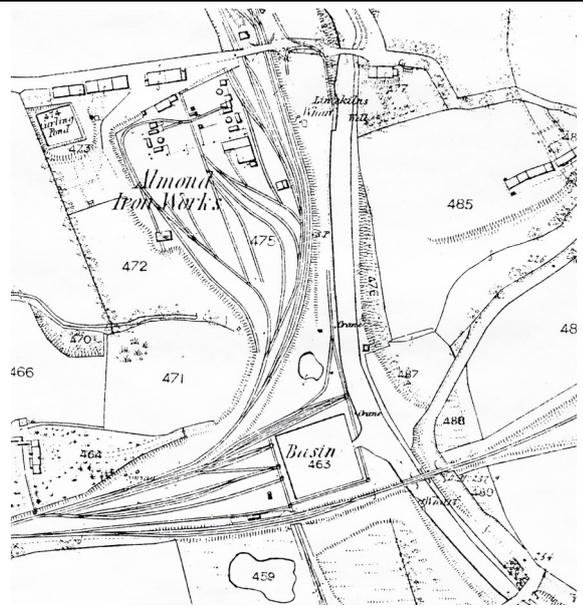
Bridge Under construction



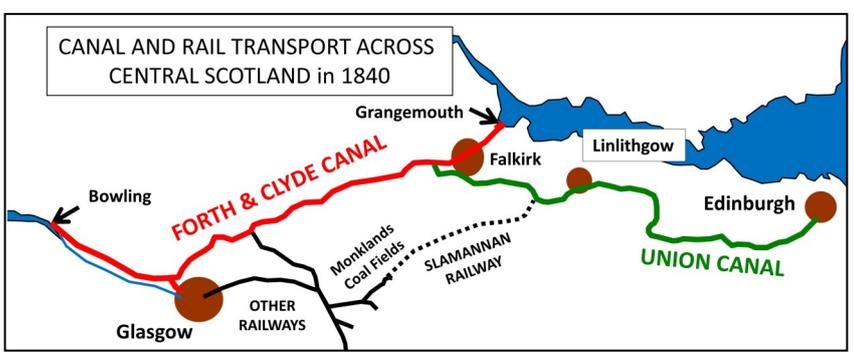
Bridge completed 1992



Miles	Feature	Details
1.4	Old Quarry	The quarry provided whinstone for road building, which was mainly transported by canal to Edinburgh.
1.8	Bridge 47	This bridge carries a road to a farm. West of the bridge and to the south is another overflow weir.
2.0	Woodcockdale	These buildings used to be canal stables with storage above and living accommodation at each end. They are now used by West Lothian Sea Scouts.
2.1	Bridge 48 – Lanark Rd	Carries the A706, Linlithgow to Lanark road. Under the bridge can be seen grooves for modern stop planks to allow sections of the canal either side to be emptied. Immediately west of the bridge is a large winding hole where lime was loaded from a quarry on Bowden Hill to the south.
2.5 to 2.6	Avon Aqueduct	The canal aqueduct over the River Avon is the 2nd largest in the UK. It has 12 arches, is 810 ft long and 86 ft above the River Avon. Built to a Thomas Telford design it carries water in an iron trough. At east end of aqueduct is a staging stone to mark the division "betwixt the third and fourth stages" and, to the south, an old canal barge abandoned in an old dry dock when the canal was closed in the 1930s
2.9	Bridge 49	Carries B825 to Muiravonside Park. West of this bridge on the south bank is the Bridge 49 bistro
3	Causewayend Basin	Your cruise turns around in the 150 ft square Causewayend Basin. Built in 1837 as the terminus of the new Slamannan Railway, it was used as a rail / barge transshipment basin for coal from the emerging North Lanarkshire coalfields. Compared with previous route via the Forth & Clyde canal this was half the distance to Edinburgh and took a quarter of the time as there were no locks on this route. From 1840 it also became a key Glasgow-Edinburgh passenger route, until the completion of the Edinburgh-Glasgow Railway in 1842. The Slamannan railway closed in 1930 and the remains of its embankment can be seen to the east of the basin. One either side of the canal can be seen the abutments of a dismantled railway bridge built for the extension of the railway to Bo'ness in 1851.



The Union Canal—took four years to build and opened in 1822. From Edinburgh to Falkirk it is 31.5 miles long. Other than its link to the Forth & Clyde (F&C) Canal it has no locks and follows the 240 feet contour. This required three major aqueducts and a half mile tunnel. Originally the Union and F&C canals were connected by 11 locks at Falkirk. These closed in the 1930s and have now been replaced by the Falkirk Wheel and its locks. The Union Canal can take boats 3 ½ ft deep, 12 ½ ft wide and 70 ft long.



The canal replaced the bone-jarring journey over rough roads by stagecoach to transform passenger travel between Glasgow and Edinburgh. Before the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway opened in 1842, hundreds of thousands of passengers were carried on Swift boats pulled by galloping horses which did the journey in 8 hours via the Forth & Clyde Canal and 4 hours via the Slamannan Railway.

The Union canal has two significant claims to fame. In 1834, shipbuilder John Scott Russell first noticed a wave on the canal that maintained its shape at constant speed. This phenomenon is now the basis of long-distance communication in fibre optic cables. On a more grisly note Burke and Hare worked as navvies on the canal before their murdering spree.