Linlithgow Union Canal Society

Annual Report
2022 - 2023

Linlithgow Union Canal Society, Manse Road Basin, Linlithgow, EH49 6AJ

Registered in Scotland as a Company Limited by Guarantee. Company No. 71328

Registered Charity No. SC011100

2023 LUCS COMMITTEE

David Shirres	**Chair / Treasurer**
Mike Smith	**Secretary**
Andy Eaglesfield	**Vice Chair, Membership Secretary**
Peter Lewis	**Vice Chair, Marketing**
Lynne Nelson	**Tea Room**
Ronnie Reis	**Boats**
Doug Scott	**Booking Secretary**

Contents

			Page
1	Chair's Report	David Shirres	1
2	Visitor Numbers	David Shirres	3
3	Bookings Numbers	John Aitken	3
4	Treasurer's Report	David Shirres	4
5	Independent Examiner's Report	Philip Bald	5
6	Membership Secretary	Andy Eaglesfield	7
7	Museum Sales	Lynne Nelson	8
8	Receptionists	Andy Eaglesfield	8
9	Booking Secretary	Doug Scott	9
10	Tea Room	Anne Mackie	10
11	Boat Report – St Michael	Allister Mackie	11
12	Boat Report – St Magdalene	Ronnie Reis	13
13	Boat Report – Victoria	Peter Lewis	14
14	Boat Report – Leamington	Eric Dallman	15
15	Boat Report – Small Boats	Ronnie Reis	16
16	Buildings and Premises	Allister Mackie	18
17	Marketing	Peter Lewis	19
18	Health and Safety	Andy Eaglesfield / Gordon Hewit	20
19	Designated Person Ashore	David Shirres	21
20	Training Group	Ian Walker	22
21	Bookings Allocation	Willie Irvine	23
22	Museum	Lucy Wilson	24
23	Gardening Group	John Lewis	25
24	IT	John Aitken	26
25	Webmaster's Report	Douglas Robertson	27
26	Marches Week	David Shirres	28
27	Special Cruises	Maureen O'Donnell	29
28	Fun Day	Peter Lewis	31

1. Chair's Report

The contributions from over 20 people in this report show the wide range of expertise that is needed for LUCS to function. To operate our services needs about 60 volunteers working in the tearoom, on reception, driving boats or whatever. The report highlights what has been achieved as a result of everyone's commitment and enthusiasm.

LUCS is also very much part of the community. During Marches week we participated in the Perambulation, Deacons Night and Marches Day. It was great to see the crowd around the basin on Fun Day in August. It's also good to see folk enjoying our cruises, especially children on the Hallowe'en and Santa cruises. A new type of cruise this year was one offering Afternoon Tea.

Such is the efficiency and professionalism of our offering, particularly our website and booking system, that some of our visitors are surprised to learn that LUCS is operated entirely by volunteers. Whilst this is a compliment, I'm aware that a balance has to be struck between the services we offer and what's expected of our volunteers for whom the Society should be fun. If we don't get this right let me know.

In this respect, it was great to see everyone on the members cruises. It was also good to be part of the LUCS contingent invited to join the Forth and Clyde Canal Society's members cruise which offered the chance to drive an even bigger boat than St Michael. It is important to strengthen the links between canal societies in this way. Another example of this is the courses offered by our MCA approved training centre to other organisations.

Promoting the canal's heritage is another opportunity to work with other groups. Though our museum is quite small we have plans to expand it into the infinite virtual world and are in discussions with Scottish Canals about this.

Of course, much of our volunteers time is devoted to maintaining our boats and ensuring that they pass their annual MCA surveys to keep their passenger certificates. This year this has not been without its challenges and the Society is in debt to its stalwarts who maintain our boats.

Our premises also have their problems with a particularly big and immediate challenge being the Tea Room floor which I've no doubt that our volunteers will resolve.

As I write this, the Society's AGM is about two weeks away when I will have the pleasure of formally presenting this report and thanking everyone for their contributions. 2025 will see LUCS celebrate its 50th anniversary. As Isaac Newton observed his achievements were due to being able to stand on the shoulders of giants: and so it is with LUCS whose earlier stalwarts transformed the basin and acquired the boat fleet. Next year we will have to consider how to celebrate this important anniversary.

Finally, it is important to record that LUCS stalwarts Ian Brodie, Jan Hayes, Dr Stephanie Blackden and Alan McAllister who have passed on since our last report. Our thoughts are with their families.

David Shirres
Chair

In June, LUCS members were invited to cruise under the new Stockingfield bridge on the Forth and Clyde Canal Society's boat Voyager

St Michael returns to Linlithgow after an evening charter

2. Visitor Numbers

2023	Days	Tearoom		Town Trips		Aqueduct		Falkirk Wheel		Notes
		Total	Av.	Total	Av.	Total	Av.	Total	Av.	
WEEKEND										
April	8	181	22.6	63	7.9	103	12.9			
May	8	277	34.6	91	11.4	121	15.1	29		
June	8	382	47.8	105	13.1	139	17.4	29		
July	10	303	30.3	142	14.2	189	18.9	50		
August	7	219	31.3	92	13.1	174	24.9	43		1
September	8	214	26.8	101	12.6	144	18.0			
Total	49	1576	32.2	594	12.1	870	17.8	151	37.8	
2022 Average	52	(-22%)	41.4	(-16%)	14.4	(49%)	11.9	(90%)	19.8	
WEEKDAYS										
July	21	280	13.3	240	11.4					
August	9	147	16.3	103	11.4					
Total	30	427	14.2	343	11.4					
2022 Average	35	(-56%)	32.6	(-5%)	15.2					
Grand Total	79	2003	25.4	937	11.9	870	17.8	151	37.8	
Note 1	Excludes Fun Day when the Tearoom had 248 visitors									

2023 saw a fall in 'turn up' bookings, particularly during weekdays and a significant increase in pre-booked cruises

3. Bookings Numbers Oct 2022 to Sept 2023

BOATS	2021 /22	2022 /23	Diff.
40-seater charter	74	53	-21
Victoria charter	22	23	1
Leamington	57	63	6
Total			
ROOMS			
Tearoom	2	12	10
Mel Gray Centre	20	57	37
Total			

2022/23 Special Cruises	No cruises	Tables booked	Children
Halloween	12	108	181
Santa Cruises	32	256	402
Afternoon Tea	3	23	--

4. Treasurer's Report

1st October 2022 to 30th September 2023	Expenses	Income	Total	Notes
Boats Expenses: Colin G	£49		-£49	
Boats Expenses: Fuel	£2,309		-£2,309	
Boats Expenses: General	£4,125		-£4,125	
Boats Expenses: Leamington	£2,348		-£2,348	
Boats Expenses: MCA BML certification	£1,011		-£1,011	
Boats Expenses: St Magdalene	£2,370		-£2,370	
Boats Expenses: St Michael	£2,545		-£2,545	
Boats Expenses: Victoria	£1,110		-£1,110	
Subtotal	£15,867		**-£15,867**	
Boats Income: 40-seat boat Aqueduct trip	£1,306	£8,608	£7,302	1
Boats Income: 40-seat boat Charter		£8,350	£8,350	
Boats Income: 40-seat boat Falkirk Wheel	£1,547	£4,655	£3,109	1
Boats Income: 40-seat boat Special Cruises	£4,547	£7,002	£2,455	
Boats Income: Battery Boats		£30	£30	
Boats Income: Leamington Hire	£425	£10,190	£9,765	
Boats Income: Town trips		£4,177	£4,177	
Boats Income: Victoria Charter	£120	£1,950	£1,830	
Boats Income: Vouchers		£1,470	£1,470	
Subtotal	**£7,944**	**£46,432**	**£38,488**	
Events: Fun Day	**£1,264**	**£1,610**	**£345**	**2**
Museum	**£0**	**£0**	**£0**	
Other Expenses: Booking System	£1,728		-£1,728	
Other Expenses: Community Events	£345		-£345	
Other Expenses: Company Management	£1,775		-£1,775	
Other Expenses: Business Insurance	£3,073		-£3,073	
Other Expenses: Marketing	£1,404		-£1,404	
Other Expenses: PayPal booking fees	£925		-£925	
Other Expenses: Purchases	£278		-£278	3
Other Expenses: Volunteer sustenance	£385		-£385	
Subtotal	**£9,914**		**-£9,914**	
Other Income: Donations		£2,013	£2,013	
Other Income: Membership		£1,073	£1,073	
Other Income: Pump Outs		£165	£165	
Other Income: Sales and Museum	£574	£643	£69	
Other Income: Scrap		£64	£64	
Other Income: Training		£1,193	£1,193	
Subtotal	**£574**	**£5,151**	**£4,577**	
Premises: Bills	£2,978		-£2,978	
Premises: Enhancement	£352		-£352	
Premises: Fuel Oil	£381		-£381	
Premises: Gardening	£47		-£47	
Premises: Maintenance	£822		-£822	
Premises: Telecoms / Software	£1,654		-£1,654	
Subtotal	**£6,234**		**-£6,234**	
Rooms: Room Hire		**£1,863**	**£1,863**	
Tea Room	**£5,384**	**£9,284**	**£3,900**	**2**
GRAND TOTAL	**£47,181**	**£64,340**	**£17,158**	

	01-Oct-22	30-Sep-23
Bank	**£62,444**	**£73,712**
PayPal	**£1,010**	**£6,895**
Cash	**£173**	**£178**
Balance	**£63,627**	**£80,785**
Increase		**£17,158**

Notes

1. £1.50 per person income transferred from cruises to Tea Room
2. Does not include £267 Tea Room income
3. Purchase of 2 laptops

This Income and Expenditure statement together with supporting documentation has been reviewed by the Society's accountant who provided the following financial statement as required by the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

The funds in these statements differs slightly from this statement to take account of accruals and other financial conventions.

5. Independent Examiner's Report

Below are key extracts from the Society's Independent Examiners report. Full copies of this report will be available at the Annual General Meeting.

Linlithgow Union Canal Society
Independent Examiners Report

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Linlithgow Union Canal Society

I report on the financial statements of Linlithgow Union Canal Society for the year ended 30 September 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Summary Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (a) to (c) of the 2006 Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the financial statements as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the financial statements presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations
- to prepare financial statements which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 8 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have not been met: or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Philip Bald FCCA
Philip Bald Accountancy
38 Ormiston Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 7SJ
12 December 2023

Linlithgow Union Canal Society
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 30 September 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	4	2,013	2,013	1,198
Charitable activities	5	38,674	38,674	34,927
Other trading activities	6	12,199	12,199	12,634
Other	7	2,936	2,936	3,988
Total		55,822	55,822	52,747
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds	8	6,993	6,993	4,373
Charitable activities	9	16,577	16,577	23,262
Other	10	15,526	15,526	10,696
Total		39,096	39,096	38,331
Net gains on investments		-	-	-
Net income		16,726	16,726	14,416
Transfers between funds		-	-	-
Net income before other gains/(losses)		16,726	16,726	14,416
Other gains and losses		-	-	-
Net movement in funds		16,726	16,726	14,416
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward		70,302	70,302	55,886
Total funds carried forward		87,028	87,028	70,302

Linlithgow Union Canal Society
Summary Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 30 September 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Income	55,822	52,747
Gross income for the year	55,822	52,747
Expenditure	39,096	38,331
Total expenditure for the year	39,096	38,331
Net income before tax for the year	16,726	14,416
Net income for the year	16,726	14,416

5. Independent Examiner's Report

Linlithgow Union Canal Society
Balance Sheet
at 30 September 2023

Company No. SC071328	**Notes**	**2023**	**2022**
		£	**£**
Current assets			
Stocks	12	2,000	2,000
Debtors	13	5,078	5,479
Cash at bank and in hand		80,803	63,645
		87,881	71,124
Creditors: Amount falling due within one year	14	(853)	(822)
Net current assets		87,028	70,302
Total assets less current liabilities		87,028	70,302
Net assets excluding pension asset or liability		87,028	70,302
Total net assets		87,028	70,302
The funds of the charity			
Restricted funds	15		
Unrestricted funds	15		
General funds		87,028	70,302
		87,028	70,302
Reserves	15		
Total funds		87,028	70,302

The trustees have prepared the accounts in accordance with section 44 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.
For the year ended 30 September 2023 the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.
The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.
The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

Approved by the board on 12 December 2023

And signed on its behalf by:

D. Shirres (Chair and Treasurer)
Trustee
12 December 2023

Linlithgow Union Canal Society
Statement of Cash flows
for the year ended 30 September 2023

	2023	**2022**
	£	**£**
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income per Statement of Financial Activities	16,726	14,416
Adjustments for:		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(2,936)	(3,988)
Decrease/(Increase) in trade and other receivables	401	(764)
Increase in trade and other payables	31	6
Net cash provided by operating activities	14,222	9,670
Cash flows from investing activities		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	2,936	3,988
Net cash from investing activities	2,936	3,988
Net cash from financing activities	-	-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	17,158	13,658
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	63,645	49,987
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	80,803	63,645
Components of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash and bank balances	80,803	63,645
	80,803	63,645

6. Membership Secretary

It is great to be able to report that the Membership at LUCS has been maintained at a healthy level over the course of this year.

The Summary Table below notes current members and the number of unpaid subs separately as a way of presenting the data. As can be seen our total membership numbers now sit at 451. On the face of it this is down only 2 from last year. However, if we take out the Subs owed, then our membership is down by 26 people. It is very noticeable that the majority of the drop in numbers is in the Senior and Ordinary members. These are the people who pay (or not) their subs each year. Unfortunately, we are not managing to replace the numbers ceasing continuing their membership with new members. This is something we must address over the next few years in order to stay the vibrant, busy and enjoyable Society that we are currently. We need to do so both by retaining our current membership and by recruiting more keen and enthusiastic people.

What is particularly pleasing to be able to report is that we have 19 new members to thank for joining the Society over the course of this year.

Whilst we have significantly more unpaid subs this year than last, we are actively trying to encourage existing members to maintain their contact with the Society until they feel in a position to rekindle their interest or sadly advise they no longer wish to be members.

It has been good to see a large number of our members able to take the opportunity to get down to the Basin over this season and take an active part in the Society. We would estimate that about 72 of our members are active in helping run the society and a great thanks go out to all of them. We have had a 'Volunteers Cruise' and a 'Members Cruise' to close the season to say a big thankyou to all those who work so hard to keep us going. One point worthy of mention is the continuation of a system of 'Mentoring' for all new members. This enables any New members who wish to volunteer or become involved to have a helpful point of contact in LUCS who can make them feel at home and introduce them to the Key members who manage the main areas of our volunteering.

Finally, thanks to all our members for their support over the last year. We still have over 400 current members – a creditable achievement for the hard work put in over the years by all our members.

Andy Eaglesfield
Membership Secretary

Membership Cat.	2023	2022	Variance
New Members	(19)	(18)	1
Junior / Associate	1	3	-2
Ordinary	18	24	-6
Senior	37	51	-14
Family	50	50	0
Life	292	295	-3
Corporate	2	2	0
Multi User/club	1	2	-1
Honorary	3	3	0
Subs due	(47)	(23)	24
Total	**451**	**453**	**-2**

7. Museum Sales

It's been another good year for museum sales which raised £643 although £574 was spent acquiring new stock including the new map and LUCS brasses.

The LUCS history booklet continues to be popular, and is now on sale at the Falkirk Wheel as well as our museum.

This year we decided to sell baseball caps and beanie hats with the LUCS logo in the museum but won't know until next season if they will be good sellers.

We have also produced a canal map based on the new map displayed at the basin. This sells for £3 and is proving popular. Also, back by popular demand are LUCS brasses.

	Sold	Takings
LUCS history booklet	16	£120
LUCS Map	23	£80
Fridge Magnet	28	£56
LUCS Brasses	4	£32
Postcard	29	£29
Puzzle	24	£24
Keyring	10	£20
Fishing Net	8	£16
1823 canal guide	3	£12
Bug	14	£11

Regular sellers continue to be postcards, fishing nets, fridge magnets and keyrings.

Looking forward to another successful season next year.

Lynne Nelson

8. Receptionists

LUCs introduced the concept of a Receptionist during the Covid Pandemic, as a way of monitoring, and to a certain extent managing, the people who came down to the Basin during public opening days. It worked so well that as a consequence we have used the same concept for the last couple of years. We talk to visitors, sell boat tickets and check off those who have a cruise booked.

We are very grateful to all the people who have stepped forward and helped as Receptionists/ Museum attendants/ Boat ticket sellers and occasional 'Land based mooring assistants'. We have a pool of about 25-30 people who volunteer for this role, based in the Museum, but roving in good weather. It is an enjoyable experience and if the sun is shining, particularly pleasant having an afternoon coffee/tea in the sunshine between customers. We do occasionally struggle to find someone to fill an afternoon, but there is usually someone (Thanks Graeme) around to stand in.

So thanks to all who have helped out – and if you feel you could do with a bit of relaxation of an afternoon please let Andy Eaglesfield (membership@lucs.org.uk) know and he can put you on his increasingly complex and seldom up to date spreadsheet/Rota.

Andy Eaglesfield

9. Booking Secretary

The new booking system that was introduced in August 2021 is more user friendly for our customers though is complicated to set up. The system requires “resources” for boat and room hire with pricing options to be set up. Cruises also have to be similarly specified and can be sold by tables or individual tickets.

Resources and cruises for next year are being set up much earlier than last year to allow customers to make 2024 bookings by the end of the year. This is possible as the committee decided the LUCS key facts sheet with dates and prices in November. The availability of LUCS Boatmasters is considered when setting up the system as 40-seater boats are not being offered for charter when both of them are needed on the same day.

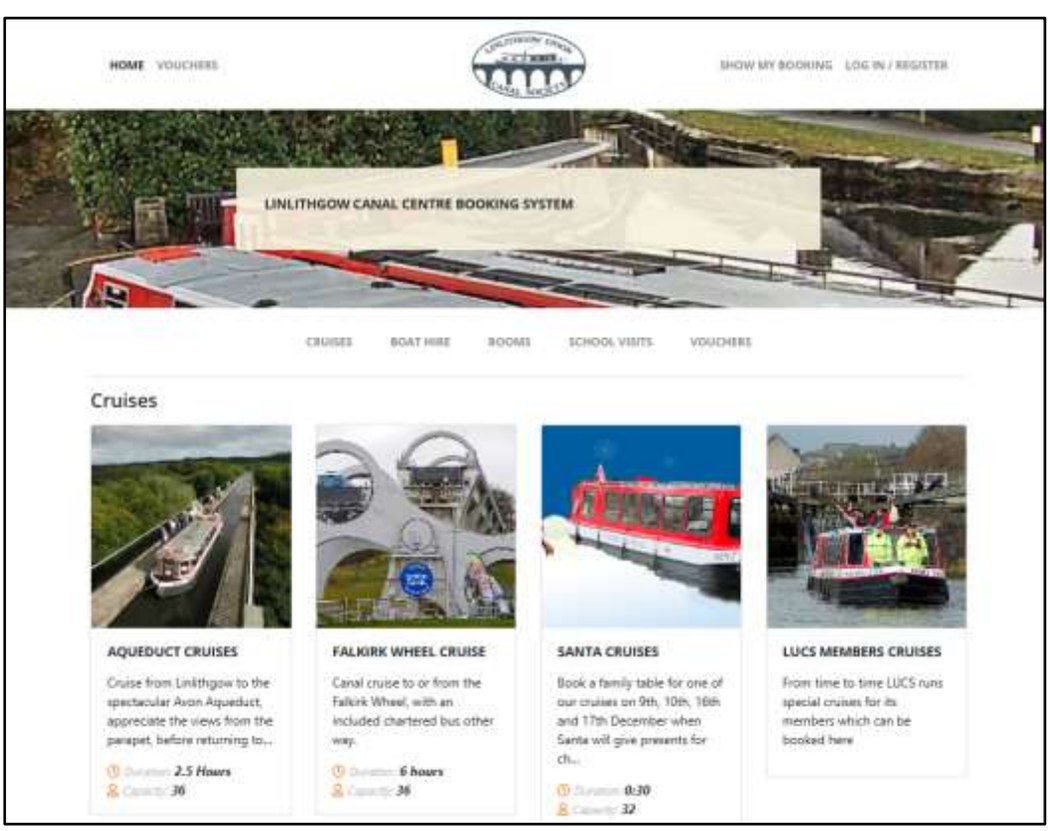
Room hire is not offered on the booking system. All such bookings, which are generally for community groups, are arranged by the booking secretary who then records them on the system.

The system generally works well and in the financial year 2022/23 booked 154 resource and 666 cruise bookings for which I am grateful as doing this manually would be an almost impossible task. My role is to respond to queries, for which information is generally available on the website, make special bookings and manage occasional problems with the system.

Most such problems are issues with PayPal. Indeed last year many bookers were unable to use their bank and credit cards to book Santa cruises. With John Aitken’s support we worked with the system’s original developers, Blue2, to improve the interface between PayPal and our system. As a result these problems are much reduced though not entirely eliminated. We also have more detailed information on the data passed between PayPal and our system which can be used to analyse problems when they occur.

The system also helps LUCS volunteers by letting them know who has booked cruises and bookings for which LUCS volunteers have not been allocated. It also offers vouchers which are a great idea for Christmas presents.

Doug Scott
Booking Secretary



10. Tearoom

We had another successful year in the tearoom, thanks to our very small team of volunteers. Once again the Fun Day was extremely busy, but our wonderful team coped admirably. However probably the most intense use of the Tea Room was in Marches week during the Perambulation when over 150 townsfolk took a 20-minute break on their 4-mile walk to inspect the town's boundary stones.

We are pleased to welcome Shona back to the team after all the Covid restrictions, but sadly Neil, Betty and Sally have had to retire for personal reasons. I thank them all for all their help in the past.

We have continued to buy our fresh cakes from Taste in the High Street.

As mentioned above, we have a small team and getting smaller. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find people to staff the tearoom so we really do need more people to join the team. If you are interested please contact weeannie2@aol.com

Anne Mackie
Tea Room Convenor

11. Boat Report – St Michael

St Michael is a boat of two personalities. On the one side she provides a great passenger experience which is often commented on: on the other she is difficult to drive and throws up endless problems for maintenance.

She has had a busy trip season and on some weekends it was difficult to find sufficient drivers. The highlight of her trips has to be the afternoon tea cruises organised by Lynne and Maureen. They transformed the boat into a high end tearoom that would have done the Ritz proud. Feedback from the public was overwhelming in its praise and enthusiasm.

In April St Michael had to be towed back to the basin by Leamington when a 6-inch thick branch got jammed between her hull and the propellor. Willie Irvine deserves credit for removing this himself the following day.

The boat itself continues to throw up endless issues which stretch our abilities and patience to the limit. Continuing problems with the exhaust were eventually solved by Tom McPhie completely re fabricating most of the system.

Long term issues with the water pipes will need a major investigation over the winter. The failure of the two domestic batteries required removing and replacing two 41kg batteries in the engine compartment. The mysterious horn failures continued but seem to have been solved with the change of batteries.

The boat's first 5-year major survey, as required by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), required her to be dry docked at Ratho where hull was blacked and general paint restoration done, two large port anodes replaced, and a small one fitted to the rudder. The MCA survey included the requirement for the floor at the bow end to be lifted to inspect the inside of the hull, a hull thickness test, insulation test, interior inspections of the fuel, fresh water and waste water tanks as well as a propeller shaft inspection.

The survey produced two areas of concern. One was a failed fire alarm system which resulted in visit from the electrical company who installed it. This necessitated a new heat sensor and a replacement circuit breaker for the battery charger. The other issue was a loose cutlass bearing due to wear inside the stern tube.

This was bad news as St Michael could not get her passenger certificate until this potentially expensive and complicated repair had been done. At significant cost, the boat's original designer was engaged to specify the required repair in consultation with the supplier of the stern tube. The repair involved applying epoxy to the cutlass bearing when inserting it into the sterntube with release agent being applied to bearing to facilitate its future removal.

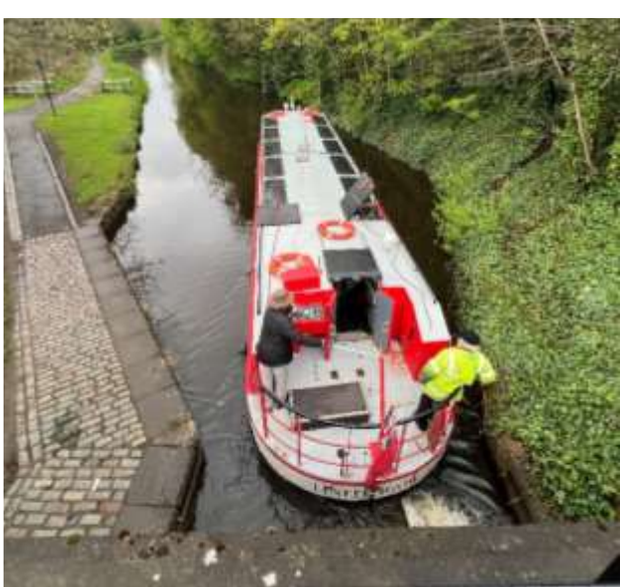
And so in November, St Michael made her second visit to the Ratho dry dock. All went well in the dry dock so that St Michael got her passenger certificate in time for the Santa cruises. This was a great team effort.

Many hours go into keeping the boat serviceable for the public and special thanks to Ronnie Reis for his endless work. Working on St Michael has its interesting, and sometimes frustrating challenges, though its good to see the passenger experience that LUCS can offer as a result.

As always, I would really appreciate anyone's help or advice to keep the boat fit for the public.

Allister Mackie

1. Dry Dock
2. Log removed by Willie
3. Fitting the bearing
4. Ronnie removing an anode
5. The challenge of Preston Road



12. Boat Report – St Magdalene

Now in her 32nd year St Magdalene, continues to serve the Society well as our fast boat to the Falkirk Wheel (an hour faster than St Michael) and our standby boat. In this respect she was able to operate the Halloween cruises when St Michael was without a passenger certificate as she awaited her stern tube repair.

St Magdalene was drydocked in September although at one stage it seemed it wouldn't get there as weed, the like of which we had never seen before, was completely blocking the canal at Philpstoun. Despite our best efforts, David Shirres and I were unable to free her from the weed and were only able to get moving when Mike Smith and Willie Irvine came with Leamington to rescue us. We eventually left Philpstoun, 3 ½ miles from Linlithgow after six hours. Fortunately, the rest of the canal to Ratho was comparatively weed free.

There was quite a bit of work to be done in dry dock. The hull was pressure washed and blacked, the roof was sanded and painted and paintwork tidied up whilst Craig Thomson revamped the stern handrail woodwork. Two bow anodes were fitted and a repair done to the stern swim fairing area above and below the cutlass bearing. The rudder had to be removed to straighten the rudder stock. This required it to be taken to Tam McPhie's workshop for repair.

Issues highlighted by St Magdalene's MCA survey were that the electrical cabinet at the back of the toilet required a lock to be fitted and a warning sign installed referring to the cabinets electrical contents and that ropes attached to the life buoys were too short as marine regulations require these to be 18 metres long. As a result, two 30-metre rope "cartridges" were fitted to the lifebuoys on both St Michael and St Magdalene. These cartridges clip into the lifebuoy with their ropes enclosed within a conveniently shaped handle which is easily held when throwing the lifebuoy, allowing its long rope to be released.

After the in-water survey there were concerns about the engine being reluctant to start first throw. Hence I replaced the starter relay which was a bit rusty, and checked the condition of the 30amp fuse which was ok. Although starting ok, still not as sharp as it should be, further investigation pending.

The Halloween trips went well with no reportable issues.

Thanks everyone who has helped keep St Magdalene serviceable during the year.

Ronnie Reis
Boat Convenor

Rudder repairs

Leamington rescues St Magdalene from weed en route to dry dock

13. Boat Report – Victoria

Another year of service of our old girl. She has done over 200 hours of service this year.

Victoria was taken to the Ratho dry dock in April to survey her hull. As LUCS is considering replacing her diesel engine with an electric motor, it was important to ensure that her hull was sound. The good news is that the out of water inspection and a thickness test revealed no problem with the hull. All that was needed was blacking the hull and some external paintwork - not bad for a boat that celebrated her 50th birthday last year.

She did however have a problem getting to Ratho and had to be towed by Leamington which was also going to Ratho to share the dry dock with her. This was due to a worn cam in the throttle control. Once repaired she was able to get back to Linlithgow without assistance.

April also saw Victoria go to the Falkirk Wheel with a Scottish travel blogger who was to promote both Falkirk and LUCS. This had been arranged by SCOTO (Scottish Community Tourism) after they held an event in the LUCS Tea Room.

Our old girl did have coolant and steering technical problems this year which were quickly resolved. With her roof was showing her age, Les Duff has spent some time renewing roof panels and roof edging. Mike Smith has also manufactured a new chimney cover.

At the end of the season, she was fitted with new side covers provided by Forth Marine textiles to keep her drier during the winter.

As well as her town trips, Victoria has had a number of charters this year, including one for a 60th birthday celebration.

As mentioned earlier, the intention is to make Victoria an electric boat. Mike Smith has been seeking quotes for this project which would require significant external funding for which there is to be a fund raising campaign next year which a view to starting this project in October 2024 so that it can be completed in 2025. this would be a great way to help celebrate LUCS's 50th birthday.

Peter Lewis

14. Boat Report – Leamington

Leamington has continued to give good service through the 2023 season. She is popular with hirers and, as reported elsewhere, is a useful rescue boat. She has not required the level of last year's expense which was due to a new engine installation.

Alongside with Victoria, she visited the Ratho dry dock in April where, in addition to rudder and propeller maintenance, repainting was undertaken.

The most noticeable improvement to the appearance of Leamington is the fitting of new canvas side screens. They were supplied by local company Forth Marine Textiles, who have subsequently supplied screens for Victoria.

Other work this season has included plumbing in replacement bilge pump and wiring in a float switch to give the option of manual or automatic operation. The coolant expansion bottle has also been raised within the cockpit locker for improved visibility and accessibility, and the mounting points for the forward fenders have been moved from the roof to the gunnels. It was also decided to remove the rearmost doors to the rear deck area as, with the roof chopped back to increase the rear deck in 2015, it has since become apparent that these doors were not required

As noted in other boat reports, Leamington proved her worth as a rescue boat this year, having rescued St Magdalene from severe weed twice, St Michael when a log jammed the propellor and one a couple of occasions when Victoria suffered technical failures.

Eric Dallman

Les gives Leamington a new floor

Leamington in dry dock

15. Boat Report – Small Boats

As they are moored outside the basin, our fleet of five small boats are often forgotten. Yet they have to be maintained and on specific occasions are very useful.

Electric dinghies

LUCS has not offered its electric dinghy's for hire this year as this would require an additional volunteer for each day when LUCS is operating. When they were operated in 2022, there was not much demand for them but then they were not promoted as we could not be sure we had volunteers for them – very much a chicken and egg situation!

This year two dinghies were used as rescue boats at Fun Day as International Rescue are no longer available to provide this service. Two were required as their batteries could not be relied upon to last for the complete cardboard raft race.

A wooden seat on one of the 3 boats had to be replaced, another replacement seat is still pending. The batteries continue to be alternately charged.

These dinghy's certainly have potential, though LUCS can only advertise what it can be sure to provide. Any ideas for the use of these dinghy's would be welcomed.

15. Boat Report – Small Boats (continued)

Slateford

As was apparent on Fun Day, Slateford provides an essential taxi service across the basin on the day. Her outboard motor works well though she needs a manual bilge pump fitted, a tidy up and a paint job.

Colin G

This boat was originally Alex Inglis which became a LUCS passenger boat from 1985 to 1988. In 1999 she became a LUCS workboat. After a cabin with a high level working platform and 500 kg davit were added in 2014, she was renamed after LUCS stalwart Colin Galloway who passed away in 2013.

Earlier in the year her hull developed a small leak caused by abrasion with a sunken object. This has been repaired, though the boat needs to be taken out of the water for a permanent repair. Her wooden transom has some rot which needs to be repaired. An engine cover also needs to be sourced, engine can run but water circulation to be sorted, the boat needs a massive makeover, and leak fixed.

Colin G is a capable workboat and we hope to make more use of her next year.

Ronnie Reis
Boat Convenor

16. Buildings and Premises

The premises like most of the black handers is starting to show signs of age. It is hard to believe but the tearoom renovation was around 40 years ago and even the “new build” MGC is over 15 years ago.

This results in an increasing amount of basic maintenance to simply maintain a safe inviting tourist attraction. Most of the work is routine cleaning and painting but recently there has been a need to replace aging or failing parts of the building. Sadly this includes items broken by the public during use.

The main replacements this year have been the two radiators in the outside yard toilets with modern electric panel radiators. The replacement of the toilet flush on the yard toilet and two sink drain systems in the MGC.

Again, the outside of the premises has been kept clean and tidy by Tom and the gardening crew. This greatly enhances our kerb appeal and attracts many passing visitors from the towpath and the boats.

Over the winter months all the outside benches will be lifted, sanded and repainted for next season. The outside of the buildings will be washed and repainted where needed. The lid of the pump-out cabinet will need to be rebuilt and painted.

The major focus early next year will be the tearoom floor. At the end of the season a small hole appeared near the back door and after investigation it is clear that a considerable area of the floor will need to be lifted and replaced between January and March. This will be a substantial project for LUCS volunteers who will, no doubt, relish this significant challenge.

If time allows the yard needs tided and the fence repaired or replaced.

We have had two occasions this year when the heating has failed due to the oil running out. This is mainly due to the oil tank capacity of only 500l the minimum that the oil company will deliver so has to be run nearly empty before refilling. If anyone is upgrading their home heating to a heat exchange system and has a redundant double walled oil tank around a 1000l, we would be very grateful if you would be willing to donate the old tank to the society.

Allister Mackie
Premises Convenor

17. Marketing

My thanks to Stuart Rennie for the handover after I took over LUCS marketing and for his ongoing support since then.

Initiatives to promote LUCS throughout the year included:

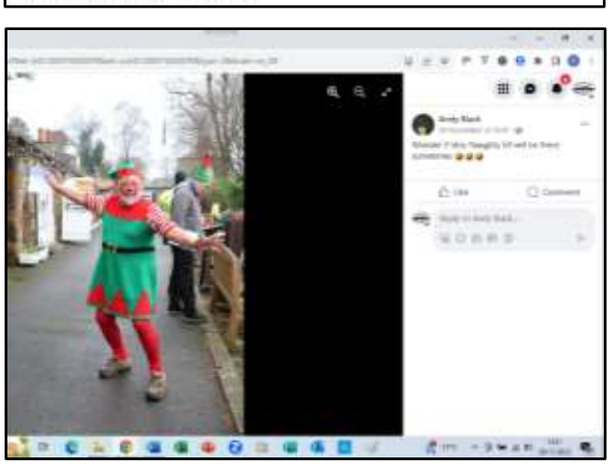
- A revised leaflet which clearly shows all LUCS offers on one page with QR codes to the appropriate page of the LUCS website or the LUCS booking system;
- Social media – we use Twitter and Facebook but could do much more. If anyone would like to help promote LUCS on these and other social media channels please let me know;
- Engagement with local papers to promote events such as Fun Day and advertise what LUCS offers, for example advertising LUCS vouchers as Christmas presents in Linlithgow's Black Bitch magazine

We also have external organisations hiring our boats which attracts people to our canal basin who would otherwise not have heard of us. One such cruise was organised by LinGin, on another St Michael's front seats were removed for a musical cruise when Sue McHugh played her harp.

Yet our visitor numbers this year show that whilst numbers for our booked cruises increased, fewer people came to the Tea Room or had trips on Victoria. Hence, I'm conscious that our marketing needs to be strengthened and would welcome ideas in this respect.

Basin Banter currently has a circulation list of 800 People. It is a good way of communicating LUCS news and future events both to our members, as well as others who have expressed an interest in the Society. I am pleased that we have been able to publish Basin Banter every month this year. If you have any ideas or pictures for Basin Banter, please let me know.

Peter Lewis
Marketing convenor
marketing@lucs.org.uk



18. Health and Safety

Over the course of this last season 2022-2023 we are very pleased to report – but not complacent about the fact - that we have had no serious accidents or incidents to people or boats, something for which we are very grateful. Gordon Hewit refreshed our Accident/Incident reporting process this season and as a consequence there has been much more discussion amongst Volunteers about this and more incidents recorded no matter how minor. Importantly, we have incorporated the learning and improvements from this process into our operations.

Over the winter season last year Ken Duerden updated the 'Skippers Handbook' for Victoria. This was issued and discussed at a Victoria drivers' meeting at the start of the 2023 season. There were a fair number of relevant points made and incorporated into the Handbook and it now sits on Victoria for all skippers to look through as often as they feel the necessity. It has been refreshing to see the interest in this and the discussions generated.

The Boat Safety Management System for our 40-seater boats has been updated by David Shirres and successfully audited this season by the MCA although there were two non-compliances in respect of a boat log book and emergency exercises which are about to be closed out.

We have updated the Risk Assessment for Fun Day, a necessity for each year as things change. We had to provide our own safety boat as International Rescue were unavailable. Whilst this worked using an Electric Dingy it wasn't ideal and we will remedy that next year with a more powerful engine to allow more rapid response to the inevitable sinkings of the cardboard boats.

All our Safety and First Aid equipment has been checked at the recommended intervals and replaced where necessary, by Gordon Hewit.

As LUCS is now an accredited MCA Training centre, as reported elsewhere in this report, Ian Walker has organised several First Aid and Safety training days over the last season.

Substantial progress was made with our project to upgrade of our Health, Safety and Environmental system which is being led by Andy Eaglesfield. Over the course of this coming Winter 'down season' it is intended to complete this exercise and refresh our H, S and E policy, collect together all the various Risk Assessments and Procedures (of which we have many) and form an easy to access Document. This work should be complete before the start of next Season. All our Volunteers will have the opportunity to be introduced to the sections relevant to them and asked to both consider and comment on them.

It is worth recording that there has been a definite increase in the number of 'Safety Conversations' at the Manse Road Basin. This is very heartening and will be encouraged by the Committee and hopefully continued over the next season, it can only help us maintain our enviable Safe Operations record.

Andy Eaglesfield, Vice Chair
Gordon Hewit
Health and Safety Convenor

19. Designated Person Ashore

Shipping regulations require all UK operators of passenger ships (i.e. all UK vessels carrying more than 12 passengers) to have a Designated Person Ashore (DPA) whose role is to manage the shore-based aspects of emergencies that might occur whilst the ship is operating. With no possibility of St Magdalene or St Michael being lost at sea, there's no meaningful role for a LUCS DPA in an emergency for which LUCS's policy is that in an emergency, the skipper phones 999 then co-operates with the emergency services when they arrive.

Yet the LUCS DPA still has a key role in liaising with the MCA and ensuring that both our 40-seater boats have an effective safety management system (SMS) and satisfy MCA requirements so that both boats will get their passenger certificates renewed each October. This requires annual In-Water and Out-of-Water surveys (only 2 OOW surveys for St Michael every 5 years) and regular SMS audits for each boat although it's the same system for both boats.

This year was particularly challenging. On one day the MCA surveyor was at the basin from 0900 for a full eight hours whilst both our big boats had their in-water surveys and an audit of St Michael's safety management system was undertaken.

As reported elsewhere St Michael failed its out-of-water survey due to sterntube wear and had to return to the Ratho dry dock seven weeks later to rectify this. The required repair was specified in a report produced by St Michael's original designers in consultation with the manufacturer of the stern gear. Resolving the practicalities of this repair was a great team effort by Ronnie, Mike, Andy and Graeme. The result is that St Michael now has her passenger certificate in time for the Santa cruises.

Of necessity, MCA regulations generate more paperwork than some might like, but it does underscore good safety and operational practice. A meeting of Boatmasters and trainee BMLs will be convened over the winter season to discuss the results of emergency exercises and incidents during the season to ensure a common understanding of what needs to be done.

My thanks to everyone who has helped LUCS ensure that its big boats meet MCA standards.

David Shirres
Designated Person Ashore

ID: 9750081e-c514-42d7-8119-31064c60a602

Maritime & Coastguard Agency

PASSENGER SHIP SAFETY CERTIFICATE FOR SHIPS OPERATING SOLELY IN UK CATEGORISED WATERS

This Certificate shall be supplemented by a Record of Equipment and Information which must be carried on board

Issued under the authority of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland **by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, an Executive Agency of the Department for Transport**

PARTICULARS OF SHIP

Name of Ship	**St Michael**		
IMO Number	-	Official Number	-
Port of Operation	Linlithgow	Gross Tonnage	-
Date on which keel was laid or ship was at a similar stage of construction			21 June 2017

PARTICULARS OF COMPANY

Name of Owner	Linlithgow Union Canal Society
Address of Owner	Manse Road Basin, Linlithgow EH49 6AJ

THIS IS TO CERTIFY

1.0 That the ship has been surveyed and found to comply with the Merchant Shipping (Passenger Ships) (Safety Code for UK Categorised Waters) Regulations 2010.
2.0 That the ship is fit to ply on voyages within the limits stated on Record of Equipment and Information which supplements this Certificate.
3.0 That the ship is fit to carry the numbers of passengers shown below, under the conditions indicated.
4.0 An Exemption Certificate has not been issued.
5.0 That the ship holds a valid Partial Declaration of Survey of a passenger ship.

Area of Operation	Mode	Maximum Number of Passengers Allowed	Minimum Number of Crew	Maximum POB
A	1	40	2	42

Date of Stability Verification: Lightweight	27 September 2023	
Date of last 2 inspections of the outside of the ship's bottom	October 2018	September 2023
Anniversary Date	01 October	

ISSUE OF CERTIFICATE

This certificate is valid until **01 October 2028** unless previously cancelled, subject to the Annual Surveys and Safety Management In-service verification being completed and endorsed on the Certificate.
Completion date of the survey on which this Certificate is based 03 October 2023.

Place	Glasgow	Signed	Signature of authorised official issuing the certificate
Date	19 November 2023	Name	Andrew Dewar

Verify

1/9 MSF 1255 v2.0

20. Training Group

Since gaining MCA approval last year we have run three Boatmaster Ancillary Safety Training courses. Our instructors, Anne-Marie MacDonald, Derek Ure, Alistair Mackie and Scott Castel have done a great job and the courses have been well received by all the participants, from not only from LUCS but also Scottish Canals, Forth and Clyde Canal Society and Fountainbridge Canalside Community Trust. This year we welcome a new instructor/assessor who will also be a new member, David Avery. David will instruct in First Aid and Fire Safety.

This year we have acquired one new BML in the person of Steve Braes who is also our instructor/assessor for the RYA Helmsman Certificate course.

Congratulations to our new BML and also to the three candidates that he has passed for their RYA Helmsman Certificate, Helen Wilson, Eric Dallman and Riley Walker. Helen is now an active Small Passenger Vessel (SPV) skipper and Eric will be, in good time for next season. Riley at 12 years old is at the minimum age to get a Helmsman Certificate but even so, has already worked 78 locks both ashore and at the helm as well as lift and swing bridges whilst on holidays with his grandad (me).

By next season we aim to have three more new BMLs and four more SPV skippers.

We will also be offering First Aid refresher training, originally aimed at BMLs, then to SPV skippers, then boat crew members, Tea Room and Reception volunteers, in fact anyone in a public-facing role. The training will include hands-on practice with a training defibrillator. Although defibrillators are generally classed as 'idiot proof', nothing beats going through the routine in a calm situation before you may have to in a panic.

Work has been going on, led by Ken Duerden, to prepare a training syllabus for Quayside Operations, an area that is easily overlooked but can have serious consequences if things go wrong. The syllabus will include rope handling, knots, hitches and throwing techniques; mooring/unmooring, using springs and countering wind effects; and other relevant safety information. The aim is to produce a short half-day (refresher) course for volunteers ashore and afloat.

Members lunch on a Victoria training day

As is well known, Wednesday mornings are allocated to maintenance of our Day-Hire boat, Leamington. Subject to availability, that is maintenance operations completed, we will be available for initial driver training on Wednesday afternoons. Anyone interested in taking the first steps should make their way to the basin before 12 noon on a Wednesday, or Saturday in the closed season, for those poor souls of working age.

Ian Walker
Training Convenor

21. Bookings Allocation

Ensuring that every facility hire has an appropriate LUCS member to open, and afterwards, secure rooms, set Leamington Hirers safely on their way, drive Victoria as the hirer wishes or drive the big boats, Saint Magdalene and Saint Michael can be quite demanding. Leamington dispatchers and Victoria drivers require Small Passenger Vessel qualification, whereas big boat skippers require a Boat Masters Licence and the help of a qualified crew person.

To achieve this calls and emails are put out with requests for a suitably qualified volunteer. Sometimes requests are followed up with pleading, cajoling, or begging. So far blackmail has not been needed to coerce a “volunteer”, so secrets are safe. So far.

Though LUCS has never let its customers down, on occasions a suitable volunteer might not be found until a few hours before the hire. This is a particular problem for our 40-seat boats due to the relatively limited number of boat masters. For this reason, next year big boat charters will not be offered on days when there are two boat masters operating LUCS cruises.

With around 140 requests for volunteers, we have always satisfied the requirements of our customers, thanks to our willing band of volunteer members. For their support and giving of their time and skills we are very grateful.

Willie Irvine

Most 40-seat boat charters are a 2 ½ hour cruise to the Avon Aqueduct

22. Museum

Thank you to everyone who took time to complete the museum survey. We received excellent suggestions and feedback which have helped shape the future plan for the museum. We have identified the display boards as our first priority and are working on identifying gaps in our current selection of images. After this we will work on obtaining any new images required and putting the new layout together. We also hope to include QR codes to direct visitors to our website which we plan to update to include further in-depth information. Once, we have completed this stage, our next steps are to assess the physical objects in our collection and the display on the monitor.

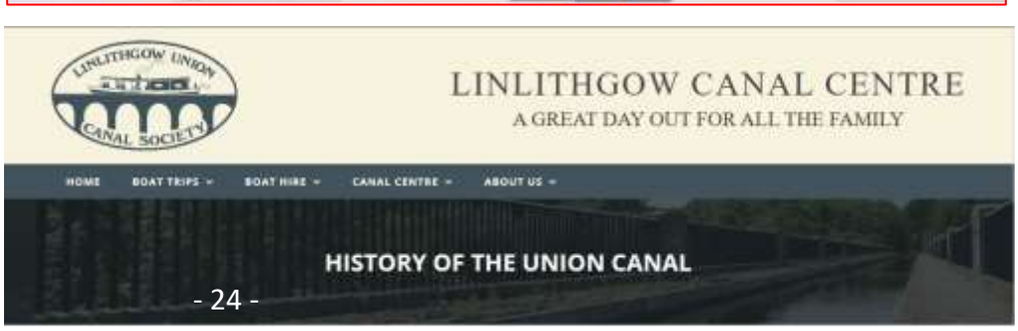
Earlier in the year, David Shirres, Mike Smith and I put together a fold out canal map to be ready for the new season. The map is a reproduction of the one on the stand outside the museum. There is additional information on LUCS and the canal on the reverse with QR code links to our website for those who wish to find out more detail. The topics covered are LUCS and its Museum, Canal proposals, Thomas Telford's report, Feeder Canal, Avon Aqueduct and Swift Boats. This is now on sale in the Museum priced at £3.50.

As a representative of LUCS Museum, I have continued to attend the West Lothian Museums and Heritage Forum quarterly meetings. Each member institution shares an organisation update and discuss various topics such as publicity and social media. Our current meetings are regarding marketing as the Forum has been allocated funding to put towards marketing for the benefit of all forum members.

Lucy Wilson
Museum Convenor

The new canal map on sale at the museum is the recently updated map on the stand outside the museum.

On its reverse it has six panels with basic information to promote the canal's heritage. These have QR codes to new history webpages on the LUCS website



23. Gardening Group

My very big thanks to Maureen Wilson for all the work over the past years in the garden and pots at the Basin - enjoy your retirement after hanging up your trowel.

In Maureen's absence Tom Findlay is helping me keep the basin grounds and plant pots looking great throughout the season. In doing so we have been greatly helped by the document that Maureen Wilson and Stuart Liddle produced about the plants used during the spring and Autumn planting.

My thanks to everyone who has helped with our gardening work during the year. This is quite satisfying work and it is always good to hear visitors to the basin remarking on the attractiveness of the planters and hanging baskets as well as the slope down from the main road. Equally pleasing is the willingness of the 'black-hand gang' to help out with heavy lifting and ladder-steadying when required.

If anyone else wants to help out, please do pop along any Wednesday and/or Saturday.

John Lewis

24. IT

LUCS depends heavily on information technology. The post of IT Convener is currently vacant and I have been “holding the fort” in the interim. We would be very pleased if someone with an IT background and/or a good working knowledge of Linux volunteered to fill it. If you feel that you could help, please volunteer!

The new on-line Booking System has settled down and is now working well. It lets people book cruises and hire boats, with payment by card or by LUCS Gift Voucher. It also lets LUCS volunteers know who is on a cruise, what has been booked and who is assigned to tasks like dispatching Leamington or driving boats. It operates on a virtual private server running Ubuntu Linux which needs to be backed up and kept up to date.

The WordPress website lucs.org.uk and our Facebook page provide useful information to the public and the LUCS Digital Archives make thousands of images fully accessible to everyone.

There is Wi-Fi that provides an Internet connection for anyone visiting the basin and connects the museum and tearoom payment systems, which accept card payments.

The webcam provides a sequence of live public images 24/7 through Camstreamer, You Tube and the LUCS website.

Four CCTV cameras monitor the basin area and the system records 30 days of activity.

The hub for all this is in the chalet, where the router is located, with ethernet connections to Museum, Tearoom, Mel Gray Centre, CCTV and the webcam. The LUCS desktop computer handles controlled documentation and is used for printing passenger manifests and boat & room booking lists for display in the Tearoom.

An Access database keeps tabs of membership and assists with managing subscriptions and annual report distribution.

Basin Banter keeps everyone regularly informed via Mail Chimp.

None of this would work properly without input from many volunteers, including the Webmaster, Bookings Secretary, Staff Co-ordinator, Membership Secretary, Document Controller, Marketing Convener and Treasurer.

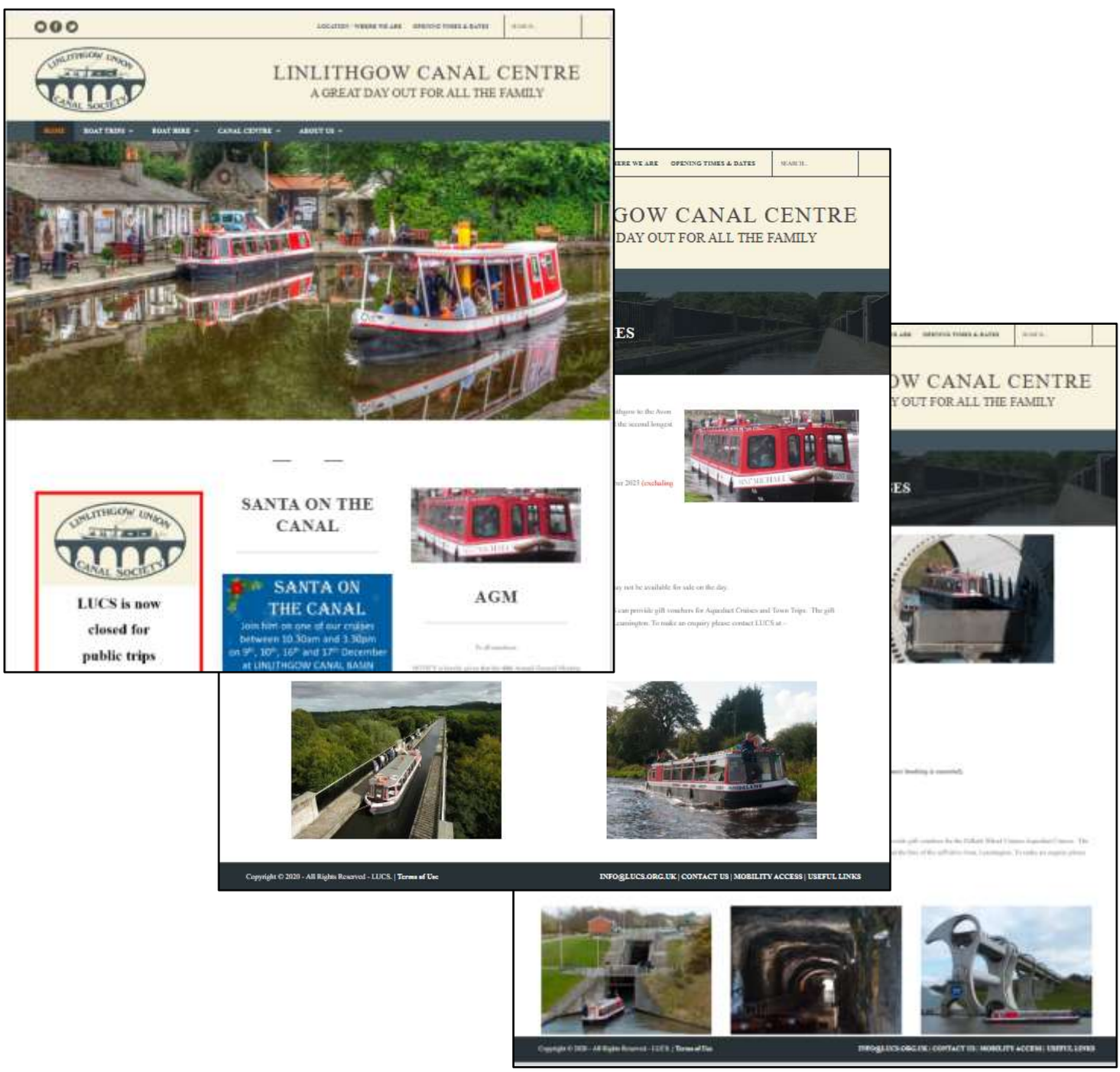
John Aitken.

25. Webmaster

I'm just passing my 6-year mark as webmaster which has been an interesting and enjoyable contribution to keeping everyone with internet access advised about LUCS activities. Around 13,000 folk have accessed the home page over the last year, the next most popular page being the webcam, so remember to smile the next time you walk down to the Basin!

I try and keep the front-page content fresh and relevant, and am helped by those who ask for or suggest new content or who "keep me in the loop" but please send me an email if you have anything you would like posted. I would also encourage members to use the member's pages of the website (accessible from the front page under the "about us" menu). If you require any help accessing these pages please write to me at my webmaster email address web@lucs.org.uk

Douglas Robertson
Webmaster



26. Events – Marches Week

Marches week has some splendid community events and it was great to see LUCS being part of this. For LUCS this started with the Perambulation on the 7th June when over 150 townsfolk headed up by the Provost of the Deacons' Court, flagbearers, halberdiers and the town piper walked four miles to visit eight town boundary stones. The canal basin is two thirds of the way around and provided a welcome respite for the walkers who availed themselves of refreshments from the hard-pressed Tea room.

Linlithgow's Deacons tour the town before the Marches in a tradition dating back to the 16th century to ensure everyone knew who the craft and guild officials were. Today the Deacons come from organisations in the town such as LUCS. Hence Saturday 10th June saw LUCS hosting the Deacons at the canal basin where they were welcomed by LUCS Deacon Stewart Liddle. In her response, Provost Liz Park stressed the importance of LUCS to the community. After all present had consumed 70 burgers from the LUCS BBQ together with other suitable refreshment, the Deacons were ferried to Friars Brae bridge en-route to their next visit.

Deacon Stewart addresses Provost Liz Park

Marches day on 13th June saw John, Lynne, Peter, Cassandra, Craig, Douglas, Ronnie and I marching to form the LUCS entry of "Canal Power through the ages" which won first prize for the unpowered entry category. The prize money paid for well-earned fish suppers as we rested at the canal basin between the morning and afternoon processions. It's good to march with the LUCS contingent and the impressive floats and bands when there's a wonderful atmosphere as hundreds line the route.

This year was poignant as it was the first LUCS Marches without the benefit of Barbara Braithwaite's advice. We also had to manage without LUCS Marches Stalwart, Martine who was away. So well done team LUCS which also included Graeme Harvey who helped pull our entry together

David Shirres

27. Events – Special Cruises

Halloween and Santa cruises

The 12 Halloween and 32 Santa cruises that LUCS ran at the end of last year carried respectively 108 and 256 children.

Last year LUCS had to provide a new Halloween offering as the Narrowboat Farm's new owner did not wish to participate. So instead of cruising there to collect and carve a pumpkin, the alternative was a one-hour cruise with family activities, suitable Halloween refreshments and a Halloween gift given to children as they disembarked. These cruises were a sell-out and were well received thanks to Halloween cruise host spooky Craig Thomson.

The 2022 Santa cruises followed the format developed in 2021 with Santa, helped by his elves, giving out presents to tables of family groups during a short half-town trip. Except that, with four inches of ice on the canal, St Michael never left the basin. On that day there were eight static 'cruises' when all on-board were entertained by Santa and his elves and didn't seem to notice that the boat wasn't moving.

David Shirres

A frozen canal for the 2022 Santa cruises

A wet canal for the 2023 Halloween cruises

27. Events – Special Cruises (continued)

Afternoon Tea cruises

The initial cruise on May 10th was a trial to see how successful serving afternoon tea on an aqueduct cruise would be. The trip was successful and 3 further trips on St Michael were added to the booking system.

Setting up costs were around £200, covering the cost of vintage china (from charity shops, and donations), table linen and cake stands. We charged £25 per person, which more than covered the catering costs.

Catering was from Wellbread, the Crannog and the Cosy Tearoom, spreading patronage around town. Flyers promoting the events were distributed to various commercial outlets for display. Catering in future will be 'in house'. Level 2 Food Hygiene and Safety for Catering certificates are held and cover LUCS.

Bookings were 2-3 per table, and all cruises were fully booked with Cruises, with 77 passengers in total and we had to disappoint some potential customers.

Plans are in hand to bring other volunteers in to help with the 2024 season, with 7 'themed' cruises scheduled in.

Maureen O'Donnell

28. Events – Fun Day

For LUCS, Fun Day is the biggest day of the year. The Fun Day planning checklist has over 80 tasks, which includes things to be done months beforehand. On the day around 30 volunteers were needed.

The afternoon started promptly at 1:30 pm when Gala Day Queen Katherine aboard Victoria cut the ribbon at the entrance to the basin. We were then glad to have John Paterson, Scottish Canal's new Chief Executive open the day. John was also one of the judges for the carboard boat race.

Due to a poor weather forecast there were fewer stalls in Learmonth Gardens than usual, though new for this year, there was a social area in the gardens with blow up seats.

The basin was busy prior to the cardboard boat race. 120 tickets were sold for boat trips on Victoria and St Magdalene, the BBQ sold 162 burgers and the Tea Room takings were seven times the normal Sunday takings.

Of the 11 entries for the carboard boat race there were 6 sinkings of which two capsized immediately. Of those that stayed afloat the fastest time 1 one minute 31 seconds. The entries included some impressive designs. It was a little sad to see them end up as soggy cardboard in the skip that Tam McPhie had provided.

It was good to see an estimated 600 people around the basin, though this was slightly lower than last year perhaps due to the weather forecast, though on the day the weather held dry until the prize giving.

A very big thanks you to all of our volunteers for their work leading up to the event, on the Fun Day afternoon and the clean up afterwards.

Next year's Fun Day will be on Sunday 4th August, the weekend before Party at the Palace

Peter Lewis
Fun Day Co-ordinator

Colmans in Colman cruiser

1st prize Silver trophy – a stable four-man boat competed the course in an impressive 1 min 31 secs

1st West Lothian Sea Scouts in Scout Mobile

2nd prize – Great teamwork from the sea scouts

The Navy Seals in HMS Nubian 2.0

3rd prize – a great performance that saw the ball in the net

Linlithgow Reed Band in Ken and Barbie

Won Low Port Centre Trophy for Best Entry aged under 15, completed course in just under four mins

Toughy McDuckies in the Toughy McDucky

Won Yellow Duck trophy for the most entertaining team, kept going for 3 ½ mins before sinking

The Mallards in The duck

Won Bill Watt Trophy for most ingenious design. Father and son team got ball in the net before sinking after two minutes

The Penguin Patrol in The MBS Penguin

Won Novice Paddlers Trophy with an impressive battleship boat that completed the course in style

Selkies in The Roach

Won Linlithgow Reed Band Trophy for perseverance

An impressive start though boat folded and sank in just under a minute

Return of the Vikings in Viking Warrier

Won Wooden Spoon for fastest sinking, the scary bearded Vikings capsized instantly

Falkirk Sams in Listener

The Falkirk Samaritans promoted their worthy cause even though their boat capsized after 15 seconds

Linlithgow Amateur Musical Productions (LAMP) in Not six feet under

Almost instant capsize of top heavy boat with its tombstone

Linlithgow Union Canal Society, Manse Road Basin, Linlithgow, EH49 6AJ

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