



**Lyneal  
Trust**

AUTUMN  
NO.2



# BRIDGE 53

THE NEWSLETTER OF LYNEAL TRUST

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

At our recent end of season review, we acknowledged 2018 as a year of huge progress for Lyneal Trust with, including the expected Santa Cruise activity, a record of around 1800 people using the Trust's facilities. This has been achieved by the success of Shropshire Lady's first full year, Shropshire Maid's introduction, Shropshire Lass's refurbishment and improvements at Wharf Cottage and grounds. On behalf of all involved with Lyneal Trust, I would like to thank the many volunteers, trustees, supporters, customers and local community groups who have made a huge contribution this year.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Chris Symes (Chair of the Trust)

Editor: Gabrielle Pearson  
Sub Editor: Chris Smith



The Lyneal Trust's boats were in use again this year for the annual Whitchurch Rotary Boat trips. 24 two-hour trips carried a record 215 passengers including primary school children, children with a wide range of neurological and physical disorders and behavioural difficulties and residents from care homes. There was much positive feedback on the boats, especially The Shropshire Lady. The bright, airy feel and the superb view from a seated position were widely commented on. One child commented "It was the best school trip we've ever had". Costs were covered by 28 local businesses who each sponsored a boat. Rotary are very grateful to them, to the Whitchurch Waterway's Trust and to Chemistry Farm and of course to Lyneal Trust.

**VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION  
ANGELA BUNCE**



It was in early 2016 when Peter and I attended an open day at the Lyneal Trust. We didn't really know what we could do to help and initially thought about skippering. However, Chris soon seized on my liking for gardening and before I knew it, I was in charge of the gardening team.

We were joined by our neighbours Ken Muir and Des Hill who offered to cut grass and trim hedges. More recently we have been joined by Roger Jones, a welcome addition to our happy bunch.

I do not consider myself to be Head Gardener as we all have an equal say. We are also interested in suggestions from other volunteers, some of whom have contributed plants from their own gardens. We are encouraged by the favourable comments which we receive from volunteers and customers. We think that creating pleasant surroundings are an important part of the overall offering of the Trust.

**The Lyneal Story (continued)**

By 2012, Shropshire Lad was showing its age and a replacement day boat became a priority. A team of trustees and volunteers undertook research particularly with regard to ramps, lifts, toilets and interior design. Occupational therapists advised on wall, floor and furniture materials and colours, and by September 2016 we were ready to commission a unique 60' 12-passenger day boat with panoramic windows and skylights and easy access. Meanwhile, approaches to previous benefactors were successful and the necessary funds became available.



Princess Alexandra accepted the Trust's invitation to name the new boat Shropshire Lady on 21st July 2017. Shropshire Lady went straight into service with Shropshire Lad, until the latter was sold. We chose the Lady naming ceremony to launch the new Trust branding and LT logo and tag line, "Making Holidays Accessible".

As the demand for the holiday boat grew, the trustees commissioned a second new boat. Plans were drawn up for a 70' 6-berth boat. Most of the design features which so benefited Shropshire Lady were included, plus an exceptionally large bathroom for a canal boat. Shropshire Maid arrived to be named by the Lord Lieutenant and his wife, Sir Algernon and Lady Jane Heber-Percy, at an open ceremony on 26th May 2018.

Late in 2017, an anonymous donation was made to the Trust, specifying that it was for the refurbishment of Shropshire Lass in the new livery.

## THE HISTORY OF ELLESMERE CANAL: Planning the route, by Chris Smith

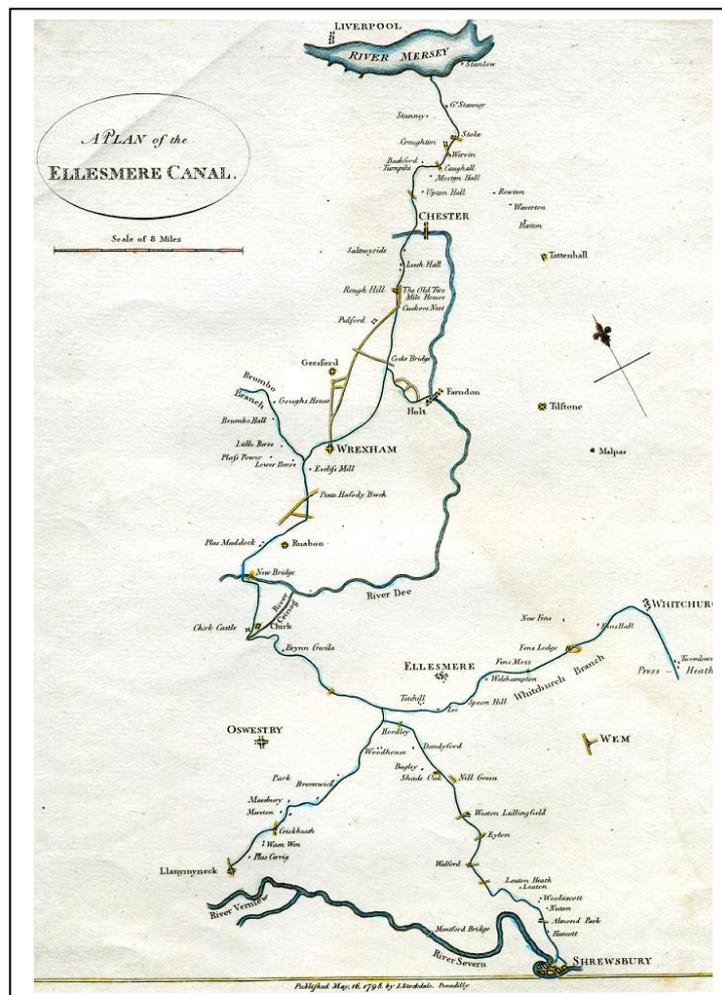
The declared intention of the Ellesmere Canal Company was to link the town to the R. Severn at Shrewsbury, the R. Dee at Chester and across the Wirral to the Mersey. The route between Ellesmere & Chester had to avoid the mighty flood plain of the Dee, and the original 1795 proposal was to skirt around it to the West, passing through Chirk and Ruabon. The engineering challenge was immense, involving crossing two steep sided river valleys, a 4600 yd tunnel through Ruabon mountain, and a 300 ft fall from Wrexham down to Chester. There were to be four branch canals to Brymbo, Holt, Llanymynech and a 17 mile branch to Whitchurch. Water would be supplied from a feeder reservoir above Wrexham.

The main line across the Ceiriog and the Dee was built and terminated at Trevor basin in 1805. The section from here through Ruabon Mountain was cancelled due to cost, and a feeder was constructed along the side of the Dee valley to obtain water from the river at Llantysilio. This narrow feeder branch was made partially navigable, allowing boats to reach Llangollen.

The planned Whitchurch branch was re-routed, first to go via Malpas to join the Chester Canal at Tattenhall. This was revised again, in response to pressure from the Whitchurch cheese factors to join the Chester Canal at Hurlston, with a branch right into the centre of Whitchurch. Another branch was also originally intended to reach Prees in Shropshire; however the line was only constructed as far as Quina Brook, 1-mile from the village. The link to the Chester Canal completed the route to Chester in 1806, ten years after construction started.

Due to the parlous state of the Severn navigation to Shrewsbury, the link to the Severn was cancelled.

Next time we will look at the phenomenal engineering challenges involved in building this remarkable canal.



## A Different Harvest by Alex Grant

Looking out at the grey mizzling sky, the hot summer days seem a distant memory. The farmers' harvests have been gathered in, and the fields have been cultivated and sown with next year's crops. The first flocks of winter visitors, such as fieldfares and redwings, are passing through and they have been busy harvesting the red berries from the hawthorn bushes along our canals. I too have been gathering a harvest, but not of any natural produce. As the vegetation has died back along the edges of the water, the annual accumulations of litter discarded by boaters and other users of the canal have become exposed. Globally, huge rafts of degrading plastic waste are circulating far off-shore, 80% of which has originated in rivers and other water-courses. It behoves us all to minimise and eventually eliminate this impact.



### SANTA CRUISES 2018

We are pleased to announce that Santa Claus is once again coming to Lyneal.

On Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> you can book a seat on Shropshire Lady and cruise along the canal with on-board musical entertainment and mulled wine, fruit juices, mince pies and biscuits served by Santa's elves.

The boat will take you to Santa's cosy cottage where you can snuggle down by the fireside. Mrs. Claus will read you one of her favourite seasonal stories until Santa himself arrives with his sack of presents.

We hope you can join us. To book a seat please contact [bookings@lyneal-trust.org.uk](mailto:bookings@lyneal-trust.org.uk) or ring 01948 710708. Tickets £8

Would you like to book a holiday either in our cottages or on one of our boats, or would you just like to go out on a skippered day trip on the beautiful Llangollen Canal?

For all enquiries, contact Carole. [bookings@lyneal-trust.org.uk](mailto:bookings@lyneal-trust.org.uk)

### NEXT ISSUE

Enjoy the photos of Santa and the Santa Cruises ....and find out about progress on our latest projects and our winter training exercises for volunteers.

### NEW VOLUNTEERS ALWAYS WELCOME

Lyneal Trust is always happy to encourage local people to climb aboard and become a volunteer with us.

We can offer you training if you would like to learn how to skipper or crew one of our boats.

We also need people with practical skills such as DIY, painting and decorating, gardening. People with experience and expertise in marketing, fund raising, hosting promotional events, social media, research into canal history or compiling information leaflets for our customers are also welcome.

By volunteering with us, you will meet and enjoy the company of an enthusiastic and lively group of people. If you would like to join us please ring 01948 710708 for more information or visit our website at [www.lyneal-trust.org.uk](http://www.lyneal-trust.org.uk)

### VOLUNTEERS END OF SEASON TRIP



On Saturday Nov 17th, a trip down the canal on the Shropshire Lady was organised by Stephen Stringer for all volunteers. Sheila Stringer provided the buffet lunch. It turned into a beautiful autumn day and it provided a perfect opportunity for existing and new volunteers to get together.