



Working Boats in Tipton.

Steve Bingham writes:

Over the weekend of 27th/28th/29th September 2019 the Black Country Living Museum held their Biennial Gathering of Working Boats. During the week leading up to the event we had 36 boats squeeze their way into a very tight Museum canal system surrounding the 1930's village. It was like stepping back in time especially as most of the boat crews and owners dressed in their period costumes to blend into the Museum's atmosphere. The weather was not very grand with rain forecast over most of the three days, but it did not dampen the spirit of the visitors who came along to see this special period display. During the Friday night Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust opened their Gongoozler restaurant for food and real ale, Cliff Sherwood brought along his display of old windlasses to put on show for the boaters. He also brought along some interesting DVD's featuring Keith Christie's movie film that was taken of old working boats in their last days of the early 1960's.

Boats

Attending:

Aldgate

Alder

Aquarius

Atlas,

Bittell

Buckden

Caggy

Cassiopeia

Clematis

Clover

Coventry

Comet

Darley

Dove

Governor

Hadar

Hadley

Jake

Kangaroo

The King

Leo

Malus

Marquis

The North

Odin

Olive

Paragon

Princess Anne

Purton

Stafford

Scorpio

Sagitta

Saltaire

Towy

Tardebigge

Trent 5

Uranus

Whitby

As Saturday dawned the weather looked a little better, the Brasso was out with vengeance! The visitors were coming in and all was in swing during the day, including an appearance of Dr Busker playing his accordion around the canal side village. Later at 5.30pm the "Bottle & Glass" pub reopened its doors for very thirsty boat crews, Dr Busker started playing the piano in the back room with everybody singing so loud I thought the roof was going to lift off ! The pub closed at 9pm but the party carried on to the small hours of Sunday morning in the Rolling Mills. The next morning saw some very hung over boaters staggering out of their back cabins after I gave the shout out to get them all into church. Dr Busker was about to start the Sunday Service at 10am playing the organ with more singing.

During the day there were fewer people around due to the rain, and by 4pm visitors were starting to dwindle as the boats were leaving to go on to their next event. I wish to thank the BCLM, Jane Allcock and all the staff for putting on a great event, plus a personal thanks to Nick Wolfe who was my assistant during the whole of this working week.



Photo: Steve Bingham



Ian Saunders sent some more pictures and listed the boats

