

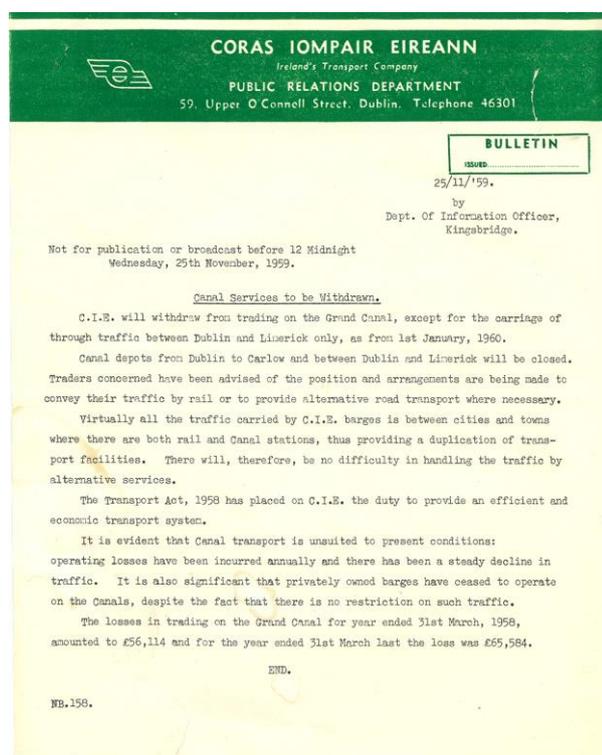


The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland

www.iwai.ie

Launch: The 2020BC project
1st January 2020 on the River Liffey
Heuston Station, Dublin, Ireland
12 midday
}{ 1.1.2020 }{ 12:00:00 }

IWAI are delighted to announce the launch of the 2020BC (Big Cruise) calendar of events on the inland navigations of The Green And Silver. The launch event comprises a flotilla of light and fast boats travelling at pace on the River Liffey from the sea lock at Grand Canal Dock to Seán Heuston Bridge below Heuston Station to activate the launch of 2020BC.



The launch date of 1st January 2020 is significant in that it marks the 60th anniversary to the day of the closure of the Grand Canal to commercial traffic by CIÉ (as per memo issued from CIÉ Kingsbridge on 25th November 1959 – marked by IWAI, the Heritage Boat Association, Waterways Ireland and CIÉ a few weeks ago at Heuston Station).

Led by IWAI Dublin — who promote The Green and Silver route strongly - 2020BC will centre around a calendar of waterside community celebrations and events to which boaters and other waterway users can travel next year.

This reflects the navigation circuit being very much ‘open for business’ for leisure, pleasure and amenity use. The 2020BC project is being coordinated for IWAI Dublin by long time waterways advocate Mick Kinahan with support from IWAI Kildare, Offaly, Shannon Harbour, Royal Canal and Barrow Branches.

Waterways interested groups want to mark the actual closure date itself and have earmarked the whole year of 2020 for the provision of information and celebration of the Grand Canal and it’s connected waterways. The 2020BC flotilla in Dublin will bring some offerings - see Appendix 1 - from the Grand Canal to Heuston Station; symbols from locations along the Canal’s length, of both past and present commercial and leisure activities.

Little known outside the boating community, the Grand Canal is also part of what is known as The Green And Silver; a navigation route comprising the Royal Canal, the Camlin River, the River Shannon, the Grand Canal and the River Liffey - a route that IWAI are keen to promote during the 2020BC and beyond. Navigating The Green And Silver route is an amazing experience along our waterways. With the advent of Greenways and Blueways, much of the route is available to walkers and cyclists, further contributing to navigation-based discovery and exploration while travelling from Dublin in Ireland’s Ancient East right through to Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands! From our indigenous canal boat tourists, who travel on their own vessels, to the novice or experienced hire boat tourists; these navigations are timeless taking you all at once back to the heyday of trading boats in the early 1800s while also providing access to waterside communities all along their lengths.

IWAI's 2020BC project has at its core the promotion of collaboration and cooperation and recognises that IWAI reflects what has gone before us in the past, while also presenting and developing the possibilities for the future.

Acknowledging the support of Waterways Ireland and CIÉ to IWAI in marking the re-release of the Grand Canal closure memo recently, as well as the launch of the 2020BC project IWAI President Alan Kelly said:

'On behalf of IWAI I am delighted to announce the launch of the 2020BC (Big Cruise) calendar of events on the inland navigation route of The Green And Silver and River Barrow Navigation. We are fortunate in IWAI to have experienced volunteers who are fully committed to the promotion of our waterways for the common good and the socio-economic benefit of all. We also have an excellent working relationship with Waterways Ireland and with Government Departments, Local Authorities, Development Associations and community organisations all along the inland waterways network. We look forward to 2020 being a year of further positive engagement with all of our waterways partners to promote the development and improvement of our waterways'.

Jim O'Riordan, IWAI Dublin Chairperson said:

'IWAI Dublin look forward to 2020BC and are grateful for the support from our peer IWAI Branches around the inland waterways network for the project. We also want to thank Waterways Ireland who have been involved in helping us plan today's launch and events for the coming year; and Clontarf and Poolbeg Yacht Clubs among others who have assisted arrangements for the launch flotilla. For 2020BC, what we are promoting is not just about boating, we intend to work with as many communities as possible to develop their interests further in the inland waterways in their vicinities and look forward to meeting many new waterways friends'.

**#IWAI #IWAIRELAND #2020BC #TheGreenAndSilver #OpenForBusiness
#2020is60YearsSinceGrandCanalClosure #GrandCanalStillSparklesOnDiamondAnniversaryOfClosure**



Thank you for taking the time to read this Press Release.

For more information contact

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Inland Waterways Association of Ireland

Notes to Editor – the IWAI

The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWAI) is a voluntary body representing over three thousand five hundred enthusiasts, with 23 branches across the island of Ireland.

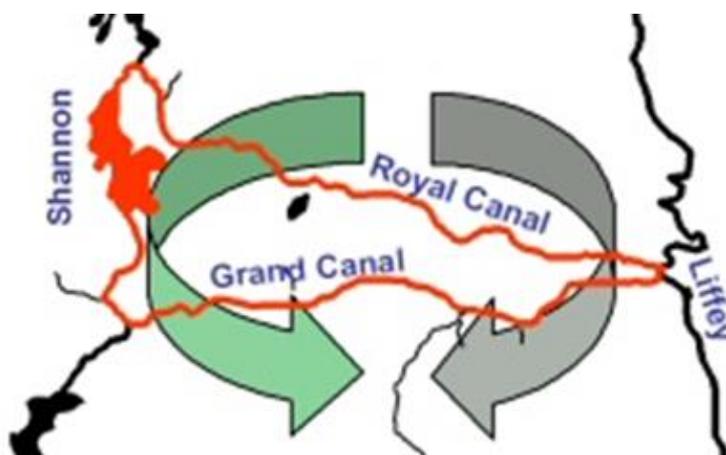
The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWAI) is an energetic, fun, voluntary organisation with members from all corners of the Island of Ireland, all sharing a keen and passionate enthusiasm for the waterways of Ireland.

The IWAI advocates the navigation, use, maintenance, protection, restoration and improvement of the inland waterways of Ireland. It was formed in 1954 to promote the development, use and maintenance of Ireland's navigable rivers and canals.

When the Shannon was almost totally undeveloped for pleasure boating, the IWAI campaigned against the building of low bridges, thus ensuring the development of the river as a national asset. In the 1960s IWAI successfully campaigned to stop plans to close the Circular Line of the Grand Canal in Dublin. Later the Association campaigned for the re-opening of what is now the Shannon - Erne Waterway (formerly the Ballinamore & Ballyconnell Canal) and the Naas Line of the Grand Canal.

IWAI played its part in the restoration campaign for the re-opening of the Royal Canal between Dublin and the Shannon in recent years. IWAI assistance to the campaign to re-open the Ulster Canal has also borne fruit with the announcement that work is to begin on re-opening the section from the Erne to Clones. Currently, IWAI members are active in restoration projects on the Boyne, Newry and Lagan Canals.

IWAI Branches hold approximately 200 events each year across inland navigations with the wider communities in many locations. These events include Boat Rallies, Harbour Festivals, Walks, Social Gatherings, Heritage Activities; Family activities and Youth focused events.



National Website Details www.iwai.ie

APPENDIX 1

Grand Canal Offerings – to be presented 1st January 2020

The Green and Silver route and the River Barrow Navigation

Grand Canal, Royal Canal and River Barrow Navigation charts jointly produced in recent years by Waterways Ireland and IWAI

County Offaly

The Story of Brickmaking in Pullogh by Caitriona Devery, published by Offaly History www.ohas.ie, and a piece of Pullogh brick which built many a building in Dublin and environs

Tullamore Train Station timetables to acknowledge the prior ownership of the Grand Canal by CIÉ and the physical link between Offaly, Kildare and Dublin

A sign from the new Edenderry E-Hive Remote Working venue

A bottle of Kilbeggan Whiskey reflecting trading barge links to the distilling industry in the past and to highlight the Ballycommon – Kilbeggan spur line off the Grand Canal; de-watered for decades

A piece of turf

County Kildare

A St. Brigid's Cross as she could work miracles!

Walking boots and a bicycle pump to symbolise the Greenway development for walkers and cyclists through the three counties of Offaly, Kildare and Dublin

County Dublin

A Guinness Glass (empty) to link to that trade that came out of Dublin via the Grand Canal

An IWAI Dublin Green & Silver brass commemorative plaque