

TRIP TO ENGLAND 7. - 18. AUGUST 2014

We mentioned for Anni and Eldor Fjermestad that we were on a channel boat trip in England in 2011. They said that they also had wanted to do that, but it had not been, and they would rather not travel alone. We said that we could accompany them, but they had to work with the locks, because the time we traveled, Anne Berit got a hernia. It comes back when she strives. They promised to take the locks, and we agreed to travel in August this year.



I completed the [The Cheshire Ring](#) in 1992, and in 2011 I and Anne Berit traveled [The Black Country Ring](#) near Birmingham. I therefore looked for another suitable round trip. Norwegian has direct flights from Norway to Manchester, so it was quite convenient to go there and travel [The Four Counties Ring](#). It is marked on the map on the left.

Anne Berit's brother, Asbjørn has moved from USA to Manchester, so we could then visit him on the same trip.



We made a reservation at [Middlewich Narrowboats](#). This company is in [Middlewich](#), and it is not far from the airport in Manchester. The boat is called [Ellsmere Navigator](#).



The next day, the 8th, we had to get up early to take the plane to Manchester. We went with [Norwegian](#). This flight went via Stavanger Airport Sola, so we had to change plane there.

While we were waiting for the departure, we got several notifications about delays. In the end we didn't believe we should catch the plane from Stavanger, Sola. We just made it. When we reached the gate we were the last ones who went to the plane.

Eldor and Anni had also booked the same plane, so I had asked them to ask the personnel in the gate if they would wait for us. They did so, but it turned out not to be necessary to wait.

The 7th of August we took a taxi to the station in Kongsvinger, when we took the bus to Oslo Airport Gardermoen.

There we checked in at [Radisson Blue Gardermoen](#). We had a nice dinner with wine in the evening.



Here we see the east coast of England.



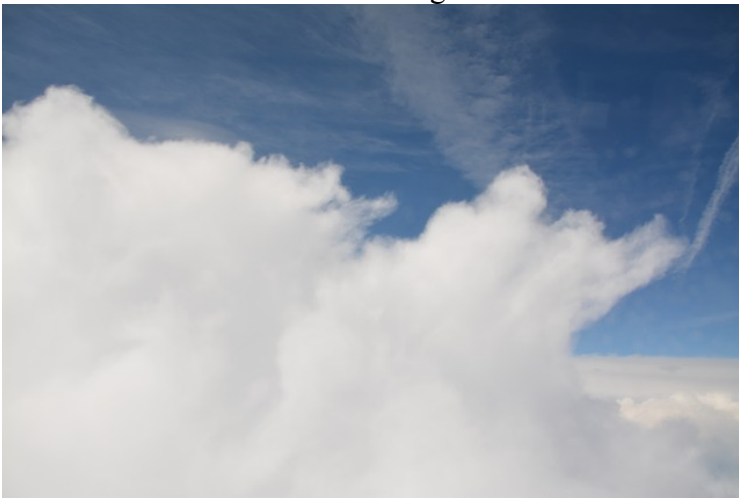
Then there is a thick layer of clouds.



I'm relaxing.



Much more clouds.





Then we are under the clouds and are approaching Manchester.



[Manchester airport.](#)

When we went to fetch our luggage here, it turned out that our luggage had not come from Stavanger Airport, Sola because we were so late. We had to fill out a form with your name and place of residence in England. We would stay at the hotel the first night, so if we did not get our luggage the next day, we thought that we had to take out the boat and wait for the luggage to come to the hotel.



We stayed at [Kinderton House Hotel.](#)
It has a large patio in the back.



In the restaurant in the evening. I take the picture.

Here is Anne Berit taking the picture.



Finally, it is one of the guests who take a picture of us all. Before the photo session we had eaten dinner. The food was tasty and well presented on the plates. It was evident that there are chefs here who know their business.



It was quite crowded with people throughout the evening, so it was obvious that it was a popular place.



A little later came a band that played dance music. It was just us dancing, and it was popular.

Eventually we got a few more out on the dance floor.



Most of them were standing at the bar.



Eldor and Anni are enjoying a «gin and tonic».



The next day, the 9th, after the breakfast, a «full English breakfast», we went for a short trip to the town. The first we did was to take a picture of the hotel where we were staying.



The next was the church, [St. Michael and all Angels](#). We thought it was nice and took a couple of pictures of it.



Between the hotel and the church is the canal where we are going to go with the boat.



There are several boats, which are moored along the canal.



Under a bridge, there were many such pigeon nests. It looked as it was very suitable, because here they had a nice shelf to build the nest, and they also had a roof over their heads.

It looked like an excellent nesting place.



This is the town hall.



Typical English apartment buildings.



There are many who have nice houses.



This we thought to be especially nice.



This is the annex with lots of nice flowers.



This is south of the city, and we stand on a footbridge over the canal and see where we are going to go with the boat the next day. Our route is right under the bridge in the middle. A week later we will come back after the round trip from the left end of the picture.

The canal that runs right is [Shropsire Union Canal Middlewich Branch](#). The one that goes straight on is [Trent & Mersey Canal](#).



When we look in the other direction, we see the place where we will pick up the boat later in the day. We went there and asked what time we could retrieve the boat. We were told we could not have it before 14.00.



Here are the boats.



More boats.



I have found a couple of dogs that I of course have to talk with.



This bench is a gift from the late Thomas Moss from Middlewich. It is salt being transported on a canal boat. There was a big salt production in Middlewich in the past, and the salt was transported in barges on the canals.

After we came back from the walk, all four of us walked to a supermarket, Tesco, to buy provisions. We had to buy food for at least three days, because there were no shops on the first stretch. Then it was so much that we had to call for a taxi to transport ourselves and the goods back to the hotel.



After we came back from the store, our luggage finally came from the airport. Just before 2 o'clock we asked them at the front desk to order a large taxi for us. Here we are loading our luggage into the taxi.



Here we are where we are to retrieve the boat. The luggage is taken out, and the driver should have payment.



Here we are welcomed by the personnel at Middlewich Narrowboats.



Anni is inspecting the boat.



The luggage is ready to be taken aboard.



Another boat of the company.



I'm talking with a guy who is working there.



Anni is satisfied with the boat.



Here we have started.



Boats on both sides at the beginning.



Here we are through the first sharp right turn under the bridge and through the first lock. It's getting a bit more rural.





There were a teeming bird life along this channel. Here is a mother duck with five ducklings.



There were also a lot of swans. Here is one of them.



The cows are grazing along the canal.



A heron.



Anne Berit had to assist the first locks to show how everything worked.



Large areas of farmland.

This is the end of the first day. It took time before we had loaded our luggage onto the boat and were given instruction about how everything on the boat worked. Moreover, it took some time to get in touch with how the boat behaved, so I ran a bit slow at the start. Therefore we were about two hours after the schedule I had set up for each day.



Eldor is standing in the bow and make sure I hit right through the narrow passages.
This photo was taken right before we go through the 4th and last gate for the day. We moored just after the last lock.



The next day, the 10th, there were more clouds and there was some rain during the day, but with good rain wear it was not a problem.



Here the canal is built above the adjoining land.



Here we have the rain wear on.





Coot in the reeds.



A coot.



We didn't see many wrecks like this.



Art.



A heron.



The heron flies away.



More art.

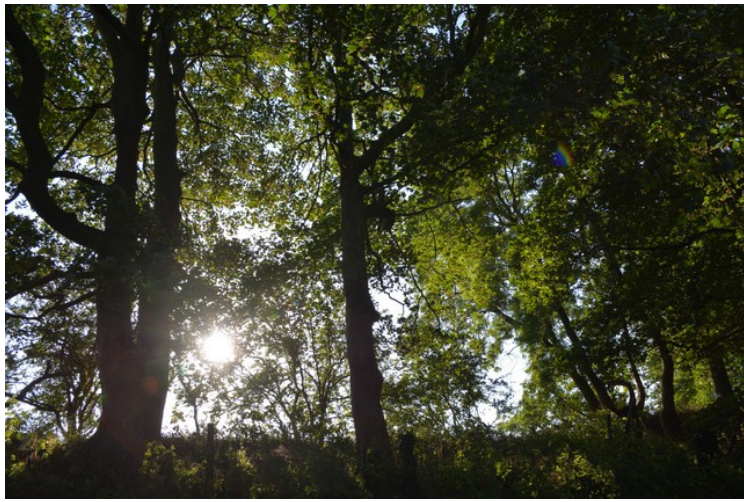


The swan mother with two kids were locked inside the lock, but they came out quickly when we opened the lock gate.



Here is a fishing contest.

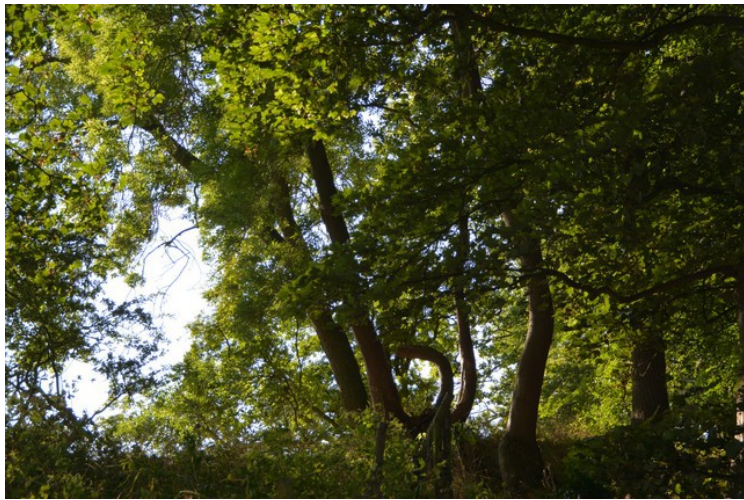




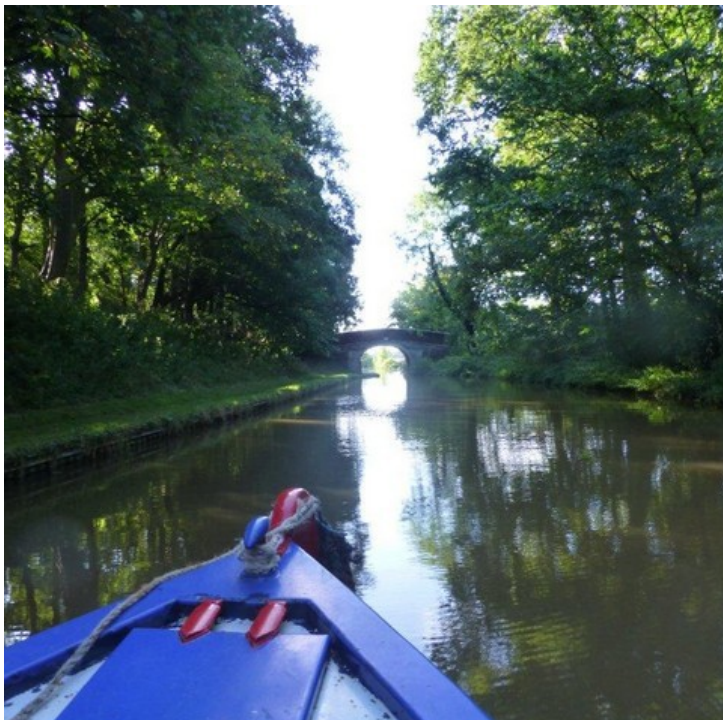
In the morning the 11th.



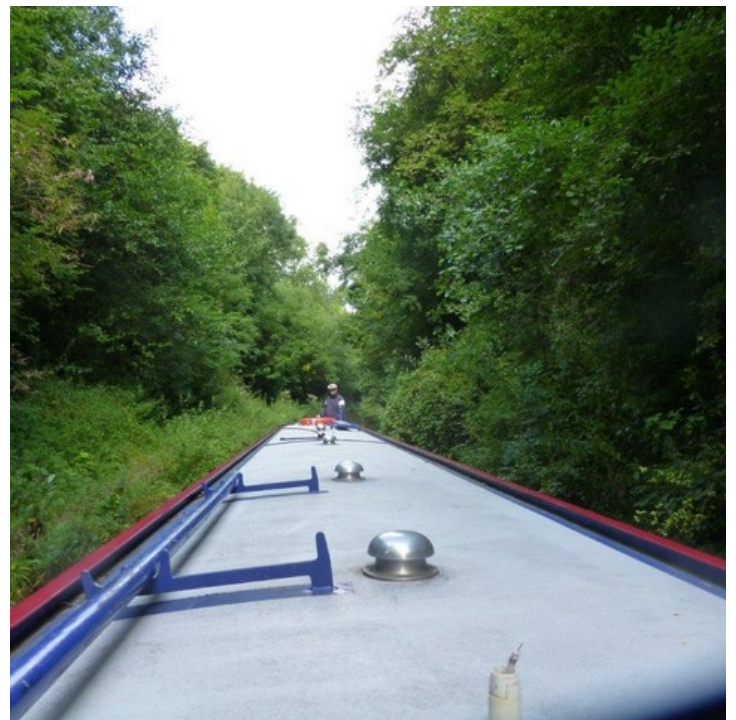
Morning mood at the canal.



Morning coffee.



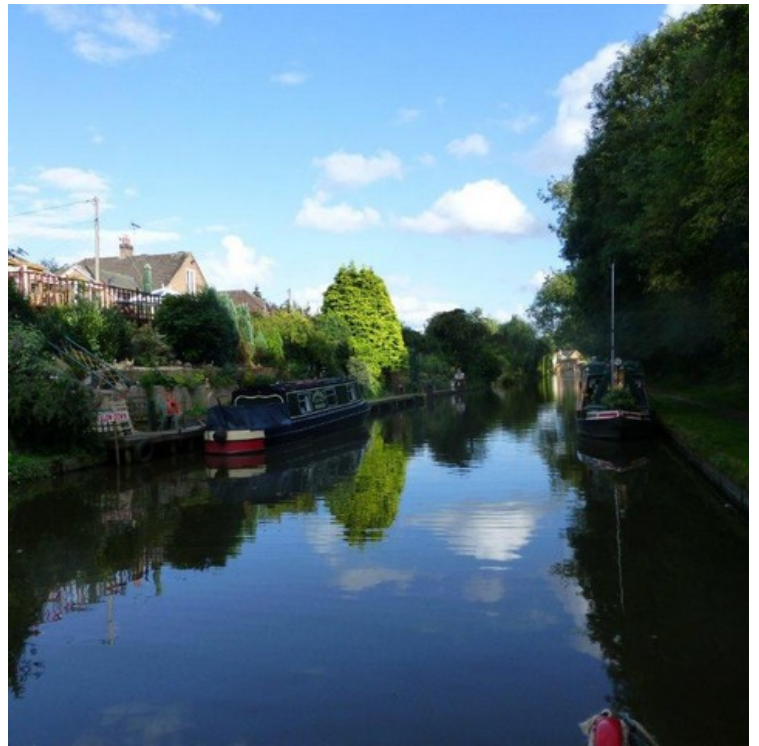
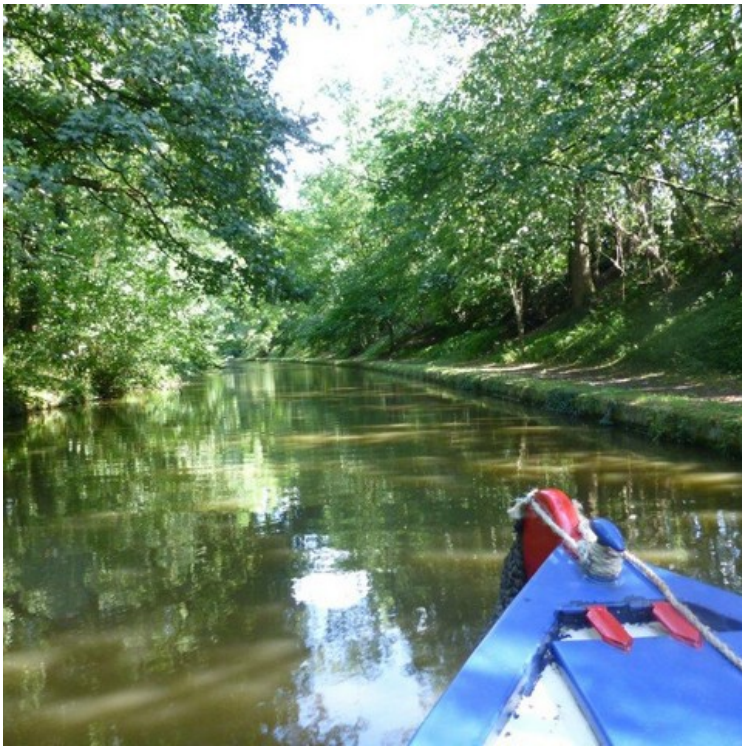
Here we go again.
It was mostly dry weather this day.



Here I stand at the back of the boat at the helm.
Long boat.



Now I had such good control of the boat that I thought I could take on the captain's cap.



There are many picturesque sections along the canals.



Now we are going to fill water. I moored while Eldor finds the tools to open the tank lid.



We did not find any tools that fit, so we had to improvise using the security pin for the tiller and a sledgehammer. Finally we managed to open the lid.



Preparing the hose.



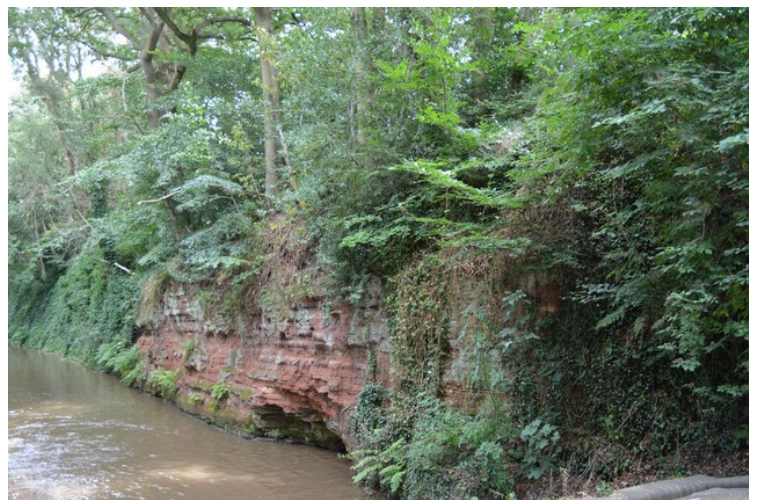
Anni is the connecting link with Eldor.



It goes very well. The water is surging into the tank.



Here we go again. Next lock.



There were several such cuts as the channel goes through.
There is a huge effort that is put into getting the channels in place.

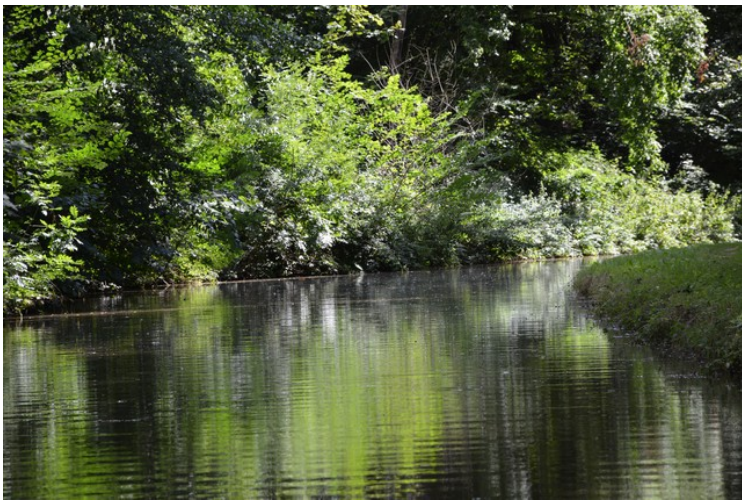


Lunch.
Mmmm!



Some pictures of the scenery along the canal.





Here we are arriving at [Gnosall Heath](#) and we are going to buy some provisions.

The others are standing on the bridge waiting for me.



The canal further after the bridge.



Right at the bridge is this pub, The Boat Inn.



Here we have finished shopping and I'm arranging the goods in the bags.



We had planned to eat at the pub, but they did not have dinner on Mondays, so it was to make dinner on the boat again.



Eldor is in control of the ropes before going on.



Then we are continuing on the canal past the bridge.



This was a long day as well, because we were still behind the schedule.