



Visitors at The Junction Inn and the boatyard cafe watch the boating activity in the basin. PHOTOS: WATERWAY IMAGES

Successful shop window for Shrewsbury & Newport Canal Trust

By Harry Arnold



(Coun Leon Murray, mayor of Telford & Wrekin Council, and his wife Barbara unveiled the new interpretation board along with S&NCT chairman Bernie Jones.

NORBURY Junction was packed with between eight and nine thousand visitors over the three-day May Bank Holiday weekend for the Shrewsbury & Newport Canal Trust's (S&NCT) 2014 Norbury Canal Festival.

Trade, historic and 26 other participating boats lined the towpath from the junction south along the Shropshire Union Canal's Shelmore embankment.

Over 40 trade and voluntary exhibitor stands and the entertainment marquee again filled the field by The Junction Inn and spread along the towpath. All offered a wide range of goods, food, services and attractions, with entertainment for the children including Wild over Waterways (WoW) activities organised by the local Shrewsbury District & North Wales IWA Branch, which also sponsored the

programme.

Boat trips were run this year by Norbury Wharf's passenger boat Shropshire Star and it really goes without saying that the yard's cafe and The Junction Inn did a roaring trade in food and drink; although they had a competitor in price and home-made quality in the Norbury Women's Institute.

The Burton Borough Brass Band played during some of the day with a variety of styles of musical entertainment in the marquee in the evenings. There was a traditional canalside church service on the Sunday.

One of the features of the event was the installation and unveiling of an information board - provided by S&NCT - close to the entrance to the Shrewsbury & Newport Canal from which visitors to Norbury can now learn something about the currently closed canal and the campaign for the reopening.

The board was unveiled by Coun Leon Murray, Mayor of Telford & Wrekin Council, and his wife Barbara along with S&NCT chairman Bernie Jones who showed them around the event and introduced them to visitors. Coun Murray - who is a regular supporter of the restoration project - also did some competition judging.

Apart from funds raised, the Norbury Canal Festival was another successful promotional shop window in the S&NCT programme of activities to raise the profile of its campaign which has really moved into top gear over the past two or three years.

It is perhaps disappointing that this level of public support did not exist to mount such a major event at Norbury during the original campaign in the 1960s when most of the waterway was intact.