

Barrow Lament of 31B - ditty - 2005

16 February 2009

Last Updated 03 April 2011

The Barrow Lament of 31B (sung with great gusto to the air of Bangor Town!)

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 From Athy town we sailed down, the Barrow for Carlow bound,
 Now between them locks there were some rocks, but on this trip we never ran aground.
 The old boatmen they came along then, the old boats for to see,
 Then we went back up across the rocks, and we stopped at Maganey.

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 Now Cormac served up the Wallbanger drinks, and the laughter was bursting in fits,
 In the arch of the bridge it was cold as a fridge, as we reminisced on the Blitz.
 In The Three Counties bar we had some jars, they were glad for to see all us boaters,
 95 wouldnâ€™t go it was needing a tow, or the lend of a good starting motor.

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 Then on to Athy for the Waterfest do, the last weekend in May,
 Below a bridge called Cromaboo, we pulled up for a couple of days.
 After the craic some headed back, for Carlow again we were bound,
 The rest they fled and they started to head, for the Shannon through Vicarstown.

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 Now Carlow Bridge or so goes the myth, is too low to get under they think,
 But with twenty one bodies standing on your back deck, then down your boat will sink.
 Enough clearance there we had one inch to spare, we went backwards down through its mouth,
 Now the myth as they say has been blown away, thought the way was now clear to the south

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 But from Carlow down, lots of banging sounds, as I bounced off the rocks with a shudder,
 Above Leighlinbridge I came over a ridge, and it lifted off me our rudder.
 Then Robbie cried as he waved the Barrow Guide, "do you see that there blue line,
 Well that ain't a path thatâ€™s upon that chart; it just shows where the rocks are lying".

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 In Bagenalstown the committee came down, and they gave us bottles of wine,
 Because they 'thunk' that if we were drunk, then perhaps then we wouldnâ€™t mind.
 Going down in the lock we were in for a shock, as the boat she sat down on the ground,
 Flushed out over the cill I can hear it still, a tearing and grating kinda sound.

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 The flush did the trick but would yet make me sick, for I didnâ€™t know that my boat had been holed,
 Now I have to say t'was a terrible day, 'cos the river was acting kinda bold.
 Before I knew eight hours had flew, and I'd only gone two miles,
 With a digger pushing and the water gushing, it was looking pretty dodgy for a while.

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 Well I spent that night down at Fenniscourt; I was tired of being beached,
 The rest of the fleet they had gone on ahead, and Goresbridge they had reached.
 The morning came more of the same, but I finally reached Borris lock,
 But then I stopped there as I did declare, it was time that I took stock.

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 The next weekend we went on again, down through Graigue to Bahanna Wood,
 And when I got there and began my repair, I found three holes to make good.
 An expert from Prague he flew in with his bag, and Paul Tim and Joe scanned me hull,
 And O'Reilly declared "to get them holes repaired, plaster concrete down till their full".

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 Then out on the tide it was great for to ride, loads of water me keel to anoint,
 We were all hell bent for the Tall Ships Event, down through Ross and around Cheekpoint.
 At the Rowing Club down in Waterford, we tied up to the old quay wall,
 Though it was kinda good we sat down in the mud, when the tide it began to fall.

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 In Carrick On Suir there are new jetties there, and for two weeks we remained,
 But the clock ticked on and soon we were gone, till New Ross was regained.
 Summer was nearly done but we still had some fun, we had one other trip left in store,
 So we moved off again up to Inistogue, at the top of the navigable Nore.

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 Well at last came the day it was time for to say, goodbye to the tidal water,
 Back through St Mullins lock we were very soon mocked, by the Three Sisters rocky 'oul daughter.
 Less water we found than when we went down, the trip up to Graigue was a chore,

Let me back to the tide where itâ€™s easy to ride, on the Barrow and the Suir and the Nore.

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Well me tale may be gory, but the moral of the story, is if you go down the Barrow in a boat,
If the weather is hot, you just make sure that you've got, enough water to keep you afloat,
Yes the river can be low, but if you take it slow, you should find out that all will be well,
And the memories you'll bring back, of the sights and all the craic, is a story that you'll want to tell.

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Now the WI crew, they'll advise you if you're new, of the tricky places that you'll maybe meet,
So get your little ship, down the Barrow on a trip, so go on now if you want to have a treat.

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