

# 72M - GCC Canal Boat - Dublin 1936

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## Technical Details

Reg Number:

72M

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Built By:

Vickers (Ireland) Ltd

Year:

1936

Construction:

Riveted Steel

Length:

61' 6"

Beam:

13' 1.5"

Payload:

60 tons

Draft:

4' 5"

Weighed:

Killaloe 1936

Engine:

Bolinder E Type, 15 HP

Ford 130hp Diesel

Home Base:

Shannon Harbour

72M was one of eight new boats the Grand Canal Company commissioned from Vickers in 1936. After a productive working life on the canal it was sold off at auction by CIE after the canal closed down in 1959. Her work days weren't over though as she was later used as an Engineering boat. The company that bought her were Cementation & Site Investigation Work and they used 72M when putting down sidings and pilings as well as other projects that they did along the Shannon and the Canal. After that 72M lay derelict in Ringsend Basin for nine years before she was bought by her current owners Ronny and Mary Byrne in 1998.

While its not of nautical interest, one piece of history is that U2 used 72M in their video "Gloria" (a single from their 1981 album October). The video was shot with the band performing on top of the barge in the middle of Ringsend Basin.

The Byrnes with the help of Richard and Mary Swayne spent the next six years working on her in Ringsend. They built and fitted out the superstructure and installed an engine. After that she made her first powered journey in fifteen years on May Day 2004. In June of that year after the Dublin Rally, 72M along with a fleet of other Canal Boats (Barges) that had been in Dublin for the rally, made her way down the canal to Shannon Harbour. In 2005 while in Shannon Harbour a new prop shaft was fitted and her bilges were completely replated. While not fully finished she is now ready to start re-exploring places that she hasn't been to in 50 years.

Crew Included -

Its first Skipper was Paddy Blight who as far as we can determine was on her for a good while. In the early 1940's the crew at one stage was Joe Connolly from Shannon Harbour, engineman. In the mid 1940's "Banagher" Jack (Carroll) worked on her with Tom Nolan. 72M was the only other Canal boat on Lough Derg on Dec 1<sup>st</sup> 1946, the day that the 45M sank. She left Portumna that morning after early Mass before the storm got too bad. On her way down the lake they hugged the Galway and Clare shore and were tied up in Killaloe before the St. James and the 45M left Garrykennedy. While Tom Nolan went home for a few months Banagher Jack stayed on 72M until around 1948 when he went to 43M.

Johnny and Mick Donoghue and Anthony Kennedy were in 75M. Their engine bed was bad and the engine was jumping

out of her on the upper lake (Lough Ree), so they went to 72M and stayed on her until 1951. Jimmy Fitzgerald of Graiguenamagh and "Lucky" Roche went to her after that. Jim spent about two years in her before going on to 46M. Willie Pender and Jim Lenihan were the last to work on her. Other men that were reported to have worked on 72M were Tom Bowers, Dick Kearney, Willy and Paddy Pender. At another time Jim Leeson was in charge and "Tinch" Sales as deckman. Gerry Kelly also worked on 72M as a deck man.

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