

AUGUST 1974.

BULLETIN No. 2.

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Dear Fellow Member,

Well here we are; our second Bulletin and approaching our hundredth member, not only locally but from canal enthusiasts all over the country - and even one from Canada.

I think we have got our aims across to most people by now - not only restoration of the Narrow but improvement of the Broad. (Note we are hoping to organise a working party on the Broad in November.)

The next question that crops up is "Why?" Why restoration? The simple glib answer is "Because it is there". But there is a lot more to it than that. Four main reasons spring to mind:-

- 1.) As more and more boats come on to the waterways more cruising miles are required to accommodate them to avoid the inevitable over-crowding. It is obviously easier to restore an existing remainder waterway than to build a new one, which has been advocated in some quarters.
- 2.) The Huddersfield Narrow Canal is an historically famous canal - witness the many enquiries we have received from all over the country - and as such is worthy of preservation as an operating waterway. Also it contains Stanedge (or Standedge) Tunnel; the longest and highest (not the roof the site) canal tunnel in the country; this, without the canal is a dead relic of a quickly forgotten past.
- 3.) From the practical boating point of view, the Huddersfield is a short-cut from Northern to Midland canals. Try getting a boat from the Calder & Hebble to the Cheshire Ring at present. It is a choice of the Leeds & Liverpool or the tidal Trent. Boats moored at Aspley or Ashton need two or three weeks for the voyage; while with the Narrow restored it would only require two or three days.
- 4.) One final point that should be made is that the Huddersfield unlike the L & L is a narrow canal and hence less water is used in locking through. Yes, I know they are 70' long as against the L & L's 50' odd but even so only roughly a quarter of the amount of water is required. The fact that there are 74 locks is of course irrelevant as only one lock full is used in going up and a further one coming down. Also the water must be kept flowing as at present to feed the Huddersfield Broad and the Cheshire Ring.

I hope I have said enough, if not too much, to give you food for thought and discussion. Have you any further good reasons for restoration? If so, write in to the Editor and let us all know them.

JOHN MAYNARD.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

During the last few months I have been astounded by the number of letters and enquiries I have had about the society. When I think back only eighteen months to when I first walked along the towpath in Marsden and dreamt of a restored canal, the change seems quite unbelievable. Then it was just me - now I know there are over 70 like-minded people, some of whom are very influential.

Actual progress is of course difficult to chart at this stage because, inevitably, most of our effort had gone into consolidating our position. There are so many people who had to be informed of our formation - Planning Department, Inland Waterway Association Branches and Sections, other Societies, etc. - I hope we have now contacted them all.

While we have been looking far ahead to the restoration of the Narrow canal, we have also been looking for tasks we can undertake now. We have planned a working party on the Broad canal and hope to generate public interest by a towpath walk and further public meetings (full details below).

Now its a question of publicity. The more members we have the louder is our voice. We are now getting an exhibition stand together, thanks to Bob Keaveney, which we intend to display at the I.W.A. National Rally (Nottingham, August Bank Holiday) and other events. If anyone can arrange to obtain display space, e.g. libraries, offices etc., during the winter months, Bob would be very pleased to hear from you. This publicity is vital both for attracting members and for fund raising. Will you please help in any way you can? Do you know anyone who can produce large black and white photos for display; or postcard size ones for sale?

We've made good progress up to now - let's ensure we don't slacken our pace.

ROBERT DEWEY

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

September 15th Towpath walk. Diggle to Ashton.
Meet 10.45 a.m. at the tunnel mouth.
Distance about 9 miles.
Bring packed meal(s).

November 16th First Working Party on the Broad Canal;
more details later.

(Please note, both events subject of confirmation
by B W B).

BULLETIN No. 3.

Please note that copy for the October issue of Bulletin should
reach me by September 20th.

G. W. Greenwood,
25, Greenacre Drive,
Upper Denby,
Huddersfield HD8 8UP
Tel. High Flatts 532.

ADVERTISEMENT

WE NOW HAVE OUR VERY OWN BADGE.

"RESTORE THE NARROW PENNINE WAY"
Price 5p. (please add 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ p. postage)

Available from Bob Keaveney.

FAMOUS LAST WORDS - No. 1.

Of course I'm sure its non-slip varnish!

STOP-PRESS

LADYLINE LTD. of Brighouse are now offering
a 10% discount on all chandlery (except petrol
and oils) to Huddersfield Canal Society members.

HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 1974.

BULLETIN No. 3.

EDITOR: G. W. Greenwood, 25 Greenacre Drive,
Upper Denby, Huddersfield. (High Flatts 532).

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Well, things are progressing!

Membership is increasing by leaps and bounds and I am pleased to welcome Kirklees Metropolitan Council as corporate members. This is certainly very good news and we look forward to similar far-sighted support from the councils in Greater Manchester.

Our next step forward is the publication of the feasibility study which it is hoped will be ready for Christmas. We hope that it will be a document which will enable us to set out in 1975 with renewed hope and detailed plans to back us up. If anyone feels that they could produce some artists impressions to show what the restored canal will look like, please let us know. It's areas such as Slaithwaite which will be particularly suitable - the council thought it had made a pleasant area by filling in the canal - let's show people how much better it would be with a few boats.

Now for an apology - we're sorry that many people didn't get the last newsletter in time for the towpath walk - still it was a wet day! We'll organise a repeat when the weather improves in the spring. In the meantime, we're arranging indoor meetings during the winter. Then there's the working party ... well, I think there's a working party! I'm afraid British Waterways (Castleford) have done an abrupt turn-about and have now refused to drain the canal for us. We are approaching BW (Wigan) who control the entire length of the Narrow Canal to see if we can clear out part of the canal in Huddersfield. More details later.

I'll keep the usual appeals short - we still need more members and space for exhibiting our stand - the more people we reach the better. Keep up the good work.

ROBERT DEWEY

"SAVE THE NARROW PENNINE LINK"

So says the slogan on our new lapel badges. Link between what? Why Pennine Link? To the uninitiated, a number of points need to be clarified. Our Canal links by a linear parkway:-

Yorkshire - with the Pennine Parkland;
Cheshire and Lancashire - with the Pennine Parkland;
and so, Yorkshire with Cheshire and Lancashire
- East with West.

It links the environmental improvement schemes of the Tame Valley and the Colne Valley.

It links the territories of the Calder Navigation Society and the Peak Forest Canal Society. Both these Societies have a vested interest in the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. Its restoration will increase the traffic and thus the prosperity of "their" waterways. So, supporting the Huddersfield Canal Society is an investment for the secure future of the neighbouring waterways.

I can speak about the support from the PFCS; it is largely a question of labour resources (or in a four-letter word - bods!). PFCS has a considerable body of members and supporters who realise how the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal will be to the advantage of the Cheshire Ring Canals, and who are therefore prepared to help in the Huddersfield campaign. Areas where this help is forthcoming include volunteer restoration work, manning exhibitions and general jobs requiring bods.

What is the nature of the work ahead of us on the Western side of the Pennines? (Living this side of Stanedge, I shall concentrate on my own patch!) The ways of overcoming the physical obstacles are becoming clearer, as the feasibility study into the restoration prospects progresses. In addition to the revitalisation of 32 locks (variously filled in, but mostly structurally intact), the following obstacles need surmounting.

Oldham section: four piped bridges and 120 yards of infilling.

Tameside section: Entrances of Scout Tunnel blocked; infilling at Power Station and extensive infilling in Stalybridge town centre with new buildings constructed in canal bed.

Apart from money, the only serious problem west of the Pennines is Stalybridge. The alternative solutions for Stalybridge are a revised line through the town centre, or diversion along the river bed. Both alternatives have their advantages and disadvantages, but neither is impossible in engineering terms.

The next steps are to complete the feasibility study, and then to discuss it with Local Authorities, BWB, River Authorities, Civic Trust, and other interested bodies.

BRIAN BEAGLEY

If you visit Stalybridge to conjecture on a new route for the canal, take time off to look at the unique aqueduct below the town centre. It has a cast iron trough, which is perhaps common enough, but the towing path is made of masonry, and is entirely separated from the trough. Don't fall through the gap between! The aqueduct is all the more interesting because a milestone is situated exactly in the middle!

We are indebted to one of our members, Mr. M. B. Wain of Leicester for the following poem.

THE HUDDERSFIELD NARROW CANAL

From the Ashton Canal -
-to the Huddersfield Broad,
Over the Pennines the "Narrow"
-once soared.

Carrying longboats,
And all kinds of trade,
Along the still channel,
That Outram had made.

Through the great Standedge tunnel,
And seventy four locks,
The water was carried-
-Over the rocks.

Rising high amongst the hills,
Across the backbone of the land,
Climbing over gated steps,
And towering over vistas grand.

Quiet now your shallow pounds,
Your locks and bridges in decay,
Nothing stirs your peaceful calm,
As you dream of yesterday.

We, your friends are dreaming too,
Though the futures on our minds,
What wrongs been done, we shall undo,
And you a bright new life shall find.

No longer now, need you despair,
Lying in your silted rut,
The Navigation we'll repair,
Restore, refurbish and re-cut.

Abandoned and neglected "Narrow",
Long forgotten, deep in sorrow,
We'll plan and work for you today,
For all to navigate tomorrow.

The following quote is from a recent letter from IWAAC to John Maynard with reference to current "works" on the narrow canal and is certainly good news.

"Thank you for forwarding a copy of your detailed survey of the present state of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

After receiving the document and our conversations at the Rally at Shipley, the Chairman asked me to contact the Board to inquire the possibility of a moratorium on works that would adversely affect the re-opening of any part of the canal; and I have pleasure in enclosing the reply of the Secretary to the Board, from which you will see that such a re-assessment is in fact already taking place, and that any such re-assessment will inevitably affect future works connected with the canal.

This certainly seems to be hopeful news for all those interested in the canal's future, and I shall be informing full Council of the Board's reply on the subject, as it falls within the Council's Terms of Reference".

OUR BADGE

Many members will have noticed that the description of our badge in the last Newsletter does not tie up with the wording on the badge. There were in fact, quite a few "link" men on the "way" to publication and this appears to be where the confusion arose.

ED.

WORKING PARTY

The BWB about-turn has caused a few headaches but don't despair, the working party will still go ahead on November 16th and 17th as arranged. Please report to Aspley Marina where a notice or committee member will supply final details.

Will any member who knows where we can beg, borrow or hire a dumper truck or bucket hoist for use on this or future working parties, please contact any Committee member.

ED.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

November 16th and 17th - Working Party on the Narrow Canal.

June 27th, 28th and 29th, 1975 - Ashton Rally of Boats at
Duckinfield Junction - organised
by the Peak Forest Canal Society.

It is planned to hold a meeting on the western side of the Pennines in
late January and in Huddersfield in early February - more details later.

FAMOUS LAST WORDS No. 2

"Of course I know which is the diesel tank and which
is the water!"

HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: John Maynard, 29 Thick Hollins Drive, Meltham, Huddersfield.
(Meltham 850575).

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Brian Beagley, 19 Marsden Road, Romiley, Cheshire SK6 4PJ.

SECRETARY: Robert Dewey, 3 Pump Row, High Flatts, Huddersfield.
(High Flatts 546)

TREASURER: Robert Wilkinson, 76 New North Road, Huddersfield. HD15ND

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Margaret Bradnum, 4 Rutland Road, Batley, Yorks.

Gerry Greenwood, 25, Greenacre Drive, Upper Denby, Huddersfield.

Robert Keaveney, 35, Councillor Lane, Cheadle, Cheshire.

Robert Lear, 5, Chatsworth Road, Droylsden, Manchester.

Tim Noakes, 7, Hartford Avenue, Wilmslow, Cheshire.

John Parkinson, 320 Platt Lane, Rushome, Manchester.

Margaret Sinfield, 73, Crowless Road, Mirfield, Yorks.

Alan West, 108, Barkly Road, Leeds. LS11 7ES.