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The Journal of the Huddersfield Canal Society

Number 11

July 1976

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NUMBER 11

JULY 1976

Editor Chris Griffiths

Printing & Distribution Derek Walker

T*@*ing /byy Who? T.S.F.?

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WE LOSE THE BATTLE BUT NOT THE WAR.

The planning application by Bates (Huddersfield) Ltd was approved by the full Development & Technical Services Committee on July 2nd. but only after long discussion. Several councillors spoke on our behalf. However, Bates promise of jobs inevitably carried much weight with the councillors.

The approval means that a four storey building will appear on the line of the canal by Queen Street South.

This must only be a temporary set back to our campaign, we must plan for a diversion around the obstacles in Huddersfield.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Dear Fellow Member,

All right, so we have lost the battle with Kirklees over the Bates' building over the line.

I think we put up a good fight and it is no use crying over spilt milk. We must consider this to be our "Dunkirk" - the Battle of Britain is ahead of us.

What can we do, you will be asking? The first thing to do is to show Kirklees that we are not going to take this lying down. I have written to my two local councillors asking them to raise the matter in full council. The next step is to get a question asked in the House of Commons.

YOU can help; if you live in Kirklees, Tameside or Oldham, write to your local councillor asking why Kirklees has been allowed to block your canal. Then write to the local press and tell them about it.

Finally, and all members can do this, write to your MP and ask him why a local authority can block a National Waterway.

It is up to all of us, not just the officers, not just the committee, but ALL members to rally round and stir it up. You want the canal restored or you would not be a member - so it is up to YOU.

Don't leave it to the other chap, he is leaving it up to you; don't leave it to next weekend - you will be too busy then, WRITE NOW.

SHIP CANAL TRIP - SUNDAY 12th SEPTEMBER

This excursion which was mentioned in Pennine Link 10, is now definitely ON, but the number of places will be limited.

The cruise, from Pomona Dock, Manchester, to Princes' Landing Stage, Liverpool, lasts approximately seven (7) hours and each passenger is provided with a souvenir programme which includes an illustrated map. A buffet for the sale of light refreshments, and a licensed bar will be available.

Transport has been arranged for the journey from Huddersfield to Manchester, and the return from Liverpool.

Depart:	Huddersfield	08.00
	(outside Railway Stn)	
	Saddleworth	08.30
	Manchester	09.00
	(top of Piccadilly Station approach)	
Return to Huddersfield		
	arriving approx	19.00 - 20.00

Members can be picked up anywhere along our route from Huddersfield to Manchester provided prior notice is given.

The cost will be as follows:

	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Children (under 14)</u>
from Huddersfield	£4.25	£3.00
from Manchester	£3.75	£2.75

A Booking form is included - please book now -
First come, first served.

Bookings, with payment, should be sent as soon as possible to Chris Griffiths (address inside front cover). Please state where you wish to be picked up, and enclose SAE for confirmation.

Remember - accomodation for this fascinating trip is limited. SO BOOK NOW.

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ELASTIC TUNNELS

In Pennine Link 10, Mr Holgate wrote about the tunnel and suggested that it was the only tunnel which had grown during its life time.

However, Mr Green of Stow near Lincoln writes to tell us that this is not so. Norwood Tunnel on the Chesterfield Canal (late lamented) was extended by 252 yards in the 1850s. This was to allow the Manchester and Lincoln Union Railway Company to build the Sheffield to Gainsborough line via Kiveton Park.

Butterley Tunnel on the Cromford Canal was also extended for railway construction and is in fact being extended at the moment for the Ripley By-pass embankment. Sadly, though it is in a 2m pipe.

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WANTED..WANTED..WANTED..WANTED..WANTED..WANTED..WANTED..

Little or no reward.

Two long reach staplers suitable for stapling this magazine (?) along the spine.
Addressing machine for use with paper-type stencils.

Contact Derek Walker (address inside cover)

Thomas Clayton Rules, OK?by B O Linder

June saw the opening of the first phase of what is probably the most interesting canal project currently in progress. Not, as one might expect, the restoration of a vital cross-country link, nor the reclamation of a few more miles of Remainder Waterway. Instead, the establishment of the first museum dedicated to preserving the boats that worked our canals in their hey-day, and to keeping alive the crafts associated with their construction and maintenance.

The North West Museum of Inland Navigation has been in existence for some five years, but until last month has had no permanent base. Its collection of historic boats has been spread throughout the north, members carrying out restoration work anywhere from Burscough to Northwich. Twelve months ago however, work started on the restoration of the Telford toll-house at Ellesmere Port. This building, together with the remaining warehouse of what was once a massive complex, and an associated basin, now provides a home for the museum.

Visiting the site earlier in the year brought a sense of depression. The Island Warehouse appeared to be in an advanced state of decay, and the toll-house with windows bricked-up to prevent vandalism, and its roof completely removed, showed little sign of restoration.

The only encouragement came from the sounds of Museum members busy inside, preparing the building for dry rot and damp treatment.

A visit on June 12th saw a completely different picture. The toll-house, although far from restored condition, has a new roof, and a fresh coat of paint. The condition of the island warehouse had changed very little, but was less noticeable, for the basin was full of working boats which seemed to bring new life to the area.

Inside the toll house the ground floor, had over the space of three days, been turned into an exhibition for which it is difficult to find sufficient superlatives. If the rest of the museum is completed to this standard of presentation, the adjudication of the 'Museum of the Year Award' will be a formality.

One end of the building had been used to tell the story of working boats, and of their relevance to Ellesmere Port, as adequately as space allowed. A mainly formal approach was used - display cases of model boats and painted ware, together with photographs, drawings and other similar exhibits. The other end of the building provided a complete contrast. A boat builders' workshop had been recreated, using original tools and materials and complete with the little odds and ends that always clutter up such places.

The effect that has been obtained is difficult to describe in words, you need to stand there and have all your senses convinced that you have been transported back over 100 years. The smells from the tar-bucket mingle with fresh paint. It is somewhat of an anti-climax to emerge from the dark damp atmosphere of

the workshop into the sunshine, with the view dominated by the massive gantry on the nearby container base.

A rally, jointly organised by the Museum and the Merssideside Branch of IWA was held over the opening weekend. To create the right atmosphere, entry to the basin was limited to traditional craft, cruisers being moored on the canal itself. A major attraction on the Saturday was the arrival by road of two wide boats, "Scorpio" and "George" that had not been able to make the trip along the Ship Canal. They were skilfully unloaded from the lorries using two cranes, in front of a large audience.

Events throughout the weekend seemed to occur somewhat spontaneously - this made the rally much more enjoyable than similar occasions of late. The Mikron Theatre Group gave performances of their two productions from the decks of the two restored Thomas Clayton tankers 'Spey' and 'Gifford'; Morris dancers danced wherever they thought the beer money was most abundant; and the 'Spey' with its 15HP Bolinder engine demonstrated its supremacy by dispatching all comers in a narrow boat tug-of-war. The toll-house was opened by Sonia Rolt, the widow of L T C Rolt whose book, 'Narrow Boat' did so much to revive interest in our waterways.

The Museum are now seeking funds to extend their restoration work. Future projects include establishing a library, lecture rooms, workshops a slipway and a dry dock. I wish them luck with their efforts and look forward to attending the reopening of the Island warehouse and the rest of the site.

....NEWSLINK....NEWSLINK....NEWSLINK....NEWSLINK....NEWSLI

.....BWB have recently announced that the Trent & Mersey Canal will be closed at Stoke on Trent from July 16 - September 13. This will prevent access to the Caldon Canal during the busiest part of the season. The closure is to allow road works to take place and has apparently been unopposed by the local IWA because the contractors claim they would lose £1M of which £ $\frac{1}{2}$ M would have to be borne by ratepayers if work was delayed until winter.

What is most amazing is the short notice given. No mention was made in the annual stoppage list - not even a press release which normally heralds even the most minor stoppage. Surely such works are not planned on the spur of the moment.

BWB are making a 25% refund to boat-owners who normally moor in the isolated section. Temporary moorings are being made available to the south of the blockage.

BWB emphasise that this "...will not set a precedent for the future.." Surely this is just what it does? What price the system now??.....

.....The detailed study of the problems to be overcome in Stalybridge is scheduled for publication in September. A similar document is planned for Huddersfield in 1977.....

.....Parts of the Lower Cromford Canal may yet be restored following a decision by BWB which requires reinstatement by the Coal Board after opencast mining. Just when this will be remains to be seen.....

..... The feasibility study has finally been reprinted. What are positively the last copies can be obtained from Chris Griffiths at the unchanged price of 62p incl postage.....

.....The 'navigable' section of the Rochdale Canal will in future have restricted opening hours This will minimise waste of water and damage to gates by inexperienced boat crews unused to dealing with temperamental locks. The canal will be open from 09.00 to 17.00 daily with the last passage will be supervised during the week by a Canal Company employee and at weekends by volunteers from the Peak Forest Canal Society. The licence fee remains unchanged at £6.50 single or £10.00 for return within 14 days. All enquiries and licence applications to the Rochdale Canal Co 75, Dale Street, Manchester.....

.....There are plans for a HCS/IWA (West Riding Branch) rally of boats at Aspley in September 1977. The first meeting of a joint committee was held on 9th July on site.....

.....'Elizabeth B' the former wide boat and club house of Aspley Marina is for sale. It is moored at Aspley at present but is understood to be mobile. Asking price £2950.....

.....Sellers (Huddersfield) have plans for extending over the Narrow Canal by Chapel Hill. We may not have a chance to object, though, as the old Huddersfield Authority gave permission when they gave permission for their infilling plans.....;

PUBLICITY NOTES

The Society's publicity department (!) has been rather inactive of late but will be bursting into life over the next few months.

A new exhibition stand is at present being designed and produced and should make its first appearance at the National Waterways Rally, Peterborough. A substantial donation has enabled us to purchase a professional display system so the new stand should be a great improvement over the old one and not prone to falling over at embarrassing moments.

After this rally, the stand will mainly be used at local events - the one definite date being Marsden Festival on September 11th. Over the winter it is hoped that the stand will be displayed in museums, libraries etc on both sides of the Pennines.

Our main problem at the moment is to find volunteers to man the stand at the various events. We particularly need people at Peterborough for each of the days (Friday, Saturday and Sunday _ 6 - 8 August) We are drawing up a rota and anyone who can spare an hour or two should contact Chris Griffiths as soon as possible.

We still require a sales officer to order and supervise the stock we sell at exhibitions. No experience is necessary and anyone interested should contact Chris Griffiths, (the eternal optimist).

I still need material for Pennine Link. Didn't anyone on the walk through the Tunnel feel able to write?

Chris Griffiths.

B.W.B. ANNUAL REPORT

The Huddersfield Narrow Canal was honoured with two mentions in the Board's glossy annual report.

- "117. A joint working party of technical officers of the Board and local authorities was established and, at meetings held during the year, consideration was given to the future amenity and recreational development of the canal."
- "156. Standedge Tunnel on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, an important channel for water supply was examined during the year. A considerable amount of repair work is necessary and it is hoped that a start will be made in 1976. Meanwhile, the tunnel remains closed in the interests of public safety."

Several observations can be made on these two paragraphs.

1. Despite our obvious interest in the canal we have not been invited to attend discussions on its future. Officially the Board have not told us of the working party's existence.
2. We were unaware that a survey had been made of the tunnel despite our enquiries about its condition and BWB plans for repair.
3. The report says that the tunnel remains closed in the interests of public safety until repairs have been done. Can we assume it will then be reopened?

THE OTHER TRANS-PENNINE CANAL

A number of press reports have recently appeared regarding the Rochdale Canal. The 'Manchester Evening News' of 14th June said:

"..The dream of restoring the Rochdale Canal is to become a reality - about 20 years before it was thought possible..."

The article then goes on to explain that the Manpower Services Commission are to finance reconstruction work on the canal as part of the government's Job Creation Scheme. Work is to start this month on a length in Rochdale.

It proved very difficult to find out further details of this scheme, since there appear to be a number of different stories circulating. The present situation seems to be that a 12 week pilot scheme is being financed by Manpower Services and supervised by Rochdale Council. If this work is successful, it is probable that a further twelve months work will be approved.

It would appear that several large companies and banks are also interested in underwriting materials costs this being necessary because the MSC grant is generally confined to paying for labour. (but up to 10% may go towards plant and materials costs)

What is not clear is what will be happening at the major obstructions on the canal, especially on the shallowed section from Failsworth to Manchester. One cannot see Manchester City Council allowing any restoration there in the present economic climate, as it would involve the council admitting that they had wasted about £1 million of ratepayers' money.

One also wonders what will happen when the Manpower Services Commission is wound-up in two years time, since it cannot be expected that the canal can be restored in that period.

If the restoration of the whole canal is imminent as the Rochdale Canal Society suggest, then we offer them our heartiest congratulations and look forward to campaigning for a reopened trans-Pennine canal ring. There are, however, many questions left unanswered, and we hope to hear more about the scheme in the next few months.

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More About Job Creation

As well as the Rochdale Canal plans mentioned above, the Manpower Services Commission are also financing work on the Thames and Severn Canal.

We have been making enquiries as to whether any jobs could be 'created' on the Narrow Canal. Kirklees Council seem interested in the idea, (for filling it in - no, that's not really fair!) they are looking at gardening type work, but difficulties arise because the canal is owned by BWB. The schemes that have already been approved are on privately owned waterways; it would appear that a scheme proposed for the BWB-owned Montgomery Canal has fallen through.

We are nevertheless pursuing our enquiries with both Tameside and Kirklees Councils to see whether there is any possibility of a grant.

STOPPAGES - LATE NEWS

The British Waterways Board have announced the following additional restrictions, due to the water shortage, which come into effect on 12th July.

Grand Union Canal - Main Line, Calcutt to Hatton
- Northampton Arm
- Aylesbury Arm
- Kingswood Lock
will be closed until further notice.

Stratford Canal (North)
- Lapworth flight.
will be closed until further notice.

Grand Union Canal - Main Line, Braunston to Cowley
will be open from 10.00 - 1300 daily

Oxford Canal (South)
- Napton Locks
will be open from 12.00 - 15.00
Fridays and Sundays only

These restrictions are in addition to those already announced. Section Inspectors have the authority to allow 'emergency' passages after the 12th. Up-to-date information can be obtained information can be obtained by phoning the Board's section offices or 01-262-6711.

PS: If you phoned 'Canalphone' (01-723-8485) on the 8th July to obtain 'the latest information about the Board's waterways' you would not have heard any mention of the above restrictions.

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New Book

At last! The ideal cruising guide! Only July 8th, Nicholson's published "The Real Ale Guide To The Waterways" written by Alan Hill a member of the Cambridge Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale. It lists over 1000 pubs which serve 'the real thing'. Price £1.95 (the book not the ale)

SOCIAL PROGRAMME

We have, at long last, had someone to volunteer to arrange a programme of meetings etc. He is Peter Freeman whose address appears inside the front cover.

He would like ideas for meetings and suggestions for speakers - please contact him as soon as possible.

Details of our first meeting of the winter should appear in Pennine Link 12.

As well as organising our own meetings, we are joining with the Peak Forest and Rochdale Canal Societies to arrange meetings with speakers of national importance.

The first of these meetings will be held on Wednesday October 12th at the Oldham Community Centre. The speaker will be David Hutchings of the Upper Avon Navigation Trust and admission will be by ticket only.

Further details will be available in the next issue of Pennine Link.

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Farewell but not adieu.

Members will be sorry to learn that Alan West has resigned from the committee but will be pleased to learn that the reason is his recent promotion within the hallowed (?) corridors of BWB. Congratulations, Alan, and many thanks for your support in the last couple of years.

DIARY

July 31/ Peak Forest Canal Society working

August 1 party. Rochdale Canal. Ring Pete
Stockdale 061-485-2247.

August 6-8 IWA National Rally, Peterborough
Help needed on stand.

August 28/9 PFCS working party. Further
details as above.

Sept 11 Marsden Village Festival:
Help needed on stand.

Sept 12 Society trip on Manchester
Ship Canal. BOOK NOW.

Oct 12 Joint meeting with PFCS/RCS
at Oldham Community Centre.
Talk by David Hutchings.

August 20 PRESS DATE FOR PENNINE LINK NO 12.

The opinions expressed in Pennine Link are those of the contributors, and not necessarily those of the Editor or the Society.



BOOKING FORM FOR SHIP CANAL TRIP

Please complete this form as soon as possible if you wish to come on the trip on the Manchester Ship Canal on Sunday September 12th 1976

I/We wish to come on the above trip:

Name(s).....

Address.....

.....

Phone:

Amount enclosed £.....(see Pennine Link)

I will be joining the trip at

(Transport has been arranged from Huddersfield via Slaithwaite, Marsden, Uppermill, Stalybridge and Manchester (Piccadilly) - See Pennine Link

Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope for confirmation of booking.

To Chris Griffiths (Dept MSCT)
4, Fairfield Court, Stafford.