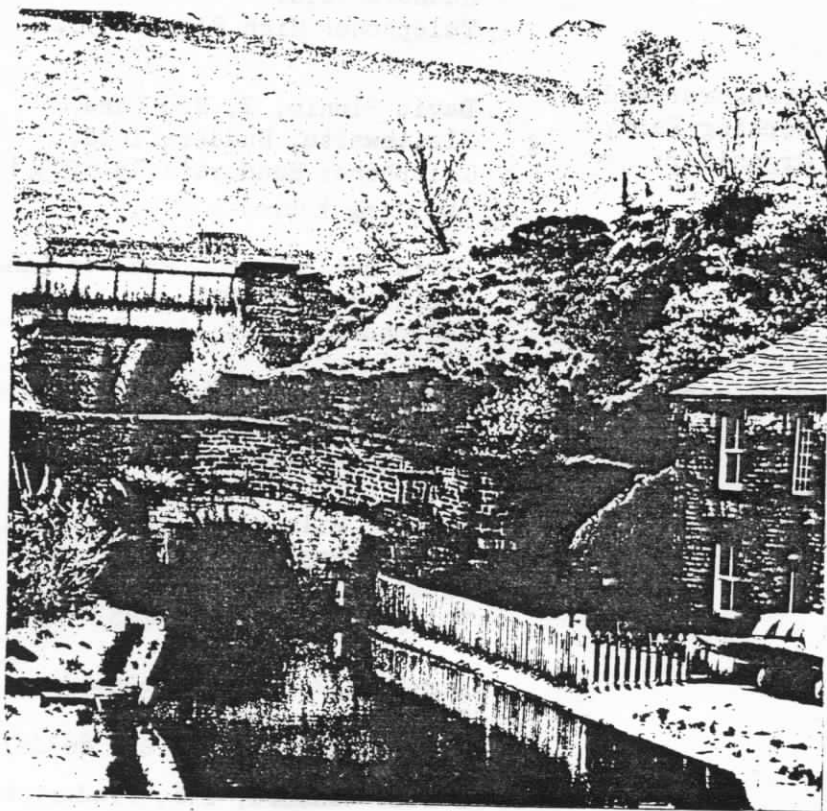


# pennine link

The Journal of the  
HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY

STANDEGE TUNNEL, Marsden



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P E N N I N E L I N K

THE JOURNAL OF THE HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY

Number 16

May 1977

Editor..... David Bullock

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EDITORIAL

An eventful two months for the Society since the last Pennine Link.

In Huddersfield there has been the rejection of the Eldon planning application and the protection of the canal line in approving the Sellers application. We still have the Bates building but Kirklees Council have shown their support in safeguarding the route through their area. Their reasons for refusing the Eldon application are memorable and should be treasured and used as often as possible by the Society. But as Bob Dewey writes in his report, there is no certainty that Kirklees could withstand a future application promising a large increase in jobs. Apart from vigilance for future proposals in this area, the obvious solution for the Society is to achieve a navigable canal as soon as possible. And this is going to mean money in large amounts.

Where that money (and the willingness of certain parties to allow restoration) is to come from is uncertain but, as members will know, exploration is soon to commence on ways and means of achieving restoration. Meanwhile we have our Feasibility Study and the Huddersfield Study (which thankfully now remains largely possible after the Eldon refusal) and Tameside Council at the other end of the canal have continually shown their willingness to help.

We have had disappointments. The working party in Huddersfield in April had to be cancelled at the last minute as the unions, understandably with the present

Page 2.

high unemployment, could not allow us to do something their members in theory are paid to do. Also Granada TV's grand working party in May seems to have died for the present. In any case working parties will not restore the Canal, invaluable as they are for publicity and membership participation. On another front the Stalybridge report has not yet emerged. The Society has a distressing tendency to make firm promises and then fail to deliver. Deeds completed speak far louder than promises unfulfilled and promises are better not made.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### H.C.S. PUBLICATIONS

The Huddersfield Narrow Canal - a unique waterway - survey of feasibility and desirability of restoration - published April 1975. price 62pence (including postage) from Stewart Wilson.

#### A New Canal for Huddersfield.

alternative for restoration in Huddersfield - published December 1976 - price 25pence (or by post five 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ p stamps) from Bob Dewey.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### ALL SYSTEMS GO

The H.C.S. is now firing on all four cylinders! Those of you who wrote to Kirklees objecting to the planning application will already know that we won! The application was refused by the Council's Development Control Sub-Committee:-

"Filling in of canal and erection of wool warehouse at:- Canal at rear of Brooke Shed and Britannia Shed, Eldon Combing Co. Limited, Colne Road, Huddersfield. The reasons for the Council's decision to refuse permission for the development are:- The proposed development is contrary to Council policy which requires that no further encroachment upon the Huddersfield Narrow Canal between Waterfront Road, Aspley, and the Standedge Tunnel, thereby prejudicing the development of its recreational and amenity potential or its

ultimate return to navigation, should be permitted. In the Council's view in this particular case, the loss of this potential outweighs any advantages that might accrue from the provision of the proposed warehouse particularly when it is considered that amendments to the proposals could take place to allow a satisfactory compromise between the various interests."

A further application by Sellers for an access road was approved - but subject to a condition which requires details of the works to protect the line of the canal.

BUT this does not mean that we are out of danger yet. It seems quite likely that an application for a factory creating many jobs might be viewed quite differently - so stay alert!

In the meantime thankyou everyone who wrote - at last the Society has proved it has a strong and meaningful part to play and that the Council is aware of it.

We have now received a press release from IWAAC (Inland Waterways Amenities Advisory Committee) publicly congratulating Kirklees Council for their refusal of planning permission.

E.D.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### AN ADDENDUM

The Huddersfield Examiner carried a report of "twenty demonstrators" from the local Friends of the Earth group outside Kirklees Council's planning offices. "They were campaigning to prevent further development by a local firm over the Huddersfield Narrow Canal" - in other words by waving banners and shouting slogans they hoped to stop the Eldon application being approved. There was no mention, incidentally, of the existence of the H.C.S.

The H.C.S. committee discussed this intervention recently. They welcome all support for restoration of the Canal, provided such support is reasoned, reasonable and constructive. They do not think that banners and picketing do anything other than irritate the councillors who have to make decisions. The Society

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put its case for refusal of the Eldon application in writing to the Council and gave constructive and reasoned arguments for its case. A large number of members wrote individually to support the Society. The Councillors read our arguments and, fortunately, came down on our side.

We regret that Friends of the Earth found it necessary to picket and wave banners in order to put their arguments to Councillors.

D.T.B.

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#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

20 members attended the third AGM of the Society on 5th April 1977 at the Albert Hotel, Huddersfield.

1. The minutes of the last AGM were approved and revealed how things have developed differently from our expectations.
2. The Chairman (Mr. Maynard) reported on the past year's activities:-

"Committee members and our exhibition had attended a variety of events on both sides of the hill, including several visits to Huddersfield Town Centre. The expensive day's hire of a site cabin on one of these occasions led to us obtaining our own caravan on permanent loan and this is now being done up for use. "We had organised our own working party at Slaithwaite which although not a resounding success had not proved a disaster.

"We had a successful meeting with staff of British Waterways Board in Leeds where many points of mutual interest were discussed. In fact Mr. Freeman (Area Engineer) is coming to address a society meeting, which is one of a variety of social events which have been organised or are being arranged.

"We have at last triumphed in Huddersfield and Kirklees Council have refused planning permission for the Eldon application. So we look forward to this year with hope, although we must not let the campaign become complacent.

Mr. Maynard ended by thanking the committee for its support - "a chairman is really supposed to be running the Society but often I find myself having to run to keep up."

3. The officers and committee (as detailed on the inside cover of Pennine Link) were elected. There are still two vacancies which, to maintain a balance between East and West, should preferably be filled from West side members. Nominations or volunteers should contact any member of the committee.
4. The following amendment to the rules was agreed (this seeks to "root-out" any dead wood which can mar the drive and initiative of the committee):-

Rule 5 - additional section

"....except that any committee member who fails to attend three consecutive committee meetings without due cause, after being given at least seven day's notice by post to his last known address will no longer be a member of the committee"

5. The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the officers and the committee.

B.D.

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#### CARAVAN RESTORATION

Ian Stott, an East side member, has kindly taken charge of the restoration of the exhibition caravan and has provided the following note:-

The Society has recently obtained the loan of a caravan with the compliments of Goodall's Caravans, Crosland Moor, Huddersfield.

At the moment it is in a decrepit and uncared for condition but it is in the process of being restored to a respectable appearance by members.

Below is a list of jobs which require completing before it can be used:-

Stripping down brake assembly, relining shoes and replace.

Remove jockey wheel, dismantle, straighten, grease and replace.

Remove near-side rear stand jack, straighten, grease and weld back to chassis.

Grind and rub-down external walls, panel beat, fill in where necessary and spray.

Paint on sides of caravan a narrow boat, "Huddersfield Canal Society" and "with the compliments of Goodall's Caravans, Huddersfield".

Remove internal fittings. Make internal walls good and erect the exhibition on the internal walls.

The exhibition will then be ready for us to (as they say in the movies) "let 'em roll".

If you could spare an hour or two one evening to help get us on the road then contact Ian M. Stott at Elland 74432 who will be pleased to discuss the matter with you.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### WEST SIDE PROGRESS

We received a fairly long and helpful letter from Tameside Council, stating their views on the canal.

Tameside say that there is no antagonism towards the Narrow Canal and they welcome comments on all forms of development. They approve the policy of the protection of the line of the Canal. They also propose to restore the culverted section of the canal near Hartshead Power Station. As regards the culverted section of the canal in Stalybridge centre, Tameside helpfully suggest that we discuss ideas with them. In June 1976 our Society expressed concern over a footpath across the culverted area of canal near the Power Station. Access has now been agreed and the path is now part of the Ridge Hill Historical Trail. It was suggested that the Tame Valley Warden could help in organising working parties. Finally a plan of a proposed lorry park was enclosed to which we could comment.

Tameside have announced a scheme for the Huddersfield Narrow Canal at Bradley Fold, Stalybridge. This is where the Mottram Road crosses the canal. Sailing, fishing and boat building facilities will be provided for older children by Tameside Council. Parents would



take part. Non-swimmers would not be allowed on the water. We phoned Tameside Council and understand that a hut will be built on the canal bank to house the facilities. The Countryside Commission and B.W.B. have been involved. Some dredging will presumably be required.

The Countryside Commission and the Civic Trust for the North West want to convince people that the Tame Valley - from Saddleworth to Stockport - is worth a visit. Over £15,000 is to be spent to "rid the Valley of its stigma and neglect". We are arranging a meeting with a representative of the Civic Trust,

Saddleworth Historical Society have been concerned about the poor state of the old transhipment building, alongside the canal at Wool Road (beneath Saddleworth railway viaduct). We have offered to assist if any restoration work (or stop-it-falling-down-work) is done. It is not clear at present who owns it.

P.F.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### SHEFFIELD WATERWAYS CONFERENCE

On 28th May 1977, the Inland Waterways (Sheffield Branch) is organising a one day conference with the title "Waterways in Austerity : Investment for the Future". The conference is sponsored by South Yorkshire County Council and will take place at Sheffield University.

An impressive selection of speakers have accepted invitations. The Chairman will be Mr. John Heap, the I.W.A. national chairman. British Waterways Board are sending three senior officials to discuss waterways transport, waterway maintenance for amenity use and waterways and the environment. Representatives from John H. Whitaker (Holdings) Ltd and Esso Petroleum Ltd will discuss waterways transport. A South Yorkshire County Council officer will talk on a local authority's role in Waterway development and Yorkshire Water Authority are sending someone to discuss their role. An officer from Sheffield Council will talk on the problems

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of developing an urban canal and Mr. E. Keaveney is to discuss the use of voluntary labour in canal restoration.

The conference fee will be only £2.50 per person. Application forms and further details can be obtained from Sheffield Waterways Conference, c/o 39, Huntley Road, Sheffield S11 7PA (telephone Sheffield 661353).

The stature and range of the participants is a reflection of the importance of the conference. This should be a most interesting and useful day.

D.T.B.

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#### PENNINE DRINK - The Tollemache Arms

If you were working your boat up the Narrow Canal through Mossley, this would be your last chance to get a pint of beer before cutting across country to Greenfield. This cosy cottage type pub is located just below lock 16W - about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from lower Mossley on the A635 Greenfield road - at the end of a row of stone houses.

Inside, the pub is pleasantly modernised, with some homely wood panels. You'll find a vault with darts, smoke room and a friendly bar. At the time of writing one of our Diggles is on display. The gents is surprisingly capacious (man-sized?). Snacks are served at lunch times. At the end of our treasure hunt last year they provided some fine plates of pie and peas. CAMRA approved Robinson's Best Mild and Bitter by handpump. Draught Einhorn lager and Guinness.

Instead of gazing out of the pub window into a weed-filled canal, how better if narrow boats were moored there instead.....

P.F.

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE DIGGLE HUNT

On a cold, wet March morning the intrepid Diggle Hunters set out again in search of the elusive Diggles. We first sighted some tracks near Marsden but after a while we decided these were the tracks of the dreaded Diesel. As everyone knows the Diesel is the arch enemy of the Diggle, and as one of the Tunnels was obviously the lair of the Diesel our search was confined to the other Tunnels.

We decided to concentrate our efforts on to one likely looking Tunnel, the one we chose proved to be the right one as all the door numbers proved (1-320). However, it was evident that these were red herrings (sometimes found in the Canal), as there were no doors.

Continuing our search we eventually discovered a lair of the Diggle. It contained a stove and a baked bean tin, the baked bean is the favourite food of the Diggle, however not a Diggle was to be seen.

Perhaps the Diggles were too clever for us. Perhaps this time they had gone to visit their cousins, the Scouts, further down the Canal. Perhaps they were posting letters in Slaithwaite. Perhaps next time we shall use Digglehounds, perhaps next time we shall use a boat!

Chief Diggle Hunter

\* \* \* \* \*

## BRASS PLATES

The demand for these plates has been impressive; in fact, most of the original order has now been sold. One member was so pleased with his plate that he immediately placed an order for another - at this rate we shall soon have to have some more cast. Another plate is now on its way to Canada (our membership is very cosmopolitan!) while nearer home and very near the canal, one is on display over the bar at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley (a regular venue for West-

side meetings, to which, needless to say, all are welcome.

Just to remind you, the plates are cast in solid brass, measure 11"x2 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", and are inscribed HUDDERSFIELD NARROW CANAL.

The price is £3.80 inc. VAT plus postage etc. 70p, and is guaranteed for this offer. Stewart Wilson (for address see front cover) will be pleased to receive either orders or requests for further information.

S. W.

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### VISIT TO BWB MARSDEN WAREHOUSE

On 26th February Mr. Whitwam; the section inspector based at BWB's Marsden workshop, kindly agreed to take a small number of members around the building. From Marsden the staff are responsible for the maintenance of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, the Ashton Canal, and the Manchester, Bury and Bolton Canal.

The large Marsden warehouse has three floors with entrances from canal level at the ground floor and an access at top floor level from the higher ground level at the rear. The latter entrance is rented for storage by the owner of the nearby private house. On the ground floor there was a boat bay inside the building, long since blocked off, dried out and covered with planks. The ground floor contains the present stock of materials and the vans used to reach the widely spread canals maintained from here. There is also a bright, comfortable office (contrasting strongly with the dull grey stone of the rest of the building) and a toilet room with a luxuriant growth of ferns in the wall against the rising ground behind.

The upper two floors are by contrast practically deserted. The first floor has a few partitioned rooms apparently the remains of wartime army occupation (one is labelled "Cookhouse") but the upper floor is completely clear from the front to the exit at the rear ground level. There is a stone covered roof supported by massive timbers. This roof apparently is difficult

to keep watertight as indicated by damp patches on the upper floor and, catching the drips, some splendid red fire buckets labelled "LNWR Canal Section". On the upper floors there are a number of metal remains from the sluice gearing and gates of, presumably, the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, and a few wooden patterns for making new parts. There are also some cast iron notice plates from the late 1800's, two of which appeared to be quite unused, Mr. Whitwam stressed that the BWB Stoke Bruerne museum has first claim on any relics found.

The whole building is very reminiscent of the Stoke Bruerne museum but on a much larger scale. One could, for instance, have at least three full size narrow boats displayed side by side on the ground floor. Speculating further on its possible use as a museum, there is obviously a built in rear fire escape at top floor level but very poor access for the public on nearby country lanes. Here the disused railway land beyond the canal and railway is a possibility for car parking with access by footbridge straight into first floor level. So perhaps the building has possibilities as a northern waterways museum but at considerable expense and who would provide the money and the exhibits?

Meanwhile BWB are obviously making good use of part of it and keeping the rest as weather-tight as they can. Our grateful thanks to Mr. Whitwam for turning in on a Saturday morning to show us round.

D.T.B.

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#### DUDLEY CANAL TALK

On March 23rd 1977 Mr. V. Smallshire spoke to a joint meeting of the Peak Forest, Rochdale and Huddersfield Canal Societies about the Dudley Canal Trust and the restoration of the Dudley Canal. Mr. Smallshire showed a large number of splendid colour slides, mostly of working parties up to their ears in mud and sundry large and small items of plant involved in the restoration. His comments were humorous and informative.

A number of hints emerged, for me, from his talk. First of all, as Mr. Smallshire said, the physical work he showed in progress was only  $\frac{1}{2}$  the story. At least as important, if not more, was the lobbying and negotiation behind the scenes. A second point was the usefulness of large working parties in providing easy publicity but their relative inefficiency in completing restoration work. Far quicker and more efficient were the large draglines, diggers and dumpers they managed to borrow or buy and use in the most unlikely situations. Thirdly, the Dudley Canal Trust had a tremendous asset to start with which is denied, at present, to HCS. Their remarkable tunnel was usable almost from the beginning and the regular running of trips through it provided a focus of interest and a tangible achievement long before they managed to restore properly the approaches to the tunnel and its various basins. To my mind the HCS badly needs such a focus of interest. Standedge Tunnel is the obvious choice but the difficulties are formidable. The fourth point that occurred to me in listening to Mr. Smallshire was the importance of actually doing something on the ground, perhaps almost regardless of the seemingly insuperable obstacles elsewhere. How about restoring the top lock on the West side so that a future trip boat could turn round there? (and entertain the passengers with the passage of a lock). There seems a lot of sense to me in our chairman's often expressed opinion that, whilst strenuously seeking solutions to the Stalybridge and Huddersfield problems, we should get on and restore the middle of the canal regardless of progress at these difficult ends.

Altogether an interesting and entertaining evening. Perhaps a little short on the chronology of events at Dudley and who paid for what and where they got the money but, as Mr. Smallshire said, slides of people writing letters are hardly interesting.

D.T.B.

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## AREA ENGINEER'S TALK

John Freeman, BWB Area Engineer at Wigan, talked to a joint meeting of HCS and PFCS at Oldham on 27th April. About 30 people attended which was rather disappointing in view of Mr. Freeman's responsibility for the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and his promise to discuss possible restoration.

Mr. Freeman opened with a brief, <sup>and</sup> very personal history of the Canal, full of fascinating sidelights on early engineering practices including the use of black powder to blast the rock. He mentioned the wholesale pilfering of company candles which were found to be providing light in buildings for miles around. To combat this they were made in an easily recognisable colour. Moving to more recent times he asked us to note that it was the 1944 L.M.S. Act that closed the canal and not BWB. And, that now the canal is a remainder waterway, under the 1968 Transport Act, BWB cannot legally contribute to its restoration except insofar as they have a duty to maintain health and safety on existing stretches.

Mr. Freeman moved to more controversial ground by giving his personal opinion that the Rochdale is the finer and more usable transpennine canal (outside his beloved Leeds and Liverpool) and should be given first consideration. He doubted whether many ordinary boaters would tackle the Huddersfield 74 locks (lacking any long pounds) and its long narrow tunnel. He also mentioned the considerable lack of reservoir capacity over the years. But, and he stressed the "but", canals are not just for boaters. Many, many non-boaters could and should enjoy them. Also the Huddersfield, having the highest level and the longest tunnel, has tremendous appeal for historical reasons. So, although he is pessimistic over full restoration, he strongly supports preservation of as much as possible.

He treated us to some amusing comments on the difficulties of maintaining long stretches of remote waterways with far too little money and very low wages for his men (I believe the basic rate for ordinary workmen

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is 92 pence per hour or about £38 to £40 per week). He told of the worthy chairman of IWA asking him if prisoners from jails might help with maintenance work to which he replied that when Mr. Heap took some prisoners to work in his bank he would consider using them on canals. He could imagine enormous problems among his workmen.

He dwelt on voluntary work at some length. He can understand our need for publicity and BWB management try to maintain a neutral stance on this matter but he, personally, thought it ridiculous to involve voluntary helpers in "coolie work" which was far better done by machine. The BWB workmen are naturally fearful that their livelihood could be affected by too much voluntary assistance and there might be a grave danger that the Government could give BWB less money because the work could be done by volunteers. Mr. Freeman really felt that the strength of volunteers lies in forming a political pressure group, a function largely denied to BWB as a government agency.

He wants HCS to go for things they can achieve and, in illustrating this, moved on to the biggest news of the evening. He stated that BWB is finding the money to clear the obstructions in Standedge Tunnel by contract labour. It will then be possible to assess what repair work needs doing and, hopefully, find sufficient money to make the tunnel safely navigable. He strongly supported HCS running a trip boat through Standedge in due course.

He ended with a rousing call for a groundswell from throughout the country demanding of the "faceless mandarins" at the Treasury that they provide a larger and more adequate sum to maintain the priceless heritage of the waterways, 2,000 miles of unique linear park through town and country. BWB and their employees do their best ("we too are also canal enthusiasts") but they need all the support and persuasion we can muster.

This was a fascinating evening in the company of a humorous, forthright and knowledgeable engineer.



We are lucky indeed to have him in charge of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

This long report reflects, as I see it, the importance of the occasion. It also raises very many questions and comments. I hope to return to them in later editions. If you have any comments let me have them before the next Pennine Link.

D.T.B.

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#### WORKING PARTIES

The proposed working party at Huddersfield on 23/24 April had to be called off at the last minute when BWB notified us they could not give permission for the work to proceed. They had consulted the Regional Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union and he had advised BWB that the work proposed was work which should be done by his members only. Members who did turn up spent the day working on the HCS caravan.

Granada Television's proposed appeal and working party on successive Sundays in May has had to be postponed as apparently camera crews are refusing to work on Sundays.

D.F.

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#### MEETING REPORTS

Considerable pressure on space in this issue means that full meeting reports cannot be published. Part of the report of one meeting, the East side members meeting on 14 April 1977, merits publication, however).

Recent publicity was noted regarding the danger of flooding from Tunnel End reservoir at Marsden. As a result local interested persons had come to the meeting. It was felt that a concerted effort should be made to establish the reservoir as a recreational area for sailing etc. It was suggested that a separate group should be set up, to include all interests. This would take some work pressures off HCS committee members. Perhaps the group could study the future possibilities

of all the Marsden and Diggle features. It was decided to write to BWB for further information on their policy and proposals for the reservoir prior to setting up the group.

D.W.

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SOCIAL EVENTS

Dudley Tunnel Trip

A reminder (full details in last Pennine Link) of trip to Birmingham and Dudley Tunnel on Whit Sunday May 29th. Tickets £3 (£2 if 16 years or under), Please state where you wish to join the coach. Applications to Peter Freeman (address on inside cover)

Frances Pratt Talk

On 15th June Frances Pratt, from the Press and Public Relations office of BWB in London, will talk to the Society. Her talk, illustrated perhaps by her husband Derek Pratt's photographs, should be most interesting.

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DIARY

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| 5 May   | East Side Members Meeting.<br>7.30p.m. Railway Inn, Marsden.  |
| 12 May  | Working Party on caravan.<br>776, New Hey Road, Huddersfield (Ian Stott<br>Elland 74432)              |
| 16 May  | West Side Members Meeting,<br>8.0p.m. Tollemache Arms, Mossley/Greenfield                             |
| 19 May  | Committee Meeting   |
| 29 May  | Dudley Canal Trip<br>(see note above)   |
| 2 June  | East Side Members Meeting<br>7.30p.m. The Junction, Tunnel End, Marsden                               |
| 13 June | West Side Members Meeting<br>8.0p.m. Tollemache Arms, Mossley/Greenfield                              |
| 15 June | Talk - Frances Pratt (BWB)<br>7.45p.m. Four Horse Shoes, Market Street,<br>Milsnbridge, Huddersfield. |

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

The Editor would be pleased to receive letters, comments or news items. His address and telephone number are on the inside cover.

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January 1st.  
March 1st.  
May 1st.  
July 1st.  
September 1st.  
November 1st.

Material to the Editor, please, one week before the above dates.

# we need <sup>more</sup> members....

Make an effort to enrol a new member – the more support we have, the easier our task becomes.

Membership...	Junior	... ..	50p
	Full	... ..	£ 1.50
	Family	... ..	£ 2.50
	Corporate	... ..	£ 7.50 (minimum)
	Associate	... ..	£ 5.00 (Voluntary Societies)

To: THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, 3 PUMP ROW, HIGH FLATTS, HUDDERSFIELD.

I/We wish to join the Huddersfield Canal Society

Full name(s) .....  
(Block Capitals please)

Address .....

.....

..... Postal Code .....

Telephone number .....

Occupation .....

Amount enclosed: ..... Cheque/Money Order/Postal Order