

pennine link

The Journal of the
HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY

No. 17 July 1977

Georgii III. Regis.

C A P. LIII.

An Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal from and out of the Canal of Sir *John Ramsden* Baronet, at or near the Town of *Huddersfield*, in the West Riding of the County of *York*, to join and communicate with the Canal Navigation from *Manchester* to or near *Ashton under Lyne* and *Oldham*, at or near the Town of *Ashton under Lyne* aforesaid, in the County Palatine of *Lancaster*.

[4th April 1794.]

Officers and Committee

- Chairman: John Maynard, 29, Thick Hollins Drive, Meltham, Huddersfield.
Telephone: Meltham 850575.
- Vice-Chairman: Brian Beagley, c/o UMIST,
Manchester.
- Secretary: Robert Dewey, (General)
Valerie Dewey, (Membership)
3, Pump Row, High Flatts,
Huddersfield.
Telephone: High Flatts 596.
- Treasurer and
Working Party
Organiser: David Finnis, 7, Ned Lane,
Slaithwaite, Huddersfield.
Telephone: Huddersfield 850361
(working hours)
- Editor:
- Social Secretary: Peter Freeman, 14, Burnell Court,
Heywood, Lancashire.
Telephone: Heywood 64468.
- Sales Officer: Stewart Wilson, 24, Abbotsford
Grove, Timperley, Altrincham,
Cheshire.
Telephone: 061 969 3888.
- Derek Walker, 16, Greenside,
Denby Dale, Huddersfield.
Telephone: Huddersfield 863487.
- Leslie Winnard, 216, Frederick
Street, Oldham.
- Mrs. Diane Charlesworth, Lingards
Road, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield.
Telephone: Huddersfield 842181.

P E N N I N E L I N K

THE JOURNAL OF THE HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY

Number 17

July 1977

Editor.....David Bullock
Typist.....Helen Bullock
Printing/Distribution.....Derek Walker

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EDITORIAL

A valedictory editorial, I'm afraid. I have had to give up the Editorship after only three issues. Living in Sheffield, I have found it expensive and tiring to attend Society functions and committee meetings in the area of the Huddersfield Canal. I firmly believe that the Editor should be on the committee and be close to Society affairs so I feel I have no option but to leave the job to someone more willing to attend HCS events. I have no doubt the committee would welcome anyone volunteering to take on the job. Is there anyone out there fancying a try at amateur journalism?

Two little successes I can report as a result of my efforts (I think). Firstly a letter to the Editor has arrived. My thanks to Mr. Wilkinson for taking the trouble to share his thoughts with me and with you. Secondly, the note included in the last Pennine Link on the inability of BWB to agree with the unions that our working party should proceed was most fruitful. John Maynard reported that someone at the Yorkshire Post had read this and included a small item in that paper. A BWB employee had rung John after reading the Yorkshire Post to say that a recent union meeting had agreed that voluntary work should be allowed and he would make sure that Union officials knew of this decision. HCS can apparently expect no further trouble on this score. I look forward to many successful working parties in the future.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Barlaston,
Stoke-on-Trent,
8.6.77.

Dear Mr. Bullock,

May I congratulate you on the standard of "Pennine Link" since you took over as Editor.

I was interested in the report of Mr. John Freeman's talk but wonder whether it is not BWB itself rather than the "faceless mandarins" at the Treasury which poses the greater immediate threat to the future of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal as a navigation.

The Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council have put forward sensible proposals for the future of the canal in which they say "future joint discussions by all interested parties should not rule out the long term possibility of restoring the waterway to through navigation". The Department of the Environment say that the recommendations do not generally touch on matters for which the Department can take the initiative and that prime responsibility for the canal rests with its owners, the British Waterways Board. Nevertheless BWB considered this matter and concluded that restoration of the full length of the waterway to navigation was not a realistic option. Presumably this is their justification for disposing of part of the canal and no doubt this and their advice to Kirklees M.C. that they did not support the feasibility of restoration to navigation, had a considerable influence on the Bates decision.

It is difficult to understand the attitude of BWB. The Board is discussing amenity and recreational schemes with the local authorities and it would be clearly helpful if this could be discussed within a framework of ultimate restoration to navigation. In fact it may only be through a series of lesser schemes that ultimate full restoration can be achieved. In this connection I think the news concerning the possible opening of Standedge Tunnel is very welcome.

I would be in full agreement with the suggestion that the Society run a trip boat through the tunnel if this can be arranged, but I feel the paramount objective must remain the protection of the line of the canal.

Yours sincerely,
R.S.Wilkinson.

(Editor's comment:-

As something of a bureaucrat by trade, not too faceless I hope, I have some sympathy unlike Mr. Wilkinson with those pushing paper around the BWB system. They have a gigantic job to do with totally inadequate funds and decisions have to be made all the time. Many like John Freeman, are "also canal enthusiasts" (As he said) but day by day, week by week choices have to be made by them and they know they will be held accountable for any promises made. I feel that the present hesitant stance of BWB regarding restoration of the Narrow Canal is no more than can be expected. But give them professional practical and well-financed proposals and I am sure Mr. Wilkinson would be agreeably surprised by their reaction.

D.T.B.)

FRANCES AND DEREK PRATT TALK

Two surnames seem to occur more than any other in waterways literature nowadays. One is Gagg, and the other Pratt. John Gagg is he of the prolific ability to put the same information in umpteen different ways in umpteen different publications. And Derek and Frances Pratt work in the BWB's Press and Publicity Department. On 15 June Frances and Derek came to the Four Horse-shoes at Milnsbridge to give us a talk on Unusual Aspects of Waterways. Both the slides taken by Derek and the commentary by Frances were excellent, covering boats, locks, bridges, tunnels, architecture, wildlife and vegetation amongst other things. Despite the artistic merits of all the slides, the one we cannot forget was the picture of Derek Pratt looking as though he had climbed out of a giant weed!

At the end of the evening HCS member Arthur Hornsby presented Mrs. Pratt with a Diggle, and thanked them for such a successful evening.

Peter Freeman.

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DUDLEY CANAL TRIP

7.50a.m. on Sunday 29 May saw a coach setting off from Huddersfield to pick up members and friends (via Oldham and Manchester) for a day trip to the Birmingham Canal Navigations. Arriving at Cambrian Wharf, Farmers Bridge at 11.45a.m. members of the party either strolled to Gas Street Basin, went into the Longboat Pub or walked down Farmers Bridge flight of locks. Some did all three and visited the Canal Shop. Meanwhile our guide for the day, Richard Jones of the Dudley Canal Trust had arrived.

Richard first took us on a guided tour by coach which included Netherton Tunnel entrance, the pump house and Delph Eight locks before we arrived at 3.p.m. at the Parkhead entrance of Dudley Tunnel. Electra, the Trust's battery-powered trip boat, was waiting for the trip through the tunnel. There followed what can only be described as a very professional trip through the tunnel(s). This included a legging session by several members. Unsolicited donations were seen to fall from their pockets on several occasions.

It was interesting to note that the Trust have working parties almost every weekend to remove debris deposited by vandals in the pounds at each end of the tunnel. Indeed, when the boat emerged at the Tipton end, a log was jammed across the canal and a nearby stop gate had been vandalised. The boat could not proceed until the obstructions were removed and all this had been done since a trip that morning.

The latter part of the boat trip had proved to be very cold although on entering the tunnel everyone had felt quite warm. This indicated that trippers through Standedge Tunnel will require warm clothing and there could be a large demand for hot drinks on board. The

most interesting thing was the power system of Electra. Being almost silent, electric power seems unbeatable in these conditions. John Horton, Electra's steerer, gave a very detailed description of the whole trip complete with anecdotes. The Trust's booklets which were on sale further illuminated our trip.

Our final surprise was an unexpected trip around the Black Country Museum which is being built at the Tipton end of the tunnel. It will include many reconstructed buildings and industries from the industrial revolution including a boat yard, a nail shop, a chain shop, a rolling mill a lime kiln and many more, some of which will be working from time to time. It is all complemented by its own canal arm with a rebuilt cast and wrought iron bridge. The rebuilding of the bridge is taking a long time as it is complicated and costing more than £60,000. Perhaps the most heartening thing was that no less than £630,000 has been raised in 2 years towards the Museum. There is hope for the Huddersfield Narrow Canal yet.

To conclude, we should thank Peter Freeman for organising the trip and our hosts the Dudley Canal Trust and the Black Country Museum, especially our guide, Richard Jones. Our enthusiasm for a trip boat was increased if that was possible and our hopes of raising the cash for restoration heightened.

Derek Walker.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

I am pleased to welcome the following people to the Society:

- 281. Northern Commercials Ltd. & Master David Gibson,
- 282. Frank Butterworth,
- 283. Alec B. Feldman,
- 284. Arthur Hornsby,
- 285. John K. Meadows,

- 286. Heather & Bill Lockwood, [REDACTED]
- 287. Clive Gardner, [REDACTED]
- 288. Mr. K. Robinson & Sons, [REDACTED]
- 289. James C. Robinson, [REDACTED]
- 290. Mrs. M. Robinson, [REDACTED]
- 291. Martin W. Main, [REDACTED]
- 292. Kathleen Marsh, [REDACTED]
- 293. Mr. Clifford Evans, [REDACTED]
- 294. Gordon MacKenzie, [REDACTED]
- 295. Raymond & Bessie Barratt, [REDACTED]
- 296. Mr. David Goodwin, [REDACTED]
- 297. D. Marcus Potts, [REDACTED]
- 298. Andrew J. Rhodes, [REDACTED]
- 299. Harold, Hilary & Helen Dermott, [REDACTED]
- 300. Eric, June & Michael Eades, [REDACTED]
- 301. Rex Shepherdson, J.P., [REDACTED]
- 302. Tameside Sea Cadets, [REDACTED]
- 303. Dan Stobbs, [REDACTED]
- 304. J. Taylor, [REDACTED]
- 305. Malcolm Asquith, [REDACTED]

Valerie Dewey.

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HUDDERSFIELD CANAL FESTIVAL

With this copy of Pennine Link you will find two books of raffle tickets for the Huddersfield Canal Festival. This, as you know, is being organised jointly by the West Riding Branch of the IWA and the Huddersfield Canal Society. Please try to sell the tickets to your friends and work-mates. The counterfoils (with name and address of the buyer) should be returned as soon as possible to the Festival Treasurer (who happens to be the Society's Chairman) together with the money collected. To those who have a conscientious objection to raffles we would like to offer apologies and say throw them away. We will quite understand. To the others - please do your best and support the Festival Committee.

If you can attend the Festival please let any member of the committee know if you can spend any time, even an hour or two to help on the site. The Festival dates are 24th & 25th September 1977. We will need help with, amongst other jobs:-

- Gate attendants.
- Rally marshalls.
- Raffle ticket sellers.
- Manning HCS stand.
- Setting out site on Friday.
- Clearing away on Sunday.

If you can find a site for the enclosed poster please do so. The committee look forward to seeing as many members as possible.

Boat entries are now being taken for the Festival. Further information is available from the harbour-master, Mr. Douglas Barlow, 314, Wood Lane, Rothwell, Leeds 16. Telephone Leeds 825225.

The co-operation in organising the Festival between IWA West Riding Branch and HCS has also resulted in a donation of £50 for our funds by the Branch. We are most grateful for this assistance.

John Maynard.
Derek Walker.

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I would like to thank all those members who contributed to my appeal in the last issue. The Treasurer tells me that we have nearly reached our first target. We still need a bit more so if you have not yet contributed but were thinking of doing so it is not yet too late. We will let you know the outcome of spending the money as soon as the project is off "the secret list".

John Maynard.

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POSTERS

Get yours now! Free!

Help publicise our Society with our new posters. They measure approximately 30x42 cms. They show a map of the canal and the following wording:

STANDEGE TUNNEL

$3\frac{1}{4}$ miles long - The longest canal tunnel
in Britain

645 feet above sea level - the highest canal
in Britain

The Huddersfield Narrow Canal. A derelict canal or a navigable waterway?

In 1976 100,000 people spent £3,000,000 on canal boat holidays in the West Midlands.

Meanwhile the Huddersfield Narrow Canal remains closed.

Write to the Huddersfield Canal Society

These free posters can be obtained by sending a large stamped addressed envelope to Peter Freeman.

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STANDEGE TUNNEL PROGRESS

Work has begun on the tunnel and has so far included laying out a road down to the off-side of Diggle Tunnel entrance and removal of fences in front of the

Marsden end cottages.

Officially...

"The work is being done by contractors to remove the blockage and carry out repairs where roof falls have occurred. This in no way represents the work required to make the tunnel safe for the passage of trip boats, nor in the short term do I envisage the Board being able to find the finance to make the tunnel safe for use by the general public" (John Freeman's letter to Secretary 8/6/77).

He goes on to suggest that in his personal view if the money were raised from outside the Board, restoration of the Tunnel would be likely. Hope yet!

We hear that the Colne Valley Society have suggested combining pleasure trips through the tunnel with pony rides over the moors. A society official said "We think this is an idea which has a lot of potential. People could choose whether to take a return trip by boat through the tunnel or go through one way by boat and come back on horse-back along the historic pack-horse trail.

This sort of thing is extremely popular in other parts of this country and abroad. It would probably have a strong romantic appeal to visitors in this area"

Bob Dewey.

David Bullock.

PULE EDGE, MARSDEN RECLAMATION PROJECT

The old spoil heaps behind the Great Western Rib on top of Standedge are to be landscaped. i.e. are to be smoothed out and covered to make them blend in with the surrounding land. The Secretary met Kirklees Chief Landscape Architect to discuss this - it was pointed out that the heaps had (probably) remained untouched for 166 years and that in some ways, the heaps represented the toil (and lives) of many eighteenth and nineteenth century workers.

The site is adjacent to the old engine house which

has two vertical shafts leading straight down to the canal 500 feet? below.

The Committee is to consider whether it wishes to object further.

Bob Dewey.

ADVERTISEMENTS

All from supporters of Huddersfield Canal Society.

Lace Edge Plates.

The West Riding Branch of the Inland Waterways Association have commissioned Water Gypsies (Northampton) to produce a limited edition of 500 Lace Edge Plates, each plate having its number incorporated on the reverse side. The plate which commemorates the Silver Jubilee is 6" in diameter and the design is in blue showing the Bingley Five Rise Locks on a white ground with a blue ribbon through the lace edge.

Priced at £8.50 (including postage and packing) the plate can be obtained from Mrs. E.A.Bentley (Secretary of the West Riding Branch of the I.W.A.) of 5, Ashbourne Croft, Cleckheaton. Please make cheques payable to E.A.Bentley. A separate certificate of authenticity is included with each plate.

CALDER NAVIGATION SOCIETY

Dance.....October 6th.

Ossett Town Hall.

David Lowe - organ. Mystique Figures.
tickets - in advance 85p (£1 at door)
from John West, 8, Northfield Place,
Dewsbury.

WAYFARER NARROW BOATS

Hire your narrow boat from Ashton-under-Lyne, near to the end of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. Four berth £60-£150 per week, six berth £80-£175. Inclusive of fuel, gas and bedding but excludes VAT. Further details from Portland Basin, Welbeck Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire. 061-330-1604 or 0257 481481.

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Secretary requires marine diesel engine and box approx. 20-25 HP - e.g. PD2; JP2 etc for his (just) floating NB "Erik" offers etc to High Flatts 596.

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PENNINE DRINK

The Diggle Hotel, a 3 storey pub, can be found on the hillside near to the Diggle entrances of the Standedge canal and railway tunnels.

Before the railway came the canal was closer to the to the site of this pub. You can find traces of the old line near to the Diggle bus terminus.

Inside, this free house is noteworthy for its tasteful style of decoration, with dark beams and complimenting prints, ornaments and furnishings. Almost as if to remind you that it is a pub after all, one or two fairy lights have crept in, ivy like, above the bar.

Carlsberg lager, Strongbow cider, Harp lager, Oldham Mild and Bitter, McEwan's Export, Tartan Bitter and Newcastle Exhibition are all on tap. If thats not enough you can select a cigar from the case on the bar or buy a good beer guide.

If our proposal to establish a trip boat on the Standedge Tunnel pound goes ahead, the Diggle Hotel will be a most welcome stop for those journeying through the tunnel.

Peter Freeman.

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(DIGGLE) LOVE IS ---
A NARROW BOAT FOR TWO

DIGGLE INFILTRATES B.W.B. H.Q.

A spokesman for the Diggles refused to confirm or deny a report that a Diggle presented to Frances Pratt was the first move in a plot to take over Melbury House. He did agree however that there is unrest amongst certain Diggles over the delays in cleaning the tunnel blockages.

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THE CONTINUING DIGGLE STORY

Rumours, previously unconfirmed, that Diggles were living outside the confines of Standedge Tunnel have at last been confirmed. They are however obviously working in an underground manner to look after their own and our interests in restoring their home and its watery approaches.

Whilst doing research into the possibility of culverting the obstructions in Huddersfield I approached Concrete (Yorkshire) Ltd. in Leeds and discussed the loadings and likely cost of a suitable culvert. Well most of the information you know if you have read "A New Canal for Huddersfield". What you do not know is that our friendly advice was given to us by a Mr. Peter Diggle. The intriguing thing is he looked human enough. Do they go through a strange metamorphosis when they leave the Tunnel or are they experts in disguise as well as mushroom growing and exporting.

Derek Walker.

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COMMITTEE MEETING 19th MAY 1977

Diane Charlesworth was co-opted to fill one of two vacancies on the Committee. It was hoped that a member living on the west side could be found to fill the other vacancy.

In view of minimal support it was decided to abandon regular working parties.

Discussions are being held with Peak Forest Canal Society regarding joint social programme next Autumn.

Reprint necessary of Feasibility Study. Agreed to make minor revisions, mainly updating.

Letter received from Kirklees Council (landscape architects) regarding the possibility of a job creation scheme by them on the canal towpath.

An early meeting agreed with BWB to discuss Standedge Tunnel and trip boat.

D.T.B.

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HELP WANTED

Can you help man our publicity stand or caravan at shows? Help prepare literature on the canal? Do art-work? Work on our publicity displays? Raise money? Organise things? Have you any other expertise that might be useful?

Or simply come along to meetings to give your viewpoint. You can give as much or as little time as you wish. Our overworked committee needs help!

Volunteers would also be welcome to man our stands at local shows, galas etc. Volunteers please contact:-

West side - Peter Freeman.

East side - Derek Walker.

Floods of offers to help to Bob Dewey, please.

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LOCK KEEPERS WANTED

On the Rochdale Canal during the week the Company staff are on duty, but at weekends the Peak Forest Canal Society provides volunteer lock-keepers. For each licence fee collected PFCS gets 50p.

Top lock 9 has a padlock (opened by lock-keeper) and water often pours over the gates, since like most of the locks there is no bywash. The canal is also broad so sensible lock usage is needed to avoid drawing too much from BWB's narrow canal above. Leaving top lock you enter a wide dark cavern with concrete piles rising from the deep water. In all this gloom is lock 8. Even when you emerge into daylight walls rise around you cutting off the busy city above. The towpath suddenly ceases too. At lock 7 a lock-keepers house is built over the canal. Just over the wall is the Playboy Club.

At Princess Street Lock city folk tend to lean over the wall here asking questions or giving you advice on how to work the lock. Before lock 5 is the electricity power station with steam pipes running along the canal to heat nearby buildings. This lock tends to flood. If timed wrongly you may be up to your shins in water, trying to get the top gates open against a tidal wave. We suspect that the Electricity Board don't like having their cellars and equipment flooded either, which is why the lock should be left empty. By lock 4 is the remains of the South Junction canal which tunnelled under Central railway station, out where Granada T.V's car park now is, and into the River Irwell on the other side of the city centre. Like lock 4, lock 3 has one gate fixed shut and therefore prevents wide boats from using the canal. Lock 2 drops you down to the short Deansgate Tunnel, and on the right is a sandstone area which was a corner of Roman Manchester. The railway builders constructed a viaduct across it. Lock 1 is deep, with gates operated by a chain and handle. It drops you down into the Bridgewater Canal and a pile of rubbish. It is interesting that the bywash at lock 1 diverts water into the River Irwell and not into the Bridgewater Canal.

If you have a lock key and are sensible, and would like to be a volunteer lock keeper occasionally, contact Pete Stockdale, 34, Hulme Hall Avenue, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire. SK8 6LM. Telephone: 061- 485 2247.

Peter Freeman.

DIARY

- 4 July 8.p.m. East Side Member's Meeting - Junction Inn Marsden, (near end Standedge Tunnel)
- 16/17 July. Worsley Cruising Club Rally (HCS stand)
- 31 July. Lower Peak Forest Boat trip - PFCS - contact I.J.Thompson, 5, North Drive, Audenshaw, Manchester.
- 7 August. Sheepdog Trials, Alexandra Park, Oldham (HCS stand)
- 15 August 8.p.m. West Side Member's Meeting - Tollemache Arms, Mossley/Greenfield.
- 20 August Diggle Pig Roasting.
- 28 August Diggle Fete (HCS stand)
- 24/25 September Huddersfield Canal Festival.

MISCELLANY

Advertisement noticed recently:-

Boat "Mary Jane" for sale which had "4 berth pump out toilet." Side by side or facing?

From Sheffield Morning Telegraph angling supplement:- Fishing on Chesterfield Canal "there are lots of boats in summer, though some visitors say they cause colour and actually improve catches".

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.

Published bi-monthly on:-

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

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

HCS sales.

The following items are available for sale through the Society and any purchases made will help the funds of the Society directly.

BOOKS (various titles available on application)

MAPS

Imrays map of Inland Waterways of E & W.....	67p
Bartholomews	77p
Stanfords	92p

TEA-TOWELS

Waterway map	97p
"Arthur" (canal horse)	97p
"Girl in Cornfield"	97p

PENS

Bolt Pen (inscribed Huddersfield	22p
Nail Pen (Canal Society.	22p

BADGES

"Huddersfield Canal Society"	17p
"Archimedes Diggle" (picture of)	17p
"Napoleon Diggle" "	17p

MISCELLANEOUS

Cuddly Diggle	82p
Solid Brass Plates	
"Huddersfield Narrow Canal"	£3.80
	incl P&P £4.50

*CHUCK, IS IF WE'RE HISSING... HIS..
WHATSOEVER YOU SAID
a Diggle*

All prices include postage & packing.

Orders to: Stewart Wilson, Sales Officer.

24, Abbotsford Grove, Timperley,

Altrincham, Cheshire. 061-969-3888.