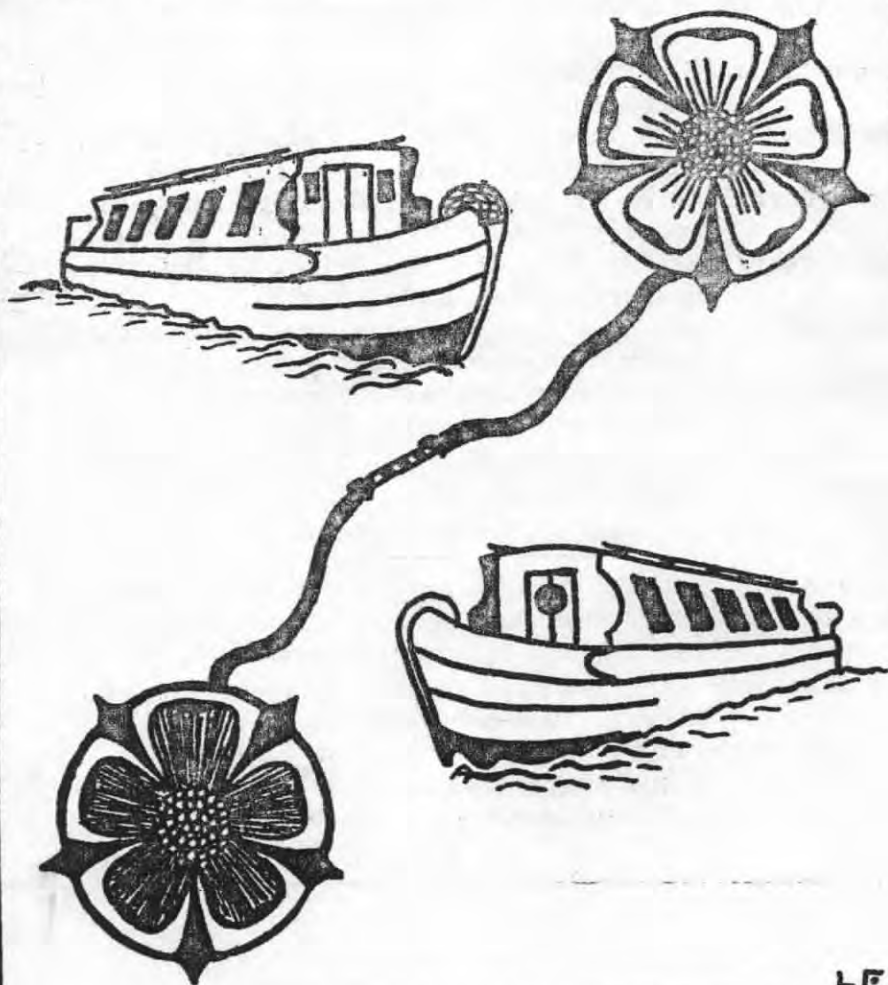


HUDDERSFIELD
CANAL
SOCIETY

PENNINE LINK

Number 30

September 1979



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HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY

OFFICERS

- Chairman (E): Dr. Chris Farrar, 'Stillwaters', Wall Royd,
Denby Dale, Huddersfield. Hudds 862329.
Vice Chairman (W): Peter Freeman, 14 Burnell Court,
Heywood, Lancashire. Heywood 64468.
Treasurer (E): David L. Finnis, 7 Ned Lane, Slaithwaite.
Secretary (E): Robert Dewey, 28 Cinderhills Road,
Holmfirth, Huddersfield. Holmfirth 5022.

COMMITTEE

- Colin Chadwick (J): 14 Simmondley New Road, Glossop.
Mrs. Diane Charlesworth (E): Editor, 'Bank Stone',
Lingards Road, Slaithwaite. Hudds. 842181.
Trevor Ellis (E): 20 Batley Avenue, Marsh, Huddersfield.
Hudds. 3466.
John Fryer (E): 14 Town End, Golcar, Huddersfield.
Hudds. 22502 (during working hours).
Graham Maskell (W): 19 Quick View, Mossley, Lancashire.
Mossley 3992.
John Maynard (E): 29 Thick Hollins Drive, Meltham,
Huddersfield. Hudds. 850575.
David Wilson (E): East Side Chairman, 194 Huddersfield Road,
Meltham, Huddersfield. Hudds. 850032.
David Sumner (W): 36 Fold Crescent, Carrbrook,
Stalybridge. Mossley 2860.
Les Winnard (W): Publicity Officer, 3 Fearnlea Avenue,
Chadderton, Oldham. 061-638-2690.

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Membership Secretary: Mrs. Valerie Dewey (see Secretary).
Sales Officer: Mrs. Jean Buckley, 37 Edward Street, Oldham.
(NOTE - 18p only). 061-624-4881.
West Side Secretary: Audrie Kinnear, 73 Gower Street,
Oldham. 061-624-5479.
East Side Secretary: Sue Sykes, 99 Scar Lane,
Milnsbridge, Hudds.
Duplicator: Roy Charlesworth (see Diane Charlesworth).
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PENNINE LINK

THE JOURNAL OF THE HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY

NO 30

September 1975

Editor: Mrs Diane Charlesworth
Typing: Mrs Ivy Lodge and Christine Janion
Duplicating: Roy Charlesworth
Collating & Distributing: East Side Members

EDITORIAL

Following on from my last article on Boat Lane in the May issue, No 28, Howard Bamforth and I set out again in an attempt to piece more of the jig-saw together. We followed a readily visible and approachable track which leads from Mount Road, round Pule Hill side to some ventilator shafts (directly over the line of the tunnels) and the ruins of an old pumping station - these are easily seen from Manchester Road, the A62. 50 yards or so on from Mount Road, the track dips down through a stream, although it is thought that there was once a small bridge there. This stream fed into a culvert which in turn fed water to the pumping station which powered the lifting mechanism - invaluable in digging the ventilator shafts. The track for much of its length was clearly defined and had been made as a road, for the small laid stones are still clearly visible.

From the shafts we headed via smaller sheep tracks in the general direction of the Marsden end of Boat Lane which we feel fairly certain came near to and opposite from the Coach and Horses Inn. We discovered a stone cattle trough, or it could have been a horse trough, and, either the foundations of an old road set with stones or an old wall. This was not noticed on aerial photographs of the area, seen previously, and needs further investigation, as, if not a road, it could still prove that the field had been altered, possibly sometime in the 19th century, which may well have obliterated further signs of Boat Lane.

We feel sure that in 1798 Ainsley Lane was already in existence, and this provided the link from the ancient

pack horse trail with the isolated farmsteads spaced around the bottom northern end of Pule Hill, and that the Canal Company made use of this existing track and probably ^{improved} it by laying stones. The track I mentioned at the beginning of this article, from Mount Road, was built by the Canal Company to create access to the site of the ventilator shafts, whilst being built. So it seems logical that the Company continued to use this track for the pack horse traffic and later the boat horses. Consequently, due to the more gentle contours, we feel that these tracks must have been linked together to form Boat Lane from Mount Road, which used to be the 1st turnpike. Again, it seems logical that (this) would have been used to get across Standedge Moor and join the Diggle end of Boat Lane.

Howard is now approaching an archeologist in the hope that we may get some excavation done of the area around the trough and the remains of the wall or road, which may prove our theory of the route of Boat Lane. For the moment, we must be patient; but our ultimate aim is to reinstate and reopen Boat Lane, along its length, as far as this is possible.

The two routes suggested previously and shown on the map in the March issue of Pennine Link, No 27, now seem most unreasonable, largely due to the gradients and difficult terrain involved. Those of you who are interested may like to amend the map (March No 27) from the following sketch.



CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Another roaring success! This was the general opinion as the second Tameside Canals Festival drew to a hot and weary conclusion on Sunday evening. Various aspects will be chronicled further in this copy of the Link and I therefore will not dwell on the subject except to thank all those on the committee and the membership who helped to make it a memorable weekend. In particular that person who has a 'hot-line' to the great weatherman in the sky!

Now to business. I promised in the last issue to expand further on the idea of co-ordinating groups. Already a number of ideas are coming forward and will have to be worked out before decisions can be made by the main committee. For example, under the heading of publicity and liaison will inevitably arise the possibility of a third Tameside Canals Festival, the prospects for an East Side Festival, the need for a major seminar in a year's time, the idea of a publicity trip for local councillors, etc. etc. We do not, as a main committee, or as a society, have the resources to do them all but we need to consider each proposal on its merits. Under the heading of projects there are still the Tunnel and Tunnel End cottages, the Uppermill stretch (active discussions with Saddleworth Historical Society), and the extension of the Ashton Canal through to Stalybridge, as suggested by ACS! Again, each needs a careful feasibility study before we decide to launch an appeal, initiate working parties, etc. Finance appears less complex at the moment and this group is largely concerned with the Company formation and keeping us in the black! However, financial and legal assistance is available for any group or project which may require it. It is essential to remember that the main committee is basically a policy-making body and is responsible for major negotiation on important matters with statutory bodies such as B&WB, local authorities, etc.

It is inevitable that after the recent political successes of the society, that the membership want positive action towards some physical aspect of restoration. The main

committee share this view, but are determined when a major effort is launched that it will be successful. Many eyes will be on us, some looking for failure, and therefore the campaign, even for a limited project, must be well planned before the first shovel is wielded. There is every prospect that the next year or so will be both exciting and fruitful.

Chris Farrar

PROFILE - JOHN FRYER

John is aged 25 years and is married. He is at present an Articled Clerk, although in approximately 6 weeks his two year training period with a firm of solicitors will be complete, and he will be a qualified solicitor. He holds a Bachelor of Law degree (LL.B.) and a Master of Law degree (LL.M.) both from the University of Warwick and has passed all his Solicitors' Professional Examinations. He is also an Associate of the London College of Music (Speech) ALCA.

In his spare time, John writes articles, concerning law for professional publications. He was co-opted on to the main Committee shortly after the Annual General Meeting and is primarily concerned with the formation of Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd.

APOLOGIES

We apologise to residents of 9 Quick View, Mossley and to Graham Maskell. The address to send to for the Mossley Report should be - 19 Quick View, Mossley.

The last issue of Pennine Link should have read July and not May issue.

RESUME OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on 18 July 1979 at Old Hunters Tavern, Stalybridge

Reports and discussions:-

Treasurer's report:

East Sub-Committee: Broad Canal certificates done; publicity out; Aspley Marina - position. Meetings from December to be 1st Thursday in month.

West Sub-Committee: Busy with Festival - rota circulated re jobs.

Finance: Directory of grant making bodies ordered from library.

Projects: Proposed restoration between Uppermill and Woolroad Warehouse received support from Tameside and B&B.

Publicity: Liaison to merge with publicity. Stand - still a need for better/more material for Stand - much discussion - need one person to supervise production and maintenance of material - No-one capable of taking on this role.

Seminar (proposed): Discussion held between secretary and John Maynard and notes prepared.

West Yorkshire Structure Plan: Invitation to examination in public.

Action to be taken:-

Letter to B&B expressing concern re Aspley Marina. Derek Walker to go to IWA National. To advance further £100 to Festival if required. A report to be produced urgently on proposed restoration between Uppermill and Woolroad. Saddleworth Historical Society will join us - to set up meeting.

Publicity material for stand - Anyone having material or anyone who can produce some is requested to do so.

Seminar - All committee to study notes and to be prepared to discuss fully at next meeting.

West Yorkshire Structur Plan - Advised to prepare further written statement in more detail before date of public examination.

NEW MEMBERS

Valerie Dewey

I am pleased to welcome the following new members:-

- 544 Ian McNab, 1 [REDACTED]
- 545 Janet Smithies, 1 [REDACTED]
- 546 Colin A. Gossley, 5 [REDACTED]
- 547 George Faulkner, 2 [REDACTED]
- 548 Mr & Mrs HFR and AM Tanner, [REDACTED]
Ashton-in-Makefield.
- 549 Howard A. Mason, [REDACTED]
Ashton-under-Lyne.
- 550 Dr. Michael Z. Brooke, [REDACTED]
Manchester.
- 551 A.J. and A.M. Buckley, [REDACTED]
Oldham, Lancashire.
- 552 Douglas W. Grimshaw, [REDACTED]
Manchester.
- 553 Mr & Mrs J.D. Muller, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- 554 Simon White, [REDACTED]
Cheshire.
- 555 David Walter, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- 556 Mr & Mrs R. Wray and family, [REDACTED]
New Mill, Huddersfield.
- 557 Phillip Shaughnessy, [REDACTED]
- 558 Keith Lyne, c/[REDACTED]

CANAL PAINTINGS

An Exhibition of Canal Paintings by the artist ALAN FIRTH whose work has been seen in 'Waterways World' and on television, will be held at The Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, September 3rd to 15th.

There will be many new pieces in this exhibition, with prices ranging from £35 to £80, including frame.

THE CANAL FESTIVAL

David Sumner

A police inspector estimated 10,000 people on the site on Saturday. Sunday was even busier. 20,000 people must have converged on the natural festival site of Portland Basin, Ashton, to celebrate the second Tameside Canals Festival on 4/5 August 1979.

This event organised by our society with support from the Inland Waterways Association was an overwhelming success. Members of the public commented on the happy atmosphere; Councillor Jim Bingham, Chairman of Recreation and Arts, Greater Manchester Council, couldn't believe his eyes. At the opening ceremony he intimated an early departure was necessary - he stayed until 5 p.m.!

The civic cruise gave our Chairman, Chris Farrar, time to put our message across as we meandered down to the swing-bridge on the Peak Forest and then back up the arm towards Stalybridge. The Mayor of Tameside, Councillor Charles Meredith was accompanied by his charming wife on Graham Burns' magnificent narrow boat BEVAN.

Festivities began at 12 noon when the CAMRA beer tent opened. Droylsden Brass Band welcomed the public as they arrived and Street Level Theatre 'clowned' their way through the afternoon, whilst Mystery Hyny kept the children captivated with his magical humour. The tug-of-war was a three-sided pull with the Church Inn, Wakefield Road, Stalybridge team easily beating off the Ashton Division Police team and another pub team 'Black Night'. For these efforts the Church Inn team won five pints of beer each and the joint losers three pints apiece.

Four-thirty 'til six-thirty was an official rest for all the beer and catering staff and committee, but the public refused to believe that the organisers were already weary but happy as they stayed on the site, so that by seven o' clock when the barbecue started there appeared to be no break in the jollification.

The evening entertainment was superb! After a short spot by a local folk/pop group 'Sunwheel', Dave Donohoe's Jazz Band serenaded us all with revivalist jazz up to

midnight. The alfresco jazz and barbecue was a fitting climax to the first day of the Festival. Ten months hard work had seemed worthwhile.

Sunday morning 7.30 - bacon and eggs for those on site provided by Jean Phillips. Numerous cups of tea helped cure hangovers ready for the afternoon 'last fling'.

CAMRA opened the bar at 12 noon, prompt as ever, and after the Royton Morris Men opened on the aqueduct, Pumpkin Pie Folk group and three 'rock' groups alternated in the main arena for the whole afternoon.

By 2.30 movement on the site was difficult as thousands crossed over the narrows and the picturesque stone bridge. Fivepenny Festival entertained a large crowd in the boatyard, followed by two 'diggles' paddling about the basin - presumably looking for other errant mushroom collectors. Their boat was six inches deep~~x~~ in water but the rear diggle gamely baled out with a saucepan. Crowds on the bridge flung pennies - 100 of which actually helped keep the boat low in the water. Des and Margaret landed one hour later with their paws wet and muddy!

The rock groups were, we're told, heard all over Ashton, beckoning people down to the festival. At 4.30 p.m. Alec Greenhalgh of Radio Manchester (and many boozers in the north west) announced the raffle prizes after Jean Wrigley had hauled an enormous bag full of counterfoils. The winner of the week's holiday on Russwell's brand new 49' narrow boat hailed from Stalybridge - a Mr. Corless. British Waterways Board, Leeds won three bars of soap!

The festival finished at 5.15 p.m. but the committee's work was only half complete. Clearing up took until 5 p.m. on MONDAY, when the basin had a ghostly appearance with no hint of the celebrations taking place only 24 hours before.

My job as co-ordinator was easy. The committee and helpers ensured this. Robin Thornber, as publicity officer, ensured the public arrived in their thousands. Graham Maskell, site officer, patrolled the site and

organised all the background work with consummate ease. Colin Chadwick, rota officer, ensured that almost £2,000 was taken at the entrance points with no person involuntarily having to work more than one hour at a time.

Alan Pollitt booked in and moored 63 boats and, with John Maynard, provided power and water. Jean Buckley beavered all weekend keeping the trade stand personnel happy, her contribution to the festival funds was over £250 in fees and numerous stalls to attract the public's interest. Audrie Kinnear ensured the public was entertained. Tony Grimshaw policed the accounts; and Margaret Sumner kept the secretarial wheels and VIPs well oiled.

Jean Wrigley (and her mum) spent hours and hours collecting and completing counterfoils for the raffle, which raised over £650. Fred and Liz Hodgson's capacity for work appears limitless - no festival should be without them. John Baker's public address system kept us in touch with each other; and Chris Potter's panache ensured our Mayor was in the narrow boat 'Bevan' and the civic cruise a huge success.

Tameside Army Cadets provided professional manpower for all tasks from tent erecting, gate manning, to litter clearing - a big THANK YOU!

Catering for parched throats and empty stomachs was also professionally organised. Jean Phillips and her capable helpers fed the 4 x 5,000 and CAMRA provided the liquid refreshment. They ordered 30 barrels of beer - over 8,000 pints - and closed the bar at 4.30 p.m. on Sunday with less than 100 pints left. Tom Lord helped to ensure that none was left to waste.

Many non-committee ensured the festival's success. Des Phillips is a Goliath - if you can't lift it, ask for Des! Alex Crippa towed 'Portaloos' over Standedge without getting lost! To all others well done.

The festival was made possible by three organisations: British Waterways Board, Russwell Canal Boats Ltd., and Tameside MBC. BWB spruced up the site and kept

water levels up. Russwell gave the raffle prize and much support, (we hope your plans for the basin materialise). Tameside MBC - you can be proud of us. Thank you for your support with tables, chairs and advice. Your Mayor and Mayoress enjoyed themselves.

The festival message was 'Restore the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, Canals are fun'. 7,000 handouts were distributed incorporating an HCS membership form. This festival has won many friends, influenced many people and made them aware of the potential of canals and waterways. To all those who contributed to its success, I congratulate you, and remind you all that as the Huddersfield Canal Society's biggest, yet again, money raising and gospel spreading event, the people of Tameside demand a third event next year.

RAFFLE PRIZE WINNERS

- 1 22805 Mr. T. Corless
- 2 11752 Mr. I. Cottam
- 3 04723 Mr. S.J. Brady
- 4 11820 Mr. Barry Shenton
- 5 07631 Mr. M. Conway
- 6 24981 Mr. Mike Armfield
- 7 14842 Mr. J. Mason
- 8 24637 Mr. K. Malley
- 9 17209 Mr. D. O'Brien
- 10 21580 Mr. S. Redford
- 11 15977 Mr. G. Smith
- 12 06040 Mr. O. Dibsden
- 13 07644 M/s Jean Jones
- 14 15831 BWB Leeds
- 15 14716 Mr. D.A. Abson

'A WONDERFUL CIVIC DAY OUT'

Chris Farrar

These were the words of the Mayor and Mayoress of Tameside on completion of their Saturday afternoon at the 2nd Tameside Canals Festival. The proceedings began with the formal opening of the Festival by Councillor Meredith, JP, The Mayor of Tameside, together with the reading of a letter from the Mayor of Kirklees, and ended with the presentation of a Festival Plaque and a commemorative china mug to the Mayor and Mayoress. By happy coincidence (or careful planning) the blue of Mrs. Merediths charming outfit matched perfectly the blue of the cloudless sky, and certainly the weather could not have been better for such a happy and informal civic occasion.

Accompanied by Councillor Bingham of the Greater Manchester Council and their son, the Mayor and Mayoress headed the small flotilla of canal craft which reviewed the fleet, dressed overall, of some sixty canal boats, narrow boats and cruisers which had gathered at Portland Basin for the Festival. As the temperature in the afternoon started to soar, that of the boat crews and their passengers was reduced with the help of ice-cream from a van strategically located at the Swing Bridge on the Lower Peak Forest Canal. One of the major purposes of the short cruise was to demonstrate to the VIPs in a small way some of the delights of canal travel, and illustrate the stark and dramatic differences between the restored and landscaped Lower Peak Forest, and the shallow, weedy and neglected 'stretch' of the Ashton Canal leading up to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. Regrets were echoed on all sides that the trip could not extend further towards the centre of Stalybridge and hopes were expressed that it would not be too many years before this would again be possible.

On completion of the formalities, the civic party disembarked for a 'walkabout' of the Festival Site and showed considerable interest in the many displays and stalls, particularly that managed by CAMRA! - the afternoon was very hot!

Many comments made during the visit reinforce the view that practical demonstrations of canals, boats, associated activities and how these can enhance the environment and enliven a community are much more convincing than any number of words and photographs.

It was a wonderful day out, and as Chairman of our Society and as one who was privileged to participate in the event, I would like to pass on the thanks of The Mayor and Mayoress of Tameside to all those who helped make it so - in particular to the owners and crews of boats used in the VIP cruise and to the owners and crews of boats who attended the Festival, and helped make it such a colourful event.

WATERWHEEL

Audrie Kinnear

Have you seen the Waterwheel at Portland Basin, Ashton? No, not the one in BWS Yard - the Waterwheel Shop.

The shop is a caravan owned by Alexandra Crippa who, since she bought it in February this year, has worked painstakingly hard with hammer and nails, paint and brushes, fingernails and gritted teeth to convert the caravan from its original state to its now worthy rank, with traditional colours and decoration outside, and inside perfectly white to show off an array of canal-ware, prints and a whole range of handpainted items of use and interest to a boat owner or an unfortunate dry-lander.

Stemming from a remark that there is a lack of shops in the area, and with Alex's imagination and own interest in the canals (both her parents lived on boats), the idea was born; and in a very short time she bought the caravan, converted it and gained permission for the Ashton site - and there it is - The Waterwheel, open for custom at Portland Basin!

Alex has joined HCS and contributes by having all our publications on sale, and has already enrolled a new member - ask her how she did it! She has been involved with preparations for the Tameside Canals Festival and

was on site over the Festival weekend to add to the colour and atmosphere of it all with the shop.

Maybe, if she can open a shop so quickly, she may have some similar influence on the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal!

THE BOATS AT TAMESIDE FESTIVAL

Alan Pollitt

Sixty boats were officially entered, although several more did in fact arrive late.

The best dressed boat was the 53 ft. narrow boat 'Shona Sue' owned by Mr. Williams from Heywood, Stalybridge. The prize was £20 which Mr. Williams very kindly donated back to MCS.

The prize which should have gone to the boat-tug-of-war which was not held, instead went to the boat which had travelled the longest distance to get to the Festival, in the previous $4\frac{1}{2}$ weeks. Two boats shared this prize; they had both travelled 540 lock miles. The boats were 'Nomad' a 17 ft. Callen craft owned by Mr. Tanner from Wigan. Mr. Tanner has recently joined MCS and in fact took only a fortnight for his journey; and 'Alexander' a 40 ft. narrow boat owned by Mr. Coppell from Huddersfield, who came to the Festival via the tidal Trent and took approximately 4 weeks.

'Maria' the horse-drawn trip boat ran from the 'Narrow' on the Peak Forest Canal to Lumb Lane, Audenshaw, on the Ashton Canal, and return trip. The boat was booked up for every trip, which took approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

'Morven' the 12-seater steam trip boat was cruising constantly up and down Portland Basin, carrying passengers, and looking very sprightly.

'Four Seasons' the restaurant boat arrived at the site on Sunday afternoon and provided a full luncheon trip and two short trips whilst serving afternoon teas. The boat seats 12 at table.

WORKING PARTY

Diane Charlesworth

The Festival working party was held by the Ashton Canal Society, on the old waterwheel, at the side of Portland Basin. The huge 28 ft. diameter waterwheel was used for powering the hoists which loaded and unloaded the cargoes between the mill and the narrow boats. By operating a sluice gate, water was taken from the canal and passed into the buckets of the waterwheel which is below ground level. The water, as it passed from the wheel, flowed into a culvert which went underneath the canal and thence into the river.

CRABTREE INN

Huddersfield Canal Society members met at the Crabtree Inn, Crabtree Lane, Droylsden, which is at the side of the Ashton Canal, on Wednesday the 1st August. We gathered to watch and take part in the transferring of some beer barrels from an old petrol-driven dray on to a narrow boat - as part of the build-up to the big Tameside Canals Festival being held at Portland Basin. The promotion was arranged by Wilson's Brewery, and members of the press were present. Although proceedings were held up owing to heavy rain, when they did take place the sun shone and many photographs were taken by Society members as well as the press.

Many members were dressed in Victorian canal costume. The men in clogs or boots, cord trousers, belts, collarless shirts, waistcoats (including even embroidery and moleskin), neckties, and a variety of hats. The ladies were dressed in full skirts, high-necked blouses, with leg-o-mutton sleeves, full white waist pinafores decorated to individual taste with lace, shawls and the very traditional head-gear of a lacy-ruffled bonnet with 'curtains' (falling from above the nape of the neck to below the shoulders) at the back. The children were dressed in knee-length trousers with braces, collarless shirts, neckties, and waistcoats, with knotted hankies or caps for headgear.

These costumes were later worn at the Festival and indeed are worn at other events attended by HCS.

A delicious lunch was provided by the licencees of the Wilsons pub, which was very quickly devoured.

HUDDERSFIELD TO ASHTON BY CANAL

2/3 AUGUST 1979

Robin Witter

The idea of attempting to canoe the length of the Huddersfield Narrow had appealed to me for some time, having walked its length in the spring. On learning that David Finnis and Don McCallum were going to repeat their exploit of the previous year, (of carrying the good wishes from the Mayor of Kirklees to the Mayor of Tameside, over the whole route) as publicity towards the Tameside Canals Festival, and that they were short of suitable canoeing equipment, it seemed the ideal opportunity to join them. Thus I found myself leaving Chester at 7.0 a.m. on Thursday 2nd August with the three required canoes and paddles, bound for the Polytechnic at Aspley Basin for a civic send-off with attendant press and television publicity by Councillor White, Mayor of Kirklees, at 9.0 a.m.

Malcolm Coward joined us to alternate with David Finnis and Don McCallum in the canoeing; and much assistance with the necessary portaging, carting of tents, and general encouragement along the route were provided by John Maynard, Bob Dewey, Chris Farrar and Trevor Ellis. This assistance and encouragement was invaluable and much appreciated by the canoeing party.

The first major obstacle at Bates Ltd. (above lock 2E) necessitated a portage of Queens Road Bridge and a lengthy carry past Sellers Engineering Ltd. to the Manchester Road Bridge above lock 4E - although the intervening isolated pounds were all canoed with much difficulty of access. A further portage around lock 5E brought us to the Paddock aqueduct over the Colne River, under the spectacular high level railway viaduct and the one mile post. This first mile had taken 1 hour and 10 minutes to cover which seemed

somewhat slow going; and we had portaged at least a half of the distance travelled, though most of the portaging had been along the canal line. Now I realised why David had insisted on a full 2 days for a 20 mile trip.

To the blockage at Slaithwaite (lock 21E) involved a further 18 portages around the 15 intervening locks. I culverted the road bridge and two dry sections where the weeds were so dense as to be impassable in the channel. The remainder of the water channel was intermittently clear water, thick sedge, and reeds up to 5 ft. high. All of this was canoed, punted, waded, dragged and even for a short stretch swum up! ('though I suspect that this last attempt was inadvertent) with great effort! There were several additional portages, such as at the swing bridge by Golcar; and at low level pipes were avoided by the expedient of lying prone in the canoes and drifting under.

Slaithwaite was reached at 1.00 p.m. with David's recommendation that lunch be taken at the nearby 'Swan' due to the excellent menu and (Wilson's) beer; the landlord being on holiday the former was entirely absent and was thus supplemented by a double ration of the latter! Bob Dewey's and Chris Farrar's help in the 1,000 yd. portage along the filled-in canal line to the re-launch above lock 23E, where the canal again becomes in water, was more than welcome.

The intervening 19 locks and associated pounds over the subsequent 4 miles to Marsden summit were much as those preceding Slaithwaite, except that now it was drizzling steadily and held the promise of much more. The nature of the valley had now changed considerably: the mill towns of the lower valley having been left behind, the scenery became at first rural and then moorland, as the ever steepening climb, culminating in the 9 locks past Marsden to the summit, continued.

The summit was reached at 4.0 p.m. - a climb of 493 ft. - in a somewhat exhausted state; and the half-mile paddle past Marsden maintenance depot in weed free water (perhaps they don't grow this high up) to the locked and barred gates of

Standedge Tunnel was a welcome relief.

The passage of Standedge Tunnel Moor must remain a blank. Suffice to say that we all agreed that a further 700 ft. climb and $3\frac{1}{2}$ mile portage carrying canoes after the preceding exertions represented a stiff mental and physical challenge.

The night was spent under canvas at the Diggle entrance to the tunnel beside the canal, and all slept soundly after considerable but well earned quantities of real ale at the Diggle Hotel.

Friday morning brought the anticipated early arrival of Fred from Marsden Depot to ensure that his tunnel had not been interfered with - which indeed it had not - and a start was made at 9.30 a.m. on the descent of the flight of 9 locks to Woolroad, which was reached by 10.15 a.m. Along this stretch we met a most indignant angler who objected to our presence declaiming that his annual licence to fish cost him £8. Our response that ours cost £13, to include the use of useless locks, evinced no trace of sympathy.

The run from Woolroad to Saddleworth was perhaps the most pleasant of the whole trip: only two locks to portage (both being in good condition;) a deep wide and weed-free channel with a thickly wooded slope on the one hand, and the Tame running through meadows at almost the same level on the other; an aqueduct and the towering splendour of Uppermill viaduct. Here, surely, could be the start of a low cost restoration exercise of a most interesting and attractive stretch, albeit isolated at the present, with perhaps a trip boat operating between Saddleworth and Woolroad?

A late breakfast of hot pies was taken at the canal side at Saddleworth; and on we pressed to the Tollemache Arms below lock 16W through some delightful stretches, and some so choked with weed that the canoes had to be dragged along the line. At the Tollemache, reached at 12 noon, Trevor Booth had anticipated our arrival and his excellent (Robinson's) beer was awaiting us together with Margaret's equally excellent hamburgers.

The trouble with the Tollemache is the lack of desire to leave it, once reached, which lack increases in an almost exponential manner dependent on the quantity of beer consumed. An added incentive to stay on this occasion, was the fact that it was pouring with rain outside, and that the pound below lock 16 was very badly weeded. Nevertheless, a supreme act of will saw us relaunched below lock 16 at 1.05 p.m. and on our way again. The subsequent $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile stretch to Scout Tunnel being weed infested, with sundry urban rubbish and a much reduced draught in the water channel.

The section from Scout to the 700 yd. filled in section alongside Hartshead Power Station (including locks 11 - 9W) is amongst the prettiest and unspoilt along the whole length of the canal; the banks on either side being thickly wooded, the water channel relatively free of weed, and no sign of buildings of any description despite our proximity to Stalybridge. To add to our enjoyment it had stopped raining, which was clearly too much for Don who, in attempting to alight for the portage at the culverted bridge, (previously a swing bridge) opposite Hartshead, went for a further swim!

The blockage was portaged and relaunch made on the final level section to Mottram Road Bridge in Stalybridge, where the canal which previously passed through the town centre, is now totally obliterated for some $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. This we reached at 2.45 p.m. and here we decided to split up: I to try the proposed alternative passage along the Tame to the aqueduct southwest of Stalybridge; David, Don and Malcolm to portage along the canal line through the town centre.

The river passage contains 3 weirs with a total fall of some 8 ft. and follows an unattractive circuitous course mostly round the backs of factories for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the aqueduct. It is very shallow and boulder strewn throughout, and I remain doubtful as to whether it represents a feasible alternative to the canal line.

Back on the canal level, we all met up again at the southern end of the blockage at Bayley Street for the final $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile paddle to Portland Basin, with only the last 3 locks to be

portaged. The water Channel was now in the main weed free; but the major problem became the usual assortment of urban debris.

We passed the 200 yd. narrow stretch at Whitelands, originally a tunnel but now opened out, to lock 1W where the Huddersfield Narrow terminates. The final $\frac{1}{2}$ mile level section on the Ashton Canal to the Portland Basin was a straight-forward paddle; and we arrived quietly at 4.28 p.m. in a somewhat exhausted state, but pleased to see the boats, marquees, and general bustle as preparations for the Festival went ahead. The objective of following the fullest possible extent of the canal line by water had been achieved.

On the Saturday, David Finnis and a Diggle were paddled across the basin to deliver the Mayor of Kirkcloses' message to Councillor Meredith, which his Worship read to the assembled crowd. Indeed it contained a most encouraging note of hope of official assistance towards the ultimate restoration to proper navigation standards of the Huddersfield Narrow, making the effort of the trip seem all the more worthwhile. Throughout the reading of the message, Diggle kept up a low growling complaint of too much heat, too much light, and a wet backside! None of which I understand he is accustomed to. The ceremonial complete, the canoeing party retired to the beer tent, and as far as I know, Diggle directly to Standedge.

Huddersfield Canal Society would like to thank Robin Witter for providing the canoes which made the above trip possible. Thank you Robin.

CANAL CAKE CUT

Peter Freeman

A few days after the Tameside Canals Festival, I presented a narrow boat styled cake to elderly patients at Oldham and District General Hospital. Ann Phillips and family, the excellent Festival caterers, made the fine iced fruit cake weighing over 23 lbs. It was the prize in a 'guess the weight' competition. Chris Farrar and myself, after a series of complicated calculations, including allowance for specific gravity and Sod's Law, estimated several weights and entered the competition. One of these was the nearest to the correct weight; so we decided to present it to the hospital. There was enough of it for patients in several wards to receive a piece each.

What really seemed to make the day for some of the patients was the photographing of the cake distribution by the Oldham Evening Chronicle. A nurse told me that one patient, obviously thoroughly enjoying herself, normally would not raise a smile!

MOSSLEY REPORT

The Mossley Report 'A Unique Waterway' is available from Graham Maskell of 19 Quick View, Mossley. It is a community view of the history of Mossley and its link with the Huddersfield Narrow Canal from its conception to the present day. Full of interesting anecdotes, debate, nature study, sketches and photographs of the 'communities straddling the Tame Valley between Saddleworth and Stalybridge', it is well worth reading by anyone interested in our environment.

Price: 75p + postage and packing.

WATERWAYS PRESS RELEASE

27 July 1979

'GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON WATERWAYS'
WELCOMED BY SIR FRANK PRICE

'The Chairman of the British Waterways Board (Sir Frank Price D.L.), speaking today after a meeting of the Board, welcomed the statement in the House of Commons this week by the Minister for Local Government and Environmental Services (The Rt. Hon. Tom King, M.P.), that the Board are to remain an independent entity and not merged with the Water Industry.

Sir Frank said "This statement by H.M. Government gives the Board and their staff renewed confidence for the future. Moreover, those who have invested considerable capital into the provision of facilities on the waterways - whether for the carriage of freight or for recreational purposes - can now look forward to a period of stability and growth.

Much remains to be done to develop the recreational use of the non-commercial waterways. As the structures are restored to good order, so the public benefit of this recreational resource will increase.

The Board are being provided with additional finance to enable them to tackle the substantial arrears of maintenance on the system. Work has already started. There are exciting challenges facing the Undertaking to meet the demands for commercial and leisure use of the waterways.

The scheme for the improvement of the South Yorkshire Canal for the carriage of freight is underway. This first major investment in inland waterway transport in the United Kingdom since 1905 is particularly timely and will contribute towards the conservation of fuel. The need to conserve energy because of the finite life of fossil fuels makes it imperative that further encouragement is given to increasing the use of major inland waterways for the carriage of freight.

The long debate about the future of my Board is now over and we are determined to forge ahead with carrying out the duties laid upon us by Parliament." - ends - '

CHATTIN' WAY BACK

LAN CASTRIA

A wonder if ther'll come a day
W'en o' this cut's bin drain't
An fillt to't top wi' rubble?
By gum, I 'ope this waint.

Wid noan bi able t'ave a chat
Wi't lock keepers wi know
Er git th'owd 'orse a pat er two
W8en 'e just stopped fert blow

An oo'd luk after factory coal
If barges were nu theer?
W'en a just hink on it owd mon
It meks mi feel o' queer

Well then, it's up tu thee an' me
Tu talk to't lads in't mill
Tu see canal's kept oppen
Su thi cun feish ther fill

Extract from the Mossley Report.

SUBMISSION TO SHELL INLAND WATERWAYS AWARDS -

TOW PATH GUIDE

Diane Charlesworth

Huddersfield Canal Society are producing a Tow Path Guide to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. The Guide will include a regional map, a map of entire canal, and 20 strip maps - scale of 6" to the mile, measuring approx. 3" x 7"-with descriptions of each section of canal, its structures, buildings, industry, and its immediate area as seen from the towpath, (or boat lane over tunnel); and also including all amenities and facilities available (pubs, restaurants, cafes, shops, toilets, telephones, bus stops, railway stations, car parks; places of interest, access points, connections with other foot-paths). To be included in essay type form with illustrations, are separate chapters on the canal's history, fishing, birds, other wildlife, trees and shrubs, plants and flowers; countryside code, leisure activities, local societies and groups.

Our research is well underway with the deadline for the submissions being mid-September, however, ~~as~~ there is much work to be done on editing, preparing and printing this information. The Huddersfield Canal Society feel that this publication is very necessary to increase public awareness of the canal's potential and indeed to encourage the public to utilise one of their assets, which is sometimes sadly neglected.

The working group intend having the printing and art work done professionally, as we require the end-product to have a strong visual appeal, as well as being well set out, well informed, accurate and interesting.

Although the Guide will be very costly to produce, with the aid of grants and loans, we feel it can be done to the Society's advantage and will make a profit. These proceeds will then go towards the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

We hope to have the Towpath Guide to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal on sale for the start of next year's season.

QUEEN STREET SOUTH - STEPS

Some months ago the idea of providing an access to the towpath at Queen Street South, Huddersfield, was suggested. This is the point just above lock 2E where the Bates & Co. culverted section starts. At present, walkers have to retrace their steps.

The idea has now had BWB (Estates and Amenities) support and Kirklees seem agreeable to the scheme, although Listed Building Consent and Planning permission will be needed. We will probably have to obtain agreement from the adjoining factory owner. So the next stage is to get the steps designed - probably they will have to be stone-faced.

Would any member be willing/able to design the steps and produce the necessary drawings for us? If you can, please contact John Maynard.

Concurrently with the above, it is obvious that some cleaning and levelling of the towpath, just below lock 2 will be desirable. Watch out for a working party date.



LETTER from R.C. Witter to Editor

A.C. Canoe Products (Chester) Ltd.

'I note from Mr. Whittle's letter in the May issue of Pennine Link (No. 29) that he doubts that the last boat to traverse the length of the Huddersfield Narrow could have done so in 1949 - the canal having been so derelict when he inspected it in 1939.

Rolt - who I think we may take as authentic and authoratitive - gives a most graphic account of a through journey by 'Ailsa Craig' from Ashton to Huddersfield in his autobiography 'Landscape with Canals' (Allen Lane, London 1977 pp 135-141) made in August 1948.

He himself only joined the boat at Diggle but continued aboard through to Huddersfield which was only reached after great difficulty, including getting wedged fast in the middle of Standedge and the bursting of a lower lock gate during the descent from Marsden. He describes the canal as being in a derelict condition and working the locks as being 'like trying to fill a bath with the plug out' and he was obviously conscious at the time that this was likely to be the last through passage. He could not of course at that time have anticipated the determination of HCS members who will eventually see the canal open again to through navigation'.

WHERE TO GROW MUSHROOMS

Mushrooms can be grown successfully in almost any kind of covered-in building which is reasonably dry and well-ventilated. Among buildings and structures commonly used are tunnells!

From 'How Mushrooms should be grown.'
Darlington Mushroom Laboratories Ltd.

The opinions expressed in Pennine Link are not necessarily those of the Editor nor of the Society.

DIARY

- Sep 3 8.00 pm East Side - Four Horse Shoes,
Milnsbridge.
- Sep 8 MARSDEN FESTIVAL - HCS and Stand present.
- Sep 8 7.30 pm Mikron Theatre "Where's Our Cut?" -
The Railway Inn, Marsden.
- Sep 12 8.00 pm West Side - Tollemache Arms, Mossley.
- Oct 4 8.00 pm East Side - The Albion, Longroyd Bridge.
- Oct 10 8.00 pm West Side - Old Hunters Tavern,
* Stalybridge.
- Nov 7 8.00 pm Commercial, Slaithwaite - illustrated
talk by David Ellis on 'The Pennine Park'
- Nov 14 8.00 pm West Side ^{Nov} William IV, Greenfield.
- Dec 12 8.00 pm West Side - Old Hunters Tavern,
Stalybridge.
- * Oct 17 8.00 pm Video Evening - contact West Members
for details.
-

East Side Meetings - from December these will
be held on the 1st Thursday of each month.

East and West Side - for ALL HCS members, please
join us, you will be most welcome.

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The Diggles © 1979 Huddersfield Canal Society

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