

HUDDERSFIELD
CANAL
SOCIETY

Pennine

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Cover: The Huddersfield Narrow Canal, Lock 37E, Marsden. Photo: L. Reason



By the time you reach the end of this Issue, I hope you will feel pleased at the restoration progress to date and optimistic for the future. It is certainly considerably more pleasing to report progress rather than failure and decline leading to closure as in the last Issue. Several

more things are going on behind the scenes that it would be unwise to mention before they come to fruition, there is many a slip etc. etc. but rest assured, I will publish the news when it becomes available.

Some of the following copy has been held over from the Spring Issue because of space limitations and fitting in with the theme of the particular Issue. Since I am covering two hundred years of history in the space of four months, I hope you will forgive a mere four months out of date for the Staley Wharf article. The words may be old, but the pictures are very new. Watch out for a boat rally here, probably 1996.

On the subject of festivals and rallies, as Brian Minor says, the festival season is drawing to a close. Brian's is another historic article that has been added to, to bring it up to date. As I write, only the Huddersfield bash is left. Unfortunately I shall miss this festival since it always clashes with the IWA National Rally, an event I always try to get to - 'cos I enjoy it! Nevertheless, I am

sure the Huddersfield festival will continue to grow in size and popularity, and next year, when the IWA National is at Chester, I may be able to make it to both.

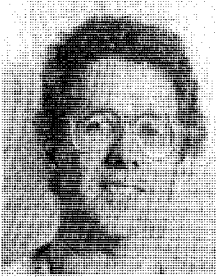
In 1995 the Huddersfield Canal Society has been asked to host the IWA National Trailboat Rally, scheduled for the end of the May Bank Holiday. This is to be the last rally of its kind under the IWA banner and we hope to make it go out with a 'bang'. The venue we are looking at is known as the Titanic Mills site at Milnsbridge, although I am informed this is not the correct name. I will be taking a lesser role at the Ashton Festival to take a leading role in Trailboat '95. There you go! Two future dates for your diary.

May I remind you again that I am always pleased to receive communications from you. Be it letter or article/pictures for inclusion; it makes it all worthwhile to have confirmation that someone out there is reading this; and don't forget, if you are not a hoarder of Pennine Link, leave them in waiting rooms (doctor's, dentist's, etc.) for others to peruse.

Enjoy you inland waterways.

Alwyn Ogborn

Editor's Note: The front cover of the Winter 1993 (108) Issue of Pennine Link featured a photograph taken at the Huddersfield Canals Festival. In error, the photograph was not credited. The picture was taken by S. Quilter; apologies for this omission.



On behalf of the Council of Management for the Huddersfield Canal Society I give my report for the year 1993 and a review of current progress on the Huddersfield Canal.

Towards the end of 1992 it was becoming clear that the Department of Environment would consider the

application of Derelict Land Grant for canal restoration. In 1993 our hopes were fulfilled when schemes were submitted by the Local Authorities (100% grant) and the Society (at the 80% rate) for site investigations, dredging, bridge raising, lock restoration and a survey of the Standedge ventilation shafts. Approximately £500k worth of work was completed in 1993 and a further tranche of £2.5m was authorised or begun in 1993 including the Diggle Flight of locks scheme, Locks 23E and 24E, which are being undertaken by the Society.

By the end of 1994 we expect to see a completed Staley Wharf, a new bridge at Frenches and the removal of the University causeway in Huddersfield. This increase in the rate of progress of restoration is necessary to maintain the impetus if we are to see through navigation become a reality. Few would believe that it is only ten years since we reopened a short stretch of canal in Saddleworth.

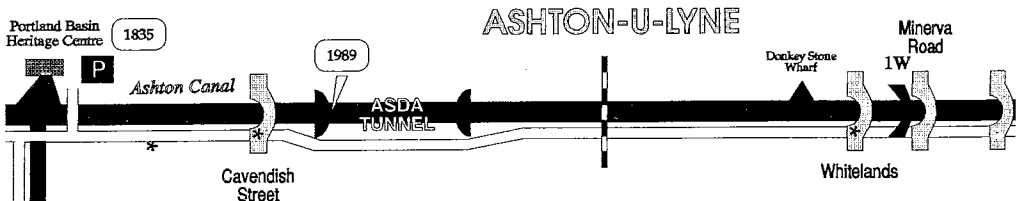
We were pleasantly surprised at the speed at which new schemes were accepted for grant aid by the Department. This was in some measure due to the document produced by our Joint Committee "A Bid for Resources" which programmed and costed the remaining works to reopen the canal by 2002. The launch of the Bid coincided with the reopening of the five locks in Tameside allowing us to cruise from Waggon Road, Mossley to the Oldham border. This stretch was opened by Councillor Roy Oldham of Tameside to mark the launch of the new Tame Valley Initiative in which the Society is represented

as full partners. The significance of the Bid for Resources in the overall plan, foreseen by the Society back in 1974, is that the restoration project is now a fully costed and coordinated scheme, with full backing from British Waterways and the three Local Authorities. An estimated £10m has already been spent on the Canal. Now, in just twelve months, £3m has been spent or committed to restoration by central government.

To complement the physical restoration the Society leads a new marketing initiative and we expect a new brochure with a common logo covering the whole canal within the next few months. Alec Ramsden assures me that a new towpath guide will follow. The role of the marketing group, with officers from our Joint Committee partners, will become increasingly important. We will need to publicise the new facilities and attractions we create, so that by the turn of the century, the Colne and Tame Valleys can benefit fully from the effects of through navigation.

I have already mentioned the role of the Society in restoration. Our subsidiary company HCS Restoration Ltd is now working in all three local authority districts. We have 14 full time staff, several full time volunteers and 25 participants under the Community Action Programme. Stephen Whitby is to be congratulated for his role in managing this company and organising his team to undertake the £800,000 Diggle project for Oldham MB and the other schemes in Tameside and Kirklees. It is not surprising that both British Waterways and the Inland Waterways Association dub our canal project as the "Premier Canal Restoration Scheme in the UK". Volunteer groups began the lock restoration scheme in Uppermill and in 1993 Trevor Ellis and his team completed Locks 31 and 32 West, and continue to work in tandem with HCS Restoration on the Diggle Flight of Locks.

As restoration continues, the Society's role will increasingly be one of promoting the usage of the canal and its facilities. I am extremely proud to announce that the Civic Trust have awarded the



CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Society as Contractor and Developer a commendation for the restoration of the Wool Road Transhipment Warehouse, Saddleworth. This building, rescued by the Saddleworth Historical Society and leased from British Waterways by the Society, was completed in 1993. We fundraised 90% of the £62,000 cost which included grants from Oldham MB, the European Regional Development Fund and many Trusts. Ken Wright supervised the restoration throughout and is to be commended for ensuring that the architect's high design specification was closely followed.

The canal is becoming increasingly accessible for boats and day trippers. Under the overall management of our fleet of three boats, Bob Maycock and Allan Knott have a crew of twenty qualified skippers. The Society, having secured a grant from Oldham MB for a new trip boat on the Mossley-Greenfield stretch, have recently purchased a new trailable boat and are leading discussions for new boats for Tameside and Marsden. Volunteer boat operation is essential whilst we create new markets. Bob Maycock welcomes new crew members to provide this valuable tourist facility.

In 1993, three festivals, all with different characters, were held on the canal. The Ashton Festival now renamed Tameside Canals Festival is an institution in Tameside and is the centre piece of the wider Tameside Festival. Chaired by Alwyn Ogborn, the 1993 Festival attracted a major sponsor in Norweb and won us many new friends. The Huddersfield Festival was unique in that the private sector hosted the event. Sainsbury plc entertained our guests, and the new University allowed us the use of their grounds and premises. Partnership in action. The annual Tunnel End event has a truly rustic feel and its popularity increases yearly. Surely it paves the way for the celebrations when the Tunnel reopens.

Pennine Link again won the Tom Rolt award in 1993 and the IWA awarded the Society the Ken Goodwin award for the most meritorious restoration progress on the canal system; which currently boasts well over 100 restoration schemes. We applied for, in 1993,

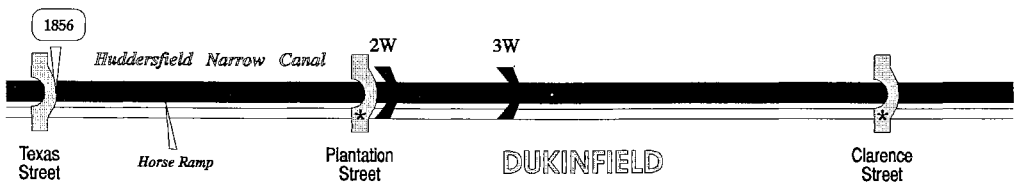
and were awarded the National Trailboat Rally for 1995. The venue has not yet been decided, but we hope for a massive publicity machine and increased usage of the restored lengths by trailable boats. Our sales team attended over twenty major events nationwide in 1993. Gay Quilter and her dedicated band of helpers are to be congratulated.

It is now eight years since Greater Manchester Council left the Society a legacy of £1.2m. I am pleased to report that we still have approximately £1m intact. This buffer of monies judiciously managed by our Finance Group who are advised by a leading national firm of accountants, is in reserve for projects which we need to pump prime. The Society pioneered large scale restoration following a study on the benefits of restoration. In 1994 we intend to update the 1986 study to support our various bids to the grant making bodies. Similarly, we may need some of our resources to further the "Standedge Experience". This scheme, dovetailing with the tunnel restoration, may involve the Society restoring the Tunnel End warehouse using its own funds.

1994 marks the 200th Anniversary of the Act of Parliament (April 4th 1794) which authorised the construction of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. It is perhaps fitting that 200 years after Members of Parliament passed the Act, we should visit Westminster to lobby for funds to complete the restoration of the canal. The Society suggested this visit, and we must continue to lobby to achieve our goal. This is, and always has been, our main role as a responsible pressure group. Two weeks after our recent visit, Oldham MB acting as the lead authority, were invited by the Department of the Environment to submit a pre-tender application for the restoration of the Standedge Tunnel!

With this exciting news for the Tunnel, surely it won't be long before we reach the summit of our restoration dreams - through navigation from Ashton to Huddersfield.

David M. Sumner



In our second installment of Robert Aickman's journey along the Narrow (reprinted courtesy of Waterways World), he recalls his experiences during an enforced sojourn at Ashton-under-Lyne, in the rain

Our Boat Damaged, We are Left Alone

As the boat rose in the fourth lock, James Sutherland's wife, Anthea happened to go below. She found that the cabin floor was deep in water. We had been holed while being dragged through the previous lumpy pound.

On the instant, we had to unload everything in the boat (and it was for some of us a seven weeks voyage, involving books of verse and Chinese dressing gowns) on to the muddy lock-side in pouring rain and in industrial Ashton. Moreover, our arrival was beginning to attract attention: long before we had removed the last weighty or fragile item, there were faces at every cotton mill window within sight, and comment was free, though not always fully intelligible by Southerners. The gang managed somehow to extricate the sinking boat from the lock, and to beach it in the next pound, which they proceeded to empty. As the water slowly fell, the bottom of the canal was revealed; strewn from side to side, from end to end, with decaying, disintegrating rubbish, some of it huge, some of it best described as unimaginable. We were rather occupied trying to resume possession of our gear and to save it as far as possible from ruination by rainfall. Therefore, some time passed before we realised that we were alone. Without a word, the gang had departed. We looked at our watches (those that were waterproof): it was not quite half-past one. One learns on canals (as on our Lifford Lane exploit) how much time-discount must be allowed to the personnel for travelling; but no doubt on this occasion the gang had decided we were past their aid. Even the cotton-mill workers had lost interest in us. With so much rain

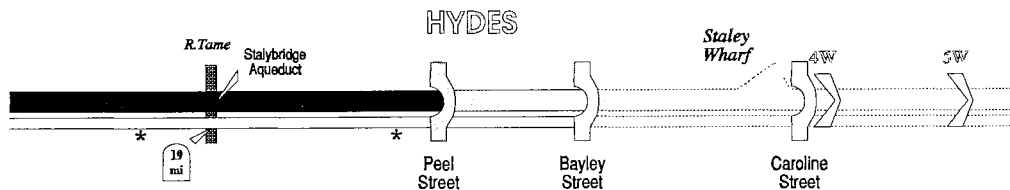
descending, it was a forlorn spot.

The next thing we noticed was that our boat was slowly heeling over in the mud. On the far side of the canal, now almost empty of water, though far from empty otherwise, was a vague and unloved open area, stacked or littered with disused aircraft parts that looked unlikely to rise again. James Sutherland and I spend a long time dragging some of these parts through the rain, mud, and refuse, to constitute both a shore against the side of the boat and a causeway to the bank. Before we had been there another day, there were even planks lashed to the aluminium struts.

It was fortunate that James was a civil engineer, but it is amazing what can be found on the bank and in fields when need arises on a canal voyage. James himself had a habit of climbing over a gate and within only a few minutes coming back with the very object required, even though adaption and hacking away might be necessary.

Late that first afternoon at Ashton, and in time to catch the post, I dictated a letter to Sir Reginald Hill (then Chairman of the Docks and Inland Waterways Executive). Fortunately, the ship's typewriter had remained viable; and even the ship's typist (Anthea Sutherland).

We were fascinated by the life of Ashton and enchanted by the kindness of the inhabitants. We received several offers of meals, beds, baths and facilities for drying ourselves and our possessions; but hesitated to leave the ship. Quite late in the evening, we saw a man standing silently by our boat in the rain. Asked if there was anything he wanted, he replied that he was keeping an eye on us. "They're rough round here," he said, pronouncing the adjective in the Lancashire way. Naturally, we thanked him but said it was not to be thought of. By then we believed we were, in any case, well informed about waterway perils and able to meet most of



them. The man would accept no refusal. All he did was withdraw to a certain distance; where we saw him still standing as night fell, still in the rain.

It rained all the time we were in Ashton, and we became aware that the local population simply took no notice of it. On that first evening, I noticed a girl on the towpath, obviously awaiting a boy friend. She wore a light coat, and under it a cotton dress; and she had to wait for thirty or forty minutes. As time passed, we suggested to her that she might like to come aboard and wait in the dry. She politely declined; she seemed so used to the rain that she did not even think to explain that she was used to it. In the end, her friend appeared; he was wearing a jacket, but under it an open-necked shirt. We assumed that they would hasten away; if only to beneath a bridge. Not at all; they walked slowly up and down the towpath, amid the downpour in steady, and apparently light-hearted conversation, for at least half an hour, and only when it was finally dark did they slowly walk away, bidding us goodnight. It was then that we saw the solitary figure of our self-appointed watchman.

Towpath Encounters North and South

We saw no sign of anyone being "rough", on the contrary, it is always most noticeable on the waterways (as doubtless elsewhere) that hooliganism grows steadily worse as one proceeds southwards. In a northern city, one can often leave one's boat open and unattended and find it unmolested after two hours' shopping. In the Midlands are severed limbs; and mattresses afloat in the cut that have been thrown from cabins. On the Regent's Canal in London, stones are often hurled at passing boats and even shots fired. John James' famous Jason at least once had a trip out to Greenford which resembled that of the Amethyst down the Yangtze. Very closely linked with these topographical variations is the attitude of

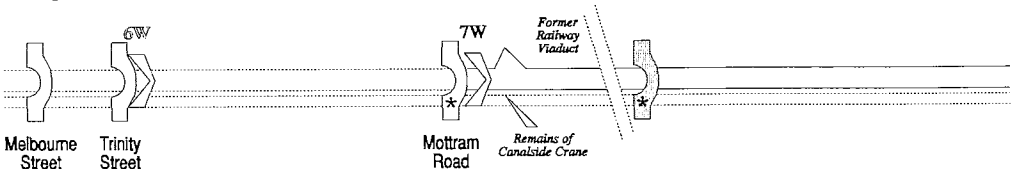
the towpath passer-by to the navigating pleasure-craft, hopefully with pretty girls aboard. In the South come jeers and politically-tinged abuse. In the North, as I have experienced often, come cordial and sincere enquiries; "Having a good time?" "What's for supper?" The northern eye is more commonly hopeful of emulation than envious. But there is one question that the navigator is asked everywhere, by old, young and very young; "Where are you going?" Often it cannot be answered without a map and a lecture. The navigator should be prepared with two replies. To the more censorious inflections, he should sharply name a town only a short distance ahead on his route and within the experience of all local enquirers. To the more poetical inflections, he should dreamily name the place most distant on his itinerary.

It was not to be expected that we should hear from Sir Reginald Hill the next day, especially as we carried no radio. Rain continued to fall but we had diversions; the most important was that at an early hour, when we were still in pyjamas (woolly ones), we received representations from one of the cotton mills that the emptying of our pound had deprived the mill of essential water supply, so that "hundreds of men were standing idle". We could only suggest immediate complaint to Sir Reginald Hill. The management of the mill behaved very reasonably, all things considered, and acted upon our suggestion. This pressure from industry probably helped to expedite the sensational events that matured on the morrow.

Interviews with the Press, Seats in the Circle

During the day we gave a long interview to the Ashton local paper: local (as distinct from national) journalists are encouraged to report fully and even accurately, and the next issue included column after column of small print about us and about the general situation on the

STALYBRIDGE



waterways; together with large photographs in which we looked as if we were nearing one of the Poles, and also photographs of our lank and aluminium causeway. Naturally, we gave many other less official interviews as the day wore on. We were offered the free loan of a radio, but refused with thanks. We were offered free seats in the front row of the dress circle for that evening's performance at the Ashton music hall (since destroyed, of course, by the said radio). We accepted gratefully and found ourselves matter for reference by at least two of the comedians. It was before the day that flying saucers first landed: I think it sufficed to mention that we were Londoners. The manager shook our hands and said we were already the best known people in Ashton.

And early the next morning, Wilf entered our lives, accompanied by two lusty shipwrights from

the Mersey. Mr Wilfred Donkersley ("Call me Wilf", was among his first words) was employed on the maintenance of the Huddersfield Narrow until his retirement in March, 1970. I fear that I cannot remember the exact position he then occupied, if indeed we ever exactly knew. It was certainly a position of authority; including natural authority. Wilf transformed the situation, and remained our indispensable, indefatigable guide until we had reached the other end of the waterway. The shipwrights also addressed themselves to the rent in our hull with will and skill. It must be set much to the credit of Sir Reginald Hill that he could and would produce such magic helpers for the instant relief of an expedition of which at bottom he could hardly approve. Always credit where due, as I used to say.

To be continued ...

Right:

"Ailsa Craig" lies holed and stranded in a drained section of the canal at Ashton.



Editors Note:

From the photograph and location description, I don't think they were in Ashton, but Stalybridge, when holed; near Clarence Street Bridge.

In the last issue of Pennine Link, I outlined the story of the birth of the canal, its construction and working life, through closure and final abandonment. After the last brave attempts at navigation, the various local authorities began the destruction of the waterway. At Stalybridge, the canal was culverted and built upon. The same thing happened at Huddersfield, and at Slaithwaite and Hartshead it was culverted but thankfully not built on. Both tunnels were sealed off and the locks were destroyed by either infilling or cascading. The only reason for not completely destroying the line was the need to maintain a water flow, this being British Waterways' sole responsibility. Silting up and weed growth took its ever increasing toll as the years went by.

Then came the first sparks that kindled the fire of rescue. John Maynard, the Society's first Chairman, takes up the story

It all began in 1974 when Margaret Sinfield was Chairman of the Inland Waterways Association (IWA) West Riding Branch. Bob Dewey had walked the length of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. Ralph Kirkham was Chairman of the Calder Navigation Society. I was just interested in inland waterways and as a newcomer, had joined the local IWA committee after having been 'conned' by Margaret into being Site Officer at the 1972 Sowerby Bridge Festival (the first festival I had ever attended, let alone been involved in).

Anyway, one day Margaret asked - "*What do you intend to do about the Huddersfield Canal?*" - and she told me that a chap by the name of Bob Dewey was interested. As it turned out, these few words set in motion what now appears to be an unstoppable drive towards full restoration. We were on Margaret's boat in mid-stream at the time so in the interests of self-preservation, I agreed to help. As a result, a number of people

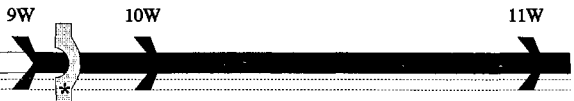
whose names escape me, met on a short boat named 'Elizabeth B' that had been converted into a clubhouse and was moored at Aspley Basin. At this meeting, Bob produced a series of maps covering the length of the canal and showing details of condition. These were spread on the floor for a lengthy study and discussion.

A further meeting took place onboard Elizabeth B attended by Margaret Sinfield, Bob Dewey, Ralph Kirkham and myself. It was decided that the best way forward was to form a Society and call a public meeting. We then had to decide on a Chairman. Margaret said she couldn't be because she was already Chairman of IWA, Ralph said he couldn't as he was Chairman of CNS and Bob preferred to work behind the scenes, so that left yours truly, 'muggins Maynard' to take the reigns. Someone asked "*what should we charge as subs?*" I said, "*How about a quid?*" Ralph promptly produced a pound note, so we all had to follow suit, and we were in business with four pounds in the kitty. We then drew up a set of rules to present to a meeting set for the 19th of April 1974 at the Zetland Hotel in Huddersfield.

Through various means of publicity, the meeting took place with fifty two people turning up, many of them from the Peak Forest Canal Society. It is interesting to note that apologies were received from Richard Wainwright, MP., Ken Goodwin and Mr Jollans, manager of YWA.

Bob Dewey outlined the history of the canal, the state it was in and the problems of restoration. General discussion took place on these points. The draft rules were adopted and officers and committee elected as follows:

Chairman - John Maynard, Secretary - Robert Dewey, Treasurer - Robert Wilkinson;
Committee - R. Keaveney, T. Noakes, R. Lear, A. West, J. Parkinson, G. Greenwood, Margaret Sinfield and Margaret Bradman.



At the end of the meeting, about forty people had joined the Society and paid their subs, so our funds increased ten fold.

The first Pennine Link, then entitled Bulletin No 1, was issued in June that year and reported that the Committee had met and an initial strategy agreed. This was firstly to prevent any further detrimental work along the line of the canal. And secondly, produce a feasibility study.

The feasibility study was duly produced and sold at fifty pence. It was circulated to the Press and sent to MPs and local councillors, laying the foundations of a reputable society.

It is interesting to note that three letters were received about this time.

- 1) from IWA headquarters castigating us for forming a society, and saying it was a hopeless task. (Watch this space).
- 2) from a gentleman in America asking if we could arrange a trip through the tunnel for him.
- 3) from BWB stating that there could be no question of restoring the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

Sadly Ralph died in May of this year.

As John outlines in the strategy above, the first aims of the Huddersfield Canal Society were to halt further development and destruction along the line of the canal, and to alert people to the fact that it was there and what a disgusting state it was in, a muddy ditch running through two valleys. This was done, and a feasibility study produced. Some idea of the magnitude of the task of restoration can be gleaned from the following extract taken from the Third Edition Feasibility Study, dated 1979.

PHYSICAL FEATURES - Locks

The canal originally crossed the Pennines via 74 narrow locks - 42 on the Yorkshire side, raising

the canal by some 438 feet from Huddersfield to Marsden and 32 on the Lancashire side effecting a descent of 338 feet to Ashton.

Around 1950, all lock gates were removed except for those at Lock Nos. 1E and 2E in Huddersfield and concrete weirs were installed across the lock heads. Since that time many lock chambers have been 'landscaped' or rendered 'safe' by a variety of methods - most of which have involved the total or partial destruction of the chamber walls - and those which remain intact are, generally speaking, in only fair condition at best, having been cheaply constructed originally, although a number have, at some stage, been rebuilt in blue brick, and these have survived in good condition.

All locks on this canal, which for convenience are numbered according to the original Huddersfield Narrow convention, ie. 1 - 42 from Huddersfield to Marsden (suffixed 'E' for East) and 1 - 32 from Diggle to Ashton (suffixed 'W' for West), fall into one of the following five categories.

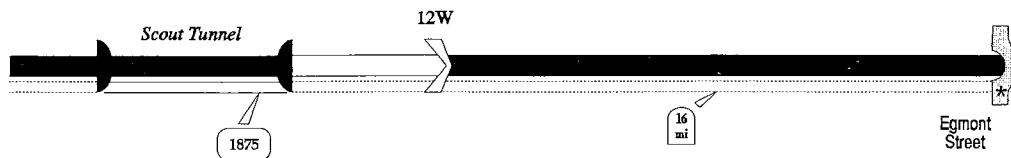
(a) TOTALLY ELIMINATED

Lock 3E (Huddersfield), lock 22E (Slaithwaite), lock 8W (Hartshead Power Station) and locks 6W, 5W and 4W in Stalybridge have been totally obliterated and will require re-building or replacing.

(b) CASCADED AND CHAMBER PARTIALLY DEMOLISHED

This treatment involves partial demolition of chamber walls and partial infilling of the chamber to form a series of concrete 'steps' or 'cascades'. Some 22 locks have been treated in this manner, the actual amount of damage caused varying considerably from lock to lock, but all require one or both of the chamber walls rebuilding, together with the provision of gates and furniture.

SCOUT GREEN



Bicentenary History - Part 2

(c) CASCADED - CHAMBER WALLS DAMAGED

This treatment is similar to that outlined in (b) above, except that chamber masonry is not used to provide fill. Instead, fill is imported and the lock structure remains basically intact, being infilled and concreted to form a series of cascades. It is rarely possible to ascertain the overall condition of any of the 23 chambers which have treated in this fashion, but it is reasonable to assume that several require only the removal of concrete steps and fill, minor repairs, and addition of gates and furniture.

(d) CONCRETE CAPPED

Some 19 lock chambers have been completely covered with a concrete cap and grassed over. This treatment has preserved them intact, although an inspection is not possible to ascertain their overall condition.

(e) CHAMBER DERELICT BUT UNTOUCHED

Four locks remain totally undamaged save for the removal of gates and fittings, but most are in a poor state, several exhibiting signs of inward chamber movement.

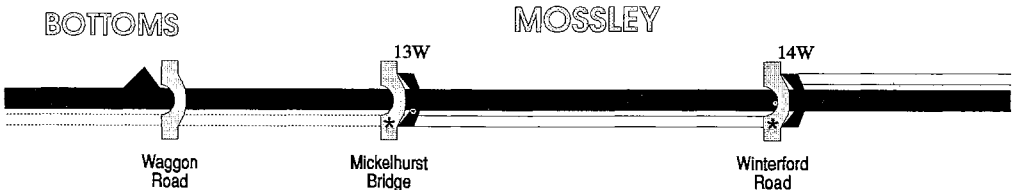
The next major step came in 1980 when a party of Society volunteers started to clear out and re-gate Dungebooth Lock, No 22W, in Uppermill. A long and laborious task but it un-locked (pun intended) the realisation that here was an asset that had been left to go to ruin. A miniature narrowboat called Stan started to run trips up and down the cleared section and was later replaced by a full length narrowboat, the Benjamin Outram. Benjie, as it was affectionately known, was something of a hybrid 'push me, pull you' with bows at both ends and water jet thruster for propulsion. This was because there was nowhere to turn round and it

had to go backwards and forwards. However, physical restoration had started and when the volunteers had finished Dungebooth, they moved up to the next lock, Limekiln, and cleared and re-gated that.

The objective of this exercise worked. Local authorities saw what could be done and the pleasing results. I do not intend to give a blow by blow account of progress from there on - it would be long-winded and boring - but two decisions had a significant effect on restoration progress. Kirklees took on the job of restoration from Tunnel End down the East side, initially to the Slaithwaite infill, and later from below the infill to Longroyd Bridge. Greater Manchester Council had become very interested in the work and when disbanded, bequeathed £1.2m from liquidation funds to the Society 'to be spent on the restoration of the Huddersfield canals'. The money was judiciously invested and used to 'pump prime' several schemes. Other money in the form of grants from various funds, including Europe, and local authority input were bid for, sometimes with success, sometimes not. The end result is that the whole restoration gathered momentum. Surveys have been carried out and works costed for the entire canal at one time or another, including the Tunnel, and bit by bit chunks are being bitten off and restored sections being joined together. Now for the bit I am sure you have all been waiting for. The latest restoration news update from Keith Gibson.



The big news this Issue concerns further Derelict Land Grant (DLG) approvals, and the start of work by HCS Restoration staff on our major contract to restore the Diggle Flight of locks.



The DLG approvals, worth over £2m, are significant in that projects are now approved by English Partnerships, the independent agency set up to deal with DLG and several other grant regimes. Most of the first year programme of the total £23m package submitted to English Partnerships to complete restoration of the canal has been approved, which we hope gives a clear indication of the importance attached to the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow.

Having started with the good news, can I give you the bad news? In the extreme weather conditions before Christmas, all of the offside wall of Lock 24E at Slaithwaite collapsed. You will recall that this Lock is being restored by the Society with 80% DLG, unlike the other DLG approvals which have been granted to the Local Authorities. HCS Restoration staff had partially rebuilt this lock wall to remove bulges in the stonework. The whole of the wall has

moved inwards at the top, including the rebuilt section. Our engineers (Ken Wright and consultants Wilde & Partners) and Neil Maxwell of British Waterways do not yet know the cause of the wall failing, and have decided that holes must be dug behind the wall to ascertain the cause. This work will be carried out as soon as we can spare staff from the other projects we are contracted to do. If, as I fear, it is found that the original foundations have failed because of groundwater (or even worse, canal water) scouring earth from behind the wall, then we are faced with a very expensive lock rebuild. The DoE have, however, confirmed that they will pay additional grant provided no negligence on our part is shown.

To turn to other HCS Restoration work. The DLG funded contract to Kirklees MC to carry out works in and around Locks 1 & 2E in Huddersfield is now complete. Also in the



HCS Restoration director, Eric Crosland (left) and Site Manager, John McLoughlin (right) inspect Lock 23E, Slaithwaite. The 'Moonraker Floating Tearoom' was moved on top of the lock whilst the dredging work took place. Photo: R. Gough

12

WOODEND

15
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15W

ROACHES

16W

17W

Manchester
Road - A635

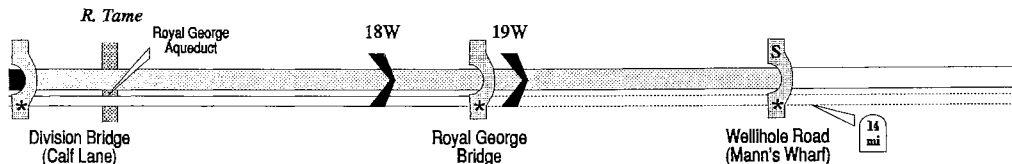
RESTORATION REPORT

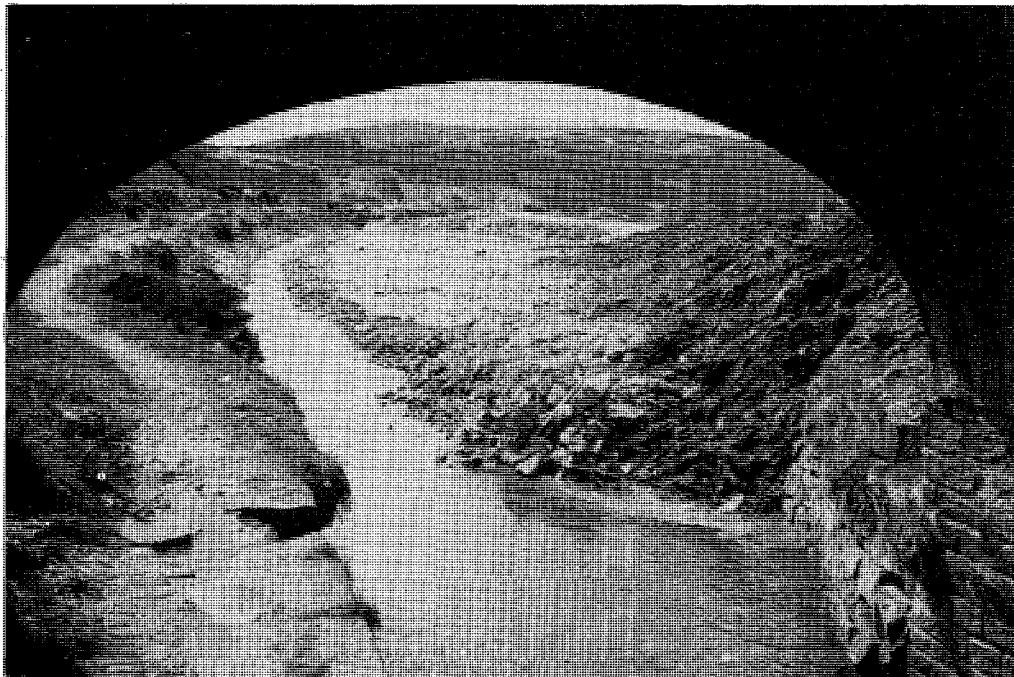


Lock 23E, Slaithwaite. The lock chamber, beyond the footbridge, is being dug out, whilst preliminary excavations have revealed the bywash exit in the washwall. The central culvert pipes the canal through the town centre infill. It is planned to create a small pound this side of the lock allowing a section of obstructing culvert to be removed. Photo: R. Gough

Kirklees area, the contract to dredge the canal between Locks 23 & 24E and to restore Lock 23E has been let to HCS Restoration at £191,000. The cost is high because dredgings are to be carried to the dredgings tip at Marsden and because of the high quality landscape works proposed at this Slaithwaite Conservation Area site. Although some work has commenced, progress will be slow initially because of delays on our Tameside dredging contract. HCS Restoration Director and Diggle volunteer Eric Crosland is supervising work here at Slaithwaite. The largest contract awarded to the Society's restoration company is that to Oldham Council to restore the Diggle locks. Work has now begun on this DLG funded contract.

The site compound has been established on land owned by Shaw's Pallets, and the volunteers compound, further up the flight of locks, cleared away. Initial work on site has been the clearance of lock bywashes and dredging work on the canal. We had a fright after work commenced when Shaw's Pallets canal fed sprinkler system silted up. Although we suspect that heavy rain was the cause, we have provided a night fire-watchman for the premises whilst the problem is resolved. Lock gates, to be constructed from *Ekke*, a tropical hardwood from a sustainable source, have been ordered from British Waterways, and the first lock (Lock 30) has been emptied of silt. The site is not without its problems of course. Some of the silt samples





Pound between Lock 29W and 28W (in the distance), Diggle. A narrow channel has been cut to maintain the water flow and help the silt dry out for easier handling. Dredgings from above Lock 29W are being stock-piled here for the same reason. Photo: A. Ogborn

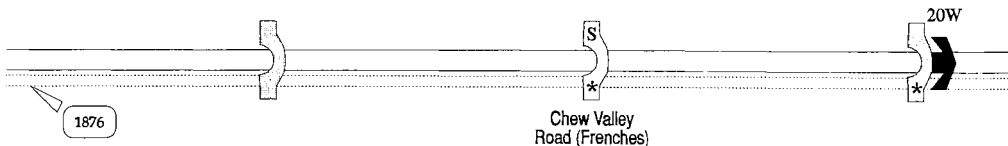
taken show high sulphide levels (not unusual in the anaerobic conditions that prevail in submerged silts) and, in two cases, high values of toluene extractable matter. If these are typical, tipping costs will escalate because of the need to take the silt to a suitable contaminated waste site. Also we have found evidence of bank movement at one point which will have to be resolved.

Our other current 'big job', the DLG funded dredging contract to Tameside MC for the area in Mossley between Locks 12 & 13W is delayed by additional work. The section from Lock 13W to Egmont Street is now dredged, including the

winding hole at Waggon Road - the name 'Mossley Docks' raises a nostalgic tear to many locals. Below that, access difficulties require us to move as few waggon loads as possible off site. Although double handling of material is expensive and best avoided, wet silt involves carrying a great deal of water. As a consequence, material is being stored on the towpath to dry before being carted off site. The surprising thing about this section of canal is the poor quality of washwall being revealed as silt is removed. We have come to expect a degree of washwall rebuilding as being inevitable, but not on the scale required here. The extra costs of

SHAW HALL BANK

GREENFIELD



RESTORATION REPORT

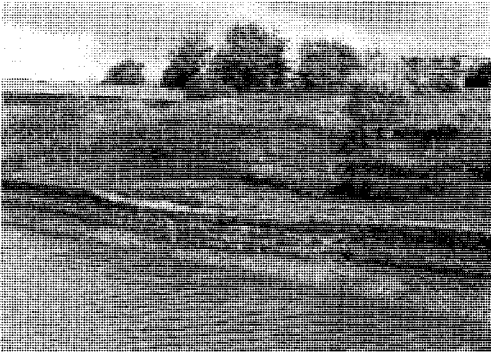
this work should be met by the DoE, but it is giving us a staff problem. We have advertised for masons in the hope of reducing the backlog of work.

Having bought the dredging fleet from British Waterways, we have no work for them immediately, because the current dredging work is all by land based machine. The dredger, hopper and tug will, however, find work when we move on to the Oldham Council DLG contract to dredge from Division Bridge to Manns Wharf Bridge. That is delayed whilst details of works to the listed Royal George Aqueduct are sorted out between Oldham Council and BW. A helpful delay as it happens because of the extra work in Mossley. In the meantime, our intrepid volunteers led by Ken Wright have used the dredger to deepen the channel near Royal George Mills in preparation for trip boat operation.

The big news, as I said at the beginning of this article, concerns DLG approvals. In Tameside, a contract worth £737,000 has been let to Morrison Construction for the important Staley Wharf project - important for not just extending the navigable canal under a new bridge at Bayley



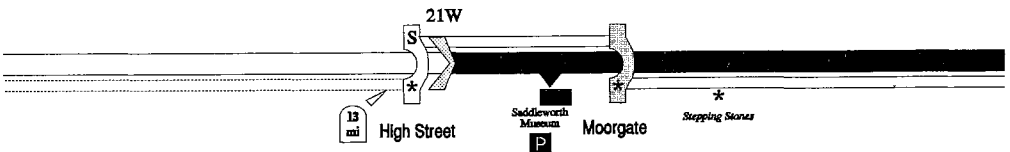
Lock 29W, Diggle. The concrete capped cascade is ready for excavation. Photo: A. Ogborn



Bank movement affecting the washwall and towpath above Lock 30W, Diggle. Photo: R. Gough

Street, but because it is the first part of the new canal through Stalybridge and because, when complete, boats will be able to turn, thus making the already restored section through Locks 1-3W actually usable and bringing the shops and pubs of Stalybridge within reach for boats on the Cheshire Ring. In addition, Tameside Council are to provide a further £200,000 to rebuild the canalside retaining wall behind the towpath below Bayley Street. Go and have a look (from the main road - keep off the site!) - work has started and, like the HCS Restoration dredging work at Diggle, this is major engineering - not

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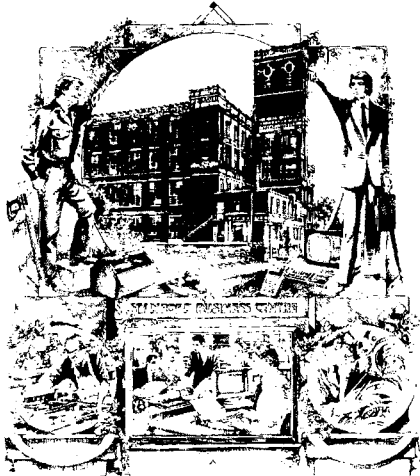


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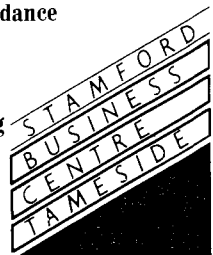
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the small scale stuff of the early work on the canal.

Also in Tameside, pre-tender approval has been given for £1,000,000 to rebuild the Hartshead infilled section of canal - thus opening the way for complete navigation from Uppermill to Stalybridge in the fairly near future; with only Lock 12W to block the way. Tenders for this work should be invited soon.

At the other end of this long stretch of usable canal, English Partnerships have approved a grant of £355,000 to rebuild Frenches Bridge in Greenfield. I hope that a clear indication was given by this approval, before Mann's Wharf Bridge was finished, that Uppermill High Street and Wool Road bridges will follow Frenches, so removing the major obstructions in Saddleworth. Mann's Wharf Bridge, by the way, is now complete apart from a few bits of tidying up. Work should start on Frenches soon.

When you read this, work should have started on another DLG contract, and one that brings another body into the canal restoration partnership. Huddersfield University have awarded a contract worth £177,000 (also to Morrison Construction) to remove the causeway across the canal below Lock 1E, to provide a new pumped sewer and a new footbridge. Access will then be available on to the extreme eastern section of the Huddersfield Narrow and to Lock 1E - so we will have a connection to the National network (if only very short at the eastern end) at both ends of the canal.

Finally, on the subject of DLG approvals, we come to what are known as moral commitments. This is where a local authority is asked to prepare the details of its bid - giving a clear indication that approval is likely to be given. The first of these is an offer of about £230,000 to be paid to the developer of the Haigh's Mill site at Manchester Road in Huddersfield. This would

enable a new section of canal to be constructed as part of the development of the site linking from the restored canal at Longroyd Bridge to the edge of the major blockage at Sellers Engineering. The DIY firm, Wickes, have applied for permission to develop the site. The second, and perhaps the most significant of all DLG news so far, concerns Standedge Tunnel. Oldham Council have been asked to prepare a bid. There are all sorts of problems still to resolve before work can start (eg. is the bid for the basic £3.5m restoration job, or for a higher standard at say £5.5m to reduce maintenance costs? Indeed, what arrangements are to be made for maintenance?) but discussions fronted for HCS by Mike Thompson are at a faster rate than hitherto and progress is being made.

I thought you might find it useful if I list all of the DLG approvals so far - so here goes:

Tameside

Hartshead site investigation, £10,000; Complete.

Staley Wharf site investigation, £11,000; Complete.

Lock 12W site investigation, £4,000; Complete.

Lock 12 - 13W dredging*, £220,000; Current.

Lock 13W - Division Bridge dredging*, £88,000; Current.

Staley Wharf, £737,000; Current.

Hartshead, £1,000,000; Pre-tender approval.

Oldham

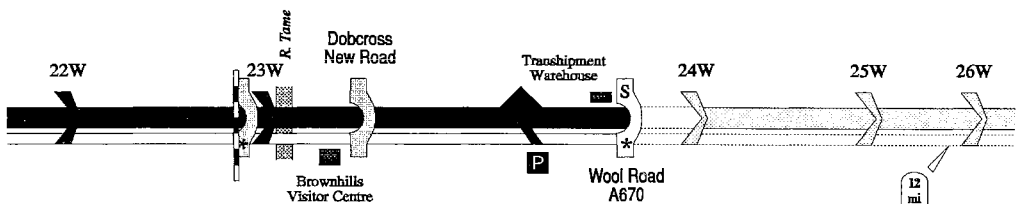
Standedge site investigation, £71,531; Complete.

Mann's Wharf Bridge, £217,988; Complete.

Frenches Bridge, £354,849; Current - to start soon.

Diggle Flight of Locks*, £792,217; Current.

Division Bridge - Mann's Wharf dredging*, £68,777; Contract to HCS, delayed.



Standedge Tunnel (half in Kirklees, but to be supervised by Oldham and DLG from NW office), £3.5 - £5.5m?; Oldham asked to prepare bid.

Kirklees

Locks 1 - 2E*, £72,500; Complete.

Lock 24E*, £91,000; Current.

Lock 23E and Lock 23 - 24E dredging*, £210,000; Current.

Haigh's Mill, £230,000; Offered to developer.

University Causeway, £200,000; Current.

Excluding Standedge Tunnel, that gives a total of £4,378,362 approved to one stage or another in the two year period since canal restoration became eligible for DLG, making our canal by far the biggest DLG scheme in this area and putting us in the top league of canal restoration projects nationally. The asterisks (*) mark schemes by HCS Restoration, the Society's subsidiary company. Where figures are different to contract prices, that is because of design and supervision costs.

I reported in the last Issue of last year that the Society's Council of Management had given HCS Restoration the go ahead to progress the project to build the Whitelands Canal Centre alongside Lock 1W at Ashton, and to seek out possible grant aid. Discussions are continuing between the Society's solicitor, John Fryer, and British Waterways regarding the lease of the site. An application has been submitted for Building Regulations approval.

HCS Restoration's tender of £40,000 for repointing and repairing the listed Redbrook Engine House at Standedge has been accepted by British Waterways and work has begun.

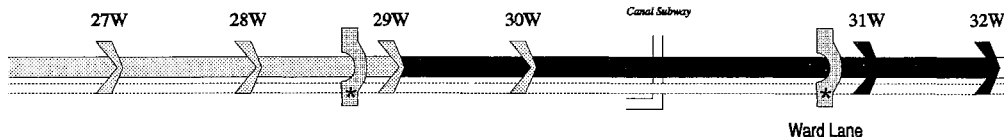
I breathed a sigh of relief when Kirklees Conservation Officer, Paul Hartley, approved our pointing - to an English Heritage specification.

I explained in the last Issue that British Waterways were 'privatising' maintenance of the canal, and that the Society's Restoration company would tender for contracts. Unfortunately we failed in our first attempt (for the Tameside contract) with a private contractor offering a significantly lower rate for the job. It was apparent that our problem was that we are equipped to do canal maintenance work and experienced in that work, but these contracts are for more cosmetic work - grass cutting and painting. If we load our costs with high plant costs to set up the organisation needed, then we are at a big disadvantage compared to contractors already in this business who are only concerned with the marginal costs of an extra job. We regard this work as important, however, because as more use is made of the canal, a larger element of maintenance will have to be concerned with actual repairs to the canal structure and dredging - work for which we are well equipped and can offer a competitive price. When the canal is fully restored such work could keep the Society actively involved in its day to day operation. Our bid for the Oldham and Kirklees contracts were much lower because we decided to subcontract the grass cutting element to a specialist contractor. We succeeded with the

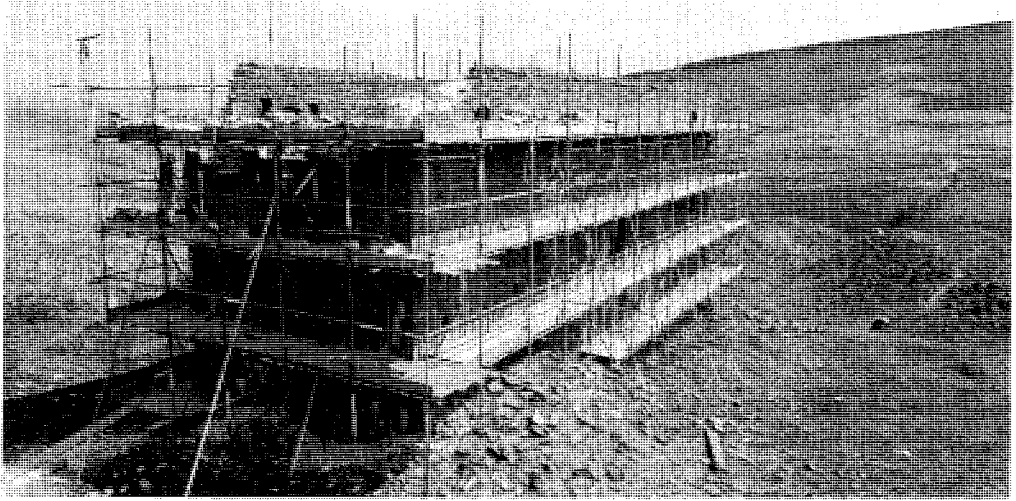


'Mossley Docks' - the newly dredged winding hole at Waggon Road, Mossley. Photo: R. Gough

Diggle Flight (25W-30W)



RESTORATION REPORT



Redbrook Engine House, Standedge Moor. This Grade II structure houses two ventilation shafts, Redbrook upcast and downcast, supplying the canal tunnel some 500ft below. Photo: R. Gough

Oldham contract - but that in Kirklees has again gone to a private firm.

The key to receiving grant aid from DLG and the European Regional Development Fund has been the fact that we were able to show the benefits of restoration. We realise, however, that the study carried out for us by L & R Leisure Consultants is now out of date, and a new study will be asked for by funding bodies soon - possibly even this year in connection with Tameside's bid for Single Regeneration Budget funding in Stalybridge (more of this later, if it is successful). We have, therefore, commissioned Coopers & Lybrand to carry out a further study at a cost of around £35,000. It's a lot of money for a study - and it's your money, the Society's money - but experience has shown that independent research to make the most of our case is the way forward. No doubt I will have plenty to say on this subject in the future!

A pleasing tale heading for a happy ending (but let's not count our chickens). Success has not come easy of course. A great deal of hard work and un-paid time has been put in by a lot of people, council of management members and other volunteers combined. Canal Society flag flying and publicity such as the sales caravan attending various events and festivals at both ends and in the middle, keep us in the public eye. Support from hard-pressed local authorities, the DoE and British Waterways via the Joint Committee, is essential for continued success and we are grateful to have it.

The Pennine Link will continue to keep you informed of developments, so - watch this space.

And to think it all started with the casual question *'WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT THE HUDDERSFIELD CANAL?'*

Keith Gibson

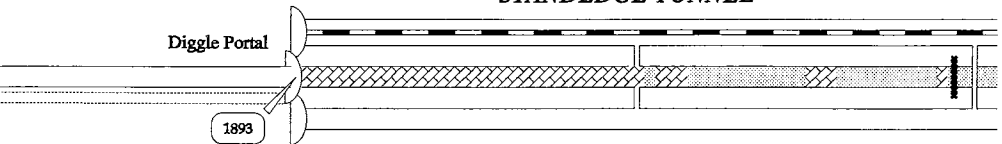
Alwyn Ogborn

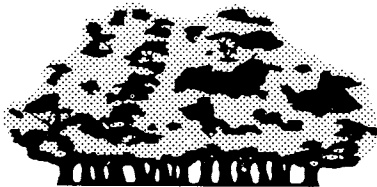
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STANDEGE TUNNEL

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Left: Inside Redbrook Engine House. The building has been scaffolded inside and out for the rebuilding and repointing work. The wire mesh covers the ventilation shaft for safety purposes.

Right: Mann's Wharf Bridge, Greenfield. With stone cladding, copings and an integral towpath, navigation has been restored in a sympathetic fashion.

Above Centre: The site compound at Diggle looking towards Ward Lane. Canal dredgings are being stock-piled to dry out, making disposal easier.

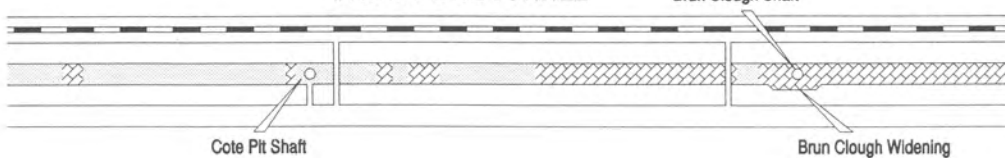
Above Right: The Diggle Flight from Lock 29W towards Wool Road. A new bywash entrance has been constructed and dredgings are being accumulated in the pond below.

Photos: R. Gough, A. Ogborn



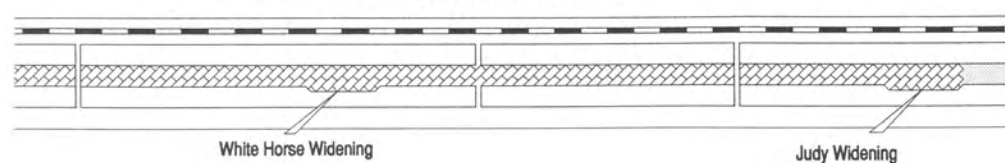
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STANDEGE TUNNEL



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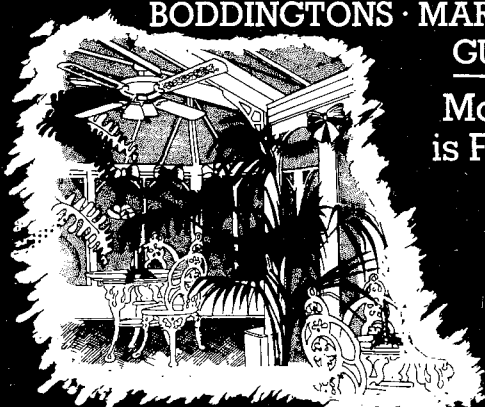
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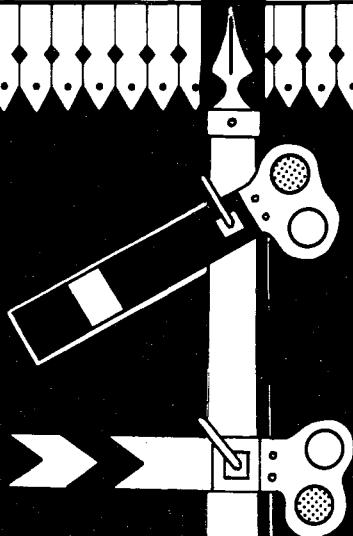
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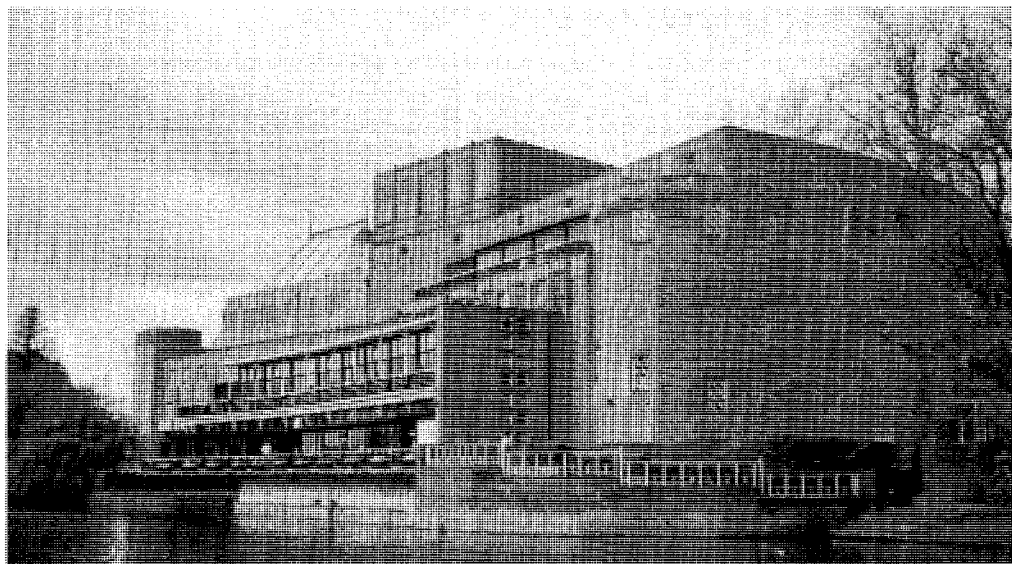
Locks: 23 (7 on River)

Up and away by 8am so that we could reach Stratford in good time before lunch. First lock is "E & H Billington" at Barton; the top gate paddle was not working so filling took an age. Next lock, just a mile upstream, is Pilgrim Lock - the weir sign was obscured by greenery and there was no hint whether we were heading for the lock or the weir! A quick check in HIS bible (Pearson's Guide) and we guessed right!

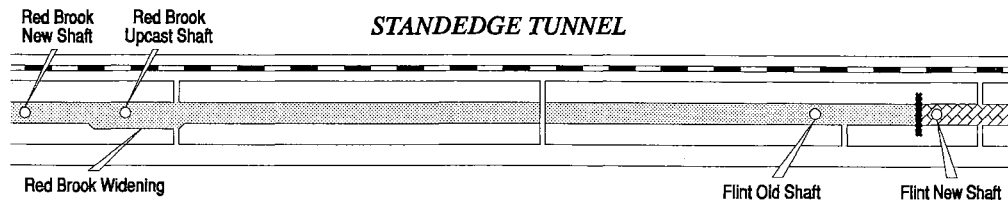
All comparatively new locks, beautifully fashioned, but they do require constant maintenance.

From here to Stratford was very plain sailing, but far from plain, in fact. This is one of the prettiest stretches on the whole ring - I lost count of the number of herons we saw. All the locks were built by volunteers including residents of local gaols and "Borstal". "Anonymous" Lock commemorates all those unknown people who gave money so generously to the re-opening of the Avon. One has to remember that there had been virtually no through navigation on the Upper Avon for one hundred years.

HE made a very professional approach to Stratford - and then nearly panicked. Somebody had stolen the entrance to Stratford Canal! However, as HE approached the pleasure boat



Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford, from the River Avon



THE WIFE'S TALE - PART 23

landings - cautiously - the forbidding-looking gates appeared from nowhere. They are tucked into the river wall, shaded by a footbridge, and there is nowhere to disembark for lock-wheelers. The choice seemed to be going back half a mile or climbing the lock gate via a little concrete ledge. HE chose the latter (HE would!) and nosed in carefully. Simon and I clambered onto the gate, raised our heads over the top, and came face to face with a couple of thousand gongoozling tourists! What a shock - and not a single one of them proffered assistance - although after a little 'gentle' persuasion two strapping fellows helped open the gate.

Dreading the thought that something stupid would happen we made an exemplary job of it, leaving HIM to have the satisfaction of rising in the lock like a cinema organist at the Wurlitzer;

except for the body-warmer in place of the tails! We moored in Bancroft Basin, a large, rectangular basin just across a lawn from the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, and then did a bid of shopping. Stratford we had "done" before and once is quite enough so we then headed for Stratford's best tourist site, The Dirty Duck Pub. (HE always calls it the Mucky Duck for some silly reason!) This is where one rubs shoulders with famous actors and where HE once stood next to Paul Schofield at the bar (Paul Schofield is not aware of the occasion!)

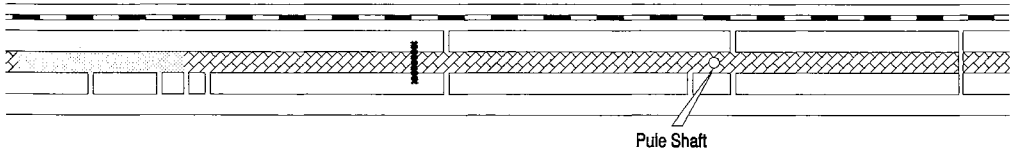
We didn't hang about but decided to make a start for Mary Arden's House (yes, Shakespeare's mum's place). Leaving Bancroft Basin is incredible. In the opposite corner from the very obvious river lock is a small hole in the basin wall. It is, in fact, a bridge under the adjacent



The Dirty (Mucky) Duck, Stratford

27

STANDEGE TUNNEL



Pile Shaft



Mary Arden's House, Stratford Photos: A & K Wright

main road, absolutely minimum headroom (HE had to bend double whilst steering). Very odd.

Strange to be back on the narrow canal system again. But, oh, what locks. In 1988 the Stratford Canal had only recently been taken over by British Waterways from The National Trust (don't ask me why!) and was sadly in need of maintenance. We handled 16 locks, all with double tail gates and all but two nearly impossible with paddle and gate opening problems. HE thought the locks were terrific - the hydraulics are such that the boat hardly moves in the lock even when going up hill. Simon and I were exhausted, yet again. We arrived at Wilmcote at 4pm and Ken and I walked up to Mary Arden's House and complex. All well worth a visit (only £1.50 at that time), house, farm, buildings etc. all in a remarkable

state of preservation - and coach loads of Americans and Japanese. Shakespeare lore is alive and well on the dollar and the yen!

The canal itself is not at all pretty or spectacular so far - overgrown and deeply rutted towpath - hope it improves further up. We had a discussion on tomorrow's programme - would we have time to go to Birmingham - looks as though we will. Had dinner, watched a bit of telly, then go to the pub. "Water Ibis", the boat that got stuck on the weir - was it only yesterday - moored up behind us and we had a good natter. Splendid Flowers bitter in the Mason's Arms, a very warm and friendly pub. We didn't hang about, though, the day had been quite shattering!

Next time: that was shattering? 38 locks and two lift bridges to Birmingham and back!



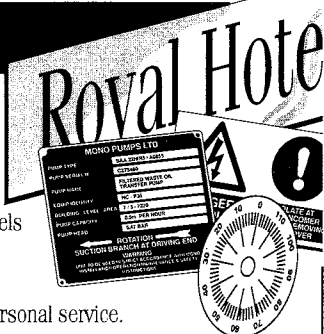
Pennine

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 HD7 6NQ

Tel: (0484) 846062

Summer (April - October) Opening

Monday	CLOSED	
Tuesday	CLOSED	2.00-4.00pm
Wednesday	10.00-1.00	2.00-4.00pm
Thursday	10.00-1.00	2.00-4.00pm
Friday	10.00-1.00	2.00-4.00pm
Saturday	10.30-5.00pm	
Sunday	10.30-5.00pm	

Winter (November - March) Opening

Monday	CLOSED	
Tuesday	CLOSED	2.00-4.00pm
Wednesday	11.00-1.00	2.00-4.00pm
Thursday	11.00-1.00	2.00-4.00pm
Friday	CLOSED	
Saturday	10.30-4.00pm	
Sunday	10.30-4.00pm	

RALPH KIRKHAM 1916 - 1994

Many of you no doubt knew Ralph and will have already heard of his sad death in May of this year.

He was well known amongst canal enthusiasts as a staunch campaigner on all matters concerning the waterways.

I first met him in 1972 on the committee of the Sowerby Bridge Festival. We then both got involved in the formation of HCS in 1974.

He is most well known for the founding of the Calder Navigation Society; of which he was in turn Secretary, Chairman and finally President.

Ralph was very annoyed, when restoration of the Narrow was starting, that we were fitting

hydraulic paddle gear and said we should stick out for the conventional type. But we thought that this would delay restoration and bowed to British Waterways Board's demands. After tireless efforts by Ralph at national level, this decision was finally reversed and for the later part of the restoration, conventional gear was fitted.

Ralph and all his hard work for the waterways will be greatly missed by all his many friends. It is a great pity that he did not live long enough to be able to take his boat SAGA through the restored Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

John Maynard

2 The Sycamores Stalybridge

through the three 'restored' locks to the end of the available canal by the new works for Staley Wharf.

Unfortunately we were defeated at 'first base' by the refusal of the oh-so-clever hydraulic gear to fully open the towpath side gate of Lock 1W. Inspection of the gate and the lock bottom revealed no obvious obstructions, but there was no way we could get the gate to open. Totally beaten, we were forced to retrace our way to Portland Basin (thence, later in the day, to Marple Top and the 'Ring O' Bells').

I sincerely hope that all the cash being spent re-excavating the Wharf here will not be wasted by unmaintained earlier 'reopened' structures not functioning properly; after all, it is boats passing that effectively keep the navigation open

In passing, we were surprised to find Lock 1W left empty and therefore with its woodwork continually drying out. We could also see NO reason why this lock needs hydraulic gear to open either bottom gate; The offside one could use a conventional balance beam, whilst the towpath side could have a cranked beam of the type common on Northern waterways. Is this a case of unnecessary 'gold-plating' of the works?

Hoping for better luck next time

Chris Williams

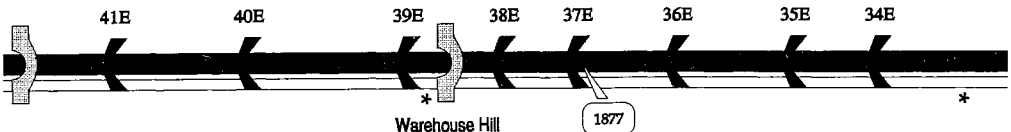
Dear Mr Ogborn,

It was very refreshing to read the first installment of Robert Aickman's epic final passage of the HNC in Pennine Link No 109. You may be interested in our party's somewhat less successful and much less epic recent attempts to sail to "off Stalybridge" in our Anglo-Welsh hire boat.

A very early start from near Dunham Town on Tuesday, May 31st 1994, had seen us at Potato Wharf, Castlefield at 7.00. While we were navigating the various arms, the proprietor of another hire boat accosted us to ask if we were going up the Rochdale Nine, as a pair of craft had already started off. Surprised to find the flight open that early, we set off, breasting up with the second boat from the first lock.

After a speedy passage to Portland Basin, we called in at ASDA to lay in provisions; a luxury obviously not available to Mr Aickman's crew in 1948! Our first experience with the 'Narrow' showed a reasonable depth of water, albeit with the usual complement of supermarket trolleys, gas stoves, etc. Winding immediately to the east of the Sea Scouts hut, it was our intention to navigate backwards

MARSDEN



The way was cleared in December last year for work to start on the Staley Wharf restoration project at Stalybridge.

The Department of the Environment has officially given approval for funding of the scheme which will mean that the Narrow Canal will be cruisable from Ashton to the outskirts of Stalybridge.

The £600,000 scheme has been designed by staff in Tameside Council's Planning and Engineering Department and will include the restoration of the original winding hole at Caroline Street.

Councillor Geoff Brierley, an enthusiastic backer of the Narrow Canal restoration scheme and former chairman of the Narrow Canal Joint Committee, pointed out that the project was part of a wider vision to regenerate the whole of the Tame valley.

"It is a wonderful initiative that has found support in all areas and will create employment, which is especially important in these lean times," said Councillor Brierley.

"There is a huge potential for tourism development linked to the Narrow Canal and I am sure that the work on the section through



In the beginning ...Tameside engineers Pete Rawson (left) and Lee Holland (right) consult the plans for Staley Wharf and try to visualise the results of their forthcoming excavations. The line of the infilled canal appears clearly defined. The view is from Bayley Street looking toward Caroline Street, Stalybridge. Photo: R. Gough



Stalybridge will be the catalyst for regeneration of the whole area. It will attract considerable interest and help to promote the area."

Former Joint Committee chairman, Councillor George Speight, said news of the funding was marvellous. *"We have a long way to go. But over £10m has already been sunk (an unfortunate choice of word, Ed.) into the restoration campaign which has provided useful employment and training for many hundreds of people who would otherwise have been unemployed,"* he said.

HCS Chairman, David Sumner also welcomed the news as another vital piece in the restoration jigsaw and said he was confident that the restoration drive would not be halted. *"Far too much has been achieved. The benefits of restoration are already being enjoyed and more and more people in Tameside, Oldham and*

Kirklees are appreciating the importance of the scheme as an industrial and commercial catalyst in addition to its value in improving the environment."

Work is scheduled to be completed before the end of the year and will involve excavation between Bayley Street and Caroline Street. There will be a new bridge at Bayley Street and a second phase of the works will be implemented when the condition of the canal walls and channel have been inspected following the excavation phase.

Surplus materials will be deposited at the old sandstone quarry at George Street, Stalybridge, which will be re-shaped and landscaped for public open space use. The scheme is the starting point for plans to divert the canal into the River Tame at Stalybridge.

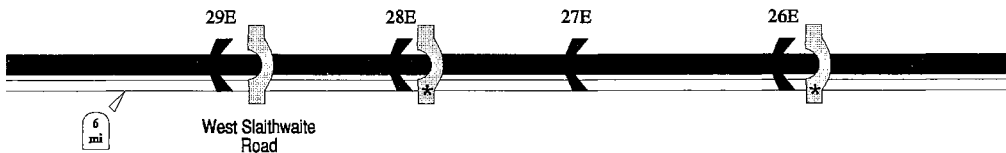
Alec Ramsden



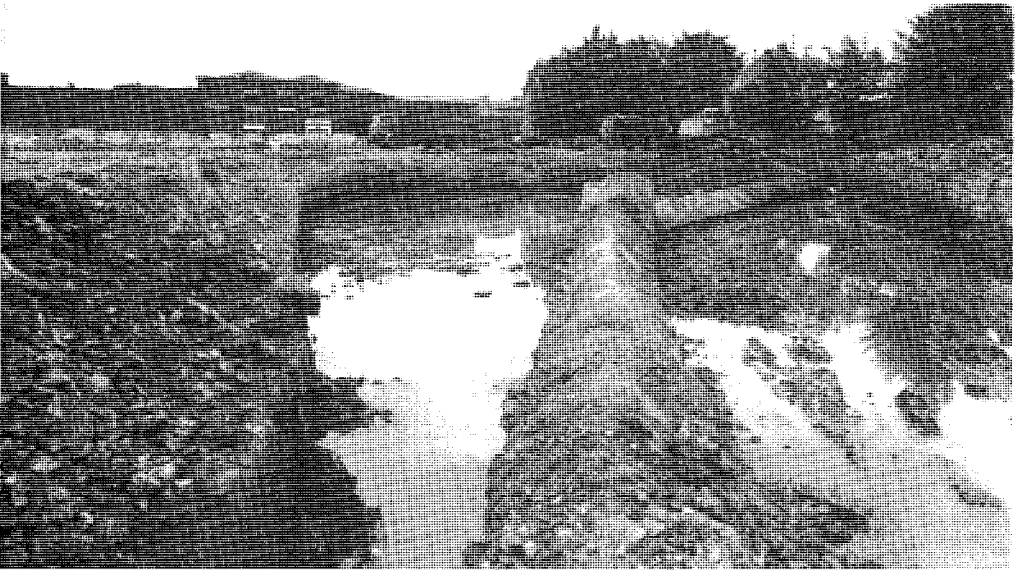
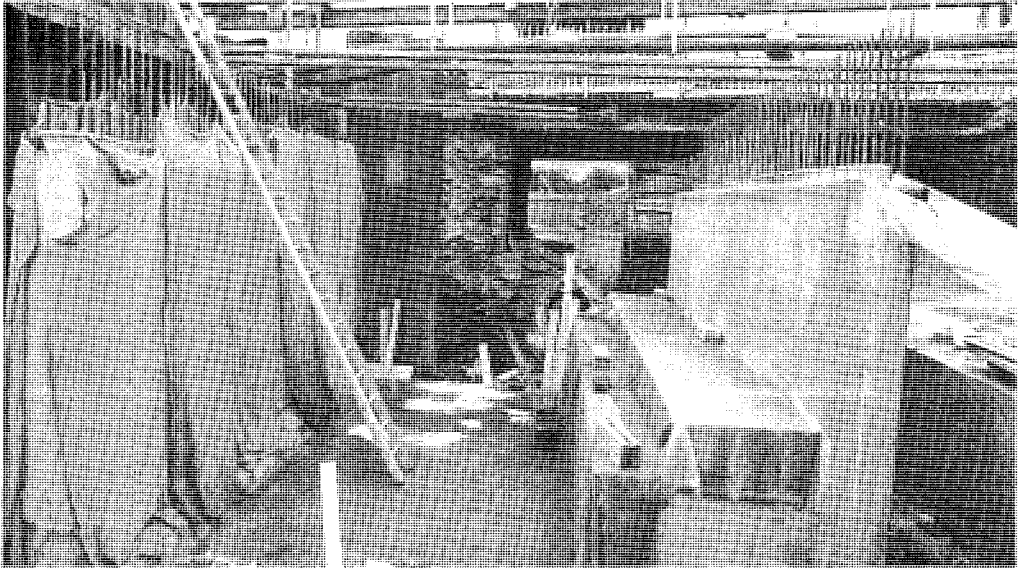
Left: The view from Bayley Street toward Peel Street. A temporary roadway has been laid over the towpath and part of the canal to gain access to the boundary wall which is in need of stabilisation.

Top Right: The new bridge culvert at Bayley Street takes shape. It is being cast in two sections and the integral towpath is clearly seen. The excavations have revealed the ironwork and abutments of the original bridgehole.

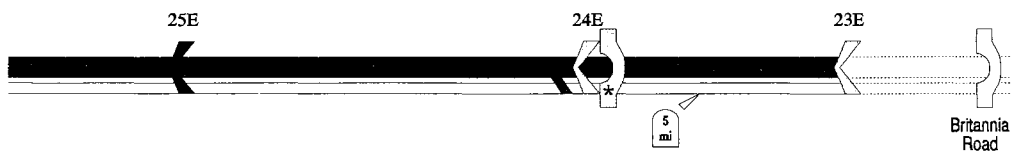
Right: Staley Wharf is almost completely revealed. The central culvert carries the canal through the Stalybridge infill from Mottram Road to Bayley Street. The excavated washwalls are in reasonable condition, but more importantly, the 'puddled' canal bed has kept its ability to hold water! Photos: R. Gough



STALEY WHARF



33





Braving the elements at Diggle - Left to right: David Finnis (HCS), Ken Wright (HCS), Councillor Brian Mather, Alec Ramsden (HCS), Ian Brook (DoE), Jo Young (HCS) Photo: Oldham Evening Chronicle

A pretty hardy character is Councillor Brian Mather, the affable former Mayor of Oldham.

It was a raw winter's day, bitterly cold with a biting wind and snow (even the brass monkeys etc.), but Oldham's former Civic Head managed a smile as he ceremonially cut the first sod to mark the start of work on the £720,000 scheme to restore the Diggle flight of locks.

Money for the scheme was made available to Oldham Council, under the government's Derelict Land Grant programme, which, of course, has been a major source of funding for the Narrow Canal restoration project.

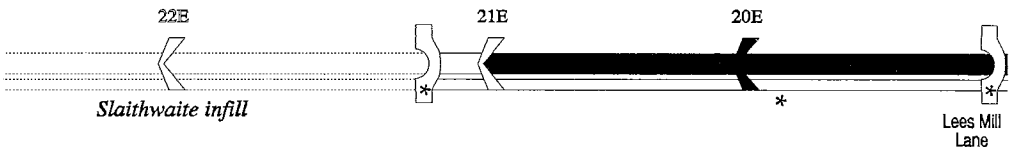
The Canal Society's Restoration subsidiary is responsible for the work on the scheme which will mean seven locks being restored and a link-up with another two locks at Diggle which have already been restored by the volunteers. Completion of the Diggle flight will mean that 60 of the Canal's 74 locks will have been restored and another section of the Narrow will be cruisable.

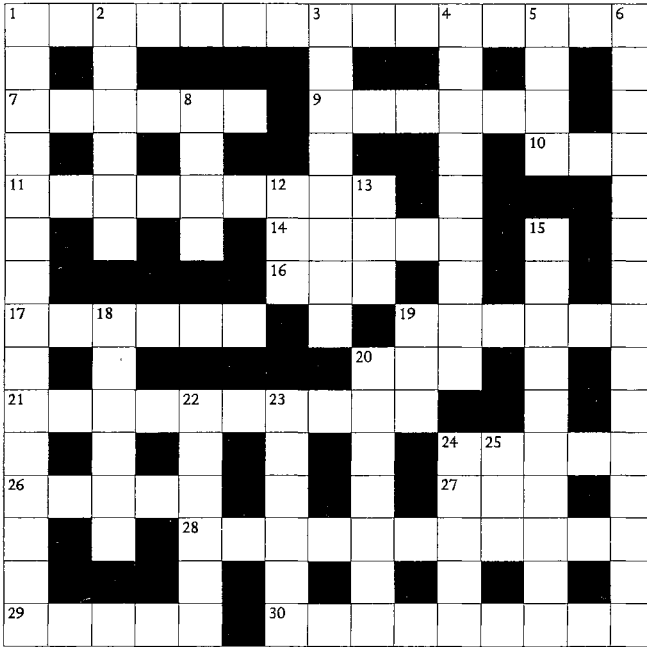
The former Mayor praised the initiative of those involved with the restoration project which, he said, in addition to improving the environment, would bring the waterway back to life and create much needed jobs.

Alec Ramsden

34

SLAITHWAITE





19. On which to stand your kettle in older times (6)
20. Famous athlete (3)
21. On 21st January 1807 Telford recommended the building of a feeder from this valley (10)
24. What a legger lies on in Standedge (5)
26. Example of a polymer - what your ropes might be made of (5)
27. Caused by cart wheels (3)
28. What we are holding in 1994 (11)
29. He was appointed 6D of Standedge Tunnel at a salary of two guineas a week (5)
30. The reservoir that failed causing the 'Black Flood' (9)

DOWN

1. Group of buildings at Marsden Portal (6,3,5)
2. Designer of the cast iron aqueduct over the Tame in 1799 (6)
3. An engine house above Standedge (8)
4. The county of the East side (9)
5. Region (4)

Our crossword setter, John Harwood of Eyam, has certainly gone for the bicentenary flavour this time and given one set of mildly cryptic clues.

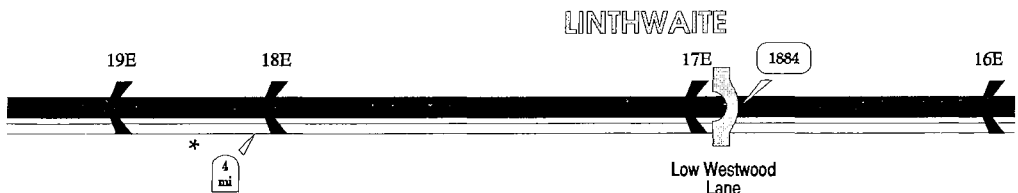
Reference to 'Pennine Passage' would not go amiss! Good Luck.

ACROSS

1. The age of the HNC this year (3,7,5)
7. Force that takes over when we neglect a canal (6)
9. Dee ran - goes with Dove near Barnsley (6)
10. For chopping wood (3)
11. Cargo transshipment area in the centre of Blackburn - L&L (4,5)
14. In 1801 he became one of the first 6D of the Diggle/Marsden section of the HNC (5)
16. --- the line (3)
17. Owner of last known dove commercial boat through Standedge (6)

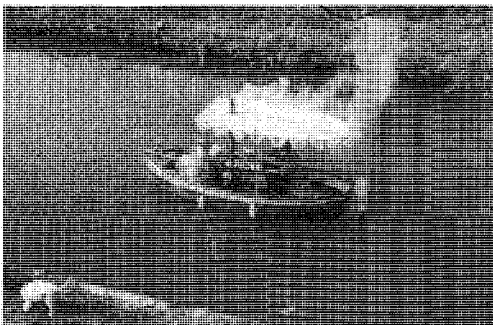
6. 14A was the first of these (15)
8. Tiers of oars? (4)
12. Find a picture in a cart? (3)
13. An enemy (3)
15. According to its Act, the HNC was to 'join and communicate with the Canal from Manchester' (10)
18. Outcome (6)
19. What a motor does to a butty (3)
20. The mark of a man or a firearm (7)
22. Ace lens - formerly used by cavalrymen (8)
23. The bodies of boats before fitting out (6)
24. This often took place at lock flights when boatmen fought for priority (5)
25. Not in (3)

Solution in the Autumn Issue 111



Well, the Festival Season is three quarters over, three down and one to go. Saddleworth Canal 200 at the beginning of May, Tunnel End Summer Fair in June and Tameside (or Ashton, as we older people still think of it) in July. Each got everything right even to the extent of placating the rain gods so that the sun shone throughout the festivals. Each organising committee worked hard and put in a tremendous amount of effort, but it's always nice when the sun shines and the multitudes come out to see the results of your efforts. And certainly the multitudes did come out, particularly at Ashton where the site was wall to wall people on both days. A superb friendly atmosphere prevailed throughout.

The close parallel between the two HCS festivals was the chronic lack of help. Both festivals have committees whose members all have a function, be it treasurer, organising traders or entertainment and as such are very often fully occupied throughout the events. Both festivals found it hard to produce man/woman power to do all the odd jobs that take the odd hour or so. This was particularly true on gate manning. Both festivals have difficult sites with several access points all of which need to be manned throughout each day. Simple mathematics show that five



Full steam ahead! Steamboat 'Dale' heads for Limekiln Lock, Saddleworth Canal 200. Photo: A. Ogborn

entrances, in a show open for six hours, needs thirty volunteers to do one hour on each entrance. Without the help of the Sea Cadets, who did a marvellous job, Uppermill would not have been able to man the gates. Ashton only managed by working some people into the ground and by taking people off other jobs. Now the point I am trying to make is that the Society has 1100 members of whom about 650 may be classed as 'local' to the canal, deduct those who are too young or old to help, and we must be left with 400 or so able and capable of helping, yet who didn't. To them I make this plea - all we are asking is for an hour of your time, you'll enjoy the festival all the more for having helped and it will give you the opportunity to meet a smashing bunch of lunatics - ie. the Festival Committee members! (This offer is also open to members of Council).

Boats obviously play a bigger part at Ashton where the site is divided into four areas by canals that are navigable. The boats at Uppermill could be viewed without actually going to the festival.

Ashton runs somewhat more slickly and professionally as befits its years of experience, but I doubt if anyone not on the Committee noticed the odd glitch at Uppermill.

They were great fun. I was there all through both of them and will be there, *deo volante*, through both next year. Our thanks to the marvellous co-operation from the Police, Oldham Division and Ashton Division. I think the individual bobbies enjoy the atmosphere as well. Not a hint of trouble when the public was present at either event, although both had to put up with the local jobs when the crowds had gone.

The final note - one of the traders at the Tameside Festival, whom I know from other shows totally unconnected with canals, was attending for the first time. When I asked him how business had been, he replied "*Not bad, but what a smashing atmosphere. I'm coming next*



FESTIVALS SO FAR ...

year with my caravan and spending the whole weekend here". As an unsolicited testimonial, I think that says it all.

Brian Minor
Festivals Officer

And now a word about Tunnel End Summer Fair

Having formed a new committee in August last year, preparations for the 1994 Summer Fair ran according to plan with all the general entertainment and stalls booked well in advance.

However, in April disaster loomed on the horizon in the shape of British Waterways and put the whole festival in jeopardy. Proposals to build a spill-way over the dam started to take place with initial site clearance devastating numerous trees and shrubs on the embankment. To the credit of British Waterways, and having explained the situation, they agreed to delay the main works on the spill-way until after the festival.

The festival itself was a huge success with all credit to the small, but hard working committee. The support from the people from the Colne Valley and in particular Marsden, was exceptional.

This year the Society replaced the 'Marsden Shuttle' with two smaller boats, but was able to carry more passengers over the festival weekend than ever before. Having run a single boat at Marsden for many years, it was uplifting to hear 'I'm sorry this boat is full, but another one will be along any moment'.

One final note, and to reiterate Brian Minor's comments, we need more help at festivals, even if members can only give a few hours of their time, it would make all the difference.

Frank Smith
General Secretary



The Wild West comes to Uppermill; Glossop Country Music Club square dancing at Saddleworth Canal 200. Photo: J. Patterson





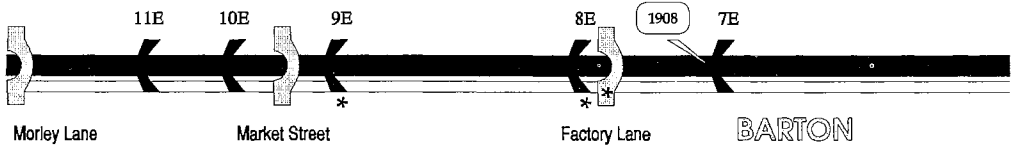
Above: 'Shuttle Too' heads for Lock 42E to pick up passengers at Marsden Station. Tunnel End Summer Fair.

Above Right: All quiet at the Summer Fair; early Sunday morning before opening.

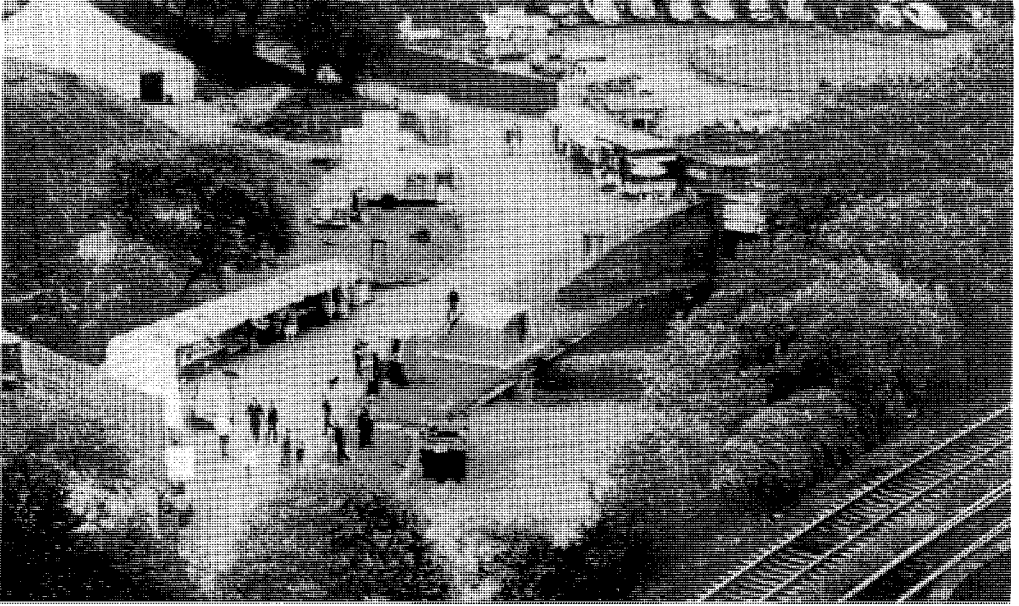
Right: 'One giant lick for the DJ' - Peter Fairhead at Saddleworth Canal 200.

Photos: A. Ogborn

FESTIVAL VIEWS

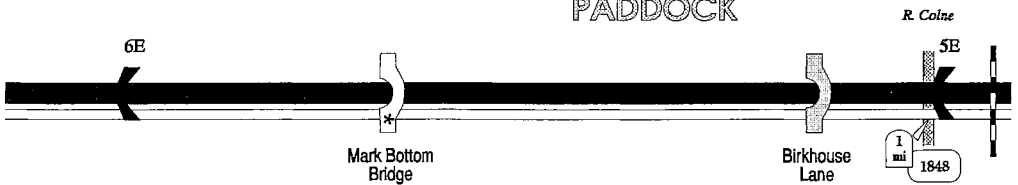


FESTIVALS SO FAR ...

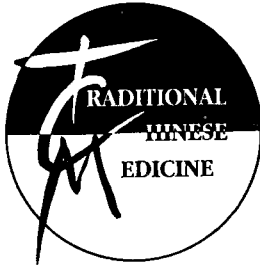


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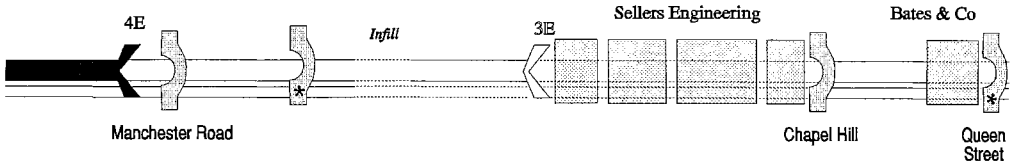
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Dear Editor,

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Kind Regards,

Michael Handford, Chairman Restoration Committee

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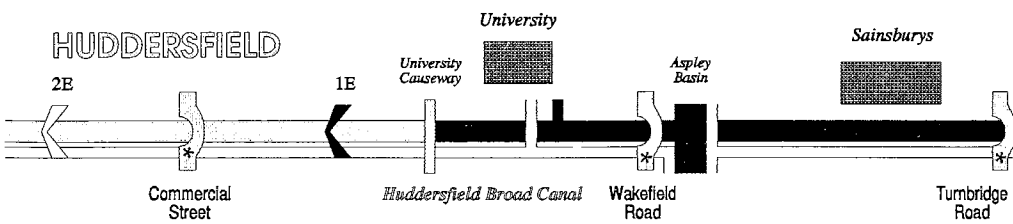
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WEST SIDE

- Wed., August 10th 'Out & About' - Walk to Staley Wharf. Meet in front of Stalybridge Railway Station at 7.45pm for 8.00pm.
- Wed., September 14th General Meeting
- Wed., October 12th Presentation: Manchester & Salford Junction Canal

EAST SIDE

Venue for the East Side meetings is under review; members are welcome to attend West Side events.

Weekend Sept. 3rd-4th Huddersfield Canals Festival, University Site, Aspley

N.B. All meetings commence at 8.00pm, unless otherwise stated
East Side meetings: Venue and events under review
West Side meetings take place at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley

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NEXT PRESS DATE

Articles, letters, etc., for the Autumn 1994 issue of Pennine Link should reach the Editor by the 7th September 1994

THE SOCIETY WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

- 2163 Mr Miley,
- 2164 Mr Linehan,
- 2165 Mr Linehan,
- 2166 Mr Edwards,
- 2167 Mr Shortridge,
- 2168 Grand Union Morris,
- 2169 Mr & Mrs Keightley,
- 2170 Mr & Mrs Davies,
- 2171 Mr & Mrs Mann,
- 2172 Mr & Miss Jennings & Gartside,
- 2173 Mr Flynn, Newtown,
- 2174 Mr Grant,
- 2175 Mr McIvor,
- 2176 Mr Lodge,
- 2177 Mr Irvine,
- 2178 Mr Mayall,
- 2179 Mr Senior,
- 2180 Mr & Mrs Parker,
- 2181 Mr & Mrs Ross,
- 2182 Mr Ryder,
- 2183 Mr & Mrs Booth,
- 2184 Mr & Ms Allan Kingdon & Val Todd,
- 2185 Mr Amos,
- 2186 Mr Heyes,
- 2187 Mr & Mrs Robinson & Family,
- 2188 Mr Buckley,
- 2189 Mr & Mrs Mount,
- 2190 Mr & Ms Frankell & Needham,
- 2191 Mr Lever,
- 2192 Ms Richardson,
- 2193 Mr Brierley & Family,
- 2194 Dr Witt,
- 2195 Mr Cropper,
- 2196 Mr Taylor,
- 2197 Mr Maybury,
- 2198 Dr Green,
- 2199 Ms Shaw,
- 2200 Mr & Mrs Mensah,
- 2201 Mrs Blaney,
- 2202 Ms Batty,
- 2203 Mr Hunter,
- 2204 Mr Goddard,
- 2205 Mr Hassall,
- 2206 Ms Clarke,
- 2207 Mr & Mrs Cutts,
- 2208 Mr Elliot,
- 2209 Mr Ashley,
- 2210 Mr & Mrs Sykes,
- 2211 Ms Buckley,
- 2212 Mr Harvey & Family,
- 2213 Mrs Grainger,
- 2214 Mr Knight,
- 2215 Miss Dawkins,
- 2216 Mr Moore,
- 2217 Mr Gardner,



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