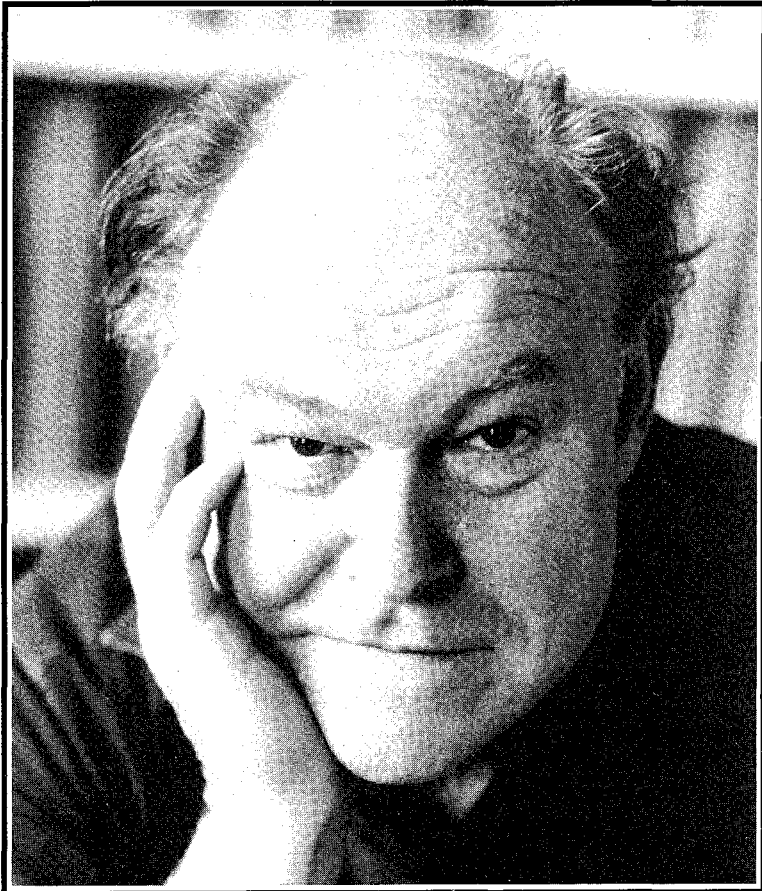




Pennine *LINK*

Issue Number 117 - Summer 1996



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Front Cover: A familiar face joins the restoration drive - see page 19.



In searching around in my mind for a topic for this editorial I kept coming back to the idea of "which do you want first, the good news or the bad news?" We have had a strange few weeks, here on the Canal, lots of opinions expressed - generally better than just

favourable but with more than the odd comment, article or action suggesting that all is not sweetness and light.

There *is* criticism and ill-feeling about some of what is going on and we are in a unique position to counter this criticism and endeavour to gain full public support for our efforts.

It is too easy to think of ourselves - perhaps as others see us these days - as part of a bureaucratic partnership with local authorities and British Waterways - moving steadily on to our goal. We must never become complacent, though. We must try to make sure that everyone realises how beneficial a restored Canal will be; we must not leave any bad feeling behind us.

Huddersfield Canal Society was and is, first and foremost, a ginger group. We are dedicated to seeing our Canal open to through navigation, with full facilities for walkers and anglers as well

as boaters and, if we have to prod a few people here and there to keep the ball rolling, so be it. But we also have an important, and full-time, public relations role.

THE BAD NEWS

So, what of the bad news. First, we had to put up with a lot of criticism of the way last year's Saddleworth Canal Festival was run. This came to a head in the local press just in time for this year's event. Basically, local residents were complaining about loud noise, late at night. Surely people who live near public open spaces must expect the occasional noisy event, and there are plenty of similar events which take place on the same field that don't seem to create any ill-feeling. It is the residents' right to have a moan about things but is it the Canal Society's high profile that makes such an issue headline news?

Unfortunately the adverse criticism of the festival was accompanied by another bout of sabotage, on Lock 22 West this time, adjacent to the festival site. I use the word sabotage, rather than vandalism, because this was a deliberate attempt to render the lock useless - exactly at the time when visiting boats were expected to sail down the Canal from the Wool Road slipway - and when the Uppermill trip boat was looking forward to a busy Bank Holiday weekend. Fortunately the attempt failed.

cont'd over...

Removing a balance beam from a lock gate is not the work of a few teenage vandals. That, and the removal of lock paddle winding gear, was the work of experienced people with practical skills. What do they hope to gain? All they did was try to spoil the weekend for members of the public, including many small children, who are innocent of any connection with the Canal organisations. British Waterways are so concerned that they are asking for a voluntary 'canal watch' effort to be set up. And why was the removed paddle gear hidden from view and not thrown into the water? Was it being taken to Diggle to restore a disabled lock for yet more flooding? Heaven forbid.

In Slaithwaite "a resident" has written to the local paper objecting to the re-opening of the Canal through the town. We thought that local opposition to the scheme had gone. That is clearly not the case, it seems, although nothing more was reported to these ears after the one letter.

GOOD NEWS

That minimal amount of bad news can be taken - we have broad shoulders! Especially when compared with the good news! We are through

to the next stage of the Millennium Bid process at last; the new trip boat is working at Marsden; the unique (for us) guillotine gate at Lock 23 East (Slaithwaite) is up and running and our small, but perfectly formed, work force is now hard at it in a new location between Stalybridge and Mossley - it can't be bad!

Also, among the good news, the aftermath of the Saddleworth Canal Festival has been that one long and vitriolic letter to the local paper complaining about the Canal, inter alia, has been met with a veritable barrage of replies, insisting that the Canal is accepted as part of the busy local scene, an essential contribution to the vital tourist trade.

TAILPIECE

Elsewhere in this issue we congratulate those concerned with the Rochdale Canal on the opening of the connection at Tuel Lane, Sowerby Bridge. BUT, if you hear their publicity machine going on about "the highest commercial canal in the country" just remind them that WE have been operating a fund-raising trip boat on the highest pound in the country for YEARS!

Ken Wright



Sitting between Mrs. Jennifer Page, Chief Executive of the Millennium Commission and Richard Bradley, English Partnerships at the Parliamentary Waterways Group meeting on April 16th was a timely yet apprehensive experience.

Our Millennium application had been posted to the Commission (see Issue 116) and English Partnerships were considering our Strategic Programme of Restoration. Both parties were about to inform us of the results of their deliberations.

The reason for our attendance at the House of Commons - Steve Whitby and Roger Anderson, (Tameside M.B.) accompanied me - was to share a presentation and debate chaired by Sir Anthony Durant M.P. on the "National Lottery and Other

Sources of Funding". Eight days later we received the letter from Jennifer Page and last week English Partnerships confirmed that they too wish to open negotiations to confirm their in principle support for matching funding.

We are over the first hurdle at the second attempt and I quote below from the Millennium Commission "offer".

"Thank you for your application for Millennium Commission funds for the Huddersfield Canal project. The Commission received 489 full applications in its second applications round, with almost £3 billion sought in grants, significantly more than the Commission can distribute.

The Commission has now selected the applications to go forward to the next, detailed appraisal stage, from which the successful projects will be chosen. I am pleased to inform you that your project has been selected for further examination. I should remind you that passing this stage of the application process is

Chairman's Report

no guarantee of the ultimate success of all or part of your project - the competition is still strong. We will be undertaking a very thorough verification of every element of your scheme, before the Commission takes a final decision on whether to award you a Millennium grant. However, we do congratulate all those who have committed their time and resources to your project on their achievements so far.

The next step will be to discuss with you the details of your project. I enclose a checklist which outlines the information we would like to have available, if possible, when we commence our detailed appraisal. We will be in touch with you very shortly to arrange a site visit and meeting; in the meantime, if you have any urgent queries about the checklist or any other matters, please do contact your case officer.

The letter from English Partnerships is in a similar vein and we are now meeting both parties to conclude our bids. Between now and the end of July our partners, chaired by Roger Anderson, will answer all the detailed points in the checklist for the detailed appraisal review. We have to satisfy both parties that we can deliver the completed project and answer the many technical, financial, management and operational queries that they may raise. Should we satisfy the Commission that all is in order we could have an offer by September or October this year. We are ready to roll and because the Society has underwritten detailed design works on structures yet to be restored work as per our submitted programme can commence once the grant has been approved.

It is clear that support for our bid from the two bodies is because there is an important element of regeneration in the whole scheme. In the past few months examples of fulfilled promises are evident along the canal corridor. Staley Wharf is now fully operational and I am pleased to note the increasing number of visiting boats to Stalybridge. I was also pleased to hear of the unanimous support from the Stalybridge 2 District Chamber of Trade for a restored canal through Stalybridge and along the line of the original route. Both options (river and original route) are of course feasible but the Chamber of Trade stated "*to gain full advantage and revolutionise the town the Chamber considers*

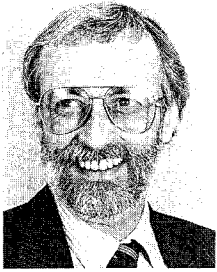
following the original line of the canal, through the centre of the town, the most favoured option".

The long awaited redevelopment at Buckley New Mill, Uppermill is well underway and houses alongside the canal are ready for occupation to complement the excellent development at Wool Road - Stonebottom Mill.

Standedge Pioneer has arrived at Marsden and was christened by Mr. Bill Owen last month. Those crew members who delivered the boat to Aspley Basin from Brighouse experienced how well this tug and butty handles. Its operation on the launch day was a complete success. We were particularly pleased that two of our main sponsors - the Rural Development Commission and an anonymous donor were present at the christening. They are both excited about the proposed Standedge Experience which of course forms an integral part of our whole project and look forward to the "tunnel trip".

We were very grateful to Dr. Andy Macdonald, Director of Estates at Huddersfield University when recently he kindly hosted a buffet on his premises for officers of the Millennium Commission during their recent whistle stop fact finding tour. His enthusiasm for our project was evident and he looks forward to the day when boats moor alongside his campus on their way up to Standedge. Dr. Macdonald is one of many partners who wrote in support of our bid for Millennium and English Partnerships Funding. I am in the process of writing to all who wrote either to me or to the Rt. Hon. Virginia Bottomley direct, to thank them for their help to date. I would like to inform all our members of the support we have received. In the last issue I quoted Barry Sheerman. Baroness Castle of Blackburn also wrote to Mrs. Bottomley and in her reply to Barbara, Mrs. Bottomley stated that one of the key criteria for any millennium project is demonstrable public support. Clearly we now have the whole community behind us and I look forward to the occasion when I can publicly thank the Commission, English Partnerships and all our other valuable partners when we successfully pass the next stage in the application process.

David Sumner
Chairman



The Huddersfield Narrow Canal - Reopened for the Millennium?

Two letters offer the prospect of complete restoration of the canal by the year 2000

24th April 1996, from Jennifer Page, Chief

Executive, The Millennium Commission

The bulk of this letter is reproduced in the Chairman's Remarks, pp4-5.

16th May 1996, from Martin Reynolds, Senior Development Manager, English Partnerships

'As you may now already be aware, English Partnerships has agreed that a Strategic Programme of Reclamation is appropriate in principle for the proposals submitted by the Joint Committee, the indicative resource allocation being up to £12.0m over 6 years, subject to the availability of resources.

There is still some way to go before a commitment can be entered into and I would like to have a working level meeting with relevant people about the details that need to be settled before the approval can become final.

For this first meeting it may be easier if the venue is somewhere on the Manchester side of the region as I would like to discuss how to proceed with a representative of each of the organisations involved in delivery being present.'

What does all this mean? First of all our bid for Millennium funding has passed the big hurdle of acceptance in principle by the Commission. They have appointed consultants, Mott McDonald Architects, to help verify the information provided in the next stage of the process know as the Detailed Appraisal Review (or DAR). Provided that is completed satisfactorily a recommendation on the application will be made to the Millennium Commissioners in September or October. Secondly that the bulk of the matching funding required by the Millennium Commission will be provided by a continuation of English Partnerships funding, provided we can meet their requirements.

The items for consideration by English Partnerships are similar to the 12 point checklist provided as a starting point for discussion by the Millennium Commission. Some of these items are relatively straightforward; others will require complex negotiations between the five partners (the three Local Authorities, British Waterways and the Society). To give a flavour of the current state of negotiations I list the 12 points of the checklist, with a few bullet point comments.

1. Design and drawings which adequately allow for construction costs to be estimated within an acceptable degree of certainty

Half of projects require only minor design input. Design is underway on 5 bridges with the costs being underwritten by the Society. Standedge Tunnel works based on Ove Arup study and subsequent work by British Waterways. Stalybridge Town Centre - Tameside Council are commissioning a detailed study of the hydrology of the River Tame so that the diversion into the River Tame, which up to now has been the favoured route can be fully studied. However, a second option now exists; that is the rebuilding of the canal along the original line. This will be possible because the closure of the Delta Crompton factory, and the likely redevelopment of that site frees the 50% of the old route previously occupied by a major industry.

2. Estimates of capital costs. This should include supporting documentation to demonstrate how costs have been calculated.

All works estimates are based on current engineering prices produced by a group of Engineers from the Local Authorities and British Waterways chaired by Ken Wright.

3. Technical specifications including works programmes, details of proposed construction methodology and project management.

A Project Manager is to be appointed to act as a "Project Champion", although individual schemes will continue to be managed by the Local Authorities.

4. Names and responsibilities of all consultants engaged by the Applicant for

The Millennium Commission Bid

both the development and operation of the project.

A long list of the firms who have advised the restoration partnership, but with the emphasis on those giving technical advice. The only new work of this nature not previously mentioned in "Pennine Link" is the feasibility study for the Standedge Experience by Roger Beckett (The Architect for the Waterways Museum at Gloucester), and the structural survey of that building by Wilde & Partners.

- 5. Details of any contracts or agreements which the Applicant has, or intends to enter into, for the acquisition or supply of assets, buildings, land, works or services.**
- 6. Details of Planning Consents, if obtained, on the basis of information to be submitted to the Planning Authorities.**

Most works do not require Planning Permission. Any outstanding permissions should be in place by July.

- 7. Technical Surveys or feasibility studies in connection with:
site and/or ground conditions including contaminated land or environmental surveys;
structural or conditions surveys in relation to existing assets, buildings and structures which will be incorporated into the projects;**
- 8. Formal valuations of assets, buildings, structures and land which will be incorporated into a project.**
- 9. Business Plans and details of the proposed operational management for the project. This should include details of revenue incomes and costs, tax liabilities and other costs associated with the project provided in a format which is ready for easy analysis by the Commission and its advisers.**

A detailed Business Plan is being prepared. A Company Limited by Guarantee (call it The Huddersfield Canal Company?) will be formed with shares held by the five partners, thereby helping to guarantee the future maintenance of the Canal. Funding contributions and likely income of this company are set out in the details

already given to the Millennium Commission; this includes an annual requirement of a £30,000 contribution by the Society.

- 10. Operational feasibility studies and/or documented research to support business plan assumptions.**
- 11. Sources of funding; documentary evidence which demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Commission that the Applicant has secured partnership funding.**

Sources of funding:

Millennium Commission:	£13,278,500	50%
English Partnerships:	£12,197,000	45.9%
Canal Society:	£550,000	2.1%
British Waterways	£400,000	1.5%
Per Cent for Art:	£131,500	0.5%

The English Partnerships contribution could be reduced if other funding opportunities arise (particularly the European Regional Development Fund which has already contributed to the canal). The Society's contribution is towards the Standedge Experience, and we may be able to seek grant aid from other sources (notably the Rural Development Commission who have already contributed to the "Standedge Pioneer" trip boat). The British Waterways contribution is limited by the legal implications of the canal's Remainder Waterway status, and represents the extent of their liability for repairs to Standedge Tunnel just to keep the water flowing.

The item headed Per Cent for Art refers to an organisation who wish to mark the Millennium by significant art works - the Millennium Commission's funding would double this figure.

- 12. Expenditure and income cashflows for both the development and operational phases of the project. This should show details of all sources of income/funding, including required Millennium Commission funding, and identify elements of expenditure.**

It sounds easy doesn't it? Don't you believe it! A lot of hard detailed work and negotiation has to be completed in a very short timescale, and much depends on the continued co-operation and agreement of all five partners, and in the continued help and guidance of officers of the

Millennium Commission and English Partnerships. Without this co-operation and help we would not have reached the stage we are now at, and, as always, I must express the Society's gratitude to our own staff, to the volunteers who have put in a huge amount of time, to the officers of the three Local Authorities and British Waterways, and to the officers of the Millennium Commission and English Partnerships. I will not name names at this stage, because there are now so many involved - but those of you who are involved know who I mean. Thank you.

Despite his many years of sterling service to the Society, Steve Whitby has escaped writing in "Pennine Link" - but he can't get away with it any longer! The time constraints of a full time job have meant that my role in this complex process of bidding for grants has been very limited - indeed the more complex these issues become, the more we rely on Steve, and the less we volunteers can do. So Steve writes below about the nitty gritty of bidding for major funding to complete the canal.

TO BID OR NOT TO BID

An officer's tale

Most Society members and Plink readers will no doubt be aware that a great deal of time is spent preparing applications for grants. Keith and Ken both thought that, as I have been working for HCS since May 1984, it was about time that I wrote my first article for Plink. So here goes....

As Keith has already updated readers on the latest position regarding the Millennium Bid and our Strategic Programme of Reclamation to English Partnerships, I thought it may be of interest to readers to learn of the number of people involved in the bidding process and what they do.

Brief history:- The process begins with identifying sources of funding. In the early years Keith, as Society Projects Officer, would identify the likely sources and through a network of friends and colleagues would begin the process of collating as much information as possible. This careful research, together with considerable creative packaging, and the help of experienced campaigners (Mike Thompson in particular) led to the creation of worthwhile relationships with

funding agencies, and we enjoyed some notable successes.

A common feature of the process was the willingness of all of the different funding agencies to help us through the maze of red tape. This invaluable assistance may have been due to their support for our project but could have equally been something to do with maintaining close (and frequent) contact - constant badgering! I was (and remain) Keith's full-time gopher, and together with Mike Thompson we attend numerous seminars and meetings, to learn how to decipher the application forms and speak in abbreviations - ERDF, SRB, DLG, RDC, EP, MC, SPD. I trust most readers will also be quite fluent - by now.

Current procedures:- This basic concept of research, planning, packaging and attack still remains, but it now involves considerably more people. Applying for grants for specific projects now involves creating a cocktail of funds from public, private and voluntary sources. The phrase 'all singing all dancing' accurately describes how these bids need to be constructed. In 1995 we produced a matrix of funding sources and together with our partners systematically researched each grant. This involved attending seminars, meetings every week and inwardly digesting all the rules and criteria governing each grant. It is probably worth mentioning some of the officers involved in this process

for HCS: David Sumner, Keith Gibson, Ken Wright, John Sully, Alec Ramsden, Frank Smith, Me, Mike Thompson, Jane Stewart.

for BW: Derek Cochrane, Ian Selby, Alex Thompson, Neil Maxwell, Colin Thompson, Danny Stead

for Tameside M.B.: Michael Greenwood, Roger Anderson, Steve Hughes, Peter Rawson

for Oldham M.B.: Nick Andrews, John Rooney, Graham Pointon

for Kirklees M.B.: John Miller, Geoff Farnell, Shalim Chaudray

This is not an exhaustive list, and I could name another 20 officers who are currently involved in the preparation of bids. Most of the members of HCS Council are actively involved and must devote all of their spare time (and considerable

Bidding for Funds

chunks of 'work time') to this process. I am one of the fortunate officers - I am paid!

With so many people actively involved, the process of formulating funding strategies and co-ordinating delivery can be difficult. The process is made easier as we have several formal committee forums, the Officer's Working Party chaired by Alex Thompson, National Manager of Special Employment Schemes, British Waterways and more recently a Millennium Bid officer's committee chaired by Roger Anderson, Assistant Chief Executive, Tameside M.B.

These committees allow all the officers to thrash out the detail of the bidding process and we are fortunate that the respective Chairmen are able to bring the necessary degree of control and in some cases arbitration to ensure progress is made. These committees bring together a wide range of disciplines, professional and amateur, a great deal of enthusiasm, commitment and purpose, and are rarely dull!

Another prerequisite these days are 'justification' reports - economic, environmental, historical and financial. The Society and its partners have spent a fortune paying consultants mostly to tell us what we already know! - because most of the funding agencies demand independent confirmation by recognised experts. The process of working with consultants has proved to be very rewarding, not only in terms of successful bid outcomes but also in the knowledge they pass on of the 'industry standard techniques'. This allows us to attack other sources of funds with greater confidence.

A great deal of time is spent working with consultants. Some members have questioned the value of consultant's reports. The Coopers & Lybrand report was used successfully during the DLG era and cost £30,000 to commission. The bid for resources to the D.O.E. has netted over £7million of grant. I call that good value for money!

The most recent bids you will have read about are the 'Strategic Programme of Reclamation' to English Partnerships and the 'Millennium Bid' to the Millennium Commission.

'Strategic Programme of Reclamation'

English Partnerships (E.P.) are now responsible for the old D.O.E. administered Derelict Land

Grant scheme. E.P. have developed new criteria for assessing potential schemes. Reclamation of derelict land, although important, is no longer sufficient in itself. Projects are now required to deliver a wide range of benefits and in particular to lever in funds from other sources. To progress an application an informal group of officers was formed (I refer to it as the 'Bid Group') and the responsibility for its production shared amongst the group.

Having successfully obtained support during the DLG era, the group used previous bids as the template and presented the application clearly emphasising how the project could satisfy the new E.P. criterion. The engineers from each of the partners provide the technical descriptions, work programmes and estimates. We have recently formed an engineer's group, chaired by Ken, to share technical information and ensure a consistent approach to programming and estimating. I didn't know there were so many designs for box culverts - I think we are trying one of each on our canal just to keep the local civil engineering contractors on their toes.

The bulk of the 'glossy' bits are prepared by the planning officers, who possess the unique ability to say (and write) the same things many hundreds of times without it appearing boring! We are fortunate to have several in-house consultants who charges are most reasonable (nothing!) and I have the privilege of working alongside them, (creep creep). We are not without talent on the paid side either - in Bob Gough, we have the one man HCS Technical Department, who is largely responsible for the processing of data (deciphering my and Mike Thompson's scribbles) and Paula McLoughlin who tirelessly types it all up. Frank Smith and Alec Ramsden orchestrate the press and publicity events which are increasingly important to help ensure success.

The bid was collated in-house and large chunks of the consultants reports copied verbatim. Within the bid document canal restoration is identified as the catalyst to regenerate the corridor between Ashton and Huddersfield. Several development opportunities are identified and the benefits of restoration clearly listed. The bid asks English Partnership to fund up to 50% of the costs of redevelopment over a 5/6 year Programme - to mirror the Millennium Bid Programme. As I

write this article we have just received agreement in principle to the Programme. Several meetings will be held with the officers from E.P. to thrash out the detail - so fingers crossed please.

Millennium Bid

You will no doubt recall that in Round 1, the Society's bid did not prove to be financially and technically viable and, unlike the Rochdale Canal bid, was not short listed (long listed - in Millennium Commission speak). Together with David S. & Derek Cochrane (BW N.W. Regional Manager) we attended a meeting with Commission Officers in London and we were given details of why the bid failed.

The application was considered poor. We had concentrated on the overall concept and omitted to include all the details - we believed that the detail would be submitted at a later stage. Tameside had submitted a bid for Stalybridge River Route and they too failed as this scheme was considered to be insufficiently distinctive.

When we originally identified the lottery distributors as a potential source of funds, we agreed with Tameside that we would bid for Millennium Funds in Round 2. However, after a meeting with E.P. we were asked to progress sources of matching funding vigorously and quickly submitted a bid prior to the deadline - taking care to complement and cross reference our application to Tameside's. Upon notification of failure, accusations were made that the HCS bid scuppered the Tameside bid; however, it was made clear by the Commission that each bid was adjudicated independently and both failed on their own merits!

As a result of these failures the partners agreed that for Round 2, one complete bid would be submitted. It was agreed that Tameside Council would act as the lead partner and Roger Anderson, Assistant Chief Executive, was appointed to co-ordinate the production and submission of a new bid. Three firms of consultants were engaged, 3 specialist's reports commissioned and HCS agreed to underwrite design fees on 5 schemes. The intention was quite clear, we had failed to prove technical and financial viability in Round 1 and we were determined not to fail in Round 2.

We had several most helpful discussions with officers of the Rochdale Canal Scheme to learn as much as we could about the M.C. assessment stages. The theme for the bid was chosen to be the 'Completion of the Pennine Ring of Canals' to complement the Rochdale's successful Millennium Bid. An action plan was agreed by all the partners and the arduous task of collating all the detailed information was undertaken by Tameside.

For our part, we worked with the Engineers to collate information on each element of the project and present this in a comprehensive and professional manner. With 21 elements to the project, scheduled to be completed between September 1996 and December 2000, the projected cash flows and project milestones were proving too difficult for graph paper and my calculator.

As most visitors to HCS offices will observe we are wholly reliant on computers (and occasionally shovels) to restore canals, so we purchased Microsoft Project to 'elp sort it out. After much cursing and swearing and a little help from the Technical support boffins, I was able to schedule and programme all the elements of the bid. Critical path analysis was never mentioned at my interview - just dredging, boats and enthusiasm!

The section of the bid covering the Standedge Experience project was completed by HCS staff. Working with Roger Beckett (architect of Llanthony Warehouse, Gloucester fame) and Neil Morton, (Wild & Partners - Structural Engineers) we developed the basic concept a stage further and produced a draft business plan for inclusion in the bid.

David Sumner, together with Roger Anderson, worked very closely with Market Access and DTW to promote the bid and secure letters of support. Steve Hughes (Tameside) was charged with drafting and redrafting most sections of the bid which proved no mean feat given the number of contributors - well done Steve.

The whole process involved hundreds of man hours and has cost over £100,000 to date. When we succeed to an offer of grant stage, David Sumner has promised a bit of a do for the staff. So fingers crossed please.

Keith Gibson & Steve Whitby

Members will recall from last year, the official opening of Staley Wharf on St George's Day. A magnificent event, mellowed slightly by the fact that an unrestored section of canal below the wharf prevented boat access from Ashton.

This situation, now rectified, allowed 'Greater Manchester' to be the first passenger trip boat to sail into Stalybridge since before the War.

Allan Knott, our erstwhile Boat Crew Co-ordinator and his gallant band of enthusiasts, operated a daily service over the Easter break.

The return trip takes over three hours to navigate Locks 1-3W and three quarters of a mile of canal. Too long, I'm afraid, for the standard weekend trip, but very interesting for special events and charter.

Linked to this is the Wharf Tavern which overlooks the Wharf; currently in the process of development, it offers catering and accommodation. Adjacent to the pub is a fish and chip shop - ideal for the boater wanting a rest from cooking.

British Waterways have modified the hydraulic gate gearing on Locks 1 & 2W which should, in theory, overcome some of the previous problems.

As yet, there are no mooring rings or bollards at Staley Wharf, but hopefully this situation should be rectified later this year.

Numerous private boats have since followed 'Greater Manchester' up to Staley Wharf and received their plaques. The first 21 were free of charge - however, at the time of going to press, all 21 have been claimed and future plaques will cost £5.00 plus 50p postage & packing.

Although we enjoy seeing photos of boats at the Wharf and this would be ideal proof, you can alternatively get an official 'chitty' from the Wharf Tavern as evidence of your success. Send your 'proof' to the HCS office in Ashton, with your remittance, to claim your plaque.

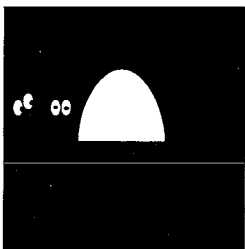
Frank Smith



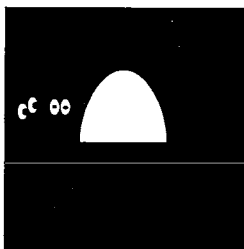
Greater Manchester entering Lock 1W on its way to Staley Wharf

Photo: A. Knott

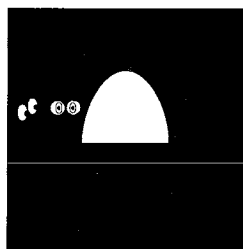
In Standedge Tunnel ...



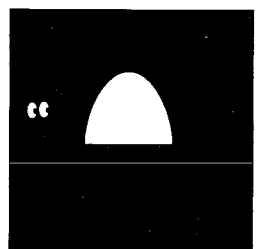
Weil....



How did you go on at the opticians?



Great



And a free pair of sunglasses!



Hands up those who know who plays 'Compo' in Last of the Summer Wine!

Bill Owen at the helm of the tug Standedge with (left to right) Chairman, David Sumner, and Boat's Officer, Bob Maycock, in traditional casual pose. The crowd includes several familiar Society faces.

Photo: Huddersfield Daily Examiner

Saturday 11th May saw quite a gaggle of Society members, friends and invited guests gather at Tunnel End to watch Bill Owen (Compo) officially launch the Society's new boat 'Standedge Pioneer'.

A 'real' bottle of champagne was used to christen Standedge Pioneer. Bill and our Chairman, David Sumner, toasted its success and then in true Bristol fashion poured the champagne over the bows.

The numerous sponsors were the first to sail on the new boat and like a formal dinner, took some time to find their names on the seats. A special plaque was presented by the Rural Development Commission, one of our major sponsors, and duly displayed inside the butty.

The Society is very grateful to everyone who contributed towards the new boat, not only

financially, but in the many hours and days spent planning, designing, and finally sailing the boat.

There are still some final land-based adjustments to be made. Ramps and steps are required at both Tunnel End and the railway station to enable passengers, including those in wheelchairs, easy access to the boat.

The launch of the Standedge Pioneer is yet another demonstration of the Society's commitment, not only to restoration, but to the development of the Canal and its environs for tourism and leisure pursuits.

Members are reminded that on production of their membership card, holders are entitled to a free trip on any of the Society operated boats, and to clarify one point, Family Membership means all near family.

Frank Smith



The official opening - (left to right) Councillors Heap and Bennett (Oldham), Ian Selby (British Waterways), Councillor Farquhar (Mayor of Oldham), David Sumner (HCS) and Mrs Farquhar (Mayoress). Photo: F. Smith

The Diggle Flight was officially opened on the 29th March by the Mayor of Oldham, Councillor Joe Farquhar. Talk about *déjà vu*, the ceremony was reminiscent of lifting the first sod several years ago. Bright skies until the actual opening

and then down came the rain.

The Flight is a good place on the Canal where restoration work really stands out and is visible from the main road.

Once some minor repairs have been completed to gearing damaged by

saboteurs, it is hoped that the Oldham Otter, currently moored in the Tunnel, will be able to offer public trips in this part of Saddleworth.

Frank Smith

1996 HUDDERSFIELD CANALS FESTIVAL 30th August - 1st September

As the festival season takes off, members are reminded that this year's festival will be held again around the Huddersfield University canal basin at Aspley.

It is hoped that local members will come along and lend their support, and if possible, introduce someone new to the benefits of inland waterways.

Last year, and with an eye on the weather, the Committee decided to hold the craft fair inside the University refectory. This was a great success, giving the feeling of a busy fair and not a Saturday market. Building on this success, the Committee have organised a similar event this year.

Anyone wishing to bring their boat along, irrespective of size (there is a purpose built slipway) should contact Tom Richardson on (01484) 663979 for an application form. The Huddersfield festival has attracted all sorts of boats, from the standard narrowboat to trail

boats, inflatables and even a coracle. If it floats, we've had it.

As with several of our festivals, the grand finale is the Duck Race, but with a surprise contestant. Hidden away is a radio-controlled duck, which to everyone's amusement swims out and shepherds the ducks towards the finishing line. There are still some people who believe it to be a real one.

Members may not realise that trying to organise festivals is increasingly difficult each year. There are more and more organisations/charities chasing sponsorship and, of course, the ever changing rules, regulations and licences required to hold public events. Festival Committees are to be congratulated for their hard work, patience and perseverance.

On a final note, and we say this every year, if you would like to help at any of the Society festivals, even if it's only for a few hours on the day, please contact HCS office in Ashton for further details.

1996 TAMESIDE CANALS FESTIVAL - 12-14 JULY

Once again the Tameside Canals Festival is approaching and as I sit here writing this article with hailstones bouncing off the windows, I remember the same time last May when it was like a summer day. Let's hope for a vast improvement by July.

The festival has been organised on the same lines as last year with one or two changes. These are either to improve the organisational side of things or due to events beyond our control.

Access to the main site was improved last year due to the acquisition of a temporary swing bridge over the aqueduct and hopefully, the improved and painted version will be in use again this year. (Thanks to Ron Tinker and a grant from the Mersey Basin Trust).

The 'fun fair', unfortunately, will not be in operation this year due to technical problems with the Portland Street car park. To offset this, the Festival of Dance site is to be improved with added attractions.

Sir James Anderton QPM continues to be the festival's President and will assist in the formal opening ceremony on Saturday 13th July 1996.

CAMRA is providing beer, cider etc. as per usual - some daft named beers - some good company, some excellent ales - can't give any tips until I've tried them (all).

The evening entertainment's continue as in previous years - Folk on Friday, and Jazz on the Saturday.

A few people ask why not have a change of evening entertainment. We have considered changing the main attractions on these evenings but both nights are traditional and attract large followings. As a result we tend to follow the old maxim 'DON'T MEND IT 'TIL IT'S BROKE' or words to that effect.

Finally, for anyone who would like to assist on the Festival Weekend or on the 'Clean Up' day - Monday 15th July, could you contact any member of the committee, or myself on my home telephone number 0161 652 2160 or better still - come to the pre festival meeting at

The Albion Hotel, Penny Meadow, Ashton-under-Lyne, on Wednesday 9th July 1996 at 8.00pm.

Last year, our then sponsors NORWEB, promoted an 'Illuminated Boat Competition'. The spectacular effect of these boats moored along the canal was so fantastic that we are going to continue the event. It will be judged at approx. 10pm on the Saturday evening (beer-break) so don't miss it. The awards will be made on Sunday morning.

We hope that as many Society members as possible will come along and support the event and of course, have a great day out.

Tony Wolstenholme
Committee Chairman



Zeneca of Huddersfield held their annual sponsored cycle ride to the East coast last year. The chosen route was the 89 miles from Huddersfield to Flamborough Head and the £337 raised was kindly donated to the Huddersfield Canal Society. Pictured above is General Secretary Frank Smith receiving the cheque from Zeneca's John Brook.

The route was Huddersfield to Garforth, Selby, Market Weighton, Bridlington and Flamborough; everyone finishing without problems!

Well done and thank you very much!

You will have noticed that we have enclosed a copy of our brand new Membership Form with this issue. The form incorporates the new map about which we have had many positive comments - most gratifying!

As existing members, you may wonder why we have enclosed the leaflet. It is our hope that it will be a catalyst for a recruitment drive if you could pass it on to friends and colleagues who you may feel have an interest in our endeavours. Further copies can be obtained from the Ashton office free of charge.

We are not having a membership drive simply for the sake of increasing our membership numbers. With the success of our Millennium bid (well the next stage anyway) it has become even more important that the Society can demonstrate a broad base of public support for the canal restoration. After all, without the enthusiasm of the Society's pioneers, we would not be at the stage we are today.

Thank you for your continued support which should soon achieve 'The Impossible'.

Jo Young
Membership Secretary

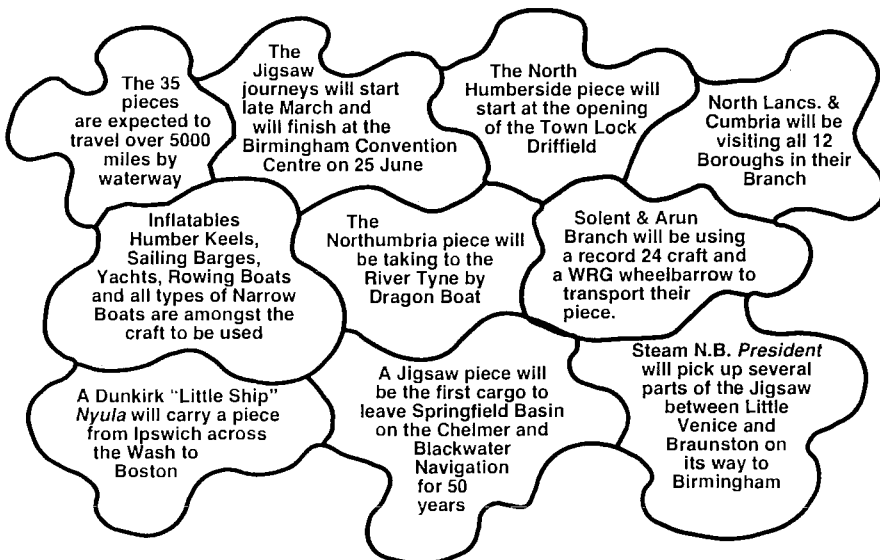
IWA GOLDEN JUBILEE

In the last issue, the Golden Jubilee of the Inland Waterways Association was highlighted and the Jubilee Jigsaw was mentioned. Here are some more points of interest about the jigsaw's journey:-

Also, for the very, very, fit among you, there is a long distance RUN, of 70 miles, from Chester to Dudley, to finish on Saturday, 24th. August at the National Waterways Festival.

Guest runners are welcome, all proceeds to very good causes, and full details can be obtained from Terry Davies, on Tel. 01270 664093

Jubilee Jigsaw Journey Facts



Remember, you saw it here first! Always the first with the best news!

Pennine

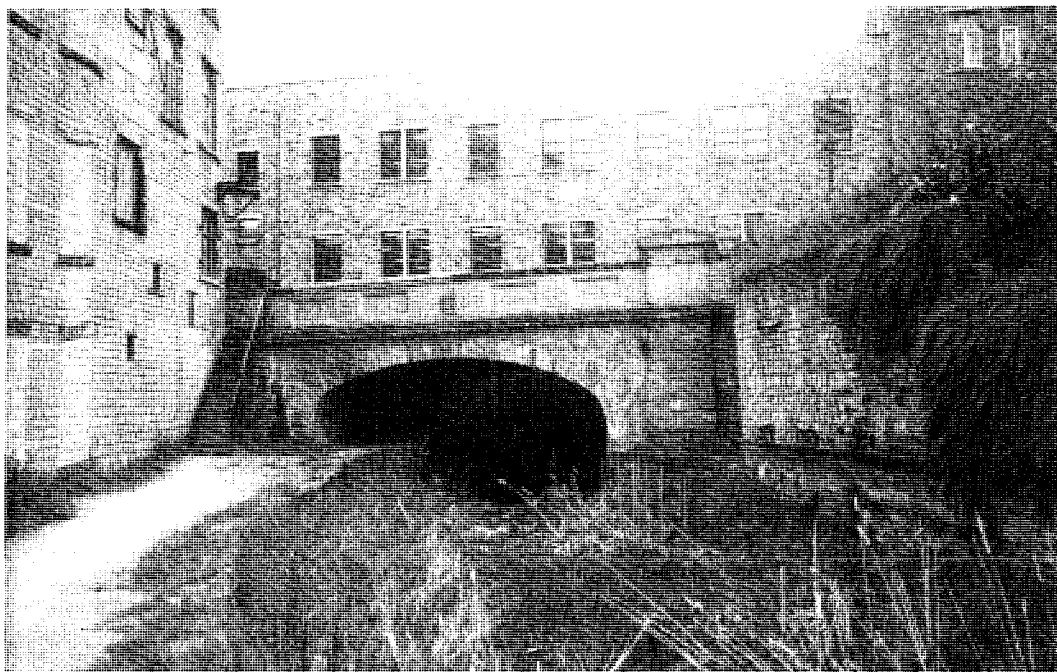


Photo-feature - Blockages

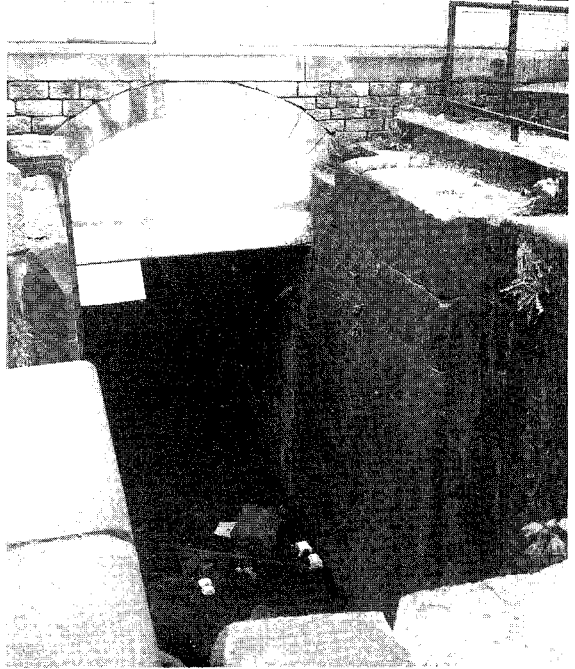
In the second photo-feature on blockages, we show you the rest on the East side; those at Bates' and Sellers', in Huddersfield. Next time - over to the West side.

Left: Bates' new building in Queen Street South. What looks like a very substantial front wall is, in fact, the parapet of the Canal bridge! Fortunately this building is on 'stilts', the route for a culverted Canal having been left under the building.

Below Left: Looking upstream from Lock 2E. This lock will be moved upstream, to beyond Bates' building, to provide enough depth for a concrete 'tunnel'.

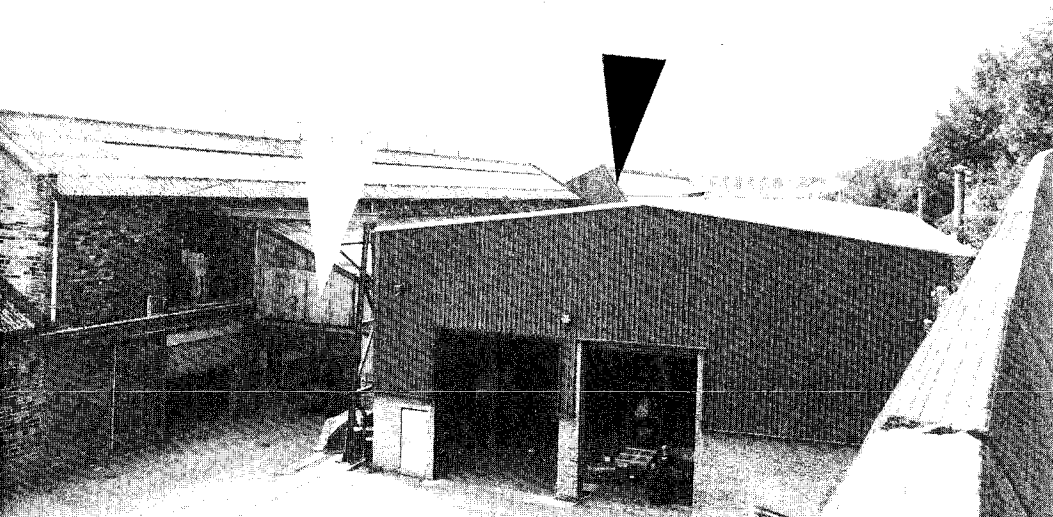
Right: The remains of Lock 3E. This lock, again, will be rebuilt upstream of Sellers' works, to provide enough depth under the work's yard.

Below Right: From Lock 3E looking along the full length of Sellers' yard, on the line of the Canal 'tunnel' which will be built under the yard, using 'cut and cover' techniques.





Above: The far end of Sellers' yard. The Canal will pass through the gap, arrowed, between the two larger buildings. *Below:* A similar view but showing both buildings, arrowed, which will need to be replaced in a new location. This option is more economic than the alternative of diverting the Canal round the site, using the River Colne. *Photos:* K. Wright



TOP ACTOR BACKS CANAL RESTORATION CAUSE

We are delighted to announce that leading actor Timothy West has taken on a new role - as a champion of the campaign to restore and re-open Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

"I am delighted to offer my support," said Mr. West, a committed canaller. Six years ago he took the first boat for nearly forty years along the full eighty-seven miles length of the restored cross-country Kennet and Avon Canal from Bath to Reading.

Re-opening of the Kennet and Avon followed a campaign over many years and Mr. West was one of the first to join a small band of enthusiasts who wanted to see the derelict waterway restored to navigable use.

"The necessary finance, engineering proficiency and sheer hard work needed to achieve this seemed, at the time, to rule it out of court. And yet, in 1990, I had the exciting privilege of taking the first boat along the restored canal," he recalled.

"So it can be done" he added, backing our bid for Millennium funding to complete restoration of the 20-miles long Narrow Canal.

"It is impossible not to be impressed by the skill and imagination of the engineers who built this unique canal across the dramatic landscape of the Pennines and through the amazing three-miles long Standedge tunnel, the longest in the country, and at the highest altitude", added Mr. West.

"But a Millennium project must be concerned with the future as much as with the past. The restoration of the canal will provide natural economic regeneration among the communities which have grown up along its course, as well as the obvious benefits to tourism arising from the completion of the 'Pennine Ring' of waterways.

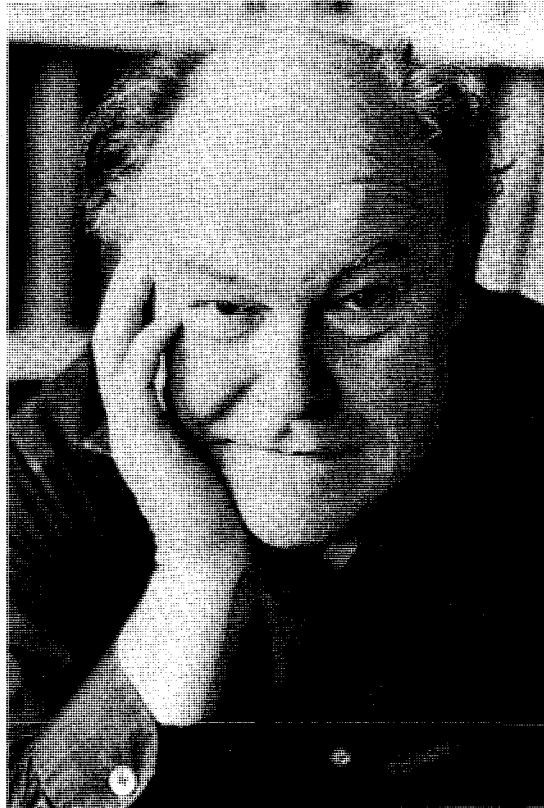
"Three quarters of the length of the Huddersfield Narrow has been reclaimed already, and although the remaining quarter presents great challenges, I cannot believe that given the enthusiasm and commitment already displayed by Huddersfield Canal Society and its partners in the restoration campaign - plus the Millennium

money, of course - they will be insuperable."

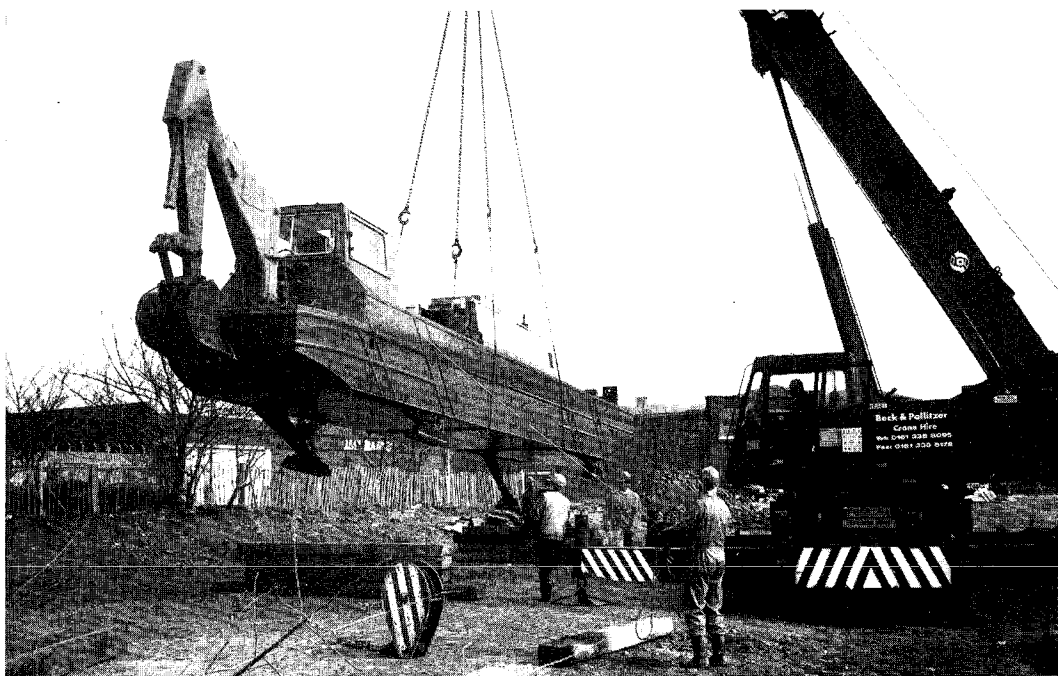
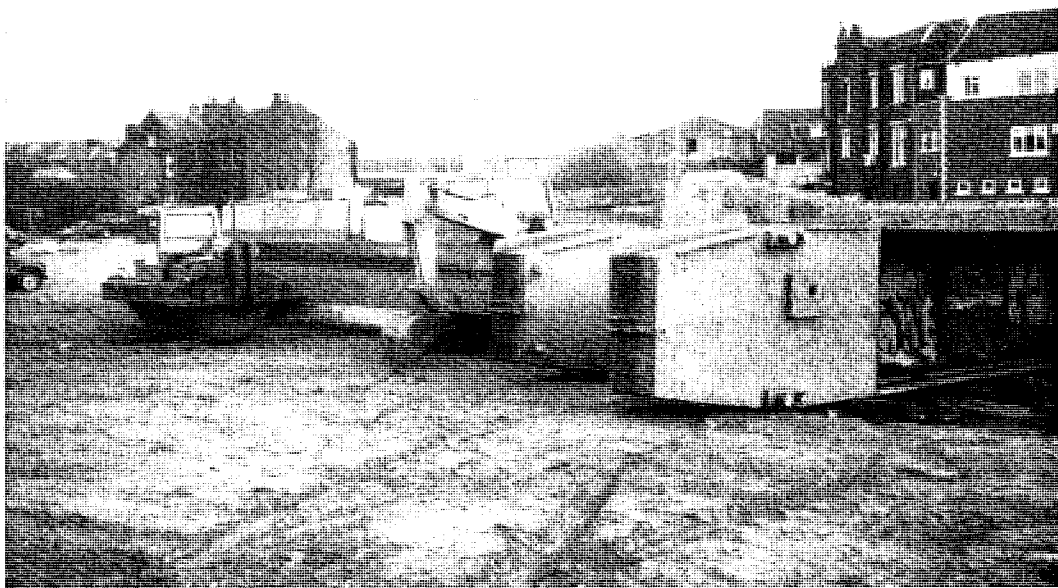
Mr. West's backing was welcomed by our chairman, David Sumner, who pointed out that our new supporter was a highly respected waterways enthusiast who had played a major role in the successful campaign to re-open the Kennet and Avon canal.

"He speaks from a position of knowledge and practical experience of the difficulties, benefits and great sense of achievement involved in transforming dereliction and neglect into a valued community asset and we are delighted that he has added his weight to the restoration campaign. We are now in the final stages of our bid for funding. It is clear that we have massive support and we are optimistic that the cash will be forthcoming," said Mr. Sumner.

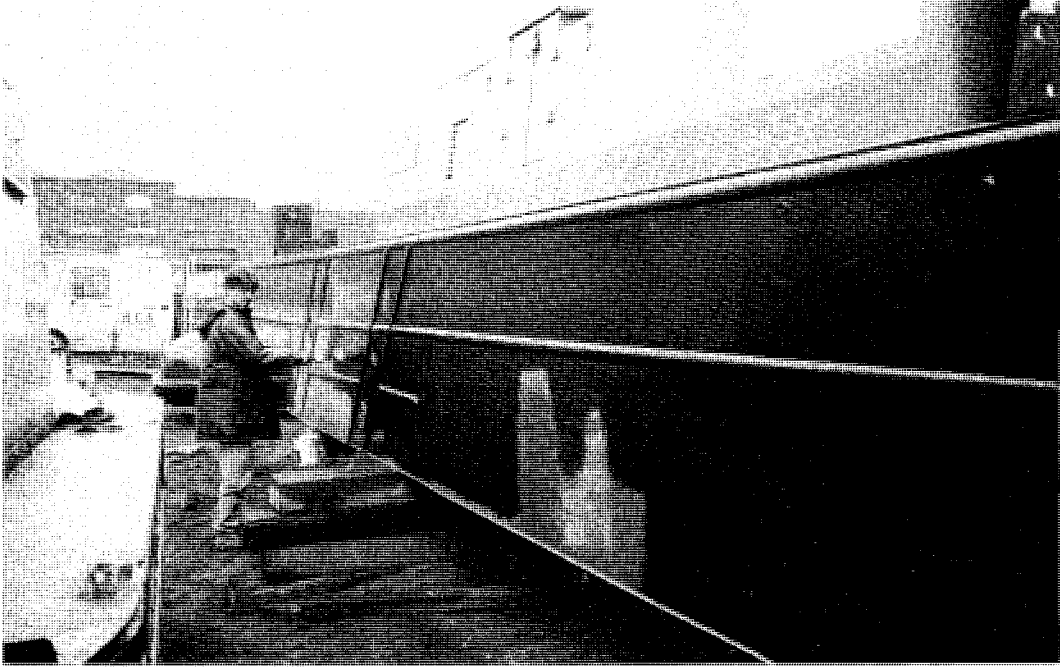
Alec Ramsden



Hoping for plenty of canal brass....



The Fleet's in Port Again!



The dredging fleet has been hauled out of the water, for essential maintenance, after completing the work between Stalybridge and Ashton. On completion of the maintenance work the fleet will start again between Stalybridge and Mossley, working for Tameside Council.

*Above Left: **The Fleet's in port again!** Dredger, tug and two mud hoppers on the bank at Staley Wharf, awaiting maintenance.*

*Left: **Look what we found in the cut!** The dredger gets a dose of its own medicine. The spud legs which drop to the Canal bottom during dredging can clearly be seen.*

*Above: **Next, the Forth Bridge!** Works driver, Trevor Wilkinson, proving that canal restoration is not all romantic bliss.*

*Right: **Wesley!** Vince Brammall, master of all trades, in welding mode.*

Photos: K. Wright



Now that we have succeeded in getting to the next level in our Millennium game of "locks and ladders" we can afford to be a bit magnanimous about the recent achievements on our 'rival' canal, the Rochdale.

We would be strange creatures if there were not a certain amount of friendly rivalry over which canal 'goes through' first. In fact, since the Rochdale is a very vital component in the "Ring O' Roses" it is as much in our interests as theirs to see it completed.

It is with pleasure, therefore, that we record the events of May 3rd - 6th, when the major restoration works at Tuel Lane were officially opened. This event was preceded by a "walk through", on 2nd and 3rd March, when the general public were invited to walk through the new tunnel - in 6 inches of water (!) - and inspect the new lock from the bottom, upwards.

This event was organised by Calder Navigation Society and Rochdale Canal Society and, at £1 per head, raised over £1,500 for restoration funds. Your editor can vouch for the success of this venture; he manned a vertical ladder for a couple of hours, acting as safety man, and helped down over 200 visitors including one black labrador and several small children in push-chairs!

Back to the new works; they are very impressive, as the photographs show, the purpose being to connect the national system at Sowerby Bridge wharves to the Rochdale Canal's previously restored 16 mile stretch to Littleborough. This length has been completed for some years, carrying three or four hire boats and a few private boats, in its land-locked length, through dramatic hill scenery.

In sequence from the upstream end, the new works comprise:-

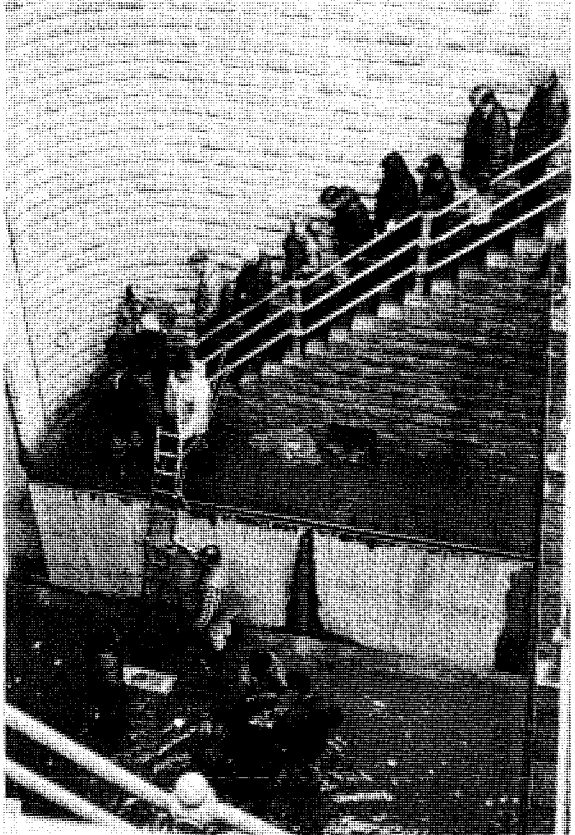
- (i) Narrow channel behind Kwik-Save car park.
- (ii) Tuel Tunnel lock, at 19'6" (6m) the deepest in the country, replacing two old locks.
- (iii) Tuel Tunnel itself, in 4 sections:-
 - a) new concrete culvert.

- b) the curved masonry invert (base) of the old Lock No. 2 and the lower part of its walls with a new reinforced concrete lid.
- c) the bridge under the main road which was filled up but only had to be dug out to be brought back into use.
- d) the extension to the bridge to carry the new footway.

- (iv) Restoration of the short length of existing canal down to Sowerby Bridge Basin.

The opening weekend, combined with a Bank Holiday festival in the town, was attended by many visiting boats, making a very colourful picture.

Ken Wright



The public queue to get their feet wet!
Note the quality of the masonry and pavings.

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1 Stalybridge Town Centre
 Start Date - First Quarter 1999
 Finish Date - Third Quarter 2000
 Estimated Cost - £8.5 m

5 Mann's Wharf to Frenches
 Start Date - Third Quarter 1997
 Finish Date - First Quarter 1998
 Estimated Cost - £100 k

9 Wool Road Bridge
 Start Date - Third Quarter 1998
 Finish Date - First Quarter 1999
 Estimated Cost - £450 k

2 Hartshead Infill & Lock 8W
 Works in Progress
 Estimated Cost - £1.44 m

6 Frenches to High Street
 Start Date - First Quarter 1998
 Finish Date - Third Quarter 1998
 Estimated Cost - £80 k

10 Ward Lane to Standedge
 Start Date - First Quarter 1999
 Finish Date - Second Quarter 1999
 Estimated Cost - £40 k

3 Scout Tunnel
 Start Date - Fourth Quarter 1996
 Finish Date - First Quarter 1997
 Estimated Cost - £80 k

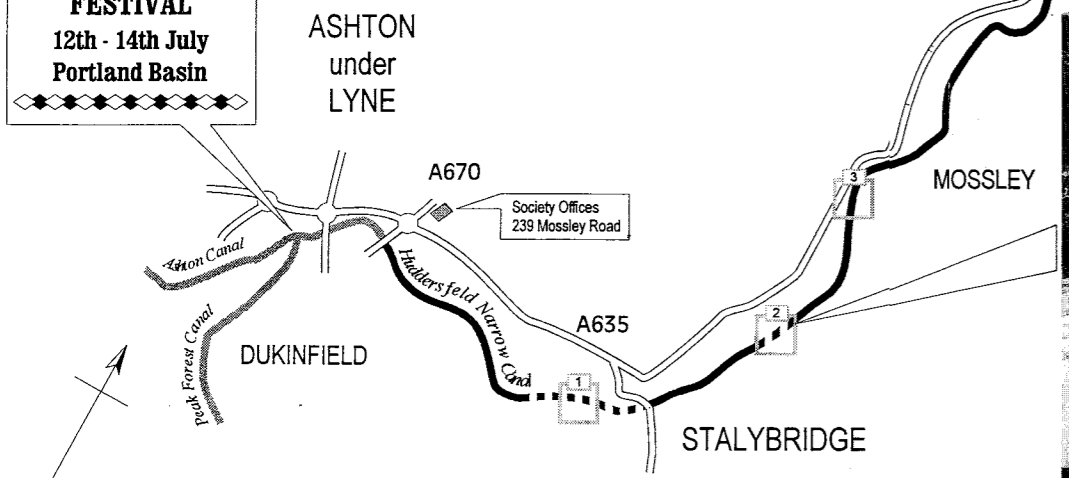
7 High Street Bridge & Wade Lock
 Start Date - First Quarter 1997
 Finish Date - First Quarter 1998
 Estimated Cost - £450 k & £130 k

11 Standedge Tunnel
 Start Date - Fourth Quarter 1998
 Finish Date - Second Quarter 2000
 Estimated Cost - £5.32 m

4 Division Bridge Aqueduct
 Start Date - Second Quarter 1997
 Finish Date - Third Quarter 1997
 Estimated Cost - £300 k

8 Old Sag Aqueduct
 Start Date - Second Quarter 1999
 Finish Date - Third Quarter 1999
 Estimated Cost - £205 k

TAMESIDE CANALS FESTIVAL
 12th - 14th July
 Portland Basin

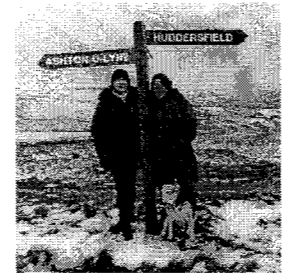


Scale approx. 1" to 1 mile

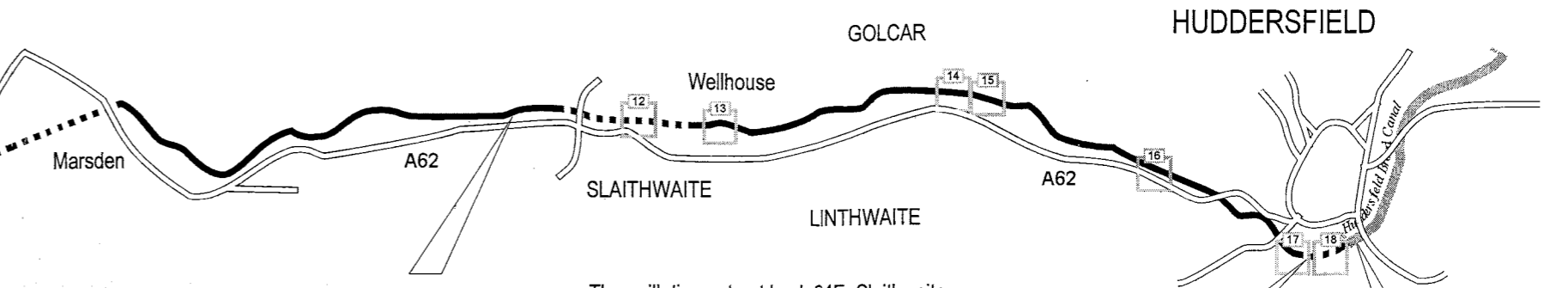


Work in progress rebuilding Lock 8W at Heyrod.

A datestone of 1897 indicates the last rebuild of the chamber in engineering brick - a method which will be followed for this restoration project.



The Remaining Blockages on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal - Summer 1996



The guillotine gate at Lock 24E, Slithwaite.

It was intended to produce a major article on this impressive structure for this Issue, but problems with the electric gearing units made that seem a little premature; better to report on a fully working device!

In the meantime ... the gate is shown in the closed position; the four tonne counter-balance at the top of the frame. The gate and balance weight are connected by a linked chain, akin to a very big bicycle chain, running over large cogs on a drive shaft. The balance is in favour of the gate, but set such that a low powered motor can drive the shaft and raise the gate when the lock chamber is empty.

* The timescale and completion of the projects are dependent upon obtaining funding from the Millennium Commission, to whom an application was made in February 1996. (See reports on pages 4-8 for the latest news)

Photos: R. Gough

Bates' & Sellers' blockages
 See pages 16-18

HUDDERSFIELD CANALS FESTIVAL
 31st Aug - 1st Sept
 Aspley Basin

12 Slithwaite Town Centre
 Start Date - Second Quarter 1999
 Finish Date - Second Quarter 2000
 Estimated Cost - £3.02 m

16 Mark Bottoms Bridge
 Start Date - Third Quarter 1996
 Finish Date - Fourth Quarter 1996
 Estimated Cost - £362 k

13 Lees Mill Bridge
 Start Date - Fourth Quarter 1996
 Finish Date - First Quarter 1997
 Estimated Cost - £187 k

17 Sellers & Co
 Start Date - Second Quarter 1998
 Finish Date - Second Quarter 1999
 Estimated Cost - £2.91 m

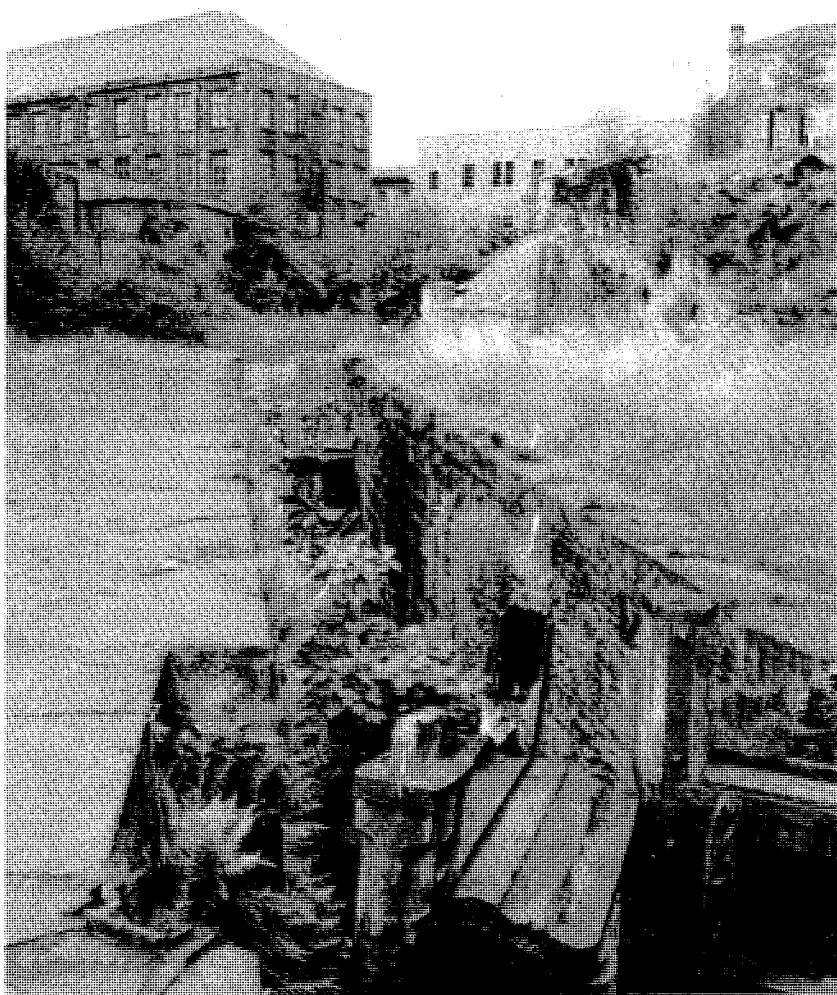
14 Holme Mill Bridge
 Start Date - Fourth Quarter 1996
 Finish Date - First Quarter 1997
 Estimated Cost - £187 k

18 Bates & Co
 Start Date - First Quarter 1998
 Finish Date - First Quarter 1999
 Estimated Cost - £2.24 m

15 Golcar Aqueduct
 Start Date - First Quarter 1998
 Finish Date - Second Quarter 1998
 Estimated Cost - £205 k

Pennine *LINK*

THE IMPOSSIBLE RESTORATION



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And now, of course, there is the Yorkshire side of the Rochdale - come and see how the competition are doing!

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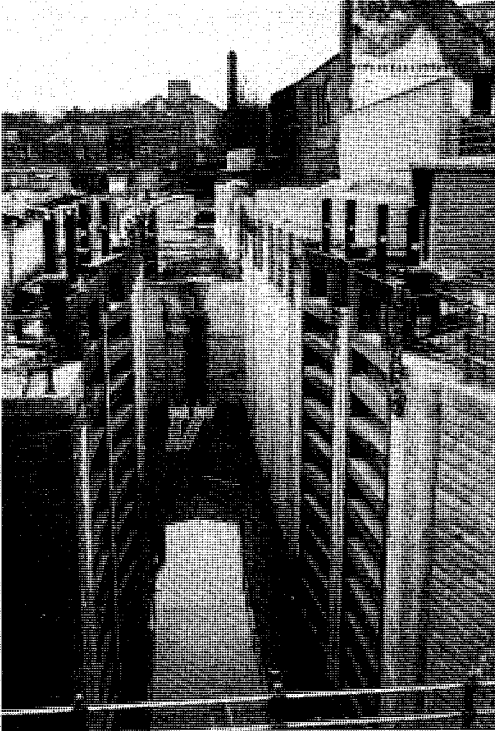


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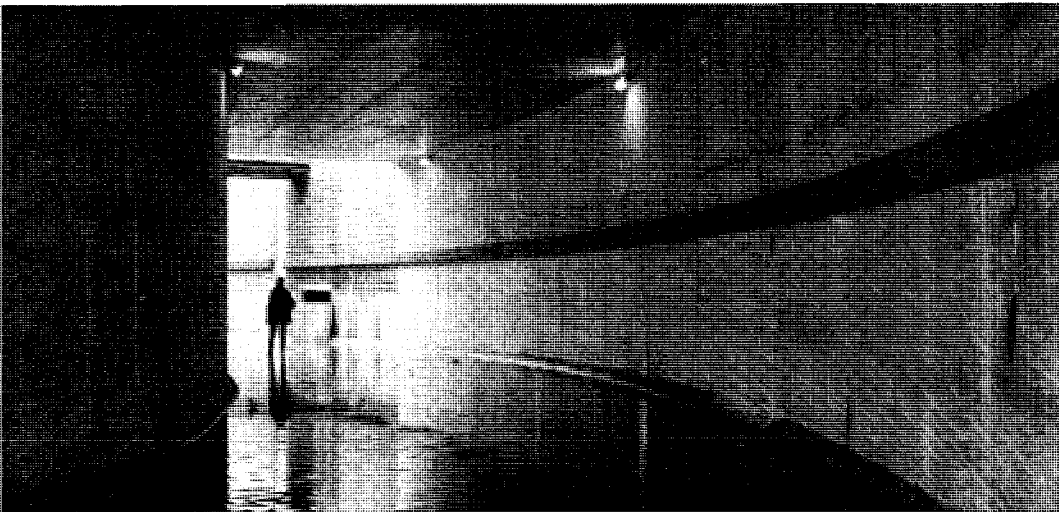
Tuel Lane Opening



The lock and the concrete channel - the double set of gates is to save water with shorter boats.



Boat's eye view of the lock demonstrates the impressive scale.



Part of the new tunnel, extra wide to allow full-length boats to negotiate the bend. *Photos: K. Wright*

And yet another Festival came upon us.

After a year of struggle and worry, our small committee got there. On Friday morning a few of us gathered in the early morning mist to await the arrival of marquees, toilets, skip and the essential brewer's dray. Everything was going to plan, marquees going up, toilets going in and the skip swinging into position. And then. The dray got stuck in the soft ground. My nightmare appeared to be coming true. Ropes and heavy vehicles were used, all in vain. Out came the shovel, some neat holes were dug and, lo and behold, one dray slid slowly away. With holes filled and turf relaid, like invisible mending, I began to relax.

As more helpers arrived the site began to take shape ready for Friday night's entertainment. This was in the form of a Jazz, Melody and Rhythm band called the Mambos. Very professional and those that attended really enjoyed themselves.

Saturday, and the sun was there greeting us. As the traders arrived and the Space Ball and Bouncy Castle took shape, the public began to arrive. A quick pint in the bar and I was ready to change into my suit for the official opening. Appearing like Superman from a 'phone box, it was amazing how many people failed to recognise me.

We were ready for the official opening. This was to be done by Chris Davies, our local

MP. My speech was to be first. Very short to give the others a chance and also because I'd only written it 10 minutes before I donned the suit!

Then nightmare number two came true. The 'mike' packed up. However, Venetia Charlton appeared on the scene, (touching her forelock and calling everyone 'Sir'), with a roving mike. With speeches made, it was a hasty retreat to the VIP tent to sample the excellent buffet supplied by Fiona Tewson and Ann Minor.

Entertainment was going full swing. Saddleworth Clog and Garland Dancers clogging away, Saddleworth School Band blowing away and Mossley Morris Men dancing and supping away. Ratty the Clown had the children in tears so all was going well. Soon the evening was upon us.

Festival of Folk by the Open Door Folk Company was to be Saturday night's entertainment. Three hours in the company of Dougie Sharpe, Mike O'Leary Johns, Liz Deane and Dave Wild, 'Rowan' and 'Tap the Barrel'. Music from all around Britain and the Provinces was a great success and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Sunday and the sun was still there. Back in normal clothes and we were ready to go. As the public drifted in, the entertainment started. Delph Band kicked off followed by Saddleworth Morris Men, Momila Mandal Dancers, Morava



VIP speeches. (Left to right) Councillor Farquhar, Mayor of Oldham, Trevor Ellis, Society Vice Chairman and Steve Quilter, Festival Chairman.



The Novelty Dog Show. The contestants show remarkable composure in the heat of competition, the dogs were well behaved as well!

Saddleworth Canal Festival 1996

Folk Dancers, Lydgate Band and Pat Hayes Irish Dancers. Ratty the Clown was still keeping the offspring happy with Punch & Judy and magic.

Sunday evening and the pace slowed down for an evening of brass performed by Dobcross Youth Band, this year's National Youth Brass Band Champions. Although not as well attended as we expected, it was a very pleasant and relaxing evening.

Monday, and yes the sun was still there. As we had two major events on this day, entertainment was limited to Uppermill Band and Saddleworth Morris Men, although we did have folk music in the marquee as a late booking.

Ratty was still with us and I'm sure he enjoyed himself as much as the kids. Perhaps we should make him a committee member.

2:00 and our new event was ready. This was a Novelty Dog Show, organised by Pat Riley who assured me she had never done this sort of thing before (I remember that phrase from my teens!).

Dogs appeared from everywhere to take part in the six categories which were;

- Dog with the funniest hat,
- Dog that is most like its owner,
- Dog with the waggiest tail,
- Dog with the best behaved owner,
- Dog the judge would most like to take home and
- Dog with the most 'come to bed' eyes.

Judged by Mary Crossley from the Northern Alsatian and all Breeds Society and compered by

the inimitable Ratty the Clown, this was a roaring success and a definite for next year.

After some more music and dance we were ready for our well known and much loved Duck Race. Record ducks were sold this year with only a handful left over. Diggle Anglers were in place to catch them and they were off. With crowds only second to the Grand National, the noise could be heard as far away as Aintree. As the crowds drifted back onto the field, we were nearly at an end. Some more folk music and it was the end of Saddleworth '96.

With everything packed away and the field cleaned we were ready to go home. Some of us retired to the Waggon Inn where a surprise buffet had been laid on by Joan and Jeff, who have been very supportive of us over the past months.

At this point I would like to thank all my committee and helpers without whom this event wouldn't have taken place. Extended thanks go to John Bradbury and John Young who, although not in good health, gave so much to ensure all went right. A special thank you to Venetia Charlton who did so much running around in the weeks leading up to the Festival.

If anyone would like to join our committee, then come along to the Waggon Inn, Uppermill every third Monday in the month at 8.00pm.

Steve Quilter
Chairman



The Duck Race - I. Society stalwart, Jo Young, breaks off from recruitment to take the latest betting on the race; could their daughter sense the couple's success?



The Duck Race - II. Venetia Charlton, Ratty the Clown, John Young and able Sea Cadets give the ducks the old heave ho. *Photos: Shirley Rowbottom*

After a gap of a year it is now 1993 and Anne and Ken are facing their first canal trip as a twosome. Simon and Sarah have "flown the nest" - Simon making yoghurt in Cheshire and living in Chester; Sarah making her way up in the music world of London. Only William is still permanently around - now been on the cut since 1980 (see Plink No. 60, Nov/Dec 1984!)

Monday 29th March

Weather - overcast, pretty miserable

Destination - Church Minshull

Distance - 16.5 miles

Locks - 6

THERE'S ONLY THEE 'N ME!

This is it! After all those years of fitting in kids and kids' friends we are a pair alone. Decided to have a fairly easy journey to see if arthritis and tempers could stand it! Settled for another trip from Alvechurch Boats at Anderton (not Middlewich, again?) in House Sparrow, a

comfortable 2/3 berth, very roomy at 45'-0" - and with the galley at the back!

Left home at 11.40 and arrived at Anderton Marina at 12.30 - v. quiet and suspect we are the only boat going out today - advantage of a Monday start - suspicions confirmed; we got excellent attention, boat moored under cover for loading etc. Had a pleasant meal and a drink in the little restaurant - Alvechurch do these things well - check list checked and away by 2.15.

Through what HE usually calls the long, boring drive to Middlewich - (only because there are no locks to keep ME busy!). According to last issue's statistics this is the eighth time we have done this length. HIS boredom relieved by spotting a heron, a kingfisher and a crested grebe - not bad for the first afternoon.

Middlewich much improved, again, even from two years ago. Everything seems neater and better arranged. Didn't stop, though; locked



It could be mid-Atlantic. Heavy weather on the way to Nantwich.

The Wife's Tale - Part 29

successfully, although the Big Lock seems to get bigger! Squeezed past all the moored boats at Middlewich Narrowboats. V. blowy - got to Church Minshull on the Shropshire Union Middlewich Branch at 7.30. How long ago it seems since we bought "lettis" at the lock-keeper's house - and examined all the woolly hats for sale, at Cholmondeston.

Dinner at 8.0 and so tired we decided not to go out so watched the (colour!) TV for a bit and then bed at 11.00. Very, very windy. Can't help wondering if the rest of the week - on our own for the first time - will work out!

Tuesday, 30th March

Weather - overcast, wind abated during the day.
Destination - Barbridge Junction via Nantwich.
Distance - 10.5 miles
Locks - 2

SALAD DAYS

What a terrible night! - both of us had very little sleep due to a) central heating noisy so had to turn it off - b) wind (outside) banging the boat about - c) front door rattling in the wind. Didn't get up until 9.30, giving the central heating a chance to warm up again. Just two locks to Barbridge - fine but still v. windy.

Decided to turn left and go to Nantwich as it was only a short day. What a shock! The heavens opened - torrential rain - did some driving to give HIM a break and couldn't see for wind and rain. The wind was dead ahead and there were white tops on the waves - honest! The water looked really angry and forbidding - plus the grey sky - altogether not v. nice but fortunately saw the funny side.

Went to the B.W. yard for water - as though we hadn't seen enough - and went on round the Nantwich embankment till we found a winding



The sun came out! House Sparrow on Nantwich embankment.

hole - HE did a superb turn, ably assisted by the wind and, lo and behold, the rain stopped, the wind dropped and the sun came out!

V. pleasant afternoon in Nantwich. Had a good look round - we only paid a fleeting visit on our Four Counties trip in 1982 - looked around the shops and spent a lot of time in the church. Brought back mixed memories of visits from when I was at school nearby. Eleven years since we were here and seems much improved in the town centre - lots of pavings etc. in the current style.

On board and off again by 4.30 and made Barbridge Inn by 5.30 - being renovated and not open till Easter! Ken rang the boatyard - hot water isn't and central heating won't stay on (noisy or not!) - fitter will meet us at the Shady

Oak (famous canalside pub) tomorrow.

William fell in today - well, half way - he misjudged the distance between bank and boat! He is 16 and his eyes are failing him - oh dear! Will have to keep him on a tighter rein - literally.

Very memorable evening - not a word about it in the log!

Wednesday 31st March

Weather - v. cold, blue skies and sunny.

Destination - Chester

Distance - 16 miles

Locks - 11

DEVA

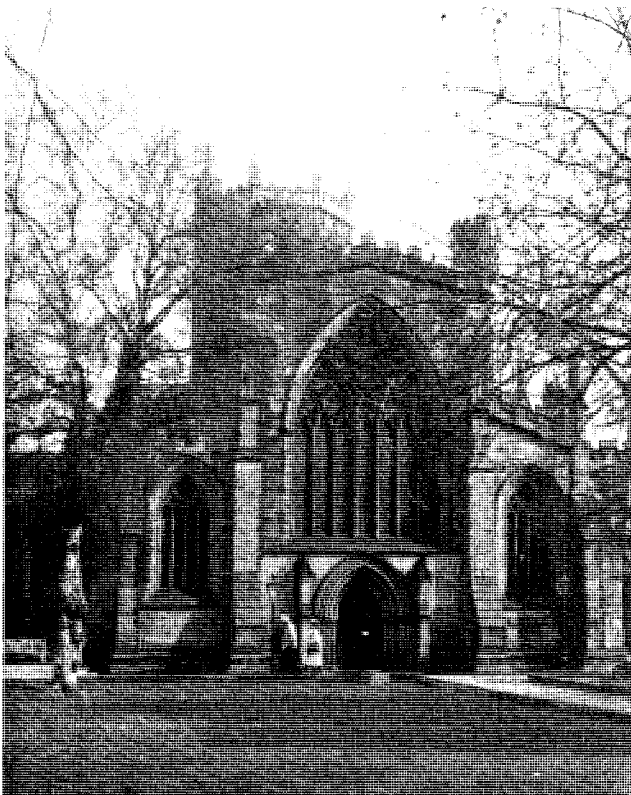
Woke to a perfect 'canal' morning - heavy frost overnight - mist on the water - steaming mugs of tea on the cabin roof - great! Bright and sunny, bit of wind on our backs - can't beat this.

Did a lot of driving and actually drove into two locks - for me that is heroism of the highest! HE did the Bunbury Staircase - too complicated for me. Made good time to Beeston except that on fighting a worn paddle spindle I trapped my right middle finger very badly in Beeston Iron lock - which is as hard as it sounds - very swollen and black - the pain came later when my frozen fingers had thawed out!

Managed to get a long look at a heron through the binocs - v. impressive. Stately birds. Also today saw a *Cormorant* perched on top of a tree - he had definitely decided it was too rough at sea!

Went to Beeston Cattle Market - selling pigs! Small open market but not much taking place apart from a greyhound changing owners and the odd horse deal. Walked round the village - takes ten minutes, if that - Shady Oak by mid-day. What a surprise - the old village pub had been extended and modernised - twelve years on since we were last there and these things do happen.

BUT - would you believe it - new



Nantwich Parish Church

The Wife's Tale - Part 29

management (taken over that day and first morning in) no food delivery, sandwiches only! HE was so disappointed. We couldn't go on as we were expecting the fitter, so pints and sandwiches it was. Luckily they were very nice and the new Landlord very welcoming and apologetic. Felt like giving him a hand to settle in! Had a look round some lovely private houses and gardens nearby; mill races, lake with swannery, curious ramps and bridges - and a large outdoor miniature railway!

Fitter arrived on time - Canadian - came from Anderton in an hour (!). V. pleasant man with a black standard poodle. Here to play ice hockey (and work as well). He soon had our problems sorted - all to do with the thermostat not working. Repaired and off again by 2.15. Soon started to rain again and didn't let up until we reached Chester. Got absolutely soaked; yellow waterproofs weren't.

Found the Old Harkers (pub/ex warehouse recommended by Simon) but as a mooring it was too near civilisation and right next to a road, so we moved on into the shopping precinct - still not so good although very well restored - and then on to a quiet stretch in the trees, in the shadow of the city walls. Lovely - and how things have changed and vastly improved.

While I made dinner HE went to phone the family to see if they could join us for a day. Finger v. black, flattened and very very painful - not broken, will just have to grit my teeth, grin and bear it.

Quiet evening in - thought we had lost William - brief panic until he was found - curled up on a suitcase, in the wardrobe with the door closed!

NEXT TIME:

Chester and Ellesmere Port Boat Museum.

Photos: A & K Wright



Frost on the roof! A beautiful cold morning at Barbridge Junction.

The second of a series of articles on the Engineers involved with the building of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

Robert Whitworth was called to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal in 1797 to give a second opinion on the works in progress, as planned by Brown and Outram. The mill owners had been complaining of loss of water and Whitworth was to report on this in particular, but on progress generally, including Standedge.

Whitworth was a student of Brindley (the 'father' of the canal network) and started his training on the Oxford canal in 1768. Thus, by 1797 when he was called to the HNC, he was well qualified to comment; by then he had worked under Brindley on the Coventry Canal, the River Thames, Lancaster, Hereford & Gloucester, Stourbridge and Dudley Canals and with Simcock and Dadford on the Birmingham line.

In his own right he later carried out work on the Thames and Severn, Ashby and Oakham canals before going to Scotland to survey the Forth and Clyde Canal (now included in the Millennium Commission's 'long list' having, like our own case, been previously unsuccessful) on which stands his masterpiece - the aqueduct over the River Kelvin.

It is strange how history latches on to names such as Brindley, Telford, Jessop etc. yet Whitworth, whilst being virtually 'unknown', was amongst the most prolific of canal engineers. By 1789 he was assisting the Leeds and Liverpool towards completion (especially at Foulridge Tunnel).

This tunnel was the scene, in 1912, when a cow fell into the canal at the western end and decided (for some reason best known to itself) to swim through. It was rescued at the eastern end where it was revived with alcohol in Foulridge village. Any person not believing the story may visit the 'Hole in the Wall' pub in Foulridge where pictures on the wall recall the incident. Human swimmers of the tunnel are not promised the same treatment!

Whitworth continued surveying and consulting on still more canals including the Kennet & Avon, Grand Western, Dorset & Somerset, Dearne & Dove (near Barnsley), Stainforth & Keadby and the River Don.

The Whitworths developed into a very canal oriented family as the eldest son (also Robert) and William, the younger son, both followed their father into the canal 'business'.

The report on progress on the HNC was presented in August 1797 and to all intents and purposes was a bit confusing as shown by the following extracts:-

"Upon the whole if your canal be finished in the manner it has hitherto been carried on I believe it will do very well."

He was later quoted as saying to a friend:-

"The masonry and earthworks of this canal were the worst executed of any I ever saw. The work will be nearly all to do over again, particularly the locks."

Of the reservoir at Slaithwaite:-

"It does leak rather too much."

Almost a prophetic remark as, in 1799, the reservoir at Marsden failed during floods and Slaithwaite only just held. Making good the damage caused by the floods cost £3,500 and at the same time the Committee decided to spend another £3,000 on works to alleviate the potential damage of future floods. Raising the money for this meant another parliamentary authority. In the meantime money became so tight that workmen on the flood repairs were only being paid monthly instead of weekly - indeed many of the debts incurred by this work were not settled until March 1801.

Whitworth died in 1799 whilst the titanic struggle of Standedge Tunnel continued. A further opinion was called for - that of Thomas Telford, the most prolific of canal engineers - more next time.

John Harwood

Robert Whitworth ???? - 1799

During the recent dredging of the Huddersfield Canal from Bayley Street, Stalybridge, down to Whitelands Wharf in Ashton, a large assortment of bottles surfaced from the mud, where they had remained undisturbed for many, many years.

Unknown to me at the time the dredger operator, Ken Wright, had been in touch with the Local Interest Library for Tameside, to ask if there was any information about local mineral water manufacturers. Knowing of my interest, the library referred Ken to me.

He contacted me, explaining about the bottles and his curiosity. Having, for over 20 years, been a keen collector of bottles and artefacts from the many local breweries and mineral water manufacturers, I was really excited when Ken invited me to meet him on the dredger to examine the finds.

You have to be a keen collector to understand the state of anticipation I was in when I went aboard the dredger. If my luck was in there might just be something I could add to my collection of over 900 bottles. I found numerous boxes and crates containing bottles of all shapes and sizes, earthenware and glass. The glass bottles were plastered with mud but with their bold embossed names clearly visible. A closer inspection revealed that the majority were from the 1890-1910 period with either a cork closure or a black ebonite stopper. They were in both green and clear glass and were all from local firms long since gone.

For many years now I have carried out extensive research into the history of local bottles and have amassed a great deal of knowledge and experience that comes in handy when assessing the age of a bottle or artefact.

The mid-nineteenth century saw the beginning of the widespread use of mineral water.

"Natural mineral waters have always been thought to possess magical healing properties, and have been used over the centuries by individuals seeking relief from ailments or pain, or curing them of all manner of diseases."

However, in 1771, an Englishman named Joseph Priestley discovered a practical way to manufacture mineral water artificially, and it was not long before mineral water companies

started to appear all over the country.

But it was not until that great age, the Victorian era, that artificial mineral water took off; people preferred the artificial mineral waters to the real thing, and drank it in vast quantities simply because it tasted good, rather than for medicinal purposes."

'BARRETT'S OF ASHTON' BY B. SULLIVAN.

Companies literally sprang up overnight, eager to supply the expanding population with the beverages for which they craved. All over the country nearly every town had its own brewery or someone or other who made ginger beer, lemonade or the like.

In my research I discovered that there were nearly THIRTY such companies in Ashton alone, with a further NINE in a small town like Stalybridge. On the brewing front there were Gartside's, Scholfield's and Shaw & Bentley's from Ashton, Heginbotham's from Stalybridge, Shaw's of Dukinfield and Creese's of Hyde.

The oldest bottle I was shown from the canal was a one pint handmade stoneware type, impressed with the name "J. Heginbotham, King's Arms, StalEybridge" (*The capital E is mine. Ed*) which would have contained stout or porter and dates from around 1860. Joseph Heginbotham became inkeeper of the King's Arms on Market Street in 1851 from where he later began to trade as a wine and spirit merchant. He was joined by his nephew John and, over the years, the business expanded to the point where it owned a brewery (opened 1887), five public houses, two off-licences and a large wine and spirit merchant's store. The company went into voluntary liquidation on 23rd November 1914 and was eventually purchased by Robinson's of Stockport.

Another very familiar type of bottle, of which many have been dredged from the depths, is the type with the glass marble in the neck. These bottles are known as "Codd's Bottles" after the inventor, Hiram Codd, of Camberwell, South London, who patented the idea in 1872. These bottles became extremely popular and sold millions over the years. Coloured specimens and patent variations can be found and the bottle survived until as late as the 1920's in some rural

areas. Apparently they are still made and used in parts of the Indian sub-continent.

I am waiting with interest to see what is dredged up on the next length, from Stalybridge to Mossley. Who knows what other relics of the past will surface.

Barry Sullivan.

It may be apocryphal but I am sure Barry told me that Mr. Codd, of Codd Bottle fame, produced a drink known as "Coddswallop", or perhaps that's what I'm talking! (Being a fan of the derivations of old sayings, I always thought codswallop was the derogatory term coined by the ale drinkers of the time to describe Mr. Codd's fizzy water; so popularly disparaging, it came into general usage. There again, Collins suggests it is C20 of unknown origin! Ass. Ed.)

The third, and final, part of Kathay Oldfield's trilogy on boat-ownership. The reason for making this the woman's view becomes clear near the end. Ed.

RESURRECTION

Good Friday dawned with a beautiful warm glow through the window, and a good feeling in the hearts of the Oldfield clan. We had found our good Samaritans in the form of one of our distant neighbours who had volunteered, armed with angle grinders, waterproof sealers and plenty of enthusiasm to tackle our mushroom farm and, hopefully transform it once again into a narrowboat.

For two days we toiled relentlessly in sweltering heat and with the very latest in hi-tech tools such as chisels and screwdrivers. By the end we had formed our own production team, with no slacking off, including the junior section who worked while eating lunch-time sandwiches at tea time. Even our friendly marina owner tolerated our turning his beautifully manicured grounds into a rest place for old windows and vents.

Barry has written a book "A History of R.A. Barrett & Co. Ltd., Mineral Waters, Ashton-under-Lyne". Not the punchiest of titles but a fascinating story, nevertheless. One anecdote in it is as follows:-

"By now the company had created a very large and wide delivery area and were even delivering supplies of minerals to the Craigside Hydro Hotel in Llandudno, by horse-drawn cart; Mr. R.A. Barrett was a director. Legend has it that arguments and even fights were common amongst Barrett's delivery drivers as to who was to deliver to the hotel; it involved an overnight stay, and a woman was supposedly "thrown in for the night" in gratitude for the driver's labours".

Copies of the book, price £3, are available through the Ashton office and a substantial part of each purchase will go to HCS funds, thanks to Barry. Ed.

Thus, by Easter Sunday we had our own miraculous resurrection; was it divine intervention, or friends with knowledge and a lot of hard work? Either way, once again we had a water-free boat, even if we didn't have an engine. Our relief was such that this seemed a minor problem, so there was only one thing to do ...open the champagne.

Our good friend Don Simpson talked us through all the reasons for the boat's failure to start, but to no avail. In the end he made a lengthy journey to check the engine out, finding the faulty isolator unit (which had been replaced only 6 months previously by another engineer) in less than 3 minutes. He then waved us off, refusing any payment with the words, "It's my reputation that is more important." At last we had found a generous and friendly engineer whose phone number would be permanently etched in our minds.

Given a few weeks hard work with floor coverings, piles of wood, pots of paint and bags of screws and nails, we once again had a pretty little boat that vaguely resembled our 20 year dream. Thus we ventured forward

clutching various Nicholson's Guides and proceeded with our journeys.

To say that everything was perfect from that time on would be a lie, but at least the problems were more bearable. The Torgem decided over enthusiastically to dry out the soaked wooden lining; thankfully we cooled it off before it set alight. The oil/temperature gauge chose to work only when its mood felt obliging. Then the water pump went to its final destination.

Man-made problems came in the form of a shattered galley window kicked in by a drunken youth. This we were assured would take at the most 7 days to repair, but actually took almost a month to fix. Then a confrontation with a hire boat leaving a narrow lock driven unsupervised by a 5 year old resulted in a wrecked gear box.

Naturally there are also unforeseen problems with boating such as sweltering hot summers that deplete the canal of its water.

While awaiting repairs to the gear box, the water shortage resulted in the locks being locked, leaving us stranded a great distance from our home mooring.

Thankfully BW realised the dilemma caused by stragglers by this action and provision was made to open the locks for two days to enable the likes of us to return home towards the end of the season. Thus we found ourselves working several 12 hour days operating 42 locks in total.

There is also the problem of not being able to choose your other canal users. We've had occasions with noise lovers, provided with separate amplifiers and speakers who believe that the whole world wants to revel until midnight to their choice of music.

The drunks who find that their joy is only complete if every one shares it, especially skinny dipping in the early hours. The vandals and bullies who see your pride and joy as a vehicle insulting to their social class. Also the occasionally obnoxious boater who sees speed as the king, who tear

our your stakes and smash your boat against the canal side.

So back to the original question ... to buy or not to buy ... or even to bother boating at all? I can only speak from my own experience. I've given a lot of reasons in these articles why not to even consider stepping on board a boat. But ...

Who can resist breakfasting at Marbury Country Park surrounded by early morning mist, accompanied by bird song and squirrels? What can better the taste and smells of chestnuts roasted on a Torgem on a cool lazy evening? The delight of lunching with new born lambs gambolling in the field alongside you. Or sharing your snack with the cheeky swan who taps at the galley window, begging to enjoy your tasty morsels. Also you will never better the warmth and camaraderie of the majority of fellow boaters.

My own personal situation has altered, my husband having left home taking the boat with him. For all our trials and tribulations with boating, my daughter and I feel its loss greatly. Boating is something you either love or hate, if you love it the occasional hire boat will not suffice. Therefore the best conclusion is to buy, but consider your options carefully.

If you are one of life's tinkerers, the type who buys old bangers to work on them rather than go anywhere, then an ageing second-hand boat is for you. Should you be very clever at building things, are a perfectionist, and don't mind waiting to travel the waterways, then buy a shell and work away.

Or if you are one of the lucky ones who has enough money to buy one of the many wonderful new boats available, then raid the bank. I know which I would choose, now I simply need to win the lottery. In the meantime, all I can say is "keep boating".

Kathay Oldfield

Thanks, Kathay; anybody need an experienced crew? Ed.

ANDERTON LIFT

Following a long and glowing article about the Anderton Lift, readers of New Civil Engineer reacted in support - except one - Mr. G.D., who suggested the lift was possibly the country's ugliest structure. The next reaction was predictable - several readers retaliated in protest.

We print G.D.'s letter and two of the (shorter) return comments. You may judge for yourselves where the truth lies - but is Mr. G.D. the only one who dares question? Is it another situation like the King's New Clothes? We canalcoholics do get carried away! Ed.

REBUILDING A MONSTER

Sir,

I was dismayed to read in your excellent article on the Anderton boat lift (NCE 29 February), that English Heritage has offered half a million pounds of taxpayers' money towards restoring the structure to a working state. I have no quarrel with the principle of restoration - I admire those hard working people who restore steam locomotives - but I question the need to rebuild what is arguably the country's ugliest structure. Current issues such as the status of engineers will be set back a pace or two if we persist in rebuilding this monstrosity - is this really the face of engineering we wish to present to society?

G.D., London.

Sir,

Surely G.D. misses the point. The restoration of Anderton Lift is not to create a thing of beauty but to recreate a working transport link. Anderton Lift is unique in this country, impresses by its sheer scale, will form an important part of the inland waterway system and a popular tourist attraction. It is a rightful destination for heritage funding.

J.L., Chesterfield

Sir,

I am surprised that Mr. D. refers to the Anderton Boat Lift as a 'monstrosity'. Perhaps Mr. D. (or other readers) might wish to offer a modern replacement, and then compare the cost with the original structure. Then if he cares to consider the technology available at the time of the construction, the magnitude of the original achievement comes clear in to focus.

D.R.M., Warrington.

SLAITHWAITE

From general observations, whilst we have been working in Slaithwaite for the last year or so, we thought that opposition to restoration through the village had gone. Although the opposition is a minority one we must accept that we can't please all of the people all of the time. Ed.

Restoring the Narrow Canal

Sir,

Regarding the re-opening of the canal through Slaithwaite: the village has never been as pretty as it is when all the bulbs and trees are in bloom.

People of my generation well remember the old canal, with all its rats, dead animals and chip papers. If the water surface is 8ft down and a child falls in, what chance is there of getting out?

Objections were raised at the meetings several years ago, but these were squashed by the Canal Society and councillors brought in from Batley and other areas. Other ideas were put forward, one incorporating the River Colne, but the powers-that-be had no intention of putting them into practice.

There are much better ways for the use of lottery money than putting it into unwanted schemes of this kind.

Slaithwaite Resident.

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What the Papers Say

UPPERMILL A TOURIST SLUM?

The recent canal festival held in the park at Uppermill has triggered a full-scale debate on the impact of tourism, and events held to attract tourists, have on those who live in the village.

One side of the argument suggests that the quality of life of people living in Uppermill takes second place to the desire to woo more and more tourists to the village.

There are complaints about thunderous music and blaring public address systems; about litter, especially crushed plastic beer glasses and empty curry and chip cartons; increasing amounts of dog excrement, especially along the canal tow-path, and the glut of tea shops, cafes, craft and card shops.

And there is a stinging indictment that Uppermill has lost its proud and distinctive identity and is becoming - or has become - a chaotic urban tourist slum.

The counter view is that tourism is keeping Uppermill alive; that without the tea-shops, cafes, craft and card shops, Uppermill's High Street would be boarded up and deserted. The jobs that the shops bring to the village would be lost and the local economy would suffer irreparable harm.

The truth is that Uppermill has come to rely on tourism, and while some may not like the weekend influx of visitors and the spring and summer round of festivals and shows, they have become increasingly important to the welfare of the village.

Tourism to Uppermill cannot be reversed, and the debate must focus upon whether it has not now gone as far as it should be allowed to, and whether more could be done to limit the environmental impact of tourists on the village.

Oldham Evening Chronicle Comment

And so say all of us.....well, nearly all. Ed.

The final throes of this debate were sparked off by a particularly angry letter from "Saddleworth Eye". He/she should have chosen a pseudonym more carefully, judging by the number of replies suggesting he/she should open the other one, etc! This one is typical:- Ed.

So, "The Saddleworth Eye" is the voice of the "silent majority" of Saddleworth residents is he? If this is the case, they must be a pretty silent lot. In 34 years of living in Saddleworth, I have rarely come across such a large dose of comprehensive bigotry.

From the description given of the canal festival, one would imagine something akin to an invasion by Attila the Hun. In fact, it was a good-natured affair, attended by a variety of

fairly ordinary people from Saddleworth, as well as aliens from far-off Oldham and beyond. It was, in fact, exactly the sort of function one would expect to witness at a public venue such as Uppermill park.

I would be interested to know what sort of function would be acceptable to "The Saddleworth Eye". A convention of a silent order of monks, perhaps? Or maybe "The Saddleworth Eye" would object to their habits.

I live next door to a pub and, yes, it is sometimes a little noisy. It's what you expect when you move next to a pub. Have I made my point? "The Saddleworth Eye" should lighten up or move to Siberia.

Toby Livings, Greenfield



Good-natured affair or yet another invasion - Saddleworth Canal Festival 1995. Photo: Shirley Rowbottom

*Peak Forest to the Huddersfield Narrow
(The Eastern End!)*

A journey in the summer of 1995 that took Huddersfield Canal Society members Keith and Margaret Sykes' 50' narrowboat, "Morning Mist" from its mooring on the Peak Forest Canal to their home town of Huddersfield, going along the Macclesfield, Trent and Mersey, Bridgewater, Leeds and Liverpool, Aire and Calder, Calder and Hebble and finally the Huddersfield Broad canal.

In planning the journey we had sought advice and encouragement from fellow members of the Furness Vale Boat Club, one boat "Tibet" having gone "over the top" to Skipton the previous year. We also made contact with other boat clubs to arrange temporary moorings on the way, Craven Cruising Club at Bingley and South Pennine Boat Club at Battyeford.

The journey itself started around the Spring Bank holiday with what had become a now familiar route to the southern end of the "Macc" with its long distance views on a clear day all the way to Wales. At Hardings Wood, Kidsgrove, the feature of first going over the Trent and Mersey, then as we swung round to join it turning north, locking down to pass back under the Macclesfield before further locks took us down towards Middlewich where even the salt factories now seem to have an odd sort of appeal.

Then a section of canal new to us, and how delightful our first experience of the northern end of the Trent and Mersey. Moorings at Marbury Country Park, the short tunnels at Barnton and Saltersford where as we went into each we had to listen and peer to see if boats were coming the other way as each have bends in their middles. There was also the wide pool between the two with views down to the locks of the Weaver. Finally Dutton stop lock - an amusing affair - wide at one end, narrow at the other - does anyone know why?

We were now entering into lock free country, the Bridgewater - all we'd seen of it before was the urban section through Sale. The western half around Lymm - pure rural, even though the signs said it was Warrington. We thought Lymm was the nicest town en route and its butcher's exotic choices were thoroughly enjoyed.

A decision well made was to go into the heart of Manchester for the next night's stay. Castlefield provided a peaceful mooring in the midst of a vibrant city, with an evening walking the Rochdale 9 and returning by tram - what more could one want.

The next day's journey through Leigh to Wigan was the opposite, a case of head down and go, no trouble, just boring desolate waste lands. Pearson's new canal guide "Pennine Waters" likens the mining subsidence containing water to the meres at Ellesmere on the Llangollen. We simply called them big puddles.

Wigan was an experience. Ignoring the guide books to moor between locks 86 and 87, a pound with its own hidden turning circle and new building offside providing a 24 hour security guard. The locks out of Wigan were fun when allowing ourselves a full day to enjoy them. A few locks on our own (well not entirely alone as we'd invited a couple of friends along for the experience!), then an early lunch as we waited for another boat to catch up. We completed the flight together and towards the end we even had the courage to breast up as we together went from lock to lock.

At the top it was like being back on the Macclesfield - all long views and rural, and so it continued along the Leeds and Liverpool as we discovered Withnell Fold a "model" hamlet with its own nature reserve. Dire warnings heard about Blackburn, but we moored at Eanam Wharf not two minutes from the centre, spoke to another who had been there two nights, and would recommend it to anybody. It has its own security gates and canal museum.

From the top of Barrowford again pure delight, especially East Marton. The only pity being there weren't any turning circles to allow us to keep going backwards and forwards between East Marton and Bank Newton for days on end. Instead we had to settle for a long lunch watching boats circling all around us as the boats on the contour based canal twisted their way tortuously to and from Gargrave.

Gargrave - we had a day off here with a walk to Malham cove and a bus ride back. The less energetic could have perhaps a day out on the Settle and Carlisle railway. Then onwards we

Peak Forest to Huddersfield

went through Skipton, another long lock free pound but with frequent pauses to open the swing bridges. Towards Bingley we enjoyed the fully automatic ones, one with sirens sounding, lights flashing, gates lowering; giving power over the traffic at the press of a button and stopping 17 cars for one boat to pass - our best score to date.

Bingley 5 rise - its all over too soon, and then through to Leeds. Again towpath tales about the bandit country from Rodley to Kirkstall. No problems outbound - they don't come out on a wet Sunday morning. They did on the return, on a Saturday afternoon in the heat-wave. All they wanted was a smile, and a lock left full so they can dive into it. Kids have swum in the canals since time immemorial, or a least they did before they had swimming baths!

Where to moor in Leeds. Office lock, under the railway wall - the sound goes over the top, quite safe, leave a boat for a week if you want, many do with a lock-keeper to watch over it.

First the Aire and Calder, its locks now all automatic and DIY all hours. British Waterways key, press the right buttons (if you can see the faint indicator lights when the sun's shining) and whoosh the gates shut, water empties and on you go. Then the Calder and Hebble with its big heavy locks - Oh how homesick we were for those dainty little pretty locks at Bosley. Then finally on a day's cruise from Battyeford, some

two months after setting off from the Peak Forest, into one of our home town canals - the Huddersfield Broad, walked on many occasions, but now what a different experience. You don't realise until you work through them how subtly different the locks are, with their shorter length, small rise, no side weirs, and the water overflowing the gate tops!

After lunch in Aspley Basin, the grand finale, onto the HUDDERSFIELD NARROW. We must admit at this point we're not too sure if we really got there. We went under the road bridge west of Aspley Basin (after measuring the headroom to see if our chimney needed dismantling - 1" to spare) - past the wharf arm to the right - under the footbridge - then we hit WEED and STOPPED!

Did we reach our goal or will we have to wait for 2003 to try and reach the east end the easy way - through the Standedge tunnel!

Ah, where does the Broad finish and the Narrow begin? Strictly speaking, just like the Western end of the Narrow, Lock 1 marks the boundary and until you are completely in the chamber, you are not on the Narrow. However, the width of the Wakefield Road bridge is such that only narrowboats can pass through! So, you have the interesting situation of a length of canal built and designated 'broad' which is now only accessible by narrowboats. A suitable case for adoption? Ed.



"Owd Sag" aqueduct, Dobcross. Scheme No. 8 in the work list. If anyone is still in any doubt that Owd Sag is leaking.....!

Chris Coburn, the director of Lee Sanitation Ltd., (whose purpose in life is to modernise every boat loo on the canals, and rivers, and probably even at sea) is also without doubt the most adventurous of all narrow-boat sailors. He is also variously described as a 'head-case', 'hare-brained' and 'off his trolley' for even contemplating some of the journeys he has made.

In fact he is none of these; he is a sea-trained sailor who has converted a conventional narrow-boat into a sea-going version. NB Progress has (removable) watertight decks, a mast (also removable) plus radar, VHF,

echo-sounding, etc.

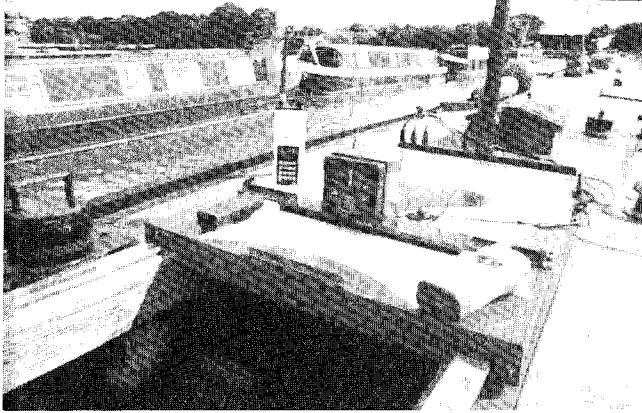
Chris decided, last year, to apply for the 'most meritorious voyage' award at the Chester National Festival by arriving in Chester UP THE RIVER DEE! This was clever enough in itself but to get to the mouth of the Dee, from Birmingham, was quite a task!

Not being a conventional thinker Chris decided to get to Chester via the Birmingham Canal Network, the Shropshire Union Canal, the Manchester Ship Canal, the River Mersey, the Irish Sea, Preston Dock, the River Lune and the Lancaster Canal returning via a lot more open



Progress crossing the Mersey Estuary en route to the River Dee

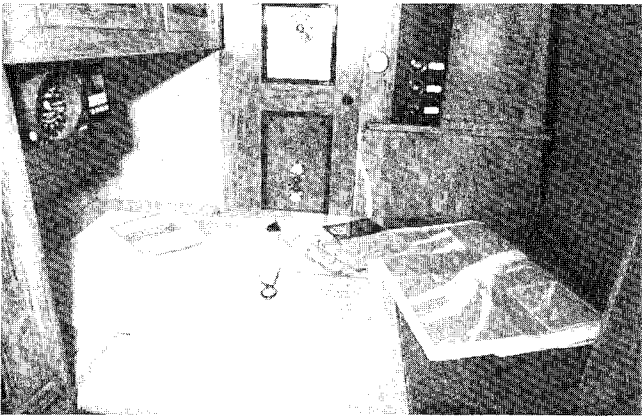
Carry On Up The Lune



sea, sometimes 14 miles from the coast! Needless to say, he won the award!

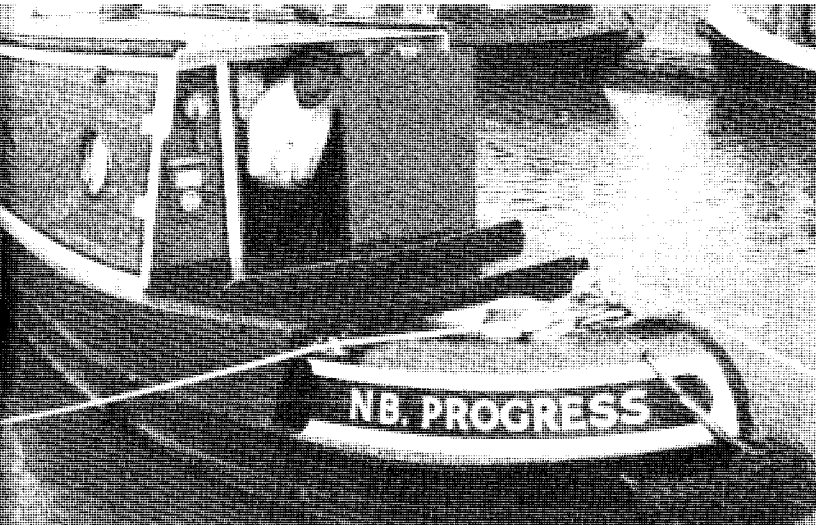
Don't take my word for it - get the video. *Carry On Up The Lune* is 2hrs 30 mins. long and is action-packed to say the least, apart from giving a fascinating insight into narrow-boat sailing and the waterways system generally. This is a "home-made" video but the quality is very good, my only criticism being that the "voice-over" is somewhat monotonous at first. This is soon forgotten as the exciting journey develops.

An excellent present for your own canal maniac.
Price £16.98, including P & P, from:
Lee Sanitation Ltd.,
Wharf Road,
Fenny Compton,
Warwickshire,
CV33 OXE.



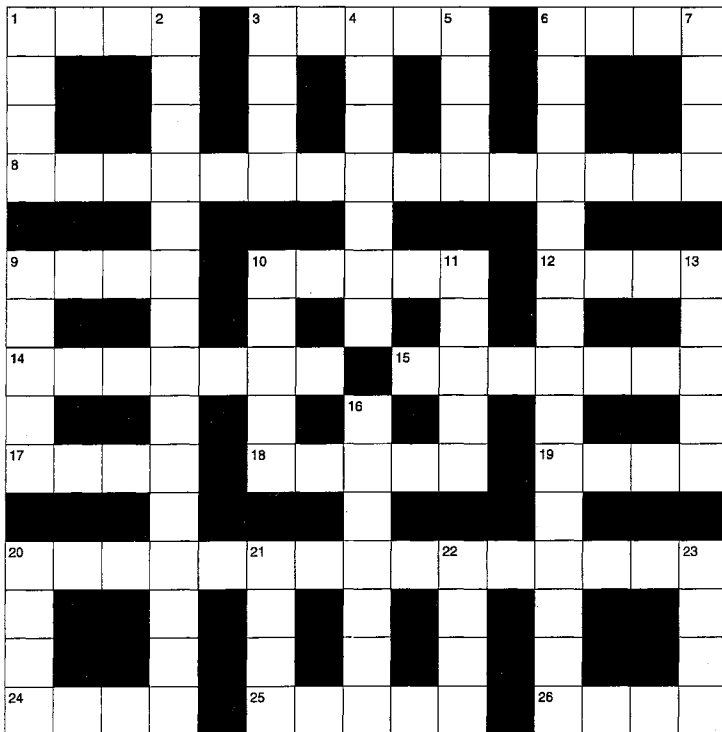
Left Above: Echo sounder, hand-held VHF and waterproof deck plug/sockets.

Left Middle: The Boatman's cabin on *Progress* converted for navigation and chart work.



Left Below: The bow well cover and deflector door being fitted to *Progress*.

Photos:
Chris Coburn &
Laurence Hogg



10. How to keep your boat aloft on the water. (5)
12. On the River Soar see one method of propulsion (4)
14. A jolly good member of a canal carrying partnership! (7)
15. C.L. Bream seen struggling to get on a boat (7)
17. List the cause of BW'S depth problems (4)
18. The stories of fabrics? (5)
19. Line up the solution of a question about an international waterway (4)
20. Magnificently joining waterway unites first and second cities (5, 5, 5).
24. On a lane play a lute to celebrate the resolution of a major Rochdale canal problem (4)
25. Discover Ural mountains by a country canal (5)
26. Brewer's dray assists the making of a non metric linear measure (4)

DOWN

1. On the River Lubb find a replacement part for your boat's tunnel light (4)

Following the response to last Issue's Prize Crossword; our congratulations to the winners Mark & Hazel Blackstone of Bristol, we are repeating the competition.

Another copy of 'Pennine Passage' to the first correct solution drawn at random from all those entries received by the next Press Date, 9th August.

Please send your entry (including your name and address!) to:

Prize Crossword, 239 Mossley Road, Ashton-u-Lyne, OL6 6LN.

ACROSS

1. In December get notice of a large lump of ice floating down the canal (4)
3. Conceive a cunning plot to gain access to the rope locker (5)
6. Find a sea bird on an Ulster waterway (4)
8. Off Chesapeake Bay at the capital of Maryland find a way of crossing the Derby or Rochdale canals! (9,6)
9. A form of liquid kept in your pocket! (4)

2. The longest tiny hull goes subterranean on the Dudley canal (5, 4, 6)
3. At a whim Lehar reversed the music and thus improved his steering(4)
4. Root map found in a canalside pub (7)
5. Help her be clever with flavourings in the galley (4)
6. Roy, tell men in van to stay green and friendly while restoring the canal (15)
7. Whither I enquire about the Great Lakes (4)
9. Faces the music in canalside refreshment rooms (5)
10. A yew offered the chance to reverse the flow of a Cornish river (5)
11. Rings a bell to collect waterway charges (5)
13. O forget your rouges, there's a rush of water coming (5)
16. Ric, sure this is the right sort of boat? (7)
20. By a Cat and a Fiddle find the source of a Mersey tributary (4)
21. Use a ruse to catch the operator of your tools (4)
22. Thespian Jimmy can fix two pieces of timber together (4)
23. Aldo Perkins always had a cargo to be carried somewhere (4)

ELLESMERE PORT BOAT MUSEUM



Following last issue's suggestion that it was time you visited the Boat Museum, here are some more events, in addition to the permanent exhibitions and working demonstrations:-

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| July 28th | Keels and Wheels
Classic Car Show |
| August 10-11th | Roses and Castles
Weekend Painting
Course £60 |
| August 25-26th | Model Boat Extravaganza |

More details next issue.

For further details ring the Boat Museum,
South Pier Road, Ellesmere Port - 0151 355 5017

Dear Friends,

A few lines to say how much my friends and I enjoyed our trip up the HNC from Ashton to Stalybridge on 30 April/May this year. A most interesting journey with no navigational problems, thanks to the recent dredging. I can't wait to sample more of the canal by boat in the near future - already walked most of it.

I enclose two photos of our Middlewich Narrowboats 60ft hire craft Damson at Staley Wharf and would like one of the plaques, as advertised in Pennine Link, either free or paid for - cheque enclosed for £50, which should cover it, and leave some over to go towards the general restoration effort.

One comment about Staley Wharf itself - there are no mooring rings or posts at present, which could put boats off from staying a while. As you might gather from my photos, we decided to moor overnight on the far side of the basin, out of the way of walkers. One rope was tied to a lamp post, the other to a mooring spike stuck in the edge of the cultivated (?) border beyond the path. This would not have caused a problem to walkers as the path was blocked just beyond our boat.

Course in Lancs/Yorks Lingo

In response to the total silence following last issue's lesson in 'Huddersfield Canal Speak' here are some more examples to set your brains (and teeth) on edge.

It helps to speak the phrases, looking into a mirror, with a slight frown and the bottom lip stuck out. (You just tried that - didn't you?).

It is a total invention on the part of the National Union of Journalists that you also need to wear a cloth cap and a muffler. Answers inside back cover.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Isthemum? | 2. Asta gorrit withy? |
| 3. Purremineer. | 4. Ayanpt eared nowt. |
| 5. Thaafter gerra newun. | 6. Eesezintiz burraberritiz |
| 7. Lerrus gerrus andswesht. | 8. Sumonemz gorragerroff. |
| 9. Weev gorra gerrus imbox. | 10. Thamun gerrit lernt. |
| 11. Shut thigob. | 12. Owzeeno? |

Dear Mr. Wright,

I am delighted to hear that re-opening of the canal through Stalybridge town centre is now a possible option. I was never very keen on the plan to lock down into the River Tame and then skirt round the back of Stalybridge to re-emerge on the other side.

How much better to use the original route right through the middle of the town, where the canal can be seen and enjoyed by everyone, and the future boater will be able to appreciate Stalybridge at its best, rather than catch glimpses from between the backs of buildings at the bottom of the river channel.

I do hope that now the town centre option has come about, all in HCS will do their best to bring it about, as it is by far the best route.

Yours,

Edward Leetham,
Wavertree, Liverpool.

We spent a pleasant evening visiting one or two pubs in town, and a peaceful night on the boat afterwards. Thanks to all who have put so much work into the restoration so far, and very best wishes for a successful completion of the task in the not too distant future.

Dave Hodges, Sittingbourne, Kent

Mooring rings at locks and wharves are on the way! Ed.

Dear HCS,

Thanks for the latest copy of P.Link (Spring 1996). It really seems to get better every time. I thought the fold-out map was great for a change, though I liked the linear-style as well.

As an ex-Marsden I follow the restoration with fascination, especially as I lived with the cut outside the back door as I was growing up. Keep up the good work and here's hoping the final hurdles can be overcome and that we'll see the Huddersfield Narrow completed in the not too distant future.

With this letter I enclose a cheque for £12.99 and would be grateful if you could send me a copy of 'The Impossible Restoration' video. Once more, all the best with your endeavours.

Mrs. A.F., Birmingham.

Dear Ken,

My congratulations on the Spring Pennine Link and particularly the centre pull out, which is an excellent idea.

As a member and an advertiser for many years, I was delighted to see our name mentioned in the Spring edition, even though it was in the long running series about journeys on the boats of a rival company!

The writer says she "*stopped at Anderton Boats (now Middlewich Narrowboats)*". Can I please state with finality that Middlewich Narrowboats is certainly not Anderton Boats! In fact there is no Anderton Boats in Middlewich, and I presume she is referring to Andersen Boats. Middlewich Narrowboats is a privately operated hire fleet specialising in traditional style boats and located at the top of the Middlewich flight, while Andersen's operate under the Hoseason's banner and are located at the bottom of the flight.

I always read this series as for obvious reasons any account of canal holidays is of considerable interest (indeed in this issue we were blessed with three). I was however most surprised to see the trip from Middlewich to Anderton described as "*the long boring flat bit*". There is a short industrial stretch through Lostock Graham, which

was depicted, but apart from that the canal winds through the lovely tree-hung Dane Valley, and through the pleasant Marbury Country Park. There are several salt flashes with fascinating bird life, and a number of sharp turns which make the route anything but boring, particularly if you are going against the flow of traffic! Nicholson's describes this section of canal as "*a stretch of canal as beautiful as any in the country*", and justifiably so.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Cliff
Middlewich Narrowboats

Making errors is one way of finding out who reads what! Chris is quite correct, obviously. The original Log said "stopped off at Andersen Boats". Unfortunately 'Andersen' suffered a typographical twitch and, in an effort to update, the wrong boatyard was re-named! This edition's Wife's Tale sorts out the 'boring' bit somewhat, but please, Chris, will you settle for 'familiar'? Ed.

Dear HCS,

PLINK Feedback

The Map is much better as a map (as in PLINK 116) than as a graph. However, I quite appreciate that the cost of fancy fold-out bits is much greater than that of a footer on an ordinary page.

The Pictures - None of the test pictures in Screen Tests were up to the standard of the rest of the magazine, even the 130dpi one. I'm sure that the perceived reduction in quality from changing to the "house brew" method will do more harm than good to HCS.

All the best

Ray Butler, Manchester

Thanks, Ray, for your comments. We agree with you on all points, and especially about the picture quality, though we felt it was worth a try. We are again about to enter for the Tom Rolt Award for the best canal society magazine so standards can not be allowed to slip! Ed.

THE SOCIETY WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2354 Mr Wood, [REDACTED] | 2370 Mr Buswell, [REDACTED] |
| 2355 Mr Kaye, [REDACTED] | 2371 Mr Smith, [REDACTED] |
| 2356 Mr Linley, [REDACTED] | 2372 Mrs Dent, [REDACTED] |
| 2357 Mr Forrest, [REDACTED] | 2373 Mr Bowles, [REDACTED] |
| 2358 Mrs Allen, [REDACTED] | 2374 Ms Schofield, [REDACTED] |
| 2359 Mr Phillips, [REDACTED] | 2375 Mr Dobbie, [REDACTED] |
| 2360 Mr Diggle, [REDACTED] | 2376 Mr & Mrs Jones, [REDACTED] |
| 2361 Mr & Mrs Tillotson, [REDACTED] | 2377 Mr Robinson, [REDACTED] |
| 2362 Mrs Hardy-Smith, [REDACTED] | 2378 Mr Wood, Diggle, [REDACTED] |
| 2363 Miss Priestley, [REDACTED] | 2379 Mrs Meredith-Harris, [REDACTED] |
| 2364 Mr Farrington, [REDACTED] | 2380 Mr Wilks, [REDACTED] |
| 2365 Mr Woods, [REDACTED] | 2381 Mr Williams, [REDACTED] |
| 2366 Mr Wood, [REDACTED] | 2382 Ms Gilchrist, [REDACTED] |
| 2367 Mr Norgrove, [REDACTED] | 2383 Mr Pearce, [REDACTED] |
| 2368 Mr Leeman, [REDACTED] | 2384 Mr Halliday, [REDACTED] |
| 2369 Mr & Mrs Parkinson, [REDACTED] | 2385 Mr Smith, [REDACTED] |

THE FOLLOWING BACK NUMBERS ARE AVAILABLE FREE FROM:

John Maynard, 29 Thick Hollins Drive, Meltham, Yorkshire
Please send an A5 size stamped, addressed envelope (29p)

10, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49,
52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79
80, 81/82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99
101, 102, 103, 104, 109, 111, 112, 114, 115

*Please Note that certain issues are now reduced to single copies only - so, first come, first served!
Also, the issues listed are the **only** ones held, please do not request issues which are not on the list.*

Errata and Corrigenda

The following slips got through the net in issue 116!

Page 6. "looking West" and "looking East" are on the wrong photographs.

Page 38. Ship Canal Cruises. The correct telephone number for booking is 0161-827-6972 (Operating through Co-op Holidaycare)

Page 33. The Wife's Tale. A mental aberration caused some confusion here. See Chris Cliff's letter in 'Letters to the Editor' on p 42.

Dialect Answers: 1. Are those they? 2. Have you got it with you? 3. Put them in here. 4. I have not heard anything. 5. You will have to get a new one. 6. He says it isn't his but I bet it is. 7. Let us get our hands washed. 8. Some of them have got to get off. 9. We have got to get our Hymn Books. 10. You must learn it. 11. Shut up. 12. How does he know?

SOLUTION TO PRIZE CROSSWORD No 12 - ISSUE 116

ACROSS 6. Caledonian Canal 7. MTB 8. Osier 9. Nonet 10. Green 14. Barnton 15. Bunbury 17. Teams
18. Anode 20. Goole 21. BCN 22. Gloucester Docks

DOWN 1. Hartshead Infill 2. Adder 3. Aintree 4. Acton 5. Hazlehurst Locks 10. Ghost 11. Nouns 12. Ant
13. BBC 16. Calcutt 19. Epoch 20. Guide

WEST SIDE MEETINGS

Wednesday 8th August	7.45pm, Grove Road bridge. Hartshead revisited.
Wednesday 11th September	General Meeting at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley, 8.00pm.
Wednesday 10th October	General Meeting at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley, 8.00pm.

The Society Sales Trailer will be at the following venues:

July	12th-14th - Tameside Canals Festival, Portland Basin, Ashton-u-Lyne
August	3rd - Emley Show, Denby Dale, West Yorkshire 11th - Huddersfield Historic Vehicles, Huddersfield 17th - Appley Bridge, Near Wigan 24th-26th - IWA National Festival, Windmill End, Dudley
September	31st Aug-1st - Huddersfield Canals Festival, Aspley, Huddersfield 14th-15th - Titford Pools, Dudley

Sales stalwarts Steve & Gay Quilter and the Sales Team regulars would appreciate a 'hello'!

In the next Issue of Pennine Link ...

Reports from the Festivals - Tunnel End,
Tameside & Huddersfield

Inaugural World Canal Conference at Birmingham

The West Side Blockages - Photo Feature

Thomas Telford - HNC Engineer

IWAAC's Inland Waterways Report

.... *plus all the regular features.*

ADVERTISING RATES

	Per Issue	Per Year
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Half Page	£18.75	£75.00
Full Page	£37.50	£150.00

NEXT PRESS DATE

**Articles, letters, etc., for
Issue 118 of Pennine Link
should reach the Editor
by 9th August**