



# Pennine *LINK*

Issue Number 118 - Autumn 1996



**Tom Rolt Award**  
(Canal Societies and Trusts)

**1996 Winner**

***Pennine Link***

**Huddersfield Canal Society**

**Editor:**

***Ken Wright***

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*Front Cover: Off to a flying start! Editor Ken Wright's first attempt at the Tom Rolt Award meets with success and the Society's fourth win in as many submissions.*



## MILLENNIUM

Due to other people being on holiday or busy doing the work they are paid for (and which, occasionally, has to take precedence!)

I have had the privilege, recently, of representing YOU at meetings of "the partners". An enormous amount of work has been

done since we were included in the Millennium "long-list" and the next submission has now been made, as you will no doubt read elsewhere.

Most of the donkey-work has been done by our colleagues in the three local authorities, by British Waterways and by our own Steve Whitby but the final submission was put together by our consultants, *Pieda*, who are nationally renowned experts in this field. Indeed, if we had not employed them they could well have been working for the Millennium Commission, vetting our submission!

So, it's fingers crossed time again. Personally, I feel confident that we will make the next stage.

My confidence springs largely from the very welcome increased involvement by British Waterways. They have changed gear, from second to top, and without bothering with the clutch! From being just one of the partners they

have moved into the lead and have enabled us to tell the Millennium Commission that our Canal is in very safe hands - for ever. Again, more details elsewhere.

Was there ever more occasion to say - WATCH THIS SPACE!

## WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

Not everything that is reported in the press, relating to our Canal, comes under the editorial eye but the last couple of months have seen a remarkable increase in coverage - mainly in the Oldham Evening Chronicle, it has to be said.

In the run-up to the deadline for this issue of Pennine Link we have managed the following column inch (cms) coverage:-

General Restoration	258 (655)
Saddleworth Festival	78 (198)
Festivals generally	66 (168)
Stalybridge	42 (107)

That is a remarkable amount of free publicity and all credit (well, most of it - he mustn't get too big-headed about it) goes to Alec Ramsden, our extremely efficient Press Officer. And all of it favourable and/or supportive.

You will have noticed from the figures that the Saddleworth Festival has received another great wodge of press. An amazing story that I won't bore you with; I'm just including what I hope

A quick apology - if you were hoping to read about this year's Tameside, Tunnel End & Huddersfield Festivals (admittedly promised in last Issue's 'Coming Soon'), I'm afraid you will have to wait until Issue 119. A lack of photos and suitable copy has forced a rescheduling - indeed, if any member has any photos from these events, especially Tameside and Tunnel End, we would be delighted to use them in the articles and guarantee their safe return. *Ed.*



On behalf of the Council of Management for the Huddersfield Canal Society, I give my report for the year 1995.

In 1995 the Huddersfield Canal Society came of age. Twenty one years ago nobody envisaged that restoring a public asset would depend upon the

success of a National Lottery. Restoration was started by volunteers and the success of the Society is evidenced by the physical changes to the Canal and by the coming together of our three local authorities and British Waterways into a partnership with our aim to complete the project by the Millennium - hence our lottery bid.

The year began with our appearance on the National Lottery draw. A three minute appearance on prime time television not only raised our profile but some £800 towards the disabled boat lift for our new boat. Was this to presage things to come? This festival mood figured throughout 1995 with the most events and festivals on our Canal ever staged in one year.

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*cont'd from page 3*

will be the last comment, from the Oldham Chronicle. (*STOP PRESS - I hear that the Saddleworth Canal Festival is now 'Council confirmed' for 1997!*)

We also have a reply to the short letter about Slaithwaite, in the last issue, which removes the last of the bad news!

Stalybridge town centre has been the cause of a bit of a furore, which led to questions being asked in extremely high places, and I include one article giving the gist of what went on. Finally, a short selection of some general articles on restoration, festivals, Millennium bids, etc.

I am having great difficulty in finding contributors for the Distaff Side page - come on, ladies - and I would like to hear from more of you for the Letters page. It's your Society, your magazine - have a go - we accept all formats, Royal Mail to the Editor, Fax to 0161 343 2262 and EMail to [plink@hcanals.demon.co.uk](mailto:plink@hcanals.demon.co.uk)

Ken Wright

I would like to congratulate all those who organised these events including our first national rally on the land locked Linthwaite section by Low Westwood Mill. The Ashton Festival was attended by our biggest gathering of guests including representatives from the private and public sectors. Government Agencies were also represented and I was pleased to accompany Mr. Jim Gill of English Partnerships with Mr. John Brown (Government Office for the North West) on Robin Witter's boat, Little Gypsy, on a pleasant cruise along the Lower Peak Forest Canal towards Marple - a stretch of canal that formed the Cheshire Ring of navigable canals only twenty one years earlier.

St. George's Day saw the opening of Staley Wharf by Mr. Tom Pendry M.P. Tom's support for the Huddersfield Narrow began in the 1970's and with Councillor Roy Oldham, Leader of Tameside M.B. we cut the ribbon under Bayley Street Bridge to open the last section before the Stalybridge blockage aboard Graham MacKeeth's splendid Lake Windermere launch Daphne.

In July we entertained Mr. Robert Atkins M.P., the Minister with responsibility for British Waterways, at Standedge and Uppermill. Derek Cochrane's team arranged a visit into the Tunnel and we completed the experience with a trip on Pennine Moonraker from the Transshipment Shed to the Saddleworth Museum. Mr. Atkins steered the boat on both occasions seemed to enjoy himself immensely and promptly resigned his ministerial position the following day!

However, it was not long before we invited his successor Mr. Robert Jones M.P. to dedicate Lock 31W to the late Mr. Geoffrey Dickens who was one of our first members and opened this lock the previous year. Mr. Jones stressed the importance of canals and our partnership approach. Alec Ramsden organised a splendid P.R. event at a time when we planned to increase our profile prior to the Millennium bid and received a letter of support from the Prime Minister.

Unfortunately our first millennium bid failed on 'technical and financial' grounds. It was hurriedly produced to match Tameside's Stalybridge bid which was considered insufficiently distinctive. So with Derek Cochrane we visited the Commission and English Partnerships to discuss a revised bid which was altogether more thought out and combined the main element of the Stalybridge bid into one application on behalf of all our partners.

# Chairman's Report to the AGM

A personal visit by Sir John Hall, a Millennium Commissioner at the invitation of Tom Pendry helped form our co-ordinated approach. We were pleased to learn that the Rochdale Canal bid had been successful. 'Long listing' is the technical term and a detailed appraisal is now being undertaken to satisfy the Commissioners that their scheme is viable and deliverable by the year 2000. Our revised bid includes the South Pennine ring as a new regenerative feature and already we can see the effects on Sowerby Bridge of increased visitor numbers following the opening of the new Tuel Lane lock.

In October of 1995 an updated Strategic Programme of Reclamation was submitted to English Partnerships outlining a programme of works to complete the restoration. This schedule, first produced for E.P. in 1994, complements our Millennium Bid as matching funding is a prerequisite for a successful bid.

One of the main features of the canal restoration is of course the Standedge Experience. In 1995 Mike Thompson's team fleshed out the project for the conversion of the Tunnel End Warehouse. A business plan has been produced and with the 'laying of the keel' of the new Tunnel End trip boat, the first phase of this scheme was commenced. We were fortunate to have sponsorship for this boat and we are very grateful to the Rural Development Commission and an anonymous donor plus various seat sponsors for enabling this boat to be commissioned.

During 1995 we, with our partners, hired consultants to progress our various projects. *Pida* plc, Market Access Limited, the Yorkshire & Humberside Tourist Board, the Civic Trust and various architects and engineers have been appointed to support our bid for funding for designs for the Standedge Experience and for a heritage audit of the canal structures.

Expenditure on consultants reports/designs is necessary but expensive. Some of the expenditure may be recovered should our bids be successful. Pump priming is necessary to keep the momentum flowing at a time when local authority resources do not allow 'speculative' expenditure on the designs for bridges and other structures.

Restoration progress continued in 1995 but only on the West Side. H.C.S. (Restoration) Limited had a very busy year. The Diggle Flight of locks were all but complete by the end of the year. Our subsidiary won the contract to restore this flight from Oldham M.B. who were 100% funded by English

Partnerships. Meanwhile we dredged the navigation from Staley Wharf to Lock 1 using our own equipment, opening up the basin to visiting boats.

Tameside M.B. completed the Hartshead Infill section and H.C.S. (Restoration) Limited will now rebuild Lock 8W, leaving only Scout Tunnel and Stalybridge Town Centre barring the way for boats off the Cheshire Ring to reach the Oldham area. Frenches Bridge was also reopened in 1995. Our subsidiary company's track record to date, chaired by Keith Gibson and managed by Steve Whitby, has been exemplary. We have acquired much expertise, employed hundreds of people and worked with volunteers with and on behalf of the local authorities and British Waterways. I hope that our experienced team can be kept intact to help complete the whole restoration.

The public face of our Society has been well in evidence in 1995. The sales team headed by Gay and Steve Quilter attended no less than 14 events including the poorly attended I.W.A. National Festival at Chester and the now well established Huddersfield Festival held on the campus of Huddersfield University.

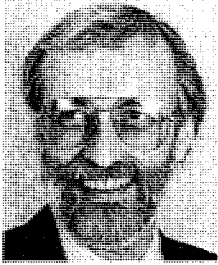
A humanist wedding celebration took place at the Transshipment Warehouse in August. Nearly 100 guests arrived by boat to the Warehouse which won a White Rose Award from the Yorkshire Region of the Royal Institution of British Architects in October - another H.C.S. (Restoration) Limited project.

After eight years, Alwyn Ogborn vacated the editor's chair and Ken Wright took over the editorship of *Pennine Link*, but not before Alwyn secured the third Toni Rolt award for a periodical produced by voluntary waterways organisations.

Our boat crews 'captained' by Bob Maycock have ensured regular public trips on the Canal on both sides of the hill as Bob masterminded and co-ordinated the design, construction and delivery of our new tug and butty to be launched in 1996.

Finally I wish to thank our full time staff at Mossley Road for their contributions to our success and progress in 1995. Their professionalism and teamwork has been a major factor in our success in achieving long listing status for our second Millennium Commission Bid and persuading English Partnerships to give us principle approval for funding up to 45% of the total £25m bid. 1996 will prove to be an exciting and challenging year.

David M. Sumner  
Chairman



Whilst the H.C.S. Restoration team is working on the Canal at Hartshead, the efforts of Steve Whitby back in the office, together with H.C.S. Council members, particularly David Sumner, Ken Wright, Alec Ramsden and myself have been put into supporting

the work of the team preparing the submission of information to the Millennium Commission following the shortlisting (long listing in Millennium speak) of our project.

The Commission staff know the basics of our restoration programme and its benefits and have made a second official visit when they were shown the major tasks involved, with the help and support of landowners. Before the application for Millennium funding is considered by the Millennium Commission itself, the Commission staff have to know in detail and be satisfied with:

- (a) Exactly what is proposed and the benefits that will result;
- (b) Exactly how delivery of this is guaranteed by the end of the year 2000;
- (c) Exactly how maintenance of the completed project is guaranteed for a period of at least 125 years thereafter.

The bidding team led by Roger Anderson, Assistant Chief Executive of Tameside Council has been through what I see as 4 key tasks before passing material on to Marion Chalmers at *Pieda* the consultants charged with producing the all important Business Plan, and for submission to the Commission. These can be summarised briefly:

- (i) Negotiating the management arrangement between British Waterways, the three local authorities and the Society which will guarantee delivery of the completed project by the end of the year 2000.
- (ii) Negotiating the management arrangement between the same partners which will guarantee maintenance of the canal and the Standedge Experience visitor centre for at least 125 years thereafter.

- (iii) Adjusting the priorities and the costs involved to meet the requirements of English Partnerships Strategic Programme of Reclamation and the Millennium Commission.
- (iv) Ensuring that answers are available for all of the questions put forward by the Millennium Commission.

All of this has now been submitted to the Millennium Commission and provided the Commission staff and their Consultants are satisfied, it is hoped that the application will be formally considered by the Millennium Commissioners in late September, and to this end the partners will again make use of Consultants Market Access to ensure that the Commissioners are fully briefed on the benefits of our project. It may be, of course, that there are still matters of concern to discuss in which case the formal decision will be taken at a later meeting of the Commissioners.

It is not possible to reproduce the huge amount of material provided, or the Business Plan in the pages of Pennine Link, but I will attempt to give a flavour of the essential elements of the bid.

The centre page map spread shows the major projects and costs which, as reported in the last issue totals about £26m. This was agreed to be unrepresentative of the total costs, however, because it excluded work already carried out, and thus inflated the percentage of the total to be met by the Millennium Commission, or the percentage of the total now required from English Partnerships. It also ignored the value of the work by the Society through the H.C.S. Office, and by volunteer labour.

The total cost of the package now put together is, therefore, increased to £35m. This includes work carried out since February 1994 funded by English Partnerships through the Derelict Land Grant programme, more than £1m as the real value of H.C.S. voluntary sector effort in the organisation of festivals, boat operation, and supporting the restoration programme and the cost of supporting the bid in local authority, British Waterways and H.C.S. staff time and Consultants time (£169,000). The total sources of funding are now:

# Millennium Bid Update

English Partnerships Derelict Land Grant since 1994	6,327,000	
English Partnerships Strategic Programme of Reclamation	12,224,000	
Total English Partnerships	18,551,000	52.76%
Millennium Commission	14,215,325	40.42%
H.C.S.	553,000	
H.C.S. Voluntary Sector Value	1,185,898	
Total H.C.S.	1,738,898	4.94%
British Waterways	407,000	1.16%
Percent for Arts	174,118	0.50%
Private Sector	85,500	0.26%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£35,171,844</b>	

The private sector item referred to is the contribution from Wickes to the new section of canal at Longroyd Bridge, and the H.C.S. figure is mainly our agreed contribution to the Standedge Experience. Although we have committed that expenditure it will not necessarily have to be met in total from the Society's resources as other funding options may be available.

To satisfy the Millennium Commission it should be possible to look at the costs and timetable of any of the elements of the programme and say with absolute certainty that it will be delivered on time and within the estimated cost. Our bid is robust in this respect and we have a clear advantage over many Millennium bidders in having the support of English Partnerships to have a total funding package agreed. Similarly we have real evidence of the benefits likely to accrue to the communities alongside the Canal from the Coopers & Lybrand report, and the proof of what has actually happened following restoration.

The only elements of the programme requiring further development work - Stalybridge Town Centre and the Standedge Experience - both have clear programmes to bring them to fruition within the timescale required. In the case of Stalybridge, engineering consultants Allot & Lomax have been commissioned by Tameside Council to carry out a hydrological study of the diversion into the River Tame which has been the favoured route and until very recently, the

only realistic option. They will report to the Council in time for a decision to be made in October as to whether to continue with the river route, or to abandon that and restore the Canal in its original alignment through the town - a choice which may now be possible since the closure of the Delta Crompton factory. Whichever route is chosen, the Council have in place all of the necessary approvals to allow for completion by the Millennium.

Although I have my own favourite, the Society's position is to support the Council in its choice of route. In the case of the Standedge Experience, Phase I is either already in place (the Society's new 'Standedge Pioneer' waterbus), or about to commence (car parking provision at the former Marsden station goods yard). We require Millennium Commission support for Phase II, the repair of the former British Waterways warehouse, and the initial elements of an interpretive centre for visitors here in scale with its setting. Although planning permission has been granted for the change of use of the building and we have accurate costings of the repair work needed, and the likely cost of providing a visitor centre, design work will not commence until the company responsible for the project (see below) is in existence.

Restoration of the Canal continuing to be overseen by the Huddersfield Narrow Canal Joint Committee, the long standing informal arrangement between the three local authorities, British Waterways and the Society, would be inadequate for the purposes of the Millennium Commission, in that the Joint Committee has no authority over the partners to guarantee completion or maintenance.

It is now proposed that the partners will set up a company limited by guarantee - call it the Huddersfield Canal Company Ltd. - with shareholding by British Waterways, the three local authorities and the Society. The proportion of council holdings will be limited as a result of constraints set up in the Local Government & Housing Act 1989. The Board of Directors will reflect the holdings, but will include at least one officer and one member from each local authority, and one officer (presumably Steve Whitby) and council member from this Society, and representation from British Waterways.

These people will have fully delegated responsibilities to act in the best interests of the company, and will have the power to co-opt other Directors should they see fit. Ultimately this Board will be responsible for delivering the restored canal, and maintaining it thereafter. An executive group of British Waterways and local authorities and Society officers will service and support the Board to ensure project objectives are met and monitor progress. Essentially this will be a combination of the current officers' working party and the bidding group.

The Huddersfield Canal Company will appoint a Project Manager, following external advertisement, initially on a contract for the period of the delivery plan. For convenience of salary payment etc. it is likely that he or she will nominally be on the payroll of the Society, or British Waterways or one of the Local Authorities. British Waterways working with the Project Manager, will be responsible to the Canal Company for delivering the restoration of the Canal, and for using their own staff resources together with those of the local authorities and the Society to best effect.

The Standedge Experience will be created and managed by a trading company - call it Standedge Experience Ltd - which will be a subsidiary of the Huddersfield Canal Company. (NB This means that Oldham & Tameside Councils will be directly involved in the Experience in addition to this Society, British Waterways and Kirklees Council.) A sub group of the officers executive group will report to the Board of Standedge Experience Ltd., and be responsible for the appointment of consultants and contractors and the development and management of the Experience. Volunteers will be very much involved in the management and operation of the Experience, and it is intended to learn from the experience of the National Trust or the best railway preservation societies in having a seamless relation between a small number of paid staff and volunteers. Day to day operation of boat passage through Standedge Tunnel will be in accordance with a management policy (a draft of which has been produced by British Waterways), and will involve a mix of Standedge Experience and British Waterways staff, although final management will be with British Waterways.

On completion of the Canal, British Waterways will be responsible for maintaining the Canal to their Cruising Standard 2B. They have produced an asset management schedule detailing the likely maintenance requirements and costs over a 130 year period (to satisfy the Millennium Commission's requirement of 125 years guaranteed maintenance) based on historic known costs and life expectancy of the engineering features of the Canal.

Because British Waterways are only allowed to maintain the Canal to Remainder Waterway standards, and it is assumed no government is likely to agree to a change to Cruising Waterway standards without additional external funding, it is assumed that maintenance costs will be met in the first instance by a call on the existing British Waterways budget (increased in line with inflation as necessary), and the costs above that will be met from a Sinking Fund to be created by the Local Authorities and this Society.

The three authorities and the Society agree to contribute for the 21 years of the current maintenance agreement (up to 2010) to a fund which, because maintenance costs in the earlier years will be lower than later, will build up to provide a large enough capital base to service the extra costs of maintaining a working canal throughout the 130 years of the asset management schedule. Subject to this, British Waterways guarantee to maintain the Canal to their Cruising Standard 2B, except in the case of a major unexpected catastrophic failure. The Huddersfield Canal Company will take out an insurance bond to cover such an eventuality.

To sum up:

- \* Your Society and our Local Authority partners have spent nearly £170,000 in staff time and consultants fees to bid for funding from the National Lottery Millennium fund which, if successful, will see the Huddersfield Narrow Canal completely restored by the year 2000, and the Standedge Experience visitor centre open at Tunnel End, Marsden.
- \* Our initial bid document was a success in that the scheme is long listed for consideration by the Millennium Commission. We have now jointly



# Millennium Bid Update

enlarged on that document and filled in the gaps, particularly through the production of a Business Plan for the project by consultants *Pieda*.

- \* The Local Authority engineers, ably assisted by British Waterways and our own Ken Wright have accurately costed all of the work in restoring the Canal and produced a programme dividing the funding between the elements of the project to suit the requirements of English Partnerships and the Millennium Commission. We believe the Commission's staff are happy with the competence of this work. The Society has underwritten the design costs of sufficient items to ensure work can go out to tender immediately a grant offer is received and, in fact, it seems possible that English Partnerships could sanction further work in Kirklees prior to a decision by the Millennium Commission.
- \* The Coopers & Lybrand report showed the benefits that had accrued to the communities alongside the Canal back in 1994 and the benefits likely as restoration progressed. The Local Authorities have updated that information.
- \* The partners in this enterprise have produced a mechanism, through the creation of a jointly owned but independent company, whereby delivery of the project is guaranteed. The solicitors of the partners have agreed the format of the company and, in particular, default procedures should one partner feel unable to meet its commitments.
- \* The partners have created a mechanism to deliver and manage the Standedge Experience by a trading subsidiary of the main company.
- \* The partners have made arrangements to cover the increased costs of maintaining the Canal to cruising standards by the creation of a sinking fund and an insurance bond which allow British Waterways to guarantee maintenance.
- \* Should the Millennium Commission offer a grant, all of the other funding is agreed mainly from English Partnerships, but with a

very significant voluntary sector contribution from this Society.

To quote from a note produced by Ken Wright: *"In my view the current position could not be more optimistic. There is a feeling of confidence in all involved. It will work, and can be seen to be workable by those who matter, i.e. the Millennium Commission."*

Although I am optimistic myself, I should end on a sober note. It is never possible to guarantee success in any competitive grant bidding process. No matter how good a bid, or how nearly it matches the requirements of the grant aiding body, failure is always possible. In the event of the Millennium Commission having to consider a surfeit of suitable schemes in the north west and Yorkshire regions, all with agreed matching funding, we could fail. That is not likely to happen because of the great difficulty in agreeing fail proof delivery mechanisms and very long life maintenance régimes, and the even greater difficulty in obtaining guaranteed funding to match Millennium money.

The most worrying issue is that the Commission's dealings with the Rochdale Canal Trust could colour their view of canal restoration schemes in general. There is no reason why that should be the case because the Rochdale's difficulties are particular to that canal and do not apply in our case. (In case you are unaware of the situation: an offer of a Millennium grant was made some months ago, but has not been accepted by the Rochdale Canal Trust yet because, I understand, one of the local authorities feels unable to shoulder what it sees as an overlarge share of the costs.) Although like all canal enthusiasts (and particularly wearing my Chairman of Northern Canals hat) I want to see the complete 'Ring of Roses' cruising ring of the Rochdale and Huddersfield Narrow, the benefits of restoring the Huddersfield Narrow are in no way dependent on the complete ring being available - that is a bonus for boating enthusiasts. I am hoping that the links at officer level between the two schemes will allow the Rochdale Canal Trust to take a modified version of our delivery mechanism as a way out of their difficulties and that both schemes come to fruition.

Keep your fingers crossed.

Keith Gibson.

The situation regarding bicycles on canal towpaths is confused, to say the least. Whilst towpaths are generally regarded as public footpaths they are, in the main, on private land owned by British Waterways. But then, since BW is a nationalised organisation, does that mean the towpaths are owned by US, the great British public? No, it doesn't.

Furthermore, cycling on towpaths is generally forbidden. OK, you all cry, what about the basic right of boaters to use cycles to prepare locks in advance as has been the common practice since cycles were invented? Well, that is different. BW can issue a permit to exempt anybody from the prohibition, if they see fit, and such permits are fairly easily obtained.

Nevertheless, thousands of cyclists use towpaths regularly, if illegally, and cause few problems.

What if, though, somebody decided to make the towpaths official cycleways? How would the casual stroller or the angler with his/her 20 foot roach pole cope?

A well-meaning body known as Sustrans (stands for *sustainable transport* or something similar) has recently been allocated £42 MILLION of lottery money towards the provision of a nationwide system of safe cycleways. It seems that the system will be for Sustrans to offer encouragement, assistance and funds to local authorities and other similar bodies (including, presumably, British Waterways) to provide proper, safe cycleways in their respective areas, eventually completing a nationwide network.

All very laudable, but not without problems. The conflict between cyclists and pedestrians on recognised shared paths is well-known. The more serious conflict between the two on ordinary footways and public areas is often dangerous and frequent accidents occur. Introducing another conflict, nationwide, by giving cyclists the right to use towpaths is cause for great concern.

And what of the environmental damage? This is another important element in the developing story.

Below are several extracts from recent letters and articles reflecting the canal users' opinions.

Letter to Canal & Riverboat

## Towpaths discovered by 'serious cyclists'

Dear Sir,

In this area, towpath cycling has traditionally been a gentle activity carried out by lockwheelers, gongoozlers and countrymen and welcome as part of the whole canal scene, the only exception to this being in urban areas where there can be problems with teenagers on bikes.

The canals have now been discovered by the serious cyclists, kitted out with the special skin tight clothing, dayglow helmets, bulging panniers, maps in cases and extremely expensive mountain bikes. They race along the towpath as if they owned it and heaven help anyone who gets in their way. I don't suppose there is a simple answer but we do have to do something before someone is seriously injured by these selfish flying menaces.

Perhaps large notices at access points giving behaviour guidelines would help and if it doesn't, much as I hate to spoil the appearance of the towpath, barriers at regular intervals designed to pass pedestrians and pushchairs but exclude bicycles may be the answer. I would be against creating a designated cycling area as part of the towpath as this will encourage the arrogant behaviour and inevitably create a 'no go' area for the rest of us. We need to keep this item on the agenda until a solution is found.

C.C., Middlewich, Cheshire.

News item from Canal & Riverboat

## Worcester & Brum Cycleway opposed

The suggestion of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal towpath becoming a designated cycleway is being opposed by the majority of members of the W & B Canal Society.

But in voicing the members' opposition to the suggestion from Hereford and Worcester County Council, the Society Chairman, Mike Woodhead, says that they do not object to reasonable numbers of well behaved people being allowed to cycle on the towpath. The County Council's idea of a towpath cycleway is included in its bid for Millennium funding to cover a number of water based projects throughout the county.

# Towpaths and Cyclists

*"The cycleway" says the Council "would create a connection between Bromsgrove, Worcester and Malvern to the Sustrans cycle network utilising corridors alongside rivers and canals."*

Registering the Society's objections to a cycleway, Mr. Woodhead lists the following points:-

- i) The designation of the towpath as a cycleway would make cycling the prime 'use' and thus give it priority over other well established users leading to conflict ... and change the 'use' character of the canal.
- ii) There would be an adverse effect on the physical character and environment of the canal by surfacing to a width of five feet or more and the widening of narrow sections. Stressing that the canal is a Conservation Area, Mr. Woodhead says *"The narrow grassed towpath with a meandering path is part of the essential character and charm of the rural canal."*
- iii) There would be an adverse impact of the large numbers of cyclists on other users, in particular fishermen and walkers as well as boaters using locks and those who wish to moor up in the countryside and have barbecues on the towpath.

Having listed the Society's objections, Mr. Woodhead says *"We have no objection to the urban sections of the towpath being used as designated cycle routes providing the design is appropriate to the setting and the use is managed."*

"Tillerman" article in Canal & Riverboat

## Commonsense on two wheels

The multi-million pound award to Sustrans to create a nationwide network of cycleways is to be applauded - road traffic-free cycling routes, such as the track beds of disused railways, are a safe, enjoyable and healthy way of travelling. The trouble is that enthusiasm seems to be forging ahead without an equal demonstration of common sense by cycling enthusiasts.

Promoters of the Sustrans scheme have been casting covetous eyes on canal towpaths, but from what I can make out have yet to

acknowledge any practical concern for walkers, fishermen and boat moorings. If they are concerned, then they are keeping very quiet about it.

Of the three main users, boaters will be the least affected. However, fishermen are up in arms at the thought of hundreds of weekend cyclists travelling within inches of them and, all too frequently, not at a moderate speed. So far no one has come up with a solution even remotely acceptable to everyone.

To widen towpaths (not cutting down on the width of the navigation, please) would destroy the very appearance of a canal by having to buy extra land and ripping out centuries old hedgerows and trees (do I hear bellows of rage from the environmentalists?). I think it is time that Sustrans came out of the long grass and publicly explained exactly what they have in mind for towpath cycleways.

Letter from Calder Navigation Society to Huddersfield Canal Society

## Towpath Cycleways

I am writing to let you know CNS' views on proposals for cycleways on towpaths and to ask you to put the issue before HCS council. We should be grateful for your support and/or comments.

Despite what others may suggest, we are not anti-cyclist. We do not wish to see cycling prohibited from towpaths, especially as many boaters use bikes for lockwheeling or access to shops. There are occasional conflicts with walkers and anglers but generally we believe that, at present, there is an acceptable balance of usage. BW's by-laws prohibit cycling on their towpaths, though they do issue permits which exempt individuals from the prohibition.

Some cyclists use the towpaths regularly, though probably few of them are entitled to do so. It is one of our aims to see canals enjoyed by as many people as possible, whether they be boating, walking, cycling, fishing or just gongoozling. What does concern us is any proposal to create formal cycleways along towpaths. This would upset the delicate balance between existing users for most of whom usage is only permissive. Cyclists would have stronger

rights on towpaths converted to cycleways than other users.

SUSTRANS has been given a grant from the Millennium Commission of umpteen millions of pounds to create a long distance cycleway. SUSTRANS was formed to promote sustainable 'green' transport and we see that as a very worthy objective. However, use of towpaths for this purpose needs to be very carefully thought through. Proper consideration will, in most instances, demonstrate that they are definitely unsuitable for formal, as opposed to casual, cycling.

Our concern is not confined to the issue of conflicting uses, however. If cycleways were to be formally promoted, this would be very different from the casual use of towpaths by cyclists which occurs at present. Designated cycleways would not just be used in daylight hours: they would need to be available at night-time as well. It may not be part of SUSTRANS' initial agenda but lighting would eventually be demanded and, sooner or later, conceded.

Similarly, regular users would expect a well surfaced track. In built up areas neither lighting nor hard surfacing need be a problem. Indeed, in our area the towpath is so treated in Brighouse but more intensive use by pedestrians and/or cyclists would sooner or later bring demands for fencing to the canal edge. Such guardrailling has been in place under the bridges in Brighouse for many years and impedes the embarkation or disembarkation of crew: it is more than a nuisance as it can be dangerous. SUSTRANS wants to see guardrailling at all bridges.

However, by far the greater part of the network of navigable waterways is rural and such treatment would destroy part of the very character which attracts people to them. One suggestion is that towpaths be widened to create a separate track for cyclists on the 'dry' side. Much of our system is fenced with mature hedges or walls contemporary with the navigation: widening in this way would destroy such boundaries in a way which could not be restored. Whatever benefits there would be for cyclists, widespread construction of cycleways

along towpaths would be a disbenefit to the enjoyment of many people who use them at present. Canal users should consider the issue now and not wait until any well meaning but undesirable proposal has progressed too far to be challenged.

In the current transport debate cycling is seen as a 'Green' activity but we must guard against any fashionable but ill-considered proposals which may be brought forward. When I met BW I came away with the distinct impression that they are unlikely to resist SUSTRANS with any degree of conviction. They have since confirmed this in writing.

K.N., Triangle, West Yorkshire.

Our Council have considered the above letter and have agreed to support CNS in any future action regarding SUSTRANS' proposals.

So, there you have it. A very one-sided argument, perhaps, but anyone who has ever used a towpath for any purpose must agree with the general principles.

You, the readers of Pennine Link, are spread far and wide across Britain. If you see any proposals for cycle-ways in your locality, especially near waterways, go and check them out and, if you sympathise with what you have read above, make the effort to write to your MP, your local councillor, your local paper and the proposers of the scheme.

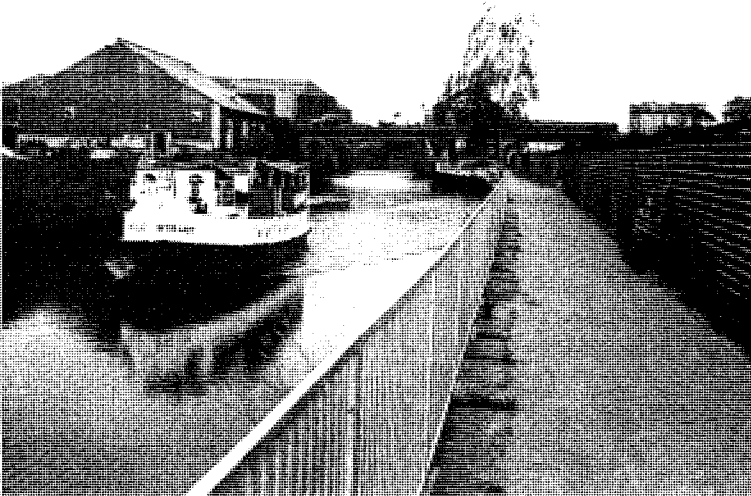
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As a post-script, and with the kind permission of Waterways World, here is a recent article on the same subject which I offer to you without comment.

## **NEW TOWPATH AT ROTHERHAM**

Over half a mile of new towpath and cycleway has been opened on the Don Navigation at Rotherham. This completes the missing link below Ickles Lock and continues the path to, and beyond, Rotherham Lock. It is an extension to the 5-mile route linking Sheffield's refurbished Victoria Quays to the centre of Rotherham which includes cantilevered steel decking to bypass a warehouse. The scheme is a joint project of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and

# Towpaths and Cyclists



Looking upstream towards Rotherham Lock. Along this section the new towpath and cycleway is a considerable height above water level and a fence has been installed for safety. *Photo: Christine Richardson*

available. Landscaping, with seating and flower beds, has been done at Rotherham Lock including a disabled access ramp to the moorings below. Downstream the new towpath is now complete to Greasbrough Road Bridge and work is already underway on the next section towards Parkgate. A deviation will be made around the moorings of Tulley's boatyard and the towpath will resume by the waterside at the winding hole beyond. RMBC has now allocated funding in this financial year for a further extension of the towpath and cycleway

downstream from Parkgate to Eastwood Lock.

Christine Richardson

British Waterways. Costs have been reduced by using a short length of the car park at the canalside by Rotherham Central rail station, thus also making public transport for walkers easily

## Canal Crisis

I look along the bank to find a good spot.  
 Then sit on my box and prepare to tackle up.  
 The trees raining blossom,  
 wave along with the breeze;  
 our Canadian goslings with their mother - so pleased.  
 Reeds and lilies;  
 a duck lands with a splash  
 right in the middle of some rubbish and trash.  
 Splashing in its panic  
 cringe at men's follies;  
 sunken old prams and rusty shopping trolleys.  
 Dogs foul the towpath;  
 children throwing stones,  
 how can they do this  
 the canal is part of our home.  
 Thoroughly disgusted,  
 've had enough.  
 Isn't it time we cleaned our act up?

## ELLESMERE PORT BOAT MUSEUM

More events you may wish to catch up on at the Boat Museum, in addition to the permanent exhibitions and working demonstrations. In a day you can also pay a visit to Cheshire Oaks Retail Park in Ellesmere Port AND pay a flying visit to Chester!

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Oct 5-6th   | Tugs and Pushers Activities themed to power, around the dock.  |
| Nov 9-10th  | Knobstick and Graining Painting Course<br>Advanced Weekend Painting Course - £60                           |
| Nov 23-24th | Christmas Craft Fair<br>Santa, narrowboat grotto and special admission price to Museum and Fair.           |
| Dec 14th    | 7.30pm Carol Concert<br>With mulled wine, mince pies, candlelight procession. Pre-booked tickets only - £4 |

For further details ring:-  
 The Boat Museum,

South Pier Road, Ellesmere Port - 0151 355 5017

I have to confess it - the Wife's Tale team have gone soft! We always said the Broads were sissy, no locks and plastic boats only once removed from those on the park lake. But, just for a lark, of course, we decided a couple of years ago to try to cover every navigable inch of the Broads in one week, which we did. We also had time to realise that we were in something approaching heaven on earth. Sometime we'll tell you all about it but the first week made us yearn for another, more leisurely one, and this year we have been again.

One of the sights we saw was the beautiful, graceful patrol boat (shown below), one of two operated by the Broads Authority and manned by retired Metropolitan Police officers. Their task is to assist boaters generally and give aid when required.

They also have the task of controlling speed on the Broads, where speed limits of 3, 4, 5 and 6 mph are changing constantly as one moves along. We just wondered - if the patrol boatman, using his radar gun, spots an offender - and they do prosecute - does he switch on his blue light and his OO-AA-OO-AA siren and plough off down the river at 3, 4, 5 or 6 miles per hour? Just a thought!

I have a confession to make. Ever since my first visit to the Broads in the mid-50s I have criticised the standard of a lot of the pubs.

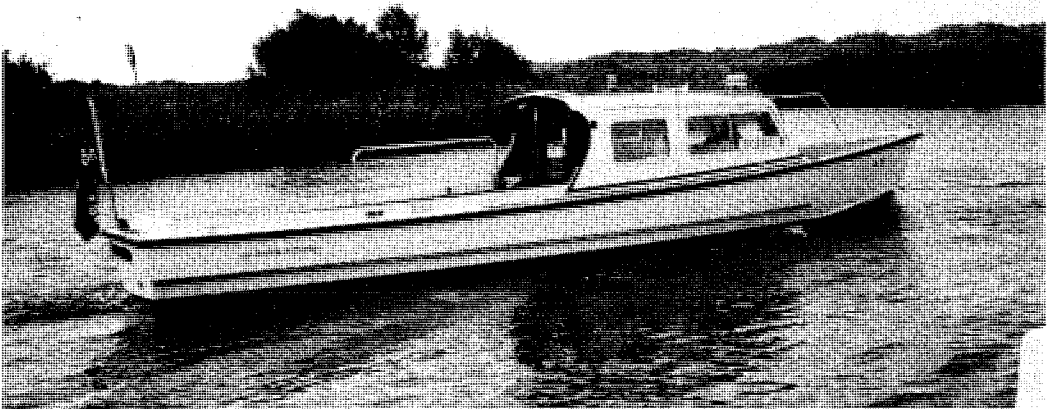
Our visits recently have done nothing to change my mind. The pubs are not poor but only average when compared with the ones I am used to in the Huddersfield Canal areas. Our standards of comfort, food (especially) and service are way in front of the much-lauded Broads pubs. With at least one exception!

Whilst we were away this time we went to the Red Lion at Coltishall, just a few minutes walk from the riverside. We had an incentive: a 10% off food voucher from Blakes' brochure! We were so glad we went.

The Red Lion is cosy and comfortable with an intriguing 'down stairs' bar (the upstairs bar is the 'play room' for locals!). On enquiring about the bitters on sale the first thing the landlord did was to pull about a quarter of a pint, as a taster. Old fashioned courtesy! By this time I had realised that Adnam's was on sale - memories of an earlier Suffolk holiday - so I settled for that, not bothering to try the pub's own special brew - Couteshall Weaselpis!

We followed a couple of drinks with a lovely meal from an extensive menu and left, well satisfied - and 10% better off! I heartily recommend The Red Lion if you are in that part of the world - and the warmth and courtesy of Andrew and Monica Burrell-Saward, the proprietors.

Ken Wright



**B**y the time you read this you will have missed the National Waterways Festival! It was held on August Bank Holiday Weekend at Windmill End on the Dudley No. 2 Canal at the southern end of the Netherton Tunnel.

Attending the Festival were TV puppets Rosie and Jim, and the BBC Radio 2 Roadshow with Ed (Stewpot) Stewart among others.

The National has been described as the flagship of the Inland Waterways Association's calendar and is largely run by the Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) as its way of re-paying IWA for its support each year. 1996 saw the added emphasis of IWA's Golden Jubilee and the whole event was run as a party to celebrate 50 years in business.

As well as the party atmosphere entertainers, boats, traders and crafts added to a programme already packed with entertainment, including WRG's Pantomime - (Diggerella) - a Boaters' Quiz and "It's a Lockout", the Boaters' Games.

The IWA has announced its intention to host a National Conference for waterway societies on Saturday 30th November at Sandwell Council House, West Midlands. Eminent speakers will be looking at subjects of major concern to all waterway societies and trusts who are engaged

either in the restoration of derelict waterways or are concerned about the care, conservation and use of navigable waterways.

Nearer home the Manchester Branch of IWA has produced a splendid Jubilee issue of their magazine "Manchester Packet", aided by a grant from the Mersey Basin Campaign. The layout is most attractive - and not at all unlike our own! Included was a description of the first "working pair" to reach Staley Wharf in over 60 years, which is repeated below.

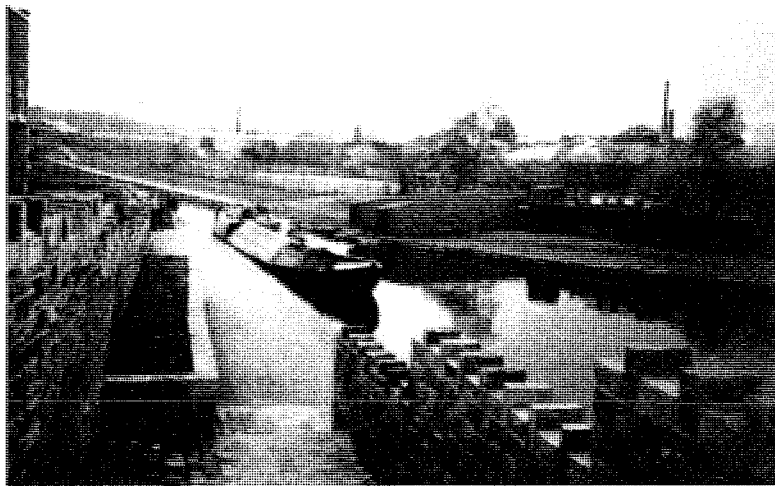
### First Working Pair to Stalybridge

On Sunday, 21st April, 1996 the Wooden Canal Craft Trust's pair *Forget-me-Not* and *Lilith* made a return trip up the newly re-opened stretch of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal from Ashton-under-Lyne to Stalybridge. This may be the first time that a motor and butty have ever been to Stalybridge as most of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal's traffic was horsedrawn. It is certainly at least 60 years since a pair have made the trip and it would be interesting to know if there are any precedents.

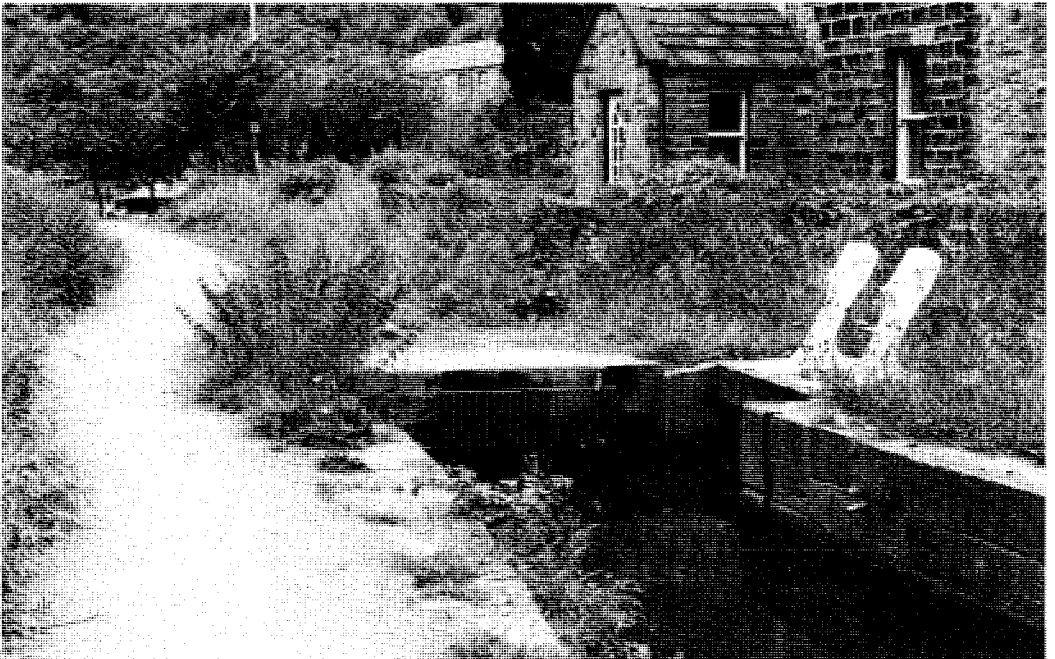
The 2 miles of canal have recently been dredged. The only depth problem encountered involved a ledge of rock protruding from the towpath side near Staley Wharf. The hydraulically operated bottom gates on Lock 2 gave some difficulty on the return trip.

*Forget-me-Not* and *Lilith* have spent the winter at Portland Basin Industrial Heritage Centre in Ashton-under-Lyne. Volunteer boat sitters have been staying on board to keep them safe from vandals. More boat sitters are needed as well as people to get *Lilith* ready for her intended future role as a recycling boat.

Anyone wishing to help with this project should contact the W.C.C.T. at 33 Beauchamp Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, Tameside, OL6 8LF.



'Forget-me-not' and 'Lilith' at Staley Wharf. HCS dredging boats on right. Photo: C. Leah





## Photo-feature - Blockages

Here is another selection of pictures showing the remaining blockages on the West side of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. Some were already scheduled for the Millennium Bid and others have been added recently.

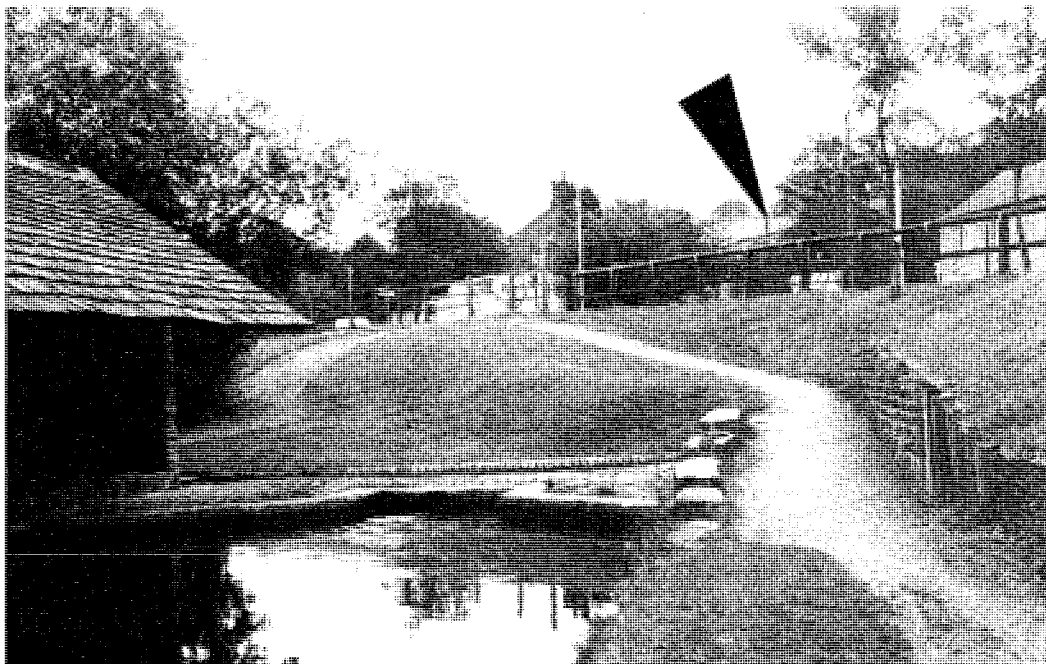
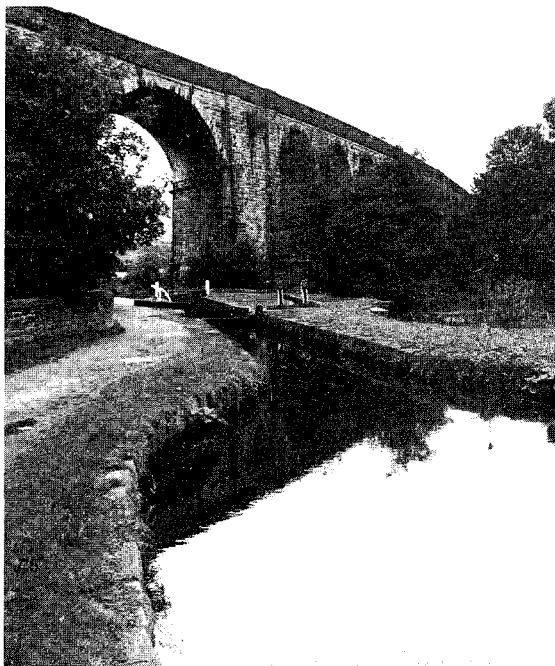
The journey starts at Diggle in the hope that, by the time we get to Stalybridge, we shall know where its future lies!

*Left:* Standedge Tunnel, Diggle Portal, showing the 1893 date-stone, the railway company arched brickwork and the "Oldham Otter" safely locked away and awaiting use as a trip boat - somewhere!

*Below Left:* Lock 24W, Wool Road, Dobcross. A long blockage because of 1960s road improvements. The old chicane over a hump-back bridge will be replaced by a restored lock and a longish tunnel. Suggestions of narrowing the A670 main road down again, to reduce road vehicle speeds, don't seem to be getting very far.

*Below Right:* The other end of the Wool Road blockage. Its length can be judged by the position of the telegraph pole (arrowed) from which the other photo was taken.

*Right:* "Owd Sag", Dobcross aqueduct with Lime Kiln Lock beyond. Not strictly a blockage but in need of serious maintenance. Beyond the aqueduct is Lime Kiln Lock (23W) recently added to the Millennium Bid - with Dungebooth Lock (22W). These two locks were never properly restored and are now in a dilapidated state after 10 years of use by trip boats.





# Photo-feature - Blockages

*Left:* Owd Sag from below, living up to its name. The aqueduct carries the Canal over the R. Tame. Readers will recall the photograph of Owd Sag, with icicles, in Issue No.117.

*Below Left:* High Street, Uppermill (Wade Lock, 21W). Viewed from the top side; the new (restored) lock will drop boats to below road level and a renewed bridge will allow passage beneath the road, all in one move and without tow-path. The A670 here is heavily trafficked

and a temporary - probably Bailey type - bridge will almost certainly be needed.

*Below:* High Street, Uppermill from below. The end of the culvert under the road (arrowed) can just be made out. The drop in Lock 21W can be estimated by looking at the height of the white van on the road over the Canal.

*Photos: K. Wright*



## HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY presents a 3 LOCKS CRUISE

The Greater Manchester will leave Portland Basin, Ashton-under-Lyne at 11am on Saturday 5th October for a MEMBERS ONLY return cruise to Staley Wharf.

The return fare will be £2.50 per person plus £3 for a hot pot and apple pie lunch at the Wharf Tavern.

It is anticipated to return to Portland Basin for about 3.30pm. Obviously there is a restriction on seat numbers, so it's a case of first come, first served!

Make your reservations with the skipper, Peter Ruffley, on 0161 494 0532 (home).

Allan Knott



**Y**ou couldn't knock the bods (and boddeses) of British Waterways for their massive support of the Birmingham shindig, billed as the first World Canals Conference.

Bernard Henderson, chairman of British Waterways was there, so

was the vice-chairman, Sir Peter Hutchison, and so were a vast and varied assortment of board members and paid officials. Head office and regional bigwigs, managers, legal brains, accountants, engineers, scientists, environmentalists, planners, marketing moguls, architects, recreation and leisure experts, customer relations specialists and researchers from most parts of the U.K.

If my admittedly shaky arithmetic is right, some 49 B.W. accredited souls were included in the total attendance of 262 who had registered for the full three days of the pioneering get-together at Brum's state-of-the-art International Convention Centre.

Audrey Smith, chairman of the Inland Waterways Association was there to press the flesh and, as head of the body co-hosting the do, to wish everybody a smiling welcome. And the third co-host, Birmingham Council, was represented in strength - fourteen assorted staff and elected members were there as official conference nominees to take full advantage of the Public Relations opportunities.

And they did just that. Speaker after speaker extolling the virtues of Birmingham and its canals, transformed from muddy, mirky, rainbow-watered, rubbish riddled ditches, with enough plastic and metal milk crates to start a dairy, into clear waterways with massive canalside developments. Not a sign now, of course, of the old rickety wharves and motley assortment of commercial carriers at Gas Street Basin - but why does a brand new pub have bollards and "no mooring" signs?

Birmingham's planning chief, Les Sparks, highlighted the clean up in a rather graphic, tongue-in-cheek way. *"It was said that if you*

*dropped your camera into a Birmingham canal the film would automatically develop. Not now."* he said. But I'll take a bet that you can't get round the Wyreley and Essington without having the weed hatch cover off a few times.

Then there was a claim that the startling new looks and uses of inner city waterways had created a local feel good factor and brought a rash of personal pride. This had prompted a Birmingham taxi driver to turn his back on financial gain. Told by a visitor from abroad that he was going to the conference the cabbie took him on a tour of the restored and rejuvenated canal areas turning off the meter as a gesture of goodwill and sincerity!

With a conference theme of "New uses for old waterways" it was only right that the Birmingham experience should be highlighted - but, hopefully, not over-exposed. Not a chance. And when, at an evening reception, there was yet another gushing eulogy to beautiful, go-ahead Brum, Jeff Brierley from Tameside, could take no more. *"I've heard enough and it's rabbit food anyway. Let's go and have a steak,"* he said. So we did - washing the sirloin down with an acceptable pint and watching England fall to Germany (European Cup on television) in a canalside hostelry.

The speakers were plentiful, had flown in from many parts of the world, and, as expected were a mixture - some amusing, some informative, some yawningly dull, stilted and unimaginative. They included, for example, Mr Guthrie Hutton, chairman of the Forth and Clyde Canal Society, who spoke with authority and practical knowledge about canal restoration and developments.

Guthrie, who has campaigned for the restoration of Scotland's waterways for a couple of decades, knows a fair bit about funding, including bids for Millennium cash - a subject which, of course, our own David Sumner can justifiably claim to be "au fait" with. For a conference with a regeneration theme he should, logically, have been on the team of speakers - but suggestions on these lines apparently fell on deaf organising ears.

Alan Jervis, of course, also knows a bit about canal restoration and regeneration, and the

ex-chairman of WRG was on the platform to talk about the role of volunteers - and to make a confession. He admitted that, when the idea of restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow was first mooted, he had been one of the sceptics, saying it was not achievable. Shades of a certain BW official who was of the same opinion - and told Bob Dewey so.

There were speakers from America, Ireland, the Netherlands, France, Sweden and a plethora of subjects on domestic waterways were dealt with. The value of waterfronts to the private sector; canals as the vital catalyst in Britain's urban regeneration; the amenity value of canals; environmental management; funding for canals - and so on.

Robert Jones, MP, the government minister who knows at first hand the value of restoring the Huddersfield Narrow, was the official opener and Labour's Shadow minister, Keith Vaz, spoke on "Labour's Vision for Canals" but wasn't

over-visionary.

Some lucky people went on a canals tour and we were all bussed over to Coventry Canal Basin where Coventry City Council beat Birmingham hands down in the hospitality stakes with a super buffet (even Jeff was pleased with it), copious quantities of wine, dancers and a sizzling, sparkling fireworks show.

At the end of it all the question had to be asked. Was it worth while? From the angle of building up business contacts for private sector delegates, the answer was probably yes. As a booster for Birmingham (now to be declared a world centre of waterways excellence), the answer was certainly yes. As a party for British Waterways the answer was a convivial, comradely yes.

As a useful, informative forum for rank and file canal societies, which, after all, are the life blood of the waterways world, the answer was a firm no. An interesting exercise - but not much else.

Alec Ramsden

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## The Mikron Theatre Company present 'A Woman's Place'

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As part of their Autumn 1996 Tour, the Mikron Theatre Company will be appearing at the Wool Road Road Shipment Warehouse, Dobcross, at 7.30pm on Monday 28th October.

They will be giving a performance of 'A Woman's Place' and tickets are priced £5 (£3 concessions); available from the Society Offices - 0161 339 1332 or Saddleworth Museum - 01457 874093.

Written by Mike Lucas and Rodney Matthew, with music & lyrics by Jim Woodland, this exciting new production tells the story of the fight for female suffrage which began in the North of England.

It is the story not only of the militant suffragettes, remembered for their violent struggle to obtain the vote, as epitomised by the Pankhursts, but of the thousands of suffragists who, using peaceful means, tried to bring about freedoms for which women are still fighting today. It was an epic

and, at times, dangerous struggle.

*'A powerful and emotive piece of theatre ... they create for us (with tremendous versatility) a maze of colourful characters ... some splendidly punchy songs ... do see it, if you get the chance.'*

### Huddersfield Examiner

The Mikron have their dry land base at the Marsden Mechanics, Peel Street, Marsden, Huddersfield, HD7 6BW (01484 843701), but their home and method of transport since 1975 is the narrowboat 'Tyseley'.

1996 has been their 25th anniversary tour of the inland waterways. They travel by van to nearby pubs, museums, village halls, community centres and arts centres, aiming to attract people who are not normally theatre-goers or who live some distance from theatre centres.

*Come along for a great evening's entertainment!*

While the restoration team are busy at Lock 8W, Heyrod, we can look forward to the next lock restoration project - 12W at Scout Green.

On first inspection, the exposed chamber walls seem to be in very good condition (see photo below) and there is every chance that little or no rebuilding 'will be required here. However, the washwall on the towpath side immediately below the lock has suffered major movement and will be reconstructed on a new alignment some metres from its present position.

Even more significant, it appears the canal bed from the lock towards Scout Tunnel has, as a result of adjacent land slippage, experienced 'heave', physically raising the bed! If this proves to be the case, the complete stretch will have to be excavated and re-lined.

As you can see from the photo above opposite, the canal is heavily overgrown, the water being restricted to a narrow channel near the footpath side. The vegetation includes stands of Greater Reed Mace, Arrowhead, Flowering Rush, Water

Plantain, Burr Reed, etc. - plants which have helped give the Canal its Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) status.

The possible excavation and re-lining would destroy all the vegetation and so, after discussions with English Nature's Selina Hill and British Waterways' ecologists Jonathan Briggs and Kath Ferguson, it was proposed to assume the worst scenario and transplant clumps of vegetation to an offside location above Lock 12.

This section of canal had been dredged early in 1994 and therefore presents a site which would not be disturbed. The photo below opposite shows machine operator Ken Williams extracting another healthy clump of vegetation for barrowing away by volunteer Jim Woods to its new, safe location.

Restoration work will start in earnest once Lock 8W has been completed and the nature of the canal bed problem has been determined. We shall keep you posted.

Bob Gough





# The Remaining Blockages on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal - Autumn 1996



## 1 Stalybridge Town Centre

Start Date - First Quarter 1999  
 Finish Date - Third Quarter 2000  
 Estimated Cost - £8.5 m

## 2 Hartshead Infill & Lock 8W

Works in Progress  
 Estimated Cost - £1.44 m

## 3 Scout Tunnel

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

## 4 Division Bridge Aqueduct

Start Date - Second Quarter 1997  
 Finish Date - Third Quarter 1997  
 Estimated Cost - £300 k

## 5 Mann's Wharf to Frenches

Start Date - Third Quarter 1997  
 Finish Date - First Quarter 1998  
 Estimated Cost - £100 k

## 6 Frenches to High Street

Start Date - First Quarter 1998  
 Finish Date - Third Quarter 1998  
 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

## 8 Old Sag Aqueduct

Start Date - Second Quarter 1999  
 Finish Date - Third Quarter 1999  
 Estimated Cost - £205 k

## 9 Wool Road Bridge

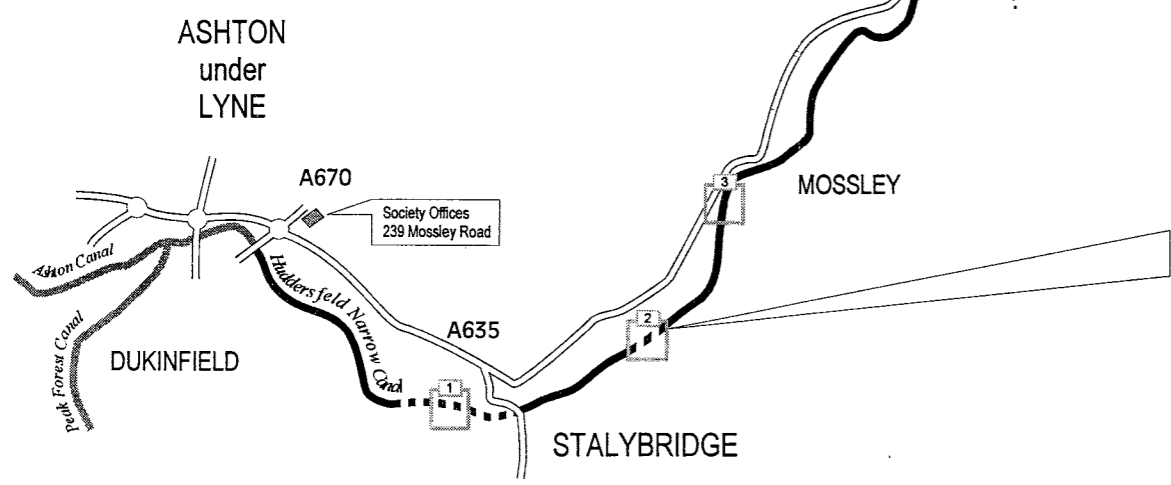
Start Date - Third Quarter 1998  
 Finish Date - First Quarter 1999  
 Estimated Cost - £450 k

## 10 Ward Lane to Standedge

Start Date - First Quarter 1999  
 Finish Date - Second Quarter 1999  
 Estimated Cost - £40 k

## 11 Standedge Tunnel

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



Scale approx. 1" to 1 mile

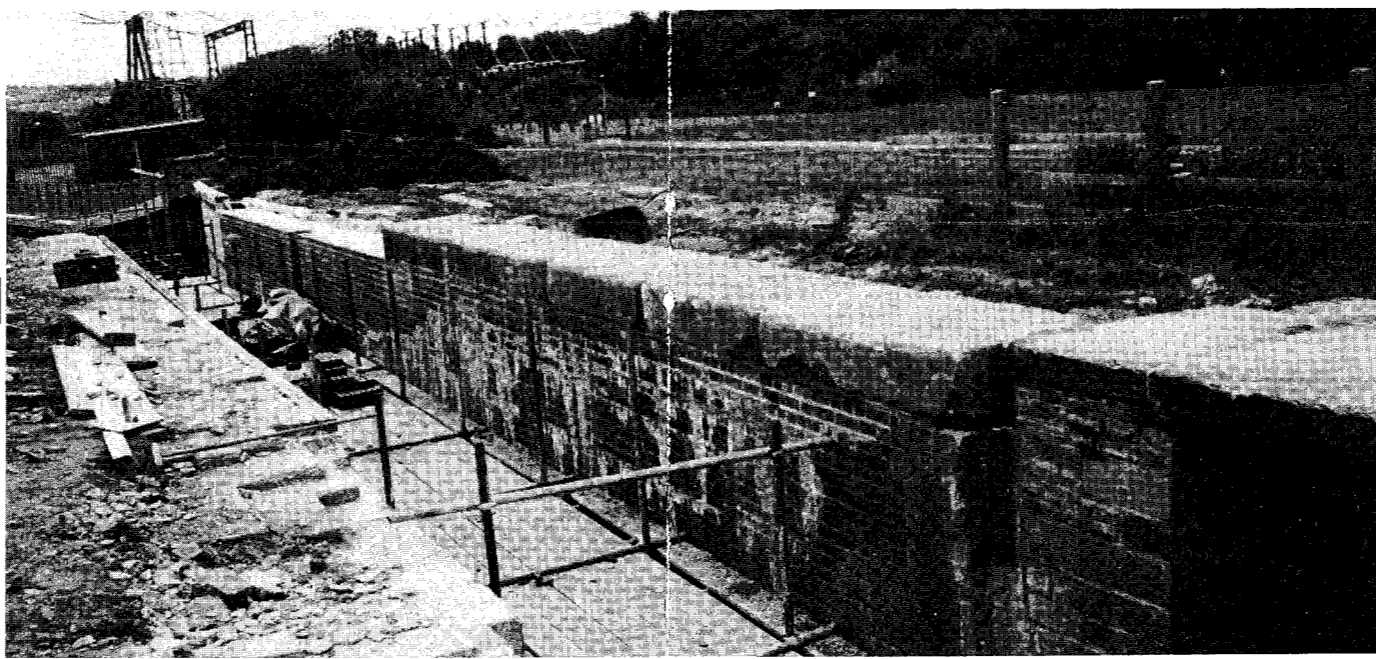


Photo: J. McLoughlin

Diggle Portal  
 Photo on page 16

Wool Road Bridge  
 Photos on pages 16 & 17

High St Bridge & Wade Lock  
 Photos on pages 18 & 19

'Owd Sag' Aqueduct  
 Photo on page 18

Work in progress rebuilding Lock 8W at Heyrod; the view is from the headgate end of the lock towards Stalybridge.

Since the view shown in the Summer Issue, the offside lock chamber wall has been substantially rebuilt in blue engineering brick and backfilled with concrete.

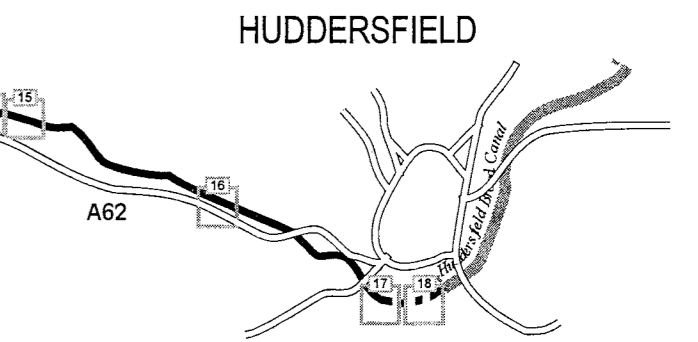
Initial excavation had shown that this section of wall was completely

missing and specialist L-shaped concrete wall units were required to stabilise the ground and define the subsequent construction.

Substantial sandstone coping stones, retrieved when the lock was first excavated, are being laid on the offside chamber wall. Unfortunately, only a limited number of copings remained intact, so much of the nearside wall will be capped with concrete copings, cast back at the Society's yard in Ashton.

The sharp-eyed amongst you may spot the modern mark of our stone mason, Andy Sharp, an initial that pops up all along the Narrow where our restoration team have been working.

\* 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 report on pages 6-9 for the latest news)



## 15 Golcar Aqueduct

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

## 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

# Lock 12W Preview

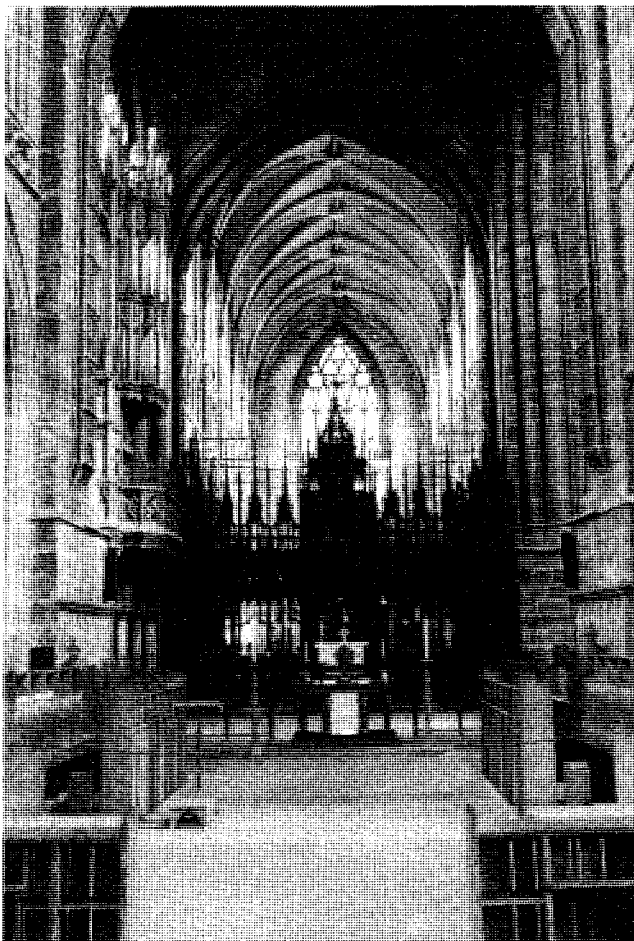




It's early April 1993 and Anne & Ken are three days into their first canal trip without the help of the younger end of the family. Even William, who is still around to see nobody falls in, is 112 in doggy years! They have over-nighted in Chester after three days out from Anderton in Alvechurch Boats' House Sparrow.

## Thursday 1st April

Weather - Fine but overcast  
Destination - Nowhere! Staying in Chester.  
Distance - About 10 miles - walking!



Chester cathedral

## A DAY OFF

Had a fairly decent night but the finger I trapped at Beeston Iron Lock is hurting a lot - hope it improves soon - decided to have a leisurely lie-in, do some shopping, etc. Got up about 9 a.m. (that's a decent lie-in for us) and both dressed in clean 'town' clothes - the ones we travelled in! HE, of course, immediately disappeared down the engine hatch, being concerned to see if we had lost engine cooling water again, like yesterday. We had.

It turned out that our fitter had loosened a hose from the cooling system to let out water to fit the new thermostat and - you've guessed it - hadn't tightened it up again! Soon done with HIS ever-present small tool kit.

Decided to ring Simon but no directories in telephone booths (and I for once hadn't brought my address book). Walked into main street to Post Office - no directories - then to B.T. offices - the same! Both advised "there's a full set in the Public Library". What a system! So we got the number at last and then had to leave a message - hope he got it.

Went to M & S and did a "super shop" for food. Spoiling ourselves. Had a look at some jackets for Ken, really nice, blazer cloth in deep colours, all the rage at present. Back to the boat to dump bags and then to the Old Harker, canalside, old mill, pub for lunch.

"Decorated" with bare wooden floors, miscellaneous old chairs and tables, books, pictures, bric-a-brac, etc. It's a house style that is repeated in another excellent pub, 5 miles outside Chester, and owned by the same company, which Simon took us to on a later visit. Had lovely meal but very expensive.

Walked along the city walls to the Cathedral and sat and listened to a lunch-time organ recital - a wonderful bonus. There's nothing like listening

## The Wife's Tale - Part 30

to soaring organ music played in a magnificent cathedral. As the beautiful music washed over us I couldn't help reflecting on that time, so long ago now, when I was confirmed here in the cathedral.

There is a constant stream of people through the cathedral as it is on a main footpath through the town centre! Makes it very "used" and openly friendly. We had a long look round inside then back onto the walls for a long walk, taking in the river and weir and race-course and Roman remains and beautiful buildings. It is a lovely place.

Then we went back into the shopping centre and the famous 'rows', up and down arcades and back to the boat for a cuppa and William. Then another walk on the walls in the opposite direction - must have walked miles. Back to boat to wait for Simon, still hoping he got the message. HE had a long sleep, I read. Simon eventually arrived at 8.45, having eaten! Flying

visit to let us know he was in touch, coming back at 10.00pm to sleep on board. Ken went to get us a Chinese - there's a huge Chinese restaurant not 50 yards away from the boat! - excellent - rang Sarah, she's coming to the boat at 7.00pm tomorrow. Simon returned and the chaps went to Old Harker for a pint (or two) - bed late!

### Friday, 2nd April

Weather - Blue skies and sun.  
Destination - Ellesmere Port Boat Museum, back to Chester.  
Distance - 17.5 miles  
Locks - 6

### INVASION?

I woke early but didn't get up till 7.30am. Finger a bit better. Set off at 8.00am through the



Roman remains at Chester

deep gap in the sandstone cliffs. The sight ahead here is amazing - the canal seems to be aiming for a railway bridge - then Wales! As you get nearer to the bridge the steep staircase of locks shows up, where the canal dives under the railway and into the lower basin. Impressive locks which Simon operated while I cleaned and tidied the boat.

The lower basin (site of 1995 National Festival) is very impressive and crying out for sympathetic restoration. I can only quote from Pearson's Guide "... *exploring the northern end of the Shropshire Union and stopping short at Chester is akin to not listening to the end of Beethoven's 5th Symphony, or electing not to see the cheese board at the Savoy!*" A lovely, meandering lock-free drive in brilliant sunshine. Larks a-plenty and greenfinches.

Tranquility suddenly ruined by gunshots - looked through binoculars and spotted two men in full camouflage gear with army berets hiding in some

bushes. Had we stumbled on a terrorist attack? Next minute a full platoon of fully-clad and weaponed soldiers burst out of the bushes onto the towpath, right by the boat! Quite scary for a split second until the leading, very fit, sergeant who was obviously in charge, saluted and said "Good Morning" as the rest charged off in the direction of Chester.

We fairly soon realised we were in the home territory of the Cheshire Regiment - great stuff, though!

Arrived at Ellesmere Port at 12.00 noon - plenty to see and well worth the visit. Went aboard several old boats and into the period cottages, as well as the more conventional "museum" rooms. Also watched a blacksmith at work - midweek other trades appeared not to be working. Set off at 1.45pm after sandwich and hot cross bun lunch. Ominous clouds gathering. Journey slow due to continuous (miles of 'em) permanent moorings - being good boaters we always reduce



Chester Locks

# The Wife's Tale - Part 30

speed but, after the first couple of miles! Well! Simon slept most of the way - he works twelve hour shifts at his yoghurt factory and is permanently jiggered - mentally and physically.

Saw jays, beautiful birds and a tame falcon on one of the live-in narrow boats.

Back up the staircase locks into Chester and moored up at 4.30pm. HE went to M & S for his jacket (having spent a full day thinking about it!) - I went to Tesco. Sat around and chatted until Sarah arrived at 6.50pm (brilliant timing for Sarah!). Glad to see her - out to the Garden Restaurant, five minutes walk along the walls - Simon's treat. A superb dinner in elegant Georgian surroundings.

Back for 10.00pm - well replete. Sarah left for home and gave Simon a lift to his girlfriend's. On our own with a couple of drinks - bed 11.00ish. Simon is meeting us for a 9.30am start tomorrow - we'll see!

## Saturday 3rd April

Weather - Fine but cold wind - but, later! Well!  
Destination - Barbridge Junction  
Distance - 15.75 miles  
Locks - 13

## WHY DO WE DO THIS?

Had a bit of a lie-in, got up about 8.00am, went for a paper, had breakfast - Simon arrived at 9.15am (wonders never cease) - made him breakfast and off we went - took on water at Hoole Lane lock. Moored up at the Shady Oak for lunch - thought it worth another try! Simon decided to leave us at Beeston to get back to Chester in good time. Started to rain as we left Shady Oak and got steadily worse - and worse - and worse!

Locked with another boat - Sheerwater - brand new one that we saw being "launched" (dropped from a crane) in Chester - it was on its way to its



new home on the River Soar.

At Beeston Stone lock we came upon two boats full of school kids, one jammed sideways across the top of the by-wash - couldn't get away - other one was struggling. Sorted them both out, very satisfying. All the kids were soaked - not a waterproof between 'em.

Stopped briefly at Beeston - went to quaint marina shop to find out bus times - (10 past the hour if you're ever passing that way!) - after a brief chat Simon left - sorry to see him go. The rain got steadily worse - locked with Sheerwater all the way up to the staircase at Bunbury - took us a long time to get through as Dartline hire boats were in full "changeover day" mode. Sheerwater's owners went into shop and returned with a brand new, traditional, brass-bound chimney for their boat!

We ploughed on regardless, wearing every bit of waterproof gear - at first taking it in turns to steer but then decided we might both just as well

get soaked together (it saves arguments later on). The driving wind and rain was dead ahead and went straight through Ken's clothes. He was livid! A man coming the other way, forging along with the wind behind him shouted a cheery "*afternoon*". I didn't quite catch what HE said!

Eventually moored up just past Barbridge at the private moorings - time 6.30pm - v. glad to stop. Changed into dry clothes - I was wet through too by this time - realised how v. few places there were to dry things. Had Indian dinner which warmed us up a bit. Spent the evening watching T.V. and trying to keep awake - bed 10.30pm!

### Sunday 4th April

Weather - Brilliant sun and blue skies.  
Destination - Anderton  
Distance - 20.25 miles  
Locks - 8



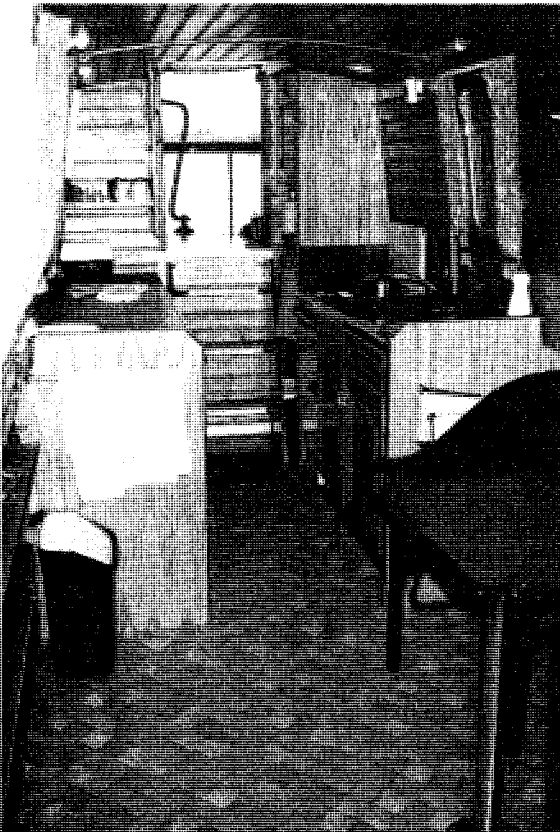
The Boat Park - Ellesmere Park Boat Museum.

# The Wife's Tale - Part 30

## THIS IS WHY WE DO IT

Woke to brilliant sunshine - a miracle after yesterday. I had a bad night again - I've realised that the side of the boat isn't v. well insulated and I'm pressed up against it all night. Really cold.

Anyway, the beautiful day makes up for that! Had breakfast and off at 9.15am. Met a lot of boats on the Middlewich Branch. One "Anderton" with two Aussies on board; another with a lovely white-whiskered farmer from Shelf, in Yorkshire, on his new (to him) narrow-boat - only been boating a month and absolutely full of it! Then three boats together with a school party from Batley. "Sir" and his wife know Austen Johnson (the boat not the man) that we have



House Sparrow - the Galley at the back!

crewed, for disabled children, on the Calder and Hebble Navigation. Small world.

Moored up for a leisurely lunch then locked through Middlewich. The Big lock is murder; Ken had to help me with the gates. Moored up, as before often enough, at Andersen Boats.

Walked into the town, bought a paper and had a look round which we've never done before! Not much to see, really.

Very hot, sunny, afternoon so meandered slowly back. Decided to moor for the night at Marbury Country Park (another first). Not unfamiliar to Ken, though. His sister used to live immediately across the canal in a very isolated row of salt-workers' cottages - probably canal-workers' in an earlier period.

Nearly a cloudless sky - enjoyed a lovely dinner (by courtesy of M & S). After a read of the paper started to pack, get the boat cleaned and stuff packed away - what a job - took all of three-quarters of an hour! Just the remains of the food to put in tomorrow. Watched Play on Two - very funny. Bed late - 11.30!

## Monday 5th April

Weather - Cloudy, torrential rain plus wind; sun later.  
Destination - Home via the marina.

## HO, HUM - ANOTHER ONE OVER

Woke up at 5.30am to torrential rain drumming on the roof - nice to be in a warm cabin - got up eventually at 7.30 - last minute pack and tidy - breakfast, and by the time we set off weather turned fine and blue skies on the way! Moored up at base by 8.20am - quick look round - packed the car - Ken sorted out paperwork and got deposit returned. Away by 8.45 - home in an hour. A good week!

## NEXT TIME:

1995 - Mouth of the river Trent to Stratford-upon-Avon in two weeks.

Photos: A & K Wright

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

On the 21st January 1807 Thomas Telford reported to the Huddersfield Canal Company on the progress with Standedge tunnel and on the subject of water supply to the HNC. The arrival of Telford on the scene was the marker for the beginning of completion, Telford being possibly the most widely respected canal engineer of the age.

Telford was born the son of a crofter in Eskdale (Scotland) on 9th August 1757, his father dying before that year was over. As their cottage was tied to his father's employment he was both fatherless and homeless before he was six months old. Friends in the village community, and in particular Telford's mother's brother, rallied round and saw to it that he received an education in the village school. Apprenticed to a stone mason, after schooling, Telford was back at home within a few months due to ill-treatment by the mason. At this stage Thomas Jackson (a nephew of his mother's) stepped in and arranged another apprenticeship, to Andrew Thomson of Langholm, which became the making of him. As a result of his early training he even prepared his own father's memorial.

After a year spent in Edinburgh, Telford decided that his future lay elsewhere and set off for London, by a stroke of fortune getting there by delivering a horse! By a quirk of fate Telford managed an introduction to two of the foremost architects of the day - Robert Adam and Sir William Chambers. In the employ of the latter he worked preparing stone for Somerset House. Government cut backs (what's new?) resulted in the slowing down of work on Somerset House so Telford moved on. After various jobs throughout the south of England, Telford eventually landed the job of County Surveyor to Shropshire. Here he led renovations on Shrewsbury Castle, redevelopment of the town centre and the building of a hospital and gaol. On the Roman site of Uriconium he led an archaeological dig examining Roman building methods. By today's

standards the archaeology would be seen as destructive but at least it stopped plundering of the site for building material and possibly became the starting point of the modern science.

Telford's reputation of working in stone was further enhanced when, in 1788, he was asked to report on a leaking roof at St. Chad's Church in Shrewsbury. He reported that stabilisation of the walls was far more urgent than the roof and that disaster was imminent without such work. Within three days the church collapsed! From here Telford's career was unstoppable. It is impossible within the bounds of this article to list his works fully. Moreover it is difficult to understand, in his day of poor communications and transport, how one man could complete the amount of work that Telford did.

Forty road bridges in Shropshire in five years, six of the thirteen bridges over the Severn (with one exception, all standing to this day) and (of greatest importance to us) his appointment in September 1793 as engineer and architect to the Ellesmere Canal Company (including what we now call the Llangollen canal). Debate continues as to whether the great Pontcysyllte aqueduct should be attributed to Telford or Jessop but, either way, there it stands to this day.

Telford was the designer of the Caledonian and Crinan canals in Scotland (as well as a number of other Scottish canals) and even went to Sweden to work on the Gota canal. Further involvement in England included Gloucester & Berkely, improvements to the Birmingham canal network, the second Harecastle tunnel on the Trent and Mersey Canal and the last canal of the era, the Liverpool & Birmingham Junction (today known as the Shropshire Union).

Small wonder that this man made a four year prediction for the completion of Standedge which proved accurate almost to the day. I must conclude with an apology to Telford for having to omit so much of his achievement in such a short article.

John Harwood

## Thomas Telford 1775 - 1834

## SPECIAL CONSTABLES TO PATROL ASHTON CANAL

This was the headline to a recent article in Canal and Riverboat reporting on the efforts made to remove the intimidation and vandalism that has been occurring, increasingly, over the last few years, on part of the Ashton Canal.

It is vital that the worst area, covering about 3 miles between locks 2 and 18 (Ashton Flight), is cleaned up, essentially for the well-being of boaters but also because the canal here passes close by - and hopefully will become part of - the site of the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester.

Last year the canal experienced its worst ever year in terms of vandalism directed at boats and intimidation of crews by gangs of youths. The situation has become so serious, particularly during school holidays, that many boaters now regard that part of the Ashton Canal as a 'no go' area. This, of course, affects anyone who is hoping to complete the Cheshire Ring by boat.

Meanwhile, to reassure boaters, the police have been giving the length as much attention as they could spare and British Waterways have initiated an "escorted locking" service with the co-operation of the police.

One escorted convoy leaves each end of the flight at 10.00am each day. Craft assemble at Lock 1 (Ancoats) if travelling East, which gives boats plenty of time to travel from the safe (and superb) moorings at Castlefield Basin, Manchester. Craft heading in the opposite direction assemble at Lock 18 (Fairfield Junction).

Regular patrols of the flight have been covered by Special Constables on bicycles assisted, when possible, by regular officers.

However, in a new initiative which has received cash support from the Home Office, the police are now acquiring a patrol boat, to be manned by Specials and, apparently, there is no shortage of volunteers for special training. Whether this includes rowing as well as lock-wheeling is not known! It is doubtful - we shall have to wait and see - if the boat is of the calibre of those operated by the Broads Authority (see photo on page 14). Whatever, the initiative is welcomed and is to be applauded.

As a footnote - in the earlier days of the incidents the authorities used to recommend boaters to pass through the flight during school hours or before 11.00am at week-ends, "before the kids get up"!

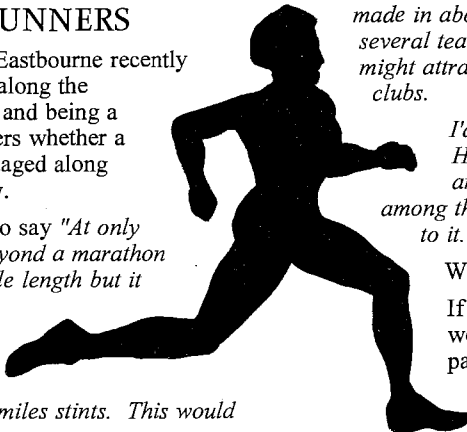
Ken Wright

## CALLING ALL RUNNERS

A fellow member from Eastbourne recently observed a towpath run along the Shropshire Union Canal and being a runner himself he wonders whether a similar event could be staged along the Huddersfield Narrow.

In his letter he goes on to say "At only 20 miles it would not be a marathon runner to cover the whole length but it would probably be more fun to organise it as a relay with, say, four members in a team, each doing two by five miles stints. This would make the logistics easier.

With people who are regular runners, even if only of moderate ability, a return trip could be



*made in about six to seven hours! With several teams it could become a race and might attract entries from local running clubs.*

*I'd be prepared to run for the Huddersfield Canal Society and I am sure there must be others among the membership who would be up to it."*

Well - are there?

If a run or race was to be staged would you be interested in participating (and/or organising).

Let us know at the Ashton office and if numbers warrant it, the idea will be progressed.

Jo Young  
Membership Secretary



## AN UNDERVALUED ASSET

Britain's Inland Waterways

Report of the  
Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council.

IWAAC was created by the 1968 Transport Act to advise the Secretary of State for the Environment and British Waterways (BW) on a range of matters related to the use and development, for recreation and amenity purposes, of BW's waterways. The report was prepared by seventeen members drawn from a wide range of environmental, water-based and academic backgrounds.

The Council was asked to develop long-term thinking about BW's responsibilities but chose not to look at BW in isolation. They felt that there was a need to report on the whole inland waterway scene, including rivers (then National Rivers Authority) and privately owned stretches, to develop a sound basis for future advice to BW.

The central theme is that Britain's system of inland waterways is a national asset of unique and outstanding quality. It exists not just to provide pleasure and profit for today's citizens; we are trustees of a splendid though undervalued inheritance. The nation should cherish and conserve it, restore it and improve it so that, for another 200 years, future generations may also enjoy and benefit from it.

### Summary of the Report's findings

The report is about Britain's inland waterways, the Cinderella among our heritage and recreation assets. These waterways, all 8,300 plus kilometres (5,160 or so miles) in the care of British Waterways, the Environment Agency, Broads Authority, the Department of Agriculture, Northern Ireland, and a multitude of other bodies and individuals, are a national treasure, a legacy of extraordinary richness and variety which, apart from a handful of popular areas and stretches, the nation as a whole still undervalues and under-resources.

The system is not a museum; it is a usable asset; its heritage a living one. Parts of it carry commercial freight. Parts of it play a vital role in land drainage and water supply. Parts of it are being used for new telecommunication routes.

But its dominant function is a resource of increasing importance for leisure, tourism, sport and recreation. It is capable, given the right policies and investment, of adding to the quality of life of millions in our highly urbanised country.

Not nearly enough is being done to give our waterways the support they need to make this contribution. The structure within which the whole system is managed is fundamentally unbusinesslike. The pattern of ownership is too fragmented; the incidence of funding too uneven: the services to businesses and customers too haphazard; the ambitions for use and development too low key; the attitudes to protection and conservation too short term.

Nationally and locally, too many of our waterways lack political clout. When a leading government department can produce a policy document on the nation's heritage and fail even to mention waterways; when even one local authority can turn its back on what may be its greatest single asset; when many tourists, visitors and residents can largely ignore them; then it is clear that changes are needed at all levels.

With the establishment of the Environment Agency and the government's consultative Review of Navigation Functions, waterways are at last higher on the political agenda. A wider look is timely.

The message of the report is a call for action on three broad and inter-related fronts:

- \* a higher status for our waterways at international, national and local level *so as to promote*
- \* more money coming into the system *in order to preserve*
- \* its long-term value by shaping development and uses to conservation-based objectives through sustainable partnership management.

We spell out in detail what needs to be done by the waterway authorities themselves, by local authorities, by government, by the private and voluntary sectors and all those concerned with, and benefiting from, the future well-being of this national asset. In doing so, we seek to build on the examples where partnership investment in our waterways has already shown dividends.

Funding our waterways represents value for money. We want to see this value realised nationally and multiplied through local communities and beyond so that our waterways continue to remain places to know, discover, learn and, above all, to enjoy by increasing numbers of people.

## Conclusions/Recommendations

Based on the work for the report, the Council drew up a list of 31 conclusions, about our inland waterways, for consultation purposes. The following is an abbreviated version!

1. The need for a full economic and physical survey.
2. Long term national policy needed.
3. Waterway prominence in Government and national funding agency policies and programmes.
4. A national planning policy for waterways.
5. The national/international importance must be pursued.
6. Investment must be evaluated and improved.
7. Conservation, heritage, environment essential to well-being.
8. Conservation and restoration linked to BW asset management.
9. BW need to achieve higher standards for built heritage conservation
10. BW need to review environmental protection and management.
11. Separate authorities need to prepare long-term plans.
12. BW should be a statutory consultee in the planning system.
13. Dept. of Transport to conserve unused navigation routes for the future.
14. Grant funding to link restoration, maintenance and management.
15. Research why little transfer of freight from road to water.
16. Increased accessibility to improve traffic levels.
17. Equate use to environmental capacity and character.
18. Increase off-line facilities to remove too much on-line mooring.
19. Anglers should make a direct contribution to their waters.
20. New visitor centres to encourage/widen user market.
21. Acceleration of urban regeneration alongside waterways.
22. Ditto for rural regeneration on a smaller scale.
23. Greater use, development and investment in waterways.
24. Improved profile to attract new benefits.
25. More marketing, promotion and education.
26. National taxation (plus statutory support from local authorities) should continue to provide core support for BW.
27. Examine changing funding base of BW from deficit grant to positive payment for services provided, such as land drainage.
28. Grant-in-aid should be index-linked not reduced.
29. Enhance competitive position for Euro, National, Lottery funds.
30. Establish National Waterways Forum to interface with others.
31. The overall conclusion is that our inland waterways have now reached a stage where significant structural and policy changes are required to ensure their effective long-term conservation and the cost-effective development of their substantial economic and social potential.

*By just flipping through the Conclusions it is easy to see that IWAAC is not entirely happy with the present system of administering the inland waterways in general, and those operated by BW, in particular. The closing date for formal comments was the end of July so it will be interesting to see what the outcome is - and how long it takes to be announced! I can't help but feel that IWAAC have over-egged the pudding somewhat. Reading the Conclusions in full is a real bureaucratic mind-boggle!*

*I should, perhaps, add that Robert Jones MP, the Canals' Minister welcomes the report, stating that 96% of people across the country regard waterways as part of our national heritage and 93% think they are good places to see wildlife and enjoy scenery. Presumably 7% think they are OK for boating, angling and walking, too!*

*Ed.*

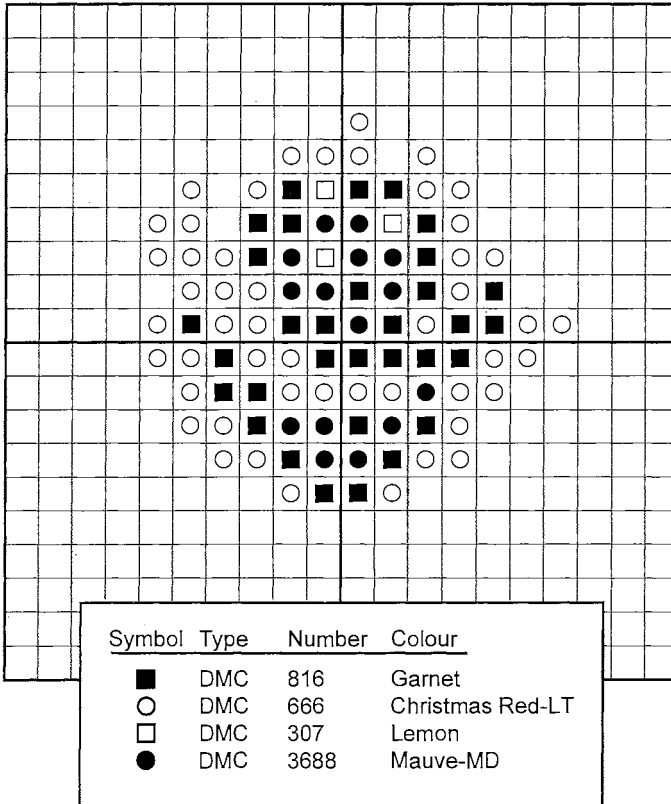
## CROSS-STITCH KITS

Imagine, an idyllic day leisurely cruising a lock-free, quiet, and beautiful stretch of the canal system. You've enjoyed a wonderful meal at a canalside pub with good company and enough spirit to lull you into a peaceful, thoughtful mood. What comes next? Do you go back to your boat to be ejected into the noisy, blatant world of the TV? Or do you fiddle between the radio offerings of nostalgia or heavy beat, resulting in the older and younger crew members' opposing views (which inevitably end in arguments)?

This was a situation that I found myself in last boating season. In desperation I flounced to the stern of the boat, and thankfully inspiration became my companion. While staring at the old

working boat moored behind us I marvelled at the opposites of the hard dirty working end of the boat, compared to the colourful, lavishly decorated cabin. Then I realised that the former occupants spent their spare time turning their cramped quarters into mini-castles, with patchwork jewel effect furnishings, and glorious gardens planted on wood instead of in soil. With this in mind I set about combining my two favourite pastimes, and discovered a positive way to encapsulate the tranquil ambience.

Armed with water-colour paper and paints, and a jumble of cloth and threads, I started to design cross-stitch pictures with waterways in mind. Thus I found my own piece of happiness, recapturing the ancient art of turning my own rusty narrowboat into a colourful castle. I had great pleasure from designing, extra enjoyment



# The Distaff Side

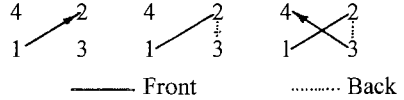
from the relaxing cross-stitch, and immense pride in decorating drab, dark walls.

I accept that designing and sewing cross-stitch pictures may seem a little daunting to some. Having trained as an artist, and succumbed to the pleasure of cross-stitch for several years, I am fortunate not to have such preconceived notions. So what do you do if you feel you would like to have a go at the sewing? Simply follow these instructions and have a go. I'm sure that you too will soon be hooked.

For our first project we will deal with a very small canal 'style' rose design. To produce this rose you will need a small offcut of 14 count Aida. The final sewn piece only measures 3cm (1¼") square, so approximately 9cm (3½") square of Aida is sufficient. Aida is the name of the fabric used in cross-stitch; it has been woven in blocks which have a hole in each corner. Every cross-stitch should be sewn over one block or 'square' of Aida.

You will also need threads, I used DMC threads numbered 816-Garnet, 666-Christmas Red-LT, 3688-Mauve-MD, and 307-Lemon. I suggest that you cut your threads into lengths of no more than 45cm (18") as this cuts down its natural tendency to tangle and knot. Each thread consists of 6 strands - separate the strands and use just 2 strands together. Each square on the chart opposite represents one stitch.

The symbols on each square represent the colours you should use. The diagram below shows you how to complete a full cross-stitch, always making the stitches follow in the same direction.

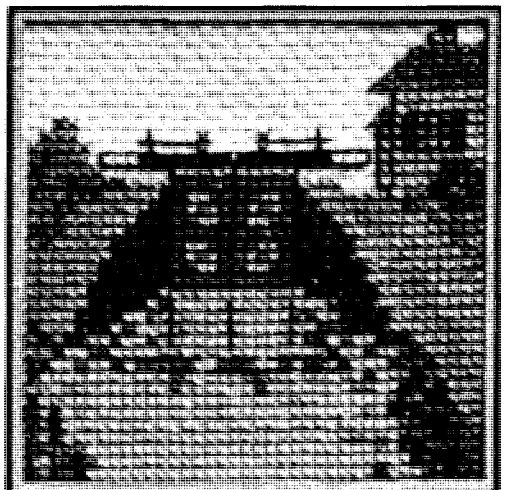
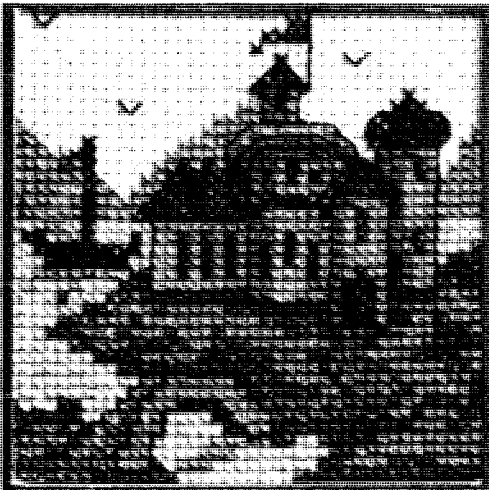


I hope that you enjoy sewing this canal 'style' rose as much as I have enjoyed designing it. Should it have tickled your creative skills and you are left hungry for more, I have been commissioned by the Huddersfield Canal Society to produce two sample kits to be sold, from the sales stand, at various shows and festivals.

These depict a typical canal 'style' Castle, and a Lock, finished size about 6.5cm (2½") (see pictures below). Every kit sold gives a healthy donation to the Society, and the good people who work hard at restoring our canal heritage need all the help that they can get. So, if you do get pleasure from sewing this picture, please have a go at another design from the series, while helping to fund a very worthy cause.

And if you can't get to the sales stand you can order the kits, direct from me, my number being 01457 864441. The price for each kit is £3.50, plus postage and packing. Happy sewing!

Kathay Oldfield



## Festival Tangle

The dispute over whether or not the Saddleworth Canal Festival should continue to be held at King George V playing fields at Uppermill, is in danger of getting completely out of control with claims, counter-claims, petitions, cross-petitions and those who signed petitions against the festival now saying they are in favour of it after all.

The Huddersfield Canal Society has asked John Battye\* if he will try to sort out the wrangle, but it sounds more like a job for the United Nations.

*\*Leader of Oldham Council. Ed.  
(Oldham Ev. Chronicle 30.7.96)*

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## GIVE CANAL A CHANCE

In reply to "Slaithwaite Resident" on the restoration of Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

I did attend the meeting as a neutral and interested observer. Yes, there were objections raised, a lot based on car-parking facilities and use of the rather narrow roads nearby.

All assurances were given as to the re-location of the almighty motor cars' resting places and road up-grading.

There were three different sets of proposed plans, done in great details, that I thought were an excellent compromise to all parties.

I have watched the restoration over the years, and have numerous photos to prove what a great job our own local people have done.

From a badly neglected dump, it is now a fascinating linear park, awaiting boats, tourists, anglers, twitchers, hikers, naturalists and photographers alike, and will give enormous pleasure to people from all walks of life and economic circumstances.

Six hundred yards of restorations through the middle of Slaithwaite will add to its appearance just as much as the trees and, you know, the canal is not dirty - only people make it unclean.

It has been an integral part of our area for a long time, and is far less dangerous than the road, rail and river that all run through the valley side by side.

So come on, give them a change to put something back, and feel assured, as I do, that it will be well worthwhile and pleasant.

And where else in Huddersfield and district can you walk for seven miles on the level, well, except for 41 places by the locks?

Denis M. Broadbent,  
Salendine Nook.

PS: I am not a "comer in"

(Letter to Editor, Huddersfield Examiner)

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## Canal campaign is seeking job ideas

Business leaders have been urged to come up with job-creating ideas for development of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal's waterway corridor, to help to back the restoration campaign.

*"This could turn out to be most memorable year in the long-running battle to get the canal re-opened, and there could be huge potential for new business ventures, both traditional and innovative,"* said Councillor George Speight, of Kirklees Council, when he was elected chairman of the canal's Joint Committee.

The partners in the restoration consortium - Oldham and Tameside Councils, British Waterways, the Huddersfield Canal Society and Kirklees - were, he said, quite optimistic that a bid for millennium funding would be successful and ensure complete restoration.

*"We are not in the game of crystal-ball gazing, but we have put up a very strong case for financial help, and we have reached the final stages of the funding process."*

*"Millennium fund officials have been to see the waterway, and I am sure they will have been impressed by what has been achieved, and the tremendous potential for the future."*

Councillor Speight, who was succeeded as vice-chairman by Councillor Jim Greenwood, of Oldham, said the canal, which runs 20 miles through the Pennines, from Ashton to Huddersfield, was widely regarded as the country's premier waterway restoration project,

# What the Papers Say

and surveys showed that huge benefits would follow.

*"We need ideas for commercial developments and new uses for the many buildings available along the line of the canal," he said.*

*"I would like to invite business leaders and individual companies to join us in taking advantage of the challenging opportunities which lie ahead.*

*"We have the support of a wide range of individuals and organisations, united in the common cause of adding a new, important chapter to the history of the Narrow Canal.*

*"I would like to think that in a year's time we will be firmly on course to celebrate re-opening by the millennium, with a mass of practical proposals to create jobs, improve the environment and provide leisure activities.*

*"We could be seeing the biggest boost to the prosperity of the Tame and Colne Valleys for many years."*

(Oldham Evening Chronicle 3.7.96)

## Cash threat to canal's 'river bypass' scheme

An ambitious scheme to re-open the Huddersfield Narrow Canal from Tameside to Yorkshire may have to be altered to win funding.

Chris Davies, MP for Littleborough and Saddleworth, says Tameside council could be forced to scrap plans to re-route the canal along the River Tame through Stalybridge.

Otherwise, it would be unlikely to attract money from the Millennium Commission and English Partnerships.

Planners have envisaged using the Tame as a 'bypass' to avoid a blockage in Stalybridge town centre - where a factory has been built over the line of the canal.

But English Partnerships - the government agency which has funds available to help finance the £24m scheme - says the river route

raises "serious concerns" about cost, practicality and value for money.

The Agency, says Mr. Davies, favours a route which would see the demolition of the former Delta Crompton factory and the laying of the canal along its original route through Stalybridge town centre.

Mr. Davies said: *"The discussions I've had leave me in little doubt that English Partnerships is telling Tameside council that the river route option is too risky."*

*"If the council seizes the initiative, rebuilding the canal through the middle of Stalybridge, it could create a very attractive environment and revitalise a decaying town centre."*

But many locals say the Delta Crompton route would be a logistical nightmare and would mean digging up much of Stalybridge town centre, causing havoc.

Tameside council is now undertaking a £175,000 feasibility study of the river route option.

A spokesman said: *"Until the results are known it is impossible to say which would be the best option. The council, in considering any proposals, has to take into account what the benefits are for the town."*

Tameside council leader Roy Oldham hit back at Chris Davies's remarks.

He said: *"This council will not listen to people who are intent on making decisions with their hearts and not their heads, especially when they neither live in the town nor represent those that do."*

*"Highly qualified and professional engineers make the decision based on facts only."*

*"For example, the old canal route will involve building three bridges alongside three existing ones. This in itself would be an engineering feat of major proportions."*

*"If the river route is the best option, then that is the one we will take. It will give Stalybridge a unique feature that very few towns around the country will have - a canalised section of river that will attract people from far and wide."*

(Manchester Evening News 1.7.96)

### **Fresh bid to boost waterway**

Canal restorers plan to boost the profile of a historic trans-Pennine waterway.

Huddersfield Narrow Canal joint committee has backed the setting up of three specialist groups to market the 20-mile canal, which runs from Huddersfield to Ashton-under-Lyne.

The plans aim to increase use and highlight the importance of the canal as a business asset.

The three groups include press and public relations, leisure and tourism and commercial development.

The five partners in the restoration plans - Kirklees, Tameside and Oldham councils, British Waterways and Huddersfield Canal Society - will all be represented on each of the groups and there will also be representatives from outside organisations.

These will include local leisure, environmental and waterway users' organisations and business people.

Alec Ramsden, chairman of the joint committee's marketing working party, said the aim was to fully exploit the huge potential of the waterway which, hopefully, would be completely restored, open and linked to the rest of the country's waterways network by the millennium.

The restoration project is bidding for £26m of Millennium Fund cash.

Harriet Hudson, British Waterways regional economic development manager, stressed the job-creating and business-boosting aspects of restoration.

*"The Huddersfield Narrow Canal, particularly if the Millennium Fund bid is successful, has really exciting potential and the setting up of the three key groups will bring a more orderly approach to marketing and launch new initiatives,"* she said.

(Huddersfield Daily Examiner)

### **200 and counting...**

Another Tameside Canals Festival rolls around this weekend and this year's event, from tomorrow evening, is a little more historic than in previous years.

This year is the 200th anniversary of the first passage of boats through the site, Ashton's Portland Basin, and organisers - of whom the chairman is an Oldhamer, Tony Wolstenholme - are expecting upwards of 100 narrowboats to make the trip to Tameside to celebrate the occasion.

The basin, a major transport junction back in the Industrial Revolution, has more recently enjoyed new development and the opening of a small museum, so more and more people are paying a visit. The final opening of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal will boost traffic even more.

This year's festival, the 18th, starts tomorrow night with a children's disco followed by a folk concert.

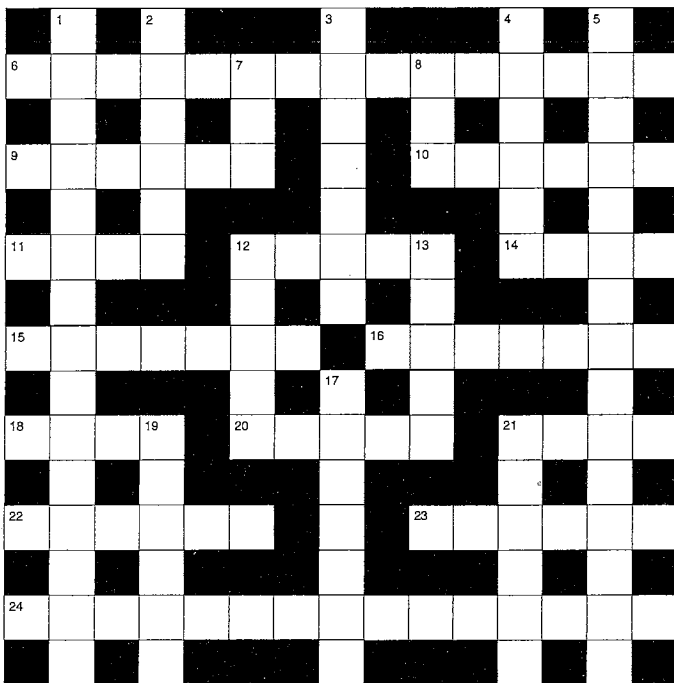
The festival proper starts on Saturday, with many attractions including what CAMRA claims is the largest beer tent in the North-West. Sunday is a repeat of Saturday, but the event closes at 4pm.

If you don't know the way to the basin, all you have to do is wait until dusk starts to fall anywhere in the area, tomorrow or Saturday night. Then follow the huge column of light you will almost certainly see lighting up the sky towards Ashton, back to its source.

As a neat gimmick Tony and his team have borrowed one of the world's most powerful searchlights, manufactured by a Bolton company, to illuminate the area. The beam should be visible up to 10 miles away!

Three of these vast one billion candlepower brutes - about the same amount of light emitted if every torch made in the country in a year was turned on and pointed in the same direction - have just been ordered to light up the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.

(Oldham Ev. Chronicle 11.7.96)



15. Equipment used to make butter by an extraterrestrial on a riverine part of the Caldon canal? (7).
16. Lad goon found on a Venetian canal? (7).
18. Mmm! Singly with three points identifies a water bird (4).
20. Poor man rents only the back of a boat (5).
21. Southerly wind bad for small flat fish (4).
22. Mix 7D with a computer from 2001 and find a towing path (6).
23. Log car over an aqueduct? Strictly not allowed! (6)
24. Hart rob Chan then whilst passing Cannock on a barely extant BCN canal (9, 6).

### DOWN

1. Route Robin and Marian might have taken when visiting the sheriff? (10, 5).
2. Cervelat, ham and other meats served at the Blood Tub\* by the locks at Burscough Junction (6).
3. Lt. motor steers the author of 'Narrowboat' (3,4).
4. Aqueous excesses! (6).

Our congratulations to Barbara Lower of Chesterfield who won last issue's competition. Once again, a copy of 'Pennine Passage' will be awarded to the first correct solution drawn at random from all those entries received by the next Press Date, 1st November.

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

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

### ACROSS

6. In Oldham get a lift on the HNC near a regal aquatic overpass (5, 6, 4).
9. Hampshire river with water apt for treatment of bites in the north east (6).
10. Western slope found at the inception of the HNC Co.. (6).
11. Name the L&L wharf in Blackburn (4).
12. The reason boats were 'stopped' at 'stops' on the BCN (5).
14. Red light district on part of the BCN Old Main Line? (4).

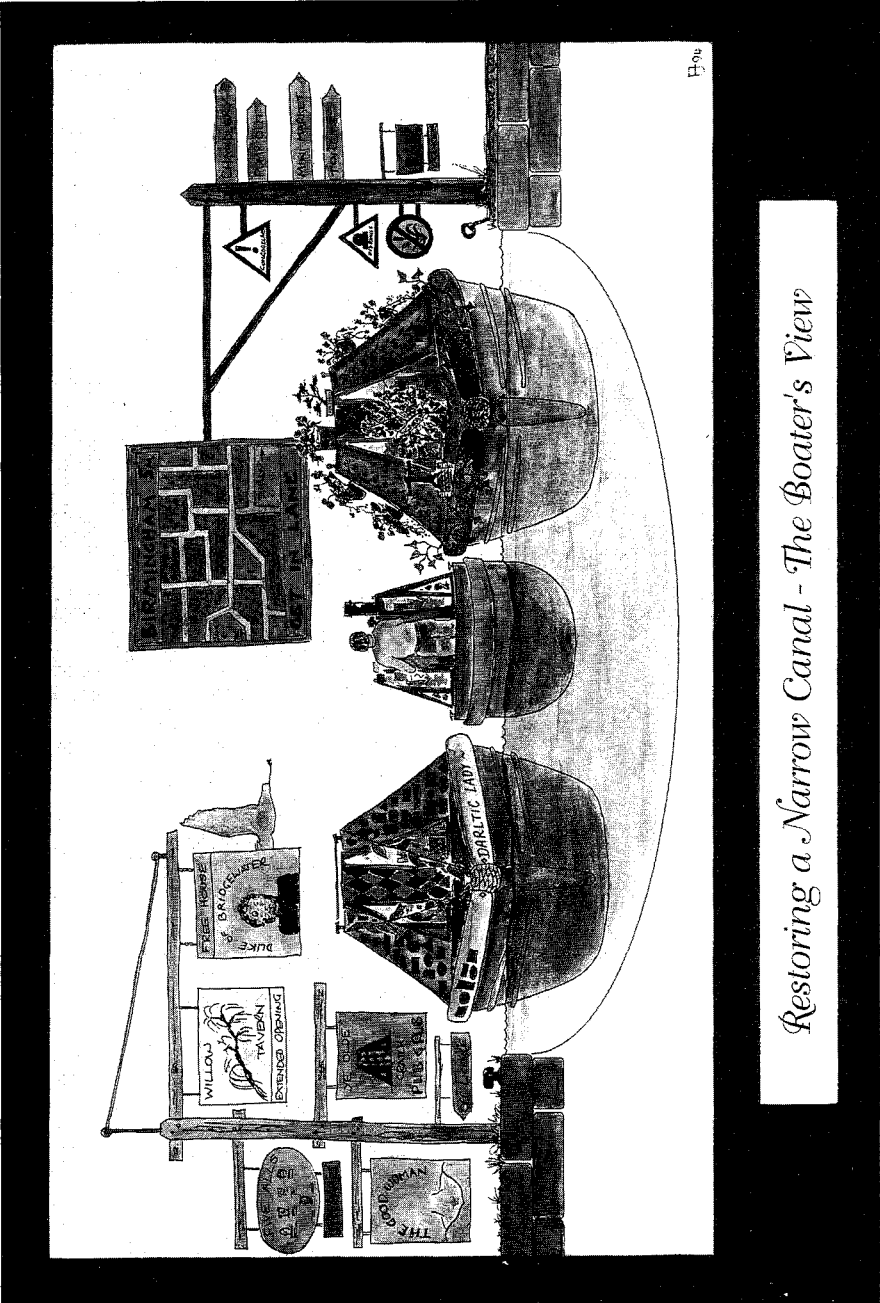
5. Hell on birch rack leaving Doe Bank Junction in one direction! (5, 4, 6).
7. Pre-prandial juniper spirit? (3).
8. Helga puts the boat neatly in the small space between two others (3).
12. Reset the arboreal connection (5).
13. Snoop on BW using one type of dredger (5).
17. Wood ale come out of a steam pump on the Cromford canal? (7).
19. Could the heaviness of a cargo lend strength to an argument? (6).
21. Reverse the lid on a tin of ham whilst picnicking on a closed Norfolk canal (6).

\* HISTORICAL NOTE:- The Ship Hotel at this junction was historically known as the Blood Tub either because Black Pudding used to be made here and a bucket of pig's blood could be swapped for a pint or because the boatmen used to fight here for priority down the locks.



Some years ago, during the early discussions for our 'Strategic Programme of Reclamation' report, it became obvious that various interest groups had their own ideas about restoring the Narrow

Canal. In a light-hearted vein, Restoration MD Steve Whitby suggested certain extremes and ever one to take people at their word, our Technical Section's Bob Gough proceeded to get

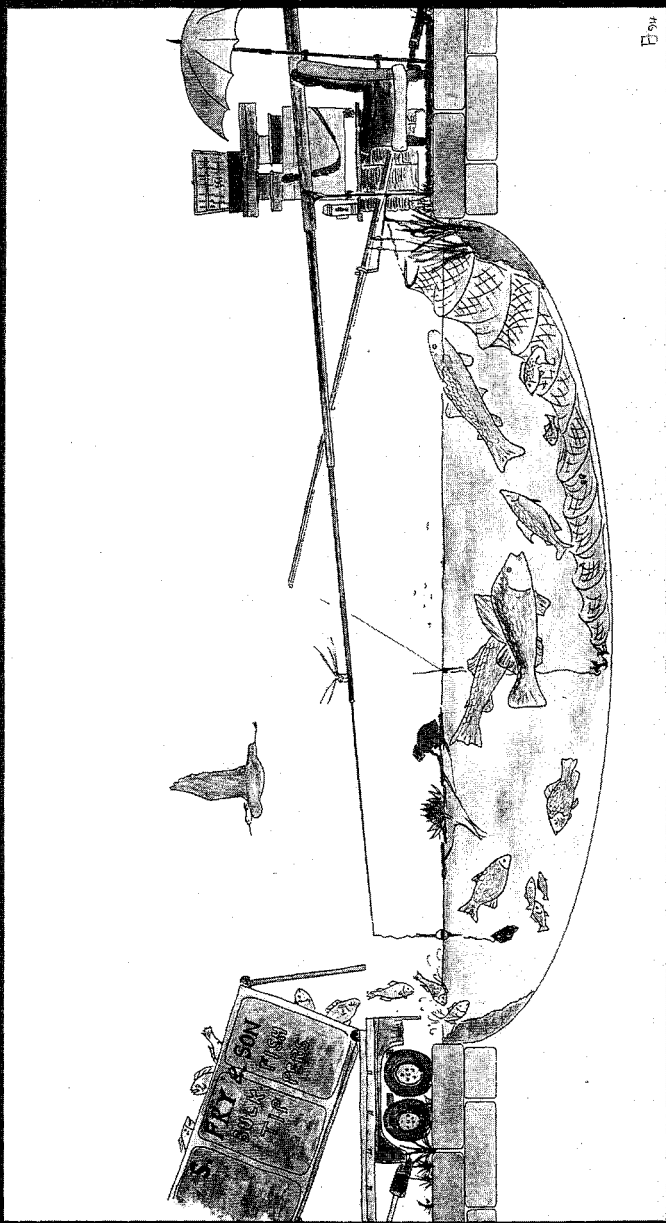


*Restoring a Narrow Canal - The Boater's View*

drawing. These are the first two in a series of six (or maybe eight!) cartoons showing the Boater's and Angler's views. To follow will be the Ecologist's and the Architect's, the Board's and

the Society's view. The extra two, the Engineer's and the Planner's view are under consideration but should be available for the Summer '97 Issue!

Ken Wright



*Restoring a Narrow Canal - The Fisherman's View*

Dear Ken,

A few weeks ago I made a foray into "enemy" territory and gave a talk and film show about restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow to Elland Probus Club.

One of the questions I was asked was "Why waste all that money on restoring canals?" - he was actually referring to the cost of the Tuel Lane work.

Before I could reply another member of the audience chipped in with information that The Barge and Barrel (in Elland) had already seen an increase in trade from boaters and was going to install showers and washing facilities for boaters. The bad news is that these will not be available until next year.

So we now have a concrete example of restoration actually bringing trade to an area along the route of the canal.

Yours,

J.K. Maynard,  
Meltham, Huddersfield.

*The landlord at the Barge and Barrel confirms John's news and adds that he is also considering putting in a washing machine for boaters. Ed.*

### Course in Lancs/Yorks Lingo

Basking in the certain knowledge that most of Britain's Pennine Link readers - and those abroad as well - are unable to speak because they are suffering from lock-jaw following attempts at earlier lessons I, nevertheless, insist on publishing part 3 of the "Huddersfield Canal Speak" in-house course; the answers to which can be found opposite.

Not a bad sentence, that!

1. Aberritinterz.
2. Nsardendes, wot dardooiin?
3. Asta seenim ont telly?
4. Corforus arpastate itmornin.
5. It dunt marrer.
6. Lerrus gurrat pichxers.
7. Asta gorratanner
8. Eenose nowt abaritit.
9. Eez gunna gerra lorra lolly forrit.
10. Leres gerontbus.
11. Eedursnt purrizeead undert watter.
12. Eesezeeantaddit.

Dear Ken,

Congratulations on another fine issue - always a great read!

Sorry to add to your "errata" but - unless someone was standing at exactly the same place at the same time (and laid out the equipment in the same way) - the three photos of 'PROGRESS' on Page 39 are mine (inc. copyright). Don't mind them being published by you, of course, but I wonder how you came by them?

All the very best, Harry Arnold,

Waterway Images also Editor, IWA magazine  
"Waterways".

*Oops! When I do it, I do it properly!*

*I got permission from Lee Sanitation (Chris Coburn) to use their material in the review of "Carry On Up The Lune" and didn't realise the photos weren't theirs. I have already apologised to Harry in writing; now I do so again, profusely and publicly! I will learn, promise. Ed.*

### CHARLES HADFIELD 1909-1996

The world's leading historian of inland waterways, Charles Hadfield, has died at the age of 87. One of the founders of publishers David and Charles and an active Quaker he was also a former labour politician and a member of the Fire Brigades Union, serving on Thames fireboats during World War II. This man of many parts took an early interest in canals, his first book on the subject being *British Canals* (1950). He wrote part of a series of regional histories, finished by others under his direction, which became the foremost reference books on British Canals.

He was a founder member of the Inland Waterways Association in 1945-6 and was one of the minority group, with Tom Roit, expelled in 1951. He rejoined in 1971 and became a leading exponent of inland shipping, promoting commercial use of the waterways for freight. He was also in the thick of persuading the Treasury that the waterways deserved proper funding to be preserved.

A South African by birth he became the youngest labour councillor in London in 1934. He inspired thousands of people to take an active role in canal restoration.

In the preface to "World Canals" (1986) he wrote "In 1938 I bought two overseas books from the red-headed girl whom I afterwards married. Since then she has been taken half round the world to look at canals and rivers and to meet people who have only one thing in common - talk about inland waterways. Greater love has no woman than that she marries a canal man!"

The Book of the Dead quotes "to sail for ever in a boat along those intricate canals where the reeds are continually bending in the heavenly wind" as one of the pleasures of Paradise.

Amen to that.

### THE SOCIETY WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

2386	Mr Spencer,	[REDACTED]
2387	Mr & Mrs Cookson,	[REDACTED]
2388	Mr Pearce,	[REDACTED]
2389	Mr Halliday,	[REDACTED]
2390	Mr Ridgway,	[REDACTED]
2391	Mr Cragg,	[REDACTED]
2392	Mr Mawson,	[REDACTED]
2393	Mr Chillingsworth,	[REDACTED]
2394	Mr Woolford,	[REDACTED]
2395	Mr Wright,	[REDACTED]
2396	Mr & Mrs Bretnall,	[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, 117

*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

A number of factors conspired to produce the two erroneous West Side meeting dates in Issue 117. The October date has been corrected to the 9th in this issue. The erroneous date of Wednesday 8th August, itself an invalid date for 1996, caused a number of members to visit Hartshead on the 7th - much to their disappointment and inconvenience. The visit took place on the traditional second Wednesday, the 14th. We apologise for this mistake and will check more carefully in future.

Dialect Answers: 1. I bet it isn't hers. 2. Now then you, what are you doing?  
3. Have you seen him on the television? 4. Call for us at half past eight in the morning.  
5. It doesn't matter. 6. Let us go to the pictures. 7. Have you got 2½p. 8. He knows nothing about it.  
9. He is going to get a lot of money for it. 10. Let us get on the bus. 11. He dare not put his head under the water. 12. He says he hasn't had it.

### SOLUTION TO PRIZE CROSSWORD No 13 - ISSUE 117

ACROSS 1. Berg 3. Hatch 6. Erne 8. Baltimore Bridge 9. Cash 10. Float 12. Oars 14. Fellows 15. Clamber  
17. Silt 18. Yarns 19. Nile 20. Grand Union Canal 24. Tuel 25. Rural 26. Yard

DOWN 1. Bulb 2. Gosty Hill Tunnel 3. Helm 4. Taproom 5. Herb 6. Environmentally 7. Erie 9. Cafes 10.  
Fowey 11. Tolls 13. Surge 16. Cruiser 20. Goyt 21. User 22. Nail 23. Load

### WEST SIDE MEETINGS

Wednesday 9th October	General Meeting at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley, 8.00pm.
Wednesday 13th November	General Meeting at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley, 8.00pm.
Wednesday 11th December	General Meeting at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley, 8.00pm.

## In the next Issue of Pennine Link ...

Postponed Reports from the Tameside, Tunnel End  
& Huddersfield Festivals

The Tom Rolt Award

Millennium Latest - The Society's Best Christmas Present?

Stalybridge - *The West Side Blockage*

Out & About - Restoration Pictures

.... plus all the regular features.

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Articles, letters, etc., for  
Issue 119 of Pennine Link  
should reach the Editor  
by 1st November

Huddersfield Canal Society is a member of:



*The opinions expressed in Pennine Link are not necessarily those of the Huddersfield Canal Society.  
Permission to repeat any of the features in Pennine Link is granted, provided that the source is acknowledged.*