



# Pennine Link

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Members Quarterly Journal

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Front Cover: Millennium Cheers! Left to Right: Cllr. John Battye (Oldham Leader), Cllr. George Speight, David Sumner, Cllr. Michael Ballagher (Mayor of Tameside), Cllr. Roy Oldham (Tameside Leader), Michael Lorkins (Millennium Commission). Photo: K. Wright.



**I can be excused for writing this editorial in a spirit of joy and boundless optimism. As we go to press everything in the Canal garden seems rosy.**

Even my pleas have fallen on fertile ground.

Two members have responded with items for the Distaff Side which will be used in time. For this special Celebration issue we are honoured to have a contribution from Mrs. Sonia Rolt, First Lady of British waterways.

The Millennium success is beginning to reach out into other areas. Oldham Council, in agreeing their share of the Project Director's salary, also discussed the now critical need for more public toilets and car parking in Saddleworth - long-standing needs. Success in this area would really bring the Society some Brownie points!

Also the Saddleworth Tourist Association has invited the Huddersfield Canal Society to keep them fully informed of progress on the canal. They clearly see the restoration as a great stimulus to their activities, and want to become involved.

Let us remember that our Society initiated all the effort towards restoration and worked alone for some years before the local authorities joined in. It is absolutely true to say that WE are solely responsible for the

restoration of the Canal getting to this stage. "The Impossible Restoration" was a bit of a joke to many sceptics. I hope they are now laughing on the other sides of their collective faces.

And restoration is still going on - entirely by the Society, at the present time. Elsewhere you will find photos of the state of works at Lock 12 - real heavy civil engineering here - and of the newly-dredged canal upstream of Stalybridge town centre.

What a transformation this is! The canal, in places, was wall-to-wall solid with silt, covered in grass and reeds. Add to the enormous amount of silt a fifty- or sixty-year collection of debris - tyres, prams, cycles, car parts, bits of old boat, large parts of old bridges and railway viaduct - and you have some idea of what we have carted to tip.

And the result, in wildlife terms, is remarkable. On this half-mile section we have already attracted a heron, a kingfisher, a pair of water-hens (the rest of the family have emigrated), two pairs of mallard (busy establishing territorial rights), a tree-full of long-tailed tits, blue tits, a sky-full of black headed gulls and the inevitable magpie. On four legs we have rabbits but, as yet, no water-voles. And, even in February, the reeds are showing signs of renewed life.

And can you imagine the feeling of being the first person to sail these waters in fifty years? That was my privilege, in the tug, as a part-time member of the dredging team.

Ken Wright



*Above Left:* The view from above Scout Tunnel of the site at Lock 12W, Mossley. L-shaped, precast concrete wall units are being used in various places to define the canal channel and stabilise the banking - especially on the offside (left of photo) where the bank is relatively narrow and falls away steeply to the River Tame some 6 metres below the canal level. On the towpath side much of the washwall has been rebuilt on a new alignment and capped with cast concrete copings. Progressively larger wall units are required as the lock chamber is approached.

*Below Left:* The towpath side between Lock 12W and the entrance to Scout Tunnel. The outflow of the large drainage pipe marks the previous location of the washwall and hence it is easy to see how much the alignment has had to be adjusted to correct the previous slippage. The plain wall units will be faced with red brick and capped with more concrete copings.

*Above Right:* The line of wall units approaching the tail-gate end of Lock 12W. The last unit has been brought into position prior to the lock chamber brickwork being cut out to allow its location.

*Below Right:* A length of newly dredged canal near the old Hartshead power station site. The vegetation in the water on the left has been retained to encourage plant growth. It originally covered the whole width of the canal!

*Photos: R. Gough except below right, K. Wright*





# Restoration Views



In this Celebration Issue I am delighted to print a Distaff Side contribution from the First Lady of the Waterways, Sonia Rolt. Mrs. Rolt, who during the last war worked a narrowboat for a living - and imagine what a hard life that was - is the widow of Tom Rolt, author of 'Narrow Boat'. In this article she compares the skills in sailing a working narrowboat and a modern plastic cruiser.

## COMPARISONS ARE ODISIOUS

by Sonia Rolt © 1996

During the last war, a government scheme enabled young women to volunteer to work the traditional paired motor and butty narrowboats. These decorated and domestic-cabined craft carried heavy goods on the canals. They were normally manned by the families which had descended from the original builders and neighbourhoods of the canals themselves. On the midland and southern canals covered by the scheme, it was an unusual and sometimes life-changing encounter, much written of later. I was such a young woman volunteer, and a recent trip on a pleasure-cruiser with dimensions half the length and almost twice the width of a narrowboat, prompted me to comment on the relative handling qualities I found, then and now.

Anyone might think, given the similar dimensions, draught and payload of both motor and butty, that their behaviour in the water might be the same. Nothing could be further from the truth. The motor moves a large propeller. Behind that an equally large rudder blade is coupled to a tiller-bar above; it travels powerfully through the water according to steerer skill. In good water and running empty with stern down, high bows and cratch swinging to tiller so readily, the encounter with an approaching craft beyond a bridge-hole can be dramatic. Even loaded, with weight forward, but level trim, this direct drive and total visibility can give the same joyous feeling of skilled control to the steerer as that experienced by 'seat of the pants' drivers in vintage cars.

The un-motored butty is a different kettle of fish altogether: it follows behind, is 'dumb' or is a free spirit according to how you look at it and is

traditionally in the care of the woman in a two-handed crew of both sexes.

The different methods of tow between motor and butty and their working are crucial to one's understanding. The general rule of towing when empty is with very short crossed straps. Through fairly close locks the tow is usually on variable-length hemp straps; in a long pound, on a 70 foot floating red coir 'snubber'.

Last and perhaps best and most exhilarating, when other things made it possible, was to proceed on the tow-rope proper. This enabled swiftest working and was nearly always used by fly boats or later beer-boats, to cut every second from the miles and locks. Here the tow is controlled from the stern of the butty over a T-stud in the cabin top, the rope being played over it as the load comes on. The butty has a mast forward amidships and here it comes into its own as the tow rope, picked up by the motor, passes through a pulley on it and back through a series of wooden running blocks and rollers to the butty stud. It is somewhat alarming to be in the small butty hatches with a wet and angry rope coiling up at speed and liable to take overlooked domestic items like tea towels and bunches of flowers along with it (or fingers if not careful). Again, with adequate water and a longer pound, the feel of the boat in the water would be at its most liberating. It swam with a motion of sailing because of the more independent mast pull.

Now for the recent experience in which lost skills, lost balance, lost judgements must have played their part. Thankfully, with determined tuition, old instincts and capacities revived, and the terror of incipient disasters of one kind or another withdrew. Boatmen and narrow-boat builders, who were frequently interchangeable in early days, added function to tradition. How can a modern craft designed for an entirely different purpose behave with such functional grace? It can't, but this is no criticism as such. While being handy and robust enough for locks and wider water, it must carry a family and friends: provide minimal privacy and space for ablutions, and also keep the weather away from the steerer. Wide gunwales and maximum headroom are added but where does all this leave movement and

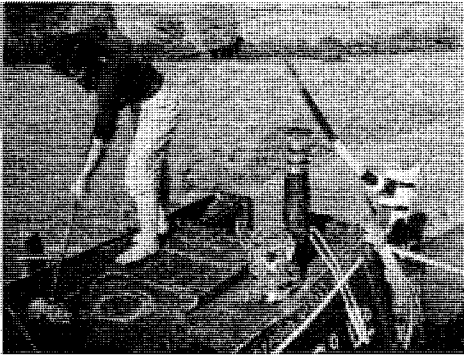
# The Distaff Side

handling? I get the feeling that commercial needs sometimes leave behind exactly those improvements in designs which could be most useful and give more pleasure in handling.

Like a choirboy on a pile of hassocks, even on boxes and tottering stool, visibility for me remained minimal. You have to learn - and fast - the spatial occupation of the boat in its relationship to every other object. It can be done. As to answering to controls, the more complex linkage inevitably takes off the fine edge of a direct tiller, and gear-box and throttle suffer from being isolated from their controls. In common with all high-sided boats, including empty narrowboats, it has a crab gait in the wind. I never saw wind/power ratio truly tested. It may be that the occasional sense of under-endowment below the water line reveals a need for a larger

prop or maybe not. It is another language in which I am truly a tyro. All these characteristics can be allowed for and become one with the steerer's instinctive reactions, which is what it is all about. When all is said and done, what I have been trying to do is describe in simple terms some aspects of boat handling which the boats themselves provide. A useful and sufficiently imprecise phrase would be 'feed-back' - when 'feed-back' is not actually the sound of splintering fibreglass or falling masonry!

Comparisons remain odious, different virtues lie around for consideration and frankly the beguiling drug of the disclosing view ahead, the shared endeavour of movement, the changing rhythms of locks and pounds passed through and the comfort of dependable companionship, all remain the same whether hand is on wheel or tiller-bar.



*To be published 20th March 1997*

## **A CANAL PEOPLE**

*The Photographs of Robert Longdon*  
SONIA ROLT

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*Above left:* The author as a war-time trainee boat woman mopping down on the Grand Union Canal Carrying Co.'s Butty-boat MOON. About 1944.

*Above:* War-time trainees Christian Vlasto and Elizabeth Glazier on the stern of Grand Union Canal Carrying Co.'s butty of the star class Nebulae. About 1943/44.

*Photos: Meriel Trevor*

**A**t the end of every year, in conjunction with Kirklees Countryside Service, the Society helps provide a seasonal welcome for visitors to Tunnel End, Marsden.

In the December frost, numerous HCS members can be seen busily crawling over the trip boat with fairy lights, tinsel and balloons etc. in preparation for the arrival of Father Christmas.

Inside the cottages, one of the display rooms is converted into 'Santa's Grotto' where, against all the usual parental advice, children sit on the knee of a perfect stranger reciting their long lists of what they would like for Christmas. (For those who don't really believe - our resident Santa is none other than Fred Carter, one of the local British Waterways employees.) Fred has literally filled the part for many years and must be blessed with the patience of Job.

Special thanks goes to Santa's band of helpers: Denise Edinburgh, Shirley Maycock, Gale Bailey, and, as seen in the photograph appropriately dressed, Pam Romanski; no wonder Santa has a gleam in his eye!

The Christmas Special boat trips and decorations were professionally provided by Able Seamen Gerald Edinburgh, Allan Knott, Bob Maycock, John Banks, Maurice Winters and Jason Diamond, with Ronnie Rose and yours truly attired in the mandatory red hat and pom-pom, providing land-based customer services.

A very creditable effort by all those involved, proving

yet again that members from both sides of the Pennines continue to support Society activities in weather that is sometimes understatedly described as 'inclement'!

The Countryside Service provided a mixed bag of seasonal activities to entertain visitors, whether they were local or came from further afield. A local artist braved the frost to paint outdoor scenes, doubling up as the resident vocalist/pianist for a sing-along inside the tea room. Mince pies and hot snacks were in abundance, with other volunteers concentrating their efforts on building bird boxes to raise funds.

I am sure that all those who attended appreciated the efforts made on their behalf to maintain that community spirit sadly lacking these days in a commercial world.

Frank Smith



Santa (Fred Carter) with Elfin helper (Pam Romanski) on board the Standedge Pioneer. Photo: A. Knott





**It is now some two months since our Millennium Application - submitted by HCS on behalf of our partners - was approved. You will read in Keith's article the details of progress since the announcement. It was a momentous occasion and the media coverage was a credit to our partners, but particularly to Alec Ramsden who persuaded BBC TV to visit Tunnel End on 16 December. His Press Release, on behalf of the Joint Committee, was published in the Daily Telegraph and other regional and local papers took the story.**

Once again we were very grateful to Robin Witter for providing a boat for the Stalybridge celebrations. The local press published a photograph of representatives of all our partners led by Councillor Roy Oldham on the bow of Little Gypsy nudging the town centre blockage outside the Wharf Tavern in Stalybridge. We will repeat the occasion in four years time and cruise through the centre of Stalybridge to mark the reopening of the canal.

Our bid was constructed on the basis of a new company being formed to manage the restoration and operation of the canal. This company will have representatives of all the partners on the board and a project manager will be appointed to deliver the scheme. Advertisements have been placed and we expect a person to be in post before the agreement is signed.

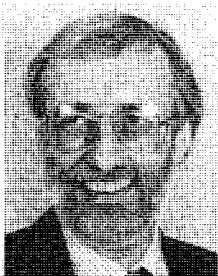
We already have a very similar mechanism in place which has overseen the whole restoration process to date - after we sold the idea to our partners! This Huddersfield Canal Joint Committee is at present chaired by Cllr. George Speight of Kirklees. One would expect, if nominated by his Council to be a Director, that he would be the first Chairman. The committee is served by an officers' working party and the officers will reform into an Executive Group. So all the players are there except for a project manager and the scheme is already underway with designs for some of the blockages being underwritten by the Society.

Looking at the canal scene elsewhere, the Lottery has provided the impetus to progress other schemes. Already the Rochdale scheme has approval. The Kennet and Avon Canal will receive Heritage Lottery Funds and now the Lowlands Canal scheme linking Glasgow with Edinburgh has received Millennium Commission approval. Three of the four schemes which link

east and west are owned by British Waterways. Clearly an injection of over £150 million into the canals network by the year 2000 will do wonders for the economies through which the canals traverse and restore and preserve our environment and heritage.

The canals system in the UK currently costs the nation around £50 million per annum to maintain via grant in aid to BW. As the late Lord Harvington stated at a Parliamentary Waterways meeting, before the then Minister, Robert Atkins MP, - £1 per head per annum. With 25 million people living within 5 miles of a navigable waterway I assert that this subsidy is money well spent. Most inhabitants of the UK must have enjoyed the peace and tranquillity of our system once a year in some way. Yet the system is under strain and newly restored canals will inevitably require more maintenance monies. BW have become more efficient if measured only in financial terms. However, the system requires more policing, more people on the canal track to safeguard our inheritance. Societies such as ours can help to reduce the burden for the local authorities and BW by reducing the annual maintenance payments or costs. The deficit must be met from the public purse and we beseech our political masters to support IWA's call for a minimum £58 million per annum, a £4.3 million Grant in Aid to the navigation account and a backlog grant of £125 million for maintenance.

The Millennium Commission and Heritage Lottery Fund believe in waterways, as I have mentioned above. Our Heritage Minister sees fit to invest nearly £15 million in our canal alone with a further £12 million from English Partnerships - the Non-Government Agency - surely an increased grant to BW is justified. You know it makes sense - and that was said by a canals supporter and friend of the Society Barbara Castle, although in a different context.



**On 13th December 1996, Jennifer Page, Chief Executive of the Millennium Commission wrote to the Society:**

**"The Commission reviewed your application for funding at its meeting on 11 December 1996. I am delighted to inform you that the Commission has approved in principle a grant of up to £14,851,241 towards the Huddersfield Narrow Canal project, subject to satisfactory conclusion of negotiations on terms and conditions of grant, within a period of six months from today's date."**

The full impact of this is only slowly dawning on me. Yes - the offer of grant is there which, together with £12.2m from English Partnerships and contributions from Kirklees, Oldham and Tameside Councils, British Waterways and the Society offer a realistic prospect of the canal being re-opened less than 4 years from now. The most stupendous news, and a huge success for the partners in the project. But it is not going to be easy to meet the requirements of the Millennium Commission in the short timescale allowed.

We now have to flesh out the details of how the project will be managed to guarantee completion by the Millennium, and to guarantee that the canal will be maintained for at least 125 years afterwards. Unless we can do this to the satisfaction of the Millennium Commission, the grant offer will not be binding and until the final contract with the Commission is signed no grant will be paid or expenses reimbursed.

The basic procedure we are to follow was set out in the application to the Millennium Commission. An independent company limited by guarantee to be called The Huddersfield Canal Company will be set up. This company will be wholly responsible for the implementation of the project and for the subsequent maintenance of the canal. The Board of the company will be drawn from the 5 partners in the project - the 3 local authorities, British Waterways and the Society, each of whom will nominate 2 Directors. David Sumner and myself have been nominated by the Society.

The Borough Solicitor of Tameside Council is pursuing the creation of the company, based to an extent on this Society's Memorandum and Articles of Association, with the intention that a first Board meeting will be held as soon as possible. He is also in the process of setting up a subsidiary trading company, Standedge Experience Ltd., which will be responsible for the management of the Standedge Experience. It seems likely that the Directors of the subsidiary company will be nominated by Kirklees Council, British Waterways and the Society.

The costs involved are being shared by the partners, although some will be recovered after the contract with the Millennium Commission is signed.

The partners have agreed to advertise the post of Project Director (see page 17). This person will be employed by the Huddersfield Canal Company as the co-ordinator of the whole project, and the main contact with the Millennium Commission. It is important that a suitable appointment is made as soon as possible to help guide the company through the final stages to the signing of the contract. Until an appointment can be made, Roger Anderson, Assistant Chief Executive of Tameside Council, who led the Millennium bidding process, is taking the role of Acting Project Director.

Whilst this is taking place the local authorities and British Waterways will be going through the process of formally approving the arrangements necessary to create the companies, and making the necessary financial

# Towards the Millennium - The Next Steps

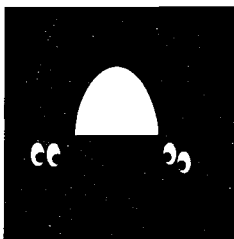
provisions. Also the bidding group of local authority, British Waterways and Canal Society officers will continue to meet to progress the scheme, but renamed as the Executive Group. In reality everything now depends on these people to push the project forward with, for example, 14 items for action listed after their meeting in early February. The Millennium Commission require that the canal is properly maintained for at least 125 years after the Millennium. In order to secure this in financial terms the local authorities have to set up and finance a funding mechanism to meet the difference in expenditure between British Waterways commitment to maintain the canal as a remainder waterway, and the actual cost of maintaining a navigable canal. British Waterways have calculated the likely Income and Expenditure, based on their experience of the costs of maintaining canal infrastructure (what they have called an Asset Management Process) which shows that during the first 20 years maintenance costs will be lower than in the following years. It is intended that a sinking fund be set up by the Canal Company with each Council contributing an annual amount (£150,000 per year between the 3 contributors) for a period of 20 years. It is calculated (based on advice on returns etc. given by the Greater Manchester local government superannuation fund) that the

interest generated from this fund will be sufficient to meet the shortfall between British Waterways expenditure and the actual maintenance throughout the remainder of the 125 year period.

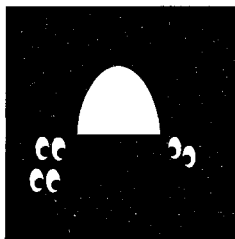
Set down on paper this all sounds very simple. Let me disillusion you. It is far from simple. No other Canal Society is so intimately involved in a process such as this. So we are treading new ground. No other partnership has devised such a method of guaranteeing completion of the work and its future maintenance. So all of the partners are in new territory. There is no precedent for us to follow. Everything hereafter is new. It could set a model for other canals (in fact other anything!). It will no doubt turn out to be more complex than we currently appreciate, and the opportunities for petty jealousies between the partners are enormous. But we have come so far and overcome any differences as to who should do what, or how things should be done. We will continue with that spirit of co-operation. At a Northern Canals Association meeting last year, Keith Ayling, the Chairman of the Chesterfield Canal Society, gave a wonderful speech full of passion and excitement about the canal restorers being the true successors to the early pioneers who built the canal network. I think I know what he meant.

Keith Gibson

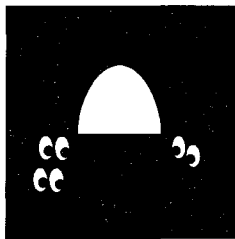
In Standedge Tunnel ...



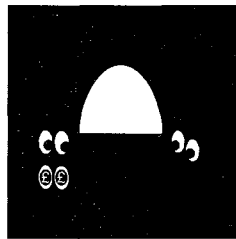
Well done on the £30m, there's someone here I'd like you to meet ...



This is Jon Phelps, DSP of Ratan, Vine & Lima, Consultants ...



...DSP? Doctor of Spin!



**I**n the first of this series of profiles, David Sumner started by asking the question “*why canals?*” I think that this is a good place to start for me too.

Until comparatively recently canals were not an obvious interest for anyone living in Huddersfield to have.

I was born in 1947, which means that I am just old enough to be able to remember my grandmother taking me to see the coal barges being unloaded into the hopper at Aspley Basin before the traffic ceased in the early 1950's. That aside, I was most definitely a railway enthusiast up until near the end of steam in the late 1960's, starting with 'spotting' locally and then travelling far and wide.

To return to canals, and particularly the Huddersfield Narrow, living in Crosland Moor on the opposite side of the Colne Valley to the railway line entailed me crossing the canal many times, and we did use the towpath. In particular I remember using the stretch from Longroyd Bridge to Leeds Road around 1960, which at the time was like a deep (and smelly!) canyon between the mills. Some of this, coupled with my natural interest in all things old and unused, must go to explain my later involvement in the Society. (*He said it! Ed.*)

I finally discovered the 'live' canal system in 1967, when a friend hired what passed for a canal cruiser in those days for a week's holiday from Chester to (you've guessed!) Llangollen. This boat was a marine ply box with a point at one end and a single-cylinder two-stroke engine at the other. Among the joys lost to present-day boaters were refuelling the small tank from army-surplus jerrycans and sleeping under your raincoat due to the amount of condensation falling from the cabin roof! Oh yes, and I nearly forgot to mention - being able to moor at the wharf in Llangollen mid-week!!! By this time I had started work for what was then the Ministry of Labour in Huddersfield and it was only when trying to

walk to work one day by a more interesting route that I discovered that someone had blocked the canal. I remember thinking how sad it was that I had never seen it in use.

Having spent about £1 10s (£1.50p) from each of my first fifteen weeks pay on one driving lesson per week, I managed to pass the driving test and was quickly into the world of motoring with £50-worth of Austin A40 'Somerset'. A range of cars has reduced my bank balance ever since but my interest in motors and most forms of motor sport continues.

In 1974 I married Colleen, who never suspected what was to follow. She loves canals and professes a keenness to see the Huddersfield Narrow restored, but has no desire to be involved personally. She would definitely be delighted to see more of me than she does, particularly on Sundays.

Sometime around 1976 I was taken with the idea of a canal holiday again. This was not a good year to pick as, until recently, it was famous as one of the driest on record. Locks opened at 8.00a.m., queue cleared by 10.00a.m., lock flights started to close again mid-afternoon. However, on my return I joined HCS, which I vaguely remembered meaning to do something about some two years earlier, and also booked another holiday for the September. The latter, on the Leeds & Liverpool, was something of a disaster as the weather finally broke with gale-force winds, heavy rain and cold.

My first meeting of the Society must have been around the same time as David's, but at the Olive Branch, just outside Marsden. I soon became involved in the attempts to continue the restoration of Lock 1E, which had been started as a publicity stunt at the first Huddersfield Festival. The main reasons for the choice were that it still had the remains of gates and BWB didn't own it. However, we never solved the problem of keeping the top pound of the Broad Canal out of the chamber. On the one occasion that one of our number managed to scrounge a pump big enough, we



## Profile - Trevor Ellis, Vice-Chairman

couldn't afford the diesel to keep it running - a far cry from these days of multi-million pound schemes.

I first appeared on the Society's Committee (as it then was) at an AGM in Ashton Town Hall shortly afterwards, as much as anything due to a shortage of nominees. When nominations for the committee left one vacancy, one of my fellow volunteers turned to me and said "*Do you want to go on?*" I've been there ever since. My involvement with HCS is second only to my pursuit of Huddersfield Town.

During our first serious restoration projects at Uppermill and Tunnel End Cottages, I was actually the Volunteer Co-ordinator for the latter, but was fortunate enough to be made 'redundant' due to West Yorkshire County Council promoting a Job Creation Scheme. This allowed me to work on the Uppermill project throughout and I much preferred restoring a canal rather than a house, however important. Little did I realise that a few years later I would be plucked from my outpost as Jobcentre Manager for the Department of Employment in Brighouse to become Manager of the Community Programme (successor to 'Job Creation') covering both Calderdale and Kirklees, which gave me oversight of the two large canal restoration schemes, as well as a number of smaller towpath jobs. Some people in the Department unkindly assumed that there was some connection between my appointment and the fact that our area had more canal schemes than any other, though I claimed pure coincidence!

My subsequent career with HCS has continued as 'Working Party Co-ordinator' at Diggle where I became better-known as the strange yellow object being interviewed in heavy horizontal drizzle in the TV programme/video of 'The Impossible Restoration'. The number of sad people with nothing else to do but watch Channel 4 at 7.00 a.m. on a Sunday amazes me! The presentation was not helped by the fact that, due to water getting into the camera, we were onto 'take 3'.

To this day I remain the Society's Working Party Co-ordinator. Our current target is to bring the Marsden-Slaithwaite stretch, which has suffered badly from two years of drought and no boats, back to navigability with the aim of encouraging some use of the longest navigable stretch. This involves making sure first that the gates will open and secondly, that when closed again, they will hold water. We have a small boat, donated by David Finnis, (long-standing HCS member and local National Trust Warden) which is invaluable and actually allows us to do a little canalling between locks. The rest of the job consists mainly of selective use of long rake and wooden laths as necessary. **Anyone out there who wants to become involved would be more than welcome and can ring me for dates.**

We may have got the promise of money to finish the rest of the canal, but it is vital that we protect what we already have.

Ring me on  
01484 534666

Trevor Ellis



Trevor, whose other interests include fortifications of all kinds, stands outside a fortified house at Breuschwickersheim in Alsace.

**T**his is the first part of a serialisation of "Storyline", the background material prepared for the Society, by Archaeamedia Ltd., as part of our report on the proposed Standedge Experience. I hope you find it as fascinating as I did. Ed.

## HUDDERSFIELD NARROW CANAL

### Background History

The birth of the inland waterways network in the 18th century changed the physical face of the countryside and the economic nature of Britain for ever. Two hundred years ago, in what became known as the 'Canal Mania' of 1790 to 1795, speculation in canal building schemes reached its zenith, and in the years 1793 to 1794 alone thirty-eight Acts of Parliament were authorised for the planning, raising of capital and construction of the new, revolutionary transport system. The trading and financial success of the early canal pioneers, and in particular the Duke of Bridgewater, inspired the fury of planning and speculation of the Canal Mania, and in 1793 there were sixty-two canals underway - half of the entire navigable waterway system in Britain.

The purpose built canal was the last crucial element in the utilisation of water as a means of transporting heavy goods across the country. It represents the point where a pre-industrial Britain of localised, hand-made trade and industry transformed itself into the new industrialised world of the machine and mass-production. Canals were the heavy goods routes of pre-railway Britain and like the first railways they were local, or at best regional, arteries of trade. They meshed with an expanding network of horse tramways, parish and turnpike roads, river navigations and ports and harbours.

The purpose-built and designed canal grew out of the tradition of improving the natural waterways to allow transport easier passage

through shallows and other such natural hazards. By the start of the 17th century about 1125 kilometres of navigable rivers were available either naturally or through improvement, and the demands of the rising urban populations and expanding trade and industry ensured that by 1760 a further 965 kilometres had been added. These river improvements of the 17th and early 18th centuries contributed greatly to the growth of trade and by the 1750's no sizeable town or city was located more than 25 kilometres from a navigable river or the sea.

By the middle of the 18th century the pressures of this rising population, along with a steadily expanding domestic market, was resulting in ever increasing demands for more food, more clothing, more raw materials and more fuel. Ironworks, potteries, brickyards and their workforces needed increasing volumes of coal and this was sitting in stockpiles at the mines, its delivery frustrated by inadequate means of distribution. England had the best waterways system in Europe, but beyond the point where the navigations ended, goods had to be trans-shipped and carried by cart or on horseback, both of which were expensive and inefficient. The problem was addressed by the construction of a string of new turnpike roads, but these did not solve the problem of transporting bulk goods, especially raw materials and coals, to the landlocked industries.

By 1760 the entrepreneurs, capital resources, markets, labour forces and nascent industrial structure were all in place and the scene was set for the great industrial and economic expansion to come. But the spectacular explosion in the British economy in the second half of the 18th century could only take place once the problem of the coal 'famine' had been resolved by the creation of a new heavy-goods transport system. This was achieved by the construction of the industrial canal network.

### The Canal Age

The Canal Age was short-lived - roughly from 1760 to 1840. When it began, George II was

## Standedge Experience 'Storyline'

on the throne, the recorded population of England and Wales was around six and a half million people and James Watt was developing his steam engine. When it ended, Queen Victoria ruled a population of over sixteen million people at home and a vast and rapidly expanding empire worldwide, and the first steam railways were beginning a new transformation of the country's economy and social and political geography (e.g. there was no common time across Britain until one was agreed upon to enable the railways to have reliable and sensible timetables). Transformed by an unparalleled economic and industrial growth, Great Britain had become the 'workshop of the world', and much of this transformation was due to the canal pioneers.

The industrial canals developed out of the river navigations but they did not replace them - the two types of waterway became an interconnected network linking, extending and feeding off each other. At the start of the Canal Age a crucial fund of knowledge and experience already existed and a small number of professional and part-time navigation engineers was available to advise, to make surveys or to go on to canal work themselves.

The first 'industrial' canal was the Newry Canal, built in Ireland in the 1740's to carry coal from the Tyrone mines to Dublin. In mainland Britain the Bridgewater Canal, built in the 1760's by James Brindley and John Gilbert, was the first large-scale, coal-carrying canal. It was owned and paid for by the Duke of Bridgewater who, at the age of seventeen, had taken himself on the then fashionable Grand Tour of Europe, during which he had taken a course in experimental philosophy (probably with elements of science and engineering) and in the south of France had visited one of the most remarkable waterways in the world, the Languedoc, or as it is better known, the Canal du Midi.

This was the first recognisably modern canal and was the wonder of its age when it was completed in 1681. It began as a dream to connect the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea during the reign of King

Francis I who in 1516 discussed possible routes with Leonardo da Vinci. He had a route surveyed but the concept was too big, too technically difficult and too expensive for the time. It had to wait for the reign of Louis XIV who revelled in just such massive ideas and projects, and work began on the canal in 1666 under the supervision of the engineer Pierre-Paul Riquet. When it opened fifteen years later it was 240 kilometres long, with numerous locks, including a staircase of eight near Beziers, many aqueducts, and a 165 metre long tunnel that is the first recorded for a navigable canal. One astonishing feature was Riquet's provision of water to the summit level - a feeder 44 kilometres long to bring water from the River Sor at the Montagne Noire, with another, over half as long, feeding a reservoir in the valley of the Laudot at St. Ferreo, its dam over 32 metres high and 800 metres long.

Although it was built more than 300 years ago it is still open and useful and shows the engineering skill and organising brilliance that constructed it, and helped to influence the young Duke of Bridgewater when he formulated his plans for a canal to service his collieries on his return to his estates in 1757. The Bridgewater Canal proved dramatically profitable and in its turn inspired the first generation of industrial canals in the 1760's and 1770's. In being owned by one man the Bridgewater Canal was unusual, but in being financed privately it was not, and for most investors the main motive behind their involvement in this new adventure was simply one of profit.

The way in which canals were built generally followed a similar pattern in which a committee of interested parties would make a proposal to build a canal and then try to mobilise public support. They would organise a public meeting which was usually held in an inn or hotel and could often be quite a rowdy affair (not everybody wanted canals for various reasons). After this an Act of Parliament would be sought and a joint-stock company formed to invite subscriptions and to allocate the shareholdings. Canal promoters

**M**any of you out there may be thinking that following the Millennium announcement, the Society can now take a back seat and watch it all happen, taking relief in the fact that a dream held by many is coming true. You may also ponder on why the Society continues to raise money via its annual canal festivals.

Members may even cogitate on what will be the future role of the Society once the canal is fully opened in four years time and what's going to happen to the Ashton office and staff.

In a nut shell - we don't know at the moment, but please be patient.

The Society's Management Council and the directors of our restoration company have been considering these issues for some time, but initial and time consuming energies are being directed towards meeting the terms and conditions laid out in the Millennium Contract, a document that must be signed by early summer or the grant may be lost.

**It has always been the Society's view that it would remain an active force in perpetuity.**

It has always been the Society's view that it would remain an active force in perpetuity. After all, consider the decline of the Peak Forest Canal once that Society disbanded.

Members should be aware that monies from the Lottery, English Partnerships, the Society, local authorities and others will not pay for everything. That is to say individual items or projects that are not specifically canal restoration but may be conducive to increasing canal use and amenities for the many user groups who currently partake of its pleasures.

What the Society cannot afford to lose now is the support of its members and the continued involvement of its active volunteers, whose support will be needed in the future and the fact that H.C.S. has so many members, active or otherwise, in no mean way assisted when the Millennium Commission considered the Society's application.

The management committees will be debating all the unanswered questions over the next six months and will of

course keep members informed as to progress and other matters, as always, through the pages of your quarterly journal Pennine Link.

.Frank Smith

*cont'd from page 15 ...* and subscribers included a real pick-and-mix of 18th century society, with some investing in order to benefit as canal users, and others for the purely financial rewards of shareholding. There were mine and quarry owners, iron-masters, pottery, glass and textile manufacturers, rich merchants, Oxford dons, solicitors, landowners, petty dukes, miscellaneous professionals and clergymen too. In the years of the Canal Mania all kinds of people were investing in canals - small businessmen, craftsmen, tradesmen, vicars and rich widows. Most of them were locals and saw the investment as a sound one, which it often was. With the finance in place and the plans approved the engineers and contractors

would be appointed and the canal built by the legendary gangs of labourers or 'navvies'. When it was finished there would be a celebration and a feast to mark the occasion.

Britain's canals can be separated into different types. Some linked major river navigations and were wide enough to take barges. Others, particularly in the Midlands, were narrow and took specially designed narrow boats. In architectural and engineering terms three overlapping phases can be defined: Pioneering canals from *circa* 1760 to 1780; Heroic from *circa* 1780 to 1835; and Late from 1835 onwards.

*Next issue: Pioneering and Heroic Canals.*



It was thought members might be interested in seeing the advertisement for the new Project Director as it appeared in the Guardian and

Telegraph newspapers - sorry you've missed the closing date, but there again, is it worth getting out of bed for a mere £40,000 p.a.?

### **HUDDERSFIELD CANAL COMPANY**

#### **PROJECT DIRECTOR**

**Salary circa £40k**

**Negotiable Package - 4 year contract**

**Huddersfield Narrow Canal**

**Restoration Project**

Following success in attracting funding from the Millennium Commission & English Partnerships a Company is to be formed to deliver this £30m project and secure operation of the canal for the future.

A challenging and exciting opportunity exists for an experienced and dynamic Project Director who is required to ensure that all aspects of the project are delivered to the timescales and within the budget constraints of the funding partners.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate:-

- substantial experience in the management of large and complex projects in both construction and financial terms
- an ability to promote and develop the canal and its associated tourist attraction at Standedge Tunnel
- excellent inter-personal skills at all levels
- knowledge of the processes and procedures of Local Authorities and Government Agencies
- ability to exercise sound objective judgement.

You will possess:-

- degree or equivalent (Membership of an appropriate professional institution would be an advantage)
- several years post qualification experience in a relevant organisation.

**A detailed job description, person specification and application form and further details can be obtained from Mr Clem Beaumont, Tameside M.B.C., Council Offices, Wellington Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 6DL on 0161 342 3032.**

**For an informal discussion please contact Mr Roger Anderson, Assistant Chief Executive on 0161 342 3933.**

**Closing date: 28th February 1997.**

**Quote Reference: HC1.**

Tameside is a Caring Council and an equal opportunity employer

***ERRATUM - Sales Report - In the last issue, No.119, we published the Annual Sales Report and, during editing, somehow dropped a name. The result was the omission of Ken Williams from the 'thank you' list. Ken, who by day is the dredger driver, regularly gives up time on Sunday evenings to drive the Sales Team home after events. Sorry, Ken!***

### **ALL SORTS OF HELP REQUIRED**

for

### **1997 SADDLEWORTH CANAL FESTIVAL**

contact John Wilson on 0161 339 1343

**At this time of celebration it is useful to remember what happened at the inaugural meeting of the Society.**

## Huddersfield Canal Society

Minutes of the Inaugural General Meeting of the Huddersfield Canal Society held at the Zetland Hotel, Venn St., Huddersfield on Friday 19th April 1974; commencing at 8.00p.m.

52 people were present. The meeting was chaired by Mr. John Maynard.

### Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from

Richard Wainwright, M.P. (Colne Valley)  
Ken Goodwin (Chairman of N.W. Branch I.W.A.)  
Mr. and Mrs. Jollins (Manager of the new Yorkshire Water Authority)

### Chairman's opening remarks.

The chairman made the following comments:

He had found a surprising amount of support and widespread interest from a great number of people and officials for the formation of a society to improve the Huddersfield canals.

He considered the society should aim its attention at both the Broad and Narrow canals.

The walk organised by the I.W.A. along the Yorkshire length of the narrow canal had shown many people the true extent of the problems to be faced if the re-opening of the canal was to be considered.

He considered the first object of a Huddersfield Canal Society should be to act as a "watchdog" to ensure that no further destruction nor obstruction of the canals took place.

Other objects of the society, in his opinion, would be:

1. To conduct a feasibility study and costing of the re-opening of the Narrow canal.
2. To encourage the full use of the canals by clean-up campaigns and publicity.
3. To canvas Local Authorities to take an active interest in the canals (and Civic Societies, angling clubs, the B.W.B., the I.W.A., etc.), with the emphasis on co-operation between them and the Canal Society.

### Description of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal by Mr. R.A. Dewey

Mr. Dewey outlined the history of the canal to its abandonment in the 1960's. He exposed the problems

that would be encountered before the canal could be made navigable. These included:

71 lock chambers requiring rebuilding or considerable renovation (only 3 lock chambers are sound),

74 sets of lock gates needing replacing i.e. to be purchased and installed,

15 bridges requiring rebuilding,

4 low pipes needing altering,

1½ miles of canal requiring excavation as this is the total length filled in and built on.

He outlined some of the advantages of having the Huddersfield Narrow Canal open again. These were:

The pressures on water space is increasing (e.g. the number of boats on the inland waterways of Britain doubled between 1966 and 1972) and this has led to a shortage of available space.

Re-opening this canal could ease this shortage which also shows that there is real demand for more 'space'.

The Huddersfield Narrow Canal is historic in its own right and includes a remarkable tunnel which deserves preserving.

It will create an alternative to cruisers by providing another "ring" with the Leeds & Liverpool Canal and the Rochdale Canal.

To improve the appearance and amenities of the canal would benefit all the people along its length and perhaps bring more trade to nearby shops, etc.

### General Discussion

Mr. Dewey was asked which problem he considered to be the biggest. He replied by saying that there are three major problems; although which of them is the biggest is now known. These are:

1. The main road built over the canal at Aspley. However this may not be a serious difficulty as there may prove to be enough headroom for our purposes without "lifting" the road.
2. The landscaped area over the filled in canal at Slaithwaite.
3. The culverted length at Stalybridge which has actually been built on.

It was remarked that a lock was being filled and demolished at the moment.

The opinion was expressed that the mile-long culvert at Stalybridge could be the biggest problem because of

# Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of HCS

recent building and landscaping over this area of the canal.

The attention of those present was drawn to the current I.W.A. "Bulletin" as it contained an article entitled "Second generation canals". It was thought that the Narrow canal could be considered as a second generation canal. All the difficulties involved were similar to those on the Thames and Severn which are going to be overcome.

It was indicated that major dredging of the reservoirs would be necessary to improve the water supply, especially as the Ashton Canal will soon be open and using more water.

Furthermore the recent roof falls in the Standedge Tunnel indicate that it is fundamentally unstable.

Mr. Dewey replied by quoting from a letter received from the B.W.B. which stated "As soon as the Ashton Canal is opened and other improvement works to the reservoirs completed, it is intended that repair works on the Standedge tunnel will be carried out."

It was observed that the previous comment that locks were being filled in seemed contrary to the stated policy of the B.W.B., this indicated that a Society was needed to take action immediately to stop the infilling.

It was suggested that a good source of timber for lock gates could be obtained from disused cattle docks along the railway.

However it was then stated that it would be preferable to use new materials in order that public safety and approval would be enhanced.

It was pointed out that the biggest obstacle to the re-opening of the canal could be local opinion; especially from the angle that people needed to be convinced it was feasible. Publicity will be important.

A representative from the Peak Forest Canal Society indicated that their experience proved that people were impressed by the achievements of working parties. He suggested that the first action should be a part restoration and to begin to use that restoration as an example in talks, exhibitions, etc.

A member of the Rochdale Working Party agreed with this view and also mentioned that the best way to influence societies is to be part of them i.e. have a Huddersfield Canal Society included in the membership of different bodies.

Dead fish had been observed near the Industrial Museum at Golcar.

An ex-B.W.B. engineer observed from his past experience that people were impressed by new techniques or materials e.g. pre-fabricated locks and gates, and he firmly stated that there should be no skimping in the restoration of the canal.

## **Proposal and discussion of rules and, if thought fit, adoption.**

Copies of a draft set of rules were handed out to those present and discussed. Amendments were made and the rules formally agreed as in the annexed paper. The Committee was requested to further discuss the rules and bring any further amendments they thought fit before the next general meeting.

## **Election of officers**

The following officers were unanimously elected:

Chairman - John Maynard

Secretary - Robert Dewey

Treasurer - Robert Wilkinson

Nine committee members were proposed and seconded. The number of votes for each candidate was:

Robert Keaveney	32 votes
* Gerry Greenwood	36
* Timothy Noakes	35
* Margaret Sinfield	33
* Robert Lear	36
Michael Burns	22
* Alan West	37
* Margaret Bradnum	33
John Parkinson	26

Those marked \* were duly elected to serve on the committee.

## **Any other business**

Help was requested for working parties on the Rochdale Canal each weekend particularly for the 4/5th May and 18/19th May.

## **Date and place of next meeting**

It was agreed that the committee should decide the date and place of the next meeting.

## **Close of meeting**

The meeting was closed by the chairman at 10.00p.m.

**T**he first of a series of excerpts from "Narrow Boat" by L.T.C. (TOM) ROLT, the book which, more than any other, was responsible for the start of the waterways restoration movement.

The excerpts are selected by Ken Wright and we are very grateful to Mrs. Sonia Rolt, the widow of the author, for her permission to publish these articles.

The late Charles Hadfield, the canal historian, wrote to Tom Rolt after he bought a first edition of "Narrow Boat", as did Robert Aickman. Together with Frank Eyre, a friend and colleague of Hadfield's, these four men began the Inland Waterways Association.

In a foreword to an earlier edition Hadfield writes:-

*"In the whole post-war canal revival and flowering, 'Narrow Boat' gave Tom Rolt a unique place, for by 1944 he had already done it. He knew, he understood how canal people lived and what they did, how canals worked. Aickman didn't, Hadfield didn't, Eyre didn't. None of us had ever steered a narrow boat, though Eyre was an experienced yachtsman and canoeist, and I could take a twin-screw fireboat on the tides of London River in the blackout. Today one has only to turn the pages of Waterways World, visit a canal bookshop, attend a boat rally, to realise Tom's achievement"*

## NARROW BOAT

### ON CANALS IN DECLINE

To step down from some busy thoroughfare on to the quiet tow-path of a canal, even in the heart of a town, is to step backward a hundred years or more and to see things in a different, and perhaps more balanced perspective. The rush of traffic on the road above seems to become the purposeless scurrying of an overturned anthill beside the unruffled calm of

the water, which even the slow passage of the boats does not disturb.

Meanwhile each year brought tidings of declining canal traffic, of once-thriving waterways becoming choked with weeds and mud and, worse still, of some closed forever. Maesbury Mill closed down, and the little boatyard at Frankton on the Welsh Marches, where 'Cressy' was converted, soon followed. It was a significant comment on the times that the boat-builder went to work as a carpenter at a nearby aerodrome on what, a year or two before, had been open fields.

There is something indescribably forlorn about these abandoned waterways; like old ruined houses or silent mills, they are haunted by the bygone life and toil which has left its deathless, eloquent mark upon them. Just as in old houses the worn stone steps are the memorial of many vanished feet, so on the canals it is the grooves worn by the towing-lines in the rotting wooden lockbeams or the crumbling brickwork of bridges that bring the past to life.

These waterways were gone, but how many more would fall to ruin before I got my boat? I knew of two that were in danger: the Kennet and Avon Canal from Reading, which crosses the Wiltshire downs to Bath, and the Stratford-on-Avon Canal, which joins the Avon at Stratford by way of Lowson Ford and Preston Bagot in Arden. If I did not take to the water soon, these, and perhaps many more, might be lost to me.

On the opposite side of the drawbridge from the boatyard there was a lock, and on the lockside stood a toll office. There all the boats southward bound for Oxford with their cargoes of coal were checked and gauged. At eight o'clock every week-day evening the toll clerk locked the bridge in the closed position and swung a heavy door across the towing path, so that any late-comers had to tie up until the following morning. There can be no mistaking this hour of closing, for they still ring the curfew in Banbury.



## 'Narrow Boat' by L.T.C. Rolt

We set forth the next morning through winding lanes by Temple Grafton and Billesley to find the Stratford Canal at Old Stratford Locks. So secretive is it that we should, I think, have searched in vain without the aid of the Ordnance Survey map. We came upon it in a narrow, tree-shaded cutting, and, leaving the car on the bridge above, clambered down onto the overgrown towing-path. We walked in the direction of Stratford to have a look at the locks, and found them, to our surprise, in excellent order. We encountered also a most original type of over-bridge. It was of extremely short span, there being no towing-path beneath, and the space between the brick abutments being only a boat's width. This would have meant that the boatman must unhitch his tow-line save for a most ingenious provision.

The arch consisted of two massive cast-iron brackets set in the brickwork, and these failed to meet by the space of about an inch at the crown. The balustrade was similarly divided, so that as the boat slid under, and the horse walked round, the tow-line could be dropped through the slot.; This curious 'divided bridge' is a unique regional type as peculiar to the Stratford Canal as are the wooden drawbridges to the Oxford.

Just below the first two locks we met an old man mowing the long grass on the banks, and of him I enquired whether any boats ever passed through. 'Oh, ah', he affirmed, 'there comes one sometimes', but when I asked how long it was since he had seen the last he confessed that it was 'bout four years back'.

'*Narrow Boat*' is available from IWA (Sales) Ltd. price £9.85 including post and packing.

Telesales No. 0171 586 2556.

### Tom Rolt Books Available From IWA:-

#### Autobiography

Landscape with Machines £9.85

Landscape with Canals £9.85

Landscape with Figures £9.85

#### Transport

From Sea to Sea

(Canal du Midi) £16.00

### Other Tom Rolt Books

Sleep No More - *Railway, Canal and other stories of the supernatural*

(Sutton Publishing Ltd) £4.99

Railway Adventures - *Tallyllyn Railway*

(Sutton) £14.99

The Making of a Railway - *The Building of the Great Central Railway* (Sutton) £12.99

## Towpath Run Update

Further to the suggestion made in the Autumn '96 Issue of 'Plink', I can now able to let you know that due to the less than good response from members (well, the proposer plus one actually) the run/race cannot be progressed.

We will keep the idea in mind for the future in the hope that better weather may prompt members to volunteer for such an event.

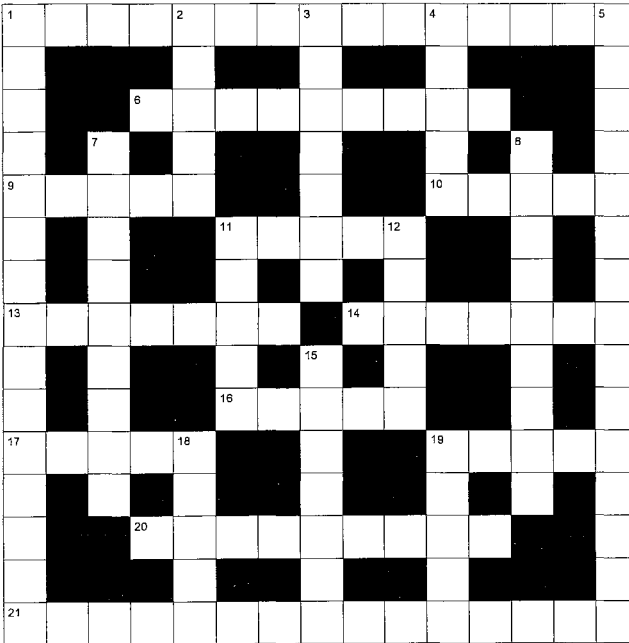
Jo Young

## STOP PRESS !!

### FORTH/ CLYDE AND RIBBLE LINK SUCCEED!!

**We are delighted to congratulate those concerned with the Forth and Clyde Canal and the Ribble Link Canal schemes in getting their Millennium Grant offers. Two more northern canal schemes now on the move.**

**Can there be any more?**



10. Sailing ship proceeding backwards through pools of water (5).
11. South coast river on which boaters might reproduce we hear? (5).
13. U R irate when another boat hits you in the Potteries (7).
14. An I itch to have a glass of wine with dinner on board (7).
16. The measure Robert used to be more certain (5).
17. Eager to be a bore whilst sailing on the Trent (5).
19. Sounds of the boat's rat catcher (5).
20. I lent trock to a boater near Nottingham (9).
21. Never mash dates in the north whilst going from east to west on a disused cross country canal in the south (6,3,6).

### DOWN

1. Centre of national aquatic excellence (5,10).
2. Bishop lost his headgear between two lock gates (5).
3. Keys rot at a Trent junction (7).
4. Another place at which to play cricket? (5).
5. Salopian marriage? (10,5).
7. SU junction one is not allowed to cross over? (9).
8. Join David Bellamy to study leaves on a sea inlet in Australia (6,3).
11. Find sailing ships with an excess consonant on the River Ancholme (5).
12. Dr Beth errs on the side of safety when using an anaesthetic (5).
15. Get up steam where a highland farmer lives on a southern cross country canal (7).
18. Point to the rising sun thrice during RI lesson - Great Lake on the horizon (5).
19. Jimmy Mac left a dark spot in a mineral (5).

Our congratulations to P D & W Wilson of Lechlade 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 Copy Date, 19th May.

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

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

### ACROSS

1. Doubled up tripartite solution to elevation problems on the Northern Oxford (10,5).
6. On but not on Constables river look to the left of the boat to find the link between a canal and a river (9).
9. Dame Evadne lost her way northwards and thus dodged the issue (5).

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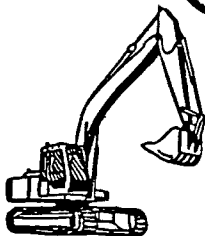
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The Kirklees independent celebration! Left to Right: David Sumner, Jo Young, Cllr. George Speight, John Maynard (1st Chairman), John Miller (Kirklees MC). Photos: K. Wright

A major publicity event took place on both sides of the Pennines on Monday 16th December 1996, announcing that the Society and its partners in the H.N.C. consortium had successfully won through to the next stage of Millennium funding, where an offer of a £14.8m grant had been made. At Tunnel End,

Marsden, Society and local authority big-wigs not only enjoyed the attention of the local press but also several moments of prime time television coverage, courtesy of the B.B.C. However, in Tameside where a larger gathering of officials took place at Staley Wharf, the T.V. and Radio outside broadcast



Cllr. Roy Oldham (Tameside MB Leader)



Cllr. John Battye (Oldham MB Leader)



David Sumner (Chairman HCS)



The Speeches Begin. Left to right: Cllr. Roy Oldham (Tameside Leader), Ian Selby (BW Waterways Manager), Cllr. John Batty (Oldham Leader), David Sumner, Michael Lorkins (Millennium Commission), Cllr. Michael Ballagher (Mayor of Tameside).

teams were diverted at the last moment to Blackburn, following the news of a replacement manager for the Rovers football team (priorities eh!). In any event, coverage of the Millennium announcement was widespread both locally and nationally and in the more informal festivities following the

photo-call more than one sigh of relief could be heard. Special thanks was given to Robin Witter who at a moment's notice, transported his slipper launch to Stalybridge to enable the more appropriate photographs to be taken.

Frank Smith

*Photos: K. Wright*



Michael Lorkins (Millennium Commission)



Martin Reynolds (English Partnerships)



Ian Selby (BW Waterways Manager)

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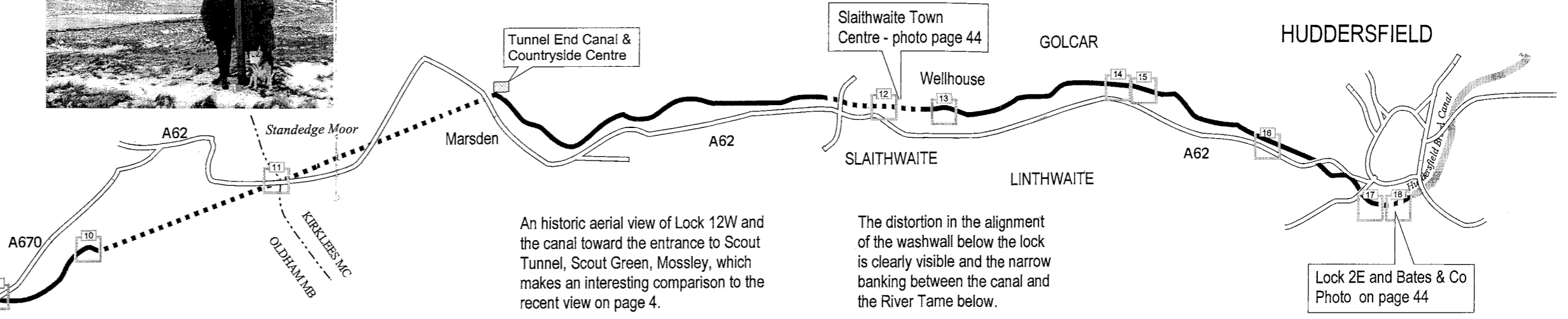




- 1 Stalybridge Town Centre  
Start Date - First Quarter 1999  
Finish Date - Third Quarter 2000  
Estimated Cost - £8.5 m
- 2 Hartshead Infill & Lock 8W  
Works Nearly Completed  
Estimated Cost - £1.44 m
- 3 Scout Tunnel  
Start Date - Fourth Quarter 1996  
Finish Date - First Quarter 1997  
Estimated 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



### The Remaining Blockages on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal - Spring 1997



An historic aerial view of Lock 12W and the canal toward the entrance to Scout Tunnel, Scout Green, Mossley, which makes an interesting comparison to the recent view on page 4.

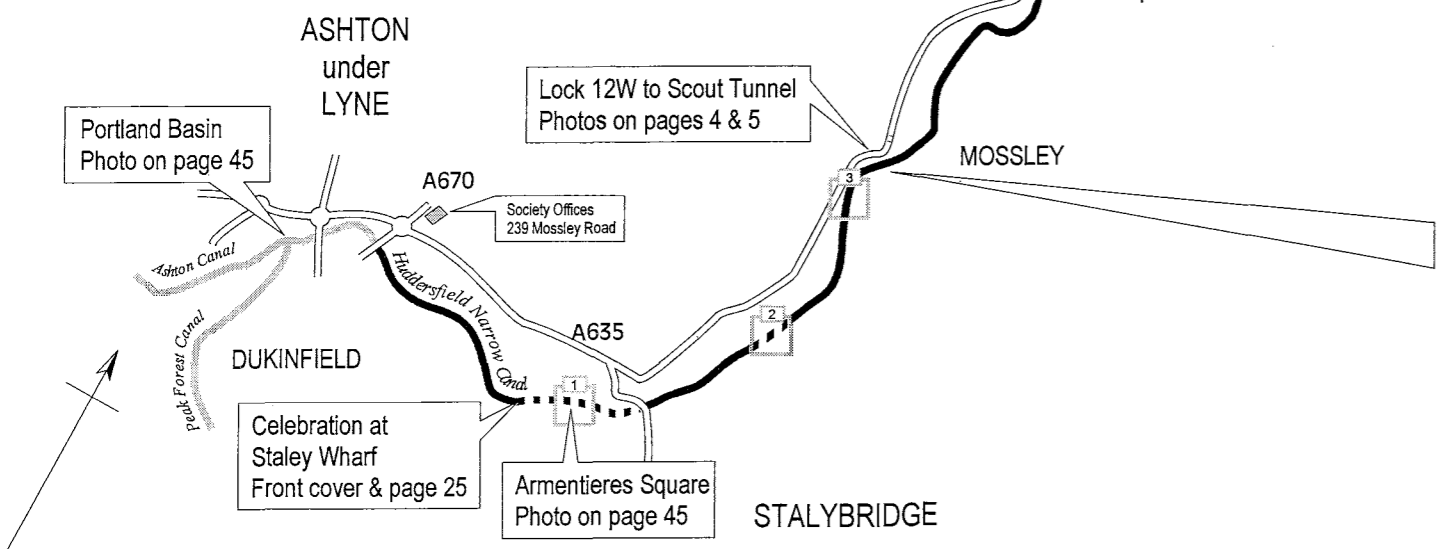
The distortion in the alignment of the washwall below the lock is clearly visible and the narrow banking between the canal and the River Tame below.

Photographed in April 1991, the tipped material which makes up the steep banking to the right of the canal is particularly obvious; indeed, it is believed that slippage in this material was the cause of the washwall displacement. The embankment was removed and the area landscaped by Tameside Council early in 1995.



\* The timescale and completion of the projects are currently under review following the Millennium Commission's approval, in principle, of grant. It is hoped that the revised project timetabling will be available for the next issue of Pennine Link.

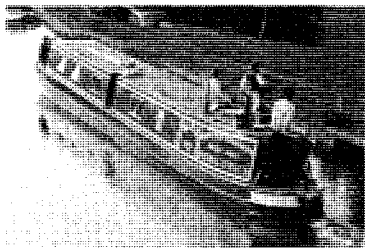
Photo: R. Gough



Scale approx. 1" to 1 mile

- 12 Slaitwaite Town Centre  
Start Date - Second Quarter 1999  
Finish Date - Second Quarter 2000  
Estimated Cost - £3.02 m
- 13 Lees Mill Bridge  
Start Date - Fourth Quarter 1996  
Finish Date - First Quarter 1997  
Estimated Cost - £187 k
- 14 Holme Mill Bridge  
Start Date - Fourth Quarter 1996  
Finish Date - First Quarter 1997  
Estimated Cost - £187 k
- 15 Golcar Aqueduct  
Start Date - First Quarter 1998  
Finish Date - Second Quarter 1998  
Estimated Cost - £205 k
- 16 Mark Bottoms Bridge  
Start Date - Third Quarter 1996  
Finish Date - Fourth Quarter 1996  
Estimated Cost - £362 k
- 17 Sellers & Co  
Start Date - Second Quarter 1998  
Finish Date - Second Quarter 1999  
Estimated Cost - £2.91 m
- 18 Bates & Co  
Start Date - First Quarter 1998  
Finish Date - First Quarter 1999  
Estimated Cost - £2.24 m

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Contact: J. Lund  
23 Pole Lane, Failsworth, Manchester. Tel: 0161 683 5728

**S**ince my lecture on the logistics of moving boats about (and, more significantly, moving their owners' cars!) the IWA magazine "Waterways" has managed a complete, and very funny, two-page article on the subject. What Plink says today .....

Summer 1995 and we are starting the third day of our two-week trip from the Trent to Stratford. La Maitresse is moored at Gunthorpe Staithe on the River Trent.

## Monday 26th June

Destination - Shardlow

Weather - misty, very sunny later.

Distance - 23 miles

Locks - 8

Woke at 7.30 after a very fitful and uncomfortable night. Isn't it always the same, first night in a strange bed? All used the BW facilities - one way of putting it - and off at 7.55. Misty but looks as if it should clear. Startled when umpteen cormorants took off from a nearby tree. Lots of birds about - swallows, martins, swifts, herons, grebes, tufted ducks and swans with cygnets everywhere.

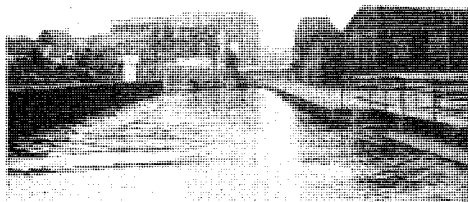
Even through the mist this is a very beautiful stretch of river. Nice looking pub, the Ferry Boat, at Stoke Bardolph. Locked up S.B. lock (manned) with "Fagin's Folly" - very turbulent lock and not too happy at our companion's handling skill! On to Holme Lock, also

manned, with views of the International Rowing Course over the banks. Then into Nottingham, passed Notts. Forest and the remains of the Grantham Canal. Turned off the main line Trent into the Nottingham Canal at Meadow Lane Lock (unmanned but three boats were helped through by two super BW men. These chaps really do a terrific P.R. job). Passed Notts. County, canal museum, Nottingham Castle, all very built up and hemmed in suddenly. Two little boys used us for target practice, briefly, but HE glared at them and they pretended they weren't there.

Moored up at the newish Sainsbury's - obviously they had developed the canal side with good mooring rings and pleasant landscaped gardens leading to the store. Took the opportunity to stock up with vitals and, quite on the spur of the moment, bought a scratchcard and won £5!

By the time we got back to the boat the sun had arrived and we all changed into T-shirts and shorts. Past new canal-fronting houses, 2- and 3-storey with moorings - a bit twee by my taste. Into Beeston Cut which is quite beautiful, then back onto the river and past quaint hamlets like Barton in Fabis and Thrumpton.

Then on to the complex junction where the Erewash Canal and the Soar Navigation leave the Trent which is soon to become the Trent and Mersey Canal. An interesting area in canal history and excellent moorings - not for us, though. On to Sawley Lock, which needs at least an ordinary degree in electronics to master the push-button paddle gear and then



Industrial archaeology - Nottingham



Yacht Station - R. Trent

## The Wife's Tale - Part 32

under the M1 motorway, passing the huge weir so familiar to bored motorists.

Through some delightful countryside to Shardlow, one of the famous canal ports, completely preserved, in a small township once totally dependent on the canal for its existence. Industrial archaeology by the bucketful! Stopped at the Malt Shovel pub but, after a bit of a walk, decided to move on to the canal basin, quieter and more interesting. Known as Hoskins Wharf, was being refurbished into pub and restaurant when we were there. The canal museum, mentioned in our 1993 Nicholson, has been closed for nine years! I've often thought of offering my services to Nicholson, updating their information in exchange for a boat, but I fear I would never see home or family ever again!

The sun was still v. hot so we all sat on La Maitresse's super after deck, with drinks, right into the sunset - what a life. Hope this weather continues.

### Tuesday 27th June

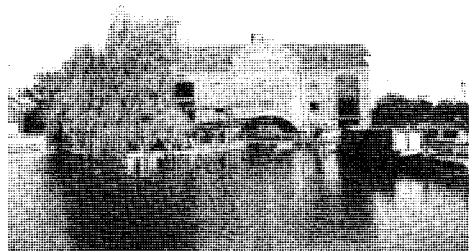
Destination - Hopwas

Weather - Perfect, hot sun and no wind.

Distance - 32 miles

Locks - 14

After an early night woke to hot sun and cloudless skies at 6.30am. Breakfasted and engine running by 7.00am. Set the lock on my own - in text-book fashion, HE admitted. Under a Bailey Bridge which we nearly had to stop and turn back for (HIM being a retired Royal Engineer). Caught Nicholson out again - they make a point of describing the large but



Hoskin's Wharf - Shardlow

short wooden balance beams on Weston Lock which are, in fact, steel ones!

Surprised a kingfisher only six feet away. Saw the remains of Sir Richard Harpur's Tudor mansion, a huge gate house. Good moorings at Swarkestone, Bridge 15 for village and pub but didn't stop. Saw potato pickers in fields near Barrow upon Trent - must be roasting in this sun even though still quite early. Long wait at Stenson Lock for a wide trip boat to turn round and then a narrowboat came through the lock "against the water". Naughty. In the meantime I saw a yellow wagtail and HE lost the top from the brass polish but soon whittled a fresh one from a redundant wine bottle cork. Well, polishing the brass keeps HIM out of mischief! Passed a huge Toyota factory near Findern, where there are also lovely moorings at the Canal Turn pub. Again, at Willington, good moorings and some lovely boats.

Roy and Ken were by this time sniffing the air in anticipation of arriving at Burton-on-Trent, one of the beer drinker's meccas. Saw a splendid old working boat - Duteous - and beautiful 4 arch road bridge over the River Dove - and a 12 arch aqueduct. Unfortunately the railings spoiled a good photo.

Went through Burton, quite rural, passed between Bass and Marston's breweries, surprisingly no smell. THEY were quite disappointed until we stopped for a lunch of steak and salad at the Bridge Inn at Branston, where the most wonderful Marston's bitter was served straight from the wood. THEY were ecstatic!



Fradley Junction

Back on board we passed through idyllic villages and beautiful scenery - I walked the locks up to Fradley Junction, working them largely on my own as Roy was busy taking photographs, and wound up quite knacker --- er, tired!

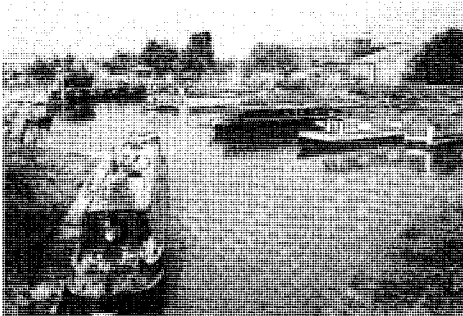
Arrived at Fradley, one of the system's famous junctions, behind a narrowboat full of totally incompetent (or blind drunk) boaters. It transpired they were looking for somewhere to turn and eventually did a 95-point turn at the junction. HE showed them how with a perfect left turn into the Coventry Canal and then scrunched over something nasty on the bottom. Felt like several supermarket trolleys.

On the way we saw the spires of Lichfield Cathedral. Coventry Canal very low on water, meandering gently without locks - absolutely gorgeous. Sat in the peace and quiet of the fore-deck with Elaine and let the world slip by. Chicken sandwiches and cake for tea and kept going. Passed the end of the derelict Wyrley and Essington Canal at Huddlesford and on to Hopwas but all the moorings were full, in the village, so we went on and moored in the country, past Dixon's Bridge. Moored opposite a lived-in boat with full intruder alarm system. A first for us!

Decided to stay in for drinks. Roy and Elaine sorry to be leaving us tomorrow. It has seemed such a short time. Bed at 10.00pm after a 14 hour boating day!

### Wednesday 28th June

Destination - Atherstone  
Weather - Brilliant again



Hudson's Marina, Glascote Basin - Tamworth

Distance - 12½ miles  
Locks - 12

Left the mooring at 8.30am, mist clearing for another sunny day. Fields full of magnificent horses, hunters and/or racers at Dunstall Farm Bridge. Impressive BW development at Peels Wharf just before Fazeley Junction, yet another famous canal name. Arrived at our crew change-over point (Hudson's Marina, Glascote Basin, Tamworth) at 10.00am. No sign of Bryn and Gwyneth, our next crew. Took on water and diesel and had a pump-out. Roy and Elaine left for the station about 10.15; B & G arrived at 11.00. Did a bit of shopping then sailed a hundred yards and stopped for lunch at the Anchor (Bridge 73). And what a lunch! Beautiful half pound rump steak, chips, peas and salad for £2.25! Eaten in a nice sunny garden with excellent ale. A good start for B & G.

Off again at 1.00pm for a gentle pootele through country and town, past Tudor house and remains of 10th century abbey at Polesworth. Have had a nasty bite - left ankle V. swollen.

It was very, very hot doing the eleven locks up to Atherstone, water very low due to the imbalance of boats going up and down. Part of the time occupied in admiring Merevale Park and Merevale Hall, a huge complex built down a hillside. V. impressive.

Moored next to a council housing estate - looked down into a magnificent vegetable garden. Felt we had done quite enough for B & G's first day! Dinner eaten on the after-deck with plenty of pre-prandial drinks - this is getting to be a habit I can cope with!

Walked into Atherstone - V. long main street. A drink or two at the Red Lion - V. old coaching inn - bed quite late. Great hilarity from B & G, making beds!

I should have mentioned earlier - Bryn's car is now safely ensconced at Hudson Marina in Tamworth! People like Steve Hudson fully appreciate the car shuttling problems and willingly assist by providing reasonably secure parking space.

**NEXT:** Sutton Stop and Coventry Cathedral.

*Photos: A & K Wright*



**An essential part of canal restoration involves the work of dredging - excavating and disposing of accumulated mud and silt to achieve a suitable navigable depth; about 1.2m (4').**

The original canal profile, when constructed, is defined by the surface of its puddle clay (a worked mix of sand and clay) lining which, in porous ground, was usually 450mm (18") thick below and 1m (3') at the sides; its impervious nature being enhanced through the efforts of the 'puddlers' - barefoot labourers, repeatedly trampling through the clay.

Though the canal may be '*clean as a whistle*' on construction, it is inevitable that the water feeding the canal and, more importantly, the run-off from the surrounding land, will bring silt into the canal. Canals lack the sediment-carrying flow of rivers and hence, in the calm pounds between locks and the lock chambers themselves, the silt settles out and accumulates over the years, reducing the navigable depth. In canals such as ours, closed to navigation for many years, the silt fills the canal completely in many places.

The water-holding properties of the canal depends on the puddle clay lining and so great care is taken when dredging not to remove the clay! But what to do with the silt and mud when it is removed?

Gone are the days when the cavalier approach of simply dumping the stuff over the boundary wall would suffice. Dredgings are classed as a waste material and as such, are subject to waste disposal legislation. On first thoughts, it might seem that dredgings would be a harmless material; after all, its not like a toxic industrial waste. However, the reputation of canals as dumping grounds and the proximity of past industries may give cause for concern. So, the first step is to sample the dredgings (the patent saucepan on a broom pole is useful here!) and send them away to a testing laboratory for analysis.

Laboratories analyse to an agreed list of elements or determinands following standard testing methods and include those toxic favourites Arsenic, Lead, Mercury and Cadmium, amongst others. The results are given for total content (mg of determinand per kg of sample) and/or leachate ( $\mu\text{g}^*$  per litre); the latter parameter is of particular note as it indicates the amount of determinand that may leach, or wash out, from the tipped dredgings and affect the local groundwater.

The magnitude of the results can be used to classify the contamination level of the dredgings. There is a variety of classification systems, though the system of 'Contamination Classes A to E' is frequently applied. The classes range from Class A (inert) to Class E (highly contaminated), based on thresholds for each determinand. The classification has a direct bearing on the disposal method, any material which is classed above 'A', should, technically, be disposed of in a fully lined, licensed tip - disposal costs being up to ten times those for inert material.

Suffice to say, all the samples from Huddersfield Narrow have proved to be of Class A for disposal purposes and have been tipped safely at various sites.

Bob Gough

\* ( $\mu\text{g}$  - microgram or millionths of a gram)



A tip full of mud! The two huge lagoons by the canal here at Mossley were nearly 20 feet deep before dredging started. The machine and tug give some idea of the scale of this operation. Photo: K. Wright



**I** was unfortunately only able to attend half the festivals organised on the canal last year, my lapse at the others being due to a variety of reasons, mainly connected with the fact that non-waterway organisations with whom I am connected had events or functions at the same time.

This is a perennial problem for anyone who is not just involved solely in restoring the Canal and I have every sympathy for those members who are not able to attend a happening organised by this Society because of pressure of work or other pleasures. The two I did attend were Saddleworth in May, where I was Treasurer, and Ashton in July where I was responsible for keeping the gates manned and press ganging 'volunteers' into doing an hour or so taking money.

I also went to the National Trail Boat Rally at Welshpool, without any official job, and purely for enjoyment; however Pat soon had me in order and helping on the Sales Stand! Although we are always asking for members of the Society to help out at Festivals, we don't expect everyone to get as involved as I am. Most members not on the actual organising committee will only do an hour or two on the gate or manning a stall for a similar time. The rest of the day is yours to do what you want at the festival i.e. enjoy yourselves!

The down side of every festival and rally this year has been that all have lost money.

The row with one vociferous local at Uppermill put a lot of people off and the attendance was down at a time when all the attractions had been increased in variety and, of course, cost. This problem has been resolved for 1997 and, with Oldham Council supporting the event, it will take more than one objector to spoil the fun.

What does amaze me as an outsider in this, to me, very desirable residential area, is the number of idiot yobs who roam the streets as soon as it gets dark. I expect to find them in

Salford, where I live, or in Ashton or Oldham town centres, but not in the better class regions such as this. These are not outsiders coming in to cause bother but local ones, many from obviously good families and with no shortage of money, who appear to be totally out of parental control.

Ashton again took more on the gate than ever before, but the cost of the attractions keeps going up and up. Without substantial sponsorship it is becoming virtually impossible to show profits. Ashton is still one of the best patronised events on the Canal calendar and one with more for the visitor than any other. It has something going on all the time and with the Festival of Dance running in parallel it is like a three-ring circus to organise.

The Craft Fair is getting bigger and better each year and the site sometimes seems too small for all the people pouring down from the town centre on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. But somehow they all get in and stand ten deep at the bar or in front of one of the entertainers. Usually the sun shines and sparkles on the water or the polished brass of the boats. Everyone who attends has at least one walk along the full length of the towpath, to enjoy and marvel at the dedication and artistic endeavour of the boat owners, whose decorations are one of the high spots of this festival.

Any attempt to downsize this event would be incredibly difficult. The Festival fits together as a homogenous whole. Remove a part and the whole edifice suffers. The Committee are looking at all sorts of ways of making savings, but without compromising. Any member with suggestions that are practical and possible will be greeted with open arms!

The National Trailboat Rally showed a slight profit before it opened, which was just as well. The attendance was derisory and an insult to the hard work and dedication of the organisers. They learned their lessons well from the losses that we had at Linthwaite in 1995. Everything they put on had a sponsor or it wasn't booked. This did mean that there

# 1996 Festivals' Retrospective

were gaps in the entertainment at several times during the day, but doing nothing is costing nowt and the object is to raise money. The Trailboat Rally is in a different area each year so there is no bother about alienating the punters for next year!

Being involved, to me, greatly increases the pleasure and fun to be had from all events. Any member who would like to put a toe (or a whole leg) into the 'sea of festivals' can give

me a ring or contact any of the various Chairmen direct:-

Brian Minor - 0161 228 5324

Shirley Rowbotham (Uppermill) - 0161 368 2731

Peter Hawley (Ashton) - 0161 338 6283

Alwyn Ogborn (Stalybridge) - 0161 339 0872

Geoff Brierley (Huddersfield) - 01484 309685

We will all be delighted to hear from you.

Brian Minor  
Festivals Officer

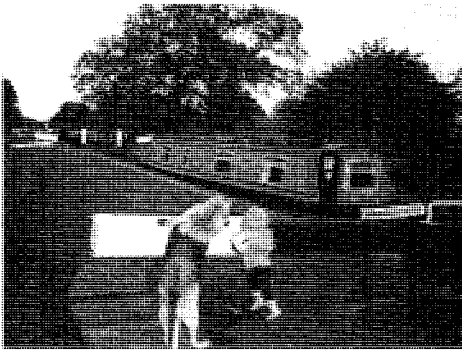
## PHOTO COMPETITION

### GET BUSY!

In the last issue we told you about the PHOTO COMPETITION which will be for photos taken between 1st January and 31st September this year.

Here are the rest of the rules again:-

- \* Prints only - black and white or colour - but remember they will be reproduced only in black and white.
- \* Minimum size 6" x 4", maximum 8" x 6".
- \* Any canal-related subject is acceptable in two categories a) Huddersfield Narrow Canal b) Other British waterways.

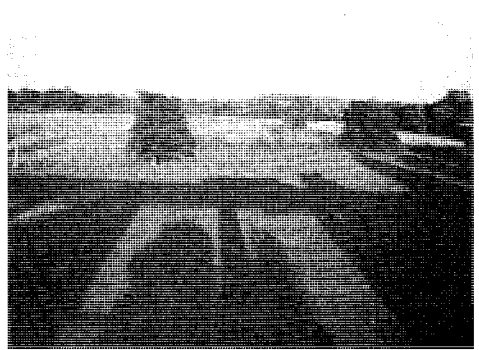


"You need all the help you can at Tardebigge" or  
"I've been boating for years - let me show you  
how it's done!"

- \* Junior section for photographers aged 16 or under in the same categories as above.
- \* Open only to bona fide members of HCS and their immediate families.
- \* Entries will be judged by Mr. Geoffrey Hope, past-President of Oldham Photographic Society and well-known in photographic judging circles.
- \* Entry is FREE but, if you want your prints back, we will need the return postage.

To set the ball rolling here are a couple of ideas from member John Harwood - one humorous, one landscape - the choice is yours! Captions are not mandatory, but the location of the picture, if appropriate, would be of interest.

So get composing that masterpiece, or just that lucky, quick snap, both stand as good a chance!



"Shadow Boating";  
Edstone Aqueduct on the Stratford Canal.

## HCS COUNCIL NEWS

The Society ran an information weekend at the Transshipment Warehouse during the Mersey Basin Weekend (12/13 October 1996). Slow on Saturday but very busy on Sunday when the weather improved.



Pat Riley (left), the new Sales Officer, was introduced to Council members.

Ken Wright is hoping to have some full colour pages in the next issue of P'link (120), paid for from economies in printing costs.

The Society decided not to go to the inaugural meeting of the Federation of Canal Societies. Although HCS agreed with some points made, its sympathies still lay with IWA. The waterways movement could manage without two negotiating bodies, probably with different aims. It was decided to invite representatives from FOCS and IWA to talk to us before we finally decide which way to go.

It was decided that it would be a good idea to have a memorial plaque at both ends of Standedge Tunnel dedicated to all those who lost their lives during its construction. Agreed but deferred until later. A project which might be eligible for the so-called 'percent for art' funding; a percentage of grant money set aside for producing 'art works' along the canal.

Serious discussions on Millennium success! 'All systems go' now. Areas of concern are about project management, considering five partners are all involved. A Project manager is to be appointed and Council have approved paying towards the salary.

The Council considered how it could assist in the running of the Tunnel End Visitor Centre at Marsden, which is suffering from under-funding.

Ken Wright

## IWA NEWS

IWA Council has been very busy recently but one piece jumped out and hit me! I quote - nearly verbatim

### Cycling and Towpaths

At the Parliamentary Waterways Group, and at a later presentation by Sustrans, there was opposition to the way cycling was going on towing paths but not against the idea of "family" cycling. Sustrans appears to have lost control of the method of use. The majority view was that there was no control of speed, particularly on 'exercise' cyclists, the established users were not fully considered and there was a lack of consultation between Sustrans and long-standing user groups.

The promised national consultation on the review of BW Cycling Permits has not materialised. It would appear that the BW Board and Executive Committee approved the principle of a "paid for" Cycling Permit, including insurance and a cycle bell, with part of the income being used to fund Cycling Wardens. However, it would appear that this will be tried out on the Kennett and Avon Canal in 1997. IWA have made representations, and BW have agreed, that BW boat licence holders will be able to obtain cycle licences - primarily for lock-wheeling - at no additional charge.

*(All the waterways communications are still commenting on the concern over possible future difficulties arising from cycling on towpaths - the debate will continue! Ed.)*

IWA Press Releases have been coming thick and fast recently covering The Squeeze on Boaters; IWA Narrowboat 'Jubilee' to carry on for two more years; Waterway societies hold conference amid fears for future of canals and rivers; IWA welcomes Huddersfield Millennium Award *(and claim, somewhat dubiously, to have supported us financially. We are pretty certain the balance is the other way! Ed)*; Success in raising Jubilee £50,000; 1997 - Beginning of the end for boats on canals and rivers.

Altogether, quite a mixture of "Pluses and minuses". If you are intrigued by all these bits of news you can always become a member of IWA and get the full story at first hand - telephone 0171 586 2510/2556 or write to IWA, 114 Regent's Park Road, London NW1 8UQ.

## **WRG (Waterways Recovery Group)**

Once again WRG are advertising their Canal Camps. If you're interested in a week's outdoor working holiday on Britain's waterways they'd be delighted to have you with them this season. Helping to restore a waterway you would meet all sorts of new people, have a lively social life in the evenings and all for about £35 plus spends and travelling.

You could be doing anything from demolishing old brickwork to cooking, to clearing vegetation, to helping to run a national waterways festival.

Age limits 17 to 70 and you have to be able to cope with the basic facilities of "village hall" type accommodation.

For copies of the excellent Canal Camps '97 brochure give IWA a ring on 0171 586 2510.

## **Election**

Not wishing to be political, but the time is approaching when you should write to all your prospective MPs, getting them to declare their interest in the preservation of the waterway system. IWA HQ (address above) would be pleased to receive copies of your letters and your replies.

**'Growing up  
is like playing a game  
whose rules  
are only explained  
when the game  
is over'**

## **Unusual Find In Huddersfield Narrow Canal**

*Spongila lacustris* is alive and doing well in the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

The discovery of a type of fresh water sponge follows dredging work being carried out by the restoration arm of Huddersfield Canal Society, on the trans-Pennine waterway.

*"The specimens look like plants because of their bright green colouring, but they are, in fact animals living in partnership with green algae. They are members of a primitive and ancient group whose fossils can be found in rocks many hundreds of millions of years old. Although they are quite common, their discovery is a very good indication of top water quality"* said Dr. Bob Gough, HCS technical officer (who in his spare time doubles as the assistant editor of Pennine Link!)

The sponges were discovered on a stretch of canal at Stalybridge between Mottram Road and Scout Green locks, and their identity was confirmed by Jonathan Briggs, British Waterways ecologist, Selina Hill, North West ecologist for English Nature, and experts from the Natural History Museum.

*"The canal at this spot is a site of special scientific interest with a wide variety of specimens of flora and fauna and this is a very interesting find."* said Dr. Gough.

The sponges were discovered during dredging work and most have been moved to a safer place where restoration has been completed so that they will, hopefully, continue to flourish. Others have been taken to HCS headquarters where they are being kept in a special aquarium and 'fed' with canal water to encourage growth before being returned to their former home when dredging work has been completed.

*"The discovery is yet another reason why waterways should be preserved. They are leisure and public amenity assets, create jobs - and are useful locations for history and nature lessons,"* added Dr. Gough.

Dear Ken,

I read with absolute delight the news in the Supplement to Issue No.119 of the success of the Millennium Bid for funding of the rest of the restoration programme for the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

Having only fairly recently become involved actively with the H.C.S. as a volunteer boat crew member (unfortunately even this being occasional due to other commitments) I can only record my sheer admiration for the countless hours/weeks and indeed years, spent by those who have had the foresight and tenacity to initiate the society, to commence and continue the bidding process for funding and to see it through to the point where the finance to complete the restoration is now in place.

It is quite apparent from the details in "PLINK" over the years, of what is involved in putting together funding applications, that this is no easy process and that those involved deserve the unqualified thanks of the rest of us - members and public alike.

My other point in writing is a query which may be premature at present, but I, and possibly other readers, would be interested to know how the proposed "electric powered tugboats" will operate in Standedge Tunnel i.e. paid employees of B.W., canal society volunteers, a mixture of both, or what? Maybe this hasn't been worked out yet, but if it has I would be interested to have some details.

Yours sincerely,

**Ray Smith**  
Mossley, Lancs.

*I will say "thank you", Ray, on behalf of all the members who have worked so hard - and know they haven't finished yet! A bit of encouragement goes a long way.*

*As far as the tug operation is concerned it is too early to be definite but the current thinking (electric tugs, ugh!) is that, following inspection to ensure all safety requirements are satisfied, boats will be close-coupled behind the tug with all boat crew members on board the tug.*

*The tugs will probably be operated by staff (full-time and volunteer) from the Standedge Experience centre and this staff could be developed from the existing HCS work force. British Waterways will be in overall control of the tunnel and the tugs but, at the time of writing,*

*have said that the operational side could be delegated to fully-trained others.*

*We shall see how accurate that summary is as time goes by. Ed.*

Dear Mr. Wright,

Last Saturday I walked from Stalybridge to Mossley to Ashton along the canal. As usual I met various people. One person has been watching dredging operations between Mottram Road and Lock 8W. They wondered why the dredging wasn't done land based as they thought it was more efficient. I didn't know!! When are the different methods used?

There were no fishermen around, so no comments this time about fishing, however there were the normal comments about wishing to see boats as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

**J. Yeomans**  
Stockport.

*Land-based dredging is more efficient in that, with the canal empty, the material is drier and the machine operator can see exactly what he is doing.*

*However the problems are:-*

*1. Emptying a pound on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal is not easy: we have to maintain a flow in the canal (West side) at all times, for various reasons, which would mean pumping water for long distances around the empty pound. Also some pounds are very long because of a shortage of places where stop planks can be put in.*

*2. In many places, for example near Hartshead below Lock 8W, the canal is very wide and the machine would need to stand in the canal bed to reach both sides. This obviously creates its own problems.*

*3. Perhaps most important; there has to be access for dumpers or lorries to the canal side. Even if the towpath is adequate - and it usually isn't - this would always certainly prevent pedestrian access for quite a distance and leave the towpath in a terrible state.*

*For all its problems water-based dredging offers a clean and remarkably efficient solution and after all, shouldn't we be promoting the use of boats in carrying out serious civil engineering works? The only tyres we see are the ones we fish out of the water! (Ed.)*

*To the Council, past and present,*

Congratulations on the wonderful news of funding being granted for complete restoration. I am so delighted, and thank you for phone messages telling me the news. As John Maynard said: 'Things have moved on a bit since the night when four of us slapped £1 each on a table, and it all began'. I am full of admiration for all you have achieved, are achieving, and will achieve.

Very sincerely,

**Margaret Sinfield** (founder member)  
Stoke-on-Trent.

P.S. The four were, of course, Ralph Kirkham, Bob Dewey, John Maynard and myself.

*We were very pleased to receive the above letter. If you haven't got page 9 of Pennine Link 110 (Summer 1994) handy I will remind you that, in 1974, Margaret Sinfield, then Chairman of West Riding Branch of IWA, asked John Maynard and Bob Dewey, our first chairman and secretary, together with the late Ralph Kirkham, "What do you intend to do about the Huddersfield Canal?" That really was the beginning. Ed.*

*Dear Ken,*

A recent survey of the Huddersfield Festival Committee revealed that only three had been on a society boat, and two of those three were boat crew members, so an afternoon trip was arranged for Saturday 21st December.

Boat trip from Tunnel End to the station, with a meal at the Railway, with a return trip on the boat to Tunnel End.

It was a cold, but glorious day, and the committee were very reluctant to leave the warm pub where the meal was really first class. All enjoyed the social trip out but several missed the event through Christmas shopping.

We hope to repeat the event at a future date.

Yours etc.

**Peter Wright**  
Huddersfield.

*Thanks, Peter. Next time, with enough warning, how about involving others on the East side? It is quite a long time now since regular social events were held there and you might get some new festival volunteers! Ed.*

## 1997 FESTIVAL DATES

### MAY 3/5 - SADDLEWORTH CANAL FESTIVAL

Following last year's successful event the festival will take place over the first May Bank Holiday Weekend on the King George V Playing Fields in the centre of Uppermill, near Oldham. Enjoyable family days out with bands, entertainers and craft stalls. Thousands of people attend the festival giving a major boost to the local tourist trade in the heart of Saddleworth.

### MAY 24/26 - STALYBRIDGE BOAT RALLY

A one-off event (at the moment anyway) organised to raise the profile of the canal between Ashton and Stalybridge. Targetted more at the boating fraternity, although music and entertainment will be provided supported by craft stalls etc., to encourage local people to investigate the merits of their recently restored canal. The main festival site will be adjacent to the Wharf Tavern which overlooks the temporary terminus/winding hole at Staley Wharf.

### JUNE 28/29 - TUNNEL END SUMMER FAIR

It is hoped to organise a similar event to last year's on the picnic site and woodland adjacent to Tunnel End, Marsden. Based on a Country & Western theme with appropriate bands and the evermore popular - Line Dancing. There will, of course, be craft stalls, refreshment and boat trips between Tunnel End and Marsden station.

*The following dates are for the remaining festivals - further details will be provided in the next copy of Pennine Link.*

### JULY 11/13 - TAMESIDE CANALS FESTIVAL

Portland Basin, Ashton

### SEPT 6/7 - HUDDERSFIELD CANALS FESTIVAL

University Basin

With the exception of the Stalybridge Rally, the majority of H.C.S. festivals levy a small entry fee for adults to help raise funds to run the events and promote the restoration of the canal.

Further information on the events listed, craft stall and boat booking forms or how members can help on the organising teams can be obtained from the Society's Ashton office.

## Canal gets £8m millennium cash

### Jobs and tourism booster

**Oldham's canal restoration dream scheme has sailed into a £8 million Christmas cash boost that could eventually mean hundreds of new jobs for the borough.**

The money will pay for nine local schemes which, it is expected, will transform the local stretch of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal into a major tourist landmark.

Also included - and the single most expensive part of the scheme - will be the £5.5million re-opening of the Standedge Tunnel which links Diggle and Marsden. Linked to this will be the Standedge Experience visitor centre at Marsden which could attract 100,000 visitors a year.

These local schemes are part of an overall waterway project worth a total of £31 million which, when complete, will see the canal linked with national waterways, including the Leeds, Liverpool and Rochdale canals.

About £14.8 million of the money has come from the National Lottery's Millennium Commission fund. The other half will come from matching funding obtained through the government heritage body, English Partnerships.

Delighted Alec Ramsden, spokesman for the Huddersfield Canal Society, said: *"After a long, complicated, hard-fought campaign, the offer of Millennium Fund millions with vital matching finance from the government's English Partnerships organisation, will see the impossible dream turned into practical reality."*

Oldham Council leader, Cllr. John Battye, said that the partnership between three councils - Tameside, Oldham and Kirklees - had been the key to the success of the bid for lottery cash.

He added: *"Once the scheme is complete, it will provide Oldham and the surrounding areas with a major landmark and I look forward to seeing the canal feature heavily in Millennium celebrations."*

It is anticipated that the scheme will be completed by the year 2,000.

Oldham education and leisure committee chairman, Cllr. Jim Greenwood, who is also deputy chairman of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal Joint Committee, said: *"We will soon see not just canal boaters and enthusiasts benefiting, but also the local environment and economies of Oldham, Tameside and Kirklees as jobs are created and the canal becomes an even greater tourist attraction."*

The nine Oldham schemes are rebuilding of aqueducts at Greenfield and Dobcross, bridges at High Street, Uppermill and Wool Road, and four locks. There will also be dredging and wall repairs along large parts of the canal route through Oldham.

Oldham Advertiser 20.12.96

## Stalybridge Rally of Boats

**Now here's a first for the Huddersfield Canal Society: the Stalybridge Rally of Boats ...**

The society has regular boat rallies on both sides of the Pennines but until now, on our side the centre of activity has been Portland Basin in Ashton-under-Lyne.

This was an early part of the local canal system to have been restored since it is the meeting point for three waterways, one of them the Huddersfield Narrow.

But at the spring bank holiday in May, restoration should have progressed out from the basin as far as the Stalybridge Wharf, the highest point before the culverted section of the canal in Stalybridge town centre.

Mark your calendar for May 24 weekend and another milestone in local canal restoration.

Oldham Evening Chronicle 20.1.97

*Two glaring errors but, as they say, any publicity is good publicity! Ed.*



### Let Christmas joy be unbounded department:

The latest issue of the Huddersfield Canal Society's award-winning magazine Pennine Link appeared on Friday.

In articles inside, officials point out that the issue was affected by a timing glitch. During its preparation, the Millennium Commission had still not decided whether to give them the National Lottery money needed to proceed with restoration plans.

*"There will be an insert inside the magazine if we get the news before it is distributed,"* editor Ken Wright says.

Of course, last week the Commission handed out almost £15 million to the project.

Which is probably why the insert simply says, in huge letters: **"Santa says YES!"**

**Oldham Evening Chronicle 23.12.96**

### It's all plain sailing now

Canal enthusiasts were today celebrating news of a huge windfall which will help to complete a scheme dreamed up more than 20 years ago.

The £15m from the national lottery's millennium commission - topped up with money from other sources - will turn the £31m plan into reality.

Huddersfield Canal Society chairman Mr. David Sumner said the first moves to restore and re-open the 20-mile-long waterway linking Huddersfield and Ashton-under-Lyne were taken in 1974 when the society was formed.

Some 20 different restoration projects are included in the canal scheme.

Standedge Tunnel - the country's longest and highest canal tunnel and one of the wonders of the trans-Pennine waterway - will be repaired and re-opened.

A massive chunk of the cash will be invested in Kirklees and council leader Cllr. John Harman is confident the canal transformation will bring new jobs to the area, as well as tourists.

**Huddersfield Daily Examiner 16.12.96**

## OBITUARY - SARAH LUCAS

It was only in the last issue of Pennine Link that we were congratulating Society members Mikron Theatre Company on their Silver Anniversary. Now we have to report that Sarah Lucas, wife and partner of Mike Lucas, died of breast cancer at the end of January. She had been in remission for two years until the problem recurred in December 1995.

Sarah was born in Leeds and eventually took up law studies at London School of Economics. She met Mike at a party in London after he had already given up law to study drama at the Webber Douglas School. She moved into public relations and helped to support Mike in his studies.

After a few years working in various jobs in professional theatre, Mike developed an urge to present live theatre to people who would not normally get the opportunity to see it and, combining that vision with his and Sarah's love of canals, the idea of Mikron was born.

For twenty-five years this devoted couple sailed the system providing entertainment to thousands of people on canal banks and in pub car parks. It is difficult to imagine that scene without Sarah, in the background, providing constant support.

Our thoughts are with Mike, son Sam, and their families at this sad time.

Ken Wright

## Fund sinks £14m into canal tunnel project

There is to be light again at the end of Britain's longest canal tunnel thanks to a £31 million project to re-open a historic inland waterway.

The Huddersfield Narrow Canal, the most direct route through the Pennines, was abandoned by Act of Parliament in 1944.

Now, a £14.8 million award by the Millennium Commission means work will begin in the New Year on repairing Standedge Tunnel, which at three-and-a-quarter miles is the longest in the country and the highest at 645ft above sea level.

It forms the link on the 20-mile stretch between Huddersfield and Ashton-under-Lyne, where 60 of the 74 locks have already been restored since the early 1980s.

The target for completion has been set for the end of the year 2000, which would see the canal re-link with the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, the Rochdale Canal and Cheshire waterways.

The Millennium Commission grant is seen as a reward for the Huddersfield Canal Society, created some 20 years ago with what many considered an impossible dream.

Its successful bid was mounted on behalf of a consortium including itself, British Waterways and three councils of Tameside, Oldham and Kirklees which, along with English Partnerships and the voluntary sector, will match the amount.

Restoration of the canal should generate an estimated £83 million of investment from the private sector with 2,500 jobs in the area it covers. Alec Ramsden, spokesman for the society and the joint committee behind the project, said: *"Twenty per cent of England's population is within a one-hour car journey of the canal, which makes it a national asset."*

The tunnel is recognised as one of the 'wonders of the waterways' and its repair is being carried out in conjunction with the creation of a heritage centre at a total cost of £8 million.

The enterprise, based at a canal warehouse at Tunnel End, Marsden, would provide a working insight into the area's industrial history and attract an estimated 86,000 visitors a year.

Standedge Tunnel was an outstanding engineering feat for its time and took 18 years to blast out of the Pennines before the canal's completion in 1811.

The absence of a towpath meant that barges had to be 'legged' through the tunnel by boatmen lying on their backs and effectively walking along the ceiling.

As steam locomotives became more efficient, the canal became used less and less before the last cargo boat passed through the tunnel in 1921.

**Daily Telegraph 28.12.96**

## Tourism facilities a worry

More toilet and car-park facilities for Saddleworth were urged, following a Millennium Commission grant of nearly £15 million towards the restoration of the Huddersfield Canal.

Concerned councillors said that the finished project would attract more tourists to the area, which would need more facilities to cope.

Councillor Richard Knowles said: *"We can't cope at the moment."*

*"This council has really got to get a plan up and running, and facilities in place for proper public toilets in Uppermill and Diggle, as well as sufficient car-parking spaces."*

Councillor John Battye said he hoped that the restoration would bring more jobs, investment and tourists, and that the provision of adequate facilities would be seriously studied.

**Oldham Evening Chronicle 16.1.67**

## Boat laws cloud canal team's joy

New laws on boats could mean doom and gloom for canal fans.

News comes as Huddersfield Canal

Society celebrates a £15m lottery windfall towards restoring and re-opening the 20-mile waterway linking the town with Ashton-under-Lyne.

Rules brought in this week mean the cost of owning a boat could rocket.

But the canal society has shrugged off fears. Press officer Alec Ramsden said: *"We're not really worried about it. Some of our members are boaters but we're much more interested in the restoration itself."*

Government cutbacks alone have led to a £125m backlog in essential maintenance which may force closure of unsafe canals and rivers all over the country.

And now the cost of owning a boat licence from British Waterways is set to rise by more than 30% over the next three years.

This year canal enthusiasts must also take out third party insurance on their boats, which for the first time must have an MOT-style certificate to prove they are in good condition.

The local £31m canal improvement scheme, first dreamed up more than 20 years ago, was handed lottery cash last month.

But the Inland Waterways Association is worried canal activity all over Britain could suffer.

Chairman Audrey Smith said: *"Insurance and the boat safety scheme 'MOT' is necessary for the protection of the majority. But we're outraged at the massive licence increase which will hit boaters hard."*

*"At the same time inland waterways are in crisis because of cutbacks to British Waterways and the environment agency, who run 2,500 miles of navigable canals and rivers in this country."*

*"It seems as if the government wants to force boaters off the water just when they should be encouraging more boaters and new licences to help raise funding for our woefully neglected waterways."*

Huddersfield Daily Examiner 4.1.97

## Canal work 'a traffic nightmare'

Almost £2,500,000-worth of work will be needed in Diggle, Dobcross, Uppermill and Greenfield before the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal is finished.

And the traffic situation could be a nightmare, Oldham Policy Committee heard.

Councillor Richard Knowles said the Millennium Commission's approval in principle to pay £14 million for the opening up of the whole canal was *"the culmination of many people's dreams."*

But, he said, the Technical Services Department needed a good plan for coping with traffic through Uppermill when work started.

And Councillor Brian Mather said the Bailey bridge in Greenfield during earlier work had disrupted traffic for 10 months. *"The volume of traffic through Uppermill is four times as great,"* he added.

A new co-ordinator's post has been set up to make sure that all aspects of the restoration are ready on time and in budget. Oldham has agreed to contribute up to £10,000 towards this.

Les Coop, Oldham's Director of Environmental Services, said: *"This is a great tribute to the strong partnership between Oldham, Tameside and Kirklees councils, the Huddersfield Canal Society and British Waterways."*

Oldham Evening Chronicle 7.1.97

Typical of adverts which appeared in many newspapers in the 1790's was one in the Leeds Mercury of 25th MAY 1793:-

Thus was born the Huddersfield Narrow Canal out of an informal meeting of local industrialists just as was the Trent and Mersey where Wedgwood was one of the early proposers, Lord Thanet to the Leeds and Liverpool and Arkwright to the Cromford canal. All industrialists, in one business or another, with a vested interest in improving

transport for their various products. Transport at this stage meant pack horse over rough tracks, horse and cart on terrible roads or boats on the river navigations, subject to the problems of too much or too little water.

Canals suddenly meant that bulky cargoes like stone and coal could be carried in 30 ton loads and that delicate cargoes like china had their breakage rates slashed. The 'motorways' and 'supertankers' of the canal era had arrived. The 'road' was unaffected by the weather (except icing), one horse could now pull up to 70 tons (against 2 tons on a cart). Understandably the entrepreneurs of the period leapt at this opportunity, like monetarists determined to reduce their costs (what's new?)

After their first informal meeting the proposers would start issuing pamphlets extolling the virtues of their proposed navigation and intent on raising support in the local area. Just as fast would others, notably those involved in providing transport and the millers whose water supplies might be threatened, start

### Intended

CANAL from HUDDERSFIELD

To join the CANAL from MANCHESTER

To ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE

*At a numerous and respectable MEETING, held at the house of Mr. Humphrey Dyson in Marsden, in the County of York, on the seventeenth Day of May, 1793, pursuant to public Advertisement, for the Purpose of taking into Consideration the Propriety of making surveys of a Line of a Canal Communication from the MANCHESTER ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE and OLDHAM CANAL to the town of HUDDERSFIELD, in the County of YORK ...*

*Resolved unanimously that a PUBLIC MEETING shall be held at the George Inn in Huddersfield on Thursday the Thirtieth Day of this Instant May at Eleven-o-Clock in the Forenoon, for the purpose of entering into a subscription to defray the expences of making Plans and Estimates of the said intended canal and for carrying the above Resolutions into Effect.*

raising opposition.

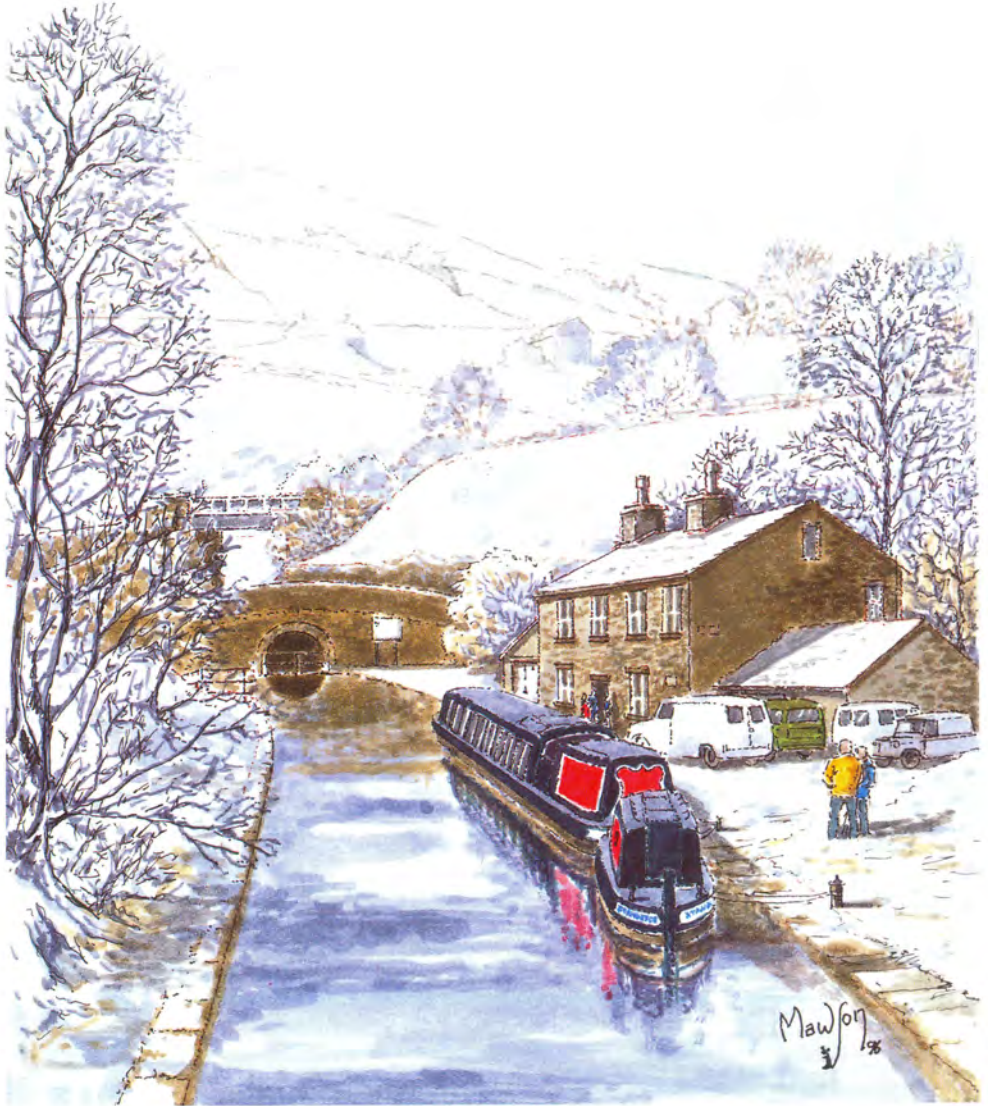
This would lead on to the first formal meeting (usually at an inn - inns were the centre of the coaching traffic so at least everybody knew where they were). At this meeting a subscription would be opened to cover the costs of establishing a company, preparing initial surveys and costings. This was in preparation for the approach to Parliament for the Act which would allow for compulsory purchase of land on the route and cover all other sorts of provisions such as toll charges etc.

With the success of the early canals it was not unknown for potential investors to be literally fighting to get into these meetings to hand money over in anticipation of good returns in the future - indeed on some canals (not the HNC however), £140 shares rose to well over £1000 and dividends on others reached 150%.

Wedgwood and the like became the chief proponents of the major trunk routes like the Trent & Mersey but on more parochial canals like ours investment would be a much more local matter. Even so, merchants like clothiers, cardmakers, woolstaplers and clothdressers were ready to invest, all hoping for the double benefit of reducing their transport costs and making money on their canal investment to boot!

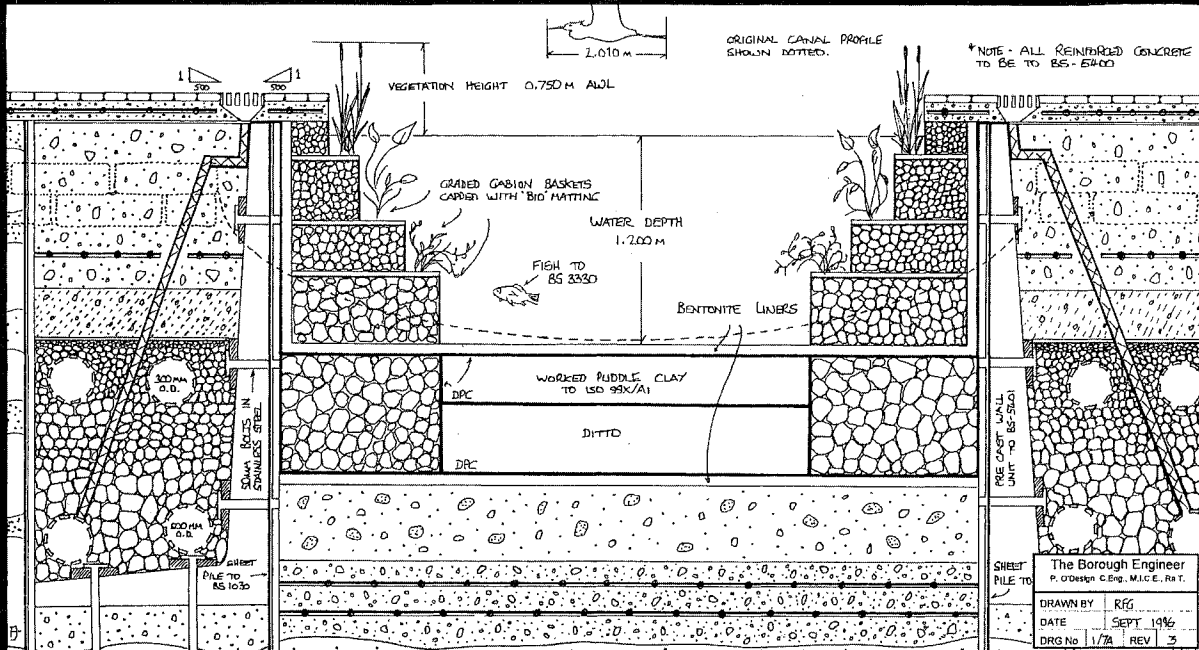
Sufficient interest having been aroused by the promoters they could proceed to the next (and sometimes very difficult) stage - Parliament.

John Harwood

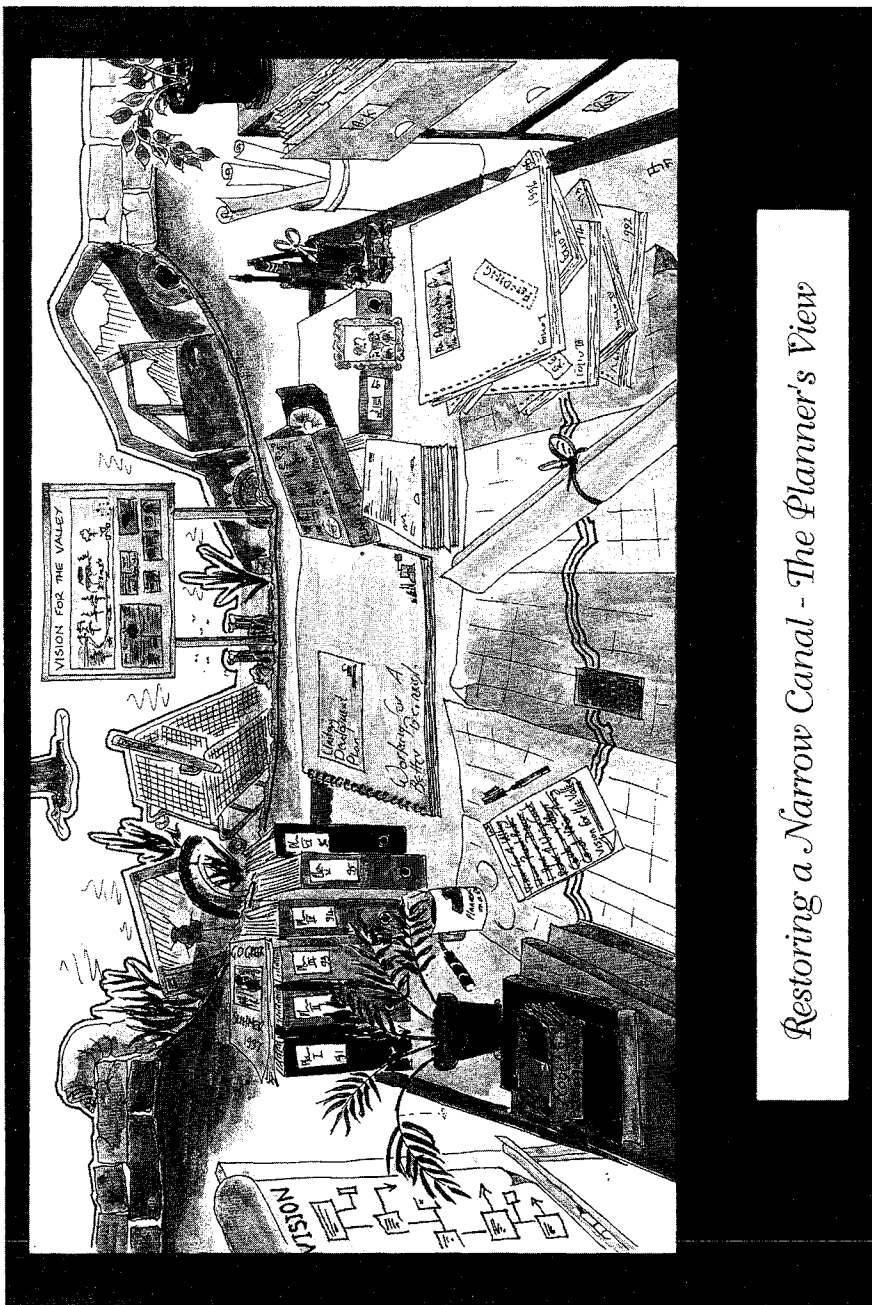


The above seasonal watercolour of Tunnel End was painted by Duncan Mawson a member from Royton, Oldham. The Society intends to use it as a cover on a Christmas card to be made available for members to purchase.

Further details will be provided in a later P'Link, and although the card might cost a little more than the standard boxed Christmas card set, it is hoped that members will support this initiative.



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



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





There are certain locations on the Canal which will change dramatically when restored, so this seems to be an ideal opportunity to record some 'before' scenes.

Watch this space four years hence when another colour issue will record through navigation in all its glory! There's optimism.

*Above Left:* Queen Street bridge and the Bates & Co blockage, Huddersfield.

*Below Left:* Slaithwaite Town Centre looking from the car park, along the line of cherry trees towards Britannia Road bridge - indicated by the passing vehicle.

*Above Right:* Armentières Square car park, and Trinity Church, Stalybridge.

*Below Right:* Portland Basin, Ashton-u-Lyne. Not strictly on the Huddersfield Narrow, but the development plans for the Basin make for dramatic changes in the skyline.

*Photos:* R. Gough except above left, K. Wright.





## HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY LIMITED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ABOVE NAMED COMPANY WILL BE HELD AT THE WOOL ROAD TRANSHIPMENT WAREHOUSE, DOBCROSS, OLDHAM ON FRIDAY THE 6TH DAY OF JUNE 1997, AT 7.30PM

### TO TRANSACT THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS:

- A. To receive and adopt the Accounts for the Company for the year ending 31st December 1996 together with the Report of the Council of Management and of the Auditors thereon.
- B. To re-elect Messrs Revell Ward of Huddersfield as Auditors and to authorise the Council of Management to fix their remuneration.
- C. To re-elect Mr John A. Carr as a Member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
- D. To re-elect Mr Keith E. Gibson as a Member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
- E. To re-elect Mr George B. Minor as a Member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
- E. To re-elect Mr William A. Ramsden as a Member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
- F. To confirm the appointment of Miss Patricia M. Riley co-opted during the year.
- G. To consider any other nominations.
- H. Any other business.

DATED the 7th day of February 1997

By Order of the Council

**J. M. Fryer**

**Company Secretary**

N.B. A Member entitled to attend and vote at the Meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote on his/her behalf. A proxy must be a member of the Company.

## THE SOCIETY WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

2410 Mr Parkes, [REDACTED]  
2411 Mr Broadbent, [REDACTED]  
2412 Mr Clarke, [REDACTED]  
2413 Mr Naylor, [REDACTED]  
2414 Mr Twyman, [REDACTED]

2415 Mr & Mrs Newby, [REDACTED]  
2416 Mr Bradbury, [REDACTED]  
2417 Mr Marland, [REDACTED]  
2418 Mr & Mrs Bailey, [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 (38p)

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, 118, 119

*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.*

## WEST SIDE MEETINGS

Wednesday 9th April                      General Meeting at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley, 8.00pm.  
Wednesday 14th May                      Walk the original canal line through Stalybridge.  
    Meet at the Wharf Tavern, Staley Wharf, at 7.30pm.  
Wednesday 11th June                      Canal boat trip - to be finalised; please ring the Ashton  
    office for details nearer the time.

## ADVERTISING RATES

	Per Issue	Per Year
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## NEXT COPY DATE

**Articles, letters, etc., for  
Issue 121 of Pennine Link  
should reach the Editor  
by 19th May 1997**

Huddersfield Canal Society is a member of:



## SOLUTION TO PRIZE CROSSWORD No 15 - ISSUE 119

ACROSS 1. Bumble Bee Lock 7. Dewsbury Arm 11. Chet 12. Sail 13. Calcutt 15. Kohl 16. Jamb  
17. Lower Shuckburgh 18. Bung 20. Tail 21. Gunshot 22. Oven 24. Scut 25. Railway Lock 26. Possett Bridge

DOWN 2. Meet 3. Brunclough Shaft 4. Oars 5. Dock Holme Lock 6. Wolverhampton 7. Deckswabber  
8. Seal 9. Yeti 10. Marbury Lock 13. Charing 14. Tarboat 19. Gull 20. Toll 23. Naas 24. Scud





A very popular event at the Saddleworth, and Huddersfield Festivals is the Grand Duck Race. Over a thousand of the yellow plastic devils are let loose on a watery track and all manner of gamesmanship ensues. Pictured above is a race in full swing on the River Tame as it flows through Uppermill adjacent to the Saddleworth Festival site.

With a first prize of £100, ticket sales are a great fund-raiser. Though you might feel the Millennium success solves all our financial problems, extra funds are always needed to maintain the Society's additional activities beyond restoration, such as festivals, membership and promotion.

*Photo courtesy of Oldham Evening Chronicle*

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*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.*