

Pennine Link

Members' Quarterly Journal - Issue 126 - Autumn 1998



CANAL
SOCIETY

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Front Cover: British Waterway's operative, Fred Carter, experiences the 'long arm of the law' at the 1998 Saddleworth Canal Festival. Send your humorous captions to the Society Offices for publication in the Winter Edition! Photo: Brian Minor



I have been on two watery trips since I last wrote - well, three, counting a ferry from Rhodes to the little island of Halki!

THE WIFE and I did the "Mon & Brec" in May. Definitely the most beautiful canal we have seen - I have never come so near to "upstickings" and

settling down elsewhere as there. Wonderful - and we managed to hit the one decent week so far.

The second trip was helping to move "La Maitresse" to the K & A for the summer hols. I was on board (sans THE WIFE this time) from Leighton Buzzard to Windsor - all new waters to me and really interesting. That "La Maitresse" is a magical boat. Two years ago we were lunching my sister at a pub against the then closed (Maghull breach) length of the Leeds & Liverpool when "La Maitresse" sailed past. We fairly disrupted the hostelry banging on windows and spent the next hour having nice drinkies with the Nobles.

This time, on the Thames, Jill Noble said "Isn't that your relative's boat"? I looked and saw a narrowboat with 'Wright' painted on it and laughed at Jill's joke. "No", she said, "that one". Sure enough, she was pointing at nephew Roger's 'Proper Job'! We moored alongside and I found them in Sainsbury's wines and spirits department (where else - although they will claim artistic licence!) and another hour of drinkies followed. Amazing coincidences.

The German connection flourishes. Following the letter in Plink 125 from our second German member the two have now been put in touch with each other and a Germany Branch of HCS should be started anytime!

Nothing on the Distaff Side this issue so I have taken the opportunity of including the first part of a lovely article by Bernhard Weiss about a German family having an English canal holiday. It is a waterway log - but with a difference. Bernhard has added passing comment on several issues, from a 'stranger's' viewpoint, and it makes interesting reading.

I have read an article somewhere, recently, about the serious reductions in numbers of boat licences being issued. The effect is more noticeable on river navigations but still marked on canals. Boat sales are obviously affected, although dearer boats continue to sell well. All very odd, considering the popularity of boat locations in TV programmes, attractive as they are.

And, following my comments recently about one hire company's views on the reasons for low hire figures, that same company has offered two large reductions in hire charges already this season. This time they blame cancellations and the strong pound!

I should think the boat brigade will be anxiously awaiting the next - and final - episode of Inspector Morse. Based on Dexter's novel "The Wench is Dead", it tells how Morse solves a 19th Century murder mystery from a hospital bed. The mystery involves the death of a young woman passenger on a fly-boat on the Oxford Canal, with lots of period "flash-backs". Should do the industry a power of good. And who cares if the canal scenes were shot on the Grand Union and the Kennett and Avon? Well,

Chairman's Report



"The past is its own defence. That thought struck me afresh a few years ago when I was making a television programme about the history and the restoration of canals in this Country" Brian

Redhead wrote this in 1992 and he was referring to a Home Ground TV programme in which I appeared with Dr David Owen. I was talking about railways. David Owen was talking about the Ashton Canal, the Cheshire Ring and restoration. Brian loved his adopted North West and his favourite stretch of the canal was the Macclesfield, from Marple to Bosley Locks and on to Mow Cop. He knew of our ambitions and I dearly wish that this talented journalist had lived to support our cause. Support our cause he certainly would have done.

Fortunately we have many influential supporters on our home ground. Our riparian MPs have reminded the Minister for Regeneration, Richard Caborn MP, of the need to support the case for restoration. Mr Caborn is responsible for English Partnerships (EP) and EP are still evaluating our bid for £12m of support to match the

cont'd from page 3 ...

perhaps somebody who knows the difference between wide and narrow locks!

A last warning for the 1998 Photographic Competition. That is the HCS one, not to be confused with later imitations. And who wants to win a canal holiday anyway? A certificate signed by David Sumner and me *must* be more acceptable. After all, it's the entering, not the winning! Plus a Challenge Shield as the Judge's Prize.

Ken Wright

Millennium Commission's (MC) promise of nearly £15m.

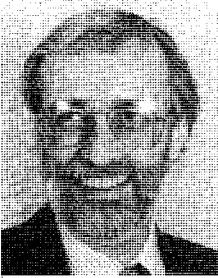
EP's consultants KPMG are auditing our bid to prove the outputs and verify the costs. As you can read in Alan Stopher's article, we are awaiting their decision. The MC have already said 'yes' and need the okay from EP. They will wait until EP decide, but should EP say 'no', their funding offer will be withdrawn and the unthinkable could happen.

We appreciate that EP should give value for money. Costs can be measured. Outputs or benefits are less tangible. Direct and indirect jobs have been estimated by Coopers & Lybrand (now Price Waterhouse Coopers) and income attributable to canal restoration may be open to interpretation - Economists v/s Economists - but other 'non-Treasury benefits' are awaiting a 'shot in the arm' of town centre waterside regeneration. Too much investment in money, effort and commitment has already been expended to allow the project to fail. Public support is undeniable.

When the Board of EP consider all the evidence I trust that they view our great project as not just a business opportunity, but as an investment in the future and a social responsibility. Three Councils, British Waterways, riparian MPs and now IWAAC all see the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow as a priority. By Christmas 1998, two years after the MC decision, we all hope that we have the 'green light' from EP. The past is its own defence as Brian Redhead stated. But the future will reward the decision-makers of today.

David Sumner

Top Restoration Schemes



The Top Three and other restoration schemes

It's official! The Huddersfield Narrow is top of the list of waterway restoration schemes. In its new report on Waterway Restoration Priorities the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council (IWAAC), an independent body that advises British Waterways and Government, says that the Huddersfield Narrow, our neighbour the Rochdale Canal, and the Scottish Millennium Link between Glasgow and Edinburgh are the top three schemes in the U.K. IWAAC strongly support these flagship schemes of national importance.

The report provides an overview of waterway restoration priorities and was produced at the request of Government to help funding bodies arrive at views on priorities for investment. It covers 80 projects throughout the UK whose promoters responded to a questionnaire identifying the objectives and significance of each project, the benefits to be gained, the stage it had reached and what remained to be done. IWAAC made its own assessment of the historical and nature conservation interest of each waterway.

Other projects which IWAAC recommend for funding in the next five years are the Ancholm Navigation, Anderton Boat Lift, Ashby Canal, Basingstoke Canal (water supply), Bugsworth Basin, Chichester Ship Canal, Derby Canal, Droitwich Barge & Junction Canals, Grantham Canal, Lower Lagan Navigation, Monmouthshire Canal, Montgomery Canal, Neath and Tennant Canals, Newry Canal, Pocklington Canal, Stroudwater Navigation, and Wendover Arm (Grand Union).

In the five years beyond this, IWAAC identify 12 projects likely to be ready for main funding. These are the Burslem Branch Canal (Trent & Mersey), Thames and Severn Canal, Dorset and Somerset Canal (protect line and structures), Ipswich and Stowmarket Navigation, Lancaster Canal

(Northern Reaches), Lichfield Canal, North Walsham and Dilham Canal, Sleaford Navigation, Somerset Coal Canal (protect line and structures), Ulster Canal, Worsley Delph & Underground Canals, and Wyrley Branch (B.C.N.).

A great deal of work will be required before the 47 remaining projects are ready for major funding. Many have scope for partial restoration schemes in the meantime. Particularly mentioned of national significance are the Bude Canal, Foxton Inclined Plane, Grand Western Canal, Shrewsbury & Newport Canals, River Stour Navigation, and the Wey and Arun Canal. Of regional significance: the Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal, the Chesterfield Canal (west of Norwood Tunnel), the Barnsley and Dearne & Dove Canals, and the Wilts & Berks Canal. The Louth Canal and a group of small projects in the Fens get special mention amongst schemes of local significance as do proposed new links: the Higher Avon Phase II and the Higher Avon-Leam Link, the Grand Union- Bedford/Great Ouse Link (both of national significance), a Sleaford-Grantham link and one between the Slough Arm and the Thames (both of regional significance), and the locally important Ancholme-Rase and Ancholme-Witham links.

Of other projects, the Ribble Link's promoters astonishingly did not reply to the questionnaire despite having Millennium funding, and the report also mentions the Royal Military Canal and the Chard & Ilminster Canal, important waterways with no restoration proposals.

The study finally makes recommendations to government, funding bodies and restoration societies. Particularly important are that government should recognise the economic and social regenerative effects of restoration, should sort out the issue of new roads crossing disused waterway routes, and should establish a Waterway Heritage Trust to grant-aid restoration. The Heritage Lottery Fund should grant-aid large schemes over several years, as well as funding smaller projects, and should accept the need for flexibility to allow for safe navigation and to fund short sections of new build linking heritage structures. Recommendations to restoration societies relate to good campaign practice and in the quality of restoration from built heritage and environmental aspects.

Keith Gibson
Restoration Chairman

The Inland Waterways Association continues to churn out large quantities of paper. My news is condensed from 340 gm (12oz) of paper which, considering that this magazine weighs in at about 100gm (3½oz), is a lot to wade through!

However, the good news - for editors - is that one of IWA's newsletters, "Undercurrents", is to cease publication forthwith. "Head Office Bulletin", the more formal version of the same news, will continue - along with spasmodic Press Releases.

At least, that's how I interpret it.

British Waterways - Franchising Proposals

The most common item for discussion in all IWA documents has been the "leaked" news of Government plans to franchise BW's operations. The news made headlines in the national dailies and on Radio 4 and ITN and in many regional and local papers.

It looks like another ill-considered fudge and virtually all news reports and discussion has been supportive of IWA's stance, making it extremely clear to Government that the proposals would meet with immense opposition from waterway interests.

Government insists this is only one of three options being considered - another being the BW Trust, favoured by BW themselves. In the meantime everybody in "officialdom" is declining to comment. No doubt Alan Meale MP, Minister responsible for BW, is polishing his crystal ball, or reading his tea-leaves, or doing whatever our elected peers do to dream up their daft proposals.

BW's High Intensity Cruising Licences

Another major cock-up is in BW's proposal to charge a new cruising licence, 2.5 times the normal one, for boaters away from their moorings for more than 30 weeks per annum - on account of them using the

system more than the average. The fact that a lot of these boaters also pay for permanent "home" moorings seemed to be overlooked as did any suggestion as to how the scheme was to be enforced. After a terrific Press Release from IWA and all the boat-owners groups (NABO, AWCC and RBOA - you have to guess what all that means, if you don't already know!) BW have now withdrawn the idea for further consideration.

These potty proposals, that are constantly being put out, do absolutely nothing to give waterway users any confidence whatever in the navigation authorities.

IWA Stamp Bank

This has been operating for over 30 years and has developed from "Green Shield" days. Virtually anything that is unwanted can be collected and sold to make money for waterway restoration. Even unwanted magazines are collected to be handed out at WRG (Waterway Recovery Group) Canal Camps.

The bit I like best is that WRG North-West will clear your loft for you - some distance from Green Shield Stamps collecting!

A few of the items are listed here:

Used postage stamps, old coins and banknotes, used telephone cards, all trading stamps or coupons. Please send to:

IWA/WRG Stamp Bank,
33 Emerson Grove,
Embleton Valley,
Milton Keynes
MK4 2JS

Old Waterway Magazines
Sheelah Lockwood - 01908 675255
or Neil Edwards - c/o IWA Head Office

Bric-a-brac, lofts cleared etc.
David McCarthy - 0161 740 2179

IWA Environment Panel

IWA Council recently approved the setting-up of an Environment Panel, to tackle existing and future problems and opportunities faced by the Association with regard to environmental issues. This includes the natural and built environments.

Membership is ad hoc and anybody who has sufficient expertise and wants to assist IWA on environmental issues should contact Justin Taberham at IWA Head Office - 0171 586 2510.

Waterway Calendar

In its death throes "Undercurrents" lists all the events in the future waterway calendar, as submitted by canal societies and IWA branches, etc. There are items as far forward as May 2000, a 21st Birthday Boat Rally for Broken Cross Boat Club!

One strange item, and I quote "Sunday 11 October - Huddersfield Canal Society Open Day at Transhipment Shed, Saddleworth -

only known contact Calder Navigation Society"! It's CNS's ubiquitous "Moving Road" newsletter, that's what. Perhaps it's time we had a comprehensive diary in Pennine Link?

Also (courtesy of CNS) we hear of the Transpennine Inter Society Quiz on Monday, 12th April, 1999. WE are a "Transpennine" Society and should have at least a couple of teams there. Council is not interested but anybody who fancies a go should contact ME! Duke's 92 at Castlefield is the venue. HCS originated this quiz AND provided the trophy - we want it back!

National Waterways Festival

This year's festival took place on August Bank Holiday weekend at Salford Quays (near Manchester!). No doubt a good time was had by all but, at the time of writing in mid-August, there was not a lot of useful information about events and times.

Ken Wright

Forthcoming lectures at Saddleworth Museum



*A Civic Trust lecture on
11th March, 1999 at 7.30pm.
Small charge for admission.*

STANDEGE TUNNEL

by

ALAN TURNER
Ove Arup & Partners

*The return of the tunnel to use by
boats, accompanied by many
fascinating slides.*

Saddleworth Historical Society

*An Historical Society lecture on
14th April, 1999 at 7.30pm.
Admission is free but you will be
encouraged to join the Society!*

CANALS TO CASTLEFIELD

by

JOHN FLETCHER
Chairman of North-West Region of the
Inland Waterways Association.

The Huddersfield Canal Company

On the funding front the Company has received a formal agreement from English Partnerships for the first £125,000 of preliminary expenditure. Once we've sorted out the VAT issue this agreement can be signed and funds drawn down against some of the site investigation, design and estimating. It will also be possible to obtain a matching contribution from the Millennium Commission.

My last report explained the background to the English Partnerships appraisal process and the Millennium Commission's agreement for the target opening to through navigation to be changed to 30th April 2001. Since then the engineering staff in Leeds, Huddersfield, Oldham and Ashton have been working at full stretch to design, quantify and cost the work on all 19 blockages. The deadline for the completion of this work was met and EP's consultants, led by KPMG, now have the job of reviewing all the work done and preparing reports for inclusion in the Appraisal Case Paper. A wide range of supplementary information on the benefits of restoration has been submitted to KPMG to ensure the best possible outcome to the appraisal. This has involved everyone in the team unearthing and updating all the evidence previously packaged for the Millennium bid and adding a few more items for good measure.

By the time this article appears work will be imminent on the first scheme to start. Originally described as the Lock 22 to Wool Road scheme it now incorporates dredging between Wade Lock and Saddleworth Museum and is more correctly described as High St to Wool Road.

The complete programme has been rescheduled to take account of the EP process and the likely start of funding in January 1999. In order to avoid a log-jam of work starting in the New Year, tenders will



be phased over the period to Easter. Wool Road planning permission was duly granted and design is well in hand. A January 1999 start is in prospect here. Standedge Tunnel is not far behind and the Kirklees bridge schemes will follow. Much of the design work on the large schemes is ahead of programme because of the need to provide EP with advanced information.

Land acquisitions are progressing. The Tetlow's site, on the line of the canal in Stalybridge, has been acquired by Tameside MBC with English Partnerships money and demolition has started. An inspection has revealed a building within a building which will be exposed when the modern steel fabrication works comes down. It is the ground floor of a former canal-side warehouse and may be of interest to future developers of the waterfront. Negotiations continue with the other landowners in Stalybridge following the confirmation of the Compulsory Purchase Orders. Also in Stalybridge, technical discussions have continued with the preferred developer for the Delta site. Further progress awaits the developer's agreement with the end-users and a full planning application.

In Kirklees a Compulsory Purchase Order Inquiry for Bates, Sellers and Lees Mill is scheduled for mid-September. Negotiations continue with the land owners over the value of the land and rights to be acquired.

In Slaithwaite residents set their priorities for future village development during the Planning for Real exercise. The Canal Company's partners were also on hand to display our plans for the canal restoration.

Sykes Leisure have been engaged by British Waterways to provide a robust business plan for Standedge Experience and they are now busy finalising costed options for the Company and key partners to consider.

The Marketing Group has launched the photographic competition. It is open to all and entries can be accepted right up to 31st October 1998. Please see the enclosed entry form which comes with this issue of *Plink*. Media coverage is increasing once more. A five page feature in *Waterways World* whetted the appetite of enthusiasts and boaters alike. The *Yorkshire Post* has also printed a feature on the restoration project.

The Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council report on waterway restoration priorities has just arrived and I am pleased to say it confirms what we already know and lends official credibility at a crucial time. The Huddersfield Narrow Canal restoration is categorised as one of the top three in the UK out of the 80 projects reviewed. In reporting, the Council strongly supports the Scottish Millennium Link, the Rochdale Canal, and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal as flagship projects of national importance. The report, which was commissioned by the Department of Environment Transport and the Regions, is aimed at providing funding agencies with information to guide them in their decision-making. The IWAAC report is most timely and gives our project and its thousands of supporters a great

Without the vision of the early members, none of us would be here now working on the final push to restore our unique heritage.

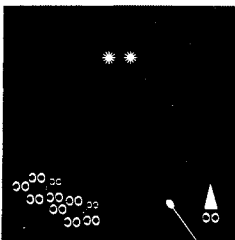
boost as the final decisions on funding are approaching.

It was a pleasure to meet and address Canal Society members at the June AGM. I can well appreciate the frustrations which are building up over the delayed start to the Millennium project. Please rest assured that the Canal Company partners are fully committed to a successful outcome and that everything is being done to make the project happen in the shortest possible timescale. It is almost 25 years since the Canal Society was first established. Without the vision of the early members, none of us would be here now working on the final push to restore our unique heritage. The opening date has indeed slipped from December 2000 to April 2001. Although I am equally frustrated with the complexities of the funding arrangements, in the context of the overall restoration, 4 months is neither here nor there. I also suspect that members will enjoy more the prospect of a

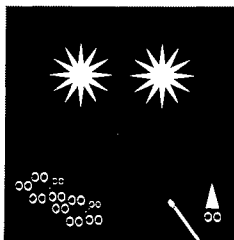
Spring celebration and boat gathering at Standedge than they would one in mid-Winter. Thats all for now. I had better get back to all that paperwork.....

Alan Stopher

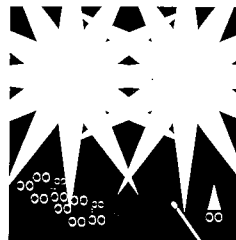
In Standedge Tunnel ...



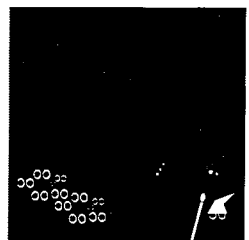
Behold, the coming of the Great Lights as was prophesied



Prophecy, prophecy ...



It is the Prophecy ...



Blast! Another inspection boat, oh well, same time next Millennium?

Harwood's Answers

John Harwood is our most prolific contributor and one to whom I am eternally grateful. Not only does he compile our regular Crossword - now at No.22 - he has also lectured us on the history of canals and canal engineers and is in the process of walking us round interesting canal locations.

Now he is into something new! He is Pennine Links "agony uncle", answering all those annoying questions about canals that you were afraid to ask in fear of looking silly. DON'T WORRY - most of us are just as ignorant - and wanting to learn.

So, let us have your questions and John will research the answers, if he doesn't know them already.

Here goes with Harwood Answer No. 1.

QUESTION

One from your Editor! I have asked "Waterways World" to do an article or a series on the "rope tricks" used by boatmen. They were not forthcoming so I asked John instead!

ANSWER

After deciding that we were to run a new series on your questions about canals your editor used privilege to get his in first! Can we tell him something of the rope tricks used by the old boat people to make life easier - of course we can, but fancy your Editor admitting to 'not knowing the ropes'.

The most common practice in the use of ropes was 'Blocking'. For a horse the most difficult part was getting the boat moving. Once momentum was established the job became much easier. To help in this on leaving locks, a block (or pulley) was positioned at the top of the towing mast, the rope from the horse passing through the block and on to a hook provided at the head of the lock on the off (non towpath) side. Half way between the block and the loop at the end of the rope a toggle was fixed into the rope. As the horse took the

strain he would gain a 50% advantage as the rope passed through the block. As the toggle reached the block normal pulling would resume, the end of the rope falling off the hook as the boat passed. The difference this procedure made to a boat leaving a lock has been quoted as 'coming out faster than a motor' and 'like a cork out of a bottle'. Incidentally the block would be attached to the head of the towing mast by a short rope. This would be placed over the 'looby' (sometimes luby) - a spring loaded metal pin at the top of the mast. Should the boat at any time overtake the horse the backward pull would operate the spring on the looby and the rope fall off thus avoiding the horse being pulled by the boat - horses did most definitely not like this!

Another common practice was 'strapping'. This is (in effect) the exact opposite of blocking in that its aim is to stop the boat. We have all noticed at the outer end of top lock gates a post, known as the strapping post. As the boat passed into a lock (to go down) the boatman/woman would throw a stern rope round the strapping post and quickly make it fast. This would have the double effect of closing the gate and slowing the boat gently as the momentum of the boat was transferred to the gate. Correctly done the boat would stop just as the bows reached the bottom gates and the 'ellum (helm) cleared the cill. It is highly likely that a great number of fingers and hands have suffered some injury before new handlers perfected their skill at strapping. And BW would prefer that we didn't do this nowadays and, in view of the tension in the rope, it is a trick that one "shouldn't try at home"!

Another ploy employed on long flights of equidistant locks when a motor and butty were working together was 'lock lining'. Simply put, once the motor was ready to leave the second lock up and the butty the first, a long line (two or more standard towing ropes) would be used to tow the butty from the first to the second lock as

the motor went from the second to the third. This was a common trick on the Wolverhampton 21 as boats left the Staffs & Worcs Canal and would, of course, involve both of the pair of locks being prepared and then filled at the same time.

In wide locks where a 'pair' were working together going downhill, an advantage would be gained by tying a slip knot from the bow of each boat to the handrail of the lock gate. A burst of reverse would start to pull the gates open, the knot slipping loose as the boats moved out of the lock.

Finally a more unusual use of ropes on the Leeds and Liverpool deep and wide locks was to leave a rope round the forward/reverse lever. The boatman could now hop off at a lock tail and slip the engine into

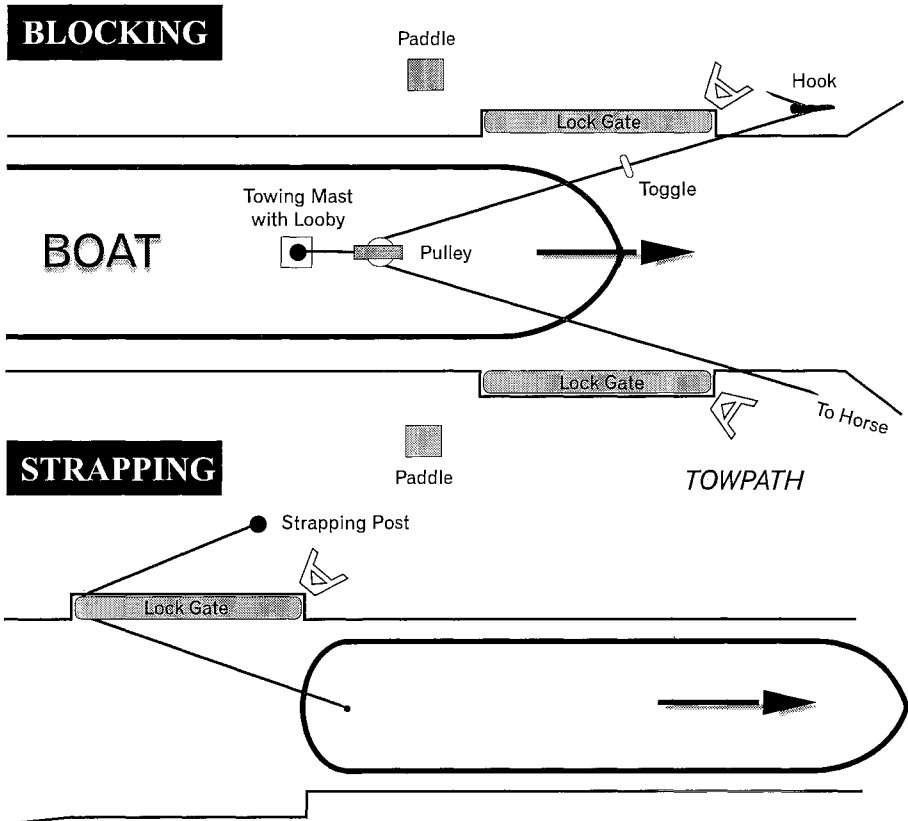
neutral at the appropriate moment and similarly into forward when a lock had emptied and the gates were open. Considering that the usual practice on entering these wide locks was for the boatman to climb up the back of the lock gate, this rope trick was considerably safer!

I know that there are other 'rope tricks' that I haven't managed to trace. Let us hear of any more YOU know about.

NEXT TIME How did canal engineers get tunnels (usually) so straight before the introduction of modern surveying equipment?

And after that, it depends upon YOU!

John Harwood



Cooking the Books

These days, one can hardly turn the page of any newspaper, colour supplement or magazine without finding a 'food' article.

Never knowingly left behind, Pennine Link is embarking on a series of recipes designed to be effected within the confines of a narrowboat galley. The recipes are also incredibly economical!

Braised Beef

INGREDIENTS

*6 lbs. rump of beef
half pint sherry or other white wine
3 each carrots, turnips, and onions
a few peppercorns and allspice
stock, salt and pepper, a little nutmeg.*

MODE

Take the bones from the meat, and tie it in a neat round shape, put it in a stewpan, with some cheap stock or water, and cook gently for 2 hours.

Prepare the vegetables, and cut them up and place them in a braising pan with the spice, peppercorns and seasoning. Lay in the beef, and pour over about half pint of good stock and the wine, and adding more of the former if necessary. When cooked, drain off the gravy, and if a braising pan is used, put some fresh hot cinders on the top to brown the meat. If only a stewpan is to hand, use a salamander, or, with care, some cinders may be put on the lid. Boil up the gravy in a small saucepan, and thicken it, adding more seasoning if necessary. Some of this pour round the meat, the rest serve separately. For a garnish a few prettily cut vegetables, cooked separately, should be used, or some bright green Brussels sprouts. The stock in which the meat was first cooked and the vegetables left in the pan will serve for an excellent soup.

Time, 3 hours. Average cost, about 7 shillings. Sufficient for 12 persons. Seasonable at any time, but best in Winter.

Mrs. Beeton's Cookery Book, 1906

FUTOCKS BOSTOCKS DYDLE CHALICO

Working on the premise that one should never be lost for words on our waterways, especially those in foreign parts over the hill, or even further away, we are starting an occasional series of glossaries. So, with a couple of buckets of chalico at the ready, read on ...

ADZE - similar to an axe but with the blade at 90 degrees and used to shape the main timbers of a boat.

ANIMALS - or more usually 'hanimals' - almost anything used for pulling a boat, except a horse! Donkeys were in common use on canals leading to the River Severn and usually worked in pairs.

AUGER - an oversized drill, turned by a horizontal bar at the top, making holes for the pegs which would hold the timber together or take metalwork such as mooring brackets.

BOSTOCKS - (sometimes BOSTRUM) - a support for narrowboats whilst out of the water. They allowed for the manipulation of boats for treatment of the bottoms, etc.

CHALICO - A mixture of tar, cow hair and horse dung applied hot to the exterior of wooden boats - filling the gaps between planks and generally helping waterproofing.

CLAPPING POST - applause required for those inventing a term which means the post against which a lock gate closes (Staffs and Worcs).

CLOUGH - (pronounced CLOW) - northern term (especially on the L&L) for a paddle.

COCK BOAT the tender, a punt or small boat, to a cargo-carrying sailing boat.

COLLAR - metal bracket which holds a lock gate vertical and in position.

COMPOSITE - a boat with iron sides and a wooden bottom.

DYDLE - on the Norfolk fens a term for dredging

FLASH - in Cheshire a lake or widened section of canal, usually caused by subsidence.

FUTTOCKS - the timbers forming the frame of a keel, secured to each other by overlapping.

GONGOOZLER - One passing the time by staring at boating activities on a canal or river - a bystander or watcher.

HALING WAY - a path alongside a river for teams of men (halers) bow-hauling boats.

HANDY BILLY - on a Yorkshire Keel a shaft about ten feet in length.

Congratulations - 1998 was a momentous time as the Festival Committee celebrated its 21st birthday.

For an event which had small beginnings - raising the profile of the Huddersfield Narrow - it has turned into one of the leading canal events in the North West. All of which is due to the hard work and dedication of the Committee.

It has been this persistence in promoting inland waterways that has turned a once semi-derelict area of Ashton into one of Tameside's leading tourist attractions. A fact borne out by the opening of the Portland Basin Heritage Centre in the late 1980's and now, as the Phoenix rises from the ashes, the whole site has been redeveloped, mirroring the style of the former canal warehouse. Within its walls will be a larger visitor centre, a cafe, pub/restaurant, offices, flats and specialised conference facilities.

As the festival has grown in stature, so has the interest in the canal for other developments. Already there is a proposal to convert part of the former Alma Street arm into a boat yard. Great in one sense, but it may have a significant effect if the festival site becomes restricted.

This year's festival was opened by its 1998 President, Frank Ruffley. A staunch supporter of the canal for more years than he cares to remember, and one of the prime motivators for canal restoration when he served as an Ashton Councillor.

On a sad note, for some that is, was the absence of CAMRA this year. The Committee wanted to run their own beer tent, and with the provision of tables and chairs, gave a welcomed and refreshing rest to festival goers.

Both the daytime and evening entertainment was first class, with a wide variety to suit most peoples' tastes, including children's entertainers and disco.

55 boats attended the festival, whose owners give great support to the event by taking part in the VIP cruise, and the Best Dressed and Best Illuminated boat competitions - a magnificent diversion for towpath walkers.

As the 1998 festival season draws to a close, many are now planning next year's event - the last of this Millennium. Well done!

Frank Smith
General Secretary

I could say this year's festival was a culmination of 15 months of dedicated hard work by an elite band of tireless workers, who watched the fruit of their labours blossom into the flawless weekend's entertainment that is known as 'The Saddleworth Canal Festival'.

However, I have to write something or the Editor would have my head, so here is what really happened.

Saturday bright and early (too early) we arrived to find an overcast site and very few traders.

My ears were burning as I promised good weather, but what the hey, by 10.00 am the traders had arrived and the sun broke through. Later, though, the rain did arrive, but it was short-lived and the rest of the day was glorious.

My day was taken up with the Civic Cruise and various tasks involving dignitaries, speeches etc.

Many thanks to the Moonraker crew and Shirley who provided the buffet and special thanks to Francis Palmer who managed the impossible by chancing the V.I.Ps entrance to the site (*and me! Ed.*)

As Saturday progressed things got into high gear and our President raised over £20.00 by having his hair dyed blue.

The evening entertainment saw Biggles & Moor of James being hailed with shouts of "Encore".

Sunday morning the summer had arrived. As temperatures soared so did tempers as, through a misunderstanding, the programming went awry. Enter Ratty the Clown to save the day with his impromptu races and with a new schedule, everything was sorted including the now famous Duck Race.

Even the Dog Show was packed, and thanks to Mary Hague's critical judging and Joan's superb organisation all went well.

Thanks should go to the Police Specials and the Fire Service for their wonderful help, also to the unknown helpers like Stepping Stones Nursery for the power, Buckley's Bakers for the cake (which we raffled), the WRVS and St John.

As a final footnote I would just like to add a very big thank you to all my committee, helpers and members of the public who made this festival the success it was; and if anyone sees Shirley could you tell her Wellephant is still waiting to meet her

John Wilson
Festival Chairman



Top Left: Crowds through the towpath and bridge; of particular note is the newly re-built Portland Basin Museum in the background. *Liz Rushton*

Top Right: Festival President Frank Ruffley performs the Official Opening in the company of (left to right) Festival Chairman Tony Woistenhoime, Mayor of Oldham, Mayor of Tameside, Mayoress and Mayor of Kirklees. *Brian Minor*

Middle Right: The Best Dressed Boat competition is always an annual favourite with festival goers. *Brian Minor*

Bottom Left: The Bisserov Sisters, (left to right) Lyubimka, Mitra and Neda, traditional folk singers from Bulgaria, giving a taste of Eastern European culture. *Liz Rushton*

Bottom Right: Neda leads a traditional Bulgarian dance or 'horo' with enthusiastic followers! *Richard, Cameraz*

TAMESIDE CANALS FESTIVAL







SADDLEWORTH 1998

Top Left: Friezland Brass Band entertain. *Ken Wright*

Top Middle: Exotic hair colouring is all the rage. *Ken Wright*

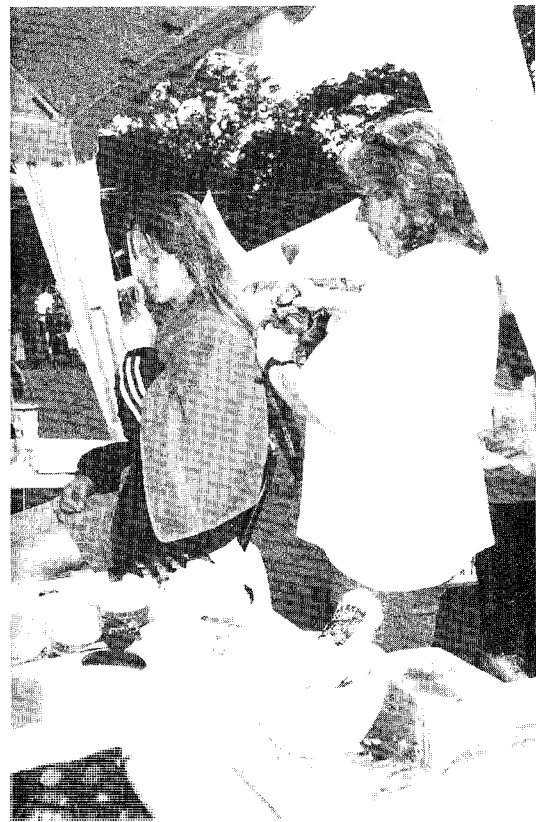
Top Right: Festival President Ctr. Hudson goes for a Party tint; believe us, his hair was bright blue, raising funds for the restoration effort with the stunt. Well done! *Brian Minor*

Left: Canal arts and crafts are a popular tradition at the canal festival. *Ken Wright*

Bottom Left: Membership Secretary Jo Young extends her voluntary effort as Duck Race Sales Officer! *Brian Minor*

Bottom Right: The Canal Society's Sales stand. *Ken Wright*





The Deutchstaff Side

In the absence of any contributions from my female contributors this time I am using instead this engaging two part article from our German correspondent, an enlightening view of our system through a stranger's eyes.

Boating on Inland Waterways - A Stranger's View

Following repeated requests from the family it was decided that, after a pause last year, there had to be a canal-boating-holiday in 1998!

Travelling the inland waterways in a narrowboat has become something of a favourite holiday for the whole family (even the galley-slave).

Encouraged by similar articles in Pennine Link I thought it might be a good idea to put pen to paper and write down some impressions picked up this year or collected through previous years. So, some of my comments will reflect opinions or views not necessarily picked up during our recent journey but built upon repeated experience.

The crew was easily completed and consisted of four - Bernhard (me), Gerhild (she), Henning (son, 13), Alke (daughter, 9). It was soon decided that the best time for boating would be two weeks before Easter. For various reasons Spring is our favourite cruising-season.

Why early cruising?

After having tried out Summer and Spring, for various reasons our favourite cruising-time is Spring.

First, it's for the children. When you have to observe school-holidays, you are limited in weeks available for boating. Second it's for the budget. Throughout the years, hire-rates have gone up, certainly along with the standard of the boats. This results in summer rates having reached a level that makes boating hard to afford.

Third it's for the boating environment. Plenty of water in the canal, no crowds or queues before locks, plenty of mooring-space even in most popular mooring-places - and on take-over you have all the attention of the hire-base crew.

What are the draw-backs? Certainly it's the weather. But honestly - even summers can become wet, windy and chilly. In Spring we also miss chatting with fellow boaters we meet at moorings or in canalside pubs.

This year it was bad timing anyhow. We should have booked over a period allowing us to moor in Birmingham on the 9th of May to join in the craze and celebrate Germany's entry to the Eurovision Song Contest!

After having cruised from Fradley Junction in previous years we decided to try a new course - the Stourport Ring.

Looking through Blake's and Hoseason's brochures we found a convenient boat from "Stroudwater Cruisers" named the "Talisien" - 55ft, large enough, 6 berth not too posh, at a reasonable rate.

Boat-Standards

Along with the rates the boat standards have gone up through the years. But do we really want all the luxury - carpeted floors, colour TV, microwave-oven etc.? For us, a less sophisticated boat at an affordable price would just fine. (*Oh, I like this man! Ed.*)

Best of all: as a "short-break boat" it was available on Monday as a start-day, which suited us very well.

MONDAY 30.03.1998

After participating at the local Easter-craft-show on Sunday it was early to bed and up at 11.30 at night, left home at midnight, driving to Calais to get the 04:00 ferry. Made it to Calais in 3 hours 30 minutes. Four countries (Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, France) in 3½ hours - new record - but easy to do with almost no cars on the motorway! It was 4:15 English time when we reached Dover. Off we went M20 towards London, then southern

ringroad - traffic beginning to become heavier - and the M40. With the sun rising I was getting tired, stopped at Cherwell Valley Services for a rest, breakfast and petrol. It was high time for all three!

Prices

Two years ago the exchange-rate was DM 2.20 for the Pound Sterling, now it is 3.00 DM or even a bit above! Thanks to this new rate travelling in England has become quite expensive - petrol, meals, hotels, whatever you could think about. But there is a good side to everything: we didn't lose much time browsing around shops - there are no bargains to find these days!

As we had some time to spend we left the M40 at Banbury, took the A422 to Stratford and Alcester for a look at the countryside - far better than racing down the motorway. In Stratford (no sightseeing - we decided to come by boat one year and take a good look around then) we stocked up at TESCO.

Retail Centres

Gerhild loves these Hyper-Markets: There is an incomparable choice of food and a level of service unknown to retail-markets in Germany. And I love these markets too - they accept Visa-Card at the checkout.

By noon we reached Stourport. It took us some time to find the "Victorian" Engine Lane leading to the boatyard. Son insisted on taking a video-shot of the narrow lane!

The boat was ready for us. The take-over was done in short time with engine, heating and kitchen-appliances well known to us. The base owner urged us to depart, so we loaded the boat and locked down the two staircase-narrow locks into the Severn.

The Severn: what a current! But there was no problem turning the boat into the current for a rapid journey down the river in bright sunshine. For lunch we had sandwiches on the river. The wide Severn locks are manned. Sorry, Lincomb lock-keeper for not being familiar with the Severn locking procedures! Next lock was Holt and we did much better, third was Bever. Did we ever do anything better than locking on the Severn?

After three hours we reached Worcester, with the biggest challenge of the journey -

the "Worcester-turn". The task is to turn the boat against the current, moor it at a pontoon below Diglis bottom-lock, set the locking-crew ashore and wait for the lock becoming ready to enter. The manoeuvre was done spotlessly - and not a single soul to watch our performance! I could bet, if we had goofed, we would have had dozens of viewers to cheer at us!

We passed the busy Diglis basin and moored for the night outside the Commandry. It was still early enough for a first look at the town and cathedral. Returning to the boat Gerhild prepared dinner while son and I walked up to the "Little Sauce Factory", recommended by Mr. Pearson in his "Canal Companion". It was a coke for son and a beer for me, but still too early in the day to get the full flavour of the promised "eccentric atmosphere".

Pearson's Canal Companion

These boating-guides are quite handy and give good hints on where to go and what to see. They are forgiven that some information turned out to be outdated, but sometimes information is superseded the moment they go to press.

But what nice words this man knows! To get the full taste of his words I found it necessary to consult my Oxford dictionary time after time. Back at school our teacher would have been delighted to have such good reading material and fine example of current English.

Mr. Pearson seems to have a preference for pubs run by the "Little Pub Company" Much to son's sorrow we had to miss out the "Little Dry-dock" in Tipton and "The little tumbling Sailor" in Kidderminster.

After dinner it was early to bed for us. After all, we had had a 22 hour day!

TUESDAY, 31.03.1998

We woke up to glorious weather that stayed with us the rest of the day. After breakfast Gerhild and I had a second look at Worcester. We concluded that Worcester is well worth a longer stay than we could afford this year. We decided to make the best out of the good weather and travel a good length today. Set off at 10.45, next stop at Tibberton for a late lunch. In the

afternoon we travelled up to Stoke Prior to moor outside the "Queens Head" below Tardebigge bottom-lock - although "Boat and Railway" at Stoke Works looked good as well.

Mutiny on board the Talisien!

Tempted by a board promising "the biggest portions you have ever seen" the crew made the captain take out a considerable amount from the ship's treasury and go eating with the family.

WEDNESDAY, 01.04.1998

The morning started chilly and misty, began to drizzle later in the afternoon.

Today was "Tardebigge-day". We started at 08.30 with son preparing the locks while "she" and daughter did the actual locking.

Without any boat in front of us or coming down the flight we made it, slowly but steadily, in 3½ hours to the top. Most of the locks were in our direction. We couldn't find out if

- a) the locks were in our direction but some of the locks were filled with water because of leaking top- gates, or
- b) the locks were set against us but most where empty due to leaking bottom-gates.

Maintenance of canals

Reading through Pennine Link or waterways magazines I find this a standing issue. Should I add my own remarks?

True, there is maintenance and even some dredging going on in places but these seem far from sufficient. Shortage of money is one thing but no excuse for everything. We are under the impression that more could be achieved with fewer tea- breaks.

What do you think of the piling works? On one side this is truly better than nothing but we find it a poor replacement for the original stone linings of the towpath now washed into the canal. We think it would be worth the effort of retaining and even rebuilding the original stone works. But this would require a timely intervention by BW. The first line of maintenance could be to cut back vegetation to prevent trees and bushes breaking up the stonewalls with their roots. The second step should be to rebuild short stretches of damaged stone walls before

major damage is caused by passing boats. Even if this would require the dewatering of a stretch of canal we think that this could be done at reasonable costs in an agreeable amount of time and well worth the effort.

Damage to canals

Make no breaking wash! Sometimes we are under the impression that this rule only applies to hire-boats while privately owned boats often travel at considerable speed.

Travelling the canals we often notice the damage to the off-side of the canal and we ask ourselves why (or if) the landowners accept the fact that good portions of agricultural land are washed away into the canal and do very little to protect their land. Do they get compensation from BW?

After lunch at Tardebigge we set off for Birmingham. After meeting no boats in the morning we met half a dozen in the afternoon with two of them in Wast Hill Tunnel! Reached Birmingham rather wet and cold at 17:30 and moored opposite the NEC. We found Farmers Bridge and Gas Street Basin very impressive since we were there three years ago with the scene even more improved. Rain kept us from exploring the city. Went to bed early.

Security

Reading through canal-guides and magazines or talking to other boaters we find that the issue of security or secure moorings ranking high.

As an overseas visitor we find that security measures are far more intense than, for example, in Germany; much more barbed wire around premises or TV- cameras in public spaces. We do ask ourselves if all these security measures are more an act of precaution or a reaction to existing threats to public security. After seven narrowboat holidays in England we never really had the feeling of insecurity - perhaps with one exception many years ago when we left Manchester for Dukinfield and encountered a gang of unpleasant youths. But we had a friendly BW lengthman to accompany us for a while and, for the remaining stretch to Portland Basin, managed to look after ourselves.

Berhard Weiss

To be concluded in Issue 127 ...

HCS Council News

25th April 1998

Once again there was a lot of discussion about the Millennium funding topics, mainly for the Council's information, since all the dealing is with the Huddersfield Canal Company - as Alan Stopher has discussed in his article.

More discussion on the appointment of consultants to prepare the Business Plan for Standedge Experience. This again, is largely out of our hands, being a British Waterways initiative.

The Marketing Group, on which we are represented by Alec Ramsden, has produced its second information sheet. Well up to the standard of the first one - but they have introduced a PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION! What a cheek! Not to be confused with etc. etc. - and open to all-comers.

The major discussion again centred around the future of HCS Restoration Ltd. It appears that they now have enough work to see them through to the start of the Uppermill work in Autumn and that should keep them going for another six months or so. After that, who knows?

The future of the HCS Sales Team was also discussed. We cannot make it run at a profit but its original intention was to keep the Society in the public eye, obviously at some cost. Is this still an issue? There are clearly mixed feelings in Council and further debate is to take place. One problem is that, if the sales side is down-sized (to quote a horrible but useful modernism!), more expertise is required on the stall to fulfil the "public relations" side. And, from long experience, we know that knowledgeable volunteers are very thin on the ground!

A decision! Ken Wright, whoever he is, was given approval to have the tables in the Transshipment Warehouse "stabilised". At present they wobble like a jelly on a plate!

24th June 1998

The Society is sharing with Tameside Council

the cost of appointing a lobbying consultant to look after our financial interests in London. This is a sort of long-stop to make sure any problems we have are reported to those in power who can do something about it! Standard parliamentary procedure in the corridors of power.

With things generally moving forward the Society will soon be committed to spending a lot of its investment savings. Consequently Council gave permission for the wheels to be set in motion.

Millennium progress slow but positive. Marketing Group producing School Packs, videos - and developing a web site.

Problems on the Rochdale Canal seem to be resolved. All they have to do now is catch up with Millennium Commission and English Partnerships - and we know what time-consuming problems that can bring!

BW continue to recruit additional outdoor work staff and we will probably lose some of ours to them. Being positive, we will have to recruit as well.

The future of the Society will be high on the next agenda.

26th August 1998.

Council heard the latest news about the funding checks being carried out on behalf of English Partnerships - watch this space for the final decision, in the next issue of Pennine Link!

HCS Restoration are still on course to start work in Uppermill in October - possibly to be funded by the Society, in advance of the BIG decision.

Council voted to continue as a Society, after restoration is complete. We are now starting an investigation into future activities, possibly with a smaller, smarter management system.

We are also looking at producing a comprehensive canal guide for boaters, walkers, gongoozlers, boozers, etc., to be published in time for through navigation.

Ken Wright

Letters to the Editor

Not a big batch, this time, but interesting in their variety. The first letter, was from Bernhard Weiss, in Germany, enclosing a disk with his watery story, printed elsewhere in lieu of Distaff Side since my feminine correspondents have taken the summer off!

But the second letter! How's this for "fame at last"

WATERWAYS WORLD

*The NUMBER ONE
inland waterways magazine*

Dear Ken,

In response to the information about Harwoods in the latest edition of Pennine Link, I have searched my records relating to the Trent Boat Gauging Tables and the Cromford Canal and find a single entry, a copy of which I am enclosing for you to pass on to John Harwood.

As it is so long ago, I don't suppose it will help him very much in establishing his connections!

Congratulations on the continued high quality of Pennine Link, which we always enjoy receiving.

Yours sincerely,

HUGH POTTER, Editor.

Dear Mr. Wright,

It was interesting to learn about 'The Boaters' Christian Fellowship' in Winifred Wilson's article in Pennine Link 125. Please are you able to let me have any more information about this - address, telephone no?

Yours sincerely,

NORMAN SUTCLIFFE, Leeds.

The Membership Secretary of BCF is Mrs. Audrey Page, 22, Lion Hill, Stourport - on - Severn, Worcs, DY13 9HG, Tel No. 01299 879394, who can provide all the information you need. I intend to print an article about BCF in the next issue of Pennine Link. Ed.

Dear Ken,

My wife and I have been owners of a narrowboat for the past 2½ years, having "graduated" over the previous 10 years or so via hireboat holidays for 5 years, followed by a similar period in a shared ownership boat scheme. We did not see entering for canal festivals as ideal use of our boat. After all, why sit on the same mooring for a whole weekend when we could be using the boat for cruising?

However, as Ashton is not a million miles from our mooring at Furness Vale, we decided to "give it a go" and entered for the recent Tameside Canals Festival, our first ever such event, to see whether or not we would enjoy ourselves.

We need not have worried! People from the HCS organising committee were much in evidence, ensuring that everything went smoothly, and all in all we had a great time, having a go at most of what was "on offer" in the process.

It is quite clear that the organisers put in countless hours voluntarily, both before, during and after the Festival.

So we felt that the least we could do, as "first-timers" with our boat at the Festival (though we have been many times previously as spectators), is to write to express our sincere thanks to all those whose efforts made it the success it clearly was, at least as far as we were concerned. Thanks again for a very enjoyable weekend!

Yours sincerely,

RAY & VAL SMITH, Mossley, Ashton-u-Lyne.

There's nothing like a genuine unsolicited testimonial! It's a pleasure to receive letters like this. Ed.

Dear Editor,

Mooring and Restoration in Slaithwaite

In a similar vein to Peter Bent's letter in your last issue concerning the possible lack of mooring spaces in Stalybridge, as a narrowboat owner and a resident of Slaithwaite I fear a similar situation may well arise with the proposed restoration of the canal in Slaithwaite.

The centre spread of your last issue showed one narrow boat moored in "The Dock" at Slaithwaite. That, I believe, will be the one and only mooring space available for those wishing to stop and shop in the village centre.

The May exhibition in Slaithwaite showed further detail of the planner's interpretation of the scheme in sketches where six boats were moored in the town centre. However on closer inspection it was noticed that two out of the three boats in "The Dock" area were moored against what will be sheer six foot high walls, and the other three were moored in "The Winding Hole", a practice not to be encouraged nor normally permitted by British Waterways.

Neither can there be mooring on the towpath side of the "Docking Area" due to the narrowness of the channel and the necessity to leave the towpath approach to the top of the Lock 22 free for those using the lock.

"The Dock", as shown, is to be of a much reduced size to the original with the remainder of the original mooring space being taken up by landscaped trees and seating, which the planner's leaflet describes as being laid out to be "a focal point for the village". That same planner's leaflet states that this focal point and creation of a winding hole will "ensure that Slaithwaite becomes a destination for boaters".

It would appear to be the opposite, where only one boat at a time will be able to moor.

My point being that this restoration of the canal in Slaithwaite appears to be designed by planners who are simply concerned with a "nice view". The proposed scheme as it stands will, in my view, dissuade boaters from stopping, shopping and bringing much needed new trade to the village centre shops.

Yours faithfully,

KEITH W. SYKES, Slaithwaite.

Keith's letter continued with comments on more technical issues which are being answered separately but I have asked Alan Stopher to comment on the above. Ed.

Alan writes:- "Firstly a word about those involved in the design of the Slaithwaite restoration. British Waterways are leading on this scheme on behalf of the Company so that the different needs of canal users are taken into account. Kirklees engineers are carrying out the detailed design work for BW and Kirklees planners are involved in presenting the scheme to the public and handling detailed planning consultations. It is very much a team effort as all work together to develop a scheme which offers the best possible facilities for all within the budget.

Reinstating the canal through Slaithwaite has been an exercise in fitting a quart into a pint pot. Road traffic in the village has increased considerably since the canal became derelict and residents have become used to attractive landscaping as well. The restoration scheme has had to balance the interests of residents, traders, boaters and visitors. The May exhibition at Slaithwaite was the public's opportunity to comment on the canal proposals. Much useful feedback has been received and detailed changes are being considered.

I take Keith's point about the plans showing mooring in the winding hole. The boats were shown to indicate to people the size of the turning area. The plans also showed a landing area upstream of lock 22 which will allow boats to moor quite conveniently and reach the car park through a stepped area. This was not easy to show accurately on the artist's impressions and the detail is being looked at to take on board views expressed at the exhibition. From the boater's point of view the prime mooring site will be in the wider channel downstream of the winding hole. As boating is an activity holiday I don't think the extra few yards will dissuade boaters from stopping, shopping and enjoying the character of a unique waterfront village."

Huddersfield Canals on Postcards

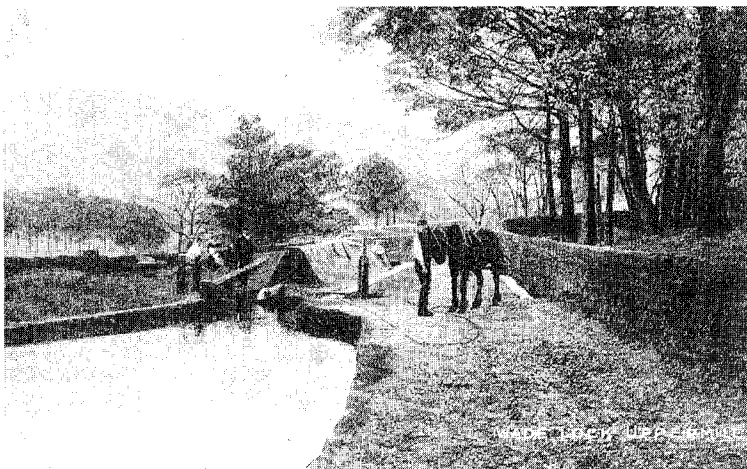
5) Uppermill

In the last article we looked at the "most photographed location" on the East Side of the canal which was around Lock 34E and the almost-circular pound above it. It seems almost unnecessary to say that Uppermill was the target for most photographers on the west side, to the extent that it will take two issues to look at it. First, we will look at the area around Wade Lock.

One card of Wade Lock has already been used to illustrate the article on "The Working Canals", though the reproduction left a lot to be desired, so I will try again with the colour version by F.& G. Pollard of Oldham. As stated before, this card is

significant as being probably the only view of a loaded boat actually moving along the canal, though what it was carrying and to where remains a mystery.

I do have another card of the Lock with no activity taking place, published by a different Oldham firm, Heywood & Son, who published several canal cards in their "Branch Series". This time the photographer



Above:

"Wade Lock, Uppermill", with narrowboat-colour version by F.& G. Pollard of Oldham.

Left:

"Canal, Uppermill", Heywood & Son, "Branch Series".

Canal Cruises



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The Stamford Group



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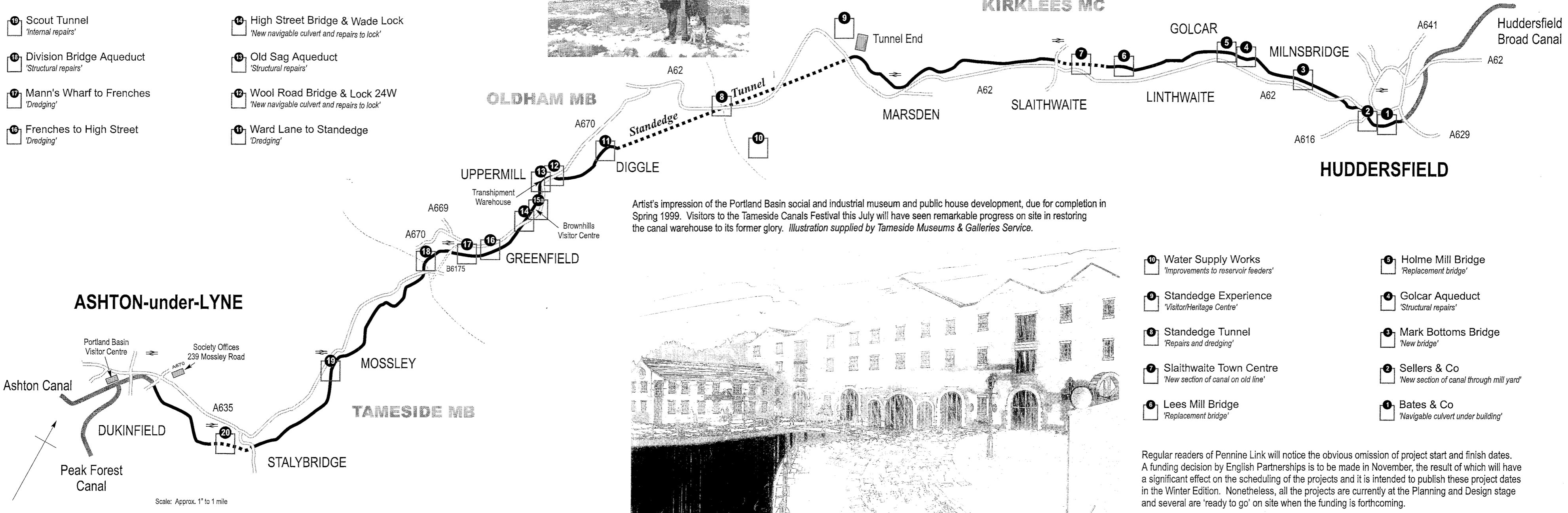
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The Remaining Blockages on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal - Autumn 1998

- 20 Stalybridge Town Centre
'Excavation of old canal line with new locks and bridges'
- 19 Scout Tunnel
'Internal repairs'
- 18 Division Bridge Aqueduct
'Structural repairs'
- 17 Mann's Wharf to Frenches
'Dredging'
- 16 Frenches to High Street
'Dredging'

- 15a Lock 22W to Wool Road
'Dredging and lock repairs'
- 14 High Street Bridge & Wade Lock
'New navigable culvert and repairs to lock'
- 13 Old Sag Aqueduct
'Structural repairs'
- 12 Wool Road Bridge & Lock 24W
'New navigable culvert and repairs to lock'
- 11 Ward Lane to Standedge
'Dredging'



Artist's impression of the Portland Basin social and industrial museum and public house development, due for completion in Spring 1999. Visitors to the Tameside Canals Festival this July will have seen remarkable progress on site in restoring the canal warehouse to its former glory. *Illustration supplied by Tameside Museums & Galleries Service.*



- 10 Water Supply Works
'Improvements to reservoir feeders'
- 9 Standedge Experience
'Visitor/Heritage Centre'
- 8 Standedge Tunnel
'Repairs and dredging'
- 7 Slaithwaite Town Centre
'New section of canal on old line'
- 6 Lees Mill Bridge
'Replacement bridge'
- 5 Holme Mill Bridge
'Replacement bridge'
- 4 Golcar Aqueduct
'Structural repairs'
- 3 Mark Bottoms Bridge
'New bridge'
- 2 Sellers & Co
'New section of canal through mill yard'
- 1 Bates & Co
'Navigable culvert under building'

Regular readers of Pennine Link will notice the obvious omission of project start and finish dates. A funding decision by English Partnerships is to be made in November, the result of which will have a significant effect on the scheduling of the projects and it is intended to publish these project dates in the Winter Edition. Nonetheless, all the projects are currently at the Planning and Design stage and several are 'ready to go' on site when the funding is forthcoming.

TOP LOCK MARINE

M.D. & A.M. Allcard

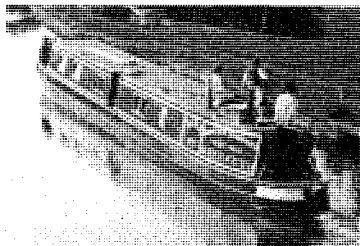
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To get a taste of how smashing the Huddersfield will be when it's open, come now and explore the other Yorkshire waterways. The Rochdale is already half complete, bowling everyone over with its scenery, and the welcome from its locals. And there are lots of other places less frequented but well worth the effort. Ask for a brochure now.

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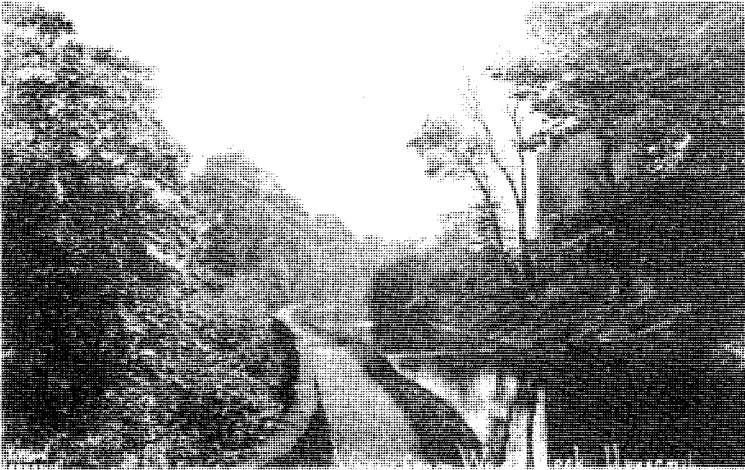
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has included the corner of the mill which formerly stood by the canal, whereas the other view carefully excluded it.

Other publishers seem to have favoured the view from High Street looking down the canal, of which at least three versions exist, the earlier ones showing a very tidy canal. This view by J. Wood, a local publisher, is the earliest, well pre-1914. The others are very similar views, but show an increasing amount of vegetation.

A few views also exist of the section between Uppermill and Dungebooth Lock. Again this is an area not much changed, though it doubtless sees more traffic now than it did then. I have included a rather empty view in the "Valley Series" of "A.H. & S." of Oldham, if only because the photographer must have gone to considerable trouble to reach his viewpoint at the bottom of the abrupt slope on the offside of the canal!

Trevor Ellis



Above:
"View from Wade Lock,
Uppermill", J.Wood,
Uppermill.

Right:
"Canal, Uppermill",
A.H. & S., of Oldham,
"Valley Series".



Canal, Uppermill.

The Wife's Tale - Part 36

Anne & Ken, and new dachshund Bill, are off for a short break on the Lancaster Canal. It is May 1996.

VOYAGE OF THE NARROW BOAT SWAN (ARLEN BOATS, PRESTON)

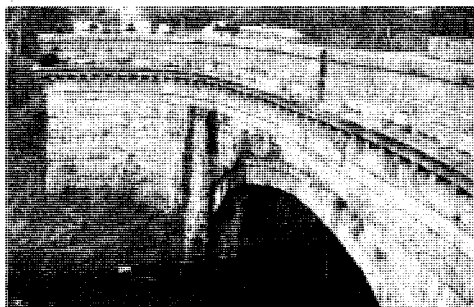
Sunday 19th May

Woke to rain sweeping through the valley, high winds and very grey - a good start to a typical canal holiday - in March!! Left at 9.20, a quick journey to boatyard in Preston arriving 10.20. Neat yard, two lively Jack Russell dogs and a very friendly, talkative owner. All craft in superb condition that we could see and we were informed that no boats were kept after four years old. "Swan", in green and red livery, had cruiser stern, open plan inside, no doors except for bathroom and curtains to partition off forward cabin and back - v. cosy! Adequate cupboard space but no facilities for drying clothes or hanging outdoor clothes. Galley next to bathroom - fairly well laid out except v. little working surface. At long last a boat with decent sharp knives and good cutlery - in fact everything of excellent quality. Loo rolls, kitchen roll, dishcloth, tea cloths, matches, washing up liquid and cleaning liquid all provided. There wasn't an inventory so we had brought all those things, including kitchen knives, which for once we didn't use. Friends Roy and Elaine arrived ten minutes after us. Stowed everything away while Mike Weaver, the

owner, took Ken through the mechanics and with HIM BEING EXPERIENCED, that didn't take long. A complimentary copy of the latest Plink was handed over and there were some very nice and envious remarks passed. I don't intend printing them for obvious reasons!

Off at 11.20am through long stretch of houses backing onto canal varying from overgrown to pleasant to superb gardens, generally the latter and a real credit to the owners who had obviously created them with pride and in the knowledge that they would be viewed from the canal. Long stretch of Balsam - "Grows 3 inches a day in Spring", says Roy! Farmland, plenty of cattle grazing - couldn't help wondering how many we will see in a year's time? (Middle of BSE panic). Plenty of young life - swans with cygnets, ducks with ducklings (14 in one clutch), moorhens and coots with offspring. Walked from Bridge 14 to 21 - both Bill and I needed a leg stretch. Kept him on a retractable lead due to sheep by the towpath and the ducks he kept wanting to swim after. I'm sure he's half otter, he loves the water so much.

Actually saw the sun off and on - at least we are dry. Reached Hand & Dagger pub near Salwick at 1.00pm. Old staging post and used to be called the Clifton Arms. Pleasant service, food good with plenty of it, followed by the best coffee, cafetiere, I've had in a pub. Resisted the temptation to have one of their delicious looking sweets.



Wyre Aqueduct



Idyllic Lancashire

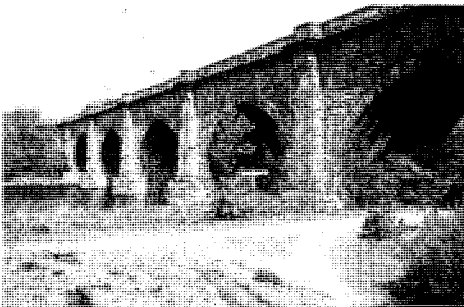
Off again at 2.05 - Bill glad to see us - greeted us as though we had been away years. Grey and overcast afternoon with the odd spot of rain and cold enough to light the stove which we eventually got going. We did have fire-lighters, wood and plenty of smokeless fuel left for us. In fact there were 3 sacks of smokeless fuel - are Arlen trying to tell us something? Have they heard a weather forecast that we haven't? Anyway, the stove was fantastically efficient!

Dive-bombed along the way by swifts and swallows! Stopped very briefly at "Owd Nells" for a look round - Nicholson said craft shops, there weren't any, gift shops but no canalia. A very popular eating and drinking place judging by the amount of cars and people and one would imagine a busy place in the summer. A bit 'weather-beaten', though. Plenty of mooring space too. Trouble getting off due to strong winds, which Elaine and I didn't see having set off walking. Well, two men should be able to cope.

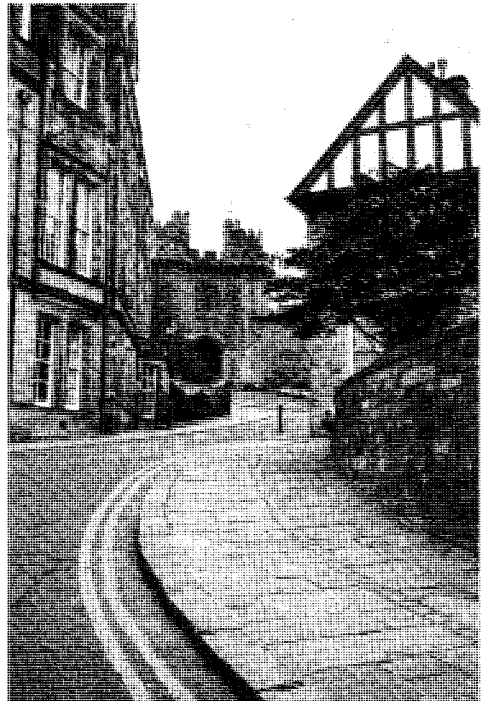
Through Catterall and on to Garstang. Stopped just past Bridge 61 and the Wyre Aqueduct. What a beautiful single span bridge. Unfortunately the golf course had fenced off any attempts to take photographs of the whole bridge which was a pity but understandable. Decided to stay put - it was 5.50pm and the weather was decidedly lowering. A brief hour of sun (well it was one of those "April" shower days!) while we had a bite to eat, drizzle and then a downpour, then blue skies again. Decided to trust to luck and went for a walk round Garstang. Pleasant town with old and new buildings well combined. Two examples of

street names - Thomas's Wiends and Steven's Wiends - don't ask me what they mean, I don't know. Passed 'Farmers Arms' pub which had a notice outside 'Get Drunker Cheaper'. What an indictment of present day attitudes. Another sign had a picture of one cow saying to the other 'With price of beer in here it's not us that's mad it's the Farmers'! Got back to the boat just as the heavens opened - yet again. All tired - it's all that fresh air - and bed by 10.00pm!

Just dropped off, woken to much shouting, engine noise and very bright lights alongside. Nosiness got the better of us and saw a large Dutch barge, navigation lights all ablaze plus huge halogen spots coming in to moor opposite us. It was quite a sight. However, after much shouting between him up front and the woman on the tiller, they decided to abandon trying to moor and made off. Presumably just come up Glasson from the sea.



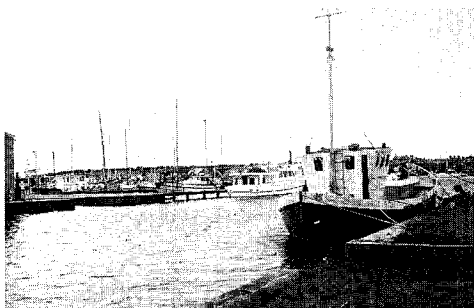
Lune Aqueduct



Typical Lancaster heritage

Monday 20th May

Fitful night - rain beating down on the roof. Woke very early but didn't get up until 7.30. Off at 8 and breakfast on the go. At least Roy and Elaine had spent a good night in their King size bed. It's quite a sight seeing someone appear, back view, climbing out through the curtains. At least it was fine. Mustn't complain about the rain - we need it. Passed marinas full of boats of all kinds - mainly cruisers - a popular owner canal judging by the amount we have seen. But not on the go. Spotted tank traps and pillboxes near the canal - did they expect an invasion from the sea via Glasson? Smithy Park, static caravans, well developed and maintained site in immaculate condition. All the caravans fronting the canal had cruisers and their gardens were a sight to behold. The grey clouds got darker and by 9.00am we were all in our waterproofs standing on the cruiser stern being bombarded by torrential rain - laughing! Luckily it didn't last long. We were warned at the boatyard of an aggressive swan on the canal and we found him - and what a performance. He attacked the boat, pecked at the fenders, flew at us and swam after us with such strength he created a considerable bow wave. What a magnificent creature. His neck lay flat on his body, his wings in a huge arc. A truly awesome sight. His mate swam serenely in the distance. Once we had cleared his patch he displayed his triumph at 'seeing off' this large bird that had invaded his territory by dipping his neck into the water and letting the water run across the whole of his body - shallow diving. Then with neck outstretched he 'stood' on the water and flapped his wings. Roy managed



Glasson Dock

to get it all on video. That was a sight I shall never forget.

The weather started to brighten and we sailed through some of the most beautiful countryside in Britain. I can understand why the Lancaster Canal boat owners generally do not want the canal to join the system! It is so tranquil and quite breathtaking in its beauty. Another sight worth mentioning - we saw a kingfisher, so close we could nearly touch it, catch a fish and then he sat on a fence watching us go by. Are they so unused to craft? They usually fly away.

Reached Glasson Arm at 10.15am. By this time the clouds had almost disappeared, the sun had come out and a stiff breeze had blown up. Only one paddle unlocked! And this was the reason for the early start. We were told before leaving Preston, that due to water shortage the locks would be open at 10.00am and locked at 4.00pm - not that much time to get down six wide locks, travel nearly 3 miles, have lunch, a look round Glasson Dock and back up again. We could see that some nifty work was going to be needed.

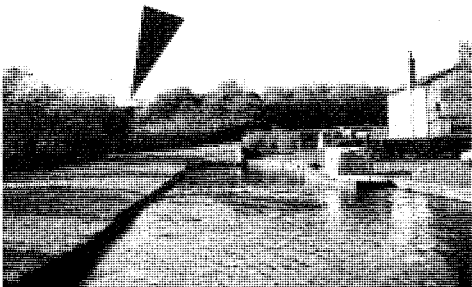
Strange paddles on the bottom gates of the first lock which took an age to fill. It was straightforward down the six, passing through farmland, and a good walk with Bill down the flight. At Lock 6 is Thurnham Mill which is now a nice looking pub and if 'Carry on Up The Lune' (Chris Coburn's video) is anything to go by serves very good food. But we had decided to get to Glasson Dock. A look round the fresh water basin which was very choppy - plenty of craft to ogle at including a concrete, floating restaurant. Moored up, on advice, just



Heading for The Lakes

inside the entrance to the canal out of the wind at 12.40. Walked to the Victoria Pub and a very pleasant establishment it was too and well worth a visit. The food was excellent, freshly cooked and of such proportions I just had to take a photograph. Perhaps a little overfacing but very good value for money. A doggy bag was needed which Bill was very grateful for! As time was pressing we could only have a brief look round Glasson Dock - we shall have to come some other time - and off at 2.15pm to make the top lock by 4.00pm. Actually saw two hares and no, they were not boxing! More pillboxes and tank traps - they really were expecting an invasion. Not a cloud in the sky, sun all the way and very hot work. Elaine took over the driving which left HIM free to do the locks with me for a change. Met the lock keeper and he promised not to lock us in if we didn't make the top lock by 4.00pm. But we did - just. 3.55pm when we got through, in time to see the lock keeper disappearing on his moped to lock the bottom lock.

With one paddle at top and bottom locked all day, and one paddle in the middle of the flight not working because of a jammed handcuff lock, operating the six locks twice took a long time. Boaters doing the canal in 3 days, like us, can't afford the time to get stuck in the flight overnight and a lot probably don't try it. Why BW don't open the flight properly AND extend the opening from 9.30 to 4.30 I don't know. If I were a publican or a shopkeeper in Glasson Dock I'd make sure they did! But then, the idea is to save water - but not, surely, at the risk of losing boaters altogether?



Textfield Terminus (M6 arrowed)

After 6 miles or more walking I was glad to get on board and so was Bill. From Galgate to Bridge 94 it was a great pleasure just to sit and admire the beautiful scenery - it never lets up. Through heavy wooded cutting - Burrow Heights Cutting, more familiarly known as Deep Cutting. It is up to 10 metres deep and over 2km long. It was so peaceful it made you want to whisper.

We decided, because it was such a beautiful evening, to moor up in the countryside instead of going into Lancaster and mooring up outside the Waterwitch pub. And what a mooring - it was perfect. Sitting outside with a well earned drink, basking in hot sunshine and watching thirty or more rabbits playing in the field opposite. Even a heron paid us a fleeting visit until Bill decided to have a bark. Walk along the towpath through a small wood to the start of the Lancaster build-up with a magnificent view of Lancaster Castle. Got back to the boat just as the clouds started to roll in, a quick downpour, and then sun again. Got talking to some people walking along the towpath with a dog and was told that we were wise not to moor in Lancaster, that is if we wanted a peaceful night. Apparently the Waterwitch has become a student pub and is inclined to be a bit noisy. We shall find out tomorrow.

Tuesday 21st May

Strong winds and rain lashing the boat woke me several times during the night - HE slept through it all - therefore was surprised when the day dawned bright and sunny. Up at 7.30 and off at 8.10 to make the water point before 9.00. Only a short stretch into Lancaster past a superb terraced row of Georgian houses and modern houses on the other side with long gardens down to the canal. Got stuck on a bend trying to get in to let me off to give Bill his morning constitutional - would be my fault. After a lot of heaving on the quant pole managed to get off - it didn't look shallow and could do with a dredge. Good view of the castle. Made the water point at 8.40 and while taking on went to look at an old building - Packet Boat House - which looked to be in the process of being converted into something or other. Certainly a lot of money had been spent on cleaning it up.

Apparently this was used for repairing packet or passenger boats between 1833 and 1843. The building held two boats with workshops above. It also contained a hoist (still there) by which boats could be lifted to the upper floors. The front is skewed thus allowing the launching of the long thin boats. Through Bridge 98 to our mooring outside the Waterwitch - the Lancaster Basin. Lucky students living in balconied flats overlooking the canal, opposite a good pub and within easy walking distance of the city. Moored up, had breakfast, locked up and walk into Lancaster for a couple of hours sightseeing. And it is worth the stop.

Our walking tour took over two hours, during which time we saw most of the major sights. It was a pity we did not have time to go into Judges' Lodgings, a magnificent house housing the Museum of Childhood and the Gillows Museum, and the Castle (the tour taking two hours) but we did go into the Priory Church built between 1380 and 1430.

What we saw was impressive. So many other museums and parks to see but no time made us put this on our list for one to visit again - by car! Back to the boat and off just after 11.00. The canal through Lancaster is extremely interesting passing canal-side mills which have been converted to offices and housing, excellent views between bridges 102 and 103 over the city and to the castle and priory on the hill. Across Bulk Aqueduct over the main road to the M6, the canal continues along a huge embankment to the Lune Aqueduct. Of course we had to stop to let HIM and Roy inspect the magnificent structure. Elaine and I held the boat. It is considered to be one of the most beautiful aqueducts in the country and is a listed building and according to the travel guides the finest piece of engineering on the Lancaster Canal. Designed and built by Rennie from local stone, it stands on wooden piles, driven twenty feet under the river bed and is 51 feet (15.5m) above the river and 664 feet (202m) long. With stone balustrades on either side I didn't mind sailing across, unlike the Pontcysyllte, but that is much higher.

Still sunny, but strong winds, as we wended

our way through pleasant countryside overlooking Morecambe Bay to Hest Bank and our next port of call, the Hest Bank Inn, where we had arranged to meet two friends from home. The inn lay on the coaching route from Grange-Over-Sands on the opposite side of the bay. A light in the window facing the canal would guide coachmen across the sands. Good moorings across from the pub also a mooring at the bottom of their very well kept gardens. It certainly looked all that we had hoped, old coaching inn with open fires (not needed that day) good ale and a very friendly welcome. Unfortunately the food was poor and not up to standard - still the drinks and company made up for the disappointment. *(In 1997 we did the Lancaster again but from Tewitfield to Preston and decided to give the Hest Bank Hotel another chance - and were we glad we did. New, very new, landlords had taken over and the food was excellent, so much so that later that year we took an Aunt who lives in Blackpool for a day out. Definitely recommended.)*

After lunch a walk round Hest Bank itself, over the level crossing and onto the sand dunes with magnificent views across Morecambe Bay. Said goodbye to our friends and off again - only one brief stop along the way at Bolton Le Sands - a very pretty well kept village. The Lakeland mountains were very much in evidence as we neared the end of the canal. Again and again we couldn't help remarking just how beautiful it was.

Reached Tewitfield at 5.55 and turned round to go back to our mooring in Capernwray Canal Arm (Although the terminus has everything the boater could wish for in an overnight mooring the M6 cuts off the canal and is so noisy we wouldn't get a wink of sleep). Another delightful mooring - we have been so fortunate this trip. The arm is just north of the Keer Aqueduct, again designed by Rennie, which has a span of 43 feet and carries the canal 35 feet above the River Keer. The canal arm is known locally as Lover's Creek and we could quite see why - beautiful woods right down to the canal, shaded walks and secluded glades! It took barges into the heart of Webber Quarry

where they were loaded with Limestone. A narrow gauge railway ran around the site which had quarry workers houses called 'New England'. The remains of the loading cranes can be seen close to the caravan site which we had sailed past earlier. What an idyllic place - all I needed was to see badgers and my day would be complete. It was so peaceful. Sat on deck in the sun with our drinks - didn't matter that there wasn't a pub nearby, we had enough on board. After dinner, time to pack up which didn't take long, a good natter, plenty of laughter as we mulled over the last three days and then bed.

Wednesday 22nd May

Slept like a log and woke to bird song at 6.30. Up at 7.15, breakfast and off at 7.50. Superb winding in the quarry by HIM but don't tell him I told you. Cleaned the boat as we went along and were all ship-shape again by the time we moored up, facing Preston of course ready for the next party, at 8.45. Water tank filled just as Mike Weaver arrived - along with the rain. Loaded up and just half an hour along the motorway we were back at base. The countryside didn't look anything like we had been through - how different it all is by canal and in the sun. By the time we reached Preston it was quite a downpour and looked set for the day. Cars loaded up, canal guide and brass plaque bought and on our way by 9.45. Home an hour later.

This was one trip I didn't want to end.

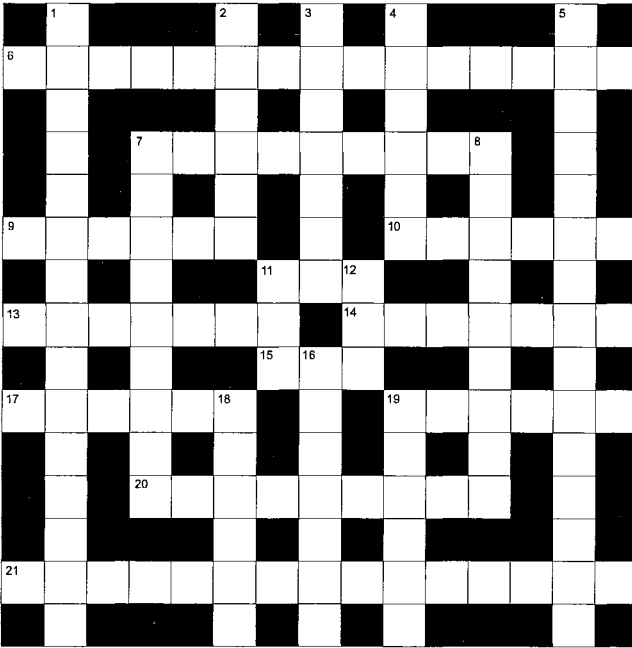
Reflections

Yes we would like to do it again, with Arlen boats, maybe the other way round to give a different perspective. The boat was extremely well fitted out, but once again to our way of thinking several design faults. With the double bed at the back everything got flung on to it - good job we had bought a car rug with us - tiller, handbags, maps, cameras, shopping, waterproofs, coats, newspapers, etc. The two steps down into the boat were too deep for comfortable, easy access, likewise the deep step up to the front of the boat - our knees felt the strain. There was a small step up

from the main cabin to the front cabin which both E and I forgot was there and nearly came a cropper. Gave us quite a jolt. Only one mirror and that in the bathroom and placed too near the bulk head. The single bunks at the front were too narrow for adult comfort but converted to a king size double! With only curtains to partition off the front and rear cabins it was very cosy and the curtains at the back did not hang well so there was always a gap! If travelling with friends it was a true test of friendship. Thank heavens none of us snored. The main bone of contention was the fact that nowhere could we dry wet clothes or hang them - and we did get wet several times, so jackets and waterproofs had to be hung from the curtain rails in the main cabin to dry, gloves and socks had to be dried, v. carefully, on the stove. The stove was super efficient and we were very snug indeed. The galley was very well equipped with good sharp cooking knives. From past experience I had taken my own and for the first time didn't need them. Everything was of good quality and plenty of glasses were provided. It would have been nice to have had more work surface as only one person could work in comfort. The hanging space for both cabins was a bit suspect - no full length wardrobes - well you don't need dresses on a canal do you!

On talking to Mike Weaver on the way back it was quite obvious from what he had to say that the Ribble Link is a definite 'no no' as far as the local boat owners are concerned and I can understand their wish to keep it landlocked. But was surprised to hear that the Kendal link is also out of favour as generally they don't like locking! One thing for sure; we will not get them on the 'Ring of Roses' when it opens with the amount of locks there. There is a them and us situation between the owners and hirers but, as Mike Weaver pointed out at one meeting, generally hirers are far more experienced boaters. The canal is underused - the whole three days we saw only three or four moving boats. But it is the most beautiful canal in the country that we have been on and definitely we will be going again - and again!

Canal Crossword - 22



19. Creditor gives vent to an expression of pain whilst sailing past Burnham on sea (6)

20. Star booth seen sailing the Leeds and Liverpool (9).

21. Handspikes compulsory on this navigation (6,3,6).

DOWN

1. Aley tall caveman found on a BCN waterway (4,6,5).

2. French tree found in Compo's trousers (sorry Bill) (6).

3. Public house named Diana - that's in bad taste (except for fish of course - they love it). (7).

4. Passing here on the Bridgewater you must sample the cakes (6).

5. Tarts call seance here - witches brewed up beside the canal (9,6).

7. How BW makes water flow uphill - miraculous (9).

8. Pour Stort water into the canal here - long way to carry it (9).

11. Questioning river? (3).

12. Huge lot of stuff keeps your hair tidy in the wind (3).

16. Worsteds toned down in colour for sailing over an aqueduct (7).

18. Suitable type of game to play on a boat. Indefinitely so (6).

19. E-less clothes with which to cover the cargo (6).

ACROSS

6. Man beat canine to death on a repair vessel (11,4).

7. Tree atop the mountains near a Walsall junction (9).

9. Military assistant within signs of decay on the bank of the Thames below Grafton lock (6).

10. Sign post to a Yorkshire river seen by a husband or wife (6).

11. A joker found in the region of a dog's posterior (3).

13. Southern labial part showing the route to put a boat in the water (7).

14. Steiner's and others attempts to gain access to a boat rally (7).

15. Type of fish found swimming along part of the bottom of your boat (3).

17. May pie not cause blood poisoning (6).

The solution to this crossword is given on the inside back page.

Boat Museum Events



LAST CHANCE FOR OUR SUPER SAVER OFFER!

The final list of this year's events at Ellesmere Port Boat Museum. Combine your visit with a trip to Cheshire Oaks Designer Outlet Village where Her Majesty the Queen nearly ate a MacDonald! And the 'barge' restaurant mentioned previously now boasts an authentic replica canal-side crane. You can also marvel at the Blue Planet Aquarium - the country's largest - including overhead sharks!

Events at the Museum

October 4th

Pulling Power - Static Engine Display
Pumphouse in steam

October 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th

Spooky Ghost Tours
Pre-Booking Essential

October 31st

Halloween Howler
Spooky Ghost Tour and Meal
Pre-Booking Essential

November 1st

Pumphouse in Steam
Subject to weather conditions

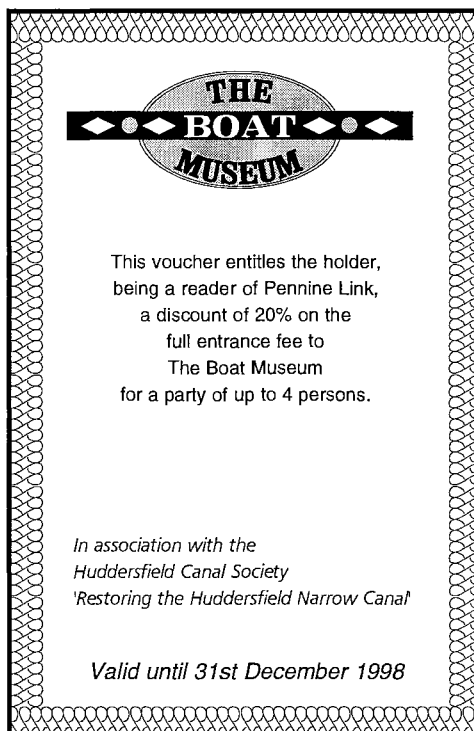
November 7th/8th

Knobsticks, Graining and Scrolls
Painting Course
Weekend Painting Course - £60

November 28th/29th

Grand Christmas Craft Fair
Santa in his Grotto
Special Admission price to Fair and
Museum.

**RING the Museum on
0151 355 5017
for more details**



Profile - Jack Carr

When did my interest in canals first start?

Looking back, I have been around canals as long as I can remember. I was born in the Chorley area in 1934 and remember as a schoolboy (must have been during the war) walking the towpath of the Leeds & Liverpool in the Chorley area. I walked with my parents on a number of occasions, the Walton Summit branch, through the Whittle tunnels to the Summit basin, then still in water but no longer used. Sunken boats could be found in the basin. During school holidays we walked from Chorley to Blackburn, the canal busy with barges delivering coal to Blackburn and beyond, Mayor's Boatyard at Riley Green busy with boat building and repairs.

As I grew into my 'teens and twenties' I lost contact with the canal, getting about the usual business of growing up, education, work and family responsibilities.

By the late seventies I had a mad idea to retrace my walks to Blackburn of some years previous. My wife Marion was not persuaded but our two young daughters Susan and Gillian, then primary school age, were willing to have a go. Not of course aware of the distance, some eight miles.

The canal by then was empty of boats and in decline, with only a few pleasure boats moored at Johnsons Hillock. Later I discovered these to be the moorings of Wheelton Boat Club.

In September 1979 I persuaded an unsuspecting wife that to buy a boat on the mooring was just what we needed, and then it all started. I bought a Nicholson's Guide and subscribed to Waterways World. I learned all about the saving of the Peak Forest Canal, the breaches on the Bridgewater Canal, at Bollington and on the Leigh Branch, and that the Leeds and Liverpool was intact, even though an annual campaign cruise to keep the Liverpool end

remainder section was required. We regularly attended these campaign rallies in the early eighties and I suppose this started me on the restoration trail.

I read in my Nicholson that, unlike the Peak Forest Canal, the Huddersfield Narrow was closed and abandoned, except for water supply to the Peak Forest and Ashton. Curiosity got the better of me and I organised with a friend, Roy Burlington, for our families to have a look. Roy also has two daughters; the plan was to walk the canal over two days with our four daughters. Our wives declined the invitation and decided on a weekend in York instead.

The time was August 1982; I had learned of HCS from Waterways World and of some mad notion that the canal could be re-opened. As our walk progressed I was of the view that they may be right, but the task was a bit more of a challenge than the Liverpool campaign cruises. We were encouraged, however, when we arrived at Uppermill, to find the concrete cap at Dungebooth Lock smashed up awaiting removal.

From here both Roy and myself joined the Society and attended the next meeting at the Diggle Hotel. I also joined the work parties at Dungebooth and Limekiln Locks at Uppermill, then continued at 31/32 West, Ward Lane and Top Lock at Diggle.

As the restoration scene changed, with the creation of HCS Restoration

to take advantage of Job Creation with availability of Public funding, the role of the East and West groups changed from a major fund raiser to recruitment, publicity and related activities.

In about 1990, I would guess, Jean Buckley, the West group chairman, asked if I would take on the role, as circumstances were such that she could not continue. I have continued in this role since then, and the

I had learned of HCS from Waterways World and of some mad notion that the canal could be re-opened



Marion & Jack onboard their narrowboat 'Linnet'

group still meets on the second Wednesday of the month, now mainly at the Tollemache Arms in Mossley, this proving to be the most popular venue of the various meeting places tried over the years. I have also recently taken over as Chairman of the Promotion Group from Jo Young, due to the illness of John, whose very sad loss was recorded in the last issue of Pennine Link. Jo will, however, continue as our very efficient recruitment officer.

I have, over the years, continued boating on the canals. We progressed from our Dawncraft "Rushy" to a cruiser-style

narrowboat "Sambuca", still in commission in the Burscough area, to my present boat "Linnet" which I completed fitting out last year. This boat is moored at Adlington near Chorley.

Well, I think that gets us up to date, but what about the future?

No rest for the Society; its aim to secure through navigation and full restoration is not quite a reality, but the winning goal is well in sight and if it comes to a penalty shoot out, we won't be missing any!

Jack Carr
West Side Chairman

Standedge Experience Storyline

The sixth and final part of a serialisation of 'Storyline', the background material prepared by Archæamedia Ltd., as part of our Millennium Bid report on the Standedge Experience.

THE RESERVOIRS AND THE END GAME

Along with the engineering problems of overcoming awkward terrain was the problem of providing enough water for a canal to function. Mines, lakes, rivers, streams and springs were all used wherever possible, their water often conducted to the canal along narrow feeders and through sluices. The high-ground canals of the Heroic phase were especially vulnerable to water shortages and reservoirs were constructed to keep their summits topped up. The first large, purpose-built reservoirs belong to the 1790's and were all constructed along similar lines. Each consisted of a substantial earth dam, sloped on the outside, and puddle-and-masonry lined on the inside. Each had an inflow (from a river or stream) controlled by a regulating weir and each had low-level outlets and overflow spillways. The outlets (which were controlled by sluices or valves) were connected to the canal either directly via a culvert or indirectly via a feeder channel.

The work of controlling water on canals was and is continuous - levels having to be maintained, locks by-passed, flood water run off into streams and rivers. Control devices included by-weirs, flood panels and spillways. By-Weirs consisting of a small weir and a narrow channel, usually stone or brick-lined, would be situated on the offside of a lock. Flood panels (also called hatches or let-offs) had a paddle opening a culvert built through the bank to allow water to escape into a stream or river. Fixed spillways or waste weirs, which were crested apron-like slopes in brick or concrete set at intervals in the canal banks, and the more extensive box-weirs which ran parallel with the bank, served the same purpose.

On the Huddersfield Narrow Canal the original plans for the reservoir system required to service such a lock-laden canal with a very short summit were as vague as the rest of the scheme. Outram's projection was that ... *"the reservoirs proposed will contain 14,900 lockfuls of water, and will afford a supply of 100 lockfuls per day (which) supply, I conceive, will be more than adequate to answer the consumption that would be occasioned by the largest trade that can be expected to be*

carried on upon this canal". The concerns of the many millowners along the proposed route required placating however, as their livelihood depended on an adequate supply of water to power their establishments and the planned canal posed a threat in this respect. Pragmatically Outram was quick to respond to their complaints, embodied in a resolution where another £4,000 was allocated to increase the planned capacity of the reservoirs by 5,100 lockfuls of water, although even this was to prove inadequate before long.

The Act of 1794 allowed for at least 607 million gallons of water to be stored in reservoirs within three miles of the canal, and Outram's total estimate of £182,748 included £13,800 for this purpose. Slaithwaite (capacity 68 million gallons), Tunnel End, Marsden (22.75 million gallons), March Haigh (71 million gallons), Red Brook (68 million gallons), Diggle (18 million gallons), Brun Clough (8.5 million gallons) and Swinshore Common (capacity unknown) formed the basic supply, while three reservoirs in the Wessenden system were built by local mill owners. Telford's report in 1807 also found that the total capacities of the extant reservoirs were inadequate.

Accordingly he recommended the construction of a further reservoir to the east of Black Moss at a site which came to be known as Swillers, or Swellands (54.5 million gallons).

The dams' construction was conventional, being of compacted earth around a clay core. In 1806 construction of an additional reservoir at Black Moss (18.75 million gallons) was commenced. Problems were frequently encountered during the construction of all these dams, especially with earth slips and seepage. The cause probably lay in a combination of limited technical knowledge, lack of suitable plant for properly compacting the earth, inexperienced staff and the lack of close supervision which seems to have dogged so much of the project. Of the summit reservoirs, Red Brook, March Haigh and Swellands discharged north-east into the Colne, while Brun Clough and Diggle flowed south-west to the Tame, and the Black Moss could be fed in either direction.

The enormous potential for destruction that was being held behind the earthen banks was a source of concern locally, and the two disastrous floods might have been avoided had the dams been constructed to proper tolerances. John Rooth expressed his fears about the construction of all the reservoirs which he believed to be so inadequate that they would scarcely hold water,

and in particular he worried about the safety of the Slaithwaite dam. The floods of 1799 had almost destroyed the dam, as well as causing the collapse of parts of the dam at Tunnel End as a result of overtopping and resulting in such extensive damage to the Swinshore reservoir that it had to be abandoned. Slaithwaite had only been saved by cutting the dam's bank open in two places to allow the flood waters to drain away safely. The bursting of the Swellands reservoir in 1810 apparently could have caused many more fatalities than the six unfortunates that lost their lives in the Black Flood, as expressed in the report in the Leeds Mercury: *"But the misfortunes lamentable as they were, arising from this inundation, are slight compared with the consequences that must have ensued from the rupture of the banks on the western side of the hill, which is covered with houses, and which the inhabitants of which must inevitably have shared the same fate of the poor cottager's family. Some idea may be formed of the rapidity and force of this immense body of water, when it is stated that a stone, of an oblong form, weighing fifteen ton, was carried from the summit of the hill and lodged in the millrace of the Horstall, a distance of two miles!"*.

The Working Canal

In commercial terms the seventeen years needed for completion proved doubly costly; the rival Rochdale Canal had already opened in 1804, and the monumental Leeds-Liverpool Canal followed in 1816, signalling fierce competition. As early as 1811 the Company felt forced to negotiate a reduction in tolls on *'corn stone iron and other articles'* with the Ashton and John Ramsden Canal companies because their charges were more expensive than *"the rates paid in respect of the same articles upon the Rochdale Canal..."*. At the same time negotiations were begun with the Peak Forest Canal for the purpose of reducing tolls on lime carried on the two canals. Tolls came down, but even so trade never grew to a high enough level to ensure an adequate return to shareholders. Indeed, although the annual reports to the Company's general assembly attempted to put on a brave face by emphasising steadily increasing toll receipts, the committee had to admit in 1823 that they had, *"for want of sufficient funds, experienced great inconvenience and embarrassment in liquidating an accumulated debt with interest thereon"*. Nevertheless, they hoped that *"this hitherto unfortunate undertaking" might "in short time be enabled to declare a dividend"*. By then, though, many must have been rueing their initial speculation, and one man's somewhat

jaundiced view was that the canal was *"The greatest evil the neighbourhood ever was visited with"*.

Yet if the Huddersfield Narrow Canal was no great boon for its investors, it most certainly was for the people of the Colne and Tame valleys, having a considerable impact both on settlement and industry along its route. Thomas Jefferys' important map of Yorkshire of 1771 depicted a landscape of scattered farmsteads based around a number of small settlements like Marsden. This picture is confirmed by Nicholas Brown's somewhat limited plan of 1793 which accompanied the canal proposal. His map is more important for the information it provides on the siting of mills - no less than twenty-nine water-wheels are shown in the Colne Valley alone, an indication of why the mill-owners had been so worried for their water supplies in 1793. By the middle of the 19th century, when the first series of Ordnance Survey maps were being produced, the local population had grown considerably, as tithe and census returns clearly show. The mills too were growing into the full-scale factory mills which are familiar to us today, and in which all the necessary processes could be centralised. In short, the canal encouraged a considerable growth in trade both locally and with other regions.

For merchants, however, water transport was by no means automatically preferable to road haulage. In terms of speed, roads often proved the faster, as canal boats still relied on horses for motive power, while on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal the need to leg boats through the great tunnel added up to four hours to navigation time. Negotiating locks was also a time-consuming process and the Huddersfield was well endowed with those. For some heavy cargoes, such as grain, coal or minerals, of course, time was not an important factor, as the economies of scale were so great, but for smaller goods speed of delivery could be essential. In addition, unless the delivery site was directly on the waterfront with adequate warehouse storage (as at Aspley Basin), road haulage to the final destination would still be required anyway.

At the same time the turnpikes had undoubtedly brought about improvements in road transport, a process accelerated by the innovations of Telford, Macadam and others, while the efficiency of the carriers had seen a corresponding improvement. Canals were also far more susceptible to natural disruptions - frost, floods and drought could all wreak havoc in water supplies: the Huddersfield Narrow Canal was frozen up for thirty-seven days in the winter of 1822-23, twenty-one days in 1825-26, and seven weeks in 1837-38, while in the

summers of 1818 and 1826 drought forced further closures of thirty-nine and sixty-two days respectively. Quite apart from all this, the Huddersfield Canal suffered from its very narrowness, which meant that either special narrow boats had to be used or goods had to be transhipped off and onto broad barges at its connection with the Sir John Ramsden Canal and, although the Ashton-under-Lyne Canal is also narrow, it connects up with the broad Rochdale Canal. It is hardly surprising that the canal should have failed to attract sufficient trade to justify its construction in purely commercial terms and that the Wakefield and Austerlands turnpike should continue to flourish.

The state of the works also continued to be of concern. In 1818 the canal had to be closed for ten days to allow repairs to take place, while by 1820 the short tunnel at Stalybridge was *"in a dangerous state and wants considerable repair"*, leading to its eventual demolition in 1824. The Company's income did grow steadily for a while and in 1824 the committee was able to announce that *"... the works of the Canal are generally in good Repair, and the finances of the Company are in such a state as to warrant the committee in recommending to the Proprietors the Declaration of a Dividend of One Pound per Share"*.

In an attempt to speed up traffic through the Standedge Tunnel the committee allowed a Manchester engineer called Wharton to experiment with a steam boat in the tunnel, followed by an actual steam boat service run by the Company's own attached barge through the tunnel using a chain on the canal bed to haul itself along. This did not last long though and the Company returned to the practice of legging, even employing their own leggers from 1833.

Dividends were made most years until the last one in 1842 when a new and formidable enemy appeared on the scene - the railway. The Manchester and Leeds Railway was completed in 1841 with a route that took it through Rochdale, the northern fringe of Huddersfield, and Wakefield. Its advent had a profound impact on the canal, which found that its shambling way of doing things was no longer viable: *"(The Huddersfield Canal) constituting as it did a very short portion of a main trunk line was enabled to levy an excessively high mileage toll on such a trade, without being exposed to the risk in consequence of driving it away ... It continued to enjoy the advantages arising from this position until the opening of the Manchester and Leeds Railway which at once effected an entire change in its circumstances ... the canal still remained the most direct line between the Lancashire and Yorkshire towns but the speed of the railway much more than*

compensated for this, and at once secured for it a preference for the conveyance of Bale goods, Grain and flour, and the more valuable articles, which it was at the same time a formidable competitor for those articles that from their weight and bulk are usually retained by Canals".

The Huddersfield's only defence was to slash its carrying rates, a tactic which the Rochdale had already started using. Fairly rapidly the Company were charging rates that were below the level that was profitable, and the crunch came in 1844. Two railway companies began to develop plans to build a line to Huddersfield, and the Huddersfield and Manchester Railway Company proved successful. It was obvious that the Canal Company could not compete with the newcomer, and in May 1844 a special general assembly ratified a provisional agreement that the waterway sell itself to the Railway Company. The shareholders received £30 per share on a putative market value of around £8, and this allowed all the debts to be paid off and the Canal Company to be dissolved, just over fifty years after it had been formed.

The Later History

The title of the Huddersfield and Manchester Railway and Canal Company was not long-lived as in 1847 the concern leased itself to the London and North Western Railway Company. A new tunnel to house the railway was being built along a course parallel to and a few yards from the canal tunnel, and five of the latter's old shafts were reopened to help remove excavation spoil. In addition, adits were dug between the two tunnels so that the canal could be used to transport spoil out by boat. At the Diggle end the canal's course was altered to run slightly to the west of its original line so that it would stay to the north of the railway.

The construction of this and another tunnel in 1871 caused further disruption to the operation of the canal on top of the usual problems that it was facing. In 1855 a boat laden with stone overturned as it was being legged through causing a two day stoppage to clear the tunnel. In 1868 a three ton rock, possibly dislodged by the blasting for the new railway tunnel, fell onto and sank another boat, and in the following year the canal tunnel was damaged when a boat carrying gunpowder to the other works blew up. The construction of the third rail tunnel between 1890 and 1894 caused so much damage that a large number of brick flying arches had to be installed to remedy this. At the Diggle end a length of the original tunnel was removed and the canal covered with steel girders for about 275 yards to allow the new line to cross it, resulting in an extra length of 221 yards being

Canal Walk 6 by John Harwood

OF EARTH, FIRE AND WATER

All of the days out we have considered so far have been totally orientated around canal addicts. If you suffer the misfortune of not having the entire family addicted with you this day trip is guaranteed to have something to please everybody - and a *full* day is promised. However due to the proximity of Matlock Bath I would suggest that you do not make this trip on a bank holiday weekend (you'll spend more time in traffic jams than enjoying yourselves).

Assuming you are travelling from the north make your way south down the A6 through Matlock and Matlock Bath. A mile after passing the latter you will arrive at the traffic lights at Cromford; turn left following the sign 'Cromford canal' and in quarter of a mile right on to the 'Cromford Wharf' car park (facilities and pay and display). After parking walk up to the canal side and immediately to your right is the warehouse and opposite are workshops and former offices. Immediately opposite the warehouse are the remains of a former ice breaking boat - well worth a look.

The Cromford canal was proposed by a group which included Outram (canal engineer) and Arkwright (owner of the mill opposite about which more later). At a meeting at Alfreton in December 1788 the engineer William Jessop presented an estimate for building the canal (to connect to the Erewash canal) in the sum of £42,697 - half of this sum was raised at the

added to the canal tunnel.

By the 1890s the canal was still carrying a tantial amount of traffic, but the accounts show that it was operating at a loss. Most of the trade on the canal was concentrated on its eastern and western extremities and the tunnel at Standedge was little used as a through route anymore. By 1916 this was such a rare event that a boat passage was actually reported in the press: *"THE NEGLECTED CANAL: First Boat through Standedge Tunnel for two and a half years - during this week there passed through the Standedge Canal Tunnel and through Saddleworth to Mossley the first boat to make a journey. Its cargo of vitriol substitute was*

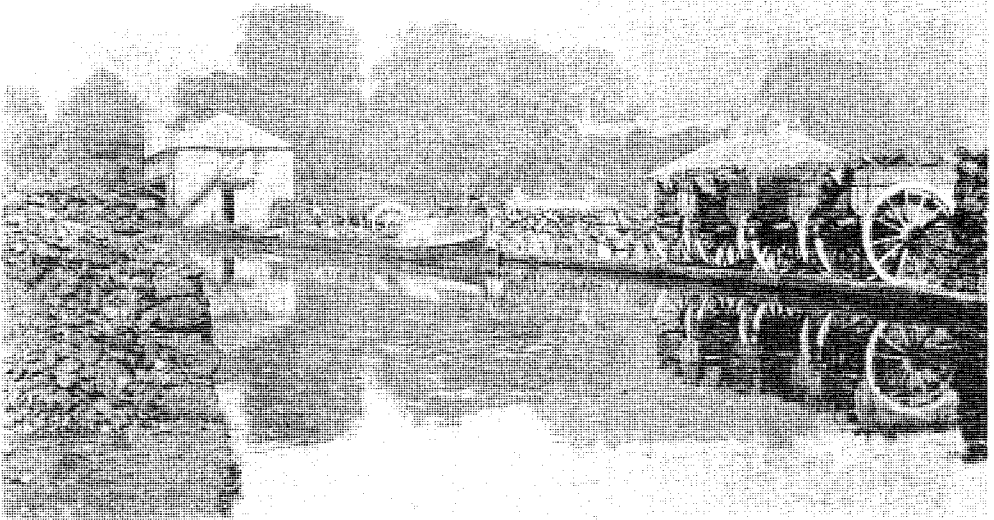
meeting and the remainder within a fortnight. The final cost of the canal was £78,880 and it was opened throughout in 1794. The cargoes carried consisted mainly (by weight) of coal and coke, lime and limestone, iron, ironstone and lead, gritstone and a lot of 'sundries'. So much lead was stored on the wharf that in the days of the Cromford Canal Society, when we did the horse drawn boat trips, the wharf had to be kept clear of all growing greenery which the horse might have eaten, due to the lead in the grass. It is indeed a pity that the horse drawn trips are no longer available - due to circumstances of which I am well aware but unable to print!

Time for a walk. Set off along the towpath to the left and in 400 yards you will come to bridge No.1. A sequence for the TV production of Silas Marner was filmed here, using the CCS boat, horse and staff and plenty of theatrical mist. For the next two and a half miles revel in the peace and quiet of canal walking until you reach the swing bridge at High Peak Junction. Keep going onward however and you will shortly reach the Lea Wood pump. Often overshadowed by its brother at Crofton on the Kennet and Avon canal, the pump was restored to working order by the CCS through the 70s and can still be seen in steam on selected days (usually published in the waterways press). The condensing steam engine drives the pump which draws water up a channel from the River Derwent and discharges it into the canal at the white wooden

consigned to Messrs R. Radcliffe and son, Woolen Manufacturers of Mossley".

On the 6th of November 1921 at the time of 6.30pm the last recorded loaded boat passed through the Standedge Tunnel, seventy years after the first. In 1944 an Act was obtained to allow the canal's owners, the London Midland and Scottish Railway, to close all of the canal except a small section leading to Aspley Basin, and this too was closed in 1963. The canal had ceased to function and was left to moulder until 1974 when the Huddersfield Canal Society began the long slow work of making it navigable again.

And that's another Storyline!



The Cromford Canal showing coal wagons waiting to be loaded at Cromford Wharf, 1906.

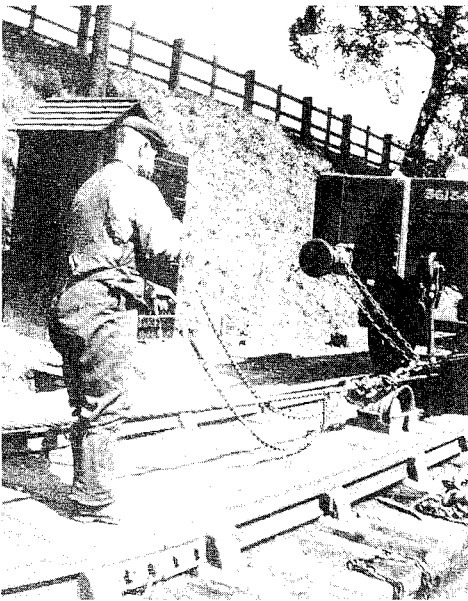
framework. Each stroke of the pump raises 25 tons of water which used to feed the locks further down the canal. Past the pumphouse you will come on to the Derwent aqueduct, designed and built by Jessop, which suffered two failures before it was fully opened. These were repaired and paid for by Jessop in order to maintain his professional integrity. At the far end of the aqueduct can be seen the remains of a branch to Lea Wood wharf. Built by Peter Nightingale (brother of the grandmother of Florence) the branch served two leadworks, cotton mills, a hat factory and quarries.

Cross the canal by the bridge provided and return on the opposite bank. Here you will see an overflow to return excess canal water to the Derwent and then come to the transhipment warehouse and engine shed (look at the far end of the building, now an activity centre). A few yards further will bring you back to High Peak Junction - but where is the junction? It is actually a junction between canal and railway (one of the earliest in the country) - the Cromford and High Peak railway - built to connect this canal to the Peak Forest canal at Whaley Bridge, when it was decided that building a canal through the limestone Peak District was not on. Immediately it will become clear

to you that the railway was built by a canal engineer because rather than climbing by gentle gradient it climbs via steep inclined planes (just like canals with flights of locks). Have a browse through the workshops here, cross the swing bridge and return to Cromford wharf the way you came. On arrival at the wharf you may well wish to cross the road and make a tour of Arkwright's mill which is under restoration by a charitable group.

On leaving the wharf in your car turn left back to the traffic lights - turn right and immediately left and climb Cromford Hill until you see the former railway bridge in front (1 ½ miles) - turn right before the bridge and in a quarter of a mile is the National Stone Centre - an exhibition on the history and historical and modern use of stone in our society. Here the children can indulge in fossil and precious stone hunting.

Back out to the road, left, straight on at the junction and right in ¾ mile (signpost Middleton Top). Here is the winding engine of one of the inclined planes of the C & HP railway (occasionally in operation) and a display on the history and operation of the railway. Returning to the main road turn right and in a short while you will come



The former Cromford and High Peak Railway was noted for its inclines. These two photographs show wagons at the top and bottom respectively of the 1 in 8 to 1 in 9 Sheep Pasture incline. The wagons were hauled up the incline on a cable to which the wagons were attached.

alongside Carsington Reservoir. In a couple of miles a left turn will bring you to the Severn Trent water company's exhibition centre where you can see displays on the preparation of drinking water and the use of water in our society generally. Marvel particularly at a great lump of granite floating on water! There are full facilities including a restaurant here but should you wish to go into Carsington village the Miners Arms can be highly recommended for food and ale and in the garden of one of the village houses can be seen an example of the trucks used in former times in the many quarries and mines hereabouts.

If you have not had enough of a day by now you can retrace your steps to Matlock Bath where, in the autumn evenings*, you can see the illuminations. You can also visit the Heights of Abraham by cable car, go round the Peak Mining Museum and generally indulge yourself in the 'seaside' type atmosphere if you have the energy left. It is probably impracticable to take in all these venues during one day but you are obviously free to pick and choose between them providing, of course, that the canal walk is seen as compulsory!

For further information:-

- Cromford Canal** - Information 01629 823204
 - High Peak Junction Workshops** - Small charge. 01629 823204
 - Arkwright's Mill** - Entry to site free, £2 for guided tour. 01629 823256
 - National Stone Centre** - £1.80. 01629 824833
 - Middleton Top** - Exhibition and parking free, small charge to engine house. 01629 823204
 - Carsington Water** - Free entry, car park charge. 01629 540696
 - Peak District Mining Museum** - £5 museum, £5 mine or £8 both - per family. 01629 583834
 - Gulliver's Kingdom** - £5.55. 01629 57100
 - Heights of Abraham** - £6.20 (inc. cable car). 01629 582365
 - Matlock Bath Aquarium & Hologram Centre** £1.80. 01629 583624 (582350 if no answer)
 - *Matlock Bath Illuminations**
29th August-31st October, 1998.
Ring Anita Proctor on 01629 580580
- (All prices per adult except Mining Museum).

Photos from 'Bygone Days in the Peak District', Porter & Fowkes, 1979

What The Papers Say

From the doldrums, earlier in the year, the Press have recently done us proud. I got two articles from May, four from June - and THIRTEEN from July. Mind you, a lot of the July material - over 70 column inches of it - was our own excellent work on the (mainly) Saddleworth Canal Festival.

In the interests of space, and acknowledging the festival articles elsewhere, I am compelled to concentrate on other articles this time.

The penultimate item relates to the sale of Victoria Works in Dobcross. Readers will recall my earlier articles and comments on this site and the article brings really good news. Definitely "fingers crossed" time!

You will also be pleased to know that I have a volunteer "reporter" for Kirklees. Come on, Tameside, there must be a member there who regularly reads the Reporter? All you need is a pair of scissors, a pen - and I will send you a stamp every three months!

Enriching The Experience

The Huddersfield Canal Society is in the throes, as most readers will know, of creating the Stanedge Experience, a visitor attraction to complement the re-opening of the Stanedge canal tunnel, around the turn of the century.

As you might expect, the enthusiasts who largely make up the society don't necessarily have a connection with the canal of old.

Which is a minor problem, since part of the Experience attraction, at the tunnel's entrance at Marsden, will feature - they hope - photographs, plans, memorabilia and other bits and pieces from the canal and of Marsden's tunnel-end warehouse and associated buildings, all of which were an integral part of operations at the country's highest and longest canal tunnel.

Amanda Topping, who is a member of the Experience project team for British Waterways (which runs the canal and its buildings), is looking for anything of interest that might be lodged in a drawer or an attic.

You can contact her at Tunnel End, Waters Road, Marsden, Huddersfield HD7 6NQ

Traffic Jams And Charges

The people of Saddleworth could be forgiven for thinking that Oldham Council has really got it in for them in a big way.

Not content with virtually cutting off the jewel in Oldham's tourist crown by allowing only one Bailey bridge, and thus only one-way traffic, in Uppermill during work to open the Huddersfield canal at High Street, the Council is now proposing that those motorists who do make it through weekend traffic jams should be charged for the privilege.

While Oldham Council may have a gleam in its eye at the prospect of wringing another £14,000 a year out of Saddleworth through parking charges, there is a thought that the charges, however minimal, may be the last straw for local businesses.

Parking charges are being introduced on the pretext that they will be a tax on weekend visitors, but there are justified fears in Uppermill that there will be no businesses left to visit after the chaotic and ruinous traffic problems that will be created by the decision to allow only one bridge on High Street.

The introduction of parking charges is seen as adding insult to injury to local businesses, to say nothing of the impact it will have on local people going to worship at their churches.

While the churches will survive because their users have nowhere else to go, shops in Uppermill fear that the traffic problems and car-parking charges will drive motorists to supermarkets out of the village, and once new habits are established they will be difficult, or impossible to break.

It might be a too gloomy, pessimistic picture, and the opening of the canal - even though hardly anyone will benefit for some years to come - is a worthwhile enterprise, but there is no doubt that Uppermill, at the heart of Saddleworth, is facing a crisis that is definitely not eased by the timing of the introduction of parking charges.

O.E.C. Comment 7/5/98

Millennium Date Slips For Canal

The restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal is behind schedule and the waterway will not reopen for the millennium, as originally planned. The new target date is April 2001.

This was announced by David Sumner, chairman of the Huddersfield Canal Society, at its annual meeting, when administrative delays were blamed for the failure of the original target.

Some members voiced concern that little practical "on the ground" progress had been made since a £31 million restoration package was announced in December, 1996, and John Maynard, founder-chairman of the society, which spearheaded the long-term drive to reopen the waterway, asked when action could be expected.

It is now almost 2½ years since the Millennium Commission and English Partnerships agreed to provide the bulk of the money necessary to complete the restoration of the 20-mile-long waterway, which runs through Saddleworth and below the Pennines, linking Ashton to Huddersfield.

Alan Stopher, project director of the Huddersfield Canal Company, which is now responsible for the restoration, said clearance of blockages involved 19 individual projects and some of the bigger ones were taking longer than expected to design. Preparatory work and discussions about land ownership were going ahead.

English Partnerships, which is providing £12 million - with the Millennium Commission providing £14.8 million and Oldham, Tameside and Kirklees councils, British Waterways and the Canal Society giving the balance - has yet to formally ratify its grant, but this is expected later in the year after consultants have completed an evaluation of the benefits that will come from restoration.

"The project is well under way, but not yet fully signed off. The next few months will see the conclusions of all agreements and major works commence," said the society council's annual report.

Mr. Sumner stressed that the society still had a vital "gentle persuasion" role to play, to continually remind people of the immense value of restoring the historic canal.

"We have to instil into the minds of the public why this waterway is being restored, why grant aid has been won and what the benefits are," he said. *"We have had a lot of help from a lot of people and we still need that help."*

"We need our volunteer members and we need our friends if we are to achieve our aim."

O.E.C. 17/6/98

New Lease Of Life For An Old Canal

The finishing touches are being put to plans to breathe new life into the Huddersfield Narrow.

The 23-mile waterway, which passes through Saddleworth, has been marked as an important site for wild life in an historic agreement between English Nature and British Waterways.

They have signed an agreement to jointly manage the water to make sure that flora and fauna will thrive during restoration work.

Restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal is being led and co-ordinated by the Huddersfield Canal Company - a partnership involving British Waterways, Kirklees, Oldham and Tameside councils and the Huddersfield Canal Society.

O.E.C. 15/6/98

Boat Slips In To Test Water

A steamboat was launched on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal at Dobcross yesterday, in a work-ability trial.

But the test was not for Rimmon - the 20ft, half-completed replica of a steam launch - it was to ensure that the canal slipway was operational.

Boats are booked in for the Saddleworth Canal Festival, on Saturday and Sunday, and there were fears that silting-up could pose difficulties in floating them off. *"There has been little opportunity to use the slipway, so we decided on a trial run,"* said Mr. John Buckley, of The Shaws, Uppermill, who is building the boat with his friends, Dr. Des O'Brien and Mr. David Chadderton. *"We wanted to make sure visiting boaters are able to cruise this section of the historic waterway."*

The Uppermill stretch is of special significance to the current £31 million restoration project - it was the restoration of its two locks, by volunteers, in 1981, that sparked off the restoration campaign.

The canal should be fully operational by the end of 2001, and Mr. Buckley and his companions, who have been building the boat for more than three years, want Rimmon, whose steam engine is already 80 per cent complete, to be fully ready for opening day.

"Rimmon is only small, and will be dwarfed by the much bigger, steel narrow boats," said Mr. Buckley. *"She is named after a beautiful Chew Valley shepherdess, who in Saddleworth folklore had several suitors, and when finished she will be just as lovely."*

O.E.C. 22/7/98

Village Digs Up Its Victorian Past

The industrial West Yorkshire village of Slaithwaite is to be dug up to make way for a Victorian canal which has been buried deep beneath its main street for 50 years.

The work is part of the final £30m push to reopen the 20-mile Huddersfield Narrow Canal, which stretches from Ashton-under-Lyne to the West Yorkshire mill town, in the next two years.

The plan has distressed many villagers who fear that Slaithwaite will become a ghost town during 18 months of excavation. The disruption of the Colne Valley settlement, they say, will keep people away too long for the small grocers, bakeries and hardware shops to survive.

Not everyone share this pessimism. Val Todd, who has turned a narrow boat into a floating tea-shop, believes the project will turn Slaithwaite into a bustling and prosperous tourist centre built around a newly restored Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

"I know it will be hard but it will be worth it," said Miss Todd, who has invested her future in the return of the canal. She bought her narrow boat, moored on the edge of the village, six years ago after being made redundant. *"I've always wanted to run my own business and I saw the restoration of the canal as an opportunity. I was lifted out of the water while this part of the canal was dredged and no one could get up here. But I'm managing, touch wood."*

Jennifer Cottrell, owner of The Full Muffin, looks on to the tarmac path which, at the end of 18 months, will be an 8ft-deep channel of water. She said: *"We've been here 15 months and we knew about plans for the canal. I thought it was an opportunity too good to miss."*

"I know I'll have to close this entrance while the work is going on but I've got another at the back. It will mean a detour for people but it will work out. My Monday-to-Friday people will find their way and hopefully when the towpath is down so will the visitors."

But just across the main street, Ray Howard, owner of Colne Valley Motor Parts Centre and chairman of the local Chamber of Trade, is worried about the impact of the restoration work on business. *"I'm not against the canal itself - it will probably enhance the village - but there is serious concern among traders and business people, not forgetting local residents, about the amount and severity of disruption to traffic through the village centre when work begins."*

"It is essential that there is effective traffic management control together with a notified timetable of work and continuous consultation."

Mr. Howard is concerned, too, about parking for shoppers, who might go elsewhere if there isn't a convenient spot.

Alan Stopher, who is directing the project for the Huddersfield Canal Company - a partnership between Kirklees, Oldham and Tameside councils, British Waterways and the Huddersfield Canal Society - described Slaithwaite as unique in canal terms. He explained: *"Canals tend to serve the rear of business and houses but in Slaithwaite it goes through the centre of the village which is unique on any canal system. I don't know a village like it."*

He will be explaining the company's intentions at this weekend's "Shaping Slaithwaite", an invitation to the village to have its say, not just about the canal but also about the impact of the television series *Where the Heart Is*, which is filmed on its streets and hillsides.

Mr. Howard said Slaithwaite had a chance to learn from the mistakes made by nearby Holmfirth, the backdrop to the television programme *Last of the Summer Wine*.

"The village is suffering a backlash," he said. *"It's full of craft shops for the visitors and there is nothing for the people who live there."*

"Shaping Slaithwaite" has been organised by the Colne Valley Trust together with Leeds University, which has created a Slaithwaite website on the Internet as part of an experiment to improve planning consultations.

Independent on Sunday 7/6/98

Canalside Plan A Step Closer

A troubled canalside project has taken a massive leap forward.

This week it was revealed that a leisure and homes scheme for the banks of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal has come a step nearer with the sale of a key piece of land, which was on the market for £380,000.

The Victoria Works land in Wool Road, Dobcross has been the site of recycling firm New Age Plastics.

This week New Age Plastics boss Alan Bradford refused to say who the new owner was, but confirmed that the sale had gone through.

Phone calls to New Age Plastics' number were being answered in the name of a new firm, ASDAC.

Victoria Works is sandwiched between the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Diggle Brook in a highly popular residential part of Saddleworth.

Mr. Bradford said that he wanted to sell the site to fund his waste plastic recycling company's proposed relocation to a town centre site, and has forecast that up to 50 new jobs will be created in the long term.

The firm have wanted to relocate since 1990 but previous attempts were blocked by planners.

Then in January this year Oldham Council planning chiefs smashed through their policy on normally protected 'green belt' land, and said the site could be developed. The planning committee gave permission for a hotel/pub/restaurant, four homes, a canal boat chandler's shop, and parking spaces. It was ruled that allowing development could help a number of schemes aimed at breathing new life into the canal route.

Mr. Bradford has said he understood the case for preserving green belt land, but his site had 'outgrown its usefulness' for industry.

Canal Project's Future Rests On Successful Bid

The future of a £30 million project to restore the historic Ashton to Huddersfield Canal could be decided within weeks.

Regeneration Minister Richard Caborn is due to announce whether a bid for £12 million from English Partnerships has been successful.

The money is vital to the hopes of opening up the canal to boats, including the Stanedge Tunnel beneath the Pennines from Diggle to Marsden.

The Huddersfield Canal Co - formed by Oldham, Kirklees and Tameside councils - has already won £14 million from the Millennium Commission.

That has allowed the company to start small-scale restoration projects, including work at Uppermill.

But hopes of opening up and beautifying the entire length of the canal - and possibly re-introducing freight shipping - rest on Mr. Caborn's decision.

Oldham East and Saddleworth MP Phil Woolas said it was vital to keep the pressure on the Government to make a decision quickly.

The Labour MP said: "*The Huddersfield Canal restoration project is of great importance to my constituency and also to the region as a whole.*"

"English Heritage has already approved much of the finance, but it never hurts to put some pressure on the Minister for a quick decision."

"The longer we wait the more likely the scheme is to all through, particularly if private-sector finance pulls out."

The canal company hopes to run trips for school children through a reopened Stanedge Tunnel to a heritage centre in Marsden.

It had hoped to win slice-by-slice funding for individual projects, but now Mr. Caborn will rule on whether funding will be made available in one lump-sum.

The Government this week told Mr. Woolas: "*The project is a large and very complex scheme requiring a significant level of investment from public funds.*"

"English Partnerships is currently carrying out a full economic appraisal to ensure the project's aims and costs are reasonable and represent good value for money."

1998 Photographic Competition

**THE DEADLINE IS NIGH.
BEATING ASIDE ALL IMITATIONS
OUR PHOTO COMPETITION
IS HOTTING UP TO A GREAT CLIMAX.
LET'S HAVE DOZENS OF ENTRIES!**

The judge, Mr. Geoffrey Hope, is providing a special prize for the overall winner in the form of a CHALLENGE SHIELD, to be held for one year, the winner also to receive a small replica to keep.

There are some minor changes to the previously printed rules, relating to the number of prints to be submitted.

RULES

Here are the rules for the PHOTO COMPETITION for photographs taken between 1st January and 30th September - THIS YEAR!

- * Prints only - black & white or colour - but winning entries will be reproduced in black and white.
Max. 5 per category.
- * Minimum size 6" x 4", maximum 8" x 6".
- * Any canal-related subject is acceptable in the following categories:-
 - a. Huddersfield Narrow Canal - Senior
 - b. Huddersfield Narrow Canal - Junior (16 or under)
 - c. Other British Waterways - Senior
 - d. Other British Waterways - Junior (16 or under)
- * Open only to bona fide members of HCS and their immediate families.
- * Entry fee of 50p per print (Cheques payable to "HCS")
- * Postage required for return of prints.

HOW TO ENTER

1. Send your photographs (maximum 5 per **category**), suitably reinforced with thin card, to:-

PHOTO COMPETITION,
HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY,
239 MOSSLEY ROAD,
ASHTON-U-LYNE,
OL6 6LN

2. Include details of the photographs (where and when), captions if you so wish and age of photographer, if 16 or under.
3. Include your name and address and the name of the HCS member you are related to.
4. Include return postage if you want your prints back.
5. CLOSING DATE: MONDAY 9TH NOVEMBER 1998.

PRIZES

There will be a winner and runner-up in each of the four categories (senior and junior) and each will receive a signed certificate and a voucher for photographic materials.

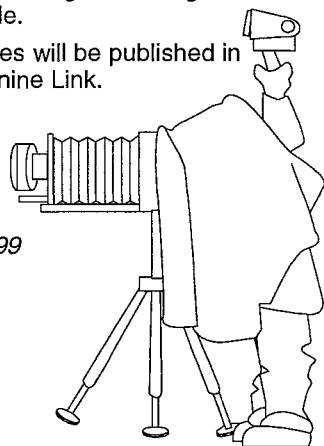
The overall winner will also receive the JUDGE'S PRIZE.

The value of the prizes will depend on the number of entries so - get shooting - and make it worthwhile.

All winning pictures will be published in December's Pennine Link.

Any queries to:

*The Editor,
Ken Wright,
Tel: 01457 873599*



New Members & Back Issues

THE SOCIETY WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

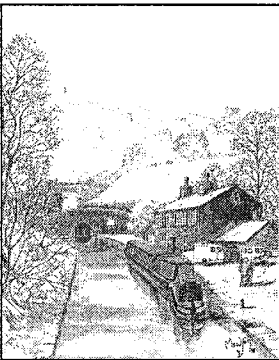
- 2490 Mr Fenton, [REDACTED]
2491 Mr Johnson, [REDACTED]
2492 Mr Dutton, [REDACTED]
2493 Mr Field, [REDACTED]
2494 Reverends Tomlin, [REDACTED]
2495 Mr Egan, [REDACTED]
2496 Ms Carter, [REDACTED]
2497 Mr Amos & Anne Nulty, [REDACTED]
2498 Mr & Miss Crookes & Harrison, [REDACTED]
2499 Mr Brown, [REDACTED]
2500 Mr Lucas, [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)
or A4 sized stamped (64p) for issues marked with an asterisk.*

- 24, 25, 38, 47, 48, 54, 56, 58, 59, 64, 65, 66, 68,
74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81/82*, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89,
90, 91*, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 99, 101, 102,
103, 104, 105, 106, 108, 111, 112, 117, 118,
119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125

*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.*



1998 SOCIETY CHRISTMAS CARDS

Following the success of our 1997 Christmas cards featuring a seasonal water-colour of Tunnel End by Society member Jack Mawson, we are pleased to be able to repeat the sale for 1998.

The cards are 8" x 6" in size, in packs of five, come complete with envelopes and are available blank or with the wording:

'With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year'.

Please use the Order Form enclosed and make sure your order reaches the Society office by Friday November 20th at the latest to give sufficient time for mailing.

Available at the 1997 price!

Solution to Crossword No. 22

- ACROSS: 6. Maintenance Boat 7. Birchills 9. Radcot 10. Spouse 11. Wag 13. Slipway 14. Entries
15. Eel 17. Pyemia 19. Crouch 20. Shortboat 21. Calder And Hebble
- DOWN: 1. Tame Valley Canal 2. Ferret 3. Daphnia 4. Eccles 5. Lancaster Castle
7. Back Pumps 8. Stourport 11. Wye 12. Gel 16. Edstone 18. Aboard 19. Cloths

Coming Soon

WEST SIDE MEETINGS

Wednesday 14th October	General Meeting at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley, 8.00pm.
Wednesday 11th November	General Meeting at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley, 8.00pm.
Wednesday 9th December	General Meeting at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley, 8.00pm.

In the next Issue of Pennine Link ...

Profile - Ken Wright, Editor

Open day at the Transhipment Warehouse, 11th October

Results of the Photographic Competition

English Partnerships - The Final Word

.... plus all the regular features

ADVERTISING

	Per Issue	Per Year
Quarter Page	£9.38	£37.50
Half Page	£18.75	£75.00
Full Page	£37.50	£150.00

COPY DATE

**Articles, letters, etc., for
Issue 127 of Pennine Link
should reach the Editor
by 2nd November 1998**

MEMBERSHIP

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Family	£11.00
Life	£90.00
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Corporate	£150.00

Huddersfield Canal Society is a member of:



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