

Pennine Link

Members Quarterly Journal - Issue 128 - Spring 1999

7 ASHTON-U-LYNE

HUDDERSFIELD 13



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CANAL
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Contents & Editorial

Pennine Link

Spring 1999 Issue 128



I don't know what to say! When I amended the editorial for the last issue to compensate for not publishing it before Christmas I cheerfully assumed it would go out mid-January. Not so. The news about

the EP money was placed on hold until all the big-wigs could get together to make a Press announcement - which turned out to be 27th JANUARY - over two months since the EP Board decision. And Millennium timing is supposed to be an issue. Consequently we didn't go to the printers until after the 27th and further technical delays meant that publication was delayed until 20th February. Just count yourselves lucky you didn't get issue 127 and this one in the same envelope! In future its "wait until next issue" for big news - I can't afford to "publish and be damned"!

Anyway, was the wait worth it? Our new, modern, glitzy, format caused some software problems but I think the effort was well worthwhile and hopefully the "technicals" will be overcome with experience. And, quite coincidentally, Bob managed to emulate the exact colours of our national waterway magazines on the cover. Certainly eye-catching and that is part of the trick.

Talking of the waterways press - there is a lot of national debate about where the "young ones" have gone. Apart from all the student types who bolster up the Waterways Recovery Group activities (see Canal Camps 99 later) there is a grave shortage of volunteers of all ages, but especially among the 18-35 range. And they aren't enjoying the leisure benefits either. And it isn't to do with the cost of hiring boats, either. Apparently the cost has reduced in real terms over the last 20 years (you could have fooled me!). And today's young'uns are better off than we ever were. If my family is anything to go by it's to do with available time. They work so hard to earn their crusts that holidays means

- 2 HCS Council Members
- 3 Editorial & Contents
- 5 Chairman's Report
- 7 Restoration Report
- 11 Restoration Volunteers
- 12 HCC Report
- 13 IWA News
- 15 HCS Council News
- 16 Not the Wife's Tale
- 19 Canal Camps 1999
- 20 Letters to the Editor
- 22 The Waterways Code
- 23 Boaters frozen out for Fisherfolk Plan
- 24 Huddersfield Canals on Postcards
- 32 Harwood's Answers
- 36 The Distaff Side
- 39 Canal Crossword - 24
- 40 Canal Walk No. 8
- 44 A Closely Guarded Secret
- 46 End of the Line for Slaithwaite Cherries
- 47 Everybody Quackers over EP go-ahead
- 49 Profile - Alwyn Ogborn
- 51 What the Papers Say
- 55 The Back Page

Cover: You could be forgiven for a sense of *déjà vu* in what seems like another 'yes' announcement with the Chair of the Canal Company, Councillor Jim Greenwood (left) being congratulated by English Partnership's Regional Director, Jim Gill. But with a project of over £30m, there is more to 'yes' than meets the eye! *Photo: Oldham Evening Chronicle*

getting off for a soak in the sun or some physical activity far removed from lock wheeling. In the case of Pennine Link I can count on one hand, in fact I don't need any fingers, the number of letters, articles, photo competition entries, etc. that I have had from the younger end recently. I lie, one exception - Julie Wilson's article on skipping - some time ago now. Can anyone throw any light on this? Come to think of it, from Trevor Ellis's wishes for more helpers on the cut and my wishes for more letter writers and photo comp. entries, the OLD 'UNS aren't doing much either!

Fresh news at the time of writing is that our Deputy Prime Minister and supremo for DETR (Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions) has announced a £24M package for saving the canal system, possibly using it for carrying potable water about the country and encouraging help from the public and private sectors. Is this the same John Prescott whose department took over a month to endorse a decision made by its own experts? And how far is £24M expected to go when our own modest restoration is costing over £30M?

I can't go without telling you of the latest unusual boat journey by the Wife and me. We've recently returned from Thailand where we visited the River Kwai, of note. An excellent

and thought-provoking tour around the wartime sights in what is now a major international tourist area. But all very tastefully done. Anyway, one day we had lunch on a sort of floating dock, a huge raft with a thatched roof, firmly attached to the banks of the river. WE THOUGHT! No sooner was lunch served than we realised we were moving. A typical Thai "long-tail" boat was heading off for mid-river with this "building" on tow! We did about 3 miles round trip and, on the way, saw several small villages floating past, also under tow, with full-scale disco parties going on. Now there's an entrepreneurial idea for the Diggie flight!

Glad to see the Society's activities have been recorded on the telly recently. The festivities of January 27th were reported on BBC's "North West Tonight" several times and, on February 22nd our Secretary, Frank Smith, was interviewed in connection with Millennium canal fun and games. Let's hope they found it a worthwhile subject!

As I write there is some sad news coming in about the Rochdale Canal missing out on funding from English Partnerships which could jeopardise the whole scheme. More later, but it appears that "fingers crossed" time isn't over after all.

Ken Wright

On the canal without a direction

Huddersfield Canal Society, having won the funding war for complete restoration, now has a new problem: what to do next.

Debate within the group now concentrates on the

HCS role after 2001, when the canal is up and running and British Waterways has taken over the main attraction, the Standedge Tunnel Experience.

It's an interesting problem, since senior members of the society mostly joined because of their love of canal restoration rather than of canal boating. A role as a canal watchdog, making sure liberties aren't

taken and maintenance skipped, might not be what many of them want.

The group is currently debating the possibilities, from running a canal-side pub or boat club to organising canal cruises. What is fairly certain is that it won't have a major role in operating the tunnel attraction, which seems to me and many others a bit of a kick in the teeth. If it had been left to authorities, after all, the Huddersfield Narrow would now be a mouldering ruin.

Perhaps expert restorers should turn their attention to the Rochdale Canal instead. Since it looks like it won't be getting any more serious money for restoration, it will need all the help it can get ...

Scrapbook, Oldham Evening Chronicle - 25/2/99

Chairman's Remarks

Sitting in a brown café 'T Smalle on the junction of the Eglantiersgracht and Prinsengracht (two canals) in Amsterdam on February 19th, I turned to the back page of the Guardian Europe to see a photograph of John Prescott, Bernard Henderson, David Fletcher and Alan Meale accompanying an article on the revitalisation of our inland waterways. How appropriate! The Deputy Primer Minister John Prescott announced an 18% rise in grant to British Waterways and other significant measures, which amount to an affirmation of British Waterways' recent handling of the waterways.

After a coffee, followed by a beer, I mused about the treatment of canals by the Amsterdam Authorities and looking out of the window noticed one big difference to the canals in the UK. The canals in Amsterdam are fully accessible. They are not hidden away behind bridge parapets or high boundary walls as in Manchester and in many urban environments. The friendly Dutch people to whom I spoke in the Cafes have a high regard for their waterways. I would imagine, but could not confirm, that public debate takes place concerning the management of their canals and waterside environment. British Waterways are now seeking consultations with the UK public leading to active participation in the future management of our waterways.

Upon my return from my short break the following letter was on my doormat and I reproduce it in full as follows.



Dear David

The Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, today announced the government's policy to unlock the potential of Britain's inland waterways and for the future of British Waterways.

The inland waterways already benefit the lives and work of many millions of people. We are delighted the government has recognised the potential to achieve more.

The main elements of the package are:

- * increased grant of up to £8 million each year to allow us to tackle £90 million of urgent safety related repairs;*
- * public/private partnerships in property, water transfer and for maintenance;*
- * long term partnerships with the public sector such as local authorities and the new Regional Development Agencies;*
- * phasing out British Waterways' outstanding debt to the National Loans Fund;*
- * consultation about partnership with the public through a membership scheme and a parallel charitable trust.*

We would like you to take an active part in this consultation so we can make sure that we engender the widest possible support for and involvement in our inland waterways. This letter is the start of a programme of dialogue to seek the views, needs and ideas of all those interested in, caring for or associated with the inland waterways.

The programme includes:

- ✱ a national forum in London on 5th May 1999;
- ✱ regional forums in May and June;
- ✱ round up forums in the late Autumn.

A document setting out our thoughts about the membership scheme and the parallel charitable trust will be available from 5th May 1999. You will automatically receive a copy but if you know anyone else that you think would like a copy please tell us.

We have created a number of channels for you to use to keep in touch with us and so you can keep up to date with news. These are:

- ✱ a web site
www.waterwaypartners.co.uk;
- ✱ a dedicated phone line for requests and questions, 01923 201115; and
- ✱ of course, all your usual British Waterways' contacts.

Your involvement and contributions to the consultation will be essential to finally securing the future of the waterways we all love. We must seize this opportunity.

I hope you share our optimism for the future. In the meantime, if there is anything I can do to help you get involved, please get in touch.

Yours sincerely

DEREK COCHRANE

The Society has almost achieved its long term aim and we are now considering our future role. I now feel that we should be part of the wider waterways movement

and our vast experience in lobbying, marketing, restoration, publicity, boat operations, local authority liaison etc., etc., should be put to good use of improve and maintain our canal system for the benefit of all the community. We shall therefore be supporting British Waterways' new initiatives. There is no reason why England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland cannot have urban waterside environments as Amsterdam so obviously enjoys. The restored Huddersfield Narrow Canal will transform Stalybridge and Huddersfield. With vision and participation from all the communities in British, our waterways will have a secure future. We wish British Waterways every success.

I was going to quote from 'Scrapbook' reproduced at the end of Ken's editorial, especially the final paragraph referring to the Rochdale Canal ... but that's definitely another story!

David Sumner

FREE CRUISE ON THE ASHTON CANAL

The Huddersfield Canal Society has pleasure in offering a FREE Social Cruise to Society members on board their Trip Boats.

Departing from Portland Basin at 7pm on Wednesday 16 June 1999, we will cruise the Ashton Canal to Fairfield Top Lock, stopping at the Causeway P&T, returning to the Basin by about 10pm.

Remember, the trip is free to members and one companion, and seats will be allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis.

Bookings - 0161 366 9554

Restoration Report

Huddersfield Canal Society is unusual amongst waterway restoration societies in employing staff. It is also unique in having as a subsidiary a canal restoration contracting business - HCS Restoration Ltd



Apart from the obvious benefit of a small workforce readily available to carry out work on the canal, this gives the society two major benefits - a staffed office base, and the day to day technical and administrative contact needed to remain a player in the restoration programme. The scale of the operation has, however, been much reduced in the last couple of years as the pace of restoration has slowed whilst preparing for the major schemes needed to make the big push for completion of restoration. I have referred several times to my concern over future work prospects for the company, and it now seems an appropriate time to review the current position.

But first, a brief reminder of the history of the company. Back in 1983 I produced two glossy reports recommending that at a time of high unemployment advantage should be taken of the job training schemes then available to move restoration of the canal on from the small scale of volunteer work. Proposals to restore the canal between Marsden and Slaithwaite led to the Kirklees Council scheme which subsequently restored most of the "easy bits" of the canal east of the Pennines. Although equally successful, the report proposing restoration between Ashton and Stalybridge was implemented differently. Tameside Council was providing a management service to training schemes run

by voluntary bodies. The Council also wanted to see work on the Peak Forest Canal included in any canal scheme. The Tameside Canals Development Association was therefore formed, with representatives of the Council and HCS on the management committee, to oversee a scheme that eventually saw over 100 participants working on the

Peak Forest Canal towpath between Hyde and Ashton. Steve Whitby, the scheme manager, was the first full time employee, and is still the Managing Director of HCS Restoration. By 1986 when arrangements had been made for future maintenance, work began on restoring the Huddersfield Narrow between Ashton and Stalybridge.

The scale of this work, and the risks involved, required something more formal than an association, and Tameside Canals Ltd was born, as a subsidiary of the Society. Three years later the company was renamed HCS Restoration Ltd when work first extended out of the Tameside district - to expand eventually over the entire length of the canal. In the thirteen years since 1986 the company has restored 25 locks, dredged about 6 miles of canal, rebuilt washwalls, re-laid towpaths, carried out environmental and landscaping works alongside or associated with the canal, carried out the award winning restoration of the Transshipment Warehouse, and completed work for British Waterways, including repairs to English Heritage standards at the Redbrook Engine House. Quite an achievement for a small canal society owned company, and its workforce! The Society owes its staff a great deal for their loyalty and hard work over many years.

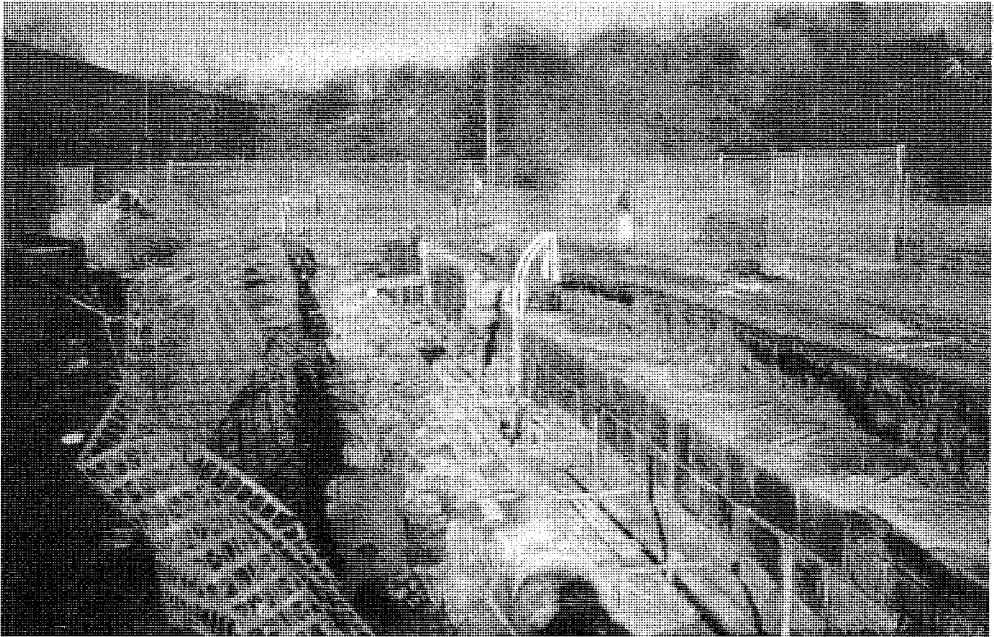
In addition to having a permanent full time work force, we have provided work and training for around 1800 participants in various government funded schemes, many of whom went on to full time employment. Current staff are: Steve Whitby [Managing Director], John McLoughlin [General Manager], Bob Gough [O.M. Technical Section], Paula McLoughlin [Admin Officer], Andy Sharp [General Foreman], Chris Sharp, Ken Williams, Roy Williams [Craftspersons], Trevor Wilkinson and James Wood [Labourers]. Society notables Ken Wright, Keith Noble, Eric Crosland and John Wilson are also employed on a part time occasional basis as needed.

The office-based staff has been crucial in developing the restoration programme. Steve has been intimately involved in bidding for funds and, together with Bob and Paula, put together the original

programme of work for the Millennium Commission and English Partnerships grant applications. They provide the essential day to day contact between the Society and professional staff in the local authorities and British Waterways. The office is now also the base for Alan Stopher, the Project Director of the Huddersfield Canal Company, the joint local authority/British Waterways/Society company charged with delivering the restoration programme. Administrative and technical support is provided to Alan.

Although both the Millennium Commission and English Partnerships have now confirmed the grant offers for the big push to completion of restoration of the canal in

OUT ON SITE: *Below - Chamber wall rebuilding at Lock 22W, Uppermill. Note the concrete backfill which will ensure these walls will remain true for several generations to come!
Right - Taking delivery of one of the pair of Ekki taigates with the ground paddle mechanism clearly visible.*



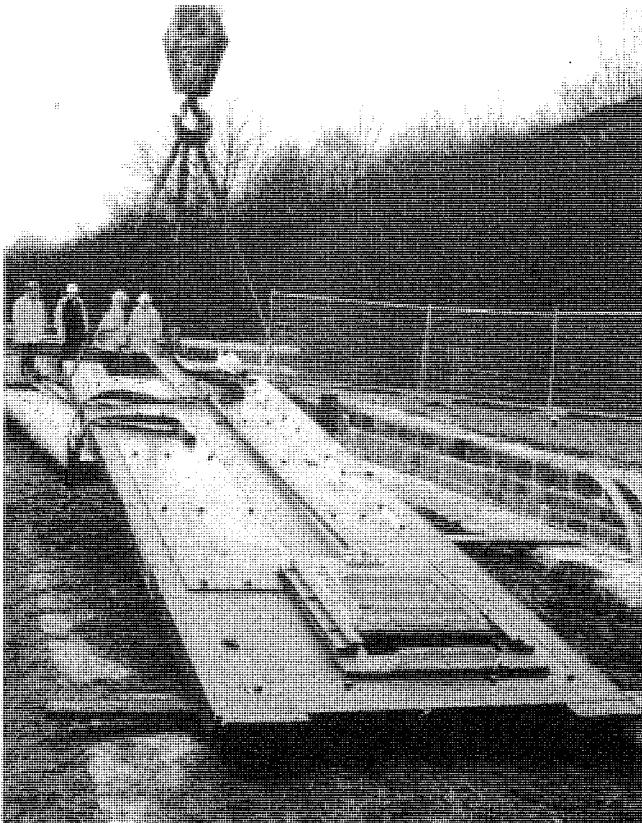
2001, grants cannot be paid until all of the legal small print is in place. To start the ball rolling, and keep continuity of work for HCS Restoration, the Society is making payments on account from our half million pound commitment to the Standedge Experience project. With the agreement of the Huddersfield Canal Company, this is being used by British Waterways to fund the first scheme of the Millennium project. That is lock repair and dredging between the museum in Uppermill and the visitor centre at Brownhill. Symbolically the two locks (Nos. 22W and 23W, Dungebooth and Limekiln) are those brought back into use when volunteer working parties started on the canal in 1981. HCS Restora-

tion gained the contract for this work which has started, and, at the time of writing, is on programme.

After the Uppermill contract we hope to win at least two other dredging contracts for the company as part of the Millennium project. Steve Whitby has also succeeded in finding additional work, under contract to Tameside Council, restoring the long since infilled Alma Street Arm, off the Peak Forest canal in Ashton, in connection with development proposals in that area.

Beyond that, work is proving difficult to come by. There may be a slim hope of some work on the Rochdale in addition to Huddersfield work – if the Rochdale Canal

Trust are able to eventually secure their grant-aid. We still hope for the possibilities of sub-contracting to parts of the larger schemes, or of maintenance work from British Waterways. But, despite not having shareholders expecting significant returns, HCS Restoration is no longer the “cheap” option it was when we were working on two or three large contracts at once. With a reduced scale of operation the overheads of the office and office-based staff become significantly more than a typical small builder would carry. Yet the Society needs the office and the staff, at least until restoration is almost complete, and Alan Stopher needs the office and technical and admin



support he receives. It is agreed that the Canal Company will eventually pay the Society for at least a part of these services when grant money comes on stream, but for the time being HCS Restoration (and, ultimately, the Society) is covering the cost.

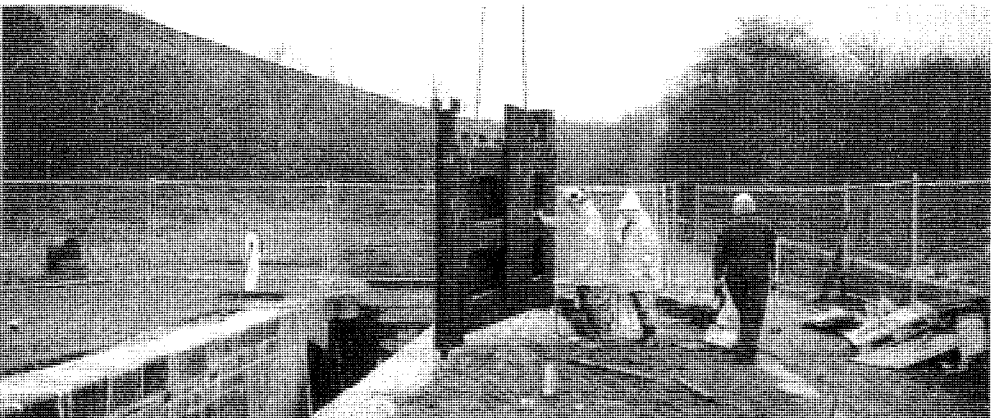
With this background the Board of HCS Restoration and the Society's Council of Management have been considering the future of the company. As has happened at times of significant change and major progress in the past, the Society may have to find significant sums to retain the service that the company provides. The current wage bill of over £3,000 per week is unlikely to be fully met by HCS Restoration income. John Sully, Steve Whitby and Frank Smith have looked at various scenarios for the Society's cashflow between now and the proposed completion date of April 2001 to ensure that any decisions made are financially responsible.

The single headgate being manoeuvred into position at Lock 22W, Uppermill. The view clearly shows the pivot point at the base of the gate's heel post which locates in a metal 'pot' set in the bottom of the headchamber. Together with retaining metal 'U-shaped' straps which encircle the top of the heel post, these fixings form the hinging mechanism for the gate.

It has been decided that the Society will continue to operate, and, if necessary, fund HCS Restoration in the short to medium term. But the benefits of having a small canal contract business and the associated office staff are unlikely to be relevant to the Society when the canal is completely restored, particularly as British Waterways have increased the number of their own maintenance staff. It is therefore agreed that the Society will consider whether it is possible to transfer ownership of the company and its assets to Steve Whitby (or a combination of Steve and other staff and/or Directors) on or around the completion of the restoration programme.

Over the next few months the management and Directors of HCS Restoration will investigate whether a potentially viable business and sufficient assets can be bought out from the Society without an unsupportable burden of debt, and without the Society transgressing any Charity Commission or other rules on the transfer of assets. Recommendations will then be made to the Society's Council of Management.

Keith Gibson



Photos: J. McLoughlin

Restoration Volunteers

I am going to try to keep people up to date with the activities of our volunteer workforce, because volunteer time is a key part of our contribution to our Millennium application and it is important that we should continue to contribute to the works.



We are involved, in agreement with British Waterways, in work to the Marsden - Slaithwaite section. BW have a programme for bringing the locks and channel up to standard and we are assisting alongside this.

Over a period, we gradually worked our way down the flight, removing rubbish ranging from road signs to bikes, tyres and rubble. We resealed the gates and through regular use these improved considerably. Now BW are working down the same stretch, servicing paddle gear and generally improving the whole canal. They have recently "refurbished" the tailgates at Lock 42E, a major job which has produced some nearly-new gates. New paint is appearing on gates to replace the cheap stuff which has been doing more harm than good to the wood beneath. Recently, the bowed retaining wall below the "narrows" by Lock 42E has

been receiving attention.

Faced with this kind of effort, we have discontinued our work on the locks for the present at least and turned to the towpath wall to try and stem the efforts of the local kids, who have been trying to throw sections of it into the canal.

At the time of writing, we are working between Lock 34E and Lock 33E, the latter being the one with the stone bridge at Sparth Reservoir. We are securing some of the copings and filling up holes in the wall where loose stones have been pulled out. The wall is not built to a great standard, having been repaired previously by the Community Programme team with whatever was to hand, and plumb lines and spirit levels are not a lot of use. However, it doesn't look bad from the front, and completely rebuilding most of the walling on the canal is too much of a distraction.

What we need are a few more willing hands, every other week, once a month or whenever, to make it possible to organise a regular programme, rather than the present random situation which depends on whether enough of us are available. If you are interested, please telephone me on 01484-534666, or maybe come along one Sunday for a look.

Trevor Ellis

Huddersfield Canal Company Report

As one member said to me recently, we've turned the corner, but there's still a traffic jam ahead. This refers to the legal agreements and financial arrangements which have to be in place before construction contracts can be let and work can start in earnest.

Two particular issues have concentrated minds in recent months. English Partnerships (EP) were insistent that the project would have to be underwritten by the partners involved in its delivery (British Waterways and the three local authorities). There was also a distinct possibility that the Company would have become liable for £5m of tax which it could not fund if it received and disbursed the funds.

I am pleased to say that British Waterways announced that they were able to resolve the first of these issues by stepping into the breach to underwrite the project subject to back-to-back arrangements with the local authorities for the highway bridges.

Since then all the local authority partners have indicated their willingness to provide the necessary undertakings. Regarding value-added tax, it was established that British Waterways already had an agreed precedent with Customs & Excise on the Kennet and Avon Canal which was tax-efficient and enabled funds to be disbursed to third parties, monitored by the Kennet and Avon Trust. It was therefore agreed by the partnership that British Waterways should become the direct recipient of EP and Millennium Commission (MC) funds with the Company acting in an approval and monitoring role.

A tight timetable has been set for the conclusion of the funding agreements and the internal agreements between the



partners so as to ensure that the construction programme stays on schedule. By the time you read this, I hope that all these will have been signed.

Turning to what is happening outside the confines of the Canal Company office, I am pleased to say that work on the Lock 22 to Wool Road contract is continuing to programme courtesy of the advanced funding by the Canal Society. New lock gates for Dungebooth lock are due within days, all the way from Holland.

Tenders returned for the combined Standedge and Scout Tunnel contract are being carefully appraised by British Waterways with a view to awarding a contract in March. Oldham Council has put the Wool Road Bridge contract out to tender. Tenders will also be sought for the Kirklees bridge schemes and Golcar Aqueduct around Easter, and for Stalybridge in May. Minor revisions in the construction schedule have been incorporated into the centre spread of this issue.

We're entering a busy period of public consultation. With feasibility work completed on High Street Bridge, Uppermill proposals are being put to the community in March. In the same month, plans are being exhibited in Stalybridge showing the detailed restoration proposals and how they fit in with other aspects of town centre regeneration. Local residents of Diggle and Marsden will shortly be briefed on activities at the Tunnel.

We also hope to explain to Marsden residents the progress we have made with regard to Standedge Experience. As I write Sykes Leisure are continuing to prepare a business plan based upon the favoured option described in the last issue.

Inland Waterways Association News

IWA A new menu-led telephone system has been installed at IWA. "It has already proven useful in minimising time spent redirecting calls and taking messages by hand". It also, no doubt, is improving callers' knowledge of light classical music!

IWA Interesting statistic. English Heritage had 5.9 million visits to paid sites and 5.4 million to free sites. Each visit cost the taxpayer £3.46.

IWA British Waterways had 159 million visits, working out at 31.4p each for the taxpayer. Something cock-eyed, somewhere!

IWA The 3rd National Conference of Waterway Societies, in November, was a sell-out. Good job we decided (again) not to go!

IWA Various bits of the canal system are being offered up as World Heritage Sites – from the whole lot to specific bits like the Bridgewater Canal. One favourite

is a group of narrow canals forming, and sprouting from, the "Grand Cross" (Thames to Mersey, Severn to Trent) including the Huddersfield Narrow. If the outcome is anything like owning a listed house we should keep well out of it. (The editor speaks from experience!)

IWA BW have announced glass-top boats for Standedge Tunnel. Hang on, that's old news!

IWA Richard Drake is the new Chairman of IWA (we thought it was Neil Kinnock from the official photo!) and made his telly debut on February 18th, responding to the Government news about the £24m for the canal system.

IWA Alan Jervis, well known IWA worker and WRG stalwart, has been made a life member of IWA. And so has Audrey Smith, until recently the very successful National Chairman.

continued over

On the marketing front, the third newsletter has been issued and a fourth is in the pipeline. It is anticipated that a video contract will be let shortly. Work continues on the primary schools pack with the assistance of the Compacts (Education Business Partnerships) in Kirklees and Oldham. With the increased interest in the Internet I hope that we can get a basic web page up and running soon using the Canal Society's site.

I am enjoying working closely with the HCS paid staff at Mossley Road because we all have the same end result in our sights. I also really appreciate the volunteers out in the field who turn up to public meetings and give encouragement when it is needed. The project has wide public support mainly

because of your 25 years of commitment and it pays to be reminded of this whenever concern is expressed about the inevitable changes that will be required to bring the project to a satisfactory conclusion. Best wishes to all of you at the Society on your 25th anniversary. May you continue to enjoy success for many years to come.

Alan Stopher

Stop Press: *Good News! The funding agreement between British Waterways and English Partnerships was signed, sealed and exchanged at 5.30pm on 31st March 1999, just in time as EP's successors, the Regional Development Agencies took over the following day. The back to back agreements with the local authorities were also secured on the same day. The traffic jam is clearing!*

IWA official new address
3 Norfolk Court, Norfolk Road,
Rickmansworth WD3 1LT or
PO Box 114, Rickmansworth WD3 1ZY.

IWA Web address
<http://waterways.org.uk/index.htm>

IWA is concerned about the use of the Rochdale Canal for floodwater in the Todmorden/Walsden areas. As Keith Noble points out in the Calder Navigation Society magazine "Moving Road" it's not the flood water so much as what comes with it – a permanent decoration of trees with rubber goods and plastic bags and other, more earthy, material – OK in a river, perhaps, but not in a virtually static water canal. Their problem!

IWA Our friend Sonia Rolt has been made President of the Commercial Narrowboat Operators Association, following the death of Sir John Knill. Well deserved – congrats., Sonia.

IWA Two new appointees to the Environment Agency board have no waterway experience between them.

IWA report that Tunnel End Cottages at Marsden have been closed since December 31st. 1998 to allow work on Standedge Tunnel and Standedge Experience.

IWA is calling for changes in Wildlife laws to allow more consultation and comment. This is to try to release the stranglehold that environmentalists are inclined to put on all SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) regardless of the needs of other users. We like to remind people that the long wildlife reserves called canals were built primarily for boats and we enjoy sharing them with Nature.

IWA has called on Government (18th January, 1999) to give a greater share of Lottery funds to community based waterway restoration and enhancement projects promising significant returns (value for money). We can't believe that the £24M, announced on 18th February, was anything to do with this. One month, dream on!

AND, FINALLY,

Chris Coburn, of n.b. 'Progress' fame, and not one for mincing his words, reminded the Government in a letter to the Minister for Roads – and in connection with the cock-up over the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals and the Birmingham North Relief Road

"future generations will either view your decision as:

- a victory of common sense, or
- an amazing act of official vandalism"

Ken Wright

PHOTO COMPETITION 1999

In view of the very disappointing response to our last photo competition, I am making a very early appeal for a bit more effort this year. I am sure lots of you will be coming to see what is happening on YOUR canal - all you have to do is to remember to take your camera with you!

This is a friendly competition between members and it is far from necessary to be a camera whiz-kid.

To open the competition up a bit I will accept any photographs, of whatever age, within the various categories, as long as they are submitted in time!

Closing date for entries will be Friday 12th November.

More details next time

HCS Council News

Since the Council meeting on 28th October reported in Pennine Link 127 there have been two further meetings, both principally concerned with the future of the Society.

7th January 1999

The Society had been invited to do most of the organising for the EP announcement on the 27th January and we decided to make it into an event, with John Lund's trip boat as a background, members dressed in traditional canal garb, musical canal items from Mikron Theatre and background music by Peter Halliwell on keyboard. Plus a cracking buffet by Shirley Rowbottom. The effort was worthwhile as Alec Ramsden's article elsewhere reveals.

The main item was to hear reports from the working groups set up to consider the Society's future. Lack of space prevents a detailed examination of the reports but the recommendations summarise the situation. THESE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE TO BE TAKEN BACK TO EACH GROUP FOR CONSIDERATION. THEY ARE NOT THE FINAL CHOICES. YOUR INPUT IS STILL IMPORTANT. NO DECISIONS ARE BEING MADE IN A HURRY.

HCS Restoration Ltd

The HCS(R) Board make the following recommendations:-

- The Society should continue to operate, and if necessary fund HCS Restoration Ltd. over the short to medium term period.
- When restoration is complete the Society should transfer the company to some or all of the staff and/or any directors who may wish to stay involved.
- Management Buy Out consultants should be appointed to prepare for this.
- Society must consider financial and legal matters including charity status matters.

The Board made no specific recommendations relating to the future of HCS volunteer (restoration) workers.

New Ventures

- Watchdog role - appoint a watchdog person/committee a.s.a.p. but before the canal is restored. Recruit volunteer "lengthsmen".
- If Mossley Road office is superfluous sell it after restoration is complete.
- Transshipment Warehouse. Whether BW or HCS run the shed it should retain its "community" use. Future requirement by BW or HCS still uncertain. HCS not really in the business of running community centres.
- Standedge Experience - maintain a presence in the area. Operate trip boats/ water taxis.
- New Ventures - examine new business venture possibilities.

Promotions

- Meeting Place - uncertain if permanent office will be required. Enhancement of social side essential in our new role. The need for a 'centre' should stem from this.
- Festivals, etc. - maintain Ashton & Saddleworth festivals and resurrect Huddersfield. Provide contingency budget.
- Towpath Guide - produce HNC guide.
- Pennine Link - maintain current standard and frequency.
- Promotions Group - to organise re-opening celebrations.
- Loxvend Ltd. - alter emphasis of sales caravan to a promotional vehicle.
- Remove Standedge Pioneer to Ashton, modify Oldham Otter, buy two small taxi/trip boats for Tunnel End.

Not the Wife's Tale

The following article gives an excellent example of the whole point of canal restoration, without further comment from me! Ed

Marsden Lock Flight **A passage to Sparth and return** *November 1998*

At 3pm on Sunday, 8 November 1998, a small flotilla of three rigid inflatables propelled by outboard motors slowly rose up Marsden's Railway lock and then sedately made their way back to Tunnel End.

Ten scouts and their instructors in those three boats had now completed 4 miles along the Huddersfield Narrow Canal with 18 lock passages in the day as the expedition section requirement of the Scout Seaman proficiency badge.

Two years ago when we carried out a similar expedition with the hopes of travelling all the way from Marsden to Slaithwaite much

continued from page 15

ALL THE NEXT MEETINGS OF THE GROUPS ARE TO BE HELD IN MARCH.

24TH February

Alan Stopher, Project Director, addressed the Council and brought them up to date on the current situation. It is still a somewhat depressing maze of completing legal and financial agreements between the funding agencies and the company and the individual members of the partnership. The fact that Millennium Commission and English Partnerships have totally different financial systems doesn't help matters one bit.

The remainder of the meeting was taken up, largely, with an investigation into the Society's cash flow position related to keeping HCS Restoration alive until the re-opening in 2001. It is looking hopeful.

Ken Wright

portage around locks had to take place whilst we took the day to journey only as far as West Slaithwaite.

This year with the recent sight of a BW workboat on the Marsden station to Warehouse Hill section and after seeking advice from British Waterways as to the condition of the length, we had hopes of an easier passage. A warm welcome and encouragement was received from the staff at their new Tunnel End offices where it was learnt that they hoped to have the whole stretch from Slaithwaite to Tunnel End fully navigable to small craft utilising the slipway above Slaithwaite's guillotine gated Shuttle Lock (E24) by 31 March 1999.

BW supplied details of the angling clubs along the length and contact with them brought news of a fishing match that was to take place between Sparth and West Slaithwaite on our day. After speaking to the secretary and members of the Slaithwaite Angling Club it was decided that we would not disturb them but take advantage of the work already done by British Waterways by having a return trip on the stretch from Tunnel End to the bottom of the Marsden flight (Lock E33).

Following a talk on the safety aspect of canal and lock workings the previous week the scouts arrived at Tunnel End at 10am where the boats were inflated and launched. By 11am we were at our first lock (E42) by Marsden station with its traditional lock gear. With no trouble at all, after further instruction, some of the scouts worked the lock whilst the others remained in the three boats as together they descended their first lock of the day.

This caused much amusement as well, with spouts of water still coming out of the lock sides as the water level fell.

All further locks down the flight had hydraulic lock gear. Whilst these were easier

for the scouts to use, with their embossed "up" and "down" arrows, much winding and not being sure if anything was happening ensued. With the exception of only one, all four paddles at each of the locks were raised to a greater or lesser extent.

The main problems came with the tightness of bottom lock gates. Those lower down the flight being worse to such an extent that at two locks water levels at the top gates never really equalised and much muscle power had to be used to get those gates open.

However this was luxury compared with the experience of two years earlier when boats had to be carried round several locks. Now the scouts were able to successfully descend nine locks whilst still in their craft.

By 12.30pm the three craft were moored in the top of Sparth lock (E33), packed lunches being eaten overlooking the Sparth reservoir with the fishing match on the stretch below.

The return journey revealed that poorly fitting top and bottom gates at White Syke lock (E36) had allowed the pound above to drain somewhat and additional water then had to be worked down through locks above.

Then at one of these higher locks whilst the hydraulic gear had enough strength to lift the paddle of one of the top sluices, it could not be lowered. This led to thoughts of emptying another pound, however with the bottom gates closed, the lock filled and the paddle was able to be lowered as the pressure on it had by now been equalised. (An example of the poor safety feature of the hydraulic

The Scouts' flotilla at Tunnel End, Marsden



systems if the flow of water needs to be stopped in an emergency).

It all added to the interest of the return trip and as no portage was required (just a few weighty heaves on the occasional reluctant top gate balance beam) by 3pm we were leaving Marsden's Railway lock (E42) on our way to Tunnel End. The day then ended with a tour of the Visitor Centre.

The following Sunday the ten scouts, from all over West Yorkshire, completed their Seaman badge at the RYA recognised Scammonden Scout Sailing Centre and through it have had the opportunity to be among the first, if not the actual first, to complete the navigation of the Marsden flight of locks since its restoration.

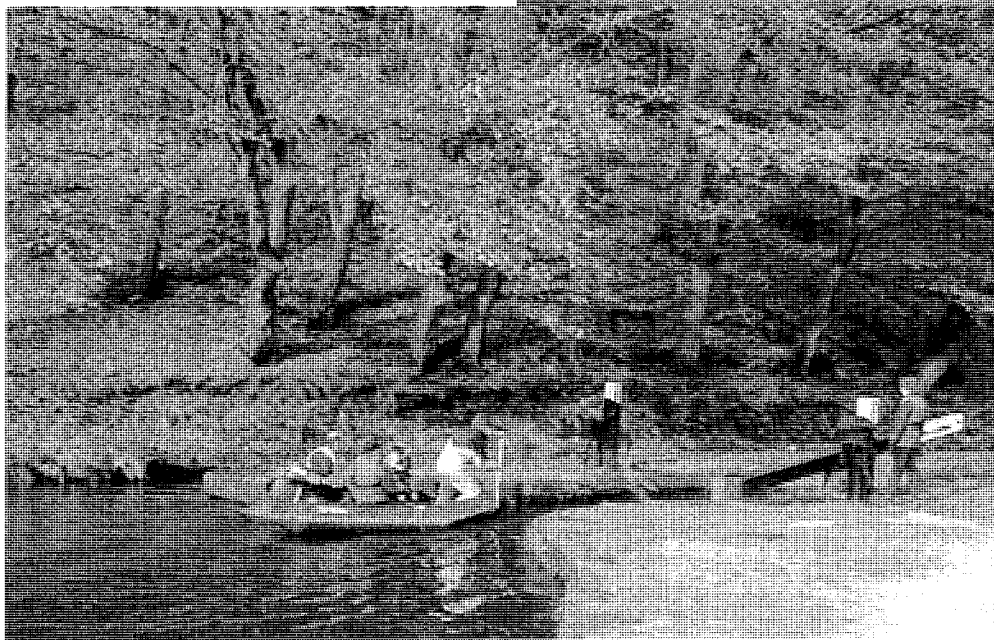
Keith W Sykes

*District Scout Leader,
Huddersfield South-West Scouts*

Next time: The Wain's Tale is back with an account of a trip on one of Britain's most beautiful (and neglected) canals, The Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal.



Right: The infants negotiating Moorvale Lock (35E) and below, entering Coilers Lock (34E). Photos: K. Sykes



Canal Camps 1999

Elsewhere we complained about the shortage of young or youngish people in the canal game. One area where there seems to be no shortage - although this article is, in fact, a plea for more help - is in canal camps, organised by the Waterway Recovery Group, part of the Inland Waterways Association.

They organise "canal camps" on various canals around the country and assist in restoration and maintenance. To answer a few questions:-

What is a Canal Camp?

A canal camp is an enjoyable week's outdoor holiday spent restoring canals.

A canal camp is an opportunity to meet all sorts of new people from all walks of life, and from all over the country - and abroad.

A canal camp is a chance to do 101 things you have never done before, such as

- Restoring a bit of industrial history
- Helping to build a brand new canal bridge
- Demolishing old brickwork and stonework structures
- Driving a digger or a dumper truck
- Clearing a canal lock of 'orrible smelly black slimy silt
- Helping to set up and run a major national waterways festival
- Felling trees, clearing vegetation and pulling up stumps
- Cooking for twenty very hungry volunteers
- Learning to lay bricks

A canal camp is a worthwhile and fun-filled week sharing a village hall with a bunch of like-minded people aged from 17 to 70, with

plenty of social activities when you're not actually working.

A canal camp is an excellent opportunity to qualify for one of the sections of a Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

This year's Canal Camps diary:

In 1999 there are 22 camps at 15 different sites from the River Severn and the Wilts and Berks Canal, through the Lichfield and the Montgomery to the Forth & Clyde Canal and the Union Canal in Scotland.

And the cost?

Volunteers usually pay £35 towards food and accommodation, i.e. £5 per night. Two camps run for nine nights and their cost is £45. Plus spends, of course, apparently "it is not difficult to spend £40 during the course of the week". And you also have to get there and back!

Equipment?

You are advised to have a tetanus jab up to date and a pair of steel-toed boots. Also a safety helmet (about £4 from any decent builders merchants or DIY store). Safety is paramount on the work sites.

Further info and application forms

WRG have issued a splendid 24 page booklet full of information and photographs and quotes from satisfied customers.

For your copy ring or fax IWA

Tel: 01923 711 114

Fax: 01923 897 000

Or write to IWA, PO Box 114,
RICKMANSWORTH, WD3 1ZY

Ken Wright



Letters to the Editor

Not a lot again but an unusual mixture - I'm sure some of you must have more to say of interest to members. The debate about the future of the Society is still very much in the forefront of the Council members' minds. It is never too late to give us your Canal Camps 1999views.

The first letter, now more than three months old, provoked a Ministerial reply which almost foretold the John Prescott statement of mid-February! I share John Harwood's concern, though, about the future of private sector involvement and the recent announcements have done nothing to diminish that concern!

Dear Ken,

Please find attached reply from DETR via my MP regarding the future of the waterways. This seems to be of some interest because:-

- 1) Para 2 seems to contain quite a strong commitment.
- 2) There is no mention here of the private sector (Other than as a source of funds) - does this mean that franchising has died or is it just not being mentioned? There is also mention of consultation, whereas some have been suggesting that franchising was going to be forced through without consultation.

Hope it's of some interest. Regards

John Harwood, Hope Valley

And the letter John received:-

From Alan Meale MP to Patrick Mcloughlin MP

Dear Patrick,

Thank you for your letter of 2 November to John Prescott enclosing this one from your constituent John Harwood of Eyam, Hope Valley, about the future status of British Waterways (BW).

The Government believes the waterways are a substantial asset and have an important role in a number of areas such as leisure and tourism,

heritage, amenity, conservation, regeneration and transport. We want to raise the profile of the waterways and increase their potential. We intend to publish in the next few months an inland waterways policy paper. (Probably on the 5th May. See Chairman's Report. Ed)

We have been considering a range of possible options for the future of BW. These include the option proposed by BW of establishing a statutory, charitable trust in the private sector. Other options include retaining BW in the public sector while developing BW's access to private sector finance and expertise. I want to ensure that the options are fully examined and the implications of each, especially in relation to accountability, are properly considered. No decisions have yet been taken. Once we have reached a view on the preferred option we will discuss it with interested parties.

Yours sincerely

ALAN MEALE

*Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Dept. of Environment, Transport and the Regions*

And a nice little one from our (very) roving correspondent, Sandra Parnell.

Dear Ken,

It is I. Sorry for not having contacted you sooner on the question of "Continental Cuts" but, since April 1st., we have been navigating them:- the central canals of France, then north up the Petite Saone, finishing up at the beginning of November with a westward trip down the Marne. The rain had been so prolific that the locks were closed and we slalomed over the barrages (who needs Disney Europe?) We didn't even have time to buy champagne!

On one particular day we managed 90 kilometres without even rushing. Safe in port again, thank goodness, but did finally manage the all-important photo. ie. The narrowboat from Staley Wharf on the Huddersfield Narrow with a



well-known monument behind - no prizes for guessing the name.

Pleased to read news of the five new employees. (*Unfortunately, BW's not ours! Ed.*) We walked a bit of **THE** canal with some Belgian visitors in October. They were very impressed.

Sincerely, **Sandra Parnell, Paris**

P.S. Word from our friends Leah and Harold on Daisy May that they travelled part of the K&A with La Maitresse - did you meet them?

Well, no, I didn't, but I had left the boat by then. No doubt Keith and Jill Noble were aboard at the time. Ed.

Well known monument in the distance!



Sandra Parnell

Continuing our series of canal vernacular, watch your Qs and Rs!

QUANT - not a fashion designer but (in Norfolk) a long pole or shaft.

QUEACHES - boggy, wet areas alongside a canal.

RAMPERS - spikes driven laterally between adjacent boat planks to hold them together.

RAMS HEAD - upper part of the wooden rudder on a narrowboat where the tiller arm fitted into its socket. Often decorated with a Turk's Head knot in ropework (pipe-clayed white) and/or by the tail of a favourite deceased horse.

RIMERS - removable sections of early "flash" locks.

RISERS - another term for staircase locks.

RONGE - rough water on the Mersey.

To be concluded in Issue 129

HUDDERSFIELD BOAT GATHERING

4-5 September 1999

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&
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01422 823562 or 01422 201880

The Waterways Code

British Waterways have issued a new June 1998 Waterways Code in "folded A5" leaflet format. In semi-gloss bright orange with black and white text and stylised graphics it is a very attractive document.

Over the next few issues we will give it to you in full, starting with general matters.

Waterways for all

British Waterways looks after 2000 miles of canals and river navigations for everyone to enjoy. The towpaths are open to all for walking, but you need a licence or special permission to use a boat, to cycle, to fish or to organise an event using any of our waterways. Please contact the local British Waterways office for further information.

We do our best with limited funds to keep the waterways in good repair. As more and more people discover the charm and tranquility of the waterways, there are increased risks of conflict and damage to the environment. So please follow the advice in this leaflet and enjoy your visit to the waterway safely.

Our obligations to you are published in 'Caring for Britain's Waterways' a 24 page booklet available from the address below.

We also publish more detailed codes for boaters, unpowered craft and organised groups. You can obtain these at any of our offices, or by post from Customer Services at Watford.

Boat licence dodgers!

We need every penny due to us to maintain the waterways. So if you see a boat not showing a current licence disc, please report it to our Licence Evasion Hotline: 01923 201122

The Code for Everyone

Look after your waterways and consider others.

Protect the waterway environment. Keep noise to a minimum and don't damage the vegetation or banks.

- Take home *everything* that you brought with you, and leave the site as you found it.
- Never dump rubbish, sewage or oily bilge water into the water or onto the bank.
- Clean up after your dog and keep it under control.
- Don't light fires.
- Things can go wrong on canals. If you see something dangerous such as serious damage to structures or water escaping, dial 100 and ask for Freephone Canals (mobile phones: call 01384 215785: normal charges apply).
- Report pollution, fly tipping or fish in distress to the Environment Agency or the Scottish Environment Protection Agency: 0800 807060 (24 hrs).
- Report birds or animals in distress to the RSPCA: 0990 555999 (24 hrs) or the Scottish SPCA: 0131 3390111.
- Make sure you have the right licence or permit to boat, fish or cycle. Cycling is only permitted on some of our towpaths. For details call 01923 201120.
- Seek permission from the local waterway office to organise a special event or educational visit.

Published by:

British Waterways Customer Services,
Willow Grange, Church Road,
Watford, WD1 3QA.

Tel: 01923 201120 Fax: 01923 201300

Email: info@canalshq.demon.co.uk

Website: www.britishwaterways.co.uk

Next time: some more for everyone - and anglers!



Boaters Frozen Out For Fisherfolk Plan

For years there has been a love-hate relationship between boaters and anglers on the country's canals - both groups love to hate the other.

But a reported move by British Waterways - if it turns out to be a serious proposal - could see boats banned from some stretches of canals which would be heavily stocked with fish and only the rod and line brigade would be allowed.

Apparently the "ban the boaters and bikers move" was suggested at a meeting between British Waterways bigwigs and the National Federation of Anglers, and is said to have been given an approving nod by the head of customer services.

Peter Wagstaffe, Customer Relations Manager at BW's headquarters in Watford, is reported as saying "We are currently looking at improving our facilities for anglers, and the concept of championship lengths of canal, which boats are asked to avoid, is a possibility.

"We have a genuine commitment to support our angling customers and this idea is one of many. I must stress, however, that this, and other ideas, have some way to progress internally before they can be implemented."

And David Kent, National Federation of Anglers senior vice-president, was hardly diplomatically friendly in his reported comments, although he did admit that there was "some way to go" before the "anglers only" imposition turns from talk into reality. "Definitely a step in the right direction.

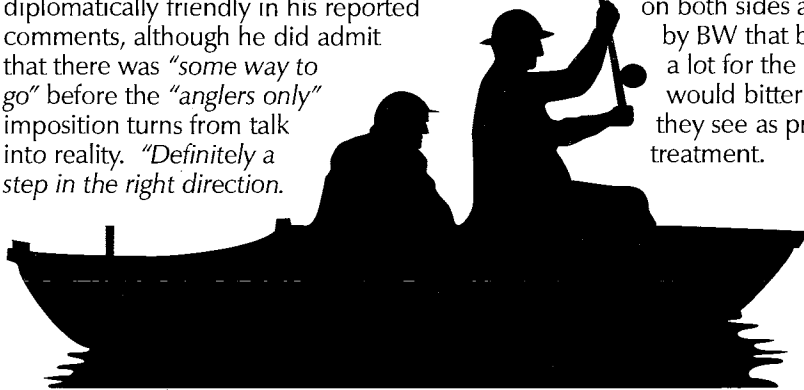
Anglers can now appreciate that they are being regarded as on an equal footing with other canal users," he is quoted as saying.

Boaters (both private and hirers) will, of course, refuse to accept such views, particularly those who have had to endure abuse and sometimes threats of physical violence from fisherfolk, who seem to have footer probably costs in the region of £1,200 a year before it has cruised an inch - and increased charges mean an upping of the expense of hiring. A decent 6-8 berth narrow boat booked in the height of the season easily tops the £1,000 a week mark. So surely boaters are entitled to freedom of the waterways without having to face a forest of "no entry" signs.

No boater, of course, would object to silted-up, derelict, dead-end nonnavigable backwaters which are not suitable projects for restoration, being stocked with fish and used more heavily by anglers. But boat bans on cruisable waterways are surely non-starters.

It's unlikely that there will ever be total tranquil peace between the angler and the boater - although the description, by one narrow boat owner, of a group of anglers as "an infestation" was, perhaps a little bit over the top. All we can hope for is more give and take on both sides and a realisation by BW that boaters, who pay a lot for the right to cruise, would bitterly resent what they see as preferential treatment.

Alec Ramsden



Huddersfield Canals on Postcards

Having looked at the "most photographed" areas of the canal, I no longer have enough cards of any remaining location to make an article worthwhile, so I am going to change to a different approach. The remaining cards can be split into the following categories:

- Bridges
- Locks
- Views of Stretches of Canal
- Other (e.g. "Disasters")

So, here we go with the first of these:-

Bridges

We have not had a card of the Broad Canal for a while, so I will start with an anonymous card of "Red Doles Lock, Fieldhouse, Huddersfield", showing the bridge at Lock 9. This card has been damaged at some time but I think it is still worth reproducing, showing a typical Broad Canal bridge and the lock cottage. This card was posted in 1905. There is a card of Fieldhouse Bridge which is a little further down the canal at Lock 7, but the one I have is rather faded and would probably not reproduce.

Most of the other bridges featured are ones that have disappeared down the years.

Slaitwhaite, seen from the tail of Lock 23E, will certainly look very different when restoration is complete. Though the buildings immediately to the right of the canal line still remain, several mills and their chimneys have disappeared. This card was produced by local stationer, E.Sykes, probably pre-WW1. There is a very similar, though probably later, card by Lilywhite, a prolific producer of cards between the Wars. *This view provides evidence that there never was much of a hump-back bridge in Slaitwhaite. Ed.*

Another much-changed area, and one little-photographed it seems, is Friezeland, where Wellihole Road Bridge was for many years on the "blockage" list. This is the only card I have of the west side between Uppermill and Scout. The view, produced by A.H. & S. (Abel Heywood & Son - I have a card with it in full of Oldham in their "Branch" Series gives a clear view of the extent of the winding hole and the tail house beyond, which presumably disappeared when the road



"Red Doles Lock, Fieldhouse, Huddersfield", anonymous card, taken from the towpath just below the lock, printed in 1905

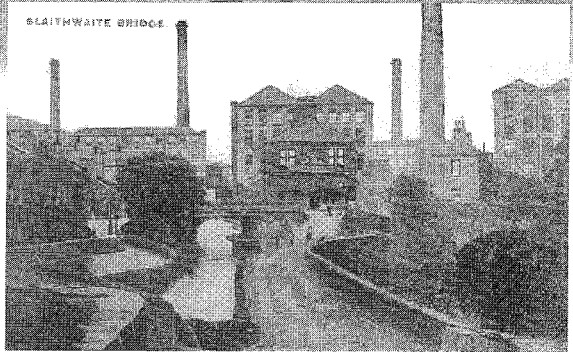
7- Bridges

was altered. The canal looks well-maintained on this view, which was posted in 1912.

The final bridge in this series is the "Turn Bridge, Millbrook, Stalybridge", produced by Valentine, one of the major national producers of postcards. It shows two cows ambling slowly across Grove Road swing-bridge. This view well illustrates the changed times for anyone familiar with the arguments about the need to keep traffic flowing which resulted in the present bridge design. In the background, the power station has been and gone in the (probably) 90 years since.

Trevor Ellis

"View on Canal, Friezeland" by A.H. & S., (Abel Heywood & Son) of Oldham in their "Branch" Series. "C.F.C." presumably is the photographer. Someone has removed the stamp from this one, and with it most of the postmark, though the date appears to be 1917.



"Slaithwaite Bridge" by local Stationer, E.Sykes, looking from the tail of Lock 23E and showing the old Britannia Road Bridge. The cobbled ramp to the right of the bridge can still be traced.

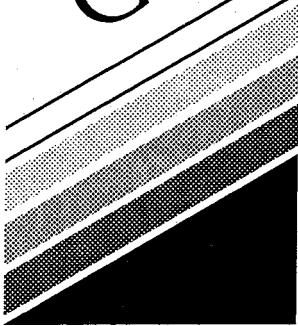


VIEW ON CANAL, FRIEZELAND.



"Turn Bridge, Millbrook, Stalybridge" by Valentine, one of the major postcard producers.

The Stamford Group



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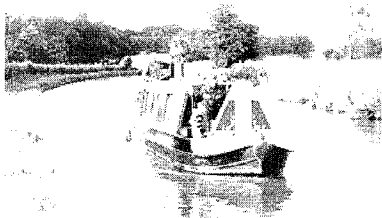
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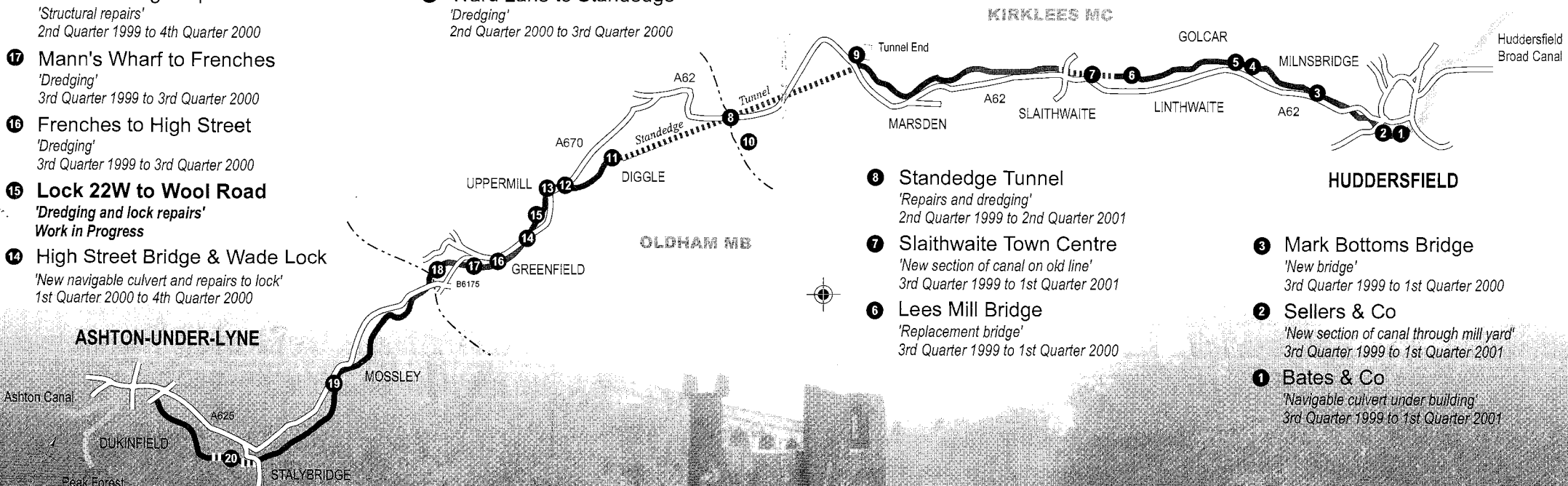
The Remaining Blockages on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal - Spring 1999

- 20** Stalybridge Town Centre
'Excavation of old canal line with new locks and bridges'
2nd Quarter 1999 to 4th Quarter 2000
- 19** Scout Tunnel
'Internal repairs'
2nd Quarter 1999 to 2nd Quarter 2001
- 18** Division Bridge Aqueduct
'Structural repairs'
2nd Quarter 1999 to 4th Quarter 2000
- 17** Mann's Wharf to Frenches
'Dredging'
3rd Quarter 1999 to 3rd Quarter 2000
- 16** Frenches to High Street
'Dredging'
3rd Quarter 1999 to 3rd Quarter 2000
- 15** Lock 22W to Wool Road
'Dredging and lock repairs'
Work in Progress
- 14** High Street Bridge & Wade Lock
'New navigable culvert and repairs to lock'
1st Quarter 2000 to 4th Quarter 2000

- 13** Old Sag Aqueduct
'Structural repairs'
3rd Quarter 1999 to 1st Quarter 2000
- 12** Wool Road Bridge & Lock 24W
'New navigable culvert and repairs to lock'
2nd Quarter 1999 to 1st Quarter 2000
- 11** Ward Lane to Standedge
'Dredging'
2nd Quarter 2000 to 3rd Quarter 2000

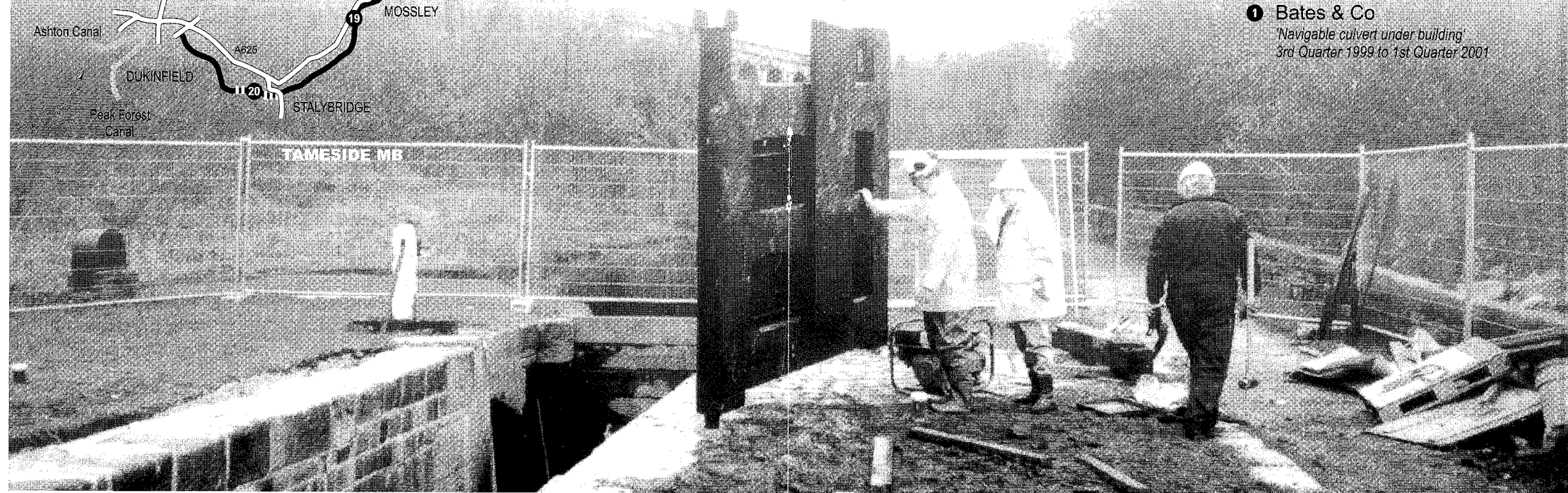
- 10** Water Supply Works
'Improvements to reservoir feeders'
2nd Quarter 1999 to 4th Quarter 2000
- 9** Standedge Experience
'Visitor/Heritage Centre'
4th Quarter 1999 to 1st Quarter 2001

- 5** Holme Mill Bridge
'Replacement bridge'
3rd Quarter 1999 to 1st Quarter 2000
- 4** Golcar Aqueduct
'Structural repairs'
3rd Quarter 1999 to 1st Quarter 2000



- 8** Standedge Tunnel
'Repairs and dredging'
2nd Quarter 1999 to 2nd Quarter 2001
- 7** Slaithwaite Town Centre
'New section of canal on old line'
3rd Quarter 1999 to 1st Quarter 2001
- 6** Lees Mill Bridge
'Replacement bridge'
3rd Quarter 1999 to 1st Quarter 2000

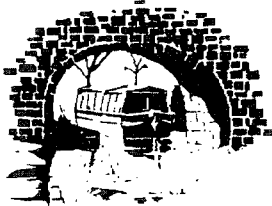
- 3** Mark Bottoms Bridge
'New bridge'
3rd Quarter 1999 to 1st Quarter 2000
- 2** Sellers & Co
'New section of canal through mill yard'
3rd Quarter 1999 to 1st Quarter 2001
- 1** Bates & Co
'Navigable culvert under building'
3rd Quarter 1999 to 1st Quarter 2001



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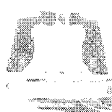
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To get a taste of how smashing the Huddersfield will be when it's open, come now and explore the other Yorkshire waterways. The Rochdale is already half complete, bowling everyone over with its scenery, and the welcome from its locals. You can also explore the third transpennine canal on one of our one-way trips. Ask for a brochure now.

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Owing to the restoration work on Standedge Tunnel and the planned works at Tunnel End, Marsden, the Tunnel End Canal and Countryside Centre, will be closing down permanently as of 31st December 1998.



Harwood's Answers

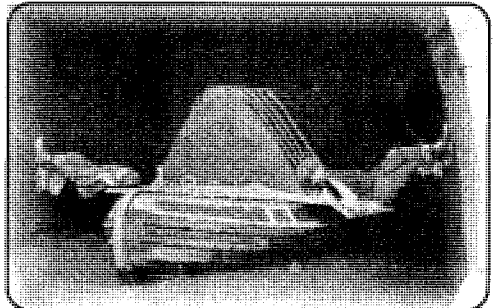
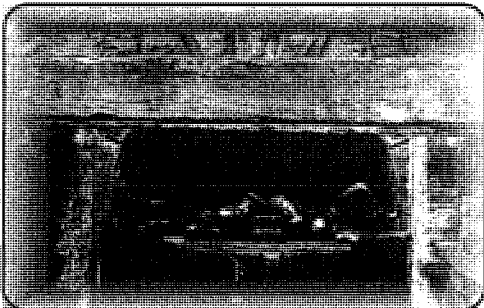
Perhaps the most important aspect of the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal will be the re-opening of the Standedge Tunnel. It is the one scheme that most excites people who have no particular interest in the canal, generally. People are so fascinated with tunnels that there have been many "unofficial" trips through the disused rail tunnels over the years. With this in mind a reader has asked about the methods used to get boats through tunnels and the answer seems to be - by any means possible!

First and foremost of course was 'Legging'. This was where the horses got a rest and human muscles took over. At the end of some tunnels (notably Blisworth on the G.U.) will be found some shelters. In here professional leggers (usually authorised by the canal company and wearing an armband to prove it) would wait for boats to arrive and, on payment of the required fee, the leggers would take over. In a narrow tunnel a short plank on the front deck would suffice, but in the case of a wide tunnel, as at Blisworth, a long plank would be fixed on the front deck to form 'wings' on which two leggers would lie - head towards the boat, feet towards the

walls. Held there, merely by gripping the plank under their backs, they would proceed to walk sideways along the tunnel wall - and this for anything up to two or three hours non-stop!

I have found no record of accidents but there must have been many - especially after a well-earned visit to the local before the return trip! "Number ones" (self-employed boat captains) often undertook this duty with their crew (often including his wife) - sending the children over the hill with the horse - in order to save the common 1/- (5p) charge. Poling (against the sides) and shafting (against the bottom) also played a small part. Modern would-be leggers can exercise their prowess by joining in the trips into Dudley tunnel operated by the Dudley Canal Trust within the grounds of the Black Country Living Museum. Legging is not dead but survives also in Speedwell Cavern, near Castleton

Contemporary photographs showing leggers in action passing through: right - Barnton (Trent and Mersey), below - Butterley (Cromford) and below right - Maida Hill (Regents) canal tunnels



Tunnels, legging & the rest

in the Peak District (open to the public) where the cavern is visited by boat along a flooded mine adit. Your guide will give you the history of the mines and caverns (and of the murders in the Wynnats Pass!) whilst legging your boat using the roof.

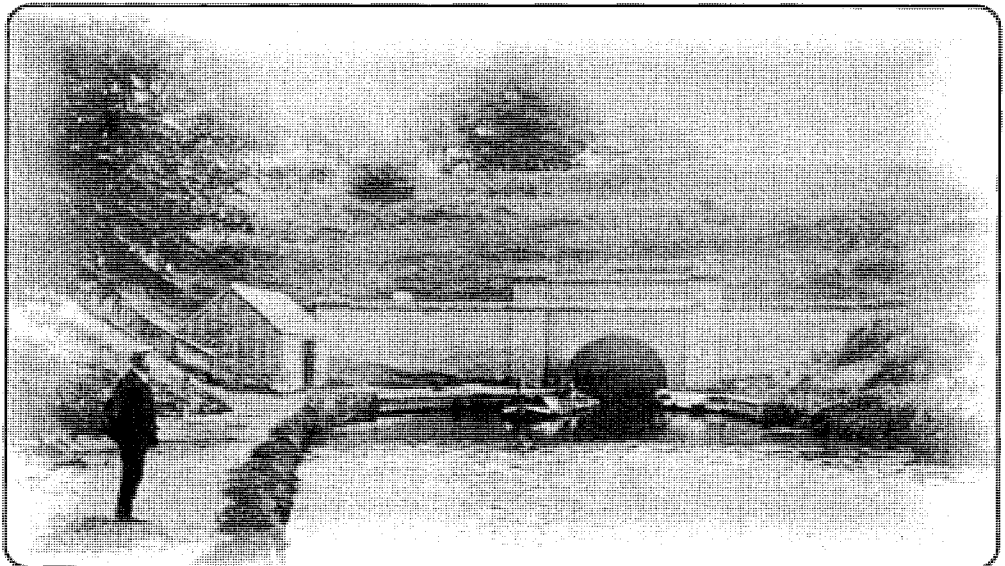
The advent of power in the form of steam, electricity and the internal combustion engine brought a new era to tunnel travel, by tugging. By definition legging was slow and limited to one boat at a time. Power traction introduced much greater speed and the capacity for taking boats through tunnels in multiple numbers, albeit with one big problem - that of ventilation, a factor that did not have to be considered when the tunnels were built.

Here we have a claim to fame in that the Huddersfield Canal Co. (as far as I can ascertain) were the first company to show interest in using a canal tug - this was considered as early as 1816 but (unfortunately?) came to nothing. Then, by 1822,

a Mr. Wharton was allowed £50 by the company to experiment with a steam tug. He, having incurred the committee's displeasure, was followed by a Mr Raistrick who, with the princely sum of £20 from the company, initiated a tug service using steam to draw a tug through the tunnel by means of a chain on the canal bed. The charge for this service was to be no more than 3/- (15p). Whether the charge or early mechanical problems were the cause of the service being abandoned, within a few years, is not recorded but legging resumed.

The Regents Canal Co. followed with a steam tug through Islington Tunnel in 1826 - this was driven by propeller but ventilation was a serious problem. There follows a gap now until 1864 when the Trent & Mersey Co. brought in tug services in Barnton, Saltersford and Preston Brook tunnels. Here a novel innovation (perhaps due to the poor alignment of two of these

Blisworth Tunnel on the Grand Junction Canal. Note the leggers' 'hovel' to the right of the entrance. Circa 1900.



tunnels) was wheels at the fore and all corners of some of the tugs to take over steering. To assist with the ventilation problems the boilers were well fired before setting off so that smoke output was minimal. At Preston Brook (southern portal) the turning point for the tug was so close to the tunnel that only three boats of the train of up to

twenty could clear the tunnel by the time the tug cast off. These three had their horses re-hitched until more could be hitched, as the boats emerged. Interestingly enough the limit of the tow was not the power of the tug but the strength of the boats 'T' studs (towing hitches) on the boats' counters and the boats' stem posts.

Services started through Braunston and Blisworth tunnels (Grand Union Canal) in 1871, 1876 for Shortwood, Tardebigge and West Hill (aka Kings Norton) tunnels on the Worcester and Birmingham and in the 1880s in Gannow and Foulridge on the Leeds & Liverpool - these having propellers at both ends to save turning. In spite of the precautions taken against the pollution (i.e. the banked fires and self steering - the crew could remain in the cabin) there are recorded cases of tugs failing to stop after exiting tunnels because the crew had suffocated and died.

The Trent and Mersey Co. moved progress on this issue by installing an electric tug at Harecastle in 1914. This was propelled by two 15hp motors pulling on a cable and powered by batteries carried in a second

boat immediately behind the tug, a spare battery boat being being charged whilst the other was in use. Within four years power was being supplied by overhead

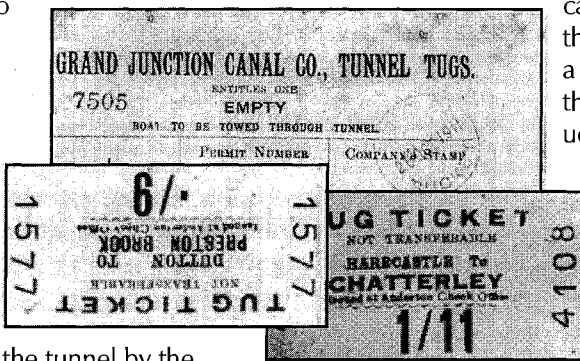
cables attached to the roof. Working a sixteen hour day this service continued until 1954

when the ventilation system was installed due to the number of boats powered by diesel. Even

so, Harecastle can still be an unpleasant experience to the eyes and nose on a busy day.

Although provision of a tow path may have seemed to be an obvious solution to the above problems they were in fact quite rare due to the cost of the extra tunnelling required. Only Netherton and Coseley (both BCN - Birmingham Canals) and Chirk (Llangollen) have surviving towpaths - Harecastle new tunnel having been built with one which was later removed.

Tunnel trivia - Foulridge tunnel boats had the capability of charging air bottles to be used by crews in case of asphyxiation - it is to be hoped the crews realised early enough when they were necessary! The tug at Gosty Hill tunnel on the Dudley No 2 canal had a lay-by and covered area - the lay-by and foundations are there to this day. Braunston and Blisworth had their own tunnel sweeping boat (opposite) - a boat with three (very) large brooms operated by men pressing on the other end of a pivot. On its first trip through the boat collected ten tons of soot! 'Worcester' -



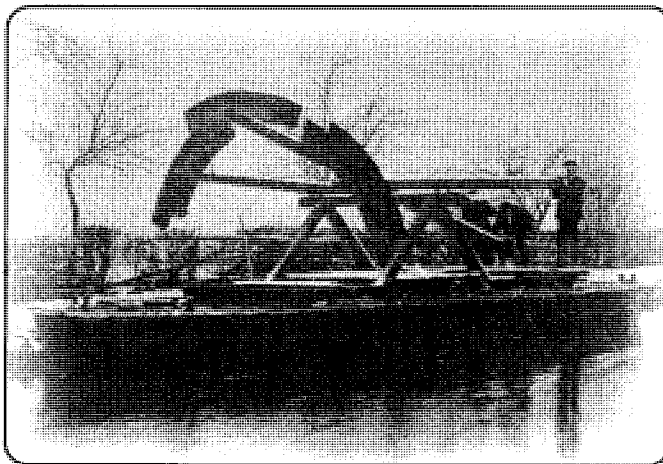
one of the tugs used on the Worcester and Birmingham can still be seen at Ellesmere Port Canal Museum. In Lappal tunnel (Dudley Canal) and in the mines at Worsley (Bridgewater Canal) lock gates were fitted across the canal and used to create a flow at certain times to aid leggers through the tunnels. In Shrewley tunnel (on the Grand Union above Hatton locks) boats were pulled through by chains attached to the walls - the horses had a tunnel of their own! The fee for legging Harecastle old tunnel was 1/6d (7p) and reckoned to take three hours - with that tunnel at 2897 yards and Standedge at 5456 yards how long did ours take? (In fact the record is said to stand at 85 minutes. Ed.)

In 1964 the Dudley Canal Society revived the ancient art of legging whilst holding public trips through Dudley Tunnel to raise money and publicity for a campaign to full restore the tunnel. This initial restoration came to fruition at Easter when TRAD (Tunnel reopening at Dudley) took place amidst so much legging that its trip boat was converted to electrical propulsion. By 1981 further deterioration of the tunnel produced another closure which took until

1992 to sort out. At this stage (if my memory serves me correctly) unpowered boats were banned from the tunnel and the Fire Brigade banned powered boats due to ventilation problems caused by diesel engines. As the (by now) Dudley Canal Trust now had a fleet of electric trip boats, they took it on themselves to provide a tug service which is now in place and operational and is also available as a rescue boat. This could have been needed some time ago when, from a hire boat moored at the Black Country Museum, I watched a man take two young children on a rubber inflatable into the tunnel. Bearing in mind the rough nature of tunnel walls I now felt a degree of responsibility for watching for them emerging safely - which was something like two hours later. The tug was built by Denis Cooper at Norton Canes dock and is 40' long by 6'10" beam and draws 2'6" and has one of the modern 'eco' bow designs. It is powered from 36x2v. cells located under bunks in the cabin and a charger is in built - forced ventilation making this safe. The tug also has a diesel generator enabling it to move anywhere on the canal system but also giving an emergency back up in the case of a prolonged operation. The batteries allow for about 6 hours of towing.

This brings us full circle in terms of tunnel transport. Of course the next stage will be Standedge with it's 100 foot narrowboat with front wheel steering, unless of course you know better!

John Harwood



The Distaff Side

Part two of the stories of the 'idle women', middle class young ladies who volunteered to work on canal boats during the 1939-45 War. M & M Baldwin, Publishers of the 'Working Waterway' series of books, have given us permission to print excerpts from four of their books, which feature these courageous women in action.

This time the extracts are from "Maidens' Trip" by Emma Smith. The book was first published in 1948 and is what today we would describe as "factional". It tells the story of three girls, two fictional and one largely based on the author and of one very eventful trip on the Grand Union. All the individual events are true, but happened to different girls over a period of time.

The first M & M Baldwin publication was in 1987, containing the text of the first 1948 edition (there had been several abridged versions over the years) and including a preface by the author.

From the preface:

The wartime scheme to take on women in place of men had a limited success. There was never much more than a handful of girls on the GUC at any one time. Some stuck it, but in general the turnover was rapid. Accidents, not surprisingly, were frequent; the wonder is that none was fatal. It was all too easy for the inexperienced, winding a paddle or leaping down from the side of a lock, to break an arm or a leg - it was even

proved possible to crack a skull while steering the boats into a bridge-hole. Apart from these natural-selection accidents, the number of trainees was maintained at a low level by those girls who changed their minds after the first trip and decided to join the boating Wrens instead.

—oOo—

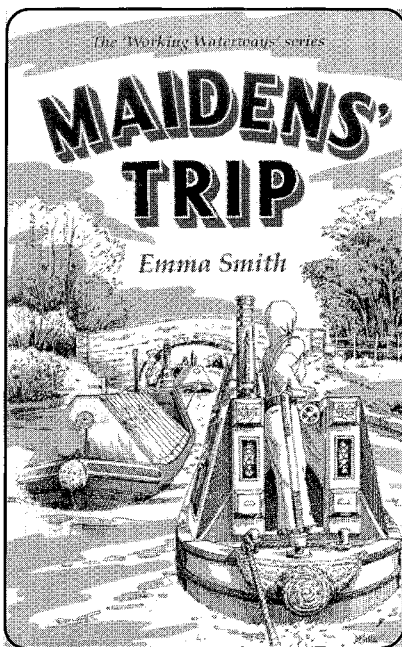
From the text:

Then suddenly - the war; and with it descended on them these fifteen or so flighty young savages, crying out for windlasses, decked up in all manner of extraordinary clothes that were meant to indicate the marriage of hard work with romance. For the most part the boaters took it stoically. They watched narrowly, in silence, and they spat and they waited.

How gladly we abandoned our sex. How noisily we proclaimed ourselves "like men" - the ancient cry we were resolved to render true. What an emancipation seemed to be ours. For at eighteen one wanted to be either a man or a woman, and to have

been instead only a girl was a disappointment that lasted several years. Yes, how we welcomed our rough translation, and in what a little, little time we began to dream of laces and ribbons and underclothes made of chiffon.

—oOo—



Maidens' Trip by Emma Smith

The butty, being tied closely behind, needed little or no steering. Emma took charge of the motor and the two others disappeared into the butty cabin to warm their hands and make themselves cocoa. It was agreed that if anything unexpected happened, Emma should blow her horn. For an hour or two the countryside streamed by unchecked on either side. Now and again we met boats coming up from the docks low down in the water with the weight of their cargo, and peaked with shiny black tarpaulin. Once loaded, the two boats were divided by a tow-rope seventy-five feet long, called a 'snubber', and the steering of the butty became an arduous and unrelaxing vigil, needing strong arms to row at the tiller and a sharp eye. According to the custom, Emma slowed down on sighting a pair and crept civilly past them with a single stern nod of greeting.

To one steerer she called out: "Are there many boats down there?"

He answered: "Ah," and she was hardly wiser.

—oOo—

Warmth was the first necessity, and then food, and after that, order. To these ends Emma devoted herself, thoughtless of anything beyond. She bundled into jersies and trousers while the methylated spirits gave off its pretty dying flame, and then carefully pumped at the Primus until it broke into a low roar. This sound was her first companion.

With the kettle heating on top for tea, she turned to the stove, a miniature kitchen range. The dead cinders were raked aside, newspaper was stuffed in, splinters of wood, a covering of coal and a little

paraffin poured on to counteract the general dampness. Coal we had in plenty, for in addition to the lumps that passing coal-barges threw us, we laid in a private supply when visiting the coal-fields for cargo.

—oOo—

"How many locks have you made ready for us?"

"Three," said the woman at once. "There's a pair of boats right in front of you. But there's more boats a-comin'; you'll have more ready later."

"Come," thought Nanette, comforting herself with Alice-like dialogue. "That's better: she really spoke to me quite a lot. And I do believe she likes me, I really think she does."

"Isn't it wet?" she shouted, much elated.

"Ah, it's a booger, this weather," agreed the woman, and to prove beyond doubt her friendly intention, she raised one hand from the wash-tub and nodded as her boat slid away.

—oOo—

Beer, which in actual fact was not beer but Guinness, was a light cargo and so had priority of passage. Anyone at any time, had to let the beer go by them. Usually these beer-boats - fly-boats they were sometimes called - were crewed only by men or boys, for although the pay was good, running the beer was reckoned no kind of family life. The work was incessant, for they were kept to a strict schedule running all night through the black-out with shaded headlights.

—oOo—

Somewhere in England a dance band was playing: "I'll See You in My Dreams."

Holding out her hands to the fire, Emma crouched down humming the tune. Her hands were ingrained with dirt, the nails broken, callouses were forming on the palms. Her mind relaxed in steamy warmth, empty, uncaring.

—oOo—

"Matthew was wondering if you'd write a letter to his young lady for him."

"Of course I will," said Emma.

Matthew looked at the floor, blinking his long lashes. She carried the tins of food and milk over to the *Ariadne* and came back with a pen and a block of paper. Matthew and she sat side by side on the settle. Emma waited. At last she said:

"What do you want me to write?"

"Dear Rose," said he in a low voice.

'Dear Rose,' - she wrote, and waited. He was silent.

"What shall I say next?"

"Will be in Brum next Saturday. Hope to see you then."

She wrote this down.

"Is that all? Isn't there anything else you want to say?" She stared at him urgently, trying to force upon him the fire of a lover. He was dumb and unhappy.

"Love from Matthew?" she asked. He nodded.

—oOo—

"The boats aren't properly boats til we get some brass on them. And if Nanette has rings on the *Venus* we'll have to have rings on the booty-chimney too."

"Soon you'll want lace in the cabins and plates. It takes all our time and strength to keep the boats going, you know it does. We aren't proper boaters. It seems to me silly to copy them so."

"If you feel like that, Why don't you give up boating and go into the A.T.S.?" said Nanette.

—oOo—

Charity washed a great many underclothes and hung them on a string in the *Ariadne's* hold to dry. She also washed some smalls belonging to Emma and Nanette.

"Not," she said, "that I'm washing them clean - it would be silly to try, but I'm freshening them up a bit."

—oOo—

A very small sample from 208 pages, and selected by a mere man. I find these books really rewarding - a combination of Arthur Ransome type adventure with the harsh reality of war-time. I hope you will read them - and enjoy them.

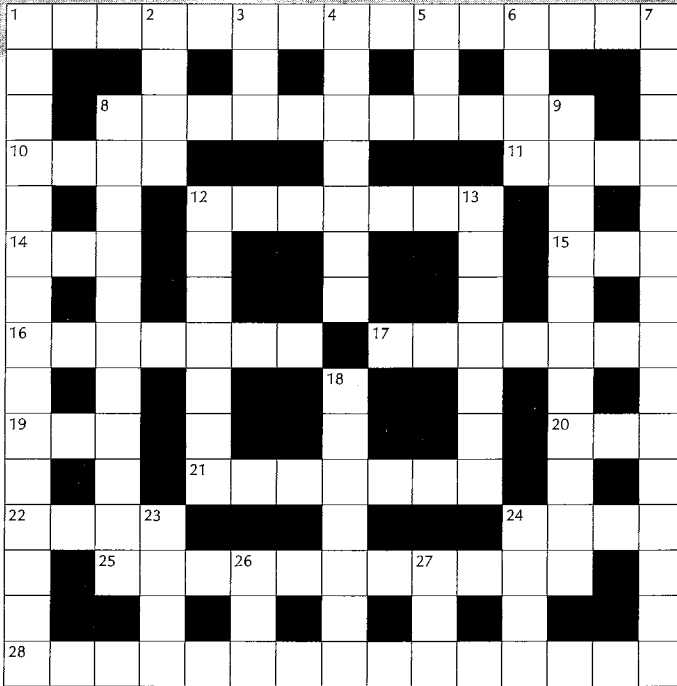
Ken Wright

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The Working Waterway series is published by M & M Baldwin, 24 High Street, Cleobury Mortimer, KIDDERMINSTER, DY14 8BY. Tel and Fax: 01299 270110.

Maidens' Trip is £7.00 (a new edition due out may be slightly more) plus £1.00 post and packing. Credit card orders by 'phone are welcomed.

Canal Crossword - 24



- 24 It is not usual to come to any harm yet you could do in the forces (4).
- 25 Small insects nearly feed on cooked meat where the K & A rises near Woolhampton (7,4).
- 28 Admiral Brough (Sn) is fond of cruising the River Yare (10,5).

DOWN

- 1 Take flight between Worcester and Birmingham (10,5).
- 2 Learn to take a railway along the east coast (4).
- 3 Fear to try painting - even roses and castles (3).
- 4 The only city in this country in which you can reach Glory by boat! (7).
- 5 I see you in hospital (3).
- 6 Alongside another lock on

ACROSS

- 1 A Hull vet, wild cat found on the M6 above the MSC (8,7).
- 8 Arrange cult - roughly in the shape of a lock (11).
- 10 Rood screen found backwards across the entrance (4).
- 11 Tunnel like hell to find Miss Gwynne (4).
- 12 Sonata in 'C' played on the lower reaches of the Ashton canal (7).
- 14 Rhubarb pie contains the British Petroleum industry - in short crust of course (3).
- 15 Sail through Elysian fields to a fenland city (3).
- 16 Aging GU employee takes boat for toll assessment (7).
- 17 Hut swab taking place from an appropriate receptacle (7).
- 19 On the BCN find where the windmill terminates (3).
- 20 Tinned, frozen, dried or mushy - one won't do.
- 21 Reg, note the family name of the canal Duke. (7).
- 22 Antibiotic approved for use on the ear. (4).

the L & L beneath the carriageway mentioned in 1A (4).

- 7 In Banbury find a canal repair shop - with equipment (7,8).
- 8 Crew of the Rag Doll? (5,3,3).
- 9 Where a regal interregnum might view a zoo from a canal boat (7,4).
- 12 E', quaint piece of Measham ware (7).
- 13 Sidles northwards in strong winds on the L & L (7).
- 18 Pc Roach on duty looking for smugglers at a sea lock on the Caledonian canal (7).
- 22 In a codicil leave money to BW for repairing a lock structure (4).
- 23 Ample time left for categorising trees to their appropriate genus (4).
- 25 Seadog Ben has taken to crewing Nbs we hear, with explosive results it is reported (3).
- 26 In a part of Malham observe a retrograde ritual of thrashing with sticks (3).

Crossword Solution on Page 55

Canal Walk No. 8

Another canal walk? Well, nearly! John Harwood is on a ferry down the BIG DITCH and walking the decks.

In 1150AD the monks of Birkenhead priory initiated a ferry service across the Mersey charging a farthing to carry a man and his horse to the market. In 1330 Edward III granted a charter allowing them the legal right to provide the service. On the 1st January 1894 the Manchester Ship Canal opened to traffic (the official opening was a few months later) and on the 30th July 1998 I sailed on a Mersey Ferry (the Overchurch) down the Ship Canal from Manchester and across to Liverpool.

Of all the wet days last summer Thursday 30th July was the wettest - the typical scouse greeting of 'You've come to sail the canal not to swim it' leaving a soaked me (having done the right thing and travelled by public transport) to decide whether to punch the funny bar steward on the nose or rustle up a grin - I grinned and got the towel out to get myself in the right frame of mind to view the 'Big Ditch'.

A short cruise around the docks followed seeing the site of the 1998 National Waterways Festival, the burgeoning L.S. Lowry centre and the wooden mine-sweeper 'Bronington' - once commanded by one of the Royals. As we entered Mode Wheel Lock it was a little satisfying to note that even MSC pilots can touch lock sides a bit firmly and that we who are more used to narrowboats need not feel too ashamed at the odd clunk!

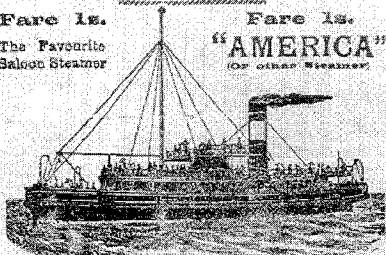
In no time at all we were passing the engineering marvel of the Bridgewater aqueduct - the 'Tank'. This replaced the former Brindley masonry aqueduct over the River Irwell with a massive steel tank

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There's nothing new about canal trips!

weighing about 1500 tons which swings to clear the Ship Canal. Unfortunately, due to the proximity of the road swing bridge, the pilot speeded up a lot and before one had chance to frame a photo we had passed it.

The locks of the upper reaches are now manned by a team working from a mini-bus rather than static lock staff, but even though I was watching them in successive locks, it was difficult to figure out which levers were doing what. Power was no problem as the volume of water moving down the canal at this stage is sufficient for a small hydro-electric power unit to be housed in some of the overflow weirs.

by John Harwood

After several concrete motorway flyovers, we came to the original railway viaducts. They were built in such a way that freight traffic went over them for six months before approval for passenger use and at no time was railway traffic interrupted. Stress testing of the viaducts was carried out by bringing ten locomotives on to them - if a viaduct didn't fail then it was okay - and they were all okay!

In flows the Mersey on the left and out flows the Mersey on the right - what BW

where the Duke lived whilst the Bridgewater Canal was built through to Runcorn and then the sites of the former lock flights down to the Mersey and later the Ship Canal. Shortly after Runcorn docks we pass into a huge lagoon and in the distance, we can see the bottom locks (and currently the only entrance) to the River Weaver.

We are now onto flat riverside scenery with only some fields between us and the Mersey. The fields are heavily grazed - all livestock having to be ferried across the canal.

Stanlow oil refinery brings on a smoking ban and next we are passing the Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port and the locks up into the Shropshire Union Canal. Here we come up behind a cargo vessel moving slowly towards Eastham Locks which forces the pilot to slow considerably. Considering this is about the fourth vessel we have

seen on the move the MSC (thank heaven) is still busier than I thought it to be. At Eastham the canal pilot leaves us and we come under the ferry captains. They are in their element as a different movement becomes evident where the ferry meets the tideway.

At the Pier Head a fleet of buses waits to take us back to the starting point (or on to Piccadilly Station in Manchester if requested). It is certain that, at no matter how many points you manage to see the Ship Canal from the road, this is the only way to see it properly. The cruises are always up from Liverpool on one day and returning from Manchester the following



would give for such a voluminous water supply! The canal passes through the Warrington suburbs in what (for its time) was the most enormous cutting, walled throughout in solid sandstone and with more swing bridges and a high level bridge.

I lived in Widnes for twenty years and never knew until that day that the MSC workshops were just across the old transporter bridge (memories!). Here is an enormous warehouse where the gigantic lock gates (each weighing 500 tons) were and still are fabricated - new ones awaiting fitting being stored submerged in the canal. Next we pass Bridgewater House

day with buses included in the £21 fare (1998 price) – a little more than the farthing of 1150AD and I wasn't allowed to take my horse!

1999 cruise dates below – get one of them booked in your diary and I hope it's not as wet as my trip! This is a fun trip, also for the non-canal anoraks, and carries the pleasure of a floating bar with somebody else driving!

John Harwood

Some time ago we published a letter about the number of Harwoods involved in canals through the ages. It will not surprise you to learn that the Deputy Chairman of

the Ship Canal Co. in 1893 was the Lord Mayor of Manchester – wait for it – The Right Honourable Alderman Sir John Harwood! Ed.

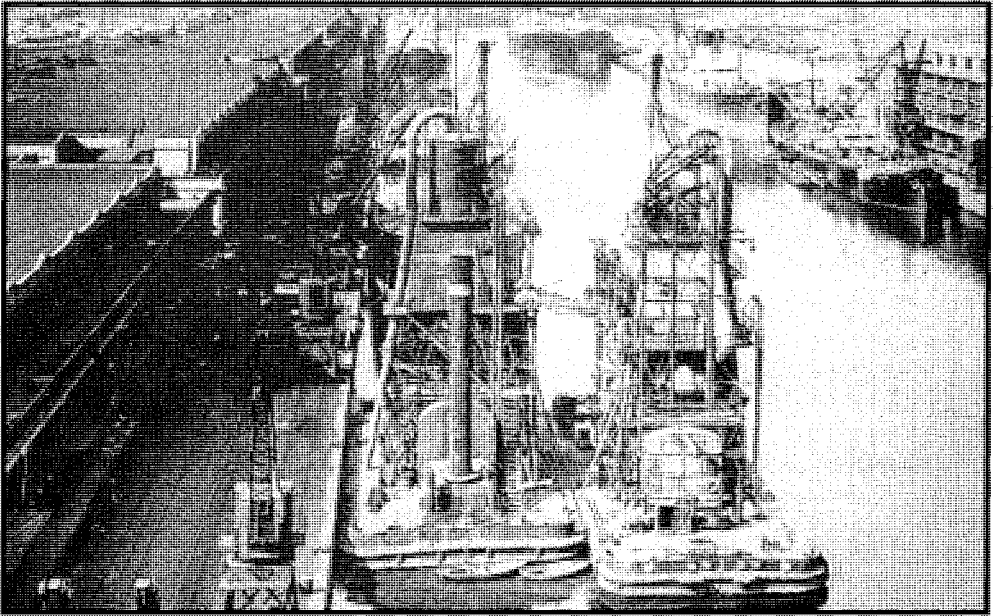
Manchester Ship Canal Cruises: 1999

Sat. 1 May Liverpool to Manchester
Sun. 2 May Manchester to Liverpool

and similarly on 15/16 May, 19/20 June, 3/4 July, 9/10 July.

Times and prices not available at present. For more information see the advertisement opposite or ring Mersey Ferries

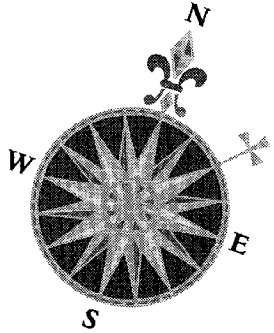
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The Ship Canal in it's hey-day

MERSEY / ERRIES

Manchester Ship Canal Cruises 1999



Weekend Manchester Ship Canal Cruise 1999

15 May Departs Pier Head, Liverpool – 1100 hrs
19 June Departs Pier Head, Liverpool – 1300 hrs
3 July Departs Pier Head, Liverpool – 1200 hrs
7 Aug Departs Pier Head, Liverpool – 1000 hrs
11 Sept Departs Pier Head, Liverpool – 1030 hrs
25 Sept Departs Pier Head, Liverpool – 1030 hrs

16 May Departs Salford Quays – 1000 hrs
20 June Departs Salford Quays – 1200 hrs
4 July Departs Salford Quays – 1100 hrs
8 Aug Departs Salford Quays – 1300 hrs
12 Sept Departs Salford Quays – 1000 hrs
26 Sept Departs Salford Quays – 0930 hrs

Evening Jazz along the Canal Cruise 1999

9 July Departs Pier Head, Liverpool – 1630 hrs

10 July Departs Salford Quays – 1600 hrs

Midweek Manchester Ship Canal Cruise 1999

13 July Departs Pier Head, Liverpool – 1300 hrs
11 Aug Departs Pier Head, Liverpool – 1100 hrs

14 July Departs Mode Wheel Lock – 1000 hrs
12 Aug Departs Mode Wheel Lock – 1000 hrs

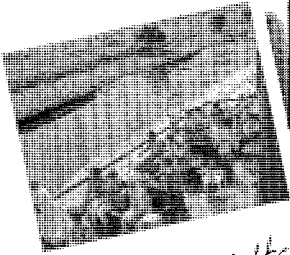
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Pennine Link - Spring 99 - 43



Enjoying the sights



Fascinating History!



Wish you were here!

A Closely-Guarded Secret

The following article is cribbed from the Calder Navigation Society's magazine, "**Moving Road**". It was written following a request from their (temporary) editor for some positive comment on British Waterways! Ed.

I am encouraged to put into writing all the positive actions – or in most cases inactions – that British Waterways are taking to ensure that the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal remains, what one of their staff dubbed, "a closely guarded secret".

The water depth at the southern end calls for two "limits of navigation", one on the canal maps and another - some two miles further north - which is "the limit of navigation for most boats". This includes all hire boats. The effect is to cut off Pontypool and Cwmbran from canal traffic thus ensuring a peaceful, virtually boat-free existence for their residents.

There is no winding-hole at the "limit of navigation for most boats", only a very private mooring branch at an angle to the cut. This encourages learner boaters and anyone with a craft over 20 feet long to practise ten-point turns, which is a very useful and positive exercise.

The water depth over most of the 35 miles of the land-locked canal ensures a maximum speed of about 3 miles an hour - often less. This enables boaters to appreciate fully this most beautiful of canals - and take a week doing it.

"No mooring" signs are only placed where mooring is required, at bridge-holes near pubs and shops, for instance. It does not matter that the signs are hidden by long grass because boats cannot get into the side anyway. Consequently the locals are

able to service land-based regulars without interruption.

Similarly, cast-iron bollards are hidden in long grass because boats cannot get anywhere near them. In only one place have BW taken a more positive step by introducing a vertical wash-wall four feet in front of the original one. Consequently the bollards are six feet from the water's edge and a very positive tripping device for the unwary.

To keep sanitary stations clean and wholesome they are completely unmarked and, consequently, unused except by locals. One shower unit contains a desk, chair and notice-board - the H.Q. of some enterprising boat club, it seemed. A good game for the children on a wet day is to send them off with the portaloos bucket and a BW key which they try in all the likely-looking doors on the canal side. The first one to find a fit gets to empty the can - if the local constabulary don't get him or her first.

The regional office of BW has no signs indicating its presence, either on the canal side or at its entrance on the public highway. Only having climbed the outside staircase and entered the building does one find a sign saying "Information". This means that BW staff can get on with their work without being pestered by the public. Needless to say, the sanitary station in the same yard looks like an unmarked military pill-box.

All locks (six of them) on the Mon and Brec are left empty, with the bottom gates open. This positive action is taken to prevent full locks ("which are like colanders", according to BW) leaking onto the adjacent private land.

The Mon and Brecon is generally a "leaky" canal, being side-hung halfway up a hill for most of its route. A very clever way of preventing the canal from joining the River Usk, following a breach, is to close a couple of isolated "lock-gates" across the canal. These are much quicker and easier to use than stank planks and release BW staff for work elsewhere.

Apart from a temporary channel along the canal bottom, which bypasses a very leaky bit and is painted to look like something from Disneyland, the obvious main work in hand is making a very positive contribution to canal side activities, the main one being walkers leaping for their lives. For the last couple of miles into Brecon - the northernmost point on the canal and the site of a large brand new canal basin and a huge, new theatre - there is now an eight feet wide, hard-paved cycleway complete with hand-rails through bridge-holes but lacking any signs, rules, pedestrian refuge

areas or whatever. And in places it is three feet above the water with a 45 degree slope down to the timber-reinforced water's edge. So, if the pedestrian leaps before he looks

And finally, a positively charged item. BW have sent literature promoting environmental enhancement to one boat hire firm who have already got four electric narrowboats and have provided superb charging points - the best moorings on the canal - but BW has made no contribution to their provision

My firm recommendation is that holiday boaters should challenge all BW's efforts to keep this canal "a closely guarded secret". It is too good to miss. Choose from any of seven bases, listed in Nicholson Book 4 or any of the waterway journals, to hire a boat on weekly or daily terms.

EXPLORER

Following last year's very successful exercise the National Trust have issued another splendid glossy brochure extolling the virtues of MARSDEN MOOR, a lot of which sits on top of our canal at Standedge.

There are 25 guided walks with such inviting titles as TUSsocks AND TORRENTS, CUCKOO SPOTTING, EARLY MORNING MADNESS, YORKSHIRE PUDDING WALK and KIDS 'N' BEARS. Dogs are allowed on 16 of the walks which vary from easy to hard.

There are also 17 "events" (only 3 of which are for dogs!) including BIRD BOX DAY.

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA, CUCKOO FOLK EVENING, MOOR PHOTOGRAPHY and KITE DAY.

For a copy of the guide and a free copy of the official guide to the Marsden Moor Estate please send a stamped, addressed envelope to:

The National Trust,
Marsden Moor Estate Office,
The Old Goods Yard,
Station Road,
MARSDEN,
HUDDERSFIELD HD7 6DH.

MOOR FOR EVERYONE IN 1999

End of the Line for Slaithwaite Cherries

Cherry trees marking the filled-in line of the Narrow Canal in Slaithwaite will bloom for the last time this Spring.

But there will be a lasting artistic reminder of the avenue of cherries lining the route of the waterway after they have been felled and work starts on the Slaithwaite restoration project in the Autumn.

For one of the trees - they are all over 25 years old, the accepted life of a cherry - has been cut down and local furniture maker, Richard Greenhalgh has been assessing the quality of the wood with a view to making it into an artefact to be displayed locally.

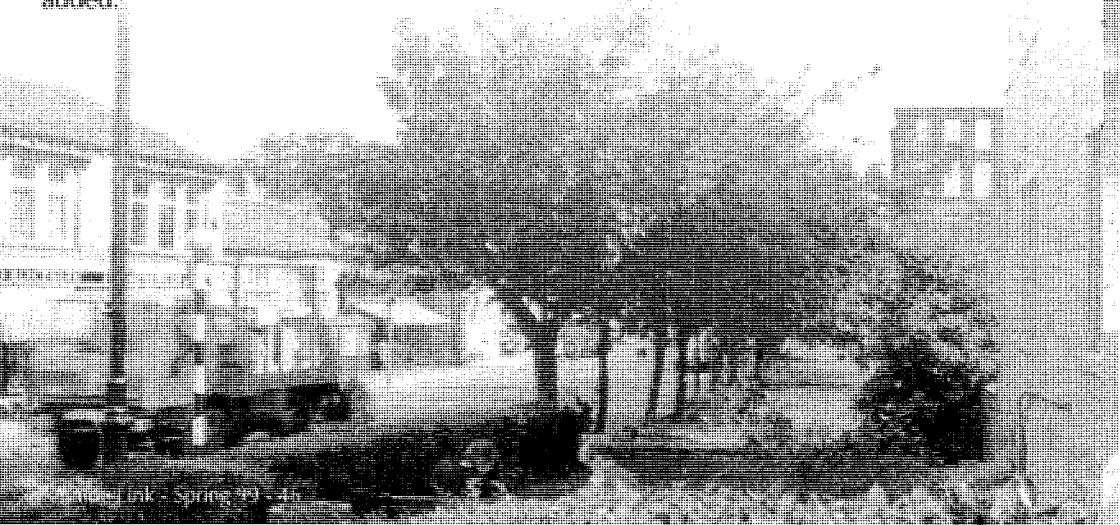
The cherries have been a feature of Slaithwaite but it was impossible to proceed with the restoration project without removing them, and Guy Thompson, of Colne Valley Tree Society, said he was delighted that an innovative approach was being taken to re-using the timber. *"The cherry trees are coming to the end of their recognised life span - in fact one has already died. We understand that some new trees will be planted when restoration work has been completed,"* he added.

Alan Stophier, project director of the Huddersfield Canal Company, which is supervising the restoration project said that local people would be consulted about how suitable timber from the trees could be re-used *"Unfortunately cherry wood is not very durable and therefore anything that is made will have to be found a home inside a local building,"* he said.

Other local environmental groups have regretted that the cherry trees had to be felled, but accepted that their life span was reaching the end. *"They will be sadly missed, but this seems a good way to preserve the memory of them. We hope that suitable replacement trees will be planted when the canal work is completed,"* said Liz Yems chairperson of Slaithwaite Environment Group.

And David Littlewood, Colne Valley Trust project officer, added *"While it will be sad to see the trees go, the recycling of the timber sends the right message about sustainability and local people will have an opportunity to contribute to how it is re-used."*

Alec Ramsden



Everybody Quackers over EP Go-Ahead

7 ASHTON-U-LYNE

HUDDERSFIELD 13



Photo courtesy of Chelmsford Evening Chronicle

Councillor Jim Greenwood (Chairman of the Huddersfield Canal Company) and Jim Gill (English Partnerships) shake on the deal - lending 'period' support in the background are Anne Minor, Jo Young and Brian Minor

Even the museum ducks joined in the celebrations, flapping their wings in approval and noisily quacking support for the announcement.

But as Jim Gill, North West regional director of English Partnerships, pointed out after being cut off in mid verbal flow (speech), by the cacophony, the £12.84m. grant ensuring full steam ahead for the Narrow Canal restoration project, did not include an item covering bread supplies for the feathered friends.

It does, of course, include funding which will guarantee that the nineteen blockages preventing through navigation will be removed, and the grant comes on top of

over £6m. which EP, through both the North West and Yorkshire and Humber-side divisions, invested in the scheme between 1993 and 1995.

The long awaited official announcement of the OK for EP funding was made, appropriately, at Uppermill where the major initiative of restoration of two locks and operation of a trip boat by volunteers took place in the early 1980's. A fair crowd gathered to mark the event, including representatives of the five restoration partners, HCS, British Waterways and

Tameside, Oldham and Kirkleas Councils. And there were a few grizzled HCS members who had practical experience of the muddy, pick-and-shovel excavations of the eighties.

As campaigners know, it's two years since the offer of the EP and Millennium cash was made. But the money needed to match Millennium funding was frustratingly far from being laid out on the table. Jim Gill pointed out that the process of appraisal had been a lengthy and complicated one. There had to be clear cut justification for the scheme before the grant could be finalised.

"This investment is considerable and we had to make sure that the benefits of restoration were real. Our investment will ensure the restoration of the canal to full navigation by reclaiming derelict land and structures. It will make an important contribution to the regeneration, environment and image of the canal corridor and will conserve an important part of the area's heritage," he said.

Coun. Jim Greenwood, chairman of the Huddersfield Canal Company, also touched on the "value for money" theme. *"The grant has fully justified our proposal that the restored canal can provide jobs, improve the environment and contribute to the economy of the Tame and Colne Valleys by bringing a piece of our history back to life. Since receiving the Millennium Commission's approval we've been drawing up plans and consulting many of the communities along the line of the canal. Now we can really start work on completing what was once called the Impossible Restoration,"* he said.

David Sumner, predictably, joined in the speechifying, asking for the EP cash in a

big NOW and recalling the early days of the campaign when there was little support for the restoration drive. *"But we refused to concede defeat, won over sceptics, converted opponents to the cause, joined forces with local authorities and the owners of the canal and we are delighted that our efforts have finally been successful. We have jumped over the last hurdle and the way is clear for end-to-end re-opening of the waterway by 2001,"* he said.

Alan Stopher, the HCC project director, acted as MC, stressing that without the enthusiasm, initiative and pig-headedness of the early volunteers there would have been no celebration ceremony, and the Press, including "Tellies" turned out in force, with local radio stations taking the opportunity to run programmes.

It was a happy little event staged around the centrepiece of a cleverly designed signpost, the work of HCS's multi-talented Bob Gough, and acting and singing members of the Mikron Theatre provided some appropriate canal-orientated entertainment.

Then, formalities over, the guests trooped to the museum's upper floor for a bite to eat, provided by HCS's culinary queen, Shirley Rowbottom. Pity that all the pork pies were scoffed. They are superb served the following day in a rich sauce of mushy peas and ham shank. Peter Halliwell on his keyboard added a pleasant and appreciated musical background to the chit-chat, the ducks finally got their bread crumbs lunches from canalside strollers, and everybody went home happy.

Alec Ramsden

Profile - Alwyn Ogborn

My descent into canalcoholism began in the mid-1950's. I was 16 years old and serving my apprenticeship at Ferranti in the radio and television industry. The normal course of nature had a strong grip on my actions, and I started to court a girl whose father, destined to become my father-in-law (f.i.l.), had just come out of hospital after having a wobble. The future f.i.l., Cyril, had served his earlier years working at the Bridgewater warehouse in Castlefield. His father, having produced our Cyril late in life, had been a Duker, i.e. a tugboat captain on the Duke of Bridgewater's canal. I understand he was in charge of the tug Ellesmere.

After recovering from his heart wobble, f.i.l., being well conversant with inland waterways, decided to take it easy and buy a canal boat. My memory of the exact date is a little hazy, but I think it was about May 1956 when he purchased a rather sparsely converted ship's lifeboat from near Acton Bridge on the River Weaver. I was roped in to help him bring it up to Worsley, so my baptism into inland waters was down the Weaver, up the Manchester Ship Canal, and

up the now defunct Runcorn Locks into the Bridgewater. Some hairy waters for a little tub. We settled at a mooring where Brinks Boats are now in Worsley.

At this period the Bridgewater was still a working canal, and it became apparent that the working boatmen did not like pleasure boats. Not many months after arriving at the mooring a pair of wide boats, loaded with 120 tons of coal, were passing through. The dumb boat made a deliberate wide sweep and crushed our boat into matchwood. Fortunately a local resident witnessed the whole thing and full compensation was eventually received. The replacement boat was a larger ship's lifeboat with a great teak hull and f.i.l. employed the services, at weekends, of tradesman to build a cabin and fit basic services. We had many hours on this boat, up and down from Lymm to Preston Brook and Runcorn at weekends, and over the Leeds & Liverpool for longer holidays. (Because of its 8ft 6in beam we could not go down the Trent & Mersey.) In 1959/60 the flight of 21 locks at Wigan was a full day's hard work, but very worthwhile



Alwyn (right) and pal, Keith, taking the sea air at Whitby on the Yorkshire coast

(still is for me! Ed)

After getting married and setting about the task of rebuilding three very old and tumble-down cottages into one dwelling, the time spent of the boat dwindled as I put all my energies into homebuilding. My interest in canals was not dead, only dormant. The rekindling came about because of the Ashton Canals Festival. As a family we attend the 1978 event and only missed subsequent ones because of me working away. Wife and I had often mentioned the possibility of hiring a boat, but having three young children we were apprehensive that they would be bored and a complete pain for a week of wasted money. Ultimately, having just come back from a particularly grueling two months in Nigeria. I said "So it, we are having a boat for a week," and duly booked with Ruswell at Portland Basin. We sailed the Cheshire Ring and the children, who were between 9 and 15, absolutely loved it, and towards the end of the holiday were asking me to ring the boatyard to say we were stuck and couldn't get back for another week. That was it! Addiction was complete.

From my radio and TV days at Ferranti, production was subsequently switched to guided missiles and I worked on the design and construction of testgear for the various control modules built into the rockets. (Believe it or not, these guidance systems were built round valve circuits, transistors being in their infancy and microchips science fiction. How times change!) from there I went into freelance radio and TV repairing and progressed on to printed circuit manufacture. In 1966 I joined a firm in Swinton which made industrial battery charging equipment, and I have been in that business ever since. I have been self-employed since 1972, specialising in battery backup emergency power systems. These are nothing like the popular concept of

batteries for torches, radios, or cars, but high integrity fixed systems installed in oil, gas, chemical and other such plants that must have safe process control in the event of mains power failure.

I followed with interest the progress of the Huddersfield Canal Society, attending one or two talks by Bob Dewey and co., at various local pubs. I visited Uppermill several times during the restoration of Dungebooth Lock and spoke to several people about the future possibilities. In all this time, despite my obvious interest, no one exhorted me to join the Society. I eventually joined in February 1985, and since becoming an active member I always try to recruit members for people who show interest. After a particularly successful contract in 1984 I decided to buy my own boat and, in 1985, I joined the committee of Ashton Canals Festival thinking it was run by H.C.S. I was soon put right on that point! However, I gained a lot of pleasure from being a member of that committee and am still there. It was not until Brian Minor approached me a couple of years later asking if I would be willing to take over the editorship of Pennine Link that I got involved with H.C.S. proper and co-opted onto council. Taking over Plink was a big decision. Being science and engineering orientated English was always my worst subject at school. I took the plunge, as longer standing members will know, and enjoyed the experience. It is a very intense job and the combination of my business workload and the fact that I thought my style was getting stale persuaded me to give up after over 6 years. My congratulations go to our current editor, Ken Wright, for producing a splendid magazine, which must be the envy of every other waterway society.

All my major interests are centered on inland waterways, and I spend as much time as possible on my boat, winter and summer alike. I like to be involved with canal

What the Papers Say

Almost too much for this issue so we shall have to compress the total. There are 39 separate items to plough through so you can have the important ones complete and I will summarise most of the rest! And a nice lot from the East side, with some splendid front page colour pics. which, unfortunately, I cannot pass on.

OCTOBER 16 Colne Valley Chronicle
Reports the arrival of five new BW Workers to assist with secondary restoration and upgraded maintenance.

NOVEMBER 2 Huddersfield Examiner
Records public welcome for £3M Slaithwaite canal scheme. That is a really welcome turnround of opinions.

festivals and other events and this dovetails in well with my hobby of photography. I used to have a darkroom and spent hours wasting chemical and paper, every now and then getting a terrific result which made it all worthwhile. I have long term plans to live aboard a boat, probably a narrowboat to start with, moving up to a Dutch barge style wide boat.

I have always been enthusiastic about my involvement with H.C.S., my only regret is not having joined sooner. I would only have needed a tiny push. It is gratifying to have been a part of the outfit that is on the verge of spectacular success. The future of the Society has been the subject of much discussion recently. 'Is there life after restoration?' My aim is to continue being involved, particularly with festivals etc., and other public participation events. My other great aim, is, of course to sail the full length of restored canal in my own boat. (Passenger bookings being taken now at very competitive rates. Numbers limited to 200, standing room only below decks and in the crow's nest!)

Alwyn Ogborn

NOVEMBER 5 Huddersfield Examiner
A nice chatty article about boat trips through Standedge Tunnel.

NOVEMBER 14 Oldham Chronicle
Jumped the gun a bit with an announcement about EP's £13M support. It wasn't officially announced until January 27th!

NOVEMBER 16 Oldham Chronicle
Comment (Part)...Property prices have plummeted and residents are calling on Oldham Council to invest in a major development programme in Hathershaw to bring it back to life.

Diggle, on the other hand, is about to undergo a massive redevelopment when the Stanedge Tunnel reopens to canal traffic and there is a fear that, instead of enhancing the village, the great boost to tourism could cause irreparable damage to the community.

While Hathershaw is crying out for redevelopment, the people of Diggle are fearful that the redevelopment being imposed on them to further develop tourism in Saddleworth, could cause major problems because the area is simply not equipped to cope with a huge influx of visitors.

NOVEMBER 24 Huddersfield Examiner
Uncle Fred Carter becomes Santa yet again for the last Tunnel End festivity as we knew them.

NOVEMBER 25 Huddersfield Examiner
Shock at Tunnel End Centre closure.

DECEMBER 1 Oldham Chronicle
Huddersfield Canal Company photo results. *Similarly reported in the Huddersfield Examiner.*

DECEMBER 8 Huddersfield Examiner
Canal drainage and Centre problems at Tunnel End. BW describe Standedge Tunnel as the "dirtiest, wettest, darkest, coldest," as well as the "deepest, highest, longest". There's nothing like a bit of good PR!

DECEMBER 10 Ashton Advertiser

Start of dredging and lock repairs at Uppermill. Nice photo of BW, HCC and OMBC - where were HCS? Behind the camera, that's where!

DECEMBER 11 Colne Valley Chronicle

Battle to save Canal Centre. Also pulling the plug to empty tunnel. "Dirtiest, wettest, etc." repeated.

DECEMBER 12 Oldham Chronicle

Next to photographs of local protestors and two BW men apparently fighting over a handspike we read:-

The first steps towards the restoration of the Diggle-to-Marsden canal tunnel are now under way.

Work has started on draining the longest canal tunnel in Britain, to pave the way for a possible tourism boom.

But the work by British Waterways hit a sour note with some residents on the Yorkshire side of the Pennines. For heavy plant will have to be moved close to the mouth of the Marsden end of the tunnel at Tunnel End.

The popular Tunnel End visitor centre is having to close - and many residents are unhappy.

The centre is also a popular stopping place for many Oldhamers at weekend.

So Marsden residents staged a protest at the closing of the centre.

Even though the centre will, hopefully, be moved to a near-by disused canal warehouse, they are not entirely satisfied.

The new home for the visitor centre is on the other side of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, which is being restored with lottery funding.

Meanwhile, as the controversy continues, workmen have already started work. But it is certain that the restoration will have a major impact on both sides of the canal.

Pleasure boats are expected to make a bee-line for the canal, which runs through scenic Saddleworth countryside from Ashton to Huddersfield.

But there are also fears at the Diggle end of the tunnel that traffic congestion will result.

Many cafes and pubs are bracing themselves for a boom, however.

DECEMBER 18 Colne Valley Chronicle

Plug pulled at Tunnel End. Canal will be re-filled by opening the lock at Marsden station. I don't think so, somehow! Canal Centre still with us under "Troubled Waters" heading.

DECEMBER 24 Colne Valley Chronicle

Closure "fiasco" continues. Public meetings, petitions, the works.

JANUARY 7 Huddersfield Examiner

Marsden school offers home to Canal Centre.

JANUARY 15 Oldham Chronicle

A switch of dates for Saddleworth Canal Festival.

Colne Valley Chronicle

School offer again.

JANUARY 18 Oldham Chronicle

The final hurdle has been cleared in the campaign to restore the trans-Pennine Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

This, it is believed, will be confirmed before the end of the month.

It is two years since the Millennium Commission and the government agency English Partnerships made an offer of aid totalling about £30 million, but it was conditional on more detailed information as to how the scheme would be developed, its feasibility and whether it was value for money.

The Millennium Commission agreement has been signed, but English Partnerships, which was offering £12

million to the project, wanted more details about the 19 individual schemes, large and small, that were itemised in the original bid document.

Experts from the Huddersfield Canal Company - consisting of British Waterways, the Huddersfield Canal Society and Oldham, Tameside and Kirklees councils - have been working hard to design, quantify and cost the necessary works.

English Partnerships consultants reviewed the research and prepared an appraisal-case paper, and it is understood the Urban Regeneration Agency, another government body, has now completed an in-depth look at the information and given it seal of approval - clearing the way for the grant-aid money to be made available.

The first of the 19 schemes, to improve the canal at Uppermill, has already begun and is scheduled for completion in June.

Preparation and design work for many of the other projects, including a visitor and heritage centre, repair of the unique Stanedge Tunnel, reopening of the canal through Stalybridge and structural work, has also been done.

The additional work needed to meet the demands of the Millennium Commission and English Partnerships has resulted in the date for the end-to-end opening of the 20-mile canal, which runs through Saddleworth and Mossley, linking Ashton and Huddersfield, being set back a year, to April 2001.

JANUARY 22 Oldham Chronicle

Saddleworth Festival article rouses one HCS member to write a critical letter. HCS washing dirty linen in public? Never!

JANUARY 28 Oldham Chronicle

A dream come true. Full report of the announcement of EP funding success.

JANUARY 28 Stalybridge Bulletin

Good article entitled "Final go ahead for canal".

JANUARY 29 Oldham Chronicle

Comment

The hand-over of £12.84 million from English Partnerships to the Huddersfield Canal Company - the final instalment in a £30 million funding package which guarantees the restoration of the canal - was a fitting tribute to the vision, hard work and enthusiasm of the doughty pioneers who have battled for 25 years to make their dream come true.

The Huddersfield Canal Society has remained steadfast in its determination to see the famous waterway opened and the end of what must at times have seemed a mission impossible is now in sight.

The canal project promises enormous benefits in terms of jobs, tourism and recreation along its entire route, and the Saddleworth villages of Uppermill and Diggle certainly stand to benefit with a knock-on boost for the whole of Oldham.

The reopening of the Stanedge Tunnel is probably the toughest of the 19 major projects which need to be undertaken before the canal will be navigable along its entire length, but it is hoped that all work will be completed by April, 2001.

It is a most exciting prospect, bringing together the economic and environmental rejuvenation of the area.

FEBRUARY 2 Oldham Chronicle

A terrific picture of Ken Williams, (invisible, having already had his moment of fame on the telly!) dredging at Uppermill - judge for yourselves overleaf.

FEBRUARY 9 Oldham Chronicle

Article about rebuilding the canalside Boat and Horses, on the Rochdale at Chadderton, as a 30 bed hotel. What regeneration and restoration is mainly about. *But what is the latest news on the Rochdale? Ed.*

FEBRUARY 16 Oldham Chronicle

A walking article refers to reopening the canal by 2011. Not a typographical error, the author is seriously ill-informed!

FEBRUARY 17 Huddersfield Examiner

Good PR story about the removal of Slaithwaite's cherry trees with the town's approval. See Alec Ramsden's article - p46. Ed.

FEBRUARY 18 Olbam Chronicle

The Government awakes to the existence of canals!

Canals in the North will be used to move water to drought-ridden areas of Britain under a plan announced today.

Deputy prime minister John Prescott unveiled a scheme to breathe new life into the canal network by making it part of a new national water grid.

Canals could then be used to shift water from the north to areas of the country hit by water shortages and hosepipe bans.

Mr. Prescott has given the go-ahead for the millions of pounds of debt owed by British Waterways to be written off.

It would then be free to team up with the private sector and local authorities to begin a backlog of badly needed maintenance.

And he said among the "exciting possibilities" that would open up was a role in transferring water.

British Waterways already uses its network to move supplies of untreated water to serve individual water companies.

But Mr. Prescott believes the canals could be a cheap option to expand that

role, although it would need substantial investment.

His report said: "The network offer a ready-made infrastructure with real potential to transfer water from places of surplus to places of shortage."

The flow of water in part of the canal network would be reversed, canal beds lowered and the banks raised to cope with the increased flow of water.

Mr. Prescott said he was determined to "unlock the potential" of the 2,000 miles of waterways which are used by ten million people a year.

That could also include moving freight, boosting tourism and greater educational and recreational use.

FEBRUARY 19 Oldham Chronicle

Oldham Council announces plans for full consultation and exhibition on the alternative schemes for High Street Bridge, Uppermill. As this could involve a lengthy closure of a Class 1 road (A670) it is a serious matter.

My thanks, as ever, to the local newspapers for never missing an opportunity to help our cause. And who knows, if IT continues to develop at the current rate, you may get excerpts from TV articles in future issues! Yes, we made it around the 27th January with several snippets on the northern magazine programmes, and again on Feb 22nd.

Ken Wright



The Back Page

THE SOCIETY WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

- 2511 Mr & Mrs Holt, [REDACTED]
- 2512 Mr & Mrs Gibbard, [REDACTED]
- 2513 Mr Heron, [REDACTED]
- 2514 Mr Hicks, [REDACTED]
- 2515 Mr Clark, [REDACTED]
- 2516 Mr Rooney, [REDACTED]
- 2517 Mr Amende, [REDACTED]

SOCIAL MEETINGS:

Regular readers of Pennine Link will have been aware that for some time we have only given meeting dates for the West Side venue at the Tollemache Arms. Owing to members commitments, an East Side function has not been feasible.

At the March meeting of the West Side group it became apparent that the diary dates from April to September conflicted with the personal arrangements of several

members. As a result, it was decided to suspend the West Side meetings and review the situation in the Autumn.

However, with imminent restoration progress on the canal, the Society is planning to organise a number of site visits and advance notice will be given in Pennine Link. So, definitely 'watch this space' and don't miss your opportunity to see the Impossible Restoration unfold!

PENNINE LINK ARCHIVE:

The following back issues are available free from John Maynard, 29 Thick Hollins Drive, Meltham, Yorkshire. Please send an A5 stamped, addressed envelope (38p) or A4 sized

envelope (64p) for issues 81/82, 91 and 100.

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MEMBERSHIP RATES

Individual	£9.00
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COPY DATE

Articles, letters and comments for Issue 127 of Pennine Link should reach the Editor at Bridge House, Dodsworth, Ottham, GLOS SN1 by 28th May

ADVERTISING RATES

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

Solution to Crossword No. 24: ACROSS: 1. Thelwall viaduct 8. Rectangular 10. Door 11. Nell 12. Ancoats 14. BPI 15. Ely 16. Guaging 17. Washtub 19. End 20. Pea 21. Egerton 22. Otic 24. Army 25. Midgham lock 28. Surlingham broad DOWN: 1. Tardebigge locks 2. LNER 3. Art 4. Lincoln 5. ICU 6. Dean 7. Tooleys boatyard 8. Rosie and Jim 9. Regents park 12. Antique 13. Silsden 18. Corpach 23. Cill 24. Acer 26. Gun 27. Lam

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

HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY LIMITED

Notice is hereby given that the Nineteenth Annual General Meeting of the above named Company will be held at the Wool Road Transshipment Warehouse, Dobcross, Oldham, on Friday the 11th day of June 1999 at 7.30pm to Transact the following Business:

- A. To receive and adopt the Accounts for the Company for the year ending 31st December 1998 together with the Report of the Council of Management and of the Auditors thereon.**
- B. To re-elect Messrs Mazars Neville Russell of Huddersfield as Auditors and to authorise the Council of Management to fix their remuneration.**
- C. To re-elect Mr. Trevor Ellis as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.**
- D. To re-elect Mr. David M Sumner as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.**
- E. To re-elect Mr. Vincent H. Willey as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.**
- F. To confirm the appointment of Mr. Keith H.W. Noble co-opted during the year.**
- G. To consider any other nominations.**
- H. Any other business.**

DATED the 29th day of March 1999

By Order of the Council

**J.M.Fryer
Company Secretary**