

The background of the cover is a photograph of a stone bridge over a canal. The bridge is made of large, weathered stone blocks. The canal water is dark and still. In the foreground, there is a concrete structure, possibly a lock or a weir, with some blue plastic sheeting and debris on it. The overall scene is somewhat overcast and industrial.

Pennine Link

Members Quarterly Journal - Issue 131 - Winter 1999

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Cover: Melbourne Street Bridge, Stalybridge. For almost 40 years since the Canal was milled, the bridge, integral towpath and washwalls have been waiting patiently for the 'Impossible Restoration'.

Photo: R.Craugh



I've gone up in the world since the last issue! Having received an invitation to the press day at Standedge Tunnel I can now consider myself to be a journalist!

It was an interesting experience; all the nationals were there, two television crews, Radio Leeds and Radio 5 Live. The banter was great, The Guardian and The Independent claiming they should be in the first group (of six or so) to enter the tunnel as they needed longer to write their pieces because they used longer words!

Most of the reporters were having a day off from the trial in Preston of the GP accused of murdering numerous patients. They were like kids out of school but, as the very cordial man from Radio 5 Live said "If this lot hear that the doctor has changed his plea to guilty you won't see them for dust!"

Anyway, although I was there to report for Pennine Link there was nothing extra to say that you won't catch up on by reading it. There was a rock bolting rig set up near the tunnel mouth for people to photograph - being "operated" by a very embarrassed looking electrician, it being far too far, wet and hazardous for the likes of us to get beyond the reach of daylight.

And when reporters, hanging about for up to three hours for their "turn", realised that yours truly was something to do with the restoration society, they turned on me to relieve the boredom and I was interviewed by Radio 5 Live, Radio Leeds and BBC TV (Look North and North West Tonight). Radio 5 wasn't live but I missed it, anyway, but I did catch myself on BBC.1 at 6.45pm. I don't think I did too badly, either!

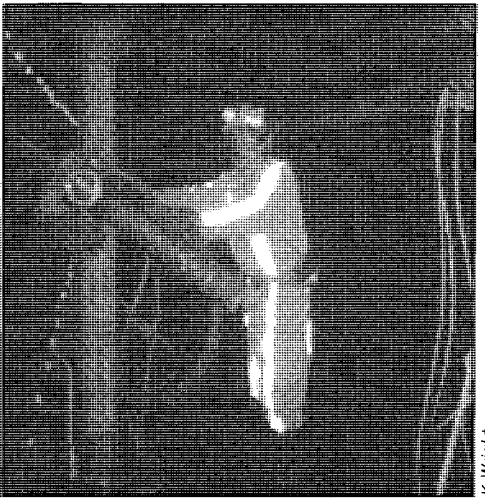


K Wright

THE PRESS - shivering with anticipation, or something. Left: Doesn't look much like a canal tunnel at the moment. Below: One very patient operative pretends to drill a rock.



K Wright



K Wright

Good news on the Plink front is that Bob Gough has been assured of a job at least until the canal is reopened, so we have a stay of execution! It now remains for me to chuck my weight about to ensure that Pennine Link gets *some* priority amongst all Bob's other jobs.

This issue is the first one when all the contracts for the works of restoration have been let and, consequently, keeping pace with the work is our priority. So, lots of

pictures and explanatory captions for you. I'm off to Thailand but I hope to see this issue safely tied up (*editorially*) before I go.

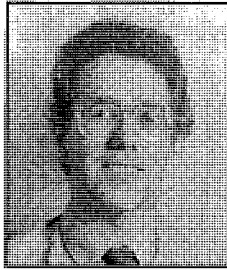
Ken Wright

Things were all on course for this issue to arrive just in time for Christmas, but due to a serious fire in an adjacent mill and its subsequent demolition, our offices were out of bounds for a critical period. I hope you had a wonderful Christmas and New Millennium, and what a year ahead for the Canal Society!

Bob Gough

Chairman's Report

"British Waterways has become the very model of a nationalised industry and not because it is now one of the few. Its programme of restoration - some 200 miles of waterways are to be added to the network by 2001 - rolls forward.



"Few are more impressive than the Huddersfield Narrow Canal as it runs, 600 feet beneath the moors, through the Standedge Tunnel. Here is the kind of monument the Millennium Commission ought to be proud to leave behind. Thanks to it (that is to say the unlucky gamblers who provided the money) £30M has been made available to reopen the tunnel and adjacent canal. "Working with enthusiasts and local authorities on both sides of the Pennines, British Waterways is bringing back into use this three mile (5.2km) stretch of Georgian brick and masonry, through which leggers used to push coal and limestone barges"

The above is an extract from the leader article in The Guardian dated 29th October, following an article the previous day, after a press visit to Standedge achieved national media coverage. The Guardian could not have summed up our message more succinctly. In the year when the Canal Society has been honoured to chair the Huddersfield Canal Company and see real progress on the restoration, we have received the recognition all the members of our Society so richly deserve. The Society has a key role in the restoration drive and we are now working with our partners to look at our role post-restoration.

All this success has not come without a price. Over the years the Society believed, quite rightly, that to demonstrate its mission it should work on the canal itself, until the funds necessary for through navigation could be assembled. We set up a restoration arm after cutting our teeth on environmental work on the Peak Forest and Ashton Canals. This, of course, followed our volunteer efforts at Uppermill and, even earlier, in Huddersfield. We established a training company which took advantage of the job creation schemes and commenced full scale restoration under the HCS (Restoration) Ltd banner. Contracts won in the mid-90s culminated in the magnificent restoration of the Diggle Flight of locks. Sadly, this was to be almost the last major contract, as the 'simple' jobs were worked out and major civil engineering works began.

We were forced to run down HCS (Restoration) Ltd and Council took the reluctant step to close the company as soon as practically possible and to make the existing staff redundant. The Society owes a great debt to the efforts of Stephen Whitby, who left our employment at the end of September. Stephen, as managing director of HCS(R), handled the job creation programmes and built up an excellent working relationship with the local authorities, for whom most of the contracts were carried out. His experience - since 1984 - on the canals in Tameside, Oldham and Kirklees kept restoration costs to a minimum, benefitting our coffers and competitively winning work with the local authorities, using English Partnerships' and other funds.

cont'd ...

The Passing of HCS Restoration Ltd

In the summer issue, I reported that the Society had reluctantly decided to close HCS Restoration Ltd., our canal contracting business. The deadline for copy for the last issue came before I could tell you any more.

I can now simply report that to all intents and purposes the company is closed. The outside workforce has all left our employment. Steve Whitby, our Managing Director, is no longer with us and is looking for employment elsewhere. Bob Gough still remains in the office as Assistant Editor of "Pennine Link", helping



Frank Smith, and providing a back-up service to Alan Stopher. He will, presumably, transfer to the employment of the Society. General Manager, John McLoughlin, who was, I think, our second employee after Steve, is still with us helping me to finalise accounts of completed work with the local authorities, to dispose of the assets, to leave appropriate and useful records, and close the company down. Actually that is a little unfair in that John is doing most of the work, and very grateful I am that he is willing to stay to the end.

cont'd ...

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He helped to make "The Impossible Restoration" possible and we all wish Stephen well in his future career.

If Standedge Tunnel is the jewel in the crown of the restoration project - it put the thespian editor Ken Wright on regional TV news! - Stalybridge must be the key to unlock the whole scheme. Members will recall the W S Atkins studies, paid for by the Society, which kept alive the hope of navigating once again through Stalybridge. One of the suggestions, apart from the obvious, was to utilise the old railway line - the Micklehurst Loop - to avoid the town centre blockage.

Now, after discounting the river route, the old canal line - with improvements (and what improvements!) - is being restored. On the 5th November, I stood on the towpath coping stones by Melbourne Street bridge for the first time. Tameside

Council held a celebration and, along with Tom Pendry (MP for Stalybridge and Hyde) I joined Councillor Roy Oldham, Leader of Tameside Council and his Mayor and Mayoress to celebrate the commencement of the major civil engineering works. Tameside Council saw the benefits of the original route and, with various town centre traders' support, promoted the scheme, taking advantage of the closure of Delta-Enfield Cables Ltd.

Without a doubt the Stalybridge project, costing around £8M, is the most significant part of the whole restoration and, with its commencement in November, I feel that the job is now all but done. As the Guardian stated "Through town and country, these ribbons of turbid water provide leisure and pleasure. The more the better". Hear. Hear!

David Sumner

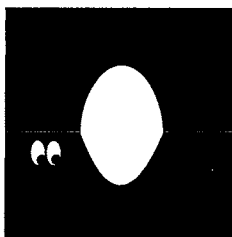
The ending of the company has caused a great deal of upset and bitterness both amongst our former staff, within the Board of HCS Restoration and at HCS Council level. I suppose that was inevitable, just as it was always inevitable that the Society would have to close the company at the time when large contractors take over in the final push to complete restoration of the canal. I have been personally saddened and hurt by the whole process. The Society, however, is strong and able to overcome the internal difficulties this process has caused. And, perhaps more important, now that we no longer have contract liabilities and responsibilities to deliver work on time, to specification and budget, the nature of the relationship between British Waterways and the Society has changed immeasurably for the better.

Over the years that I chaired the company I learned a great deal - some of which I didn't expect to have to know as a

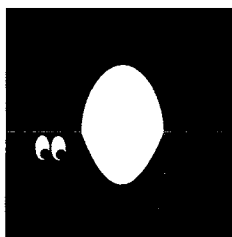
volunteer seeking to restore a canal, such as the importance of health and safety issues, or of contract law, and the overarching role of profitability even for a company operated by a Charity (If you don't make a profit, you make a loss!). Most of all I learned that to operate a company such as this, a voluntary Society is totally dependant on its staff. To them we all owe a huge debt of gratitude. Without their efforts HCS Restoration would not have restored 27 locks, dredged 6 miles of canal, re-laid tow-paths, rebuilt washwalls, restored the Transhipment Warehouse and carried out landscaping and other works. Without their efforts, the Society would not have been able to put in the huge effort needed to bid for the Millennium Commission grant which, together with English Partnerships funding, is now seeing complete restoration as an imminent prospect.

Keith Gibson

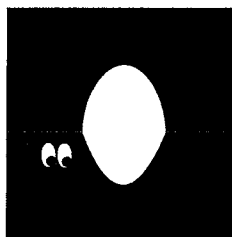
In Standedge Tunnel ...



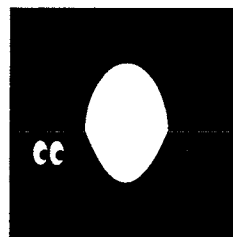
Good grief! ...



Where's the carpet gone ...



Come to that,
Where's the floor gone ...



Mary, have you been using
that Dyson again!

**If the turn of the Century does Herald the End of the World,
perhaps an Australian could phone and let us know.**

Huddersfield Canal Company Report

The last quarter has seen a start on most of the remaining blockages. I hope that the photographs in this issue give you an insight into the high level of activity along the whole canal.

Work at **Stalybridge** started at the end of September and what a change there has

been in a relatively short time! Demolition of the buildings inside the Delta site is now complete and piling rigs have been deployed by the developer's contractor to install the foundations for the new canalside buildings. A whole new vista has opened out along this 300 metre long stretch of canal. The purely canal-related works have resulted in site clearance at Mottram Road, and piling and excavation to the first third of the concrete box culvert and pre-cast concrete units are arriving. Lane closures and temporary traffic lights are keeping traffic moving on this busy stretch of the A57.

Armentières Square is the scene of much activity. The car park has been removed and the buses re-routed along Trinity Street. A major drain has been diverted and the excavation for the new Lock 6W is now complete. The computer literate amongst us can monitor progress in the square by looking at the images recorded by the Tameside Council webcam fixed to the rear of the Stalybridge town centre project office at 30 Melbourne Street. The address is:

<http://www.tameside.gov.uk>

This camera takes a picture every 5 minutes from 7am to 11pm. Each day, at around 2pm, an image is saved with a view to a time lapse film being made.



Either side of the pedestrianised Melbourne Street, excavations have revealed the original bridge and the canal walls. The contractor has been removing the bricks and crushed stone used to fill the arch and identifying the repairs which will need to be made to the bridge.

British Waterways have made a start on **Division Bridge Aqueduct** by damming off the canal at either end. The intention is to repair and waterproof the lining across the aqueduct to prevent leakage and make localised repairs to the masonry.

DCT Civil Engineering Ltd has been awarded the contract for **High Street Bridge** at Uppermill. In conjunction with Oldham Council engineers, the contractor is currently reviewing construction methods and traffic management arrangements with a view to minimising disruption in the village. To assist this process, trial excavations are being made in the road over a two week period to establish the precise position and condition of the old bridge.

The same contractor is on programme at **Wool Road**. The reinforced concrete channel is virtually complete and steel is now in place for the top section of the new concrete box culvert. The bywash pipe has been laid beside Lock 24W and the new wall built beside one of the cottages. The traffic diversion over the original arch bridge continues to be effective.

At **Standedge Tunnel**, removal of debris has reached around 1600m in from the

portal. A second centrifuge is being built at Tunnel End, Marsden to tackle the section up to the first rock fall. Rock bolting is following the desilting operation.

At the nearby **Standedge Visitor Centre** (note the revised name which we are trying on for size) British Waterways have engaged Architecture & Design Partnership from Holmfirth to lead the design team planning and managing the refurbishment work of the Grade II listed warehouse. Some members will remember this firm's involvement in the award winning restoration of the Wool Road Transhipment Shed. In order to get a feel for the work required on the canal arm inside the warehouse, BW's operational team have excavated a boat-sized trial pit and found the stonework to be in excellent shape. BW also have a multi-disciplined team reviewing the requirements for the tug and trip boats.

A start has also been made at **Slaithwaite**. The contractor, Galliford Northern from Warrington, has already started excavations at Old Bank to enable the road to be realigned and a new bridge built to take the private access road over the canal just downstream of the restored Lock 23W. A start has also been made on the demolition of the old New Street council depot to allow construction of the replacement car park. Work on Britannia Bridge and the main canal channel will start after Christmas. An initial liaison meeting has been held between representatives of the residents and business community, the engineers and contractors to help with the flow of information during the 14 month contract. David Littlewood of the Colne Valley Trust has kindly undertaken to act as chairman for future meetings. In the

centre of Slaithwaite, the vast Globe Mills frontage is being stone-cleaned with funds from Kirklees Council's 'Enhancing Marsden and Slaithwaite' scheme showing that some of the spin-offs from the canal restoration are already taking place.

Further down the Colne Valley, the contracts for **Mark Bottoms and Lees Mill Bridges, Golcar Aqueduct and Holme Mill Bridge** have been awarded to Wrekin Construction.

So far work has concentrated mainly on the latter. A temporary canal crossing has been formed to provide continuous access and the 1920s fixed 'swing' bridge has been removed. With the canal dammed either side of the bridge works, British Waterways ecologist, Nick Birkinshaw assisted by a Huddersfield University Geography student have been rescuing several hundred native white-clawed crayfish and transferring them back to the canal upstream. The clean nature of the canal at this point supports this nationally rare and protected species. Unfortunately, like the red squirrel, the native crayfish is under threat from an introduced predatory relation and there is concern for its future survival, so it is particularly pleasing that this aspect of the work is getting the attention it deserves.

In Huddersfield, at **Bates and Sellers**, work on Yorkshire Water's deep sewer diversion under the proposed canal in Queen Street South has been delayed by hard rock, resulting in a longer than planned road closure. Out of sight behind the façade of Bates' Fairfield Mill, the teasing shed has been cleared of equipment and a piling rig is installing intersecting concrete piles either side of

the future canal. This will then be roofed over to enable the teasing activity to return whilst excavation takes place below. A new car park and access road have been built in Sellers Engineers yard to release space for canal construction. Two lines of sheet-piled walls have been installed beside the existing tin shop and concrete cross members cast to support piles when excavation of the 'tunnel' starts. Site clearance work is also under way at the location of the new Lock 3E behind Earnshaws motorcycle showroom.

Promotion of the project continues to take place. Media interest is high, with work on Standedge Tunnel particularly capturing the imagination. Filming for the

Company's video continues with a number of local people's recollections being captured. Jackson Quigg Associates of Hipperholme, Halifax have been engaged by British Waterways to manage the Arts Project. They have already made contact with members of the arts community in the Tame and Colne Valleys and sought further expression of interest through the local papers. This promises to be an exciting venture, which will link well with the opening celebrations and our own visitor centre.

As we embark on the year 2000, the final push to complete restoration is evident for all to see.

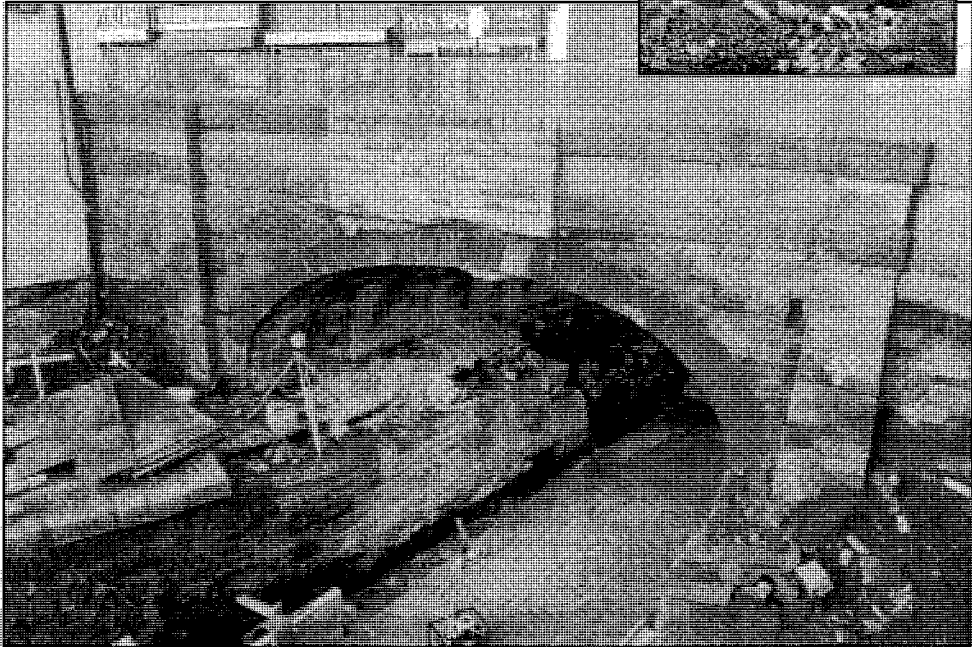
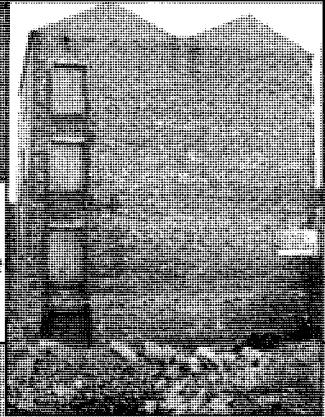
Alan Stopher



Stalybridge - Melbourne Street



Melbourne Street, Stalybridge - Above: The view from Back Melbourne Street (completely removed) showing the road deck extension and excavated bridge hole. Right inset: A period cantonade building adjacent to the bridge. Below left: A suitably historic picture of (left to right) Project Director, Alan Stopher, North West Development Agency's Chris Wilkinson and Society Chairman, David Sarner in front of the bricked-up arch prior to its excavation, which (below) revealed a bridge in excellent condition, complete with seatwalls and integral parapet.

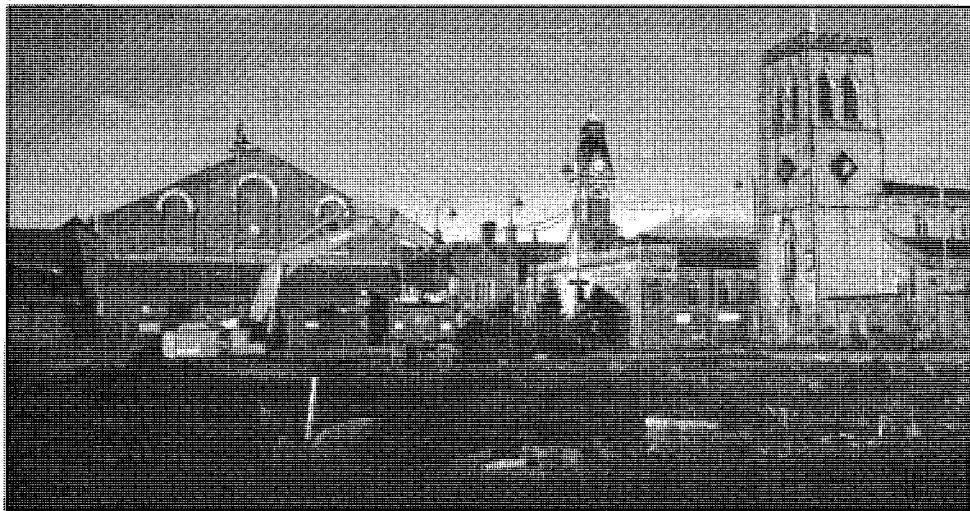


R Gough

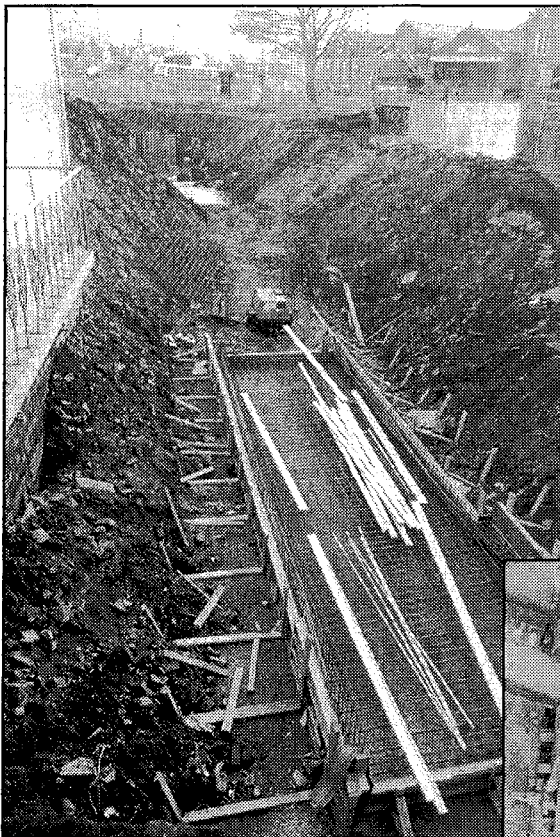
R Gough

R Gough

Armentières Square



A Stopher



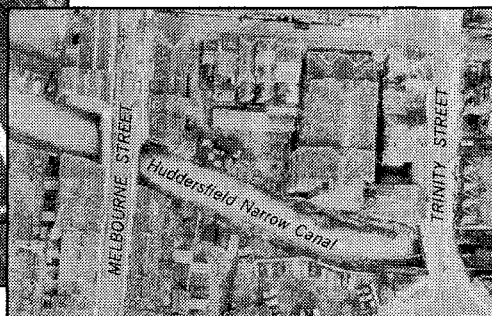
R Gough

Though the Stalybridge skyline (above) remains familiar, Armentières Square (above right) has received some serious attention. The concrete casting for the base of the relocated Lock 6W is clearly visible in the bottom of the excavation. Visitors are struck by the depth of the excavations, but the completed lock will mean boats will be at paving level when the lock is full.

The view shown left is from Melbourne Street toward the Square. The reinforcement work in the foreground marks the line of the new canal channel. Trinity Street, along which the bus in the distance is travelling, will be breached and diverted around the new Armentières Square, crossing the canal via a box section culvert to be constructed just beyond the reinforcement work.

Perhaps the most dramatic change in Stalybridge has been the clearance of the site formerly occupied by Delta Cables (right). It is always difficult to show the full scale of such sites in photographs from the ground, but the works will be very impressive. The view, taken from the Trinity Street entrance to the former works, shows the location of the original Lock 6W in the foreground.

Below: In the days before Armentières Square. An aerial view from 1960 courtesy of Stalybridge Reference Library.



and the Delta Site



R Gough



R Gough

Mottram Road & Division Bridge Aqueduct



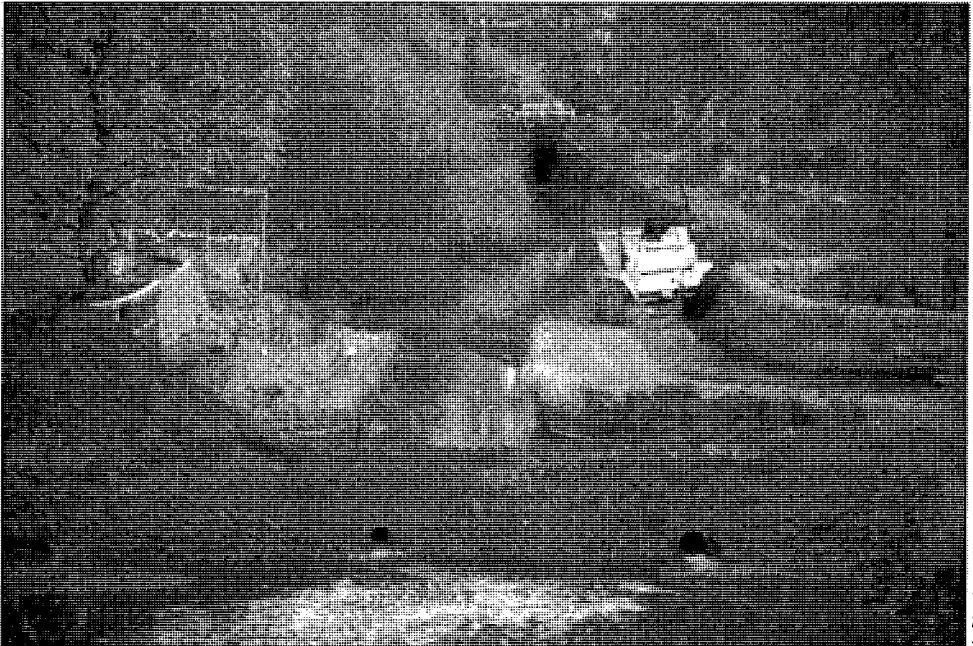
Left: Piled excavations at Mottram Road on the Delta site revealing a particularly narrow original bridgehole. A new box section culvert will be constructed here carrying the canal under the main Mottram Road. The bridgehole will be much wider than the original to accommodate a towpath and hence safe pedestrian access across the road.

Below left: The canal at the Division Bridge aqueduct has been dammed off in preparation for local dewatering so that the structure can be made watertight and inspected for any structural problems.

Right: A familiar, yet changing view of Wool Road bridge showing the formwork in position to complete the new road bridge.

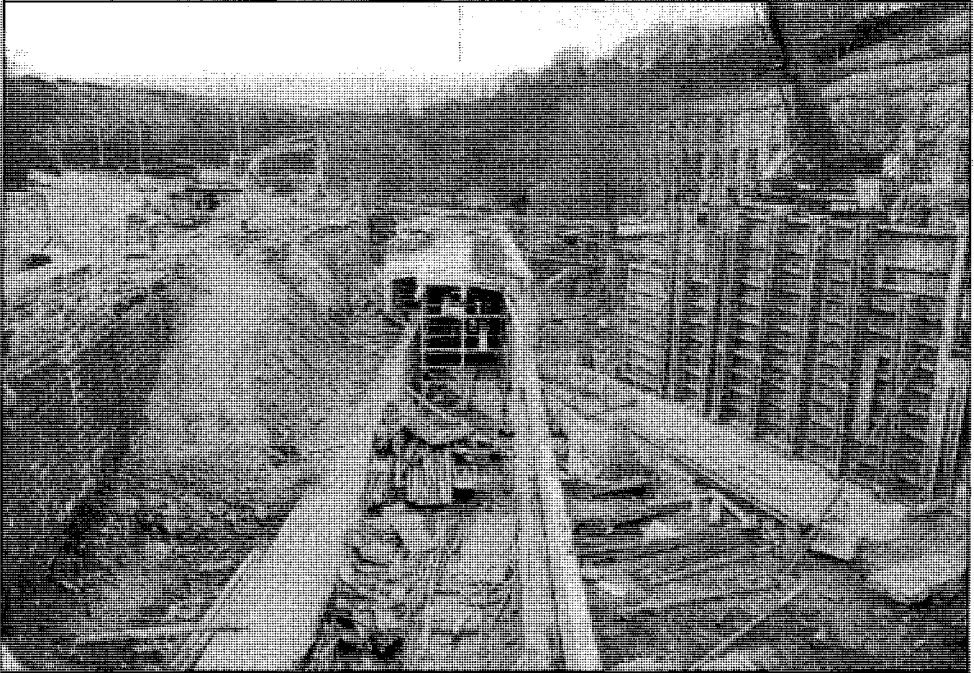
Below right: Lock 24W at the bottom of the Diggle Flight. The original lock chamber was simply capped and via access from a surface manhole, engineers have ascertained that the chamber is in excellent condition. The chamber has been temporarily filled with hardcore while new coping stones are being placed.

R Gough



A Stopher

Uppermill - Wool Road & Lock 24W

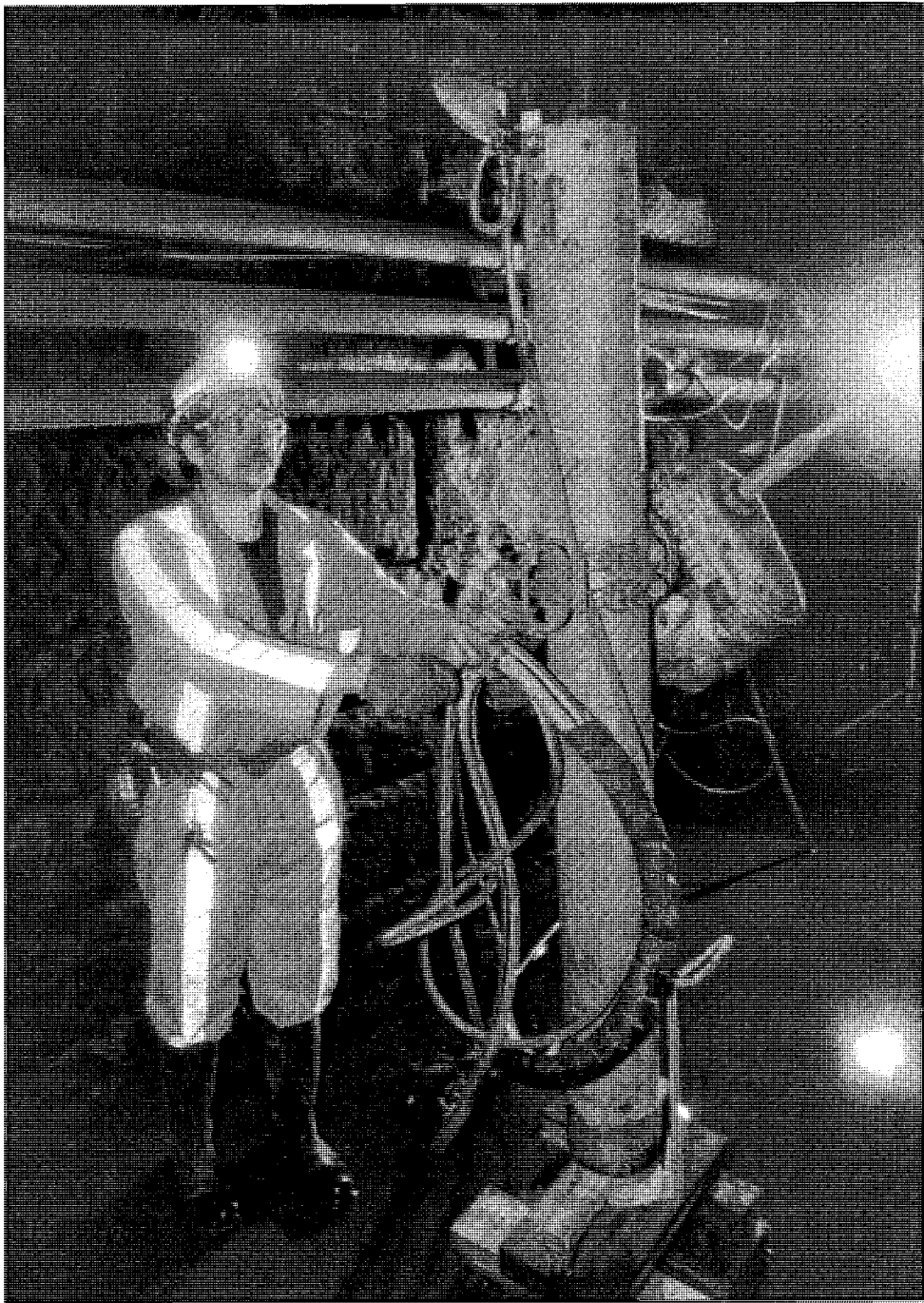


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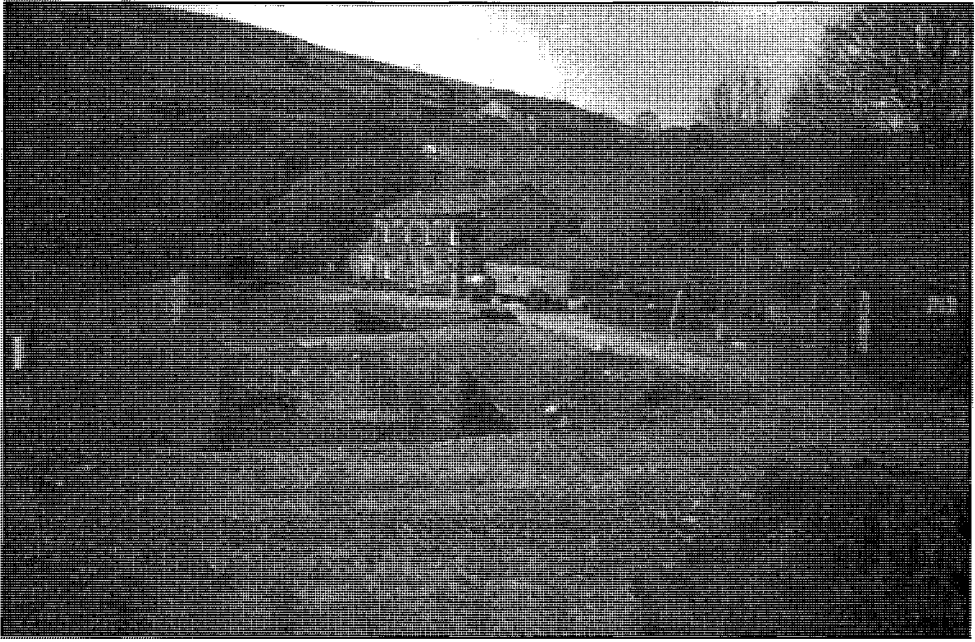
A Stopper

Inside Standedge Tunnel



Courtesy of British Waterways

Tunnel End & Slaithwaite



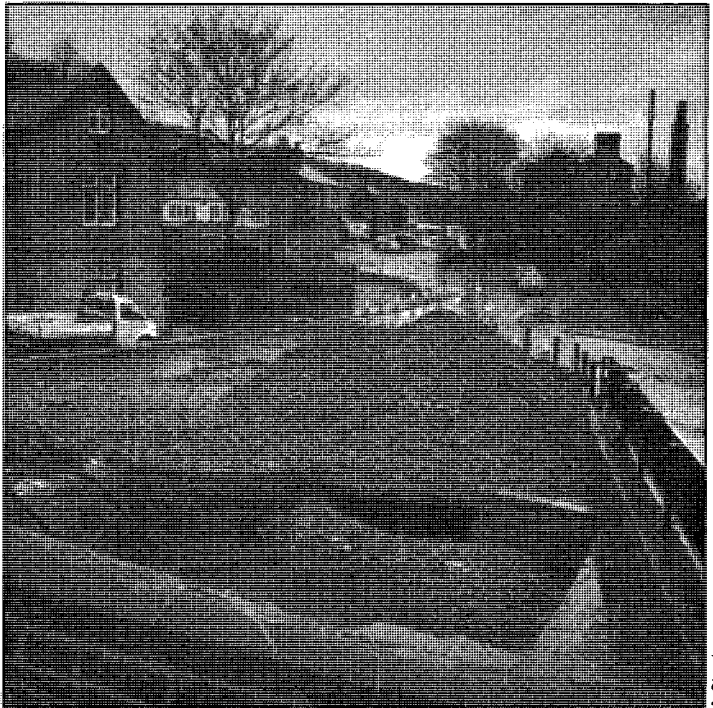
A Stopher

Left: Rock bolting at the Diggle end of Standedge Tunnel.

Above: Tunnel End, Marsden. Two new settling lagoons have been constructed in the canal channel and new centrifuge equipment is being built on site to complement the arrangement at Diggle (featured in the last issue).

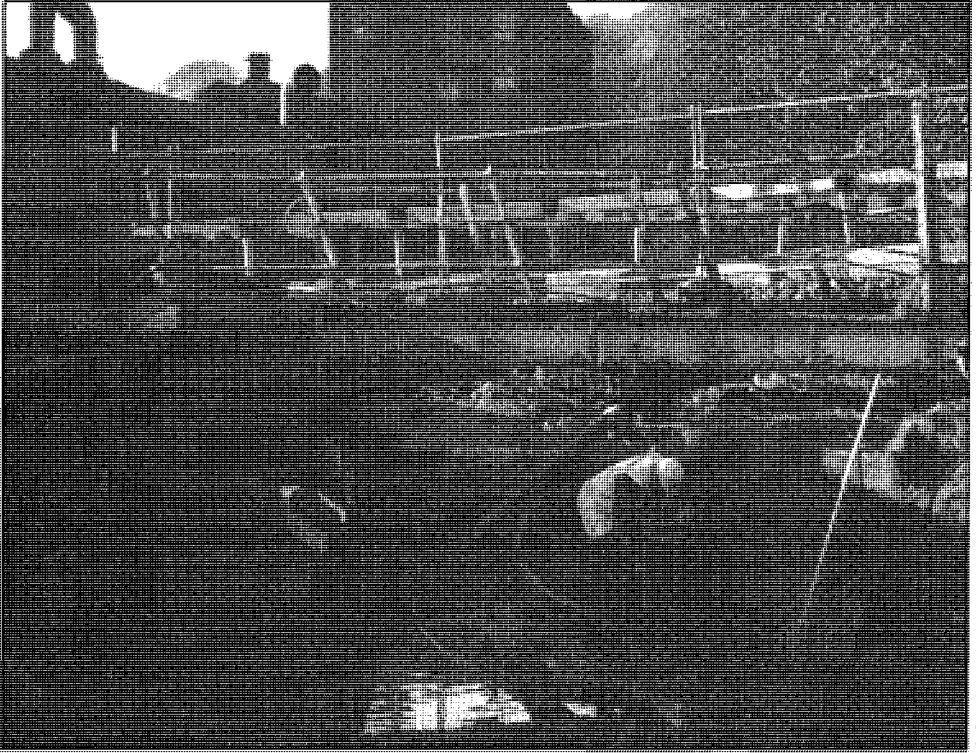
High pressure water dredging of the tunnel produces a silt slurry which is pumped into the first lagoon and then to the centrifuge. Here the bulk of the solids are extracted and collected in the skips, while the supernatant is pumped to the second lagoon for settling of any fine sediment that may remain. The clear water is then returned to the canal from the second lagoon.

Right: Preliminary works at Slaithwaite. The hardcore will be used to construct a temporary road diversion while a permanent bridge is constructed for the roadway to the right of the photograph.



A Stopher

Golcar - Crayfish Rescue



A Stopher

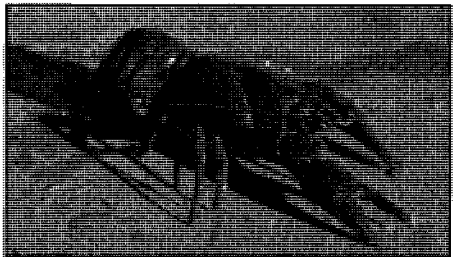
Above: Rescuing the nationally rare White Clawed Crayfish from the canal at Holme Mill Bridge. British Waterways' ecologist Nick Birkinshaw (left) examines this rare crustacean before returning it to an undisturbed section of canal upstream from the works.

Above right: The steel work of the old swing bridge prior to its removal; it now lies in state at Red Brook reservoir!

Right: A later view of the site showing the construction of the footings for the new bridge.

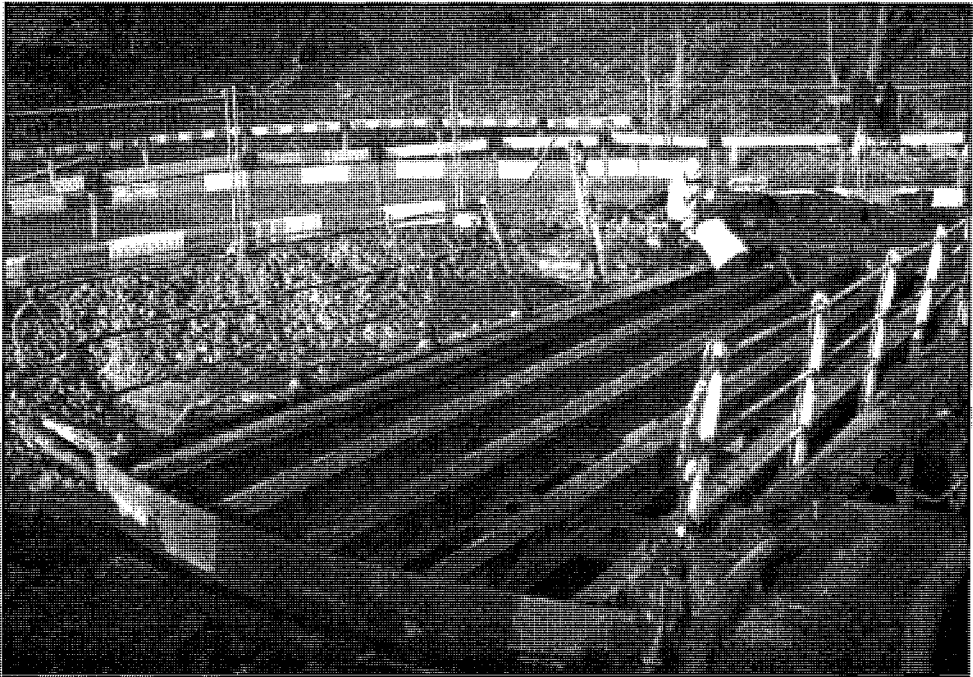


A Stopher

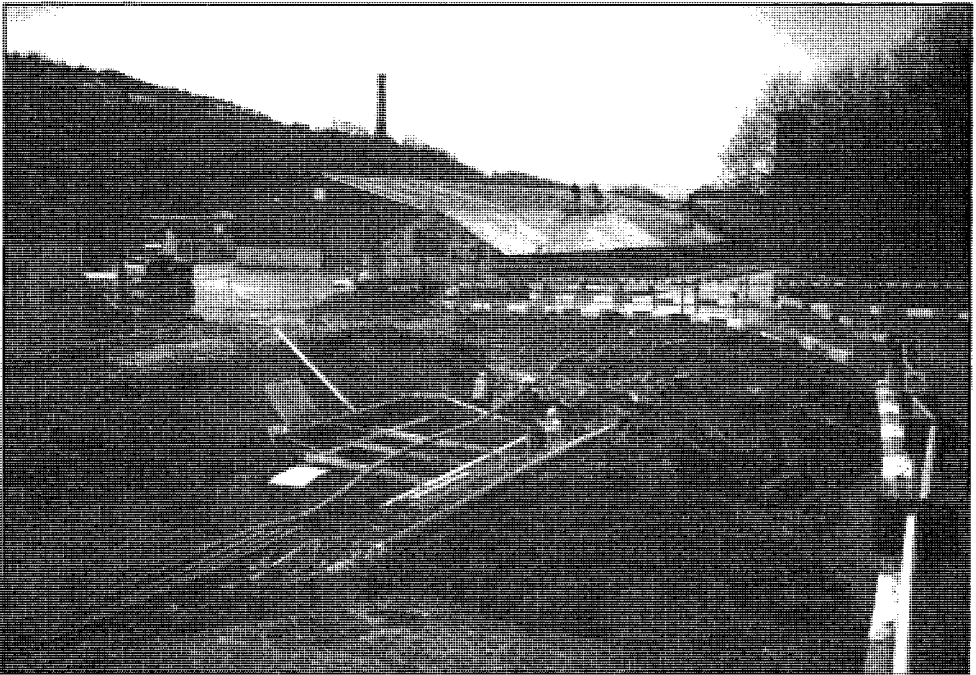


A Stopher

Holme Mill Bridge



A Stopher

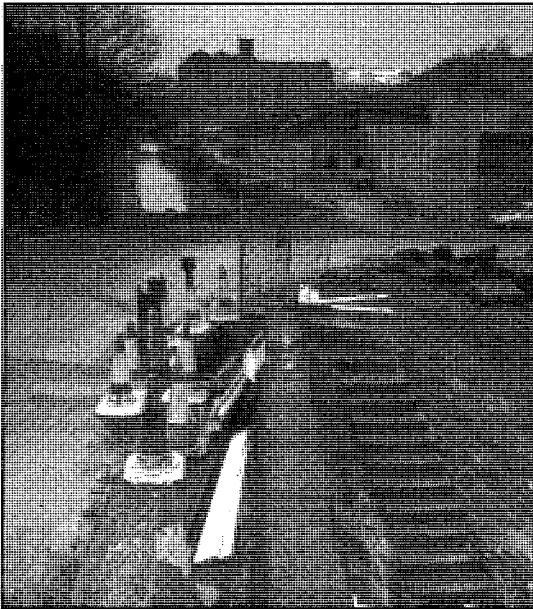


A Stopher

Golcar Aqueduct & Mark Bottoms Bridge



A Stopher



A Stopher

Above: Staging has been erected at Golcar aqueduct to allow a safe inspection of the structure.

Left: Preliminary works are underway at Mark Bottoms bridge. The roadway will be temporarily diverted on to the far banking while the new bridge is constructed.

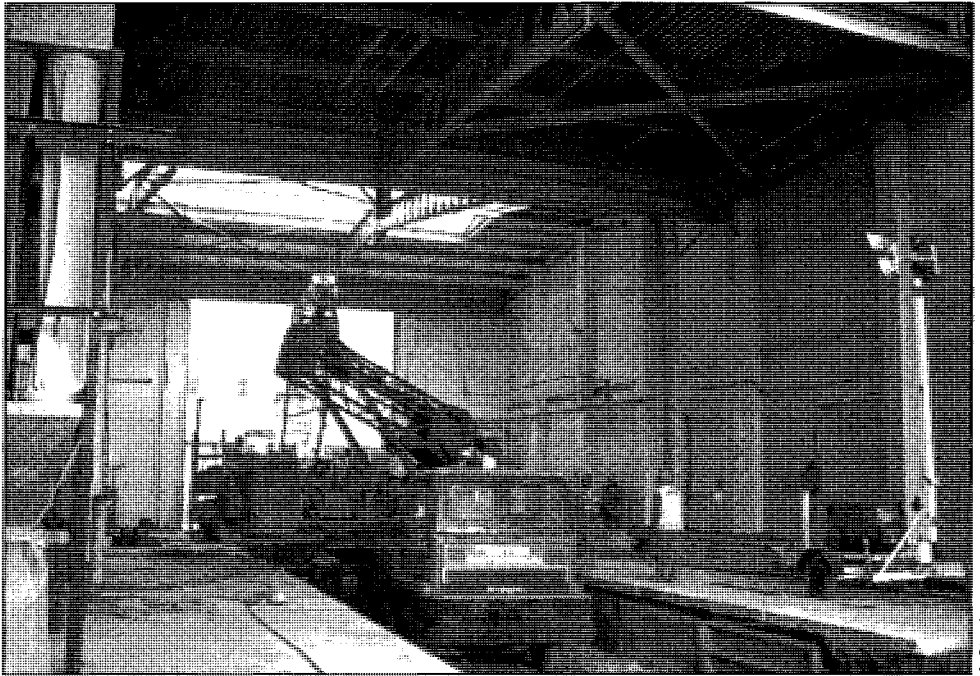
Above right: This is the site of the new Lock 2E looking upstream toward Chapel Hill. The stone-built Albion mill to the right has been converted for residential use. This is quite an unusual view of the Huddersfield Narrow in that it is a section normally hidden from view. Being enclosed by buildings and no public access, it is a very secluded stretch of water much favoured by Australian Black Swans!

Right: Inside the Bates & Co Teasing Shed. The works machinery has been cleared away and the floor excavated. The piling rig is in the process of constructing concrete piles either side of the planned canal tunnel. Once piled, capping beams and a new floor to the works will be installed so the machinery can be returned. Subsequently, the canal tunnel can be safely excavated between the piles, while the Shed returns to full production.

Huddersfield - Work at Bates & Co



A Stopher

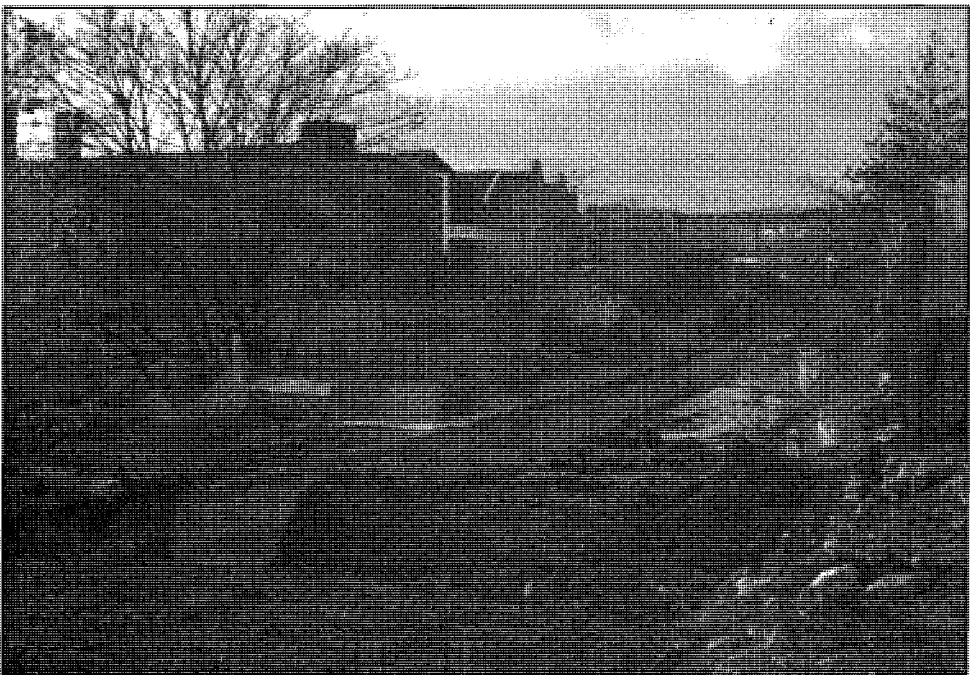


A Stopher

Site of new Lock 3E



A Stopher



A Stopher

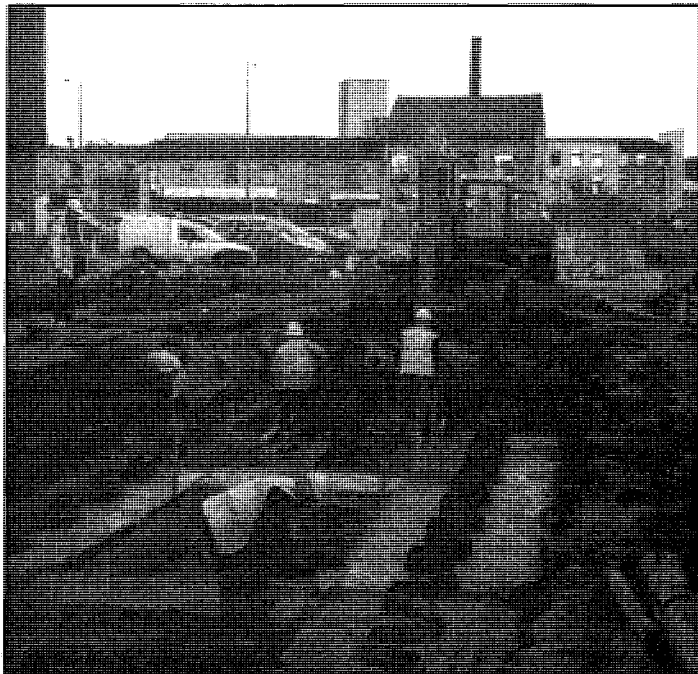
Sheet piling at Sellers Engineering

Left: The site of the new Lock 3E looking toward Sellers Engineering with the company's old Grinding Shed to the right.

Below left: The same location, but looking towards Longroyd bridge. When the new Wickes superstore was constructed, part of the development involved the reconstruction of the canal in this area.

Right: The Chapel Hill end of Sellers showing where the steel sheet piling has been installed to create the walls of the future canal tunnel.

Below right: A later view looking between the workshops after the capping beams and stabilising struts have been added to the piles to form the roof of the canal tunnel.

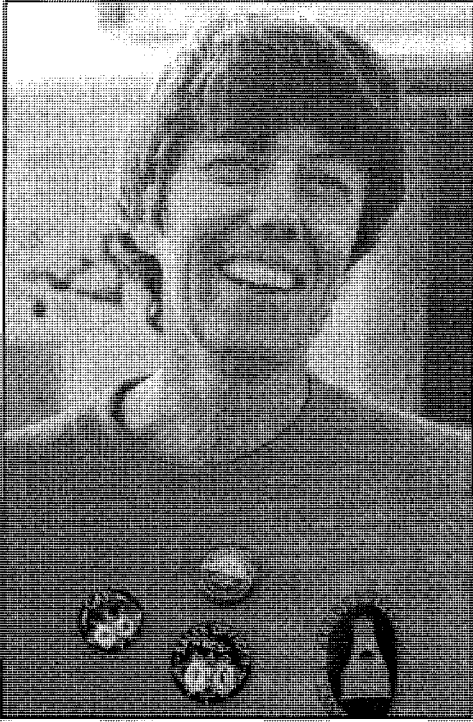


A Stopher



A Stopher

Obituary - Gay Quilter



It is with great sadness that we must report the untimely death of our former Sales Officer, Gay Quilter, who finally lost her brave fight against cancer in early November.

Gay was born in Ashburton, South Island New Zealand, a farmer's daughter whose talents included being able to shear sheep by hand. She had always wanted to be a vet, though found her career in teaching.

She taught for many years in Sydney, Australia before coming to this country in 1970, working in a variety of schools in the South of England.

She met her husband Steve in Essex when, with a friend, she set up an adult literacy scheme in which he became a voluntary tutor. They married in 1980 and lived on the Suffolk coast for a while indulging a mutual passion for windmills!

After a canal holiday they fell in love with the waterways network in the North West and in 1987 moved to a canalside house in Greenfield.

Inevitably she became a Director of the Canal Society and being a qualified teacher, was eminently suited to be appointed Sales Officer.

As a husband and wife team, Gay and Steve were regulars at canal festivals all over the country, raising the profile of the Society and the restoration work on the Huddersfield Narrow. A true ambassador for the Society.

It was through illness that Gay handed over the post of Sales Officer to family friend Pat Riley.

The funeral service was conducted at Dukinfield crematorium by another Society stalwart, Bob Maycock, whose eulogy was most moving and heartfelt.

Gay's excellent humour and generosity of character means that the Society has not just lost one of its staunchest supporters, but a dear friend.

Bob Gough

Some weeks ago, my father and I were watching the television and were struck by the number of commercials which ended with an almost obligatory reference to the Internet. And far from being restricted to 'high tech' commodities, even the most mundane of life's essentials seems to have a presence on the Web.

Always keen to keep up with modern developments, especially into the new

millennium, the Society has produced its own website, and, in the spirit of partnership and co-operation, has included a site for the Huddersfield Canal Company. It is hoped to make a major update on this, our first effort, before Christmas and at the moment the site is not registered, so it is best accessed directly: <http://www.hcanals.demon.co.uk>

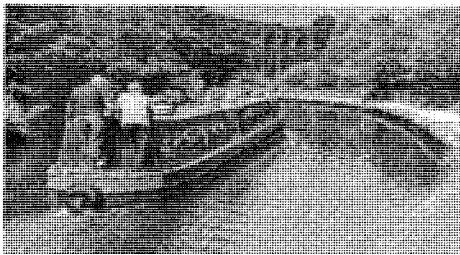
Although Internet-ready home computers are becoming increasingly commonplace and will probably be the Christmas present of 1999, especially if you have children, most public libraries have Internet access, so why not 'log on' and have a surf!

We would welcome your comments and suggestions either electronically or by traditional pen and paper.

Bob Gough



Welcome to the official site of the
HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY



**On the following pages you will find,
via a series of tunnels, details on the following:**



The Society - Who and what we are, our volunteer activities, and how you can help support the Society's 25 year campaign to restore and maintain the unique Huddersfield Narrow Canal.



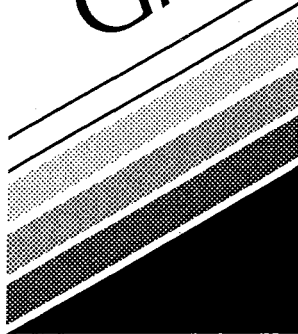
Huddersfield Narrow Canal - Historical back ground on its construction, operation, and eventual decline and dereliction - later followed by an exciting programme of restoration works.



Huddersfield Canal Company - Established in 1997 to complete the final phase of restoration following substantial grants from The Millennium Commission and English Partnerships.

*The Canal Society's
Home Page which greets
visitors to our website.*

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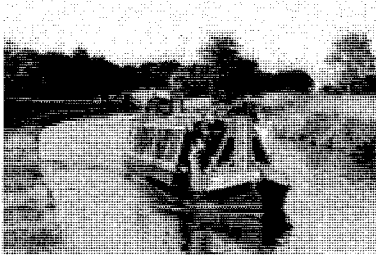
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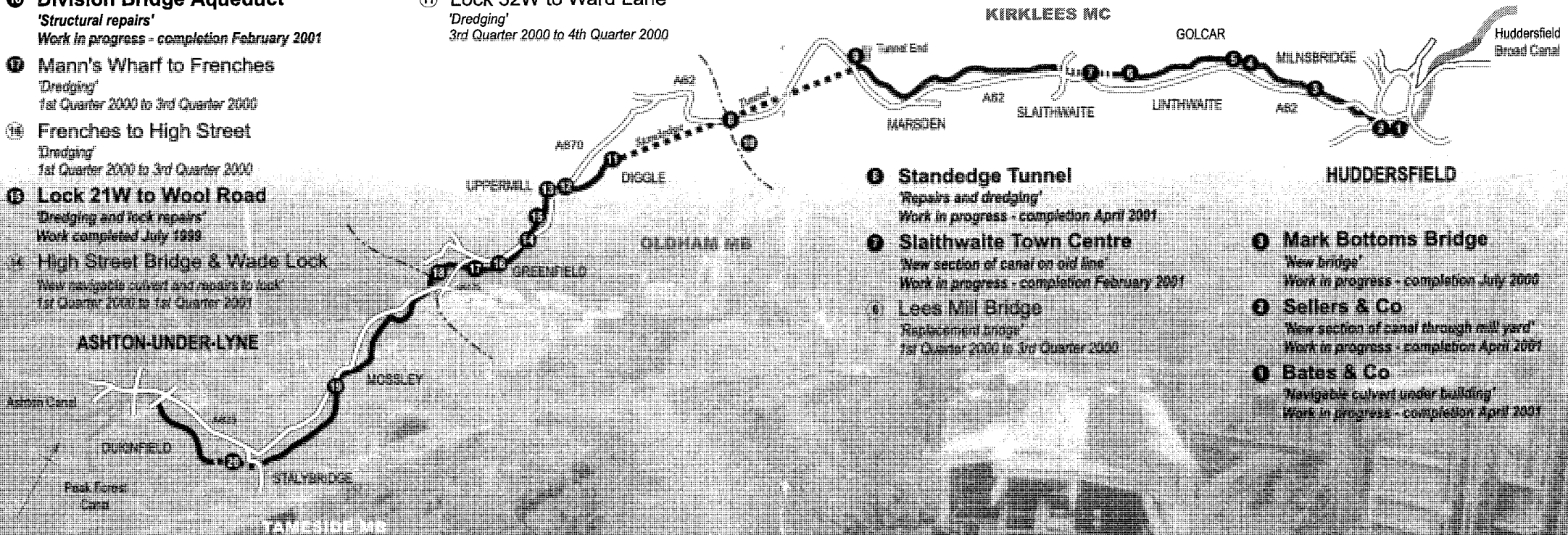
The Remaining Blockages on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal - Winter 1999

- 20 **Stalybridge Town Centre**
'Excavation of old canal line with new locks and bridges'
Work in progress - completion February 2001
- 19 **Scout Tunnel**
'Internal repairs'
Work in progress - completion April 2001
- 18 **Division Bridge Aqueduct**
'Structural repairs'
Work in progress - completion February 2001
- 17 **Mann's Wharf to Frenches**
'Dredging'
1st Quarter 2000 to 3rd Quarter 2000
- 16 **Frenches to High Street**
'Dredging'
1st Quarter 2000 to 3rd Quarter 2000
- 15 **Lock 21W to Wool Road**
'Dredging and lock repairs'
Work completed July 1999
- 14 **High Street Bridge & Wade Lock**
'New navigable culvert and repairs to lock'
1st Quarter 2000 to 1st Quarter 2001

- 13 **Old Sag Aqueduct**
'Structural repairs'
1st Quarter 2000 to 2nd Quarter 2000
- 12 **Wool Road Bridge & Lock 24W**
'New navigable culvert and repairs to lock'
Work in progress - completion April 2000
- 11 **Lock 32W to Ward Lane**
'Dredging'
3rd Quarter 2000 to 4th Quarter 2000

- 10 **Water Supply Works**
'Improvements to reservoir feeders'
1st Quarter 2000 to 3rd Quarter 2000
- 9 **Standedge Experience**
'Visitor/Heritage Centre'
2nd Quarter 2000 to 1st Quarter 2001

- 5 **Holme Mill Bridge**
'Replacement bridge'
Work in progress - completion July 2000
- 4 **Golcar Aqueduct**
'Structural repairs'
Work in progress - completion July 2000



- 8 **Standedge Tunnel**
'Repairs and dredging'
Work in progress - completion April 2001
- 7 **Slaithwaite Town Centre**
'New section of canal on old line'
Work in progress - completion February 2001
- 6 **Lees Mill Bridge**
'Replacement bridge'
1st Quarter 2000 to 3rd Quarter 2000

- 3 **Mark Bottoms Bridge**
'New bridge'
Work in progress - completion July 2000
- 2 **Sellers & Co**
'New section of canal through mill yard'
Work in progress - completion April 2001
- 1 **Bates & Co**
'Navigable culvert under building'
Work in progress - completion April 2001

Canal Cruises

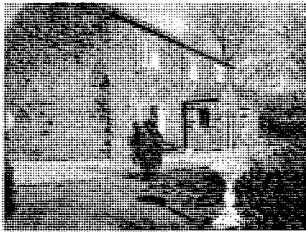
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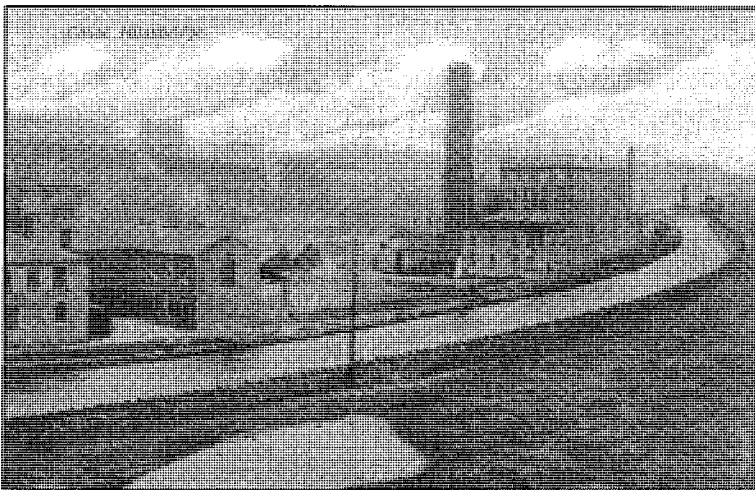
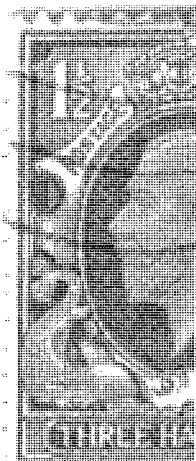
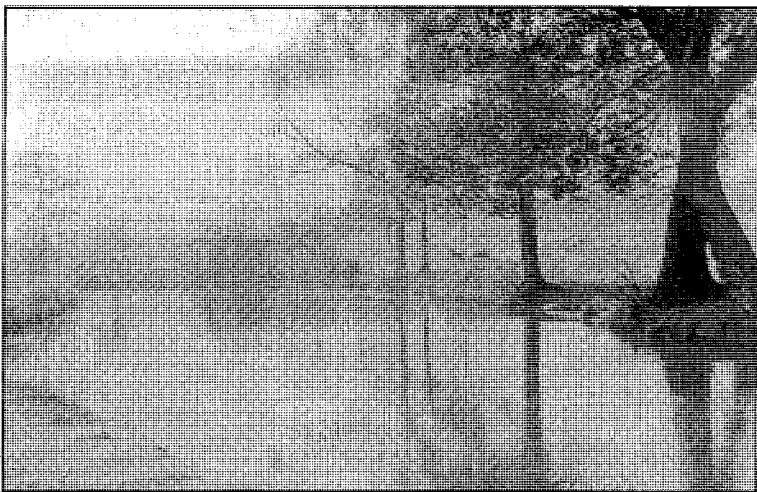
*A Big Thank You from the Society
to all our Members and Advertisers
who have Supported us in the last
Millennium. Enjoy the Celebrations
and please stay on board as we
achieve the Impossible in 2001!*

Huddersfield Canals on Postcards

Following the recent pattern, I will start with a view on the Broad Canal, one much altered today. "Canal Colne Bridge Nr. Hudd." is a view by a local photographer, Netherwood of Deighton, looking west from Colnebridge Road. Even without a posting date of 1905 on the back, it would be easily dated from before WW1, when an explosives factory was built in the fields between the canal and the railway. Today this has been replaced by a sewage treatment works.

The next card "Canal, Milnsbridge" is by a local publisher, Walker of Milnsbridge, and looks east from near Lock 12E. The small pond has vanished along with the tall mill and its chimney. The terraces on Britannia Road and Scar Lane in the background are still recognisable today, as is the dye works to the left.

"Canal Bank, Slaithwaite" is a card produced by Lilywhite, a large firm based at that time in Brighouse, for J. A. Briggs of Slaithwaite.



Above: "Canal Colne Bridge Nr. Hudd." by local photographer, Netherwood of Deighton. View looking west from Colnebridge Road.

Right: "Canal, Milnsbridge" by a local publisher, Walker of Milnsbridge. View looking east from near Lock 12E.

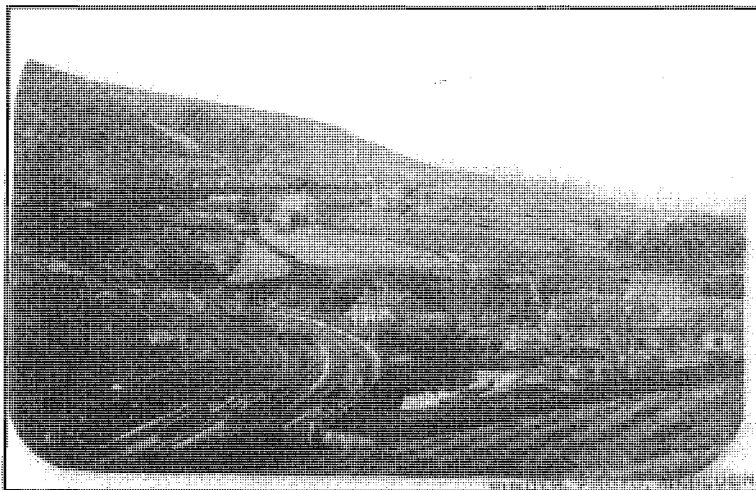
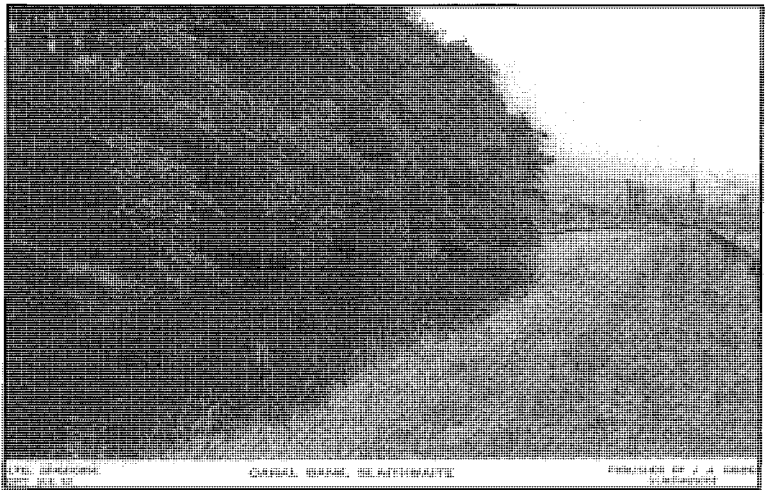
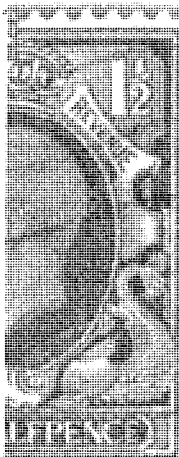
10 - Views on the East Side

The bulk of Lilywhite cards date from between the Wars, though this appears to be one of their later efforts, possibly even from the 1940's. The view is above Lock 25E and almost certainly can not now be taken because of tree growth on the towpath side. Interestingly the towpath looks to have been used by some kind of vehicle.

Finally, a view by local Marsden photographer, Pinder, showing Tunnel End from Reddisher Road. A narrowboat is moored by

the warehouse and smoke is rising from the chimneys of the warehouse, the cottages, and a building opposite the end of the footbridge. On the left can be seen the line leading into Tunnel End Sidings. There seems little to date this by unless anyone from Marsden can provide a clue? Please send any suggestions to the Editor at the usual address.

Trevor Ellis



Above: "Canal Bank, Slaithwaite" Lilywhite Ltd. of Brighouse, for J.A.Briggs of Slaithwaite.

Left: A view by local Marsden photographer, Pinder, showing Tunnel End.

The Distaff Side

This time a welcome story of a trip round the Cheshire Ring by member Belinda Davenport. We wonder if she will ever dare set sail again!

Another Wife's Tale

When I was approximately ten years old, I followed avidly where our hirers were going and what was the hardest route or quickest, as they all exchanged experiences. You see, we had a small family hire boat business on the Trent & Mersey Canal. With this in mind, I often looked up various stretches and discovered the one with the most locks and longest tunnel. I'm not sure whether my information was, in fact, correct, but the interest was set.

Some years later I discovered the Huddersfield Canal Society stand at one of the IWA rallies and instantly became a member.

By this stage we had sold our business but my dad, having been motivated by the loss of a relatively young friend, had embarked on building his dream tug style FMC boat.

One year we borrowed his boat and, armed with baby and sister, my husband and I decided to tackle the Cheshire Ring, because although I'd been in many different directions and many sections of the ring, I'd never circum-navigated the whole circle in one go.

What an adventure we had ... this is how the story begins.

We set off after a mad rush of unloading all sorts of equipment - it was a good job we weren't limited to so-many-kgs as for a flight! Off we went to the turning point

and encountered strategically placed anglers. Assuming they were together, I let the first one know that I would be turning the boat round. Unfortunately, they weren't together and my husband, who was at the front of the boat with our one year old son, got all the abuse. I didn't realise he'd been swearing etc., however, although we'd just passed the anglers (incidentally he said nothing to me) when I found out. Stupidly, in this day and age, I reversed and told the 'gentleman' that I wasn't happy that he'd just sworn in front of my son and that there was no need. After, we discussed the reasons for the canal being built in the first place and the angler insisting they had in fact been built for fishing - I decided he was beyond help. Although it seemed ages, it was in fact only a couple of minutes exchange, but it left us both feeling "what a start to our holiday".

Anyway, facing in the right direction now we set off, arriving without incident just outside of Stoke, after picking my sister up in Middlewich. Talking to a fellow boater, whilst mooring up for the evening, we were advised not to continue our route, due to a shortage of water on the Macclesfield.

Determined to go as near as possible to the end of the Huddersfield Narrow (I had it in my mind I was going to reverse to the first blockage!) I rang one of the boatyards on the Macclesfield who assured us it would be o.k.

What a beautiful canal, breathtaking. Although in desperate need of dredging, we all felt it was certainly one of the most scenic.

We encountered a large group of people struggling within one of the pounds. I understand they had lost their propeller, after wandering too far over and hitting an underwater stump. We managed to help them get unstuck and they moored up and went for assistance. We continued up to the end of the Macclesfield, ready to join the Peak Forest.

After breakfast the following day we set off down the flight, only to be told half way down by a friendly BW gentleman that 'vandals had let all the water out of a mile section of the Peak Forest'. However, in our present position we had no alternative but to go on.

Warning bells rang in my head as we struggled, audibly scraping the bottom through the first bridge. Having a relatively deep draught, I hoped we would be alright, but we thought we might get stuck turning round and we were far enough round the ring to motivate us to go forward rather than back.

Steadily onward, feeling almost every nook, cranny and barrel - then it happened ... going through one of the bridges, we scraped, scraped a bit more then tilted and ground to a halt.

My husband called down to me, but having felt it I was already on my way. We just managed to reverse out of the way to allow a narrowboat through followed by a day boat, full of blokes obviously having a 'very good time'. As they went past however, even in mid-stream I felt us starting to get stuck as they took our water.

We needed either to get through this obstruction or we were here 'til the rainy

season (not that long away in Britain, but nevertheless long enough!).

We decided to enlist the help of our fellow boaters. The narrowboat got the rope in a tow position, the day boat gents got off and had hold of our rope, which was funny to see in their particular state. No doubt, I'll get shouted at for admitting this, but I went back as far as I could, took a run at the bridge hole, aimed for a woosher and prayed dad's welding was good!

It worked ... we made it, but it must have sounded like the Titanic scraping along the iceberg!

By this time, my easygoing husband was totally stressed out. 'What happens if we get stuck in the middle of the canal?'

We did encounter another bridge hole, but it didn't sound the same, more sort of metal-on-metal. So we borrowed a rake from a friendly canalside householder and, armed with boathook, retrieved bikes, bits of mattress and all sorts - enough to let us through.

Finally we arrived at the top of the Rochdale. Dad had told me he'd lost his key, so we went to the top lock keeper ready to buy one, only to be told we would have to buy one from the other end!

Luckily, we had been joined by a large hire boat, equipped with lots of deck hands and an extra key. So we not only got the key on loan, but some staff!

We breathed a sigh of relief at having survived our ordeal - I dismissed entirely the thought of risking my propeller backing into the Huddersfield, which

would most definitely have had something horrible in it based on, at the time, the general surroundings and our previous experiences.

I was most definitely extremely disappointed at not getting on the treasured cut - even if only a little of it!

Onward and forward or something like that we passed through, encountering only a little difficulty from the local lads, trying either to swim next to the boat whilst we were entering a lock, or trying to get on from one of the lock foot bridges. Eventually the arrival of a camera made them disappear rather quickly.

Glancing down to the map, I noticed a little warning 'low bridges' just as I noticed how low the footbridge was. Taking the chimneys off and all the extras off the roof, we just managed to get under it. Not even a hair extra though! "Phew", we all said, only to go around the corner and lo and behold (low being the operative word!) an even lower railway bridge. No chance, absolutely no way.

My clever dad had ingeniously left the cast inner chimney on his stove at a high level, for a better 'draw' or something and there really was "no way".

Hirers to the rescue again. They generously attempted to 'hacksaw' the cast chimney to a more realistic height - poor bloke would still have been there now! Thankfully and exceptionally luckily, my husband went to see if the men working on the previous bridge had anything better to cut with - along came a man and his 'motorised

Stihl saw!' The noise that made and the sparks; I cringed ... thinking "my dad's going to kill me!" (We did in fact video that bit).

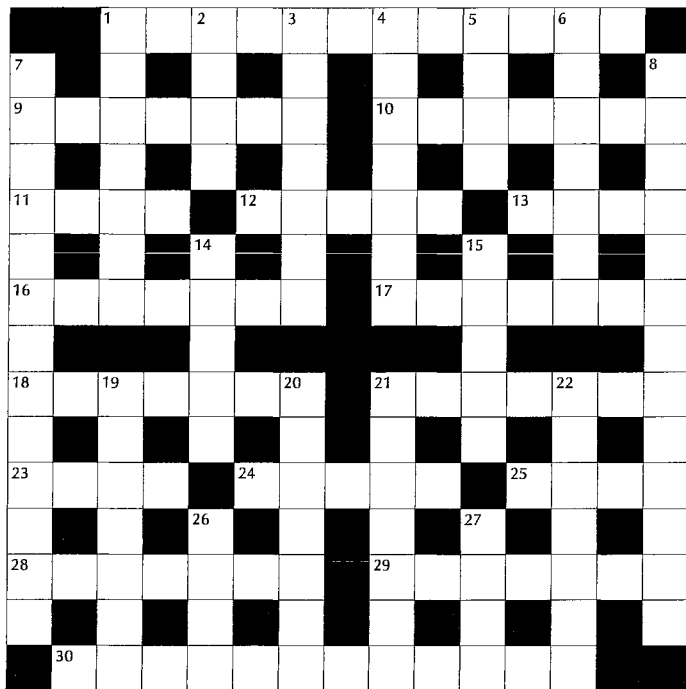
The rest of the trip went smoothly, but as an experience it was a trip of a lifetime, discussed over many a bottle of beer, wine, rum, etc. All with that mischievous twinkle in our eye to say "we made it, through our little adventure" - even though I'm sorry to say we missed out on our Huddersfield Narrow Experience. That'll come ... roll on completion - we'll be there!

Belinda Davenport

Belinda Davenport and Benjamin at the end of their epic journey - moored at Wigan Pier for a waterways festival.



Canal Crossword - 27



ACROSS

- 1 Growlers been seen near Park Head! (7,5).
- 9 Fifty sewers found alongside the Yorkshire Derwent (7).
- 10 Victoria's consort spans the Tamar here! (7).
- 11 Goes with bolts (4).
- 12 Great tree in which a water bird might roost? (5).
- 13 Pencil line drawn whilst sketching part of a lock's structure (4).
- 16 The German found in the Fens trying to avoid scrapes on his boat (7).
- 17 What the temperature might be during an icicle cruise (7).
- 18 Site of the MSC lockgate workshops (7).
- 21 You will deform a boat if you hit these T & M locks hard! (7).
- 23 A geometrical figure found beneath a Rennie aqueduct on the Lancaster canal? (4).

- 24 $H_2SO_4 + HNO_3$ - Cargoes? (5).
- 25 Pass watering holes on your hols (4).
- 28 Butter preparation equipment et al found on part of the Caldon canal (7).
- 29 Appropriate technique for painting the bottom of a boat? (7).
- 30 Apt sort of settee for a boat on a canal off the Trent (12).

DOWN

- 1 Honey makers (heavyweights), on a Trent by pass in Nottingham (7).
- 2 Aqueous ebbs seen on a Yorkshire river (4).
- 3 Comes out? (7).
- 4 Messy St gets things organised (7).
- 5 Control taken from a founder member of the IWA (4).
- 6 Type of answer given by an uncomfortable chairman at the AGM! (7).
- 7 Where pigs may have crossed the River Avon above Bristol, giving rise of 4'4" (9,4).
- 8 Lock by a mooring place for gondolas on the Middlewich branch? (13).
- 14 Ardea Cinerea - a canalside fisher (5).
- 15 A ray of light to the side of a boat we hear (5).
- 19 Cosh nun of unrivalled virtue (7).
- 20 Cite Ken as an expert in menswear (7).
- 21 That part of a gents anatomy which tends to show of too many visits to 26 down! (7).
- 22 Agin in Yorkshire? (7).
- 26 Opposing points in canalside hostelries (4).
- 27 Lapse of memory in church? (4).

Crossword Solution on Page 55

The Wife's Tale - Part 39

It is Tuesday, 19th May, 1998 and Anne & Ken, with their two dachshunds Bill and Lizzie, are on the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal. It is the start of the return journey to base.

Tuesday 19th May, 1998

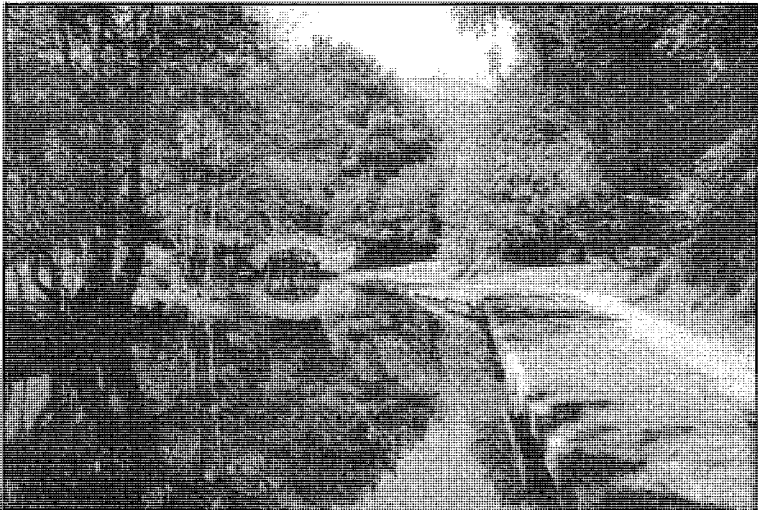
It is amazing how different a canal looks going the other way - quite refreshingly so. Well, it was reluctantly that we motored away from Brecon. The place and people were quite delightful and more time must be spent there. In the last episode I forgot to quote from Nicholson about the new basins, so here goes. *"The navigation terminates in the newly-built Theatre Basin, a joint venture by local bodies which has resulted in attracting grants worth £6 million from the Welsh Office and Welsh Arts Council and a further £2.5 million from the private sector. The first phase of the development has seen the partial rebuilding of the Brecknock Boat Company Wharf, filled in in 1881. A new canal bridge named after Thomas Dadford has also been constructed, giving access to the Theatre Basin.*

The new basin provides mooring for 40 boats as well as a welcome turning area."

The first lock was soon reached and we were helped through (taking pity on a weak woman operating locks!!) by some of the gongoozlers on the cycle path. I didn't object and was happy to engage in conversation. The question we were asked time and time again on this trip was 'How do you like the canal - better than the Llangollen isn't it. We're a friendlier lot than up North'. At the risk of starting a North/South war, I couldn't possibly comment! Yes, it is prettier and everywhere we went, be it pub, village, town, shops, etc. we were met with nothing but extreme kindness and courteousness.

Anyway, back to the narrative. I decided to walk with the dogs as far as the aqueduct, before getting back on board, and enjoyed the beautiful views of the River Usk and the aqueduct bridge.

We stopped at Cambrian Cruisers (Bridge 159) for a leaflet and were very impressed



An idyllic scene on the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal

A Wright

with their superb boats. The owner's farm does B&B, which is handy if you want to start your holiday the day before. (If that makes sense!). On to Bridge 158 which is the site of an old 18thC canalside warehouse, now the home of Water Folk Craft. The museum is worth a visit with interesting exhibits, good videos and helpful guide. There is also a lovely garden and tea shop though we didn't sample, but it looked good and was certainly being enjoyed by many people, as all tables were full. On certain days they run horse-drawn canal trips.

Just past the first farm lift bridge HE of the eagle eyes spotted a snake in the water. It followed us - when we stopped, it stopped, rearing its head out of the water to look at us. When we moved, it moved, until it gave up stalking this huge beast that had invaded its territory. I just wished I'd had a zoom lens on my camera. We also passed a school party on a day out - 3 canoes full - having a whale of a time and great hilarity when one fell in. Didn't

tell them about the snake!

On and through Pencelli. *"This little village was at one time the head of a medieval lordship, but the only indication of this today is the castle mound. The castle farm occupies the site of the old castle which can now only be recognised by the footings of some of the walls laid down in the 13thC."*

Two more lift bridges - the first 60/30 turns, (60 up, 30 down, she means!. Ed) the second 46/28 and another which was up. Four in total before Talybont. Valley full of hawthorn trees in full blossom and the scent was quite overpowering. Reached the Talybont lift bridge at 5.10 just in time for the rush hour! Managed to close the gates and operate the bridge without any mishaps, thanks to the very clear operating instructions.

Moored up just past the bridge at 5.25. Time for drinks on the aft deck in the sun; sitting in our new chairs which were very comfortable. What a pleasant mooring it

is on the embankment, and mooring rings too. Took the dogs for a quick walk and got talking to a couple on a narrowboat which had broken down.



A tight squeeze in the tunnel!

The fitter was there looking very oily - engine jobby - and the word was they would soon be on their way.

The Star Inn beckoned for dinner. I suspect the thought of a pint or two of Shepherd Neame Bishop's Finger did the beckoning! The landlord was very nice and we had a pleasant chat. In the room where we were the walls abounded with photographs of the disaster which befell the village in 1994. On 8th December the embankment breached and the canal drained. The village was cut off for days and the damage was quite horrendous. There is a mark on one of the walls to show where the mud came to. We spent a very happy couple of hours or three in the pub and again were struck by the friendliness and openness of the people.

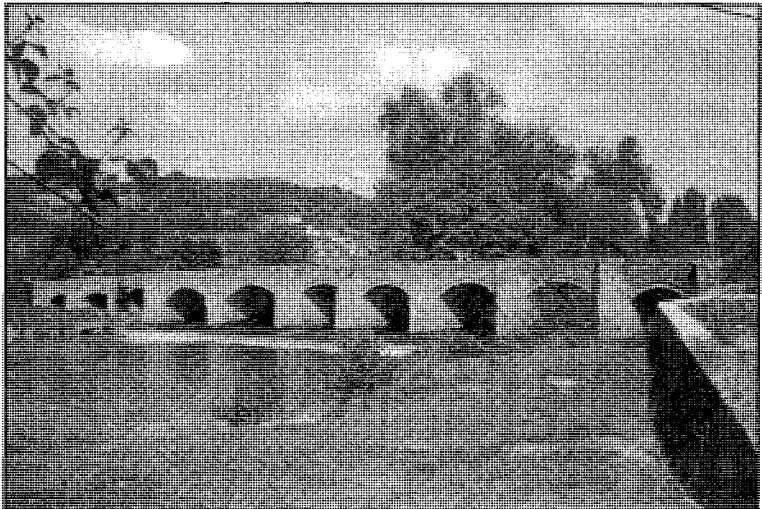
Wednesday 20th May

Another cloudless, glorious day - haven't we been lucky. Up at 8.15, had breakfast, took on water and set off quite late - for us!

Through tunnel and took a photo (page 39) of the very low section which I hope comes out. Reached top lock at 10.55. Hotel boat coming up with an Aussie

girl from Alice Springs driving and two New Zealander girls helping. Had quite a chat. The owner of Country Cruisers and his daughter were in charge. He told me about Red Line and how the new owners have got quite a struggle trying to get the boats into some decent order. I got a brochure from his wife and we had a long talk about Brecon. She felt very strongly about the fact that the old Cattle Market was being sacrificed for a Safeway which she felt would decimate the city and destroy the smaller shops. We know the feeling well!

Moored up on a lovely stretch to have a sit in the sun and enjoy the peace and quiet, not to mention the scenery. Time for lunch and to the Coach and Horses - a lovely old pub with a very extensive menu at reasonable prices. Sat in the garden which ran down to the canal, with the dogs, and thoroughly enjoyed the excellent food. A walk followed down to the river, a wooded valley and quite an idyllic setting.



Crickhowell Bridge

A Wright

Set off at 2.45 - many gongoozlers, mainly from the pub. One helped who was a staunch canaller, so we swapped notes about the many canals we had been on while the lock filled - and then emptied. Through the concrete section (Bridges 124 to 118) and surprised a cock pheasant sitting on the fence bordering the canal. Noticed that the water level was two inches down from when we first came through.

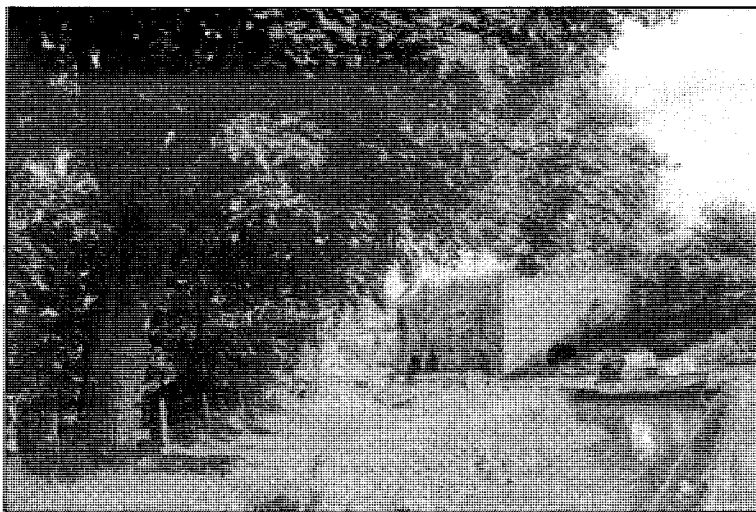
On to Llangattock and moored on a pleasant stretch between bridges 115 and 114. Had a bit of a problem trying to get in but managed in the end. We had intended to moor opposite the lime kilns, which we wanted to visit, but there was a BW notice partly hidden by undergrowth saying No Mooring. The lime kiln side was private moorings only. Still hot enough to sit out on deck with drinks and sandwiches. Went to look at the Lime Kilns. Apparently *"the village was once famous for its weaving and its limekilns. It also has a 12thC church, founded in the*

6thC. The hills behind the village are riddled with limestone caves and quarries". We found the BW facilities mentioned in Nicholson, presumed they were, but there was no notice to say so. Looked as though it had been taken over by a boating club as there were notices to that effect on the notice board. Walked up the hill with super views over the Black Mountains. Passed the Stables Hotel which looked very nice at the end of a long drive. Big sign outside giving facilities available including 3 crowns and Conference Facilities spelt with an 'a' (Conferance, that is). It's amazing how many signs we have seen over the years spelt incorrectly - a talking point perhaps.

Back to the boat for a read and a night-cap. Wonder what we will wake up to. Clouds - fluffy white - had come up at 1.30 and got progressively denser. But, according to a local 'Should be alright tomorrow' he said, looking up at the sky.

Next time - The home stretch.

A & K Wright



Here, is a most appropriate place and time for me to express my thanks to Anne Wright (unsung heroine) for her efforts in typing up the articles for Pennine Link on to disc, making my job of typesetting so much easier. Thank you Anne.

*Bob Gough
Assistant Editor*

Limekilns at Llangattock

The 1999 Festivals in Retrospect

There were only two Festivals held in 1999 and, to quote the old football adage, 'it was a game of two halves!'

Tameside (or Ashton) had gorgeous weather the whole weekend and the crowds to go with it, Uppermill (or Saddleworth) had indifferent weather and the smallest ever attendance.

One of the problems at Uppermill is that the restoration has started at Wool Road and, until the bridge work is completed, there is bound to be a certain amount of resentment towards the Canal Society by local residents. The duck race was, as usual, the high point of the weekend, producing sufficient revenue to stop the event being a total loss.

Once again many thanks to childrens' entertainer 'Ratty' who took over as M.C., ran the Dog Show with the greatest of good humour and organized all the other artists. It was a pity the attendance was so low as the entertainment was of a very high standard. Singers, Line Dancers, Brass band and the most amazingly good accordion player I have ever heard, as well as childrens' entertainment including Punch and Judy; and all for a quid!

The committee now feel that until the restoration is completed there will be no more canal festivals in Uppermill, as it seems that the residents and the fates are perpetually against us. Chairman John and Secretary Janet Wilson worked hard and pushed every possible button to no avail. Even an interesting web site, with many recorded 'hits' failed in its prime purpose.

Tameside on the other hand goes from strength to strength. A good turn out of

HCS hierarchy and ordinary members was a pleasing item this year, if we can get you lot down we must be doing the job right!

Although CAMRA left the Beer Tent a couple of years ago, the committee took over the running and made a large profit from it in both years. I admit there wasn't the variety of real ales on offer, but although that is a loss to me personally, the majority of the public seems to be happy with a choice of two or three and quicker service!

The Festival opened on the Friday night with Folk Group 'The Houghton Weavers' and although there were some grumbles about the price of admission (a 'name' group like this is costly) an agreement was reached that kept everyone happy. The Oompah Band booked by the beer tent was also a smash hit!

The sun shone all day Saturday, the only down side was that your correspondent, as Chairman, made a speech! (Fortunately quite short) The tent for the VIP reception got very hot and the Mayor has offered us the use of the museum in future years. The weather stayed hot all weekend, and for the couple of days we need to clear everything away, so the crowds came in and in.

Once again the Festival of Dance proved a big draw during the day. Childrens' entertainer 'Ratty' was a big hit. All the traders were delighted with the business done particularly those in the craft tent. On Saturday night the Jazz in the entertainment tent was bolstered by the Oompah band in the beer tent. Both bands have been booked for 2000.

The only low point was that the number of boats was the lowest for many years. This was due to many factors, some boaters were saving themselves for all the millennium rallies, there has been a spate of vandalism around Portland Basin and the connecting canals, but mainly because the position of Boats Officer was not filled until it was almost too late! For 2000 Sue Greenwood has a full year and with the assistance of new committee member Ricky Richardson I anticipate that all records will be broken.

My personal thanks to all the members of the committee for their hard work and dedication during the twelve month run up. The two days before the Festival and the Sunday evening and Monday are the most fraught as reaction starts to set in, but none of us actually came to blows! Farewell to the two ex-chairmen Tony Wolstenholme and Peter Hawley who have decided to retire from the committee at the end of this years Festival,

although I am sure that both of them will be seen around next year! For 2000, Shirley Rowbottom, who actually lives on a boat in Portland Basin, will be Committee Chairman - and you can't have anyone closer to the action than that!

Finally and sadly, can I pay a personal tribute to Gay Quilter who died recently after a long illness. Gay and her husband Steve had been on both Festival Committees, it was Steve and Gay who started the Saddleworth Festival. She went on to become the canal society's Sales Officer, and did the job well until her illness necessitated a hand over. Always a cheerful person, her name was appropriate in the original version of the word. The world will be sorrier place for her passing. The sympathies of the Society and all members of both committees to Steve.

Brian Minor
Festivals Officer

IWA NEWS

In an effort to cut down on words this time, I will try to summarise events at the Inland Waterways Association!

IWA still concerned about BW licensing costs and organisation.

IWA's survey of responses to BW's consultation on Trusts and Membership issues produced largely negative results.

IWA has produced some interesting facts about BW's "Freephone Canals". It is run from a private call centre in Dudley! For mobile 'phones the number is 01384 215785 - why only mobiles?

IWA continues to worry about "continuous cruising" - boaters who never stop long enough (or claim they don't!) to pay a mooring fee. Must be dizzy.

IWA have published a Technical Restoration Handbook containing 19 chapters by experts - our own Bob Dewey has contributed a chapter on "Town and Country Planning for Beginners". A 'practical' restoration handbook is to follow.

That's three months of IWA's Head Office Bulletin covered and not one single mention of the most important and successful restoration scheme!

Ken Wright

Harwood's Thames - Part 3

The third part of John Harwood's trip up the Thames.

Spent the first few hours of this morning watching the tide come in until we decided that the moment was right to cast off (without hitting the three decked white thing - aren't these narrowboats good!) to make Richmond in time for the tide gate lifting. This we did two minutes early. Between Richmond and Teddington the river is held back by the tide gate which is only open for two hours either side of high tide - at other times you pay £5 to use the lock. Teddington lock brings us onto fresh water along with a demand for £42.65 from the Environment Agency for the use of the Thames for fifteen days.

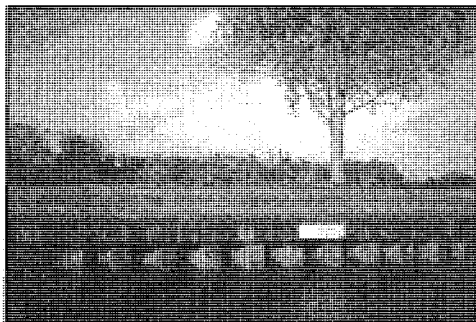
Here begins the culture shock. All the Thames locks are manned (and in one case ladyed) by staff in smart blue semi-naval dress - including in some cases a white topped cap! Not a green overall in sight! But also these people run around and operate the lock for you - it makes a confirmed canaller like me feel guilty at not doing one's bit (and also deprived me of my annual exercise - but if you've tried working one of these locks manually the idea of annual exercise soon pales).

Hampton Court sounds a natural for a boater but unfortunately is not best seen from the river and is expensive (in northern terms) to visit. There is however free mooring - something which becomes increasingly difficult to find. Passing Weybridge one is tempted by the thought of the River Wey and the Basingstoke branching off it until one remembers that we subscribers to BW will require Thames, Wey and Basingstoke licences to make the visit. The lock keeper at Runnymede recommended the moorings at Ankerwycke Priory as being nice (as marked in Nicholson) but we couldn't find them so we retreated to Egham moorings (free and not marked in Nicholson!). After passing Old Windsor lock, distant views of Windsor castle are possible, but the unwelcome sight of miles of 'No Mooring' instructions - from H.M. no less, accompany us past Home Park and Windsor Great Park until our arrival in Windsor. After finding a spot to moor with instructions to 'Pay at Leisure Centre or Collector will call' we took the option of waiting for the collector who didn't call - just as well because entry fees to Windsor Castle are - expensive.

The sign reads

"CROWN ESTATES NO LANDING OR MOORING"

Examples of boats 'properly equipped for sailing the Thames - no one should be without radar, VHF, bow thruster, depth sounder, etc. etc!



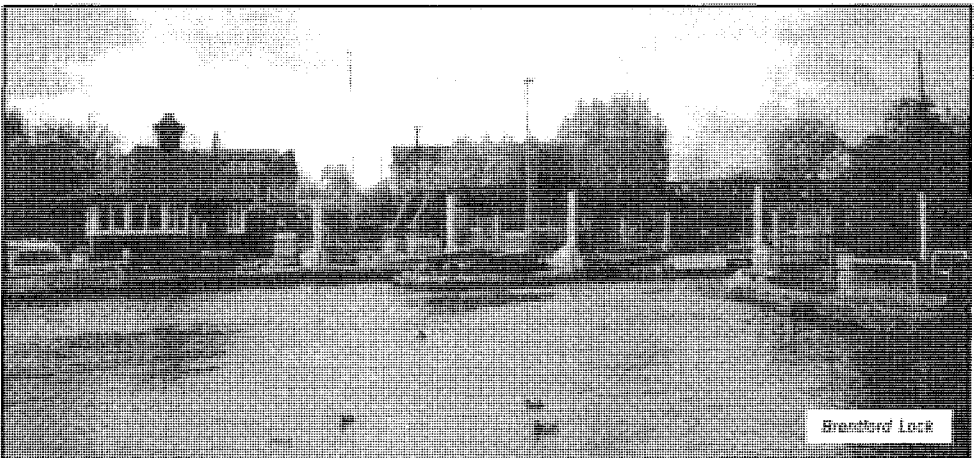
Boulter's Lock at Maidenhead is reached after a bit of a struggle against the current through the town (beware going downstream!) and we were able to provide the demonstration of lock working to a party of schoolchildren being shown around by the lock keeper - a (humorous) attempt to collect a demonstration fee got us nowhere.

Henley on Thames was notable both for its scenery and riverside location and the fact that it had free town centre moorings - for one boat. Still, it enabled us to catch up on the shopping. At Marsh Lock, a mile later, we discovered that the lock keeper had a penchant for fresh coffee (like me)- after he had overcome the culture shock of being treated in a friendly manner by a boater - and a pleasant ten minutes was spent drinking, chatting and waiting in case another boat came (well that was his excuse) but he certainly remembered us on the way down. At Reading, sore temptation strikes, as the Kennet and Avon canal leaves the river, but also a riverside Tesco with free mooring was also welcome.

The next day I was taking advantage of having a capable crew by taking a shower on the move when (in full flow so to speak) the engine stopped dead. Being thankful that we were not on the tide now I was able to get dry and dressed before stepping out to find that a fuel line had fractured (yes, again). Heaving the anchor over this time gave us time to think whilst a gentleman (?) stood on the bank pointing to his 'no mooring' sign and threatening (mobile in hand) to ring his solicitor if we came near his property. He relaxed somewhat on seeing we were only broken down and couldn't get near his property and left us to it. Here the narrow boat type depth gauge (otherwise known as a barge pole) told us we were in deep water and helped us in paddling, punting and any other 'ing' which came to mind to get to a hotel mooring (thanks to the proprietor of the Beetle & Wedge, Moulsoford for free mooring for a few hours) to await a second visit from the boatyard.

Next time - John completes his eventful journey!

Photos: J Harwood



J Harwood

1999 Photographic Competition

We had an excellent competition this year, with 67 pictures submitted by 15 different members, including a six year-old, James Archer!

Our judge, Geoffrey Hope, was very pleased with the standards, which he considered to be well up on previous years'. So much so that he has recommended several 'highly commended' and 'commended' certificates in addition to the usual awards. These members will all receive a signed certificate and, as usual, all contributors will receive a copy of the judge's notes on their efforts, with the returned photographs.

Thank you to all of you who entered the competition for making it such a success.

RESULTS

Category 'A' Huddersfield Canal - Senior

WINNER: Alan Crosby, "HNC, Marsden"

RUNNER UP: Jo Young, "Tunnel End"

Category 'B' Huddersfield Canal - Junior

WINNER: James Arthur (then 5)
"Linthwaite, Christmas 1998"

Category 'C' Other Waterways - Senior

WINNER, OVERALL WINNER, CHALLENGE SHIELD WINNER: Tony Briggs,
"The Avon at Bath"

RUNNER UP: Alan Stopher, "Descending Greenforge Lock"

Highly Commended: Pam Romanski (2), Anita Crosby (2), Alan Crosby (2)

Commended: Alan Stopher, Anita Crosby, Anne Wright (2), Bob Derrick, Anthony Carter, Alan Crosby.

Awards will be sorted out soon and I am pleased to say that they will, at last, be worth competing for! Tony Briggs, the overall winner will receive, in addition to the Challenge Shield (for one year), a shield replica to keep, a signed certificate and **A PAIR OF PENTAX BINOCULARS**, kindly donated by **Arcade Photo Services, Imperial Arcade, New Street, Huddersfield.**

The other winners will receive a cash prize of £15 and the runners-up a cash prize of £10, being a share of the total prize money, together with signed certificates. All well worth having a go at! So start thinking now about entering next year - the rules will be as relaxed as this year's were!

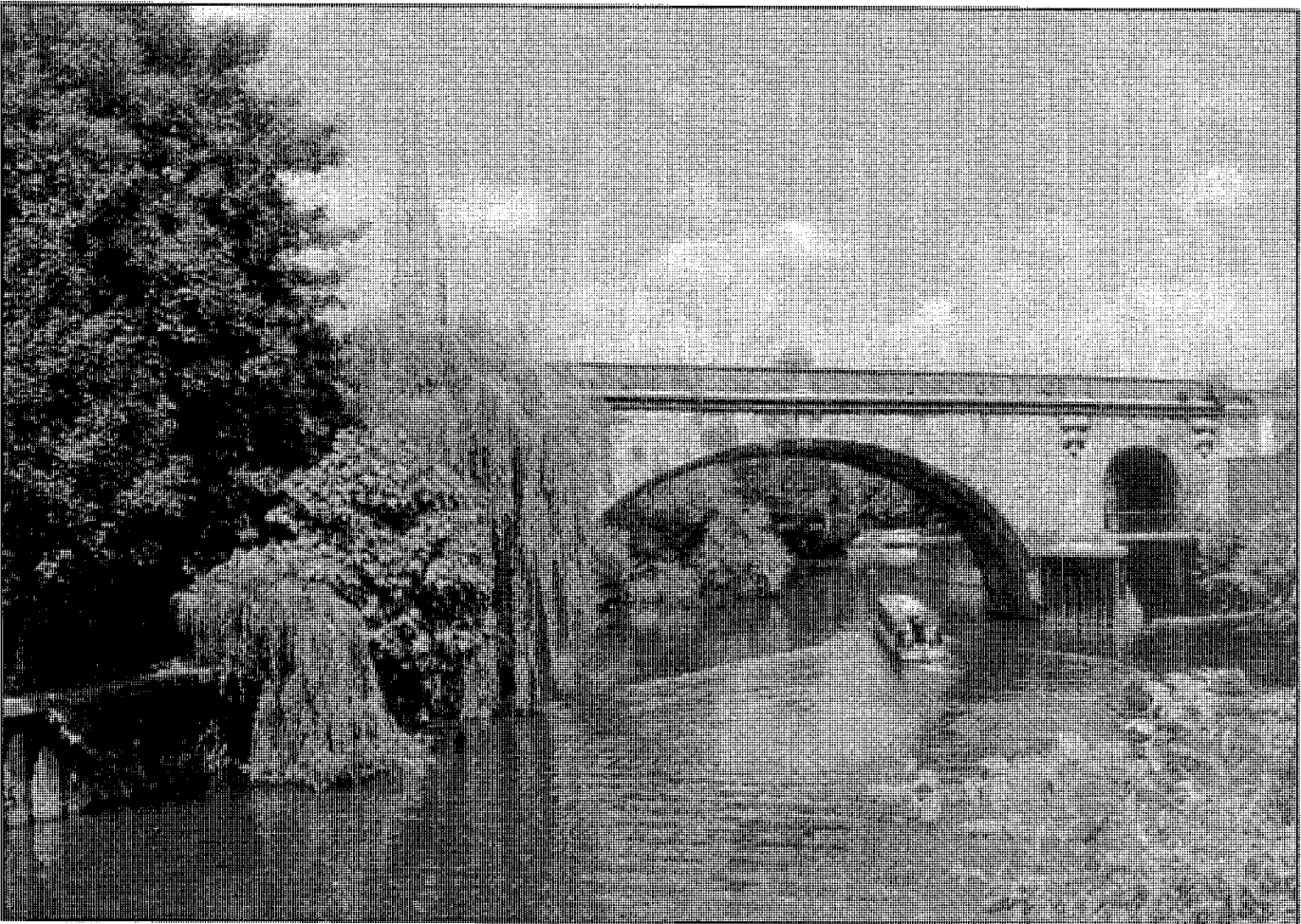
And, finally, if anyone would like any advice from our judge, Geoff. Hope, on anything connected with photography, he has offered his services. Put your query in the form of a letter to me or to the office.

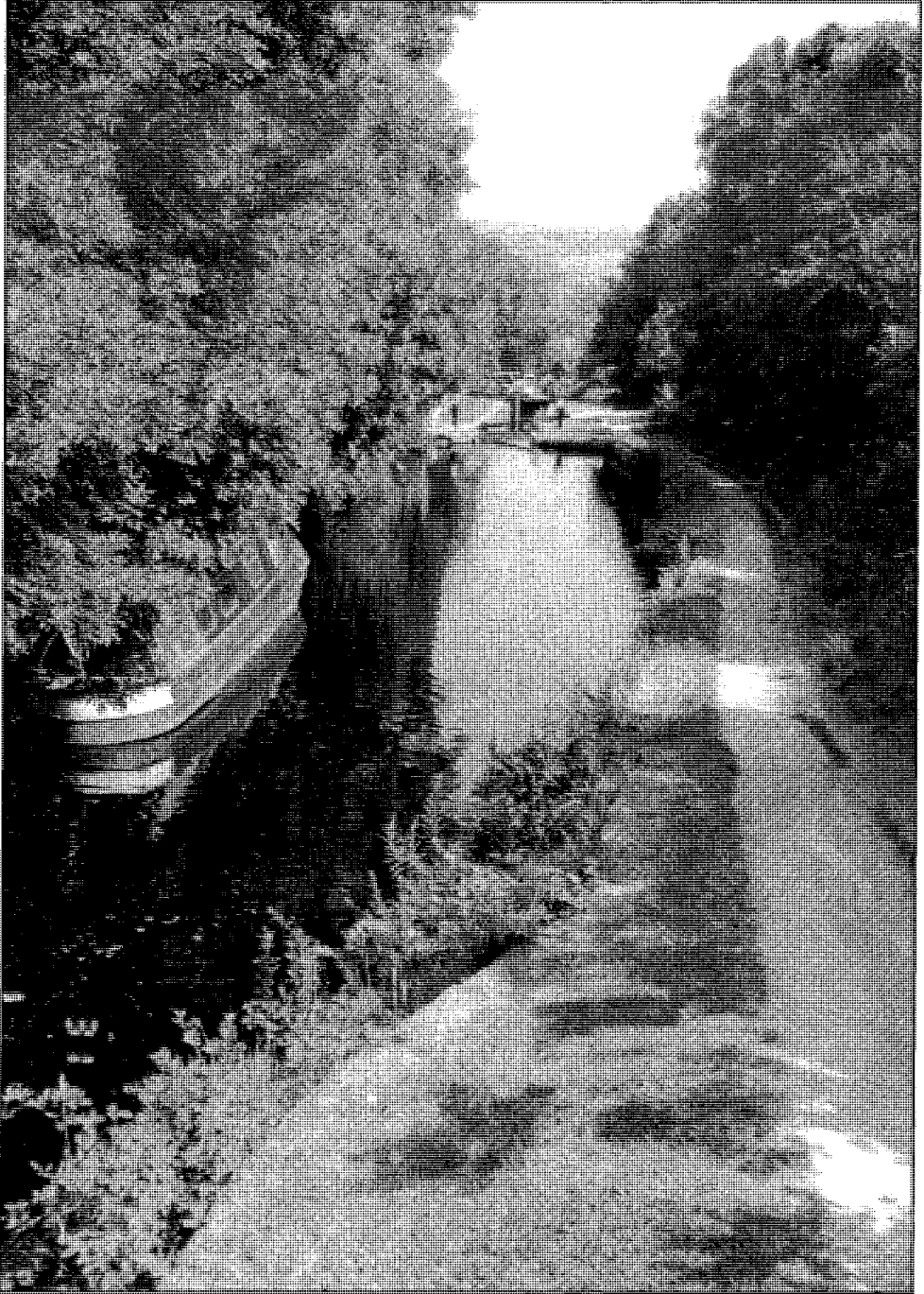
Ken Wright

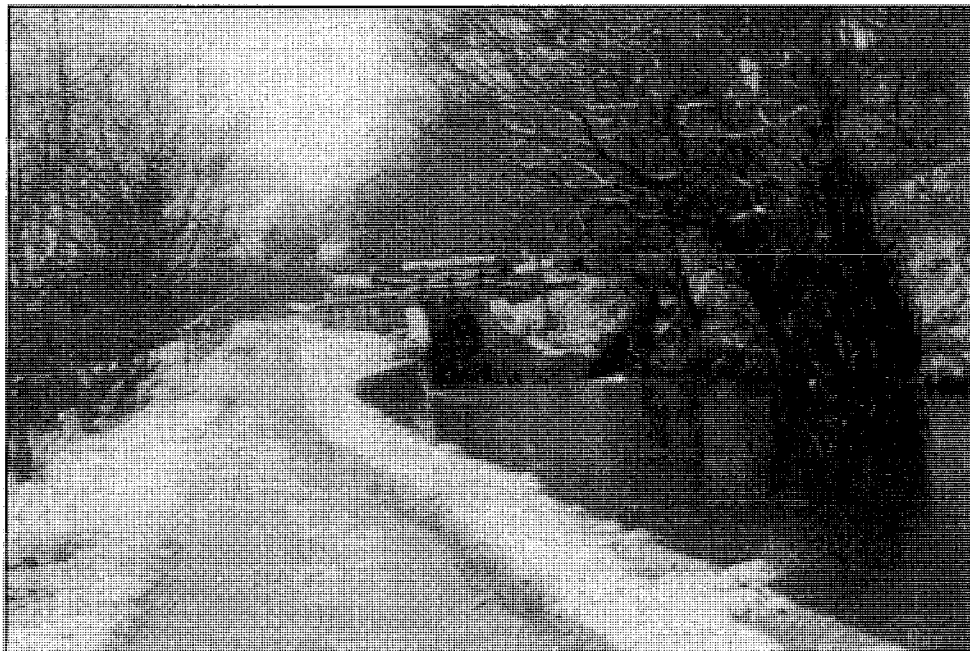
Judge's comments:

*Opposite: **Category 'C' Winner, Overall Winner, Challenge Shield Winner***

A milestone for our competition, the computer age meets the canal. This is the first entry we have had that has been digitally produced. But what a beautiful example to start us off with. Regardless of what equipment was used to produce this picture the result is excellent. The viewpoint, composition and content leave me with no chance for criticism or advice. The finishing touch is the position of the narrowboat and the red sweater the skipper is wearing. (What a super Calendar picture).







Left: **Category 'A' Winner**- This is an excellent picture! Well seen, well taken, well done. Lots of interest and, pictorially well composed, matches the theme 'canal' very well with all ingredients necessary.

Below Left: **Category 'A' Runner up** - Very good picture that tells the viewer of an event in the life of the canal. Well exposed, good colour and well composed with plenty of human interest. A very competent picture.

Above: **Category 'B' Winner** - What can I say about this! Other than keep buying him film!

The composition is extremely good and, although the lighting was 'flat' he has finished up with a very competent result. Move over, Lord Lichfield!

Below Right: **Category 'C' Runner up** - I love monochrome pictures when they are well done and this one is! Pin sharp from edge to edge with a lovely range of tones. Plenty of interest and the composition gives great depth to the shot. First class work.



What the Papers Say

Our canal continues to interest people far and wide - well, at least as far as Oldham and Slaithwaite, judging by the Evening Chronicle's efforts and those of East Side correspondent, Keith Sykes.

Aug. 24th Oldham Evening Chronicle

1. Set for messing about on canal. Report on the April 2001 boat rally at Stalybridge, being planned by Alwyn Ogborn to celebrate the reopening of the canal. Provision for 200 boats is being made - hopefully many of them coming in from Huddersfield.

2. Canal trolleys to save rare plant. Rather bizarre story of old supermarket trolleys ("once the scourge of rivers and canals") being used as 'pond baskets' to protect clumps of 'Benett's Pondweed' on the Forth and Clyde Canal!

3. Letter to the editor ... "the scheme to reopen the Huddersfield Canal will cause mayhem for the people of Saddleworth." "We will soon find out!

Sept. 6th Huddersfield Examiner

Half page report, with two excellent pictures, of the boat gathering in Aspley Basin, Huddersfield, organised by Calder Navigation Society and ourselves.

Sept. 6th Oldham Evening Chronicle

Full page of pictures and positive story about Wool Road scheme ruined by unfortunate headline "Canal work bringing disruption to Dobcross" and "Diversions and delays as restoration gathers pace". Just not true.

Sept. 17th Oldham Evening Chronicle

1. The army being called out to help a clean-up operation on the Rochdale Canal. Basing the scheme at the Rose of Lancaster pub sounds like a good idea!

2. Sad picture of trip boat operator John Lund with an empty canal for background. The article blames the work we had recently completed when in fact, it was partly to do with the work at Wool Road but mainly a very dry previous month.

3. Story and colour picture about reopening a Standedge RAILWAY tunnel by 2004 to produce better freight routes.

Sept. 30th Oldham Evening Chronicle

Another big article and two pictures on the Wool Road scheme. Better headlines this time "Canal is plain sailing" and "Restoration work is right on target". Oldham Council engineer Freda Rashdi featured very prominently in hard hat and yellow jacket.

Oct. 3rd The Sunday Telegraph

New lease of life for Victorian canals. Nice report on progress on our restoration.

Oct. 8th Huddersfield Daily Examiner

Progress report on Standedge Experience and the canal in general.

Oct. 15th Oldham Evening Chronicle

Nice story about the electric tugs being put forward for pulling boats through Standedge Tunnel plus a bit about Standedge Experience and the restoration campaign in general.

Oct. 21st Oldham Evening Chronicle

Announcement that DCT Civil Engineering, the contractors at Wool Road, have been selected to do Wade Lock, Uppermill scheme - in partnership with Oldham Council. The new-fangled "partnering" contracts allow for closer working between designer and builder.

Oct. 27th Huddersfield Daily Examiner

Report of the press day at Standedge Tunnel.

Oct. 28th "Examiner"

Further report to add to that above.

Oct. 28th Oldham Evening Chronicle

Excellent report and pictures of the Standedge Tunnel work (see Editorial). Two pictures nearly like mine - and a lovely bit of artistic license "*The sound of drilling is constant as restoration work gathers pace*". There wasn't a drill for miles!

Nov. 4th "Examiner"

"New Age of the Canals". Work on Slaithwaite to begin.

Nov. 5th Colne Valley Express and Chronicle

"Impossible Dream Turning to Reality". Long report on the tunnel visit and the restoration process.

Nov. 10th "Examiner"

Large coloured advert for more management and supervisory posts with British Waterways at Marsden. Is this a chance for us?

And, finally, how about this for class!

Nov. 4th NEW CIVIL ENGINEER

The professionals' prestigious magazine carried a colour photograph of the "drilling" in Standedge Tunnel and a short report:-

"TUNNEL TRANSFORMATION: Barnsley firm Amalgamated Construction is two months into the £30M restoration of Standedge Tunnel, Britain's deepest and longest waterway tunnel. Over the next year, it has to clear away deep deposited silt and at least four rock falls inside the 5.2km 200m deep bore, all accumulated since the last boat passed in 1945. The brick lined tunnel, opened in 1811, took 17 years to build with primitive explosives. Narrow boats would take two and a half hours to pass through the darkness using a technique of "walking the walls". Modern boats will be hauled in trains by an electric barge, avoiding fumes. The restoration of the rest of the 32km long trans-Pennine Huddersfield Narrow Canal is being designed by British Waterways Technical Services."

The final sentence is only an approximation of the truth! And, of course, the £30M is stretching a bit further than the tunnel.

Ken Wright

Letters to the Editor

Five good ones this time, but the last three only just made it!

Dear Ken,

"The East Side"

Having last week returned from our summer cruise which took us as far as Sharpness I send you a few cuttings that we picked up on our two short visits back home.

I also include one from last weekend when 20 boats visited Aspley, which we visited by car.

Things are about to happen in Slaithwaite, proclaims the second issue of canal restoration news. The best thing about it is that Carr Lane, the main shopping street, will see the lorries that thunder through to visit the industrial estate at the far end on New Street cut by half. The locals might thank us for that.

Finally after reading Keith Noble's letter to BW in the last edition I took up your suggestion and wrote to BW in support and with suggestions (copy enclosed). However after listening to Frank Smith give his update at the Mossley meeting, I cannot think we will change their minds unless there is a bigger groundswell of opinion. Can we spread the word of what is proposed, and their possible prohibition on boats visiting Tunnel End if not using the tunnel, to the wider Waterways press.

Yours sincerely,

Keith W. Sykes,
Slaithwaite.

For your perusal here is Keith's letter to BW.

Dear Mr. Rowe,

Standedge Tunnel

I have written previously expressing the concerns of my wife and I over the

practicalities of towing unmanned private narrowboats through the Standedge tunnel once it becomes navigable again. We have also discussed the position with your staff at an exhibition held at your offices earlier this summer, which indicated that no full solution to prevent damage to craft has yet been established.

I have now read in the summer edition of the Huddersfield Canal Society's magazine, Pennine Link, a copy of the letter to you from Keith Noble, secretary of the Calder Navigation Society, expressing the same concern, and raising the issue of being able to steer one's own boat, under its own power, through the tunnel.

I would like to associate myself with Mr. Noble's comments. My view being that I would only wish to use Standedge tunnel if I had full control of my own boat.

I understand that the reason for the original suggestion of towage was the presence of diesel exhaust fumes. As Mr. Noble states, this has been overcome in Harecastle so far as canal boats are concerned. It is also overcome in many other places throughout Britain and Europe where road tunnels, some of similar length, experience a far greater concentration of such fumes.

I have been informed that the majority of Standedge Tunnel's fumes would come from the adjoining railway. These could be eliminated by the installation of airlock doors (openable in emergency) in the adits that link the two systems. Then with the canal self contained extraction equipment could be installed for the small amount produced by boats that may not dissipate up the existing ventilation shafts, as they do at present in the one and a half mile Blisworth tunnel.

It would be appreciated if you would give consideration to my desire to take my boat,

under my own control, through the Standedge Tunnel.

Yours sincerely,
Keith W. Sykes.

And another later one from Keith:-

"The East Side"

They say that work should have started on Slaithwaite on Monday 8 November, but all we saw during the week was one day when two men in hard hats walked the line of the buried canal bed.

Last year you published my account of our scouts travelling from Tunnel End to Sparth and return. With blessing from BW we intend to repeat the trip on Sunday, 28 November, launching above Marsden Station.

In checking the state of the length on 11 November we came across BW working! - dredging the pound above Marsden Station lock (42E) and a tug working the dredging dumb barge down five locks to where it was being emptied and tipped on spare land between canal and river. The process used four operatives. All in the cabin having tea when we arrived - standard practice (we call it thinking time) - then into action with one left dredging whilst three worked the tug and barge down the locks - one driving and two lock wheelers. They reckon they can dredge at the rate of two, sometimes three, 25 ton barges a day.

Yours sincerely,
Keith W. Sykes
Slaithwaite

We are all allowed tea breaks and it is also "standard practice" that visitors or supervisors always arrive at the same time! Interesting, though, about a day's output.

When dredging with HCS(R) we were expected to do six or eight loads a day with one man operating the tug and lock-wheeling! Only down three locks, though.

Next is a letter from member Martin Clark which is self-explanatory. A nice background story is that someone from national contractor Costains was "browsing" and found Martin's web site. He contacted Martin and invited him to inspect the site of their work on our canal in Huddersfield - a great privilege since all of the site is on private property. The power of the Internet!

Dear Ken,

Following our telephone conversation, may I once again thank you for permission to use the photographs of the tunnel interior on my web pages.

You asked me to send you some details of the web site for the benefit of Pennine Link readers.

The new URL (web address) of the site is <http://penninewaterways.co.uk>. If you want to look at the site you will be able to access it using the above address, where you will go to the "front page" from which you can choose where to go next.

I also have specific addresses for each part of the site. Latest pictures of the restoration work will be <http://penninewaterways.co.uk/latest>, the Peak Forest Canal will be <http://penninewaterways.co.uk/peak> for example.

The web site covers the Huddersfield Narrow and Broad, Ashton, Rochdale and Peak Forest Canals, including some historical notes. There are photographs of each canal arranged as a "virtual cruise" along the canal, which means that you can pretend the blockages aren't there! In fact, you can virtually cruise all along the Huddersfield

Narrow and Broad, up the Calder and Hebble Navigation, along the Rochdale down to Manchester, then back along the Ashton to where you started.

The site features photographic reports of the various blockages along the route of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and frequently updated pages with pictures of the work in progress at each location.

There are also pages covering the Hollinwood Branch, the Tameside Canals Festival and Portland Basin Museum.

I hope this gives you a picture of the website, which all started with 3 pages about the HNC to add to my Ashton website! (<http://come.to/ashton>)

Yours sincerely,
Martin Clark,
Ashton-U-Lyne.

And next, one of the complimentary ones we love to get! I'm sure Ray's questions will be answered in the next issue or soon after.

Dear Ken,

It is wonderful to see the progress now being made in the various contracts for the final restoration of "our" canal, notably at Wool Road, Standedge, and Stalybridge, and Issue 130 of "PLINK", with the various articles and superb photos of the work as it progresses, was very interesting indeed - congratulations!

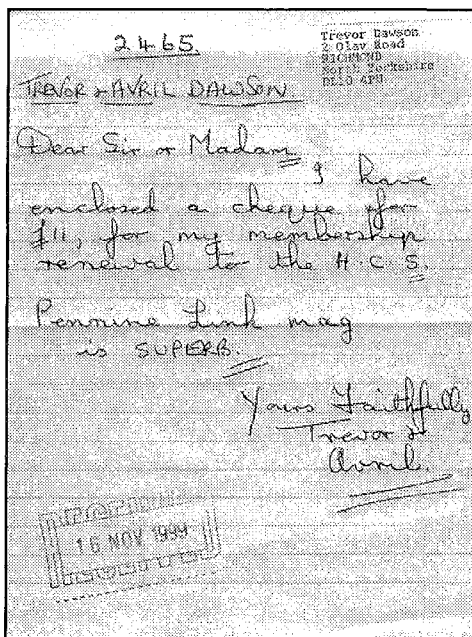
Could a future issue perhaps give some details of the plans for the more routine, but equally essential, work needed to re-open the canal? For example, living near the Mossley-Uppermill section, I frequently walk along sections of this stretch, and it seems to me that considerable dredging of parts previously restored will be necessary, to remove regrown vegetation, and assorted

"junk" large and small, before boats can have any chance of being able to use the canal. There will no doubt be other restored lengths in similar poor condition.

Also, regarding the use of "tugs" in Standedge tunnel, how many such boats will there be? The reply from Project Engineer Colin Thompson in PLINK 130 did not make this clear - similarly could we have more detail on his plans to increase the number of boats at peak periods from the "normal" 8 boats each way each day - again he did not go into details, but I think this would be of interest to your readers.

Yours sincerely,
Ray Smith,
Mossley.

And, finally, another very short but very nice one, reproduced in facsimile:



Another satisfied customer!

The Back Page

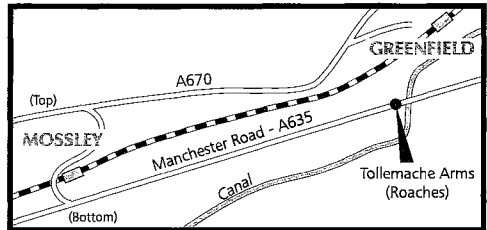
THE SOCIETY WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

- 2538 Mr Rowland, [REDACTED]
- 2539 Mr Daniels, [REDACTED]
- 2540 Mr & Mrs Davies, [REDACTED]
- 2541 Mr Winterburn, [REDACTED]
- 2542 Mr Carden, [REDACTED]
- 2543 Mr & Mrs Dyson, [REDACTED]
- 2544 Miss Eachus, [REDACTED]
- 2545 Mr Sykes, [REDACTED]
- 2546 Mr Edwards, [REDACTED]
- 2547 Mr & Mrs Wilkinson, [REDACTED]
- 2548 Mr Cooper, [REDACTED]

SOCIAL MEETINGS:

As usual, the venue is the 'Tollemache Arms', Manchester Road, Mossley (Roaches) on the second Wednesday of the month commencing at 8.00pm. Forthcoming meetings are:

9th February, 8th March,
12th April 2000.



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