

Pennine Link

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Front Cover: A spectacular fire stunt from the 'Over the Top Motorcycle Stunt Team' at the 2002 IWA National Festival, Huddersfield. Photo: R. Gough



Editorial

The biggest event since the last edition has been the IWA National Waterways Festival in Huddersfield. If you didn't go -

shame on you!

It is extremely unlikely that the National will appear very near the HNC again, there is nowhere with the parking space and facilities required on the canal line. I must confess that I do have a few vague doubts about the event; not the way it is run, that is superb, but the very reason for its existence. It is now so big that the places it can go are getting fewer and fewer and the whole reason for it, namely to show locals and politicians what a marvellous thing a canal can be in their area, is becoming unnecessary.

The outstanding success of the HNC restoration and the attendant publicity and influx of funding has made canal restoration a 'number one' priority for local authorities. British Waterways are partners in the presentation and co-operate fully with the organising committee. Government too knows that real jobs are being created by a restored canal as the leisure industry gets stronger.

So who are we now trying to influence with a big show and beating the biggest drum there is? Don't get me wrong, I enjoyed the event and will continue to do so at similar Festivals whenever the opportunity presents itself, and I hope that the indigenous inhabitants of Huddersfield also made the most of the party. It is just that I feel, in some ways, that the day of the big, all singing, all dancing, public

show is over. A similar organisation, the Caravan Club, has a National Rally each year, but for its members only. It does not seek to create more caravan sites or better access for vans, no, it realises that commercial pressures will ensure that Government and local authorities will look after the sport's welfare and the Club itself can get on with looking after its members. I have no doubt that this view will not be a general one and I look forward to hearing your thoughts for the Letters Page in the next issue.

The problem of the 'narrow' locks rumbles on. We have reprinted an article (page 50) from the Historic Narrow Boat Owners Club newsletter (and letter in response from the Chairman of BW.) These are the people who put their money and effort where their mouth is and keep alive the memories of the industrial heritage that is the canal system of this country. It is vital that these pieces of living history are able to freely navigate the system and not be moored somewhere as a museum piece. This applies also to the members of the Horse Boating Society, with their particular problems of towpath blockage. BW have acknowledged that there is a problem and are putting in hand a series of measures to make the system freely navigable. All credit to them, and I look forward to giving news of fresh work being completed on Wade Lock, Uppermill, for instance. When Mike Lucas is able to moor Tyseley outside his house in Marsden, I will be there to personally congratulate BW.

Changes on the Council of the Society have Jo Young standing down as Member-



Chairman's Report

To see over 200 boats moored on the Huddersfield Broad Canal over the holiday weekend at the National Waterways Festival

was a just reward for all of us who campaigned to restore the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

As Event Chairman of the Festival I knew of the number of expected boats. But to see the canal towpath lined from beyond the top lock on the Broad to well below Leeds Road was a sight for sore eyes. During August, whilst recuperating at home, I would often walk on to the Marple flight of locks. Many locals remarked how good it was to see so much activity. Most of the privately owned boats were crossing to Huddersfield and, of course, up the Huddersfield Narrow. You can read in this issue of John Sully's experience around the newly re-opened ring. It was to celebrate the ring re-opening that the Festival was held on the

Kirklees Council owned playing fields at Leeds Road. The Huddersfield Narrow has never seen such activity in its history.

The Festival was a success. Kirklees Council could not have been better partners. The site, perfect for a large event from a logistical point of view, was made available by the Council. As usual Waterway Recovery Group were superb in their operation of the site and always with a smile. I bumped into Bob Dewey on many occasions; he was in charge of site cleaning. Well, he gained a lot of experience in the bottom of Dungebooth Lock in the eighties!

Chris and Avril Farrar were present in their splendid narrow boat and won awards for their journey to the Festival. We reminisced over a pint how the Principal Engineer North of BW gave Chris, as Chairman of HCS, the authority to 'explore' Dungebooth and Limekiln Locks in Saddleworth. John Maynard was also on site with his family. Our trip boat never stopped over the four days. Thank you to all the crew.

contd....

ship Officer and Neville Kenyon taking over. We are not losing Jo, who has been a feature at canal events all over the country in the past few years wearing traditional dress. She has increased the membership base enormously. Jo will be staying on Council, making sure we all behave ourselves! Neville has been a Director of HCS Restoration Ltd and now brings his business sense to keep some of our wilder ideas in check.

Another first for Treasurer John Sully, storming his way around both of 'his'

canals, enjoy his article which will be in two parts. I did ask a senior member of the Rochdale Society to do a write up on the restoration of their canal, but John's article says it all!

Don't forget this years photographic competition, full details on page 39. Encourage the younger end to submit entries; everywhere I go I see cameras popping wielded by schoolchildren, some of those efforts MUST be worth a wider audience than Grannie!

Brian Minor

The Festival was made possible by the generous help from British Waterways. Their staff, led by Ian White, dredged the 'Broad', made the locks attractive and user friendly and provided financial support as the major sponsor. Dave Fletcher is in his last year as BW Chief Executive. It was his leadership which saw the change in BW's attitude to voluntary societies and restoration. I am sure that George Greener and Dave were proud to see a celebration of their efforts in the North of England.

The Mayor of Kirklees, Councillor Margaret Bates, had a wonderful weekend including the riotous Canal Boatbuilders Association Dinner on the Saturday night at the McAlpine Stadium. We all enjoyed Kevin Wadworth's contribution to the entertainment. Kevin owns Warble Narrowboats (on the Lower Peak Forest) and his band, the Skelmanthorpe Brass Band, serenaded us after the dinner and formal proceedings.

So what next? Well, following an initiative from Keith Noble (also assistant Harbourmaster at the Festival) we have had an exploratory meeting with the Rochdale Canal Society and the Calder Navigation Society to discuss a closer relationship between the three of us. At this stage we do not see a merger as the way forward, but we do wish to explore

joint activities to promote the new 'Ring of Roses'. General member's views would be appreciated.

One of the reasons for a closer relationship with the RCS and CNS is to pool our manpower resources. All voluntary organisations, clubs and societies are suffering from a lack of new, younger members who will be active participants. Without a healthy membership we cannot survive. Jo Young has been our Membership Secretary for over 10 years. She and her late husband John were also ever present at our rallies and festivals. Jo has now retired and I thank her on behalf of us all for her efforts over the years. I am pleased to announce that Neville Kenyon will replace Jo and he has offered to spend a day or so each week in the office at Ashton (as did Jo) to assist Frank and Bob and spearhead a new recruitment drive.

Yes, voluntary societies play a crucial role in the economy of the Country and help restore and maintain the fabric of our UK Society. Without the IWA, who organise National Festivals and campaign with the Societies for restoration, our waterways would not be as popular as they are now. Thank you, IWA, for organising a fitting climax to 28 years of campaigning. It was a Festival to remember.

David Sumner





Keith's Disconnected Jottings

What a year 2002 has been for the waterways! It must be the year of waterway openings and re-openings to surpass all others with the Anderton

Boat Lift, the Falkirk Wheel, the Ribble Link and the Rochdale Canal all now open to boaters. But first a word or two about waterway people.

David Fletcher, Chief Executive of British Waterways, was appointed a CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours. He surely deserves this. Waterway enthusiasts will always find fault with BW, but the organisation Dave will leave on his retirement in December - where the restoration of disused and derelict waterways has become a core activity - is barely recognisable from the BW of not so many years ago. Let us hope that Robin Evans, his successor as Chief Executive, continues to press that way of thinking on the Board, and restoration stays central to BW in the future. Robin has been BW's Commercial Director since 1999. Before that he was employed by heritage organisations - the Historic Royal Palaces, the Landmark Trust and the National Trust.

John Fletcher, the Chairman of the North West Region of the Inland Waterways Association has been elected to succeed Richard Drake as Chairman of the IWA in November. Although known as a long-standing advocate for the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal (Margaret, John's wife, chairs the Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal Society), John is a member of several other canal societies including HCS, and is a Trustee of The Waterways

Trust. With the mantle of leadership passing to a younger generation, it will be interesting to see the changes that John's appointment will bring. Will he find a way to escape from the inevitable committees of the Regions and Branches? Will he find a way to push the IWA into a more proactive role in waterway restoration? Time will tell. Talking of the IWA and Dave Fletcher, I was pleased when IWA Council decided to appoint Dave as a vice-president of the Association in July. And talking of the Manchester, Bolton & Bury, I was impressed with the leaflet on that canal available at the National Waterways Festival. Restoration of the canal is proposed as part of the next group of BW supported restoration schemes, and a partnership has been formed between BW, the local authorities and the canal society. It is expected that restoration will result in the creation of over 6,000 jobs, lever in over £180m of private investment and bring as much as £11m into the local economy each year when the canal is restored. The ambitious target has been set of completing the £32m restoration by the year 2006.

I also picked up the leaflet on the Lincolnshire County Council Waterways Project. Years of campaigning by local groups and canal societies has certainly paid off here. The County Council has allocated £9.7m and intends to seek grants that will see the completion of restoration of the Louth Canal, the Horncastle Canal and the Sleaford Navigation, and, intriguingly, the creation of a new canal linking the River Witham at Boston to the Fens.

Other new links are in the news too. On May 24 HM The Queen opened the Falkirk Wheel boat lift, that remarkable

piece of modern engineering linking the Forth and Clyde and Union Canals. Only two months earlier the Falkirk Wheel's Victorian cousin, the long-closed boat lift at Anderton, had been re-opened to link the Trent and Mersey Canal and the Weaver Navigation. And the Ribble Link is at last open to navigation - marked by events in July arranged by the Ribble Link Trust and BW. A convoy of craft descended the Link from the Lancaster Canal on 11 July ready for a VIP cruise the following day down the lower part of the new canal and up the River Ribble to Preston Docks. The first convoy up the Link took place on 13 July. A formal opening is planned for September. A month earlier, on 12 June at the Merseyside Maritime Museum, BW reported on the results of their consultations about the proposed new Pier Head Canal to link the Leeds & Liverpool Canal to the Liverpool waterfront. This will create a genuine destination that should attract boaters to the little used Liverpool end of the canal. There is a long way to go yet, but detailed engineering design will start soon in preparation for applying for grants.

Talking of grants, it has to be a good omen that the South West Regional Development Agency have assisted BW to buy industrial buildings on the site of the canal basin at Brimscombe Port, near Stroud, on the Thames and Severn Canal. Although filled-in now, the basin will become an important focal point on the 36 miles of the Cotswold Canals when restoration is complete. I was able to see the potential importance of this site myself when I recently visited my publishers based in a former canalside woollen mill here - which leads (not very subtly) to an unashamed plug for the book "Pennine

Dreams: the Story of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal." Published by Tempus Books Ltd, this will be available from HCS or your local bookseller priced £16-99 by the time you receive this copy of *Pennine Link*. It tells the story of the canal - how and why it was built, the operating years, the decline to closure, and how HCS and our partners (the local authorities and BW) achieved the restoration of the canal.

Other waterway re-openings have been in the news. At Hanbury on the Droitwich Junction Canal the top three locks on the canal, restored by Waterway Recovery Group and local volunteers, were re-opened on 31 May. A couple of days earlier a ceremony had been held to mark the completion of the Cotgrave Project on the Grantham Canal, which has created a Country Park and returned a large area of land to agricultural use. The canal has been dredged and locks repaired through the length of the project, bringing the total spend on restoration of the Grantham Canal to about £4m and bringing nearer the dream of complete restoration being progressed jointly by the Grantham Navigation Association and the Grantham Canal Restoration Society in association with BW. The key to this will be the re-creation of a link to the River Trent. When funding is obtained for that, expect to see the canal re-opened very soon throughout its complete length.

Finally the big news nearer to the Huddersfield Narrow. British Waterways succeeded against all the odds in re-opening the Rochdale Canal on 1 July, an event marked by ceremonies at the ends of the closed part of the canal. Ribbons were cut, in Manchester by well-known broadcaster John Craven in his role as vice-president of the Waterways

Trust, and at Littleborough by Fred Dibnah. John Fletcher reported in the IWA Head Office Bulletin that only six days before opening day the canal was "the scene of frenetic activity." There were unfinished bridges at Ashton Road West and Poplar Street and work was far from complete at the M62 crossing, where contractors had no legal access to the site until confirmation of the compulsory purchase order a mere five weeks before the opening day.

Learning from experience with the Huddersfield Narrow, BW are reminding boaters that in some parts the canal has been restored only to a minimal navigable standard, and for the time being, so far as navigation is concerned, this is a commissioning period. Special conditions apply, particularly the requirement that boaters book ahead for an escorted passage of the formerly shallowed section from the junction with the Ashton Canal to Failsworth, through locks 83 to 66. Only a limited number of boats will, in fact, be escorted, effectively rationing use of this part of the canal and limiting the amount of water lost through lockage. The Rochdale will not be over-endowed in terms of water supply. The contract by which British Waterways operate the canal on behalf of The Waterways Trust apparently accepts that navigation will not be maintained throughout in a one-in-three years dry summer, compared to the one-in-ten years standard considered the norm on other BW waterways. BW intend to see where problems occur before considering what solutions might be possible. Apart from this, the Rochdale should be an easier canal to work than the Huddersfield Narrow. With broad locks the pounds between locks, even where short, were built to hold a

significantly larger reservoir of water than the short pounds of the Huddersfield Narrow feeding narrow locks, so the incidence of boaters coming across low pounds should be less. More important, perhaps, the Yorkshire side of the canal has been open for some years, giving plenty of time for operating problems to be revealed.

Congratulations are due to British Waterways and The Waterways Trust for making it possible for the Millennium work to be carried out, and the canal to be re-opened throughout. Congratulations are due to the Rochdale Canal Trust - that amalgam of the local authorities, the Rochdale Canal Company, and the IWA, chaired by HCS Council member Allen Brett, that had overseen restoration since 1984. Most of all, perhaps, congratulations are due to our friends and colleagues in the Rochdale Canal Society. Without their vision and inspiration the canal would not have been restored. The Society's experience and the history of the restoration of the canal has been very different from our Society and canal's story, but the Rochdale restoration stands out, alongside the Huddersfield Narrow, for the professional and skilled way in which work was carried out over many years.

In the last issue of *The Cuckoo*, the journal of the Chesterfield Canal Trust, John Lower says 'Nothing is impossible if we want it enough.' The progress on waterway restoration this year - after the re-opening of the Huddersfield Narrow, the Forth & Clyde, and the Union Canals last year - proves how right he is.

Keith Gibson

Cruising the South Pennine Ring - Part 1

Society Treasurer and intrepid cruiser John Sully and his wife Cynthia take the first hire boat around the newly opened South Pennine Ring of waterways. All photos - J Sully.

Introduction

In 2001 British Waterways confidently predicted that the Rochdale Canal would be opened on July 1 2002 and so in December 2001 we booked 'Leicester' from Shire Cruisers for 2 weeks from July 15 to cruise the South Pennine Ring. We decided to travel clockwise around the ring beginning on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and returning on the Rochdale. This allowed a week's margin if the completion of the restoration of the Rochdale Canal was delayed. However, despite some nervous weeks in May and June, British Waterways worked wonders and opened the canal on July 1.

The opening of this final stage of the Ring is an incredible achievement by British Waterways staff and their major contractors. Boats are assisted through the reopened section of the Rochdale whilst in the initial commissioning stage; we were booked to meet BW staff in Piccadilly Basin on 23 July. Our passage through Standedge Tunnel was booked for 19 July essentially setting our itinerary.

Sowerby Bridge to Piccadilly Basin, Manchester

The importance of the opening of the Ring was shown by the interest of the local press in our departure. As Cynthia and I left Sowerby



Setting off, the guillotine gate, Salter Hebble Locks

Bridge, with Peter Saunders, who was accompanying us for the first leg of our journey, we were photographed by The Yorkshire Evening Post and the Halifax Courier.

Our progress around the Ring is shown from our daily log.

Brighouse has plenty of moorings complete with mooring rings outside the relatively new Sainsbury's, which does not close until 20:00. From Brighouse we continued on the Calder & Hebble and passed through Anchor Pit Flood Lock, where the weir collapsed earlier in the year and was repaired by BW pouring in large stones.



Handspike operated gearing - Calder & Hebble

At Cooper Bridge we turned onto the Huddersfield Broad Canal. Three reserves have been created for the protection of Floating Water Plantain (*Luronium natans*), a rare and protected plant that is patchily distributed on the Broad but abundant on the Narrow and Rochdale Canals.

Dredging of the whole canal started on January 1 and was still taking place above Lock 4. It was due to be finished for the IWA Rally. Preparations for National IWA Rally were just starting at the Leeds Road Playing Fields. When we reached the Locomotion Bridge a workman raised the bridge still using the old handle. The work that was due to be undertaken on this bridge had caused another nail biting few days at home in Peterborough before our holiday. In June, BW put a stoppage notice out to say that the canal



Dredging at Lock 4 - Huddersfield Broad



*Work in progress, Locomotion Bridge - Huddersfield Broad.
If I had not discovered what was happening, this bridge would have been closed to boats.*

would be closed at this bridge from 15 to 19 July and also for 9 days at the end of July and the beginning of August. After I had protested to BW North East that they were going to be closing the Ring only two weeks after it was opened they agreed to keep navigation open as much as possible. There would be one or two afternoons when it would be closed, but 48 hours notice of this would be given. The bridge has been repaired at a cost of £100,000. The repairs have included mechanising the Lock instead of the manual hand-reel. Although closed to road traffic, the contractor was using it in the daytime. In the evenings it was left up so canal boats could pass. There is no safe mooring on the Huddersfield Broad Canal until after the Locomotion Bridge, when we were once again grateful to find another Sainsbury's with mooring rings.

A new sanitary station was under construction opposite Aspley Basin, which has been upgraded. There is also a water point just before Aspley Basin - the last before Marsden.

After spending an afternoon in Huddersfield we continued under Wakefield Road Bridge and onto the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. In 1986 I took the first boat under this bridge after it had been restored at a cost of £350,000. It was good to be back. We took Leicester from Huddersfield to Ashton-under-Lyne as soon as the Huddersfield Narrow Canal opened last year. This year progress was much easier although we still experienced difficulty with moorings. There are very few mooring rings on the canal and on the towpath side, the canal is very shallow with stone flags. Even in those few places where it is possible to get to the side, it is almost impossible to find places where mooring spikes could be hammered in. We moored for the night below Mark Bottom Bridge, just below Milnsbridge, on the non-towpath side, where the canal was reasonably deep.

On reaching Milnsbridge the following day we found that there are railings opposite the towpath side, where boats can be moored overnight. At Milnsbridge we passed other boats coming down who reported some difficulties with a shortage of water further up. We continued but were forced to call BW out at Lock 13e, (Lower Ramsden Lock) and at Lock 18e (Can Lock) because the water was too low to continue. At both places BW let water down from higher up so that we could proceed. We became stuck above Lees Mill Bridge in Slaithwaite, exactly the same place where we were stuck last year. This time a passer-by helped to pull the boat along past the obstruction. At Slaithwaite new rings have been put in on the non-towpath side above



No mooring place! Slaithwaite out of town.

Lock 21e, Waterside Lock but it is not a very attractive place to moor. Sadly the road beside Val Todd's Moonraker has been tarmacked, the trees have gone and no rings have been put in, so it is now impossible to moor. We continued and with difficulty moored at the towpath above Lock 25e.

Next morning we saw a boat approaching and as the pound was short decided to move on, as filling the Lock would lower the water level further. The boat was Ferrous and was being used by BBC TV for Songs of Praise to be broadcast on September 29. Boats going through the Standedge Tunnel have to wait at Lock 32E the day before and are then escorted up the 11 Locks of the Marsden flight. We reached the Lock at 10:40. There are no mooring rings and it is quite difficult to moor. The Lock is beside the attractive Sparth Reservoir and as the sun was shining we did not mind the wait. Shortly afterwards Ferrous arrived; our companion through the tunnel.



BW workmen were busy removing a tree, which had fallen into the canal above Lock 32e. At 12:20 two BW staff appeared to say that they could not bring the boat down past Lock 34e because a rock was preventing the gate from opening. They needed our boat to enable them to remove the rock. We set off immediately and the BW staff were able to pull the rock out of the canal and on to our boat.

The gates on the Marsden flight were leaking and we were glad of the help in bringing down water. The bottom gate of 36e, where we were caught on the cill last year going up, was still leaking very badly. (On the flight we

passed Mike Lucas's house on Warehouse Hill. He had hoped to moor the Mikron boat Tyseley outside his house but it was unable to go past High Street Lock at Uppermill.) We reached Marsden at 15:30. We had to wait until the trip boats had stopped running before we could fill up with water outside the Visitor Centre and were instructed to make sure we filled up before 18:30 as otherwise we would be caught by the security lights etc.

The following day our boat and Ferrous were protected with padding and we travelled through the Tunnel on the trip boat in front of our boats in 2 hours 15 minutes. Fred Carter was the pilot and the guard was Mark Nield, who had joined BW after working as a volunteer for Huddersfield Canal Society's Marsden Shuttle service. Stephen Windmill was the very informative guide. The Songs of Praise crew filmed us emerging from the Tunnel.



Guard, Mark Nield with Leicester in tow.

There was only one boat waiting to go through the Tunnel, which was the Huddersfield Canal Society's trip boat Astra returning to Marsden after being used at events at Salybridge. We were escorted down the Diggle flight through the first 9 Locks as far as 24w, Wool Road Lock. We took water at the Wool Road Transhipment warehouse, the last water point before Portland Basin. Here we were filmed from Ferrous as it went past. We hoped to make Salybridge for the night but the weather deteriorated and then we became stuck in Lock 17w. Both bottom paddles had become detached and so we had to wait for over an hour before the water had dropped

sufficiently for us to open the bottom gates. Vandals had removed the footbridge at this Lock. We eventually managed to moor on the towpath side above 15e, Roaches Lock, beside the pub.

The following day our crew changed over and we were joined by our daughter Anthea Cox and her two children Ewan (8) and George (4). They arrived by train meeting us as we emerged from Lock 7w just above Tesco's in Stalybridge. We reached Portland Basin at



Leicester at Stalybridge with Ewan and George safely attired.



Enough time for a detour to the top of the Marple Flight.

14:00 on Saturday 20 July and, knowing when we were booked to begin the Rochdale canal, decided that there was time to take the boat up to the top of the Marple flight. We were going to moor at the entrance to Portland Basin Marina on Sunday night but Colin from the Wooden Boat Trust suggested that we would be safer beside the Museum and lent us a key. The following morning we had a pump out at Portland Basin Marina and filled up with water at the water point beside the Museum. There were two other water points on the Ashton Canal, one at the top of Fairfield

Locks, which had been vandalised and the other at the bottom of the Ashton Canal. The next water point on the Rochdale Canal was at Durn above Littleborough Higher Lock.

We were advised to travel early down the Ashton Canal because of problems with vandals etc. but by the time we had filled up with water and had a pump out it was 11:00. This was the only section of our journey when we met boats going in the other direction. One or two were going to the IWA Rally but most were doing the Cheshire Ring. We stopped at the biggest ASDA Supermarket in Europe just before Sports City, where most of the Commonwealth Games were held. The store had opened in June. (ASDA were one of the major sponsors of the Games.) There is an entrance to the store from the canal and we could take our trolley to within a few yards of the boat although there were no mooring rings. We left ASDA at 16:20 and passed the City of Manchester stadium where rehearsals were taking place for the ceremonies for the Games. There was a great sense of excitement in Manchester due to the imminent start of the Games. There were many people beside the canal as we cruised down the Ashton to Piccadilly Basin and we were glad of the new CCTV cameras, which we could see following our movements and we had no problems from vandals. The cameras cover the canal from Sports City to Piccadilly Basin, which also has CCTV. We moored on new moorings on the Rochdale Canal above Lock 84 on the right hand side, as instructed, for the passage up the 18 Locks from 83 to 66 the following morning.

Rochdale Canal

Because of possible problems with water supply and also work still taking place, BW would only allow one lock of water a day (effectively 2 boats) to travel in each direction on the 18 locks between 66 (Failsworth) and 83 (Piccadilly) in the commissioning period. Besides assisting boats on the 18 locks between Manchester and Failsworth, BW have also been taking children for trips on the Rochdale Canal on Sundays. These have

proved very popular and helped to make local children aware of the benefits and dangers of a restored canal.

On Tuesday 23 July, BW staff met us for our assisted passage up the 18 locks. Another boat was booked but did not turn up and no boats were booked to travel down so we had 4 BW staff to help us. There was considerable excitement as we set off through the locks that I had photographed during restoration. The first two locks, 83 and 82, were restored in advance of the Millennium funded restoration.



Lock 82 (Ancoats Lane - pictured above), featured in the BW video 'Unlocked and Unlimited' produced to illustrate their £500m expenditure on restoring canals. There are many industrial buildings beside the canal and it is expected that the restored canal will contribute to regeneration on this section.

As the canal approaches Newton Heath there is housing and we had many people watching our progress. Frequently we had comments from local people saying how pleased they were to see the canal restored. Our grandsons were amused by how many times children said to us "Mister: can I have a ride on your boat?" The canal had been shallowed from Lock 81 to 69, Newton Heath, and restoration of all these locks was completed shortly before the reopening.

In Oldham we went through the three Tannersfield Locks 68, 67 and 66, which were restored in advance of the Millennium funded restoration. At the former Failsworth Centre there is now a very wide and attractive basin, which will be developed for boaters. At the

moment BW do not recommend mooring here and the BW staff helped us through the next Lock 65 (Failsworth), which was locked after we had passed through.



Canal basin at the site of the former Failsworth Co-op store.

Oldham Council restored Failsworth Lock a few years ago. We then continued to the Boat and Horses pub at Chadderton, which is a new development, with a Travel Lodge beside the A663 and Junction 21 of the M60. There are no mooring rings here and three boats were moored waiting to pass down the following day. However the hotel car park has CCTV, which also covers boats moored on the canal.

The assistance of the BW staff meant that we had only taken 5 hours from Piccadilly Basin, including 19 Locks. A BW officer arrived and told us that next day we would only be able to travel as far as the top of the Slattocks Flight. We said we wanted to reach Littleborough and he said that if we were at Slattocks by 13:00 we would be escorted through the M62 site.

The next lock, Kay Lane, would be opened at 08:30 in the morning and we were advised to leave at 08:00 to reach Slattocks in time. With an afternoon spare we caught a bus into Manchester and the children enjoyed the Museum of Science & Industry, which was free.

The next day we left at 08:00. We passed work in progress on the Grimshaw Lane Lift Bridge, which would take some time to be completed and reached Lock 64 (Kay Lane) just as BW opened it. This and the next two locks were restored by Oldham Council some

years ago and a trip boat operated for a time on this section. BW left some of the bottom gates open for us and helped us up some of the locks on the Slattocks Flight.

After Failsworth the scenery changes from industrial Manchester to open country at the attractive Slattocks Flight as the Pennine Hills appear. From the Boat and Horses to Sowerby Bridge, the Rochdale Canal is probably one of the most attractive canals in the country. The nine locks from 54 (Slattocks Top) to Lock 61 (Scowcroft) were part of the Millennium restoration. We reached the top of the Slattocks Flight at 12:00 and had time for lunch and arranged to meet the BW staff at 12:45 above the M62 section.

The BW staff had to operate the new Lock 53 Blue Pits Lowest and Lock 52 Blue Pits Middle, which were both in the section where work was taking place. The new Lock 53 is south of the M62, whereas the previous 53 was north of the M62.

After a number of phone calls, I arranged to meet BW's Project Manager John Hallam and was able to step off the boat at Lock 53 and take photographs of Leicester's progress through the M62 section. John Hallam was also Project Manager for the restoration of the Slattocks Locks and last year was Project Manager for the Standedge Tunnel restoration.



A former farm track bridge is the new M62 bridge.

After BW received approval to compulsorily purchase the remaining land necessary for the new line through the M62, John Hallam had worked 12 hours a day and seven days a week to ensure the canal was open at the M62 on 1 July. BW staff helped us through the restored

Manchester Road Bridge and through the adjacent restored Blue Pits Highest Lock. It was then a short distance to the new tunnel under the A627M; at over £3 million, the most costly of all the blockages to be removed. The tunnel is not very long but takes the boat under the new light-controlled crossroads.

The BW staff helped us through the two locks in Rochdale 50 (Moss Lower) and 49 (Moss Upper). Here there were a large number of onlookers and again we were told how pleased they were to see the canal restored. Just after Lock 50 we were joined by Councillor Allen Brett, who is Chairman of the Rochdale Canal Trust and Deputy Leader of Rochdale Metropolitan District Council, and took him to Littleborough through the new Deepdale Swing Bridge and restored Firgrove Bridge, Little Clegg Swing Bridge and Smithy and Ben Healy bridges.

This was the first time he had been on the Rochdale Canal in Rochdale. He said how difficult the Rochdale Canal Trust had found negotiations with the Millennium Commission to obtain the promised grant. It was only when British Waterways set up the Waterways Trust that the funding could be received. The setting up of the Trust not only saved the Rochdale Canal restoration, but also has been a great stimulus to other restorations and to the wider enjoyment of the waterways.

We reached Littleborough at 16:30 and Anthea and our grandchildren left on the 16:44 rail service to Leeds for an easy connection to their home in Peterborough. The moorings below Lock 48 Littleborough Lowest are very convenient for the railway station.

For the next three days Huddersfield Canal Society members Peter Smart and Tricia Bayley were to join us to help with our journey

John Sully

John & Cynthia complete their journey around the South Pennine Ring in the next edition of Pennine Link (Winter 2002).

The Opening of the Rochdale Canal



Ken Wright's camera caught some unusual sights at the Littleborough end re-opening of the Rochdale Canal on July 1st.



The crowds started to gather very early.



Umbrella sales were up.



Police did a great job in traffic control.



The VIP had his own executive transport.



Queenie let it be known that the towpath was for horses. Sue lost her hat, struggling to keep Queenie in check.



Fred was in expansive mood. This was about his sixth attempt at cutting the tape.



Queenie says: "Thank God, that's all over!"

The National - The Editor's View

Motor cyclists leaping over twenty people, dogs jumping through blazing hoops, a full scale cavalry charge and 'volunteers' abseiling down a 50 foot tower - and this was just in the Main Arena!

This year's National Waterways Festival was held on the Huddersfield Broad, as near as we are ever likely to get it to the Narrow. Some of our members were very involved in the organisation; David Sumner was Chairman of the Organising Committee, Keith Noble was Harbour Master and Steve Scholes was Campsite Manager. The East Side boat crew, under the direction of Mo O'Neill, ran trips for the long Bank Holiday weekend and co-operated with the Calder Navigation boat

and a local 'community' boat in keeping the crowds afloat. Their hard work is reflected in the fact that although they weren't charging for the trips, relying purely on donations, some £400 was taken. Congratulations to all the crews.

There was an enormous bar - real ale of course - and a smaller one at the other end of the twenty five acre setting. This was run by a company calling themselves the Real Ale Co., who apparently attend events such as these providing the good stuff instead of the usual fizzy lager that is dispensed by most 'outside' bars. There were 10 or 12 food outlets offering Fish and Chips, Hog Roast, Crepes, Doughnuts, and, probably the most popular, the German Sausage and Wiener Schnitzel wagon. These were not cheap, but were



good and therefore worth the money. Chairman David was one of their best customers (and salesman!)

In the beer tent was a pianist and guitarist playing gentle music all day. In the food tent was a flautist, a Jazz band and a Country & Western band playing foot-tapping music. In the theatre, Day Star Theatre put on their latest production and around the site, the practitioners of street theatre were on stilts, playing barrel organs, playing pirates or simply walking their imaginary dogs! Frankly, just one day would have been insufficient to take in all the shows.

For the children there was WOW - standing, I believe for 'Wild Over Water'. This was a multi-activity idea, the kids were given a 'passport' and sent round the site to find various objects or get tasks completed. As some of these were helping to build a wall (real bricks and

mortar), helping to build a boat, operating the grab on a dredger on the canal and taking part in otter racing (radio controlled), I rather wished I was 10 again and could join in the fun!

For the people with itchy wallets, there were two craft tents as well as a marquee with smaller traders. There were samples of completed narrow boats on land and on the water to be goggled at or write cheques for; all the engine manufacturers were there extolling the efficiency of their wares and several of the more abstruse electronic producers had items from their production lines for appraisal and purchase.

Ropes, overalls and binoculars had their stalls and of course every canal society had a sales or information stand. Next door to our pitch, there was a company selling outdoor clothing, folding seats, tents etc. I am a sucker for this sort of



thing and left with bulging bags and an empty wallet!

HCS had our trailer, manned by Bob Gough and Frank Smith, with part time assistance from yours truly. Astounding how many members of other societies are also members of HCS. Many of the people manning other stands came and talked to us and finished by saying "by the way I am also a member of HCS". Many of them had had interesting boat trips getting to the festival, I hope some of them will send a record of the trip to us here at Plink and we can all share their experiences.

As there were around two hundred boats and a similar number of caravans/campers attending the Festival, giving a figure of over 2000 people living on or near the

site, the organisers provided evening entertainment for the residents only. And this was good. On Sunday night, for instance, there was the Huddersfield Brass Band and the Colne Valley Male Voice Choir performing in the beer tent to about a thousand people inside and a similar number sitting outside.

Altogether a reet good do!!

Brian Minor



K Wright



K Wright



T Lomas



K Wright

The National - The 'Promo' Trailer?

Sales Report - or is it Promotions Report?

Technically, the Society discontinued its general sales activities under the 'Loxvend' banner over two years ago - activities in which the sales staff trundled around the region with the Land Rover and purpose built trailer, selling all sorts of canal and associated books, clothing, knick-knacks and memorabilia.

The new idea was to use the trailer to recruit more members and promote regional and local waterways, in particular, the Huddersfield Narrow and Broad. Unfortunately we had so much stock left that it was financially inappropriate to throw it, or give it, away. As a result, the office staff, namely Bob Gough and myself, along with help from Jo Young, attended various canal events, culminating in the I.W.A. Festival this year, with every hope of reducing stock levels to nil.

Due to the limited number of events attended, it would be remiss of me not to mention the contribution made by Ken and

Anne Wright along with Norman and Brenda Hayes who organised and staffed the trailer during the Society's Link Day last year.

The I.W.A. National was not necessarily a financial success - our profit just about covered the cost of the electricity (used to power the T.V. and video), and if we had been required to pay the full entrance fee, we certainly would have been well into the red. Having said this, as the event was staged to celebrate the re-opening of the Huddersfield Narrow and Rochdale Canals, the Society, whatever the cost, had to be there. Special thank's to Brian Minor, who came along to help out over the weekend. However, volunteers come at a price - Brian refused to drink the tea being sold on site, so a kettle had to be produced so he could brew up on the trailer, a small price to pay some would say.

Although our trailer was located close to the central arena, it was in some respects, a little off the main pedestrian thoroughfare, much to the chagrin of the adjacent commercial traders, and it was also difficult



The Society Trailer at the National.

R Gough

to find for those who had come along to see us. On a positive note, we had a good view of the arena and the activities which took place on a daily basis. I even managed to persuade (con) my daughter-in-law into taking a ride

on the back of one of the stunt motorcycles - she was not to know that the stunt man would do 'wheelies' etc.

Visitors to the trailer were impressed by the relatively new restoration video 'The Impossible Dream' and we managed to sell most of what we had on board. It was also nice to have the veteran actress Prunella Scales, in company with Ken and Anne Wright, stop by to say hello.

Bob won one of the star prizes from an adjacent tombola stall. A novel idea in that in order to win you had to draw a ticket with the name of a navigable canal on it. Bob, despite being a non-drinker, won a bottle of whisky - and the name of the navigable canal he drew was none other than the Huddersfield Narrow, what a coincidence. Brian was highly amused and Bob genuinely shocked at the tarnishing of his 'never win anything' reputation! I won a can of Coka-Cola, yes a navigable canal, however, I had never heard of it.

With the exception of a few books, canal scene coasters, glasses and a handful of sweatshirts, we have just about sold up.

In my opinion, the I.W.A. must be congratulated on the overall layout of the site, traders' parking, services, in particular the cleanliness of the public toilets, and site security, (it was not their fault that mindless vandals removed/stole most of the route/direction signs).



Huddersfield Examiner

Frank Smith spreading the word!

The main whinge over the four-day event, by those taking part or trading, was the lack of 'punters'. It was suggested that the £7.50 adult entry fee (accompanied children free) put many local people off. This may be

so, but I well remember a few years ago at one of the H.C.S. Huddersfield Canal Festivals, some people balked at paying 20 pence entry fee!

Some would say that events of this nature are basically preaching to the converted, perhaps so, but there was sufficient ancillary entertainment on site to meet the needs of all ages. Taking this into consideration and the fact that the I.W.A. needs the event to raise money, £7.50 was in many eyes value for money - will they quibble at £7.50 next year at Reading?

Large national events descending on towns and districts which are not generally used to hosting sizeable commercial fairs, do take time to become established and local people are surprised by the cost of entry, however, successful events tend to return and become regular, popular calendar events. However, in this instance, I would be surprised if the I.W.A. National returned to Huddersfield before the next Preston Guild.

And finally, we now have the winter to plan any modifications to the trailer, to be more conducive to promoting H.C.S. than selling goods, and if funds will allow, a re-spray and re-signing - the trailer is over 10 years old and is starting to show its age.

Frank Smith

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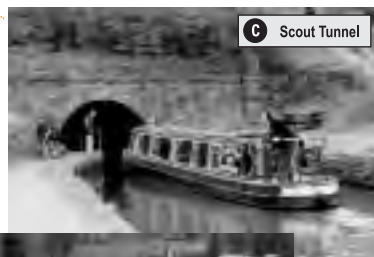
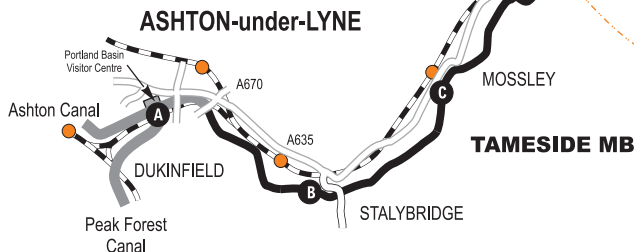
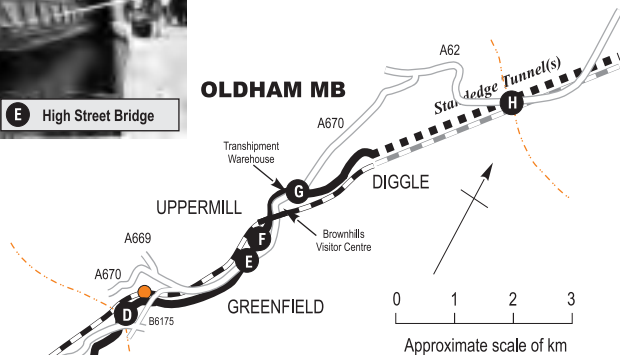
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C Scout Tunnel



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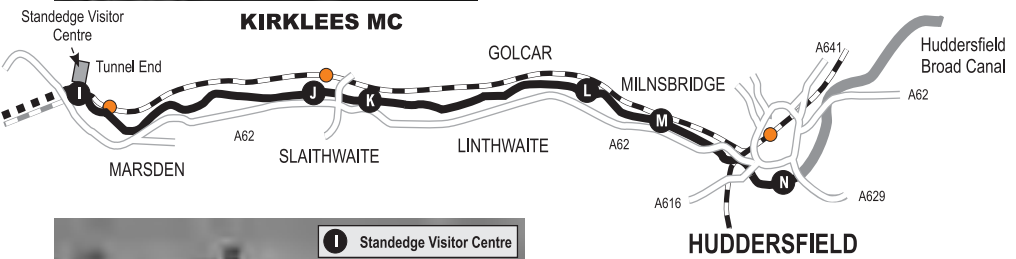
B Stalybridge Town Centre



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The National - The Boat Crew

NO-ONE FELL IN and NO-ONE FELL OUT

Well we've been there, done that and definitely got the T-shirts to prove it! Yes, the IWA National Waterways Festival held at Huddersfield was a great success and certainly a "double whammy" for me. Not only was this my first festival but also my first big event in my relatively new role as HCS East Team Crew Co-ordinator. Talk about in at the deep end! (pardon the pun).

Apologies for sounding like an Oscar winner here but I simply have to thank "My Boys" (as they are frequently referred to) and of course we had some "Girl Power" too I'm delighted to say. I was lucky to secure a super efficient band of crew members to cover the whole four days plus another four getting the Shuttle down from Marsden and back up again. Thank you all folks - we had a great time -

no-one fell in and no-one fell out - what more could we ask?

A very special thank you to Terry Lomas, my 'rock', without whose unfailing support, advice and mentoring I wouldn't have survived the experience. You're a gem Terry and I luv ya honey! Special mention must also go to my special pal Ronnie Rose who turned up every day to whip us all into shape and bully poor unsuspecting punters into taking one of our magical mystery tours. I'm sure half of them had only come out for a short stroll and had no intention of taking part in the festival, but nothing stops Ronnie - the Man with a Mission!

Our allocated pitch didn't at first seem ideal - we were well away from the main exhibition area, almost under Leeds Road Bridge and business was far from brisk at the outset. However, we soon cottoned-on to the fact that many people didn't actually want to go into the main



The Society's Marsden Shuttle jockeys for position in the three boat relay offering trips to the festival-goers.

site and had simply come 'in at the back door' to see how far they could go for free. We had them on board and parted from their money before they knew it!

The trip from the bridge through to Lock 5E and back was just right and afforded us plenty of exposure to the main site, thus encouraging the visitors to make the pilgrimage down the towpath to see our smartly turned out HCS crew and step aboard. I know I shouldn't say so, but I'm going to (well don't I always?) we DEFINITELY looked the smartest with everyone in correct HCS crew uniform. We were easy to pick out and hey - we were really nice and smiley all the time. Excellent ambassadors for HCS, one and all - not that I'm biased or anything.

Ashore, the exhibitors were many and varied and all very interesting. Personally speaking, the crepe stall took some beating and I was staggered (almost literally) by the vast range of excellent thirst quenchers at the real ale bar. Unfortunately I had to limit my research in that particular tent due to crewing

commitments and having to drive home each night. At the next festival I must ensure I have a complete day off crewing and book a taxi home.

All in all, it's been an extremely enjoyable, worthwhile and informative Bank Holiday weekend. I've met interesting people, oohed and aahed at the luxury boats and played on the BW dredger. Thank you HCS and especially thank you to all the super crew members for such great team work.

Mo O'Neill
East Side Crew Co-ordinator



Boat crew at their HQ: left to right, Barry Garthwaite, Ronnie Rose, Terry Lomas and Mo O'Neill.



Lincoln Porter on the helm makes an elegant turn below Lock 5E - the halfway point of the trip.

The National - The VIP!

The exclamation mark is necessary here as the VIPs in question were none other than Ken Wright and his wife Anne, who joined other VIPs at the IWA National Festival in Huddersfield. His story unfolds - eventually!

We had been to St. David's in Wales in our caravan and arrived home, after three weeks away, to the usual mountain of mail (wanted, and mainly unwanted). One of the 'wanted' letters was from the magazine "Canal Boat and Inland Waterways", to which we subscribe, to tell us that we had won their Challenger competition - a week on the canals in a Challenger narrowboat! Well, not having won anything since a dishcloth with a No.18 in "Wings for Victory Week", I rang the magazine lady, Anne Kelly, to find out what this was all about. And yes, it was true, Anne had entered a competition (she didn't remember doing so!) answering three historical questions about the waterways and our correct answer had been pulled out of the hat, from many others.

Next move was to ring Challenger and I spoke to the boss, Ed Rimmer. He was delighted that we had won - perhaps because we were experienced boaters! - and said that OUR boat was a brand new 62 foot semi-trad, named BLACKBIRD, still being built in Stoke and travelling to the National at Huddersfield by road, to be "launched" there.

Now, to backtrack a bit, because we have known actors Timothy West and Prunella Scales for some years, IWA asked me if they would consider opening the Festival and it had been agreed that Prunella would do the opening as Timothy was busy rehearsing "King Lear" for a national tour and could not be here until later.

Obviously, we were going to chaperone Prunella at the event (well, not so obviously to IWA, but that's another story!). On with the tale.

So I told Ed Rimmer that we would also be at the Festival, and why, and it didn't take us a moment to wonder if Prunella would also "launch" BLACKBIRD for Challenger. I asked her and she willingly agreed.

Prunella travelled up from Euston on the Friday, the opening day and we got her to the site with - literally - five minutes to spare. After some introductions we went into official opening mode and listened - in a heavy drizzle - to speeches from the Mayor of Kirklees, our Chairman David Sumner (who was also Festival Chairman), Richard Drake (IWA National Chairman), Dr. George Greener (Chairman of British Waterways - chief Festival Sponsor) and finally, briefly, from Prunella who was crisp, funny, and very much to the point.

This was where Anne and I became temporary VIPs by joining the platform party for a splendid lunch in the playing fields' pavilion. Only three tables of eight - ours included Liz Payne, IWA National Vice-chairman and old pal Cllr. George Speight and Mrs. Speight. Also there was Sir John Harman, Chairman of the Environment Agency, who was plain John when I worked with him at Kirklees Council umpteen years ago, and Dave Fletcher, Chief Exec. of British Waterways.

After lunch we had invitations to an Environment Agency reception at 2.30 and a British Waterways reception at 3.30 but we missed both of those because a) BBC Leeds had grabbed Prunella for a 'piece to camera' for 'Look North' (this was the fifth or sixth time she had been

'diverted' from the main course, which she accepted with great charm), and b) we had a date with a boat - and more photographers at 3.00pm.

We had already had a look at BLACKBIRD - WHAT A BEAUTY. All mod cons, including a hydraulic bowthruster (which I have always thought were only for cissies but am prepared to change my mind about!), microwave, colour TV, CD player over the four poster bed, two loos etc. etc. 6-berth full up but ideal for four. It is part of Challenger's new 'Stealth Fleet' (I imagined a low black thing, just showing above the water) and will be for hire at Nantwich. Challenger, of course, are better known for their shared ownership boats which operate on a sort of time-share system.

We met Ed and Gill Rimmer and had a glass or two of bubbly with them and Prunella made a lovely job of the launching. After a short look round some of the exhibits, including the Shire Cruisers hire boat which was moored next to BLACKBIRD, and having done a wave or two at our passing Society Trip Boat, we finished for the day.

Timothy West had arrived on Friday night so we all went back to the Festival on Saturday for him to have a look round. He and Prunella had a date with "Canal and Riverboat" magazine, to do some filming in connection with a video, so Anne and I had a look for Keith Noble, who was part of the 'waterspace' organisation and also found Bob Maycock and his wife, who were representing the Society on the IWA publicity boat 'JUBILEE'. Anne and I put our names down on the volunteer list for moving JUBILEE around the country.

When our guests reappeared we had another look through BLACKBIRD, the Shire Cruisers boat - and a Sagar Marine

wide Dutch Barge (basic price £125,000 PLUS generators etc.!).

Just then the rains came as we were about to look round more exhibits. We had decided to leave our brollies in the car - fatal - so we sheltered in the Environment Agency marquee for a while and then decided to brave it. We went to look for Warble Boats - and even put on the protective footwear - before we saw the length of the queue. Instead we went and played at sailors in the excellent Sea Cadets bus. Simulated periscopes, sonar, torpedoes, GPS systems, computer navigation - all genuine tackle and very well done. Pity, the outside of the 'bus doesn't give a real clue as to what's inside and so, consequently, it was deserted but for us.

Sunday morning we all went to the Standedge Visitor Centre and into the Tunnel where 'Standedge Admiral' Fred Carter was in sparkling form and, in the afternoon, went down Anderton Lift. Both very enjoyable and all as guests of British Waterways.

We rather enjoyed being 'honorary VIPs' for the weekend but, in that capacity, I must say we saw very little of any of the three societies who are connected with the two canal openings being celebrated at the Festival. There was stacks of room near the centre of things for a special set-up of Huddersfield, Rochdale and CNS stands with properly dressed members in attendance. Our caravan - which is desperately in need of refurbishment - was in a distinct backwater - and our trip boat is not easily recognisable, having gold lettering on a red background. A bit too "low-key" for such an important occasion. Too late now but we really should have gone to Huddersfield "all guns blazing".

Ken Wright

Ashton Town Hall

In the third of our series of places worth visiting, Editor, Brian Minor detours from the canal a little to two fine exhibitions at Ashton Town Hall.

A short distance from Portland Basin is the town centre of Ashton-u-Lyne and its superb market place, both outside and inside. At the back of the market is the imposing building of the Town Hall.

Two exhibitions are currently on show there and it is well worth the walk to see them.

Before even getting to the shows, pause for a moment in the entrance hall and look in the display case to the right. There is the most magnificent candelabra and sweet dishes I have ever seen. The cake trays are on silver supporters showing various hunting scenes, but the candelabra, standing almost three feet in height is of the finish of a hunt with horsemen, dogs and even the huntsman holding up a trophy fox, all of this in perfect detail and made in solid silver. If ever the Council let their political passions persuade them to dispose of this, please, please send it me!! It is magnificent!

On the ground floor is the **MUSEUM OF THE MANCHESTERS**. This is a record of the campaigns and history of the various battalions of the Manchester Regiment and has examples of the uniforms and weaponry they used throughout the two hundred years of the Regiment's existence. The drum that beat in Ladysmith is there, as are campaign medals won by many generations of local men. These medals include 5 Victoria Crosses as well as every other battlefield decoration and all the campaign medals of the past wars.

This medal collection must be one of the finest in the world, there are drawer after drawer of beautifully presented awards as well as the principal display case. My father fought with the regiment in Mesopotamia in the First World War and I was enthralled by the description of the campaign. There is an evocative mock up of a front line dug out from the battle of the Somme, with sound and very eerie lighting. This is a well presented exhibition that will appeal to civilians and ex-soldiers alike. Across the hall way is a room devoted to the 'Home Front' from WW2. This includes a full scale Anderson Shelter that brought back childhood memories to me.

Down a flight of stairs to the basement (that is actually ground level – it is a slightly confusing building) is the new **SETANTII EXHIBITION**.

This exhibition, filling the cellar of Ashton Town Hall, opened in April this year. Using audio-visual imagery and quite staggering tableaux, this is the history of the Setantii tribe or the original inhabitants of Tameside. Part of the Brigante people who occupied much of North Western England and North Wales in pre historic times, the Setantii people fought the Roman legions as they threw their roads across Britain and raised castles at Melandra and Castleshaw to subjugate the whole of Britain up to Hadrian's Wall. Many bloody battles were fought in the forest and swamps of Tameside before the Romans could feel safe in the towns of Manchester, Chester and York.

From these beginnings, the whole development of the region is traced; did you know for example that 'Longbows' came

originally from Longdendale? Throughout the history of the British Isles, this part of Lancashire and Cheshire has played its part in the turbulence of civil war and the rise of industry.

The show starts in a theatre showing a film of a boy playing a 'Dungeons and Dragons' type of computer game. He is pulled into the screen and an old Druid tells him of the type of person who was here first and their philosophy.

We then proceed through a series of rooms each illustrating an era, from the Celts to the Romans and then the Vikings and on to the Normans. A tableau representing a Norman Chapel with a praying figure has the Audio of a Gregorian Chant which together with the flickering candles gives an eerie experience of the real world of Brother Cadfael.

There are suits of armour, quite lethal looking weapons and even an executioners block for beheading aristocrats!

Further rooms go through Medieval Times, the Tudors, the Civil War and Victoriana to modern times.

One marvellous exhibit of a man in a tin bath in front of the fire, with the water looking like Brown Windsor soup, brought back childhood memories!

There is a transport history section with another cinema showing how the different systems of transport, Roman roads, Pack animals, Turnpikes, Canals, Railways and motorways have altered the pattern of trade and communication. Some shots of parts of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal are to be seen here.

The final section is for those of us who wish to trace our ancestors with a well-equipped genealogy section with up-to-date P.C.s and advice at hand.

Many of the exhibits have an interactive capability which will appeal to the brighter school children, who I think will enjoy the whole experience.

My thanks to Paul from the Museum of the Manchesters who guided me through.

Altogether this is a well set out and well lit exhibition, all on one level for those with mobility problems. I thought I was quite well up on local history, but I found many new and interesting items among the displays.

Allow at least an hour to tour it and then you might well need to revisit to see something you have missed.

Open Tuesday to Friday from 10:00 to 17:00. Showings start at 10:00 am and are shown at half hourly intervals, the last entrance is 3:00 pm. Contact the Tourist Information Office (0161 343 4343) to book time to bring a school (or other group) in together. Thursdays are often given over to local school parties taking the tour. Individuals are welcome. There is a web site www.setantii.org.uk that gives a flavour of the show. There is a separate entrance through the Tourist Information Office in the main Market Place.

Admission is free for both exhibitions, but parking in Ashton town centre is difficult if you are not walking from a boat. There are several car parks, but all are of the money in slot and 'no change given' type. If you only have notes, this means a long walk from somewhere you can park for free (as I had to!).

Brian Minor

Locks, Docks and Beyond

The Kirklees Community History Service team led by Kim Strickson have run a series of workshops and events in the Colne Valley for young people. Sub-titled 'On the Wild Side of the Canal', the project has spent a year in researching legends, events, traditions and disasters to do with the canal and then used the latest techniques to record and present this information.

The final projects produced Book Stop (hand made books), Map It (the canal map), Waterways (the performance work) and the final exhibition, Locks Docks and Beyond.

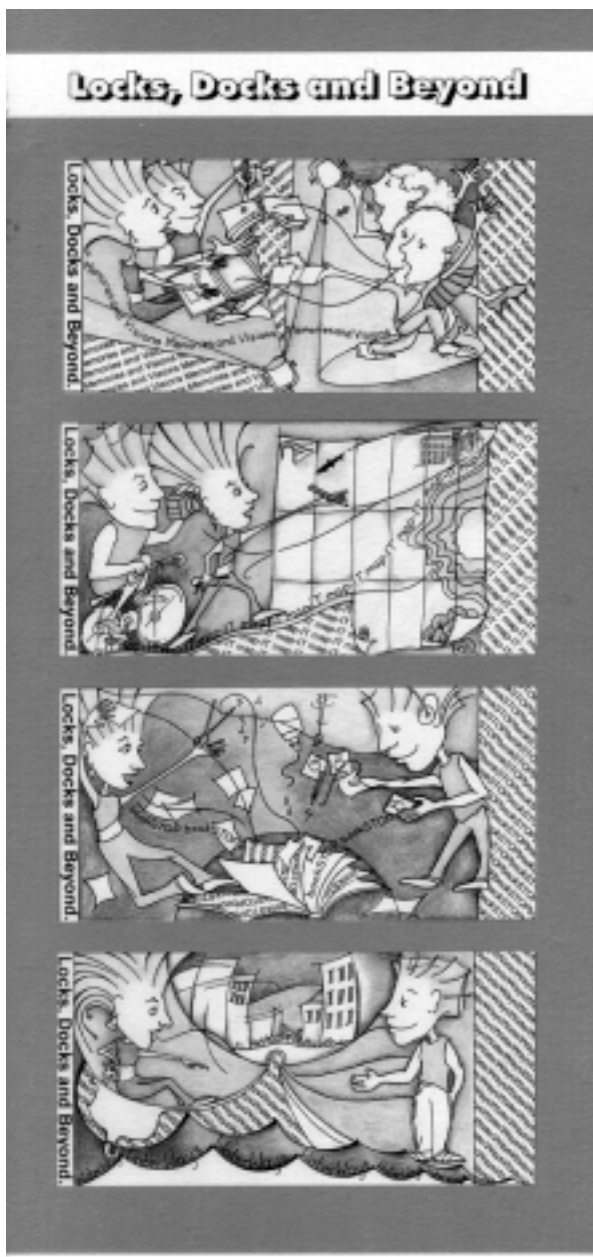
I visited this last exhibition together with my grandchildren (aged 13 and 10) to get a child's eye view. We all agreed a considerable amount of work had gone into the project and obviously new skills had been learned and many participants had experienced many things outside their normal lives.

The final item was the play 'Timelock' which I had the privilege of seeing the World Premier performance. Written, produced and acted entirely by local people, it was an energetic and spirited tour through past and present and thoroughly entertaining.

Congratulations to everyone involved in this project; it seems to have caught the imagination of all the youngsters taking part and raised the awareness of the Canal and

its importance to the wealth and well being of the Colne Valley.

Brian Minor



2002 Photographic Competition

Another exciting year on the local canals has given everybody a chance in our brilliant annual competition.

Look at the new possibilities:-

1. The Rochdale Canal with boats
2. The Falkirk Wheel - nearly local!
3. The Ribble Link - a nice day out.
4. The Anderton Lift - ditto.

All very photogenic and well worth a visit with a hot camera. This is the **FIRST** and **ONLY** notice of this year's competition.

So start digging into your piles of pics. **ANY** inland waterway shot, worldwide, is eligible in one of the two main categories and our judge is keen to see good, interesting, pictures alongside 'digital works of art'.

AWARDS

There will be the usual awards - the Challenge Shield (and a replica to keep) for the overall winner, and A PAIR OF BINOCULARS, again generously provided by member **Anthony Carter** of **Arcade Cameras, Imperial Arcade, New Street, Huddersfield**.

Other winners and runners-up will receive a cash prize and a signed certificate and this year the judge will present a **SPECIAL MYSTERY AWARD**. This will be aimed at **JUNIORS** and is intended to **GET MORE ENTRIES FROM THE YOUNGER END**.

We continue to hope that the constantly growing use of **DIGITAL** cameras would mean that more young people would have a go. Come on, parents, give 'em a nudge!

RULES

Prints only, black & white or colour - winning entries will be printed in Pennine Link in black and white. Minimum size 6" x 4", maximum overall size 8" x 6". Prints **must not be mounted**. Any canal-related subject is acceptable in the following categories:-

- a. Huddersfield Narrow - Seniors
- b. Huddersfield Narrow - Junior (16 or under)
- c. Other waterways - Senior
- d. Other waterways - Junior (16 or under)

HOW TO ENTER

Send your prints (maximum 5 per person in each category) to:-

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

Include details of the photographs (captioned if you so wish) and age of the photographer if 16 or under.

Include your name and address and the name of the HCS member you are related to and return postage if you want your prints back.

Include a P.O. or cheque (payable to Huddersfield Canal Society) totalling 50p for each print submitted.

CLOSING DATE - FRIDAY 15TH NOVEMBER.

PRIZES

The judge will once again be Geoffrey Hope, Past President of Oldham Photographic Society, who will write a critical comment for each print submitted.

There will be a winner and a runner-up in each of the four categories a) to d) and each will receive a certificate and a cash prize. There will also be some certificates for "highly commended" and "commended" entries, where these are justified.

The overall winner will receive the Pennine Link Challenge shield for one year, a replica to keep, a pair of binoculars and a signed certificate.

All winning prints will be published in Pennine Link, with the judge's comments.

Any queries to: The Organiser, Ken Wright,
Tel:- 01457 873599

E-mail:- wright.ken@talk21.com

PLEASE NOTE The use of digital entries is actively encouraged, **ESPECIALLY FROM JUNIORS**. Now tell me I'm not keeping up with the times!

Ken Wright

An Evening Out - Tunnel End Inn

Society Boats Officer, Allan Knott and partner Pam sample the delights of the newly refurbished Tunnel End Inn.

Do you remember that glorious day on 1st May 2001 when the whole length of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal was re-opened? The Visitor Centre and the former Tunnel End Cottages both had a new purpose with fresh paint, hardly dry, glistening in the sunlight. What I couldn't understand was why, after years of anticipation of the Canal becoming navigable, the Tunnel End Inn still had its tired, old image and didn't seem geared up for the new influx of walkers, boaters and people eager to experience a trip into the Tunnel itself.

Well, all that has changed now. Under the new management of Gary and Bev Earnshaw, the pub has had a complete refit, whilst retaining much of its old character. Situated about 150 yards up the lane from Standedge Tunnel, the pub is a moorland haven with breathtaking views of the surrounding countryside. On entering, the customer is met with not only a tastefully redecorated and cosy bar area but an exceptionally friendly welcome from the licensee and his wife. The centrepiece of the building is the open fireplace, elegantly kept alive on a warm Summer's evening by a display of burning scented candles.

In addition to a wide range of beers (including Black Sheep, Kelham Island Pale Rider, draught Guinness and cask Tetley and Timothy Taylors), wines and spirits, the diner is well catered for with a varied menu of home-cooked food at very reasonable prices, with the option of a separate room for non-smokers. On our visit, food was served within 10 minutes of ordering and nothing was too much trouble for the staff.

Of special interest to the visitor are the old photographs and newspaper cuttings of historic happenings in and around the Tunnel displayed on the lounge walls. The boater is

particularly well catered for as food is served early evening, soon after the arrival of the convoy of boats from the Diggle end of the Tunnel. During our visit, an elderly lady with walking difficulties was worried whether she would be able to walk up to the pub for her evening meal. In no time at all, a car was laid on and the lady was transported from canalside to pub doorstep with minimum fuss!

Being in such a special location, the pub is most welcoming, especially to boaters who have just emerged from probably their first, long-awaited, passage through the Tunnel itself. One couldn't help eavesdropping on the excited chatter of some of the diners as they shared their delight in reaching the highest point on the Huddersfield Narrow. And with a delicious meal and quality beer to round off the day, it truly is a summit experience!

Allan Knott & Pam Romanski

Tunnel End Inn, Reddisher Road, Marsden

*Open: Monday - Thursday 7 - 11pm,
Friday 5 - 11pm, Saturday 12noon - 11pm and
Sunday 12noon - 10.30pm*

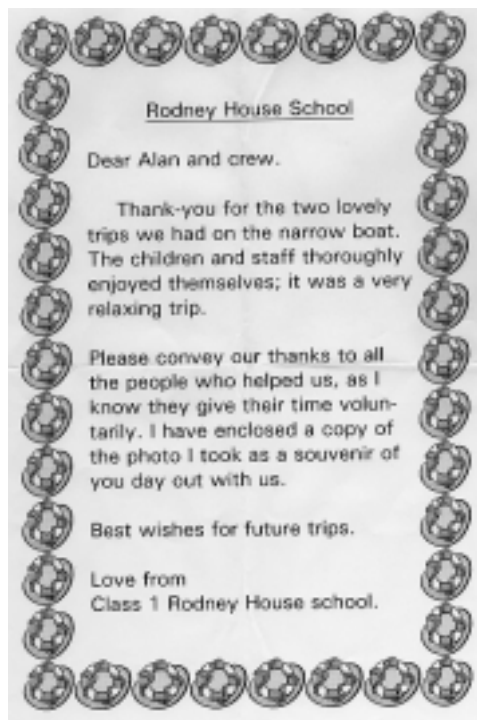
*Food Served: Friday 6.30pm - 8.30pm,
Saturday 12noon - 2.30pm and 6 - 8pm,
Sunday Lunch 12noon - 3pm,
with Breakfasts 9.30 - 11.30am for
pre-booked parties of 6 or more.*

Enquiries and Bookings: 01484 844636



A Knott

Boat Trip 'Thank You'



Pictured above: Left to right, Crew Examining Officer, Bob Maycock, his grandson Adrian and Boat Crew Co-ordinator, Allan Knott.

Rodney House School are regular visitors to the canal and clearly enjoy their trips aboard 'Still Waters' which Society volunteers operate on behalf of the Tameside Canal Boat Trust, particularly catering for disabled groups.



DAY HIRE BOAT "OTTER"

Self-steer, for up to twelve people.

HAVE A SPECIAL DAY OUT ON THE HUDDERSFIELD NARROW!

Thorough tuition in boat handling and lock working included.

Huge table, ample seating, kitchen & toilet.

*Ring Ed 0161-303-7635
or Dick 01457-831038
(HCS Members)*



SOCIETY VOLUNTEERS

'Wanted'

From its formation in 1974, the Society has relied upon its volunteers to manage its resources, promote restoration, and maintain momentum, continuity and general interest. As a result, 27 years and 12 days later the dream, which was once dubbed 'The Impossible Restoration', became a reality when the H.N.C. was re-opened to navigation in May 2001.

The financial cost to the Society escalated over the years as restoration gained pace. Coincidentally, the Society both started and finished its restoration work on the Uppermill to Dobcross section. The initial project undertaken by volunteers cost a few hundred pounds, whereas the final and similar scheme completed by the Society's subsidiary company, H.C.S. Restoration Limited, cost approximately £300,000.

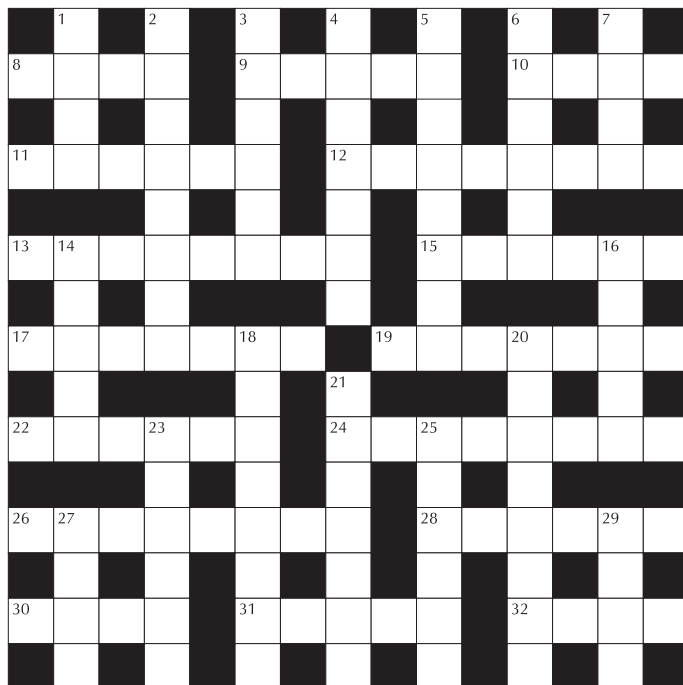
Although the day-to-day restoration work was taken over by the Society's full-time workforce, members continued to undertake smaller canal projects. Other volunteers, as now, crewed and maintained trip boats, and organised the various annual canal festivals, e.g. Ashton ran for 24 years.

Although the canal has re-opened there is still work to be done. The Society's aim, in support of British Waterways, is to enhance, maintain and develop the Huddersfield Narrow. For example, we hope to provide additional mooring rings, bollards, seats, signs, bridge plates and service stations for boaters etc, i.e. items which we could not provide at the time.

This is why we need more volunteers than ever before, a few hours once or twice a month can make all the difference. Any member requiring further information or an update on any of the Society's activities, with a view to volunteering their services, please contact the Society's Ashton office.



Canal Crossword - 38



30 A continent removed from the Cape of Good Hope find a sound warning device (4)

31 A rugby player takes action when the wind catches a boat unawares (5)

32 One kilo advanced towards completion of the cargo (4)

Down

1 From panache take a nap to give your back a rest from the locks (4)

2 Stool now found by St Winifred's Well near Maesbury Marsh on the Monty (8)

3 A lock at the bottom of the Fradley flight not rarely found (6)

4 Dew lost as it fills a river near Earith (7)

5 Not far from Hawksbury, coming south, find out why Kenneth connected with his

Across

8 A nymph occupying Hera's attention in a canal tunnel? (4)

9 In fog ley lines can be lost at one end of the Lichfield canal (5)

10 A golfer taking a tee shot by a north eastern river (4)

11 Left handed mule pulling boat with old fashioned steering apparatus (6)

12 BW run rye up the Llangollen canal (8)

13 Bits chopped out of newspapers become canal features (8)

15 On holiday pulling up the anchor we hear (6)

17 This instant on the Chesterfield canal find me a town near the terminus (7)

19 No mates to be found for a canal engineer (7)

22 Northern genie found under the back deck (6)

24 Bleary me found in a town on the Wey navigation - blame the ale! (8)

26 Realistically Italy could be removed from north of the Lake District (8)

28 Duke losing his second half in Ince before the introduction of labour (6)

upper extremity (5,3)

6 The boat was steerable ere I lost direction looking for somewhere to bed the horse (6)

7 Many a bee rightly made for this product (4)

14 Find a nut of a swingbridge near Aldermaston (5)

16 Daft letters taken from a floodgate at an inland port (5)

18 Stuck for diesel I had to pawn hoes in the region of Clayton locks on the Ashton canal (8)

20 Dear Lea, I am sending you a postcard from a valley at the eastern side of the Leeds and Liverpool (8)

21 Being late Raleigh took a short cut down a branch canal (7)

23 Losing an ace from a canalised river find yourself surrounded by water (6)

25 With mortar built many canal structures (6)

27 River on which the Tempest can be seen? (4)

29 Lacy lining for canals (4)

Solution on Page 54

Operation & Maintenance of the HNC

British Waterway's Project Manager, Mike Marshall, reflects on the running of the re-opened Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

We are now well into the second year of operation and approaching what will probably be our busiest period leading up to the IWA National Festival. So much has happened since the opening to improve the operation of the canal and make the visitor experience more enjoyable.

It is fair to say that we had our fair share of problems last year, although these were not so much on the new sections of canal. However, I do believe our staff on the ground handled the situations with enthusiasm and determination to keep the operation running. We have received many letters of praise and thanks for the help they have received from our operational staff. Following last years experience we have targeted our main areas of improvement as follows:-

We have increased our staffing levels for this Summer to supplement our permanent staff through the busy period. This will give us more staff on the ground to help with the Tunnel operation and to keep the canal running smoothly.

Water will always be an issue on the Huddersfield, due to the very nature of its construction. Improvements have been made to increase supplies into the summit pound and a large programme has started to improve the equipment that monitors supplies and canal levels. This information will help us make our daily management decisions on what changes are needed to the supplies.

The operation of the Tunnel has settled down now and we are taking through the Tunnel more boats than this time last year. We now regularly take convoys of up to four boats in length and very few of these experience any problems. Additional convoys were taken through the Tunnel to accommodate the extra traffic going to the festival in Huddersfield.

You may have seen our new 'Boaters Guide', which is helping boaters to understand the quirks of using the canal and make the best use of their journey. This is also available on our website at www.southpenninering.co.uk along with further information about this canal and the other canals on the waterway.

We are not resting on our laurels with these changes, and are continually striving to improve the canal and its surroundings. I am sure you share this view and we are very thankful for all the support received from the Huddersfield Canal Society over the years and which we are continuing to receive today. If you have any comments to make then please do not hesitate to contact me at our Manchester office where I will be pleased to discuss these with you further.

Michael Marshall
Project Manager - British Waterways



British Waterways



Ever hopeful that some light might be shed on another glimpse of the past, this historic photo was rescued from a house clearance in Marsden by BW's Fred Carter. Of course, it would be wonderful if it had a local connection to the Canal or railways.

Discussions here in the office and at the Standedge Visitor Centre raised more questions than answers, (no surprise there!), but the following are worth considering.

The modern tungsten lamp was introduced in 1908 and in general use by the 1930s, so the photo cannot be earlier than 1908. The swing bucket appears to be operated by a cable winch housed within the 'wriggly tin' shed. The tantalising glimpse of the horizon between the workers on the far right (detailed opposite) includes a curious structure in the middle distance. The structure upon which the workers are stood and sat, appears to be able to slide across the shaft opening, hence the gripping foot treads and sturdy, vertical handles either side of the structure.

Please feel free to offer your observations either by EMail (photo@hcanals.demon.co.uk) or post to the Society's office in Ashton. I'm sure the individual expertise of our members can be combined and reveal much more about this picture, even if it is to say that it has nothing to do with Standedge and its tunnels.

Bob Gough



What the Papers Said

Thanks to everyone who sent in Press Cuttings, with especial mention of David Finnis and Keith Sykes for their efforts.

Editorial in the Calder Navigation Society's Spring Magazine

Quote 'I have railed elsewhere about the trend towards littering our countryside with works of art. The front cover of the Huddersfield Canal Society's Pennine Link displays a piece of art somewhere on the banks of the Narrow. Presumably it's not meant to be representational, but resembles the fronds of an opening fern. It could be worse and it is in a semi urban area, but is it needed?'

The article finishes 'Dumping lumps of art along the line is becoming more and more common as those with no intrinsic appreciation of canals insist on interfering with them'.

Yorkshire Post

24th August

Colour pictures and half column of text about the National Waterways Festival in Huddersfield.

Huddersfield Examiner

26th April

Letter complaining about the towpath closure under Sellers engineering caused by vandalism.

1st May

Picture of members of Huddersfield Cine and Video Club who have won the overall award in the International Amateur Film Festival for their film *Restoration: Impossible* telling the story of the Huddersfield

canal in its building, decline and restoration (*make a note - must ask them to show it to us! Ed*)

The same picture and almost identical report appeared in the Colne Valley Chronicle of May 10th.

8th May

Heading of 'Canal set for busy summer' followed by article stating it is expected that this summer will be far busier than last year, and listing the improvements made over the winter.

10th May

Article about the Annual Exhibition of the Colne Valley Art Society saying that the canal restoration has provided inspiration for many local artists. This is illustrated by a painting of a narrow boat on the Canal near Marsden.

17th May

Feature about the cross on the top of Pule Hill that has been damaged by vandals. It was put there by Lieut. Walter Horne MC who spent the early days of the war guarding the ventilation shafts and entrances to the tunnel at Marsden. He won his Military Cross in Normandy.

4th June

Column headed 'Ban on Boats hits Tourism' talks about the concerns of the Colne Valley Society that boaters are being turned back at Marsden with oversized boats and not being allowed to use the Tunnel.

12th June

Story of a factory by Lock 13E at Milnsbridge who are being flooded

everytime a boat goes through the lock. The Plastics company are worried that if this inundation doesn't stop they will have to close down with the loss of 120 jobs.

29th June

Picture and article of Sue Day taking Elland round the Ring of Roses.

2nd July

Problems with the liftbridge at Turnbridge were highlighted by Society Treasurer John Sully who had found out that BW were going to close the canal to repair the bridge during the National Waterways Festival. Fortunately common sense prevailed.

19th July

Good article by columnist Denis Kilcommons on a visit to Standedge Visitor Centre and a trip into the Tunnel (together with a party of seven year olds). Mention of Australian couple who are visiting and a paragraph on Peter Carter one of the new boat guides.

29th July

Letter complaining of the rubbish in the Canal basin at Milnsbridge and the general state of the area. The writer wonders whether some of the community service orders made by the courts might be used to clean up this area.

1st August

Short account of how a boater had not closed a lock properly and had drained a section of the Canal. Quote from Mike Marshall saying how quickly this could affect the canal.

9th August

Picture of Huddersfield Choral Society & Sellers Brass Band combining together for

the Songs of Praise programme to be broadcast on Sept. 29 featuring the HNC.

Picture of Festival opener Prunella Scales and husband Timothy West, with plug for the festival from several people and a short list of the attractions.

16th August

Letter warning residents of Slaithwaite that the restoration of the Canal will create the need for traffic lights in the village.

Article with picture of Anne Kirkbride and Terry Waite who are to appear in the Songs of Praise programme on September 29th.

Article about the church service to be held at the National Waterways Festival.

17th August

Article headed '6 days to go to the National Waterways Festival' has account of the money spent on the refurbishment in Apsley Basin at the start of the Broad Canal done by marina owner Anthony Hellewell and British waterways.

There is also a short resume of the delights likely to be seen at the Festival.

19th August

Story of the Vintage and Classic cars coming to the festival.

20th August

Heading of 'Boats Line up for canals Festival' together with picture of a boat owner applying polish to a gleaming boat. The rest of the article is an account of how the land-based boats are getting there.

21st August

Picture of Kevin Wadsworth and the boat

he is displaying at the Festival.

22nd August

Picture of Claire Moynihan and her boat Blackadder and the story of how she nearly went over a weir.

23rd August

Start of the Festival recorded with a picture of one of the display boats and description of the delights to come. On a sombre note is the story of the man whose boat was stoned by local idiots near the Festival area.

26th August

Good story and four pictures about the National Festival. One of the pictures is of Bob Maycock holding the line on the CNS boat and being described as 'of the Calder Navigation Society' Another picture is of four children looking terrified at the front of the Marsden Shuttle, but the caption says the youngsters were enjoying the trip on the HCS boat!

Colne Valley Chronicle

4th May

Article about discussion in the Valley by traders expecting a wave of tourists now the Canal is open. The Marsden traders are considering forming a Chamber of Trade.

19th July

Picture of the cast of Timelock and article on the Locks Docks and Beyond project (see page 38); apparently this was funded by a Heritage Lottery grant of £25k as part of a scheme called Young Roots.

Emmaus Mossley Newsletter

Article about the saga of Terry Waites' clogs (written about at length - in the last Plink).

Saddleworth Parish News - August

Part of the Chairman's Message where he recommends a trip into the Tunnel. He also joined the crew of the boat delivering Terry Waites clogs and appeared to have enjoyed the experience.

Oldham Chronicle

Quite a lot in the Oldham Chronicle about our sister canal - the Rochdale - inevitably, as it re-opened this year - but all canal publicity is good for us all!

27th June

Full page article and coloured pictures about the Rochdale reopening and details of the costs incurred and the work carried out.

4th July

Story and pictures about our very own Sue Day taking her boat past the Boat and Horses pub in Chadderton as they led the flotilla of boats making the first journey along the newly restored Rochdale.

Report on a planning request to build a restaurant, hotel, pub and four houses on a site in Dobcross next to the Canal that is being opposed by local residents.

In the same issue is the story of Oldham's bid for the North West in Bloom competition and a picture of the judges having a boat trip in Uppermill.

5th August

Picture of boat crew member Lincoln Porter helping children from Park Dean School out of their ambulance before going on board Still Waters for a trip up the Peak Forest Canal from Ashton. Bob Gough quoted as saying the boat was especially adapted for disabled people with a wheelchair lift and ramps.

7th August

Strange story of a 'head' found in the Rochdale Canal by police. When retrieved it turned out to be a plastic ball wrapped up in plastic bags.

8th August

Local Lions Clubs are organising a walk along the Rochdale Canal for charity on September 29th.

9th August

Heading of 'Boats before cars' over picture and article about the new lift bridge at Foxdenton Lane on the Rochdale Canal.

29th August

Picture of Terry Waite and Anne Kirkbride accompanying story of the 'Songs of Praise' programme to be broadcast on the 29th September.

Tameside Advertiser

23rd May

Picture and short article about Pennine Link Festival receiving a grant from British Waterways and showing Chairman Alwyn Ogborn and his wife Joan with BW's Julie Maund and Sue Day.

Same issue - letter criticising the number of plastic bags floating down the Canal in

Stalybridge. A picture was shown illustrating the problem - I think it must have been a library one as I have not seen anything that bad since the Canal was re-opened.

Same issue - Article about planning permission being received for a 10,000 sq. ft. (yes imperial measures - Tameside are on my side!) Chinese restaurant and takeaway to be built on the canalside in Stalybridge. Appropriately entitled Phoenix City this will be of great interest to boaters passing through.

6th June

Article and picture about the Pennine Link Festival, the picture showing the beer being delivered by wooden boat.

Same issue - another picture of Chris Leah and some youngsters on the back of 'Forget Me Not' and a short write up of the Festival itself.

13th June

Picture of Chris and the youngsters repeated, but this time in B&W, accompanying a letter from HCS member Jack Patterson wearing his hat as a member of Tudor Cruising Club inviting local boaters to join the Club.

Brian Minor



Not vandalism or the start of a riot! A party of mature gentlemen celebrating a 50th birthday with a day boat trip from Stalybridge and a barbecue - in a mill yard? It takes all

sorts, but the message is obvious, the canal is there to be enjoyed! And not a penn'orth of damage was done to the boat.

K Wright

Historic Narrowboats on the HNC

This is an article first produced in the Historic Narrow Boat Owners' Club Newsletter.

Following the problems experienced by historic boats on the newly re-opened section of the Chesterfield Canal above Worksop, the Committee decided to investigate the situation on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, on which the Millennium Commission-funded works to remove the remaining obstacles to navigation were then just starting. Enquiries were made of Derek Cochrane, British Waterways North West Regional Director, who responded that, although he could give no guarantees, he did not envisage any problems for historic craft and suggested that BW would wish to take their own not inconsiderable fleet of historic narrowboats through the restored Canal.

Later on, enquiries were made to ascertain whether the tug service planned for Standedge Tunnel would be adequate for our relatively large and heavy historic craft, and in this context the beam of 7ft was again mentioned. Once again, a positive response was received. Finally when the restoration was approaching completion we heard that British Waterways were planning 'gauging trials' using craft of various sizes to ensure that there were no problems. We offered the use of a member's boat for this purpose and this offer was initially accepted. In the event, we believe the trials did not take place due to the complications caused by Foot and Mouth disease, although we were never advised of this.

However, once the Canal reopened we soon began to learn that all was not well for historic boat's. Enquiries made of Tom Rowe, the Waterway Manager, elicited the response that attempts to navigate the Canal in boats of 7 ft beam was a 'mistake' by their owners, who did not realise that British Waterways and its partners agreed way back in 1974 that the restoration would only be for boats of up to 6 ft 10 inches beam. I have since seen a copy of

a letter written by British Waterways to the Huddersfield Canal Society in 1974 which, far from agreeing dimensions for the Canal when restored, declared that there was absolutely no chance of the Canal ever being restored to navigation! The Chairman of the Society also denies that there was ever any agreement about dimensions, but mentioned a document published by the London, Midland and Scottish Railway in the early 1920s which gives a maximum beam of 6 ft 10 inches and that has been taken 'as a guide'. I think it doubtful that there were any boats so narrow at that time - more likely it was a ruse by the railway company to discourage boats from using the canal.

The article then concluded by saying that they had contacted Dr Greener, the British Waterways Chairman for his comments.

The letter from Dr Greener to Mr Booth of the Historic Narrow Boat owners' Club reads as follows:

Dear Mr Booth,

I have now been able to consult with colleagues and can reply to your letters of the 9th and 18th January 2002.

A huge effort as gone into restoring the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, but we need to put that into context. We now have a Canal that is navigable for the vast majority of boats on the canal network, but falls short of the standard we would expect to deliver in a fully restored canal.

So far, there have been two phases to this work. The first phase between 1983 and 1998 saw the recovery of 90% of the locks by a combination of volunteer labour and employment training schemes, managed by local authorities.

Limited funds and a skill base lacking some sophistication meant that major structural repairs to locks chambers were avoided if at all possible. Much of the work merely involved excavating out old chambers or

building off old foundations, re-setting quoins and cills and fitting in new gates. A pragmatic view was taken that locks would only be rebuilt if the passing gauge fell below 6 ft 10 inches. The volunteers and the local authorities should be congratulated on what they achieved with scarce resources, since they saved the Canal and created the climate for the second phase of works.

It is the second phase which has just been completed at a cost of £30 million. The work was confined to removing the last remaining difficult blockages like Stalybridge, Standedge, Slaithwaite and threading the Canal through and under the factories and mills in Huddersfield. Also, six new locks were built and six old chambers were excavated out and brought back into operation, although funds did not permit any rebuilding. £30 million may seem a lot of money, but considering the complex problems that had to be overcome, it was a major achievement to re-open the Canal to the very tight fixed budget. There was no other money available - it had to be delivered to time, cost and scope and Tom Rowe and his team did a remarkable job.

Phase three has now started to bring the Canal up to a fully operable canal; to standards we all find acceptable, and this will take some years to achieve.

British Waterways is committed to developing a network that is capable of enabling boats of 7 ft gauge to navigate freely and this is built into all our new works.

It must be recognised though that throughout a 2000 mile network that is generally over 200 years old with 1500 locks, 450 aqueducts, 3000 bridges etc, some movement and distortion is inevitable and will lead to pinch points on the network. Not all of these can be readily fixed without a complete rebuild and they do have to compete for funds against other priorities such as safety related backlog of maintenance. In time, they will be remedied.

It must also be recognised that occasionally

the problem is not with the structure but with a boat that has spread or become misaligned.

In summary we are committed to a 7 ft gauge, and will identify and publish the pinch points and there will be a forward programme of works to remedy.

It was most kind of you to say that it was not your intention to raise this matter direct with me but, especially given the question at the Parliamentary Waterways Group, I am glad you did. I very much valued the opportunity to understand the issues. My reply is, of course, brief and I know that Stuart Sim and his people will be more than happy to go into detail 'through the normal channels.'

Yours sincerely

George Greener
Chairman, British Waterways

Editorial comments.

My 1918 edition of Bradshaw gives the 'Maximum size of vessels that can use this navigation' as length 70 feet, Draught 3 ft 6 ins, headroom 6 ft 8 ins and beam 7 foot.

It also gives the dimension of Standedge as 3 miles 135 yards, Minimum height above water level 6 ft 8 ins and minimum width at water level of 7 ft 8 ins.

HCS Restoration would also be unhappy in the lack of appreciation of their efforts by Dr Greener in complete restoration. From Ashton, Tyseley (the Mikron theatre boat) got through all the locks restored by HCS Restoration Ltd. It wasn't until it reached Uppermill, and the lock restored by BW, that their voyage came to an end.

However the canal has been re-opened, it is an enormous success and is showing the way for similar projects all over the country. I am pleased that Dr Greener and BW have the intention to identify and remedy the 'pinch points' and then once again the canal will be open to the boats it was built for 200 years ago.

Brian Minor

New Membership Secretary

For some 10 years, Mrs Jo Young has been the Society's Membership Secretary and with her husband, John, were regulars at all the popular canal festivals, promoting the Society's cause and selling Duck Race tickets! After John's passing, Jo continued her work for the Society and could be found every Tuesday in the Society offices at Ashton processing the week's applications and renewals.

In common with many retired workers, she finds she is as busy as ever and has decided to give up her post as Membership Secretary in favour of other voluntary commitments. She will continue to be a director of the Society and maintain her interest in the Huddersfield Narrow.

The Society cannot thank her enough for her long standing commitment and stalwart service and we all wish her the very best for the future; the immediate one, we hear, features a bit of a relaxing trans-Atlantic cruise! Enjoy yourself Jo!

Although a vacant post is often a cause for concern for the Society, we are pleased to introduce our new Membership Secretary, Neville Kenyon, who has agreed to take over from Jo without missing a Tuesday!

Neville has been a director of HCS Restoration for over twenty years and was elected on to the HCS Council some three years ago.

As a director of The Stamford Group Limited, Salybridge, he helped to lead the appeal for support aimed at local businesses. It was crucial during the 1980s that we could count on the endorsement of industrial and commercial concerns in order to emphasise our case for major funding. Neville spoke on behalf of the

HCS at various business seminars, including an unforgettable visit to the House of Commons where MPs were pressed for support.

Canal watchers have, for many years, admired the landscaping of the car park of The Stamford Group as it meets the Canal. Now that it is fully open, more people are able to appreciate this well-tended feature amid the industrial landscape.

Neville has recently retired from full time work, but is retained as a consultant by the Group on a part-time basis.

He believes that we can increase our membership now that the Canal is navigable. He says, "There are so many fascinating environmental aspects along the route of the Canal, that we can go out and sign up all sorts of enthusiasts in addition to boaters and those primarily interested in restoration."

Bob Gough



Neville Kenyon, Membership Secretary

IWA Notes

Not a lot happening to affect our area within the IWA Orbit recently (after all there was the National Rally at Huddersfield!).

The most notable happening is that the new Chairman of the Inland Waterways Association is to be John Fletcher, one of the founders and prime movers in the Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal Society, Member of HCS and a recent contributor to Plink.

John is well known in boating circles and a familiar and instantly recognisable figure at rallies and festivals. He is currently Chairman of the North West Area of the IWA and a Trustee of the Waterways Trust.

He has written many books and pamphlets on the waterways of the Manchester area, is in great demand as a knowledgeable speaker on this area's waterways and has one of the biggest collections of photographs of obscure parts of the waterway network I have ever seen! *(These are produced whenever there is a waterways quiz with the necessity of baffling an erudite audience).*

He always has his own individual views and is ready to argue them forcibly and coherently. In his new post, John will be a staunch advocate for the waterways of the North West and we wish him every success and enjoyment out of the appointment.

Brian Minor

Songs of Praise

The Sunday evening TV hymn programme 'Songs of Praise' will come from the Huddersfield Narrow Canal on Sunday September 29.

The presenter is Anne Kirkbride, who plays Deirdre in Coronation Street and her husband actor, David Bucket also appears in the programme.

In the programme Anne Kirkbride makes a journey on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal on the boat Ferrous. The boat was filmed at various parts of the canal including Lock 42E at Marsden, coming out of Standedge Tunnel, on the Diggle flight of locks passing Wool Road Transhipment Warehouse and with the choir singing hymns at Stalybridge.

The producer of the programme is Ken Stephinson, well known for his production of Great Railway Journeys of the World. He lives near the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

Edwin Fasham is the owner of Ferrous, which is moored on the Dudley Number 2 Canal. Songs of Praise asked the Boaters Christian Fellowship (BCF) if they could provide a boat and crew for Songs of Praise and eventually it was agreed that Ferrous would be provided. The BCF advertised for crew to assist Edwin Fasham to take the boat to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal from Birmingham and bring it back.

John Sully

STOP PRESS

HCS has won a prestigious SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY AWARD in a competition organised by the Huddersfield

Examiner. In winning the Award for raising Huddersfield's profile, HCS beat off fierce competition.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Brian,

I enjoyed reading in Plink 141 of Anne and Ken Wright's trip to Edinburgh and the Union Canal.

I was born and raised within half a mile of the Union Canal and drive a black cab in Edinburgh, so I may have been one of the taxi drivers who impressed them with their enthusiasm!

However, your readers may want to benefit from a couple of minor corrections to Ken's article.

The Union Canal between the Leamington lift bridge and Lochrin Basin was not drained to allow for the work on the lift bridge, but to allow for the installation of a major conduit below the canal bed (incidentally, the alleged cause of the recent major breach of the canal and consequent serious flooding of the Fountainbridge area of the city).

Ken also writes of the construction of a *new* Leamington lift bridge. In fact, this is an old bridge which is being refurbished and brought back into working order. The bridge was originally provided to replace an original bascule bridge which spanned the canal in Fountainbridge, next to the Co-op building. When the canal between Lochrin basin and Lothian road, along with its associated 'ports' - Hamilton and Hopetown, was infilled before the Second World

War, the lift bridge was then repositioned to its present location.

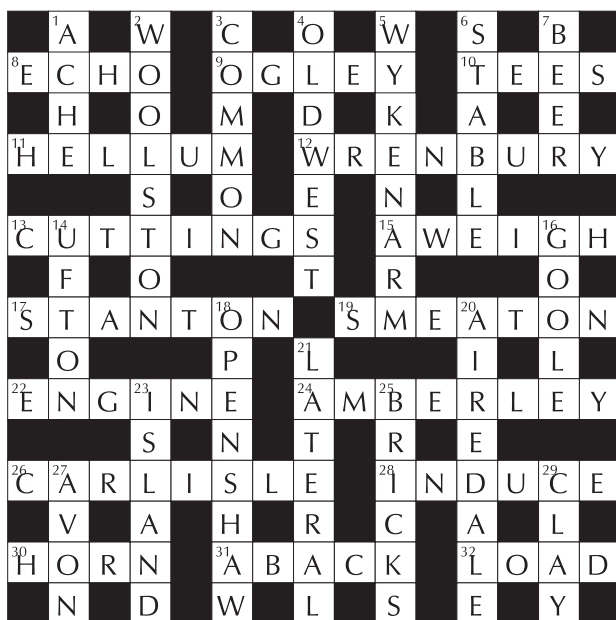
Further information is available to people interested in walking the Union and Forth & Clyde canals, and the surrounding countryside, in Hamish Brown's guide to 'Exploring the Edinburgh to Glasgow Canals' published by the Stationery Office at a cost of £8.99.

Yours sincerely

Ron Elder (No. 2440)
Penicuik Midlothian.

Thanks Ron for putting Ken right. I must go and have a longer look at the canal there - the only time I have seen a short stretch is walking back to the town from Murrayfield after watching England beat Scotland! Ed.

Solution to Crossword 38

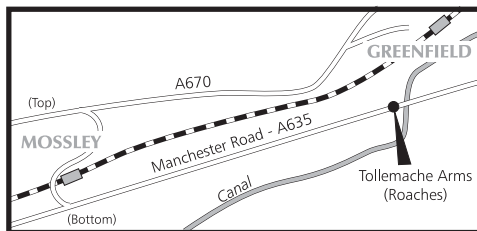


THE SOCIETY WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

2657 Miss Fisher, [REDACTED]
2658 Mr Heathcote, [REDACTED]
2659 Mr & Ms Marsh & Morris, [REDACTED]
2660 Mr & Mrs Hemingway, [REDACTED]
2661 Mr & Mrs Pike, [REDACTED]

WEST SIDE SOCIAL MEETINGS:

As usual, the venue is the Tollemache Arms, Manchester Road, Mossley on the second Wednesday of the month commencing at 8.00pm. Forthcoming meetings for 2002 are: 9th October, 13th November & 11th December.



PENNINE LINK BACK NUMBERS:

The following back issues are available free from John Maynard, 29 Thick Hollins Drive, Meltham, Yorkshire, HD7 3DL. Please send an A5 stamped, addressed envelope (44p) or A4 sized envelope (76p) for joint issue 81/82.

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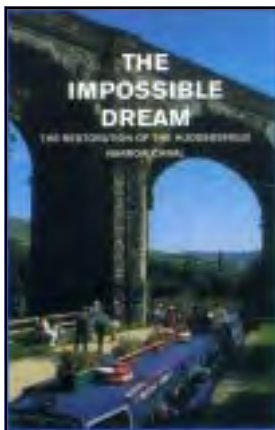
Articles, letters and comments for Issue 143 of Pennine Link should reach the Editor at 45 Gorton Street, Peel Green, Eccles, Manchester, M30 7LZ by 8th November 2002

ADVERTISING RATES

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



The original 1992 video commissioned by the Canal Society. Copies are available from the Society offices, price £10.99 plus £1.95 p+p.



The new video, 'The Impossible Dream', is available from the Society offices, price £10.99 plus £1.95 p+p.

This video, commissioned by the Huddersfield Canal Company, tells the story of the complete restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, from an idea by enthusiasts in the early 1970's, through to the official re-opening by HRH the Prince of Wales, in September 2001.

Running time: 56 mins

Please make all cheques payable to 'Loxvend Ltd'

