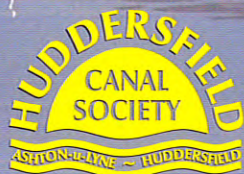


# Pennine Link

Magazine of the Huddersfield Canal Society



Issue 160 Winter 2007



# Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd

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Transshipment Warehouse, Wool Road, Dobcross, Oldham, Lancashire, OL3 5QR  
Tel: 01457 871800 Email: [hcs@huddersfieldcanal.com](mailto:hcs@huddersfieldcanal.com)  
Website: [www.huddersfieldcanal.com](http://www.huddersfieldcanal.com)

*President - David Sumner MBE*

## Council Members

**Neville Kenyon** Meadow Head, Tottington, Bury, Lancashire, BL8 3PP  
*Chairman* Tel: 01457 871800

**Trevor Ellis** 20 Batley Avenue, Marsh, Huddersfield, HD1 4NA  
*Vice-Chairman* Tel: 01484 534666

**Steve Picot** HCS Ltd, Transshipment Warehouse, Wool Road, Dobcross,  
*Treasurer* Oldham, Lancashire, OL3 5QR Tel: 01457 871800

**John Fryer** Ramsdens Solicitors LLP, Oakley House, 1 Hungerford Road,  
*Company Secretary* Edgerton, Huddersfield, HD3 3AL

**Andrea Fisher** 53 Bayfield Close, Hade Edge, Huddersfield, HD9 2QX  
*Boat Co-ordinator (East)* Tel: 01484 686136

**Alwyn Ogborn** HCS Ltd, Transshipment Warehouse, Wool Road, Dobcross,  
*Editor Pennine Link* OL3 5QR Tel: 07973 269639 [alwyn@ogborn.co.uk](mailto:alwyn@ogborn.co.uk)

**Vince Willey** 45 Egmont Street, Mossley, Ashton-u-Lyne, Lancs., OL5 9NB  
*Boats Officer* Tel: 01457 871800

**Jack Carr** 19 Sycamore Avenue, Euxton, Chorley, Lancashire, PR7 6JR  
*Council Member* Tel: 01257 265786

**Eric Crosland** 44 Marina Terrace, Golcar, Huddersfield, HD7 4RA  
*Council Member* Tel: 01484 659748

**Keith Noble** The Dene, Triangle, Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire, HX6 3EA  
*Council Member* Tel: 01422 823562

**David Sumner** 4 Whiteoak Close, Marple, Stockport, Cheshire SK6 6NT  
*President* Tel: 0161 449 9084

**Keith Sykes** 1 Follingworth, Slaithwaite, West Yorkshire, HD7 5XD  
*Council Member* Tel: 01484 841519

## NON-COUNCIL POSTS

**Claire Bebbington** Marketing Officer

**Bob Gough** Administrator



*The views expressed in Pennine Link are not necessarily those of Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd*

# Pennine Link

## Issue 160

Marked stone, near Lock 7E, Paddock



Bob Gough

When walking the Narrow, keep a look out for examples of these curious stones. Usually located in a towpath wall, so far I know of ten examples. The 'C' and 'W' are deeply incised and the 'B' is made of metal, mortared into a rectangular recess.

There has been much discussion about their significance; the meaning of the C and W, the later endorsement with the letter B. I am indebted to a Mr Eckersley of Mossley who directed me to an example which lacks the letter B. The stone is marked C and W, widely spaced, with no marking between the letters.

The carved letters come in different

styles, but consistently C and W, hence they have a clear purpose.

Here are a few suggestions Society members and colleagues have made:

Canal Boundary Wall  
Course of Waterway (B problematic)  
Culverted Watercourse (B problematic)  
Company Warehouse (B - Bonded)  
Company Wharf (B - Both sides)  
Capped Well (B problematic)

An on-going puzzle! Of course, if you have some good ideas or know their true meaning, please do get in touch.

**Bob Gough**

Editorial	4	Hollinwood Canal Society	31
Chairman's Report	5	Lichfield & Hatherton CT	34
Disconnected Jottings	7	Wordsearch - 3	38
Treasure Hunt Presentation	11	Jidoku - 7	39
News from t'East	12	Sellers' Re-development	40
Letter to the Editor	14	Memoirs - Final Part	44
Standedge Transit	16	Looking Back	47
Photographic Competition	18	The 74 Club	50





## Editorial

Winter 2007, how time flies. That will probably touch a nerve with most people, but it is already over 12 months since I took over editing

Pennine Link from my good friend, Brian. It seems like last week. In case you are wondering, Brian is fine.

The feedback received following our suggestions about re-vamping the P'Link layout and content said 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it'. So we won't! Canal industrial heritage and wildlife would be desirable, but we still want someone to write it. Don't be shy, if anyone would like a shot at it, send us an article and see your efforts in print.

In this edition I am pleased to have received permission to reproduce snippets from the book 'The Uxbridge English Dictionary' For those of you unfamiliar with this, it is the product of the zany Antidote to Panel Games, 'Sorry I Haven't a Clue'. (Wireless 4, 6-30pm from time to time), a programme I am addicted to. (Wireless has much better pictures than TV, all in the head). The snippets are for new definitions of words from a book crammed with side splitting twisting of our language.

As I say in my roundup of the Photographic Competition, the quality of the submissions has been excellent, my only deep regret is that we did not have any entries from the junior section, not a one. My reaction to this is that maybe I didn't publicise enough in the appropriate manner. As a result, the HCS Council was asked if we could have a 'Rollover' of the prize money for next year and publicise in a wider campaign. The answer was YES, so watch this space.

On the inland waterway front, I am delighted to have a piece from The Lichfield & Hatherton restoration efforts, with Blott actively involved, the project is bound to succeed. If you don't know who Blott is, a donation to L & HCRT will produce an explanation. (That's my contribution unbeknown to them). The proposed Sellers developments in Huddersfield are very welcome, but would have been extremely more welcome years ago when heads were being scratched as to how to get past the blockage of the engineering works. The tunnel subsequently constructed beneath the site is now to be opened up again. Which came first. The regeneration effect of a re-opened waterway, or natural company growth? I think the former. Take note out there. Restored navigations are a magnet for desirable property development.

On the subject of restored navigations, our own canal could have become a tragic location for a drowning but for happy chance (see page 15). It is never a good idea to jump into the water to save a pet, or even a human. By far the best course of action is to effect a rescue from the bank, either with a boat hook, thrown rope, or even the branch of a tree. Consider your personal safety, animals are very bouyant and will come to the bank to you to be pulled out. Michael was very lucky Paul & Steve were at hand to help.

The Society is indebted to the East Side boat co-ordinator, Andrea, and her dedicated team for sterling work in running the Marsden Shuttle. Sometimes in difficult conditions and at the mercy of the weather, they press on regardless (see page 12). Well done to all.

To anyone awaiting the continued Story of DB1, this has been held over until the next





## Chairman's Report

Since our last Issue, I have attended two important events (among a host of less earth-shattering meetings) on behalf of the

Society – the first at Lichfield for the Northern Canals Association and the second in Birmingham for the Annual General Meeting of British Waterways.

The Northern and Southern Canals Associations organised a joint meeting and there was an attendance of some 50 enthusiasts at the Lichfield Guild Hall.

The meeting was addressed by Charlotte Atkins, MP for Staffordshire Moorlands who

was most entertaining and answered questions with aplomb. She works tirelessly with Sir Peter Soulsby, MP for Leicester South in supporting canal regeneration and campaigning for increased investment by DEFRA and other government agencies into the waterways of Britain.

It is always encouraging to know that there are politicians on our side. We are, of course, fortunate in the Huddersfield Canal corridor in that we receive great encouragement from local MPs and MEPs irrespective of Party.

The meeting was also addressed by our friend John Fletcher who in addition to being the National Chairman of the Inland Waterways Association (IWA) has campaigned long and hard for the

issue. The latest progress is a little difficult to convey. Under the cabin floor, in tight corners, or just simple routine fitting of panels etc. On the outside, painting is continuing as the weather will allow, but shielded by large tarpaulins over the hull. The wind has done it's best to rip these to pieces and they are now full of holes with several eyelets missing. Must press on with all haste to dispense with these before complete shredding renders them totally useless. All these things are virtually impossible to photograph or describe in any interesting way. By the time the Spring issue is being compiled I expect to be able to give a detailed description of progress and report an expected launch date. Please note. The actual launch will be attended by essential personnel only. All the snags of introducing the ship to water and sailing trials are to be sorted out without the embarrassment of onlookers. Party time to follow at a suitable interval. The week after to be set aside for recovery.

The membership events, ably organised by Claire Bebbington, have been a welcome addition to the HCS publicity portfolio. More member participation is to be encouraged for the next series of meetings/talks etc. for next year. My personal high point was the Marsden Treasure Hunt. A most enjoyable day. Claire is actively pursuing ideas for 2008 events which we hope will fire your enthusiasm and swell the numbers attending. Watch out for future announcements within these pages

Our new office at Wool Road is the subject of my 'Looking Back' selection from previous old issues of P'Link. I find it fascinating ferreting through these to select suitable pages for highlighting. Lots of other stuff comes back to mind about the old days, but far too much to reproduce in its entirety. It would be overkill anyway.

Finally. Seasons Greetings to all our members, non-members, friends and associates from all at HCS Council.

**Alwyn Ogborn**

regeneration of canals in the North West – in particular the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal on which work has commenced from the Salford end.

Julia Simpson, Head of Navigation at the Environment Agency and Keith Lloyd of the Cotswolds Canals Trust also spoke, the latter addressing the problems for volunteers in canal restoration work in view of the increasingly severe health and safety regulations which seem never-ending.

There was a presentation by the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust followed by a site visit where we parked our cars on a lock that is destined to become part of a navigable waterway within the next five years. Although we at HCS are fortunate to relate to a navigable waterway thanks to years of campaigning and volunteering by our members, we should remember that there are still many waterways trusts that are struggling to reconcile land issues and other vested interests standing in the way of progress in restoring navigation through some of the best scenery in Britain.

The Annual General Meeting of British Waterways, held at a canal-side conference centre in Birmingham featured some brilliant presentations which indicated the PR professionalism of this gigantic nationalised industry. I could find no fault with their stated strategy and it was particularly interesting to see videos of the BW contribution towards flood relief during the catastrophic downpours of last summer. My personal view is that the management team is seriously committed to the same values as are we at HCS. We also witness this attitude in the cooperation we receive from

our BW partners in Yorkshire and North West who administer each side of the Huddersfield Narrow.

However, the financial restraints present a real challenge to the BW management. They need to recover funds from some source or other and their main target is boaters. Licence fees are destined to rise by 30% over three years and boaters are unhappy about this to say the least. The attacks on the management on this issue became increasingly rancorous with one delegate shouting to Chief Executive, Robin Evans, that many boaters did not earn even a fraction of what he received in bonus!

By and large, however, partners understood the financial restraints imposed on BW by their masters in government. It is still a puzzle to me how DEFRA's inefficiencies relating to Foot and Mouth disease, Bird Flu and the CAP should impact so relentlessly on poor old BW. Our waterways heritage should surely not suffer because of totally unrelated misfortunes.

To all our loyal members I offer, from all at HCS, our best wishes for the festive season and for a happy and enjoyable 2008!

**Neville Kenyon**



Ian Bradbury

Keith Gibson and Neville Kenyon at the NCA meeting, Lichfield





## Disconnected Jottings

### Notes about the national waterway restoration scene

In the last issue of *Pennine Link* I mentioned the remaining two English waterway schemes bidding

for £25million of the Big Lottery Fund's Living Landmarks scheme money but not the third waterway based scheme, Scotland's 'Helix'. Ironical, in that the only scheme to succeed in this competition has been the Helix.

This is a plan to transform the environment between Falkirk and Grangemouth by creating what is described as a double helix framework of woodland including paths, cycle-ways and water features. A new 1.85km canal will connect the restored Forth & Clyde Canal to the river Carron, the Forth Estuary and Grangemouth. A boat lift will allow craft to leave the tidal water of the river and enter the canal. The lift will take the form of two giant 35m high 'Kelpie' heads, based on mythical Scots horse-like creatures. The world's largest horse sculptures, these will be created by internationally acclaimed figurative sculptor Andy Scott, who works mainly in steel and bronze. Complete with flowing manes, the two horse heads will slowly rock backwards and forwards to displace water from a lock chamber, allowing boats to move to and from the canal. Are you still with me? No? Not surprising, really because I don't exactly understand how the lift will work by displacement of water. You could look at the website [www.falkirkonline.net/helix](http://www.falkirkonline.net/helix).

Two other bids still in the running for the top prize of £50m, that for the Black Country Urban Park and Sustrans, the cycling network charity's Connect2 scheme include some work to waterways: towpath and landscape works, new bridges, new visitor moorings, reopening of the filled in Hay Canal Basin in Wolverhampton town centre & extending the Dudley Tunnel complex by reopening the Severn Sisters mine and the connecting Wren's Nest Tunnel (Black Country Urban Park); replacement of a swing bridge over the river Weaver, removal of the first blockage to navigation on the Melton Mowbray Navigation, towpath improvements on parts of the Bridgewater and Rochdale Canals, new bridges over the Regent's Canal, on the river Severn, on the Great Ouse at St Neots and on the Oxford Canal at Banbury, and reopening of the towpath route of the former Shrewsbury Canal in Shrewsbury (Connect2). You should have heard whether either bid was successful, or whether the money has gone to an extension of the Eden project or to Sherwood Forest by the time you receive this. The decision will be made by public voting in conjunction with television slots for each scheme in early December.

The schemes that reached the final stage of this lottery competition but failed at the final hurdle have succeeded to the extent of having been given £250,000 of development funding, which immeasurably improves their chance of

receiving future funding. But I have to say that the task of finding money for any canal scheme is now much harder than it was in the late 1980s and early 1990s when massive progress was made on restoring the Huddersfield Narrow and our neighbour, the Rochdale, with grants from government and European sources, none of which has the exact equivalent in current funding regimes.

There is good news for waterway restoration however, in that the Derby & Sandiacre Canal Trust has secured funding to join the elite group of restoration schemes that employ a project officer to drive the scheme forward. Funding is being provided up to the year 2010 by the Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership, by the local authorities and by the Trust's own fundraising efforts. The Trust hopes to be able to make an appointment soon.

In the last issue I reported on the House of Commons Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Select Committee's report on British Waterways and that committee's concern at the cuts in grant-in-aid being made to BW. In October, the government officially responded to that report. To say the least, the response is disappointing. A government with a large majority can, it seems, ignore public opinion & the facts presented to it and hide behind bland statements that the government is "... committed to working ... to secure the continued and sustainable revival of the waterways and their contribution to the wealth, health and well-being of communities across the country."

How the writer of the government's response can claim to "... fully recognise the economic, environmental and social

benefits of the inland waterways and the role they can play in supporting ... (the government's) objectives in health, recreation, regeneration, social inclusion, conservation of heritage and the environment" at the same time as effectively ignoring the Select Committee's strong criticism of the cuts made in grant-in-aid to British Waterways, which, apparently, are to continue into the foreseeable future, is beyond me. The government's response on this key issue for the future of the inland waterways to all intents & purposes fobs off the Select Committee behind words such as "BW and Defra are working closely together". It blames the fact that Defra (BW's sponsoring department – Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) faced "considerable budgetary problems as a result of unfunded pressures in the 2006/7 financial year." That these budgetary issues were the result of losses in the farming budget, had absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with the waterways and could have been overcome by a tiny additional input from the Treasury's contingency figures are not even mentioned. The conclusion on this issue that, "Defra and BW recognise the value of giving BW more security in its long term funding ... but the Department needs to retain some flexibility in its budgets..." is little short of a threat of further cuts still to come.

A few days after the publication of this response, David Drew MP, the chairman of the Select Committee spoke to members of the Parliamentary Waterways Group. I understand that he said that members were indeed disappointed at the government's response. The Committee had raised



serious concerns and the government had to consider the effect of the reductions they were making in funding as these were not sustainable.

A couple of days before the publication of the government's response to the Select Committee report, the Inland Waterways Advisory Committee had published *The Inland Waterways of England and Wales in 2007*, an investigation into what had been achieved on the waterways since the publication in June 2000 of the government report *Waterways for Tomorrow*. IWAC found that prior to the financial cuts of 2006 & 2007 there had been government support for BW's management of its part of the waterway network. That support and BW's record of tackling the maintenance backlog and bringing in third party support (I assume this means grants from the EU and the lottery etc. and support from local authorities & developers) had resulted in the BW system being in a better shape than for many years. The Environment Agency and the Broads Authority had been slower to respond but progress had been made. The same, however, could not be said for the smaller independent navigation authorities that lacked any source of public funding. There had been weaknesses in the implementation of *Waterways for Tomorrow* with IWAC saying that the legislative background is "no longer ... suitable for the tasks faced by the navigation authorities, ... (with) most local authorities and regional development agencies failing to appreciate the opportunities presented by navigable waterways." The absence of a robust funding plan was a serious problem highlighted by the cuts in grant-in-aid. If sustained, these cuts would

bring the threat of the waterways not just failing to make further progress but actually regressing. IWAC points out that the lack of third party funding currently available makes this issue more serious. Local authority support is difficult to secure and likely to become even more difficult to achieve; more lottery funding is being directed to what government sees as higher social and development priorities and Regional Development Agency support remains the exception. Even the Waterways Trust has had to scale down its fundraising to concentrate on the National Waterway Museums that urgently need extra money.

IWAC says that "... it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the waterways have become a more marginalised policy area for Government... (There) has been a continuing struggle to make the case for the potential value of the waterways and their benefits on national policies and programmes for urban and rural regeneration, waterborne freight development and planning and regional and local government."

IWAC make the key point that "Heritage issues do not have a high priority in Defra because heritage issues are led in Government by DCMS. Similar points can be made about freight transport, where the lead department is DfT, or regeneration and spatial planning issues where the lead department is DCLG." (The Departments of Environment, Food and Rural affairs, Culture, Media and Sport, Transport and Communities and Local Government respectively.)

IWAC also recommends that an interdepartmental committee should be set up with representation from the departments with lead responsibilities for

environment, regeneration, heritage, recreation, planning and transport to ensure that government policy for the inland waterways is carried through by all departments of government.

This committee should produce a new up-to-date policy statement replacing **Waterways for Tomorrow** and should undertake a comprehensive study of the opportunities for and barriers against increasing waterborne freight carriage.

The earlier Select Committee's report had also recognised the importance of these other government departments, suggesting that there was a strong case for them to make a direct contribution to BW funding to reflect the contribution the waterways made to the agendas of those departments. In response, the government have offered that Defra will set up an Interdepartmental Working Group (whether that will have the power of an interdepartmental committee remains to be seen) and says that other government departments can already fund the inland waterways, for example through grants for regeneration or freight projects. To me, that seems to deliberately miss the point - that the role and function of the waterways extends across the roles of a group of government departments and general funding should be delivered accordingly, rather than being dependant on one sponsoring department, especially a department whose main interests lie elsewhere.

IWAC will monitor the effects of cuts in government grants, will conduct a study of funding options and will continue to draw public and government attention to instances where navigation authorities give inadequate priority to heritage issues. Finally, it is recommended that there should be a government Planning Policy Statement reminding local authorities of the value and potential of waterways.

When this argument over funding of the waterway network began I was certain that the blame (if that is the right word) lies fairly and squarely with government officials; with Defra's inability to manage its farming budget and the Treasury's refusal to allow contingency funding to help out that department. Now, after all of the lobbying by waterways interests, and the support of the Parliamentary Select Committee and IWAC, I am not so sure. It seems to me that a general incompetence is being displayed and, worse, a total contempt for the views of the public. Where the actual blame for that lies (whether with officials or politicians) I am not competent to decide.

Nor do I feel competent to string polite words together to report on the latest issue that has arisen in this saga of the funding of the waterways. I am too outraged that government should think it can continue to ignore the views of the voting public and treat the waterways (which, don't forget, have shown that

continued on page 42

## New Definitions:

**Alkaline**

*A queue at Alcoholics Anonymous*

**Bigamist**

*A larger than usual fog*



# Treasure Hunt Presentation



Claire Bebbington

In response to the feedback from Marketing Officer, Claire Bebbington's membership questionnaire, a number of member events were organised this year.

Although some were perhaps not as well attended as the Society would have hoped, they were enjoyed by those who took part.

In addition to guided walks and talks, a devious Treasure Hunt, set in and around Marsden and the Narrow Canal, was compiled by Administrator, Bob Gough.

There was a tie for 'first' place with three different entrants each scoring sixteen correct answers from the twenty clues.

By an 'out of the hat' selection, the Cosgrove family from Marsden were awarded the prize of a Roberts DAB radio.

Pictured above is Mrs Angela Cosgrove with baby Callum (somewhat disinterested in the proceedings!), Administrator Bob Gough and Chairman Neville Kenyon.

The other entrants in the Treasure Hunt who tied for first place were:

Sue & Ian Bradbury of Stalybridge and Martin Clark of Mossley

The 'Hunt' has caused quite a bit of interest and the Standedge Visitor Centre have asked if a more child-friendly version could be produced for one of their family days in 2008. Look out for this and other events in future issues of Pennine Link.

## Childhood

*A very young gangster*

## News From t'East

Well amazing! We've just come to the end of another season of adventures with the little Marsden Shuttle. We've certainly had some fun and games with her, most of them without a hitch. However, on the weekend of the 16-17<sup>th</sup> September we came unstuck at the end!

After a really good trip down to Slawit to support a charity fund-raising event organised by Val & Co. from the Moonraker tea-rooms, we set sail for the return journey at 3.30pm.

The weather (Mr Christian) had just started to blow a pretty stiff westerly, with huge rain clouds looming from t'other side. That's set the scene nicely, and although we made pretty good time through the first half dozen locks, we knew we were going to struggle with an

abysmal supply of water under the boat. We had to abandon ship via the plank. She wouldn't haul to the side due to silt, the prop was cluttered with vegetation we couldn't get at, and then the engine just gave up the ghost. (But she'd really tried very hard)

Thanks to nifty footwork from Alex, when the plank wouldn't quite reach the towpath, we managed to lock up, secure her and then pose for a wet photograph, before trudging to the pub to talk things through and have a laugh about the situation.

Ronnie and Paul worked hard the following day and got the Shuttle back to her moorings where she was looked over, tended to and declared fit for work the next weekend.





Thanks to all concerned with taking her down, running and bringing her back.

On a completely different tack, I'm delighted to tell you all I completed my walk of the South Downs Way in September. We covered 115 miles in eight days in stunning countryside and beautiful weather. Six of us walked from Eastbourne to Winchester and had such fun; it was like being an overgrown Girl Guide. Flowers and wildlife were abundant, even so late in the season.

On arriving in Winchester we went to the Hospital of St Cross, the oldest charity in England, where we were given the Wayfarer's Dole, a piece of bread and small mug of ale, in beautiful, peaceful surroundings. Thanks to the generosity of many people, I raised six hundred pounds for the Candlelighters, who care for and research childrens' and

adolescents' cancer at St James Hospital, Leeds.

Many thanks to everyone who has supported us during the year – it is very much appreciated. Extra thanks to Ronnie Rose who does a great job in 'caretaking' the Shuttle; he's always on hand to make sure things are in order. He has also done a great job of selling calendars to passing visitors and boaters (over 50 to date), not to mention a brisk trade in 74 Club plaques! Well done Ronnie.

It now just leaves me to say I hope to see you on some of our Winter Walks – please give me a ring (01484 686136) for details of our next scheduled outing.

Last but not least, have a peaceful Christmas and healthy New Year.

**Andrea Fisher**  
East-side Boat Coordinator

A bedraggled crew - left to right - Alex Thompson, Abi Bliss, Gwen Walker, Paul Leeman and Patricia Bayley



# Letter to the Editor

Dear Alwyn,

I don't know how you have the time but by damn! I admire you ... Editor, author, ideas man for P'Link, photo competition organiser, Council member, marine engineer, boatbuilder, with a bit of estate agency thrown in .....

I read just about every word of Pennine Link and appreciate both the contents and quality of the publication. If I understand the meaning of "strap line", then don't change it - it says what it is! And I trust the title of the magazine remains unchanged ; presumably *Pennine Link* is respected and traditional. I would welcome regular articles on flora/fauna and heritage, but I'm no author. My only suggestion: I find the advertisements somewhat discordant in their present position - much better at the back (including the inside back cover) which allows me to read on through the articles. The current, *The Back Page* could be retitled *Not The Back Page*, or some such. Otherwise AOK.

However, I must bring to your attention an alarming error in *Looking Back*, Issue 25 - alarming, that is, if you were or are a motorist. The motorway that spans Titford Pools is the M5 and not the M6. If this was not corrected in Issue 26 then this is probably the most delayed (and inconsequential) correction ever to be flagged-up in the history of *Pennine Link*!

I mention this because I have some slides of the IWA rally in 1978 but regrettably none of the HCS stand. One of my slides does indeed show some historic boats, as reported by the contributor nearly thirty years ago, tied up beneath the motorway including Iona, Gifford and Spey.

Another shows an enormous queue patiently waiting for a supply of .... milk!

Kind regards to yourself and Joan.

**Michael Young** (member 2744)  
Rugby

*Thank you so much for those kind words Michael, I think I shall blush. I must point out that I cannot take all the credit for everything. Our office administrator, Bob Cough, does a sterling job with the collating, picture cropping and reproduction, page layout etc., etc., all put on a CD which he sends to the printers and then, with Claire, deals with the finished product. I rely on them both for several other things as well.*

*Your comments are noted and any alteration to P'Link content will become apparent in future issues. However, moving the adverts to the back of the magazine would require the publication becoming full colour throughout with a significant increase in cost.*

*I was suspicious about the motorway by Titford Pools being the M6, but it is only a road, nothing as important as a waterway. Ed.*

**Comatose**

*Foot's gone dead*

**Delight**

*To make things go dark*





Left to right: Steve Heathcote, Michael Stanley with Henry, and Paul Peacock

## Dramatic Rescue on the Narrow

Society members Paul Peacock and Steve Heathcote were fortuitously at hand when boater Michael Stanley got into difficulties while rescuing his dog from the Canal.

In appreciation of their help, Michael wrote to the Society:

*"Telstar"*

*Sunday 8th July 2007*

*My small dog "Henry" fell overboard and I jumped in to rescue him.*

*Henry was quite easily taken out of the canal but I had difficulty getting out.*

*Two of your members, Paul & Steve, were fishing nearby and gave great assistance in extracting me from the canal.*

*They have been extremely friendly to me and my sister ever since. They provided me with a new battery for my mobile and have taken us both for a run in their car around your wonderful countryside.*

*Everyone on your section of canal has been extremely friendly and helpful.*

*My sister and I would like to thank everyone for their kindness.*

**Michael Stanley & Josephine Higgs**  
Ashwood Marina  
Staffs & Worcester Canal

***Dilate***

*To live long*

# Standedge Transit

Thorough and regular readers of Pennine Link will have noted that the Society has been campaigning for a relaxation in the regime in force for boats requiring passage through Standedge Tunnel.

The artificial constraints put on traversing the Narrow Canal, limit the number of boats using it both directly and indirectly. If too few boats are seen using the canal, restoration will be perceived to have failed. If so that would be bitterly disappointing to those who strove for a quarter of a century to bring the canal back to life. It would also be to the detriment of future restorations if the Narrow were to be cited as an adverse precedent.

Quite apart from the embuggerance of arranging a passage through Standedge, this year, BW, reacting to Government imposed budget cuts, have limited passages to two days a week. No more than four boats at a time have been allowed in each direction. That means a maximum of 16 boats passing over the summit each week. Previously eight

boats at a time have been taken through but it is assumed that this year's reduction arose because the batteries in the tugs were proving unreliable. New batteries have now been installed so hopefully more boats will be accommodated in 2008 even if the established regime persists.

Even before the budget cuts your Council was concerned about the applied constraints and the announcement of cuts presented an opportunity to put a paper to BW suggesting a relaxation of the present regime for managing the use of the tunnel. The paper is summarized as follows:-

*The present method of operation consumes excessive manpower and cash. This diverts BW's already scarce resources away from maintenance of the canal.*

*The restricted times of opening and of passage through the flights either side of the tunnel are highly inconvenient to boat users. This, added to the reputation of the Narrow as a difficult canal to navigate,*



Left: Representatives on an inspection trip through Standedge Tunnel

Right: An adit connecting the canal tunnel with one of the railway tunnels as seen pre-restoration.



acts as a powerful deterrent to boaters. This is against the interests of BW, who need more traffic to justify the expense of maintaining the canal.

This paper suggests that the present operating method is based on an over-cautious safety case.

Other ways of operating the tunnel are recommended for further study :-

1. Allow boats to pass through the tunnel under their own power.
2. As 1. but with forced ventilation.
3. As 1. but with gas detection and gas masks for use in emergencies.
4. Allow boaters to take their own boats through the tunnel but powered by small electric tugs.

Improvements to the water supply without unduly limiting boat movements should be considered :-

1. Allow boats to use of Diggle and Marsden flights more frequently than at present. This might necessitate addressing lock leakage.

2. Back pump to summit pound from Lock 33E.
3. Tap into available unused water supply at Lock 24W and back pump to summit pound.

In all cases, it is recommended that emergency communications equipment be provided.

Last April BW called a meeting of representatives from a number of organisations, the canal society, IWA, boat clubs, hire businesses and individuals to discuss operation of the tunnel and HCS' paper was tabled at the meeting. BW agreed to review the whole method of operating. This would entail carrying out atmospheric tests on the restored tunnel. Tests had been carried out in the early 1990s when the tunnel was partly blocked by roof falls.

A study then concluded that there would be ventilation problems but no new tests had been undertaken to verify the position since the tunnel was restored.

In October BW took the representatives through the tunnel and there are now grounds for optimism that the whole operation will be improved. Consultants have undertaken new atmospheric tests with a diesel powered boat. The initial results are very encouraging but further tests will have to be undertaken using boats with older engines, taking more than one through at a time and in varying wind conditions.

No immediate changes are expected for 2008 but in the longer term, watch this space.

**Keith Noble**



# 2007 Photographic Competition - Results

As usual, a stunning collection of images has been submitted for this year's competition. It has become the norm for judging to be a series of difficult decisions and I am grateful to Vincent Brown and Tony Miller of the Oldham Evening Chronicle for their expert opinions in choosing winners. The winning entries are displayed here and the overall winner is the subject of our Winter edition cover.

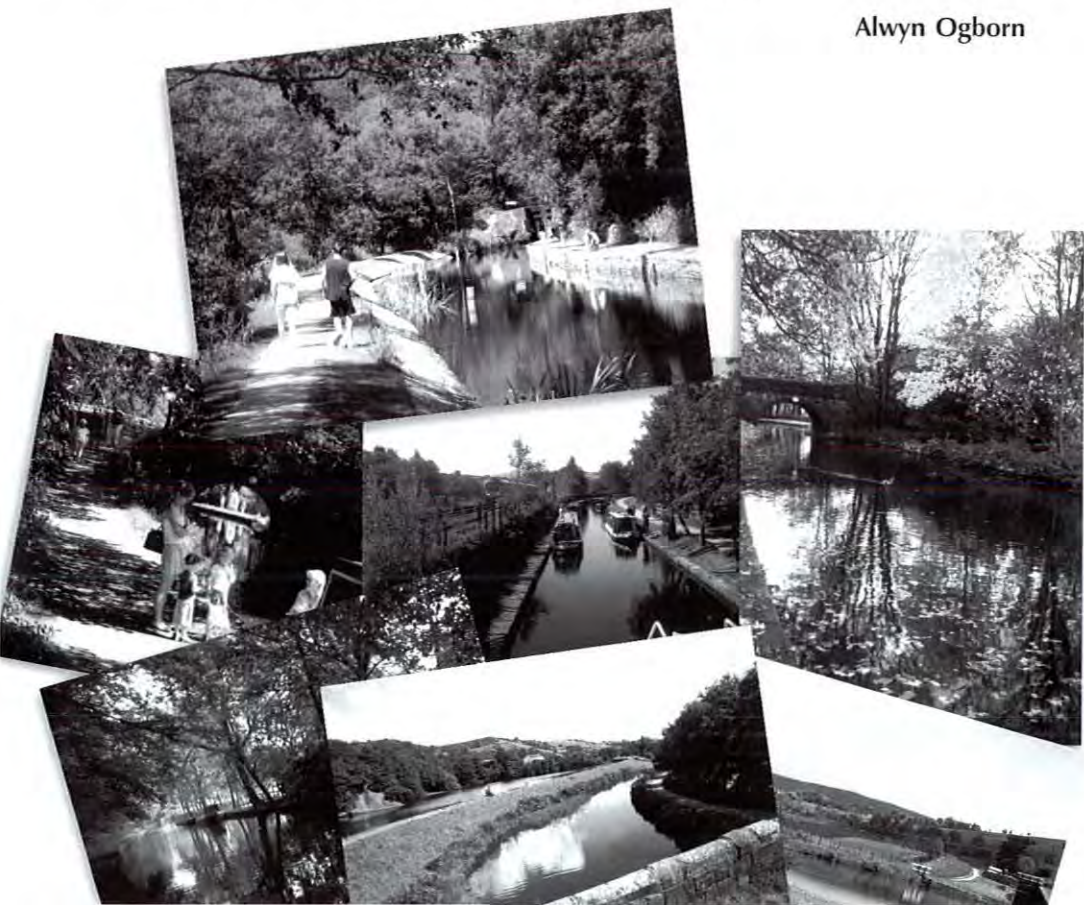
If you didn't win anything, do not despair. Subject to the sales success of our 2008 calendar, (press all your friends and relations to buy one), we shall be selecting pictures for a 2009 version.

Your talents may manifest themselves here. I stress, a 2009 calendar is dependent on the viability of the 2008 issue.

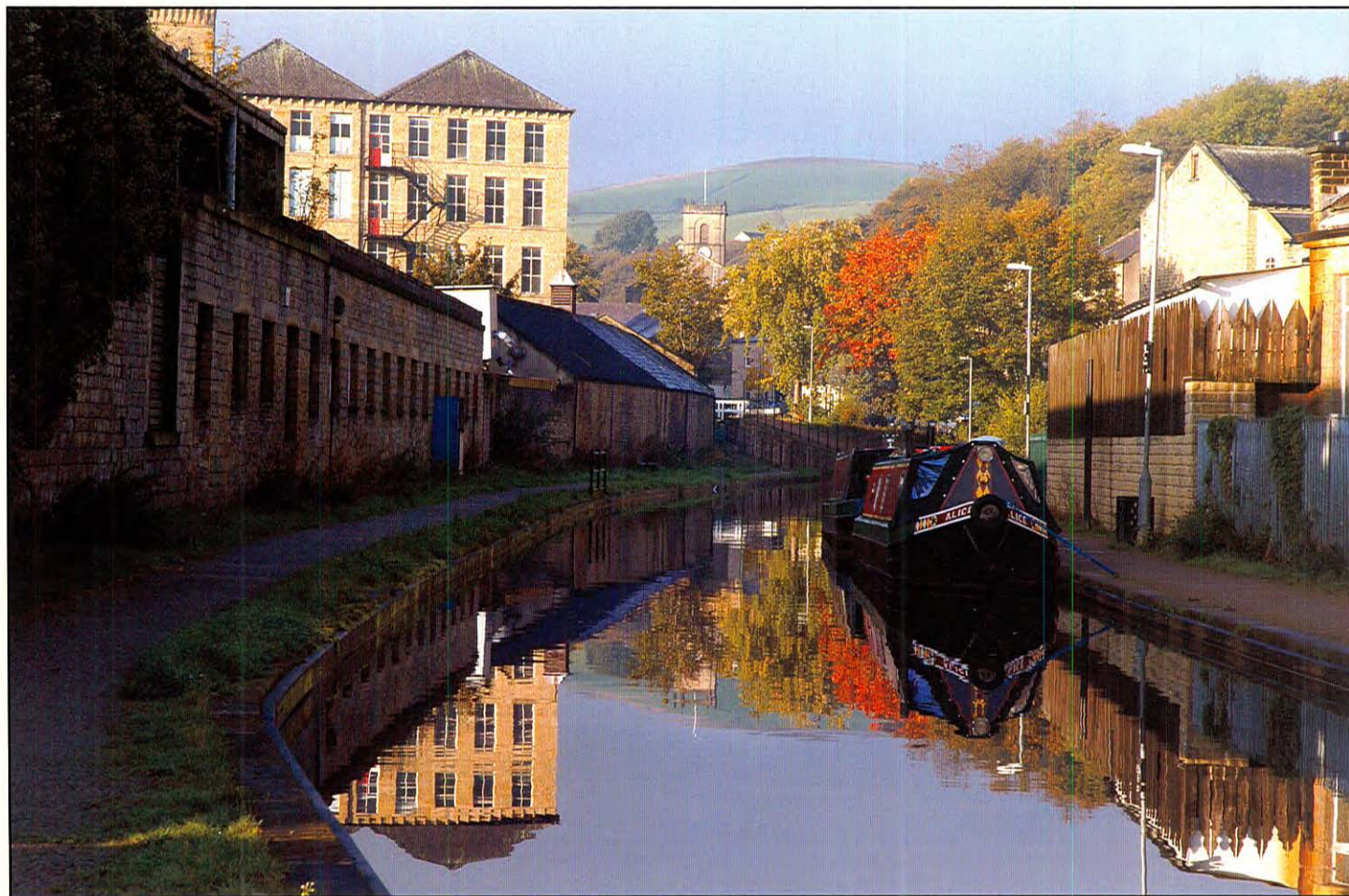
One aspect though, causes me great disappointment. Sadly we had NO entries for the junior sections, not a one. This is the first time this has happened, we will have to examine ways to galvanise this age group to the scenic beauty of our waterways.

Congratulations to all our winners, the overall winner receiving the top prize of £50. A big thank you to everyone for taking the time to send in your entries. Much appreciated.

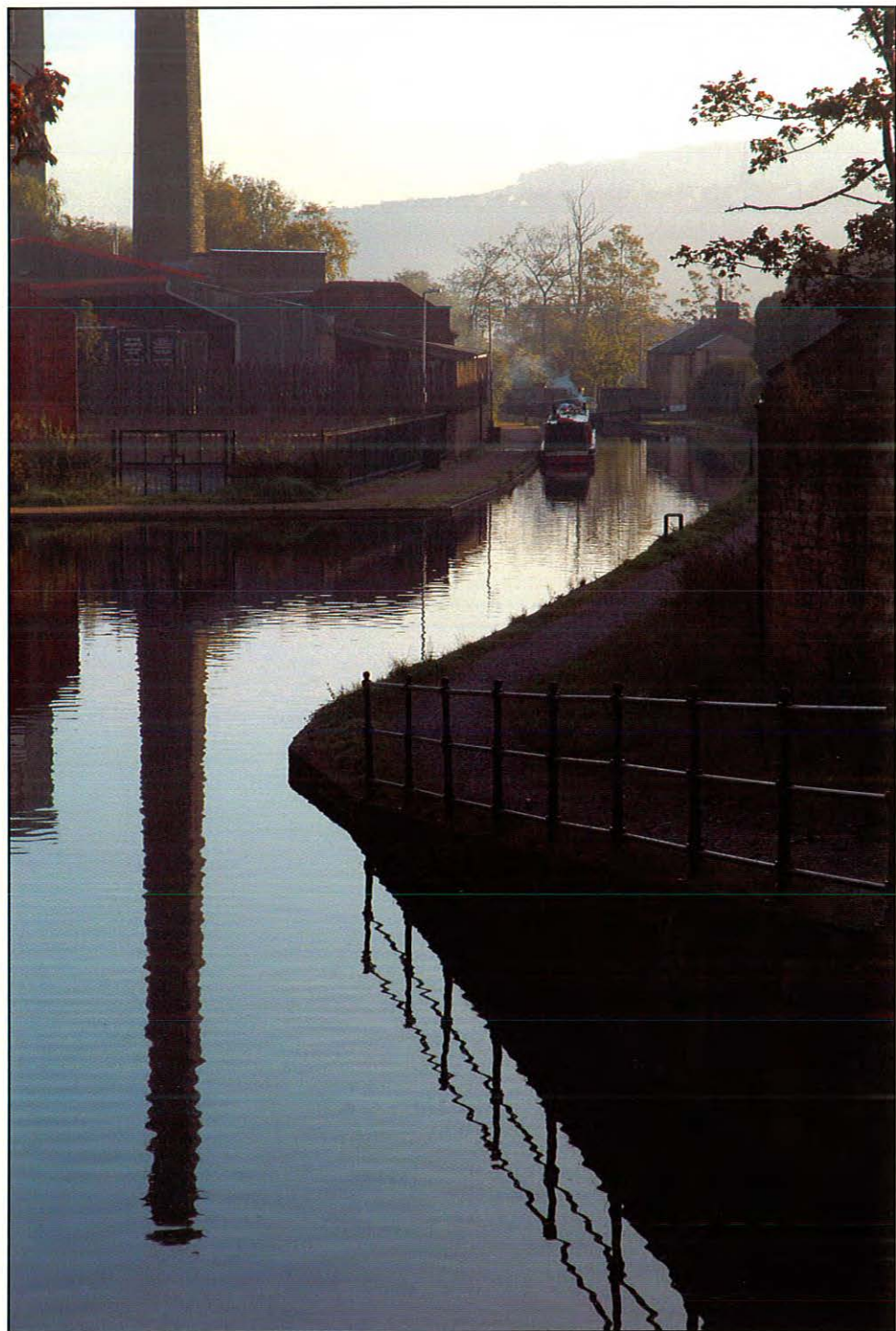
**Alwyn Ogborn**







**OVERALL WINNER - Mark Curry - Above Lock 21E, Slaithwaite**



**CATEGORY 'A' WINNER - Mark Curry - Below Lock 22E, Slaithwaite**





CATEGORY 'A' RUNNER-UP - Ray Griffiths - Lock 23W, Uppermill



CATEGORY 'A' COMMENDED - Martin Clark - Lock 14W, Woodend, Mossley



**CATEGORY 'C' WINNER - Martin Clark - Slattocks Top Lock, Rochdale Canal**





**CATEGORY 'C' RUNNER-UP - Alan Crosby - On Guard on the Coventry Canal**



**CATEGORY 'C' COMMENDED - CB Holmes - Weston-by-Stone, Trent & Mersey**

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(Worth nothing)

"IMPECCABLE..."  
(Bird-proof)

"SPECTACULAR..."  
(Short-sighted vampire)



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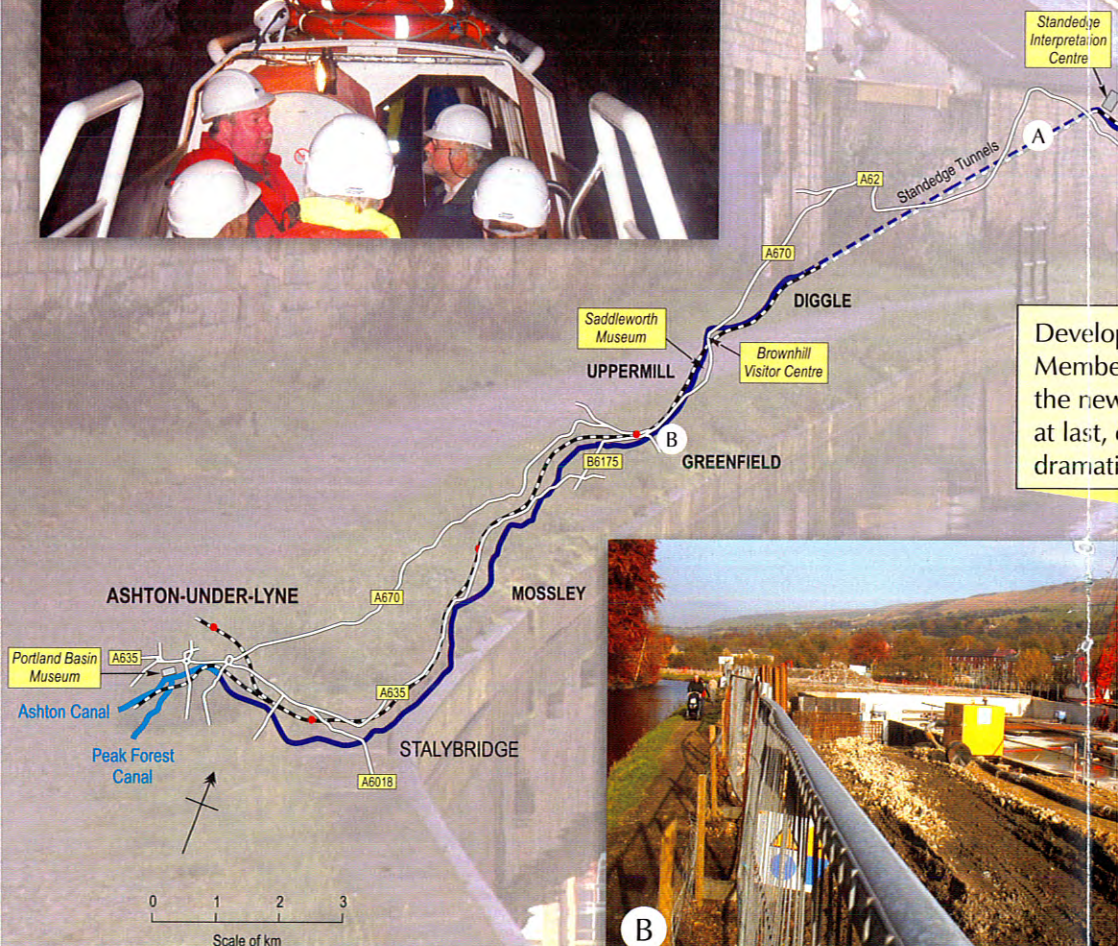


# The Huddersfield Narrow & Broad Canals

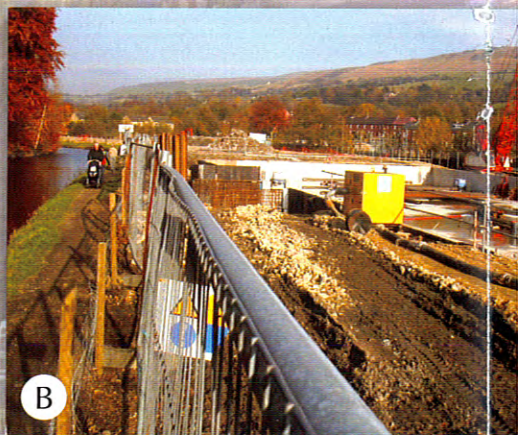
Standedge Tunnel inspection trip - Page 14



A

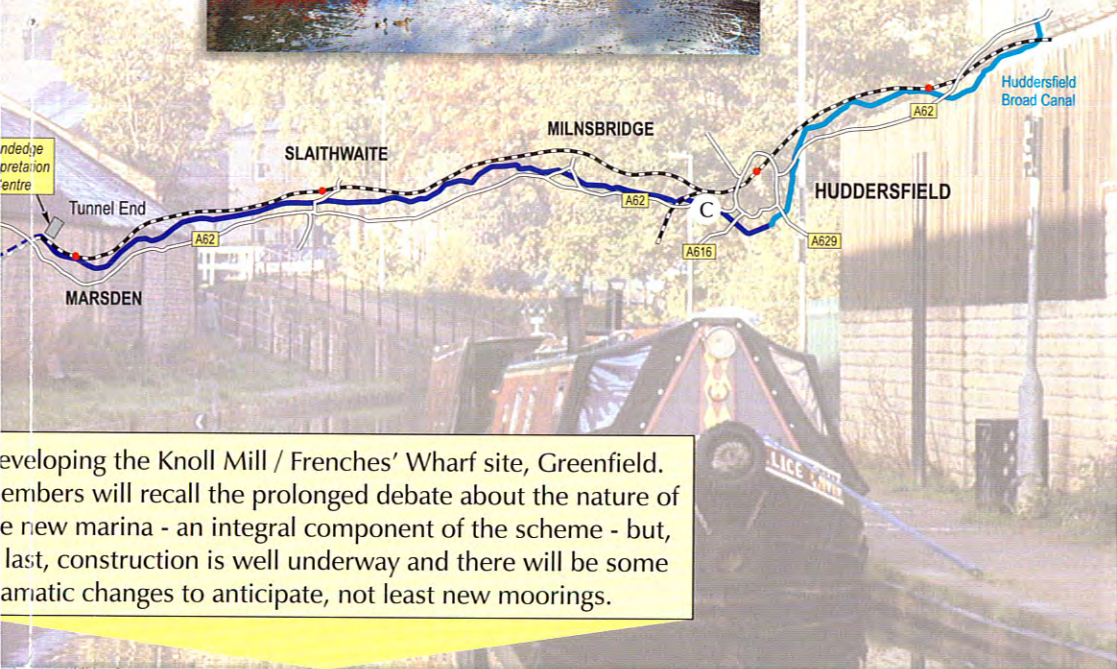


Develop  
Member  
the new  
at last,  
dramati



B





developing the Knoll Mill / Frenches' Wharf site, Greenfield. Members will recall the prolonged debate about the nature of the new marina - an integral component of the scheme - but, at last, construction is well underway and there will be some dramatic changes to anticipate, not least new moorings.

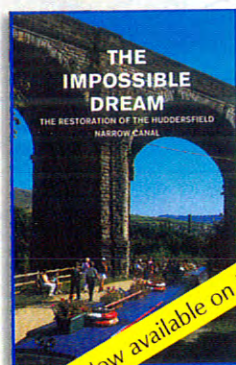




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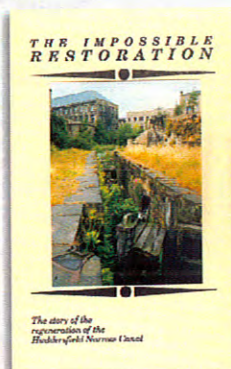
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The original 1992 video commissioned by the Canal Society. Copies are available from the Society offices, price £10.99 plus £1.95 p+p

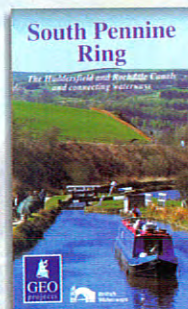
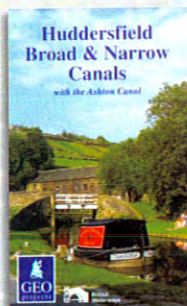


Chris Coburn's North West stage of his London to Inverness marathon.

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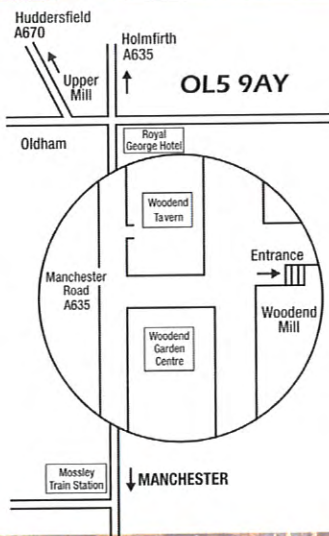
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# Woodend Artists Studios



*Mossley's New Cultural Revolution!*

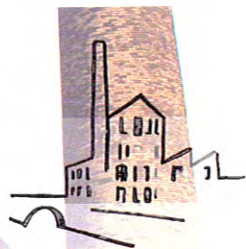


Over 20 artists now reside in the mill, which include Painters, Ceramercists, Furniture Makers, Wood Turners, Jewellery Designers and even a Recording Studio.

Refreshments are available in the Tea Garden whilst you ponder over the variety of local talent that have formed this community of art and culture.

Contact 07903 455 388 for details

Situated in Mossley between Manchester Road (A635) and the Huddersfield Canal at Lock 14 West. There are moorings just past the mill near the Roaches Lock Pub. Woodend Mill is well worth a visit whether you like art or interested in the heritage and history of the industrial past. Most studio's open weekends 10am - 5pm.





# Hollinwood Canal Society

Tameside Council's three local councillors for Droylsden East, Keiran Quinn, Susan Quinn and Jim Middleton took part in a ceremonial "cutting of the first sod" at the site for the new Droylsden Marina in November. They were watched by Debbie Lumb, North West General Manager for British Waterways, Andy Shaw of developers Watkin Jones and representatives of the Hollinwood Canal Society.

The first phase of work on this large site, involving construction of apartments alongside the main line of the Ashton Canal, began earlier in the year, but in mid-November, the developers moved onto the main site for the marina development. Core samples were taken from the ground in September, as reported in the last edition of PLink.

The extensive development will include 90 houses, 291 apartments, restaurants and offices. It will involve re-opening the first 175 metres of the Hollinwood Branch Canal. The centrepiece of the development is to be a small marina for around 30 boats. Councillor Kieran Quinn said: "The marina is the vital component in this exciting development."



*Above: Celebrating the cutting of the first sod for Droylsden Marina are (clockwise from left): Andy Shaw from developers Watkin Jones, Cllr Kieran Quinn, Cllr Susan Quinn, BW North West General Manager Debbie Lumb and Cllr Jim Middleton.*

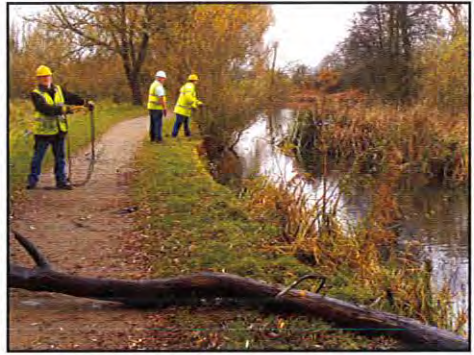
*Below: Councillor Susan Quinn cuts the first sod for the Droylsden Marina, ably watched by colleagues Councillors Keiran Quinn and Jim Middleton.*





In November volunteers from the Hollinwood Canal Society and WRG North West had another two day working party at Daisy Nook. Teams set to work using grappling hooks to drag all manner of debris and rubbish from several sections of canal. Several stumps of trees that were cut back earlier in the year (because they were damaging the coping stones) were removed and the stones re-laid level with the towpath. Surplus vegetation was cleared back from Lock 21 and the overspill above Lock 22. Fresh vegetation next to Lock 19, which had been cleared last winter, was cut back again. Throughout the weekend members of the public remarked on how much better the canal was looking this year as a result of our ongoing efforts.

**Martin Clark**



*Above: Using grappling hooks to pull debris from the Fairbottom Canal*

*Below: Clearing surplus vegetation from the shallowed Lock 21.*

*Opposite: Stages in removing a tree stump from the towpath edge and re-laying the coping stone.*

*All Photos - Martin Clark*







*Removing a tree stump from towpath edge*

*Good as new! The space has been packed with stones and the coping stone re-laid.*



*The tree is growing from behind the wash wall*

*Malcolm gets to the root of the matter*



# Lichfield & Hatherton

## The Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust

The Trust came into formal existence in 1988 but its true origins go back quite some way further. In the mid 1970s IWA Birmingham Branch members enjoyed a presentation of slides taken by member, Dick Mantle, who had flown the route in the Midlands Electricity helicopter. The show was much appreciated but very few in the audience could see any potential for restoring the canals, this being well before the big restorations such as the Kennet and Avon, the Rochdale and the Huddersfield Narrow were much more than slightly crazed gleams in the eyes of their enthusiasts.

By the early 1980s, after some 15 years of "Remainder" status, the decline of the Wyrley and Essington had become of grave concern to IWA members. Icicle Cruises, protests both on the water and on paper, seemed to have little effect. The next move was to organise campaigning rallies at Pelsall with much

support from local people, canal societies and boat clubs. The 1987 Rally was a resounding success and the organising committee, rather than just winding itself up, decided that it would reconstitute itself as an organisation committed to rejuvenating the northern BCN. The result was the IWA West Midlands Restoration Group – BCN Initiative" a title which exactly explained its purpose but was not one likely to capture the popular imagination. On 12<sup>th</sup> October 1988, just seven months later, the L&HCRT held its first meeting.

At first sight, the aims of the Trust seem to diverge from the original direction of the "BCN initiative" as it was decided to work for the restoration of the Hatherton Branch of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal (The Hatherton) and the Ogle Branch of the BCN (The Lichfield Canal). It was recognised that the re-establishment of these two canals, both abandoned in the 1960s, would feed new traffic and new life into the northern BCN and rescue it from steady

The iconic Lichfield Canal Aqueduct





decay. Restoration should also bring in support from Lichfield and Cannock both long-separated from the waterways network. Now came months, if not years, of painstaking work in simply getting the attention of a largely indifferent public and an even more sceptical raft of local authorities and public bodies. The Trust had little access to the "track" of either canal and found initial contacts with land owners frustrating. Fortunately, a considerable section of the Hatherton, at its western end, was retained in BW ownership after closure to ensure water supplies to the main network. The first practical work was scrub clearance and rebuilding of an accommodation bridge behind the Roman Way Hotel, just south of Cannock.

The Trust was aware, right from the start that motorways and trunk roads would loom large in its plans. The M6 had effectively severed the Hatherton close to Calf Heath and the A38 was a major obstruction on the Lichfield, cutting the old line to Huddlesford. But it was the steadily approaching menace of the Birmingham Northern Relief Road (later M6 Toll) which was to prove both the threat and the opportunity and became a major catalyst which turned round the fortunes of the Trust. It took two public enquiries before the road project was properly established. It would cross the Hatherton twice and the Lichfield once and it was clear that unless proper provision for the canal was made at the design stage it would probably prove impossible to restore the canals later, especially at Churchbridge. There followed years of discussion and campaigning at all levels up to that of Deputy Prime Minister. The outcome was that the Trust had to raise the finance

for two enlarged culverts and an aqueduct within a very short space of time. It looked impossible but directors and members threw themselves into the task.

David Suchet agreed to become Vice-President and to front a major appeal for funds which he did with great energy and commitment. A major donation from the Manifold Trust and amazingly generous support from the public brought in the £1½m with days to spare. Political pressure and support from British Waterways ensured that the culverts at Churchbridge were built to navigable dimensions. In August 2003, with just a week to go, the aqueduct arrived from South Wales and was hoisted into place. Now it stands spanning the motorway, in splendid isolation, waiting for the day when the new deep lock can be built to reconnect it with its embankment and to the Ogley Flight. Later came the celebrations and the formal opening but the Trust was now seen as being a serious restoration organisation which had a realistic chance of achieving its goals.

Even so, L&H still seems to be event rather than policy driven. Everyone knows that we should have business plans, environmental studies, feasibility studies and all the rest but it never works that way. On the back of the aqueduct project we obtained substantial ERDF funding and this enabled us to commission a major study of the Hatherton from Arup. We also bought some land, stored some bridge box sections and rebuild Cappers Bridge. All these projects were chosen to fit with grant criteria rather than through any grand plan.

Then came the Lichfield Southern Bypass which was again, both threat and opportunity. We needed the environmental strip alongside the road to bypass a section near the City which could not be reclaimed. We could only safeguard our interests by paying £240,000 for the construction of a navigable culvert under the Birmingham road. This was funded by mortgaging a canalside cottage at Ogley Lock 1 which we had bought with a grant from the Manifold Trust.

With the help of Lichfield District and Lichfield City Councils we have gained control over several useful sections of canal. Our own teams, visiting WRG Groups, and summer camps have facilitated excavation of buried locks and



*David Suchet at work on the culvert under Birmingham Road*

the rebuilding of several sections of canal track. A recent Aggregates Levy Grant has enabled work to start on a long section of canal wall and funded the installation of a footbridge.

Nearly 20 years on from those rallies at Pelsall, L&H has much to show for its dedication to a vision of canal regeneration and restoration. It is right to be proud of what has been achieved but

certainly wrong to be self-satisfied. We know that we have to follow the trail set by those Trusts which have achieved their objectives and re-opened their canals. In the current funding climate this will not be easy but it is so worth doing. L&H has been described as a scheme of national significance and so it is.

**Brian Kingshot**  
Chairman LHCT

(We eagerly look forward to the opening date. Ed)

*David Suchet in front of Culvert 155 at Churchbridge*







*KESCRG volunteers tackling several tasks at Tamworth Road, Lichfield, 15-16th September 2007*

All photos courtesy of L&HCT



## Wordsearch 3



The theme of the words in the grid above, reading horizontally, vertically or diagonally, is 'towns on or close to the Peak Forest Canal'. There are 18 towns to be found and for a change, no list of answers!

### **Fiasco**

*An unsuccessful wall painting*

### **Gripes**

*What Australians make wine from*



# Jidoku 7

W				T		C		J
						T		
	J	R			C			M
			T	C	L	S		
		M	S	J	W			
R			W			M	L	
		C						
B		T		M				W

The grid represents nine adjoining 'canals' and the letters are features on those canals: Lock, Junction, Tap, Rubbish point, Bridge, Marina, Waterways office, Sanitary station and Crossover bridge.

Fill in the missing blanks using these initial letters, bearing in mind that each 'canal' (3x3 block) can only have one of each feature and there must be no duplication in horizontal rows or vertical columns.

*Solutions on page 46*

## Splint

*To run very fast with a broken leg*

# Developing Sellers

*Society President, David Sumner considers the significance of developing the Sellers Engineers site in Huddersfield and Paul Barber, Managing Director of the developer Strategic Sites, explains how his company's latest project could have a major impact on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.*

I first met Paul when he was with English Partnerships (EP) then Yorkshire Forward. Together with EP Northwest, they kick-started our restoration with derelict land grant monies. This regional aid followed the job creation programmes and preceded the millennium grants and the associated Regional Support, which culminated in the reopening in 2001.

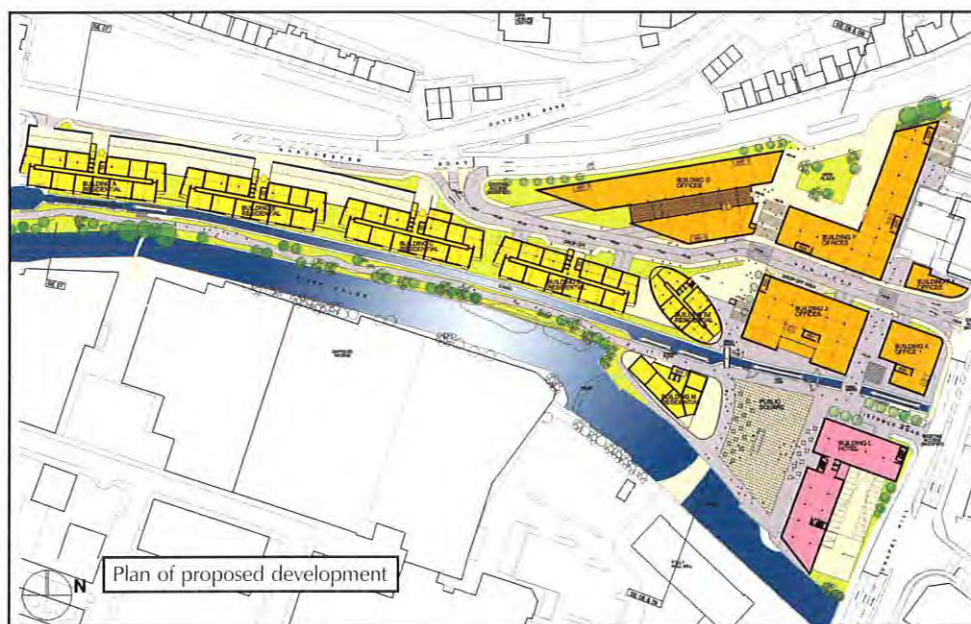
We were disappointed when the Huddersfield Town Centre scheme "buried" the canal, unlike that at Stalybridge, and we always hoped that one day a redevelopment opportunity would open up the canal again. It is particularly appropriate that a canal enthusiast should help regenerate Huddersfield and one in the private sector.

I travel the Transpennine rail route to Leeds regularly. Incidentally, Stalybridge to Huddersfield is timed at around 20 minutes compared with my trip by boat with Derek Cochrane and Stewart Sim in 2002 in 36 hours. I have noted more extensive residential redevelopment alongside the canal in Mossley. I wonder how much added value has gone into the canal corridor since 2001? Does HM Treasury look at the financial benefits through direct investment and the economic multiplier when it considers funding to British Waterways?

If we want to see further investment in new canal schemes (and even the maintenance of existing canals) I urge all members to lobby MPs and take the opportunity of reminding everyone of the benefits of our system of inland waterways.

*Paul writes:*

"Canal restoration seems to be a recurring theme in my life. During the 1980's I was Treasurer of the Barnsley Canal Group until my day job took me away from Yorkshire for





a few years. In 1994, I returned to the county as Regional Director of English Partnerships in Yorkshire and in that role I approved the necessary matching investment to help re-open the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

I now run a private sector property development company and fate has resulted in me returning to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

Strategic Sites has been appointed as lead developer of the Sellers Engineers site on Chapel Hill, Huddersfield. As readers will be aware, whilst the canal passes through this site it does so in a rather unattractive concrete tunnel. This is due to the need for Sellers to run their business at ground floor level which would be impossible if the canal was in open water.

A deal has now been agreed for Sellers to move off the site and into new factory premises elsewhere in the town. As part of plans to redevelop the site, Strategic Sites is working with Kirklees Council and British Waterways to remove the lid from the concrete tunnel and raise the water level so that the canal will again be open for all to see. As well as being open to boaters, the site will also be re-opened to walkers, avoiding the current detour via Manchester Road.

The whole Sellers site, and an adjoining area of land owned by the Council, will be redeveloped as homes, offices, cafes and teaching facilities.

Work on the Waterfront Quarter project is due to start next year and completed by 2011. Discussions will shortly take place with British Waterways about exactly how and when the lid on the canal will be removed and the water level increased.



Further details will be provided as soon as decisions are reached on the detailed programme."

*Plan & Impressions courtesy of Strategic Sites*



they can deliver so many of the government's key policy areas such as regeneration) in this way for no good reason except that British Waterways and the Environment Agency happen to be sponsored by a department with other funding problems. Instead, the Inland Waterways Association has kindly agreed to me quoting from their *Head Office Bulletin* for December.

"Over the weekend of 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> November, press reports indicated the likelihood of further cuts to waterways budgets, and IWA's own direct sources verified the correctness of these reports on 19<sup>th</sup> November. IWA understands that ministers are to be presented with a package of £130million of immediate cuts to the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs' budget with radical options for another £140 million of savings. This would affect all the Department's funded bodies, including

British Waterways and the Environment Agency and would be in addition to the 5% year-on-year cuts already reported. British Waterways is allegedly at the top of the list for further cuts to its funding. Whilst the Comprehensive Spending Review settlement for the Department appeared to present a real increase to the Department's budget, it only later emerged that a number of new centrally-directed priorities had been added to the Department's funding obligations and that the cost of these would have to be taken from existing budgets as no additional funds had been allowed for these new obligations."

"IWA is concerned that British Waterways and the Environment Agency have not recovered from their share of the £200 million cuts to funding imposed by the Treasury in 2006 after the Department mismanaged payments to farmers following a reform of agricultural

---

## Photographs

Together with David Finnis, who will be well-known to many members of the Society, I am considering writing a second book about the canal. My health problems, hopefully now behind us, and David's move to Scotland have delayed progress on this.

We have looked at all of the historic photographs that David collected over many years and we know that Tameside and Kirklees Council's collections include some historic photographs of the canal. There seem to be very few photos of the canal at work with boats and wharves, for instance in Stalybridge, Slaithwaite or Huddersfield.

If anyone knows of any other historic photographs, and would be willing to make these available for publication, I would be grateful if they would contact me on 01484 681245 or by e-mail at [keith@gibson7000.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:keith@gibson7000.fsnet.co.uk)

Keith Gibson

Loading cargo at Stalybridge





subsidies. Furthermore, British Waterways has suffered from the effects of this summer's flooding and the breach in the Brecon and Abergavenny Canal – a total additional cost of over £10 million, for which no allowance has been made by the Department. Other navigation authorities have also suffered considerable losses. IWA argues that the Treasury should allocate funds to waterway managers to cope with these disasters as they were outside their control. IWA believes the Government's decision to reduce waterways funding to help pay for the additional costs of the outbreaks of Foot and Mouth Disease, Blue Tongue Disease and Bird 'Flu is unfair, unreasonable and should be reversed before further damage is done."

"IWA is concerned that substantial budget cuts to British Waterways would raise the likelihood of closure of canals due to an inability to fund routine

maintenance and safety requirements, risking the type of breach such as that seen recently on the Brecon and Abergavenny Canal in October."

The formal decision on whether to go ahead with these further cuts is expected before the Christmas break. If the government goes ahead with the further cuts as suggested, the scale of the damage to the waterways is difficult to assess. Let me just say that we should be extremely grateful that we succeeded in reopening the Huddersfield Narrow at a time when the governments of the day were more sympathetic, but that we must hope that no breaches, leaks or other unforeseen problems occur that could cause a cash-strapped British Waterways to close the canal, despite the legal promises made to the local authorities and to the Millennium Commission.

**Keith Gibson**



A Cooke

# *Memoirs*

Brian Badminton concludes his reminiscences of the Society's early days ...

*The festival at Portland Basin was always a good event. I still have a slide of my daughter Claire sampling her first pint in a glass nearly as big as she was at the time (she was about 5). I was honoured to be, one year, invited on the official opening party boat. As I approached the junction on "Invicta" 2 years ago I had a feeling of nostalgia as it was the first time on the water there since that day on the official boat.*

*Sponsored walks and pub crawls seemed to feature as a regular way of bringing the HCS to the public's attention. I recall on such pub crawl in the Marsden area where we set off round all the pubs in the village and up Standedge Road. To make things slightly more sensible I restricted myself to half pint in each hostelry (I never knew they sold beer in anything less than a pint glass until that day), I can recall Jean Buckley and a friend resplendent in their canal boatwoman's bonnets but the end of the sponsored walk remains a mystery!*

*We had various fairly low key sponsored walks along the canal towpath but the grandest was a major event we called "Toepath 82". A committee was formed and detailed arrangements made to maximise income and the public's awareness. On the day walkers could start at 4 points, Tunnel End, Slaithwaite, Milnsbridge, and Longroyd Bridge and complete as a double passage of the east side of the canal making a total of 12 miles walk. We had the starting ceremony at Slaithwaite to maximise publicity and invited the Mayor of Huddersfield to perform the official start. We had obtained a Landrover free of charge to move the marshalling caravans and supplies about. As we had it for the day and the Mayor was there we invited him to be taken on a tour of the canal. In these days of political correctness and over cautious approaches to anything not usual, it is hard to imagine that the current Mayor would agree to be taken on an impromptu tour in a hired landrover being driven by me and with his own chauffeur sat in the back looking most perplexed! But that's exactly what we did. We took him to see Tunnel End, the Diggle Portal, the centre of Uppermill, and the work at Dungebooth lock before returning him to his limo' left at Slaithwaite and I think we won another official convert during that day. The walk was a great success with many people taking part, schools included, and I think we raised into the thousands*



# *Memoirs*

of pounds for the HCS funds!

In those days HCS had a good relationship with Dave Lambert (sadly no longer with us) who ran the Calder Cruisers Hire boats at Aspley basin on the Broad Canal.

He had lent us his facilities to prepare the floats and on many occasions lent us up to four hire boats for HCS trips on the Huddersfield Broad and Calder and Hebble canals.

We both gained publicity and so it worked well. We had several trips but the most memorable in my mind was the time we set off to go to Salterhebble on the Calder and Hebble and back. After an early start at Aspley we made good time down the Broad and I will never forget when we were working Lock 1 at Cooper Bridge; there was shout and a postman running down the towpath. What a good service by the Post Office to send a special delivery to the HCS, but it turned out the posty had just finished his rounds, heard about our trip and was running to join us for the day.

Due to pressure of work, a growing family, redundancy and subsequent business venture, I let my membership lapse. After this, it was almost 20 years before Dave and Val Milson tracked me down to tell me a lunch was to be held for past members of the Council of the HCS at Stalybridge to celebrate the opening of the canal. Sue and I accepted the kind offer with gratitude, renewed many acquaintances that day and rejoined HCS! Oh dear, we lapsed again as spending the Winters abroad you forget to do things back home, but we rejoined for a second time and are here to stay.

As a footnote I can reveal that even during my period of not being a member I had plans for a high profile publicity event for the canal to mark the reopening. We had decided to extend "Invicta" from 40 ft to a bit over 60ft and the work was being carried out at Dewsbury by Dave Lambert's son Gordon (now operating as Calder Valley Cruisers). Ironically this was the only place on the canal system that the boat would not fit the locks so I had to plan to transport it out of Dewsbury by road. My business partner was nearing completion of his 1900 Wallis and Stevens traction engine and so the idea came to us that we could move it using his traction engine to Aspley basin, and crane it in with the local paper present and invited guests from HCS. I obtained clearance for the police to block the road on a Sunday,



# *Memoirs*

surveyed the point where no overhead cables would be in the way, got a quote from a crane company, and even got Nat West to sponsor the coal for the traction engine. The only trouble was that, as anyone who has refitted or fitted out a narrowboat will know, what you think you can do in a time frame (not to mention a budget) just doesn't work out that way. I was fitting the boat out myself and instead of the nine months I had given myself, it took three years! Hence I missed the opening of the canal by a country mile and by the time I had finished the thing I just wanted to get it back to the Midlands as soon as possible, so it left Dewsbury by a regular wagon. Oh well what could have been!

To all those people who did make it happen *THANK YOU*, and we look forward to meeting members of HCS as we go East/West in mid June and West/East in late September/early October each year. Sue will appreciate help with locks!

*Brian Badminton*  
June 2007

'Toepath 82' award ceremony. Left to right: Frances Sheard, Roy Meakin, 'Rebel', Brian Badminton and John Willis





# Looking Back - Issue 27 - March 1979

*Pennine Link - Issue 27 page 12*

- 12 -

## WOOLROAD TRANSHIPMENT WAREHOUSE, DOBCROSS

In 1977 several members of Saddleworth Historical Society became concerned about the deteriorating state of a building known as Woolroad Transhipment Warehouse which stands on the side of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal at Dobcross, Saddleworth, Greater Manchester.

The building is stone built, with an unusual stone slated roof overhanging part of the canal. Originally the building would have provided protection from the elements for narrow boats unloading and loading perishable goods such as wool and corn.

The canal basin at Woolroad was the terminus of the western section of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal between 1799 and 1811. The canal link across the Pennines could not be completed until the huge undertaking of driving the  $3\frac{1}{4}$  mile long Standedge Tunnel had been finished. This tunnel took 17 years to drive and it is still the longest and highest canal tunnel in the British Isles. The Woolroad Warehouse is the last remaining building of this early period and it is thus an important building in the heritage of Saddleworth and is well worth preserving.

After discussing the matter of the restoration with the British Waterways Board, the Committee of the Saddleworth Historical Society were able to negotiate a lease on the building from the Board for a 21 year period.

The Committee appointed four trustees\* and after legal formalities had been completed, work started on the repair and renovation of the building. During the spring and summer of 1978, working parties of members of the Society stripped the roof of its heavy stone "grey slates" (some were as large as 4' x 4'), removed rotten purlins, rafters, battens and ridge tree timbers, and in addition generally tidied up the land adjacent to the building, cutting the grass and removing some small bushes that were undermining the foundations.

At the same time fund raising was started and help was received from several quarters - the local Saddleworth Parish Council, the Saddleworth Civic Trust, Industrialists and many members of the public. To date £350 has been given towards the cost of restoration.

- 13 -

During the autumn of 1978 timber was purchased and a start was made on replacing all the rotten wood in the roof. In addition, four massive octagonal oak posts have been ordered as the posts at present holding up the cantilevered roof have rotted.

Work will progress steadily during the coming months and it is hoped that in 1979 the building will be made completely 'wind and watertight' - a condition of the lease from BWB.

Several ideas have been put forward as to the future use of the building, but initially it will be used as a much needed store for the Society's excavating equipment and as an overflow store for Saddleworth Museum.

Recently, offers for help towards the landscaping and tidying up of a much larger area, surrounding the river and the canal, have been made by Oldham Metropolitan Borough, and so what started off as a simple restoration project may well result in a whole tract of semi-derelict land being turned into an attractive area that could be a credit to the district.

#### D. Chadderton

FOOTNOTE \* David Chadderton is Vice Chairman of Saddleworth Historical Society, is a Trustee of the Woolroad Warehouse and has been a member of the Huddersfield Canal Society for over three years.

#### HUDDERSFIELD NARROW CANAL EXHIBITION

From March 24 to April 22 HCS, in association with Saddleworth Historical Society, will be presenting an exhibition about the Canal. It will have particular features about the Woolroad Warehouse and the Stalybridge Aqueduct. The exhibition will be in the Saddleworth Museum, Uppermill. Opening times are 2.30 pm to 5.00 pm on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays with probable extra openings on Bank Holidays.

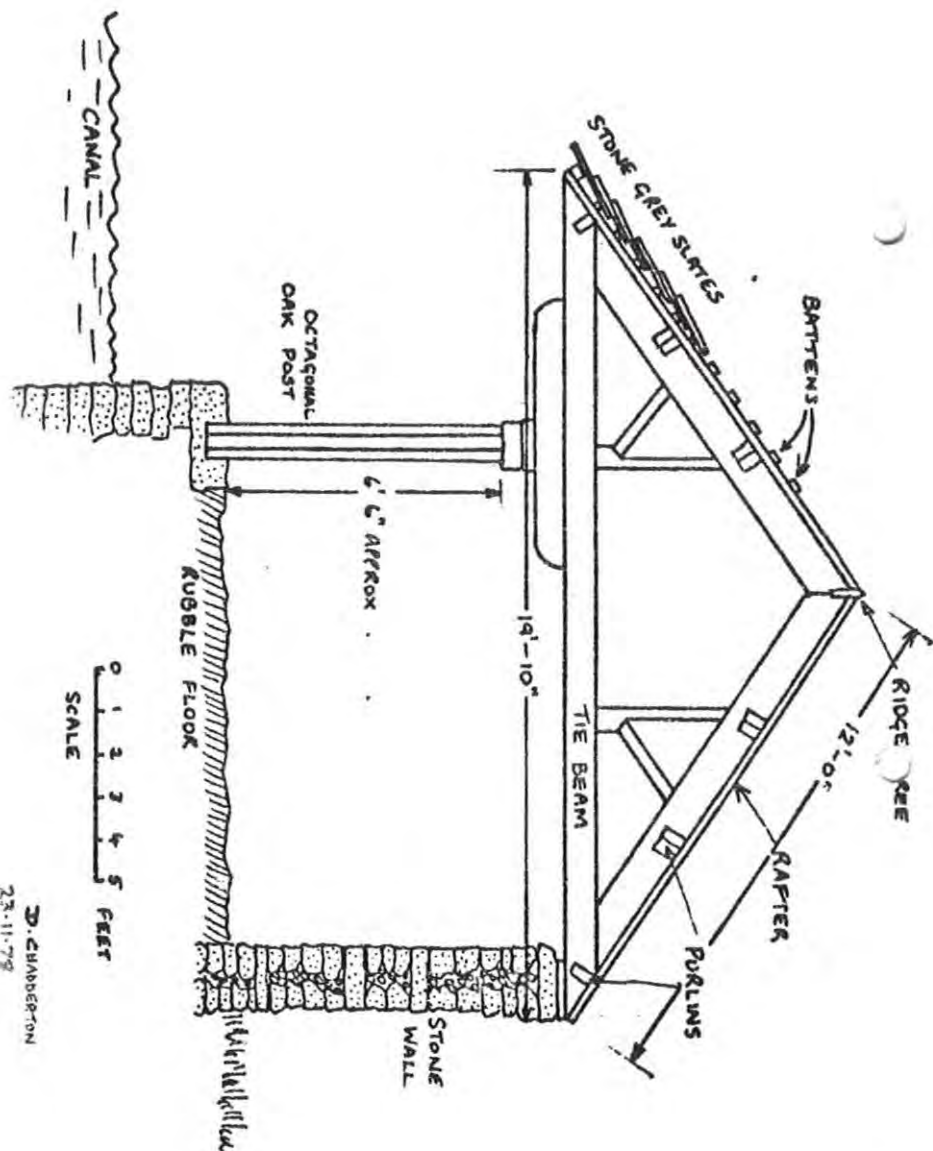
#### Sketches for Pennine Link

Good clear, black and white sketches of scenes of canal are urgently required for PL covers.



111.

# WOOL ROAD TRANSHIPMENT WAREHOUSE: DIAGRAM OF ROOF TRUSS



# The 74 Club

The Society has commissioned a plaque to acknowledge boaters who have 'done' the Narrow.

The plaque is available at £5.00 for members, £8.00 for non-members and £4.00 for non-members who join the Canal Society at the time of applying. Postage & packing is £1.00 per plaque.

Transit of the Standedge Tunnel is accepted as proof of navigation. Simply contact the Society on 01457 871800 or EMail [hcs@huddersfieldcanal.com](mailto:hcs@huddersfieldcanal.com) to request an application form or download the form from the website: [www.huddersfieldcanal.com](http://www.huddersfieldcanal.com)

The form includes space for boaters to comment on their experience in navigating the Narrow, and the views, both positive and negative, are regularly copied to British Waterways.

Generally, boaters find the canal a great experience and are very complimentary to British Waterways' operatives 'on the ground'.



We are pleased to welcome the following boaters to the '74 Club'.

R Amner	SAPPHIRE
G & D Wheeler	MON AMOUR
Mrs McCulloch	SHUNA
A Smith	RYPECK
R Brooks	ROSIE

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## Solution to Wordsearch 3

A	D	U	K	I	N	F	I	E	L	D	F	E	N	V
K	S	T	R	I	N	E	S	W	O	O	D	L	E	Y
C	T	H	O	R	N	S	E	T	T	C	B	S	W	Z
O	J	G	T	M	W	L	F	G	K	E	R	M	M	M
M	I	R	B	O	P	K	H	O	E	L	E	I	I	M
P	A	R	J	R	N	T	R	X	X	G	D	N	L	L
S	L	S	A	X	R	U	D	P	H	C	B	E	L	C
T	L	M	U	O	O	S	N	E	B	C	U	W	S	Q
A	Y	H	W	A	M	E	Z	D	N	U	R	T	K	D
L	T	X	H	H	I	L	N	K	E	T	Y	O	H	I
L	U	Q	Q	J	L	P	X	B	N	R	O	W	Y	S
B	Z	A	U	D	E	N	S	H	A	W	L	N	D	L
I	A	O	V	T	Y	K	Q	B	O	S	C	Y	E	E
F	U	R	N	E	S	S	V	A	L	E	U	W	N	Y
W	A	W	H	A	L	E	Y	B	R	I	D	G	E	E

## Solution to Jidoku puzzle 7

W	M	B	L	T	R	C	S	J
S	C	L	J	W	M	T	B	R
T	J	R	B	S	C	L	W	M
J	R	W	T	C	L	S	M	B
C	T	S	M	R	B	W	J	L
L	B	M	S	J	W	R	C	T
R	S	J	W	B	T	M	L	C
M	W	C	R	L	J	B	T	S
B	L	T	C	M	S	J	R	W



# The Back Page

## HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY welcomes the following new members

2759 Mr & Mrs David & Gillian Wheeler, [REDACTED]

2760 Mr Neil Parkinson, [REDACTED]

2761 Mr David Mounsey and Miss Fitzhugh, [REDACTED]

2762 Mr Stephen Garside, [REDACTED]

2763 Ms Suzy Davies, [REDACTED]

### MEMBERSHIP RATES

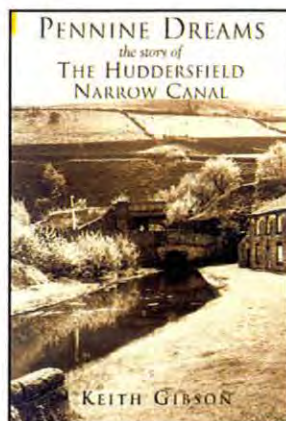
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Articles, letters and comments for **Issue 161** of Pennine Link should reach the Editor at Transhipment Warehouse, Wool Road, Dobcross, OL3 5QR by **29th February 2008**

### ADVERTISING RATES

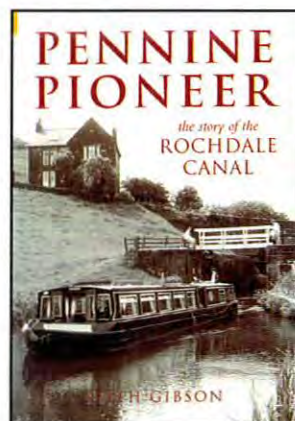
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