

# Pennine Link

Magazine of the Huddersfield Canal Society



Issue 161 Spring 2008

# Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd

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## 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*

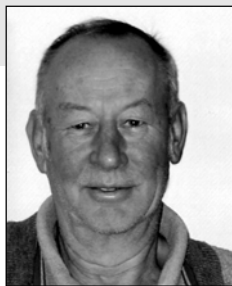
Issue 161

Tameside Canals Festival - July 1998



Alan Stopher

Editorial	4	2008 Photographic Competition	23
Chairman's Annual Report	6	The Story of DB1 - Part 10	30
Disconnected Jottings	7	Society Events 2008	35
Demise of the TCF	10	Then & Now	36
Obituary - Margaret Sinfield	11	Wordsearch - 4	38
Random Jottings from the East	12	Jidoku - 8	39
Not just mucking about ...	14	CBW - The Mystery Continues	40
2008 AGM Notification	15	Standedge Gas Testing	42
Review - Towpath Guide	16	Mikron Theatre Company	46
Greenfield 'Marina'	19	Looking Back	48
Hollinwood Canal Society	20	The 74 Club	50



## Editorial

It is a pleasure to be able to write this Editorial. We have two great pieces of news to gladden the heart. Firstly the launch

of a brand new 'TOWPATH GUIDE'.

The first since 1981. Secondly, a press release from BW to say that boats will be able to traverse the Standedge tunnel under their own power from next year.

The Towpath Guide has been painstakingly compiled by our very own Dr Bob Gough. Bob has been beavering away for many, many years on this project. Fitting in the odd few hours or a day or two now and then in between routine administration duties, (including setting of your magazine), plus the usual selection of un-scheduled interruptions. It has been a project of determination for Bob, and certainly a feather in his cap.

The guide is incredibly detailed with a myriad of pictures. All bus stops on the adjacent roads are marked, as are eating & drinking places, car parks etc, useful for people walking the track in stages. Navigation information is included for boaters showing water taps and sanitary stations. The photographs on each page progress through from end to end. Anyone who is less active and not keen on walking, (or indeed, not able to because of some medical reasons), could traverse the whole 20 miles from the comfort of their own armchair simply by following the pictures and referring to the accompanying map symbols.

It is planned to have a HCS Open Day to promote the publication, which is a

bargain at £4-99. (A fiver really). See Ken Wright's review on page 16.

The second momentous piece of news is that BW have issued a press release about boaters 'own power' transit of Standedge tunnel. This is published on page 44. The thing is – we already had a privately written report from Specialist Plant Services, who had undertaken a survey themselves, which dismisses fears of choking to death by use of the infernal (*sic*) combustion engine. The results of this survey are printed on pages 42-44, and we were going to use it to try to persuade BW to do what they have just done. Sod's Law, but who cares how it comes about as long as it does. Our cover photo gives a dramatic view of what to expect once inside.

Claire B has put together a programme of Society events for the coming year and it would be very nice to see many members and visitors faces at these. Details page 35.

I have tried, unsuccessfully, to get a write-up from BW west side, setting out their activities past, present and future, on the HNC. The best I have achieved so far is a verbal list, time constraints due to the amount of work needed being cited as the reason for no written report.

The work carried out includes:- Bridge plaques to be fitted when available. Bollards fitted to all locks up to 32W, 3 on each. This is a very welcome addition for us boaters and will help to encourage more use of the canal. All Locks have been numbered. Vegetation trimmed back. Cill markers painted on lock sides. The balance beams have had handles



fitted and walkover bridges painted with anti-slip paint. Winding holes cut back. (I don't think this means dredged, I have not noticed any difference here at Mossley). 'No Fishing' notices installed where overhead power lines are present. Personally, I consider this to be a cover your back 'We Warned You' exercise/expense. I would hate to hear of anyone being harmed, but in my experience, these notices are universally ignored. They should not be and I have no easy answer.

Very sad to report on the demise of the Ashton Canals Festival, later known as the Tameside Canal Festival. Although held in Dukinfield, it was on the Ashton canals, the T-junction from Portland Basin being an arm of the original canal. Although now known as the Lower Peak Forest, officially this canal finishes at the lift bridge where it joined the Ashton arm. (The name was changed to give the impression that Tameside organised it). However, as with many such festivals, interest has been waning for a number of years. With the loss of financial backing, the committee reluctantly felt it could not continue. I myself served on that committee for over 15 years, it was very hard work, but the sense of achievement in bringing pleasure to so many people was immense. It was when the festival started to fade and become a chore rather than a pleasure that I left.

The other sad news is of the death of Margaret Sinfield, one of the prime movers of the fledgling HCS. See obituary, written by another of our founder members, Bob Dewy, page 11.

On the navigation front, canals were built for boats and we encourage as many boats as possible to this tremendously

scenic canal. I know from my own experience that many difficulties exist which will tend to put people off the navigation. Most of the difficulties are known about and will be addressed as and when sufficient funding becomes available. As widely publicised, our Government has reduced, by many millions, the funding BW use to maintain the waterways to throw at higher profile projects. (Makes them look good). Inevitably, maintenance work is rationed.

The horrendously difficult hydraulic operated bottom gates of Lock 1W are scheduled to be changed soon, negotiations for a little more space on the offside being the hold-up at the moment.

Although mooring bollards have been installed at lock approaches, their use is very limited due to the fact that it is impossible to get near enough to the side to jump off. Either Olympic standard long jumps or some good dredging is required before this expense is utilised.

Navigators beware of the bywash streams when entering or leaving locks. The bywash enters the lower pound at right angles and in times of high water flow, the force of the water will slam your boat against the side and cause entry/exit problems, maybe damage to property, or even worse, to people. I intend to bring this hazard to the attention of BW. I must stress, this is only when there is high water flow after prolonged rainfall. The problem will diminish significantly as water usage with increased boat movements drops the level. Don't let it put you off.

Spring and Summer on the way. Enjoy your waterways.

**Alwyn Ogborn**



# Chairman's Annual Report 2007

Your Society has enjoyed another successful year. We have continued to work closely with our partners in the

three local authorities - Tameside, Oldham and Kirklees (Huddersfield) - and British Waterways. Perhaps the two most significant advances during the year have been our move from Ashton under Lyne to the Transshipment Warehouse and our major contribution towards an improved arrangement for boaters using the Standedge Tunnel. The latter has been a controversial issue since the re-opening of the canal in 2001.

Continued pressure from the Society, particularly by HCS Council member, Keith Noble, has persuaded British Waterways to reconsider the methods for Tunnel transit. It is now likely that boaters will be allowed to take their vessels through the Tunnel accompanied by a BW pilot instead of the current, expensive method using electric tugs. We have not yet been successful in persuading BW to allow Tunnel transit for more than two days each week in the season but we continue to negotiate for extra passage days.

We have managed to regularly produce quarterly issues of the Society magazine, Pennine Link and we thank Editor Alwyn Ogborn and Society Administrator Bob Gough for ensuring that we maintain a lively and interesting periodical.

During the Season, Bob and Marketing Officer, Claire Bebbington organised some well-supported members' events including a Treasure Hunt in Marsden which we intend to repeat in 2008, but this time in Uppermill.

Trevor Ellis and Eric Crosland have continued to lead the HCS volunteers' team but have been frustrated by the increasing number of health and safety regulations that are a feature of so many aspects of modern living. We continued to donate bridge plates for BW to fix on both sides, along the length of the Canal.

The annual Photographic Competition was again a success and a 2008 calendar was produced featuring the winning entries. Sales of the calendar were encouraging, although promoting and distributing them entailed a great deal of employee and volunteer time and effort.

A highlight of 2008 will be the launch of the Towpath Guide which Bob Gough has been researching for several years. It promises to be a best-seller and Council agreed that your Society would be prepared to subsidise the overall cost in order to promote the use of the Huddersfield Canal by everyone.

Your Council is mindful of its high level of responsibility for ensuring that our waterway maintains and increases its appeal to all users. British Waterways manage it to the best of their ability but the Society exists to put the heart and passion into championing a unique and beautiful resource.

I wish to thank all our loyal members and welcome those who joined during the year. I offer my thanks also to our Treasurer, Steve Picot and all the members of HCS Council of Management and to our employees Bob and Claire for their major contribution to yet another successful year in the life of the Huddersfield Canal Society.

**Neville Kenyon**  
Chairman



## Disconnected Jottings

### Notes about the national waterway restoration scene

In the last issue I reported on the threat of even more cuts in British Waterways' budget. Probably

you will have seen in the national waterways press that a storm of protest, led by the Inland Waterways Association, resulted and that it was eventually announced that there would be no cut to BW's budget for 2008/9. Instead, exactly the same amount would be made available to spend on BW's waterways this year as in 2007/8.

I am sorry, did I miss something there? Allowing for inflation (which has been higher in the construction trades than in the retail trades), if the government pays exactly the same this year as it paid last year, that is actually quite a significant cut isn't it? Yet, we have become so used to cuts in waterways budgets, that the news seems to have generally been received in waterway circles, if not with delight, at least almost as though an increase had been awarded.

The lobbying of politicians had certainly been a success in that the threatened larger cut was fought off, but until we get back to a situation where BW's income is sufficient to properly maintain the waterways we are far from out of the woods.

The seriousness of the current situation is shown by decisions British Waterways has made regarding the inevitably unplanned spending required to repair last year's flood damage (costs I believe

approaching £10m) and to spend as much as £15m over three years on repairs to the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal following the embankment collapse at Gilwern on that canal. With no sign of any extra government money to pay for these responsibilities (which are huge additional expenses for a relatively low spending body), BW decided to back out of its commitment to the Cotswold Canals, a decision that to me has every sign of panic and, whilst it will save some of the financial costs has other, possibly much more significant, consequences.

In July 2001, Dave Fletcher, then the Chief Executive of British Waterways, announced that BW had a firm intention to fully restore the Cotswold Canals (the Thames & Severn Canal and the Stroudwater Navigation) and BW then took on the lead role in the partnership with local authorities and the Cotswold Canals Trust seeking to achieve that aim.

Large-scale grants were awarded, including £11.3m from the Heritage Lottery Fund to restore the 6 miles of canal between Stonehouse, through Stroud to Brimscombe Port and work eventually began on that scheme towards the end of last year.

BW has appointed staff to carry out this work and has already spent or committed about £1.5m of its own money. The freehold of the canal has been passed from its previous owner Gloucestershire County Council to BW.

Apparently without any advance warning to the other partners in the scheme,

except a telephone call from Robin Evans, the current Chief Executive, BW announced on 4<sup>th</sup> February that as from April it would withdraw from the restoration partnership and that the additional £4.5m that it had committed to the scheme would not now be available. At the time of writing, I do not know how the other partners will resolve the funding shortfall or the project management gap this leaves in the scheme.

Frankly, I am appalled not just at BW's decision but at the way it was announced apparently with no attempt to find alternative finance or to realign the management of the project and, from what we are told, with no prior discussion with BW's partners in the scheme.

In my rather more years than I will admit to as either a player in or an observer of the waterway regeneration scene, I think this must be one of the most unprofessional acts that I can recall.

BW had committed itself to play a leading role and to put financial and staff resources into the project to restore these canals and had acted on that commitment in partnership with others over a seven year period. It had a moral, if not a legal, duty to continue to act on that commitment, especially after all the hard graft and financial commitments made by the other partners to reach the stage where large-scale grant-aided restoration was beginning.

In my view, it certainly was not a commitment that should have been quickly abandoned apparently as a panic measure as a result of the inadequate resources to deal with the problems of last year and apparently without

sufficient care as to the effect of the decision not just on the Cotswold scheme but on waterway restoration generally.

It is hard to see where this leaves waterway restoration in the eyes of potential grant giving bodies. There is clear evidence, from our own canal for instance, that waterway restoration has been a successful means of achieving the government's regeneration objectives (not our reason for spending so much time on restoring the canal – but the reason why we got most of the money!).

Yet the government has apparently turned its back on that success to such an extent that its executive agency, British Waterways, has walked away from a commitment to a project that had millions of public money offered in the form of grants. Those grants may not themselves be at risk if the remaining partners can put together an alternative financial package with new money or cost savings or both but I am pretty sure that, at the very least, anyone making decisions about the allocation of grant funding will be seeking rather more in the way of cast-iron commitments if a waterways project is involved after this debacle.

Indeed those other canal societies and trusts who have seen the Kennet & Avon/Huddersfield/Rochdale pattern of BW eventually taking the lead role as being the one to follow must be wondering if there might be other models that could be followed.

Just as DEFRA robbed Peter to pay Paul when it cut the funding to BW and the Environment Agency because of deficiencies in its farming budget, so BW is robbing the proven successful Peter of

waterway restoration to pay the Paul of an inadequate budget.

The House of Commons Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Committee, which has already expressed its concern at the effects of cuts in waterway spending, has again met to consider British Waterways and its remit to deal with regeneration and restoration issues as a result of this decision. To coincide with that meeting new guidance to BW has been announced by DEFRA which recognises that BW has to balance a wide range of interests and competing priorities.

Three priorities are set in England and Wales which are to maintain the network in satisfactory order, to achieve a longer-term vision of moving towards greater self-reliance (i.e. away from grant aided funding) and to deliver a range of public benefits. To me this sounds suspiciously like waffle! It actually says very little other than what was and remains obvious.

It did not help the government's case that Jonathan Shaw MP, the Waterways Minister, told the committee that BW was still promoting waterway restoration and that he had been to see examples at Loughborough Wharf and in Birmingham. He should have been better briefed – Loughborough Wharf is on the River Soar and the Birmingham

site on the Icknield Port Loop, a remainder but open and fully navigable section of the BCN. These sites might be examples of regeneration alongside waterways but neither of them has anything at all to do with Waterway Restoration.

I can't help but compare Dave Fletcher's proactive BW back in 2001, when it was decided to make the commitment to the Cotswold Canals, with Robin Evans's reactive BW of today. I am not competent to make any judgement as to whether one or other of these two Chief Executives is the more successful, I am simply comparing the external appearance of BW as it is in today's political climate compared to a time when waterway restoration was seen in the glow of success from the Millennium funded restoration schemes. It seems to me that BW is in danger of having its staff withdraw into the bunker.

When I chaired Northern Canals Association meetings, BW staff regularly attended, not just at junior levels but at the top level with Derek Cochrane and Ian White and even the Chief Executive himself attending our meetings. The equivalent people are conspicuous by their absence today.

**Keith Gibson**



Halcyon days as Dave Fletcher re-opens a restored Standedge Tunnel

Alan Stopher



# Tameside Canals Festival

## CANALS FESTIVAL SAILS INTO SUNSET

Sadly, the annual Tameside Canals Festival will not take place this year as the voluntary committee for organising this event has disbanded due to the lack of numbers.

Retiring Vice Chair, Hazel Maskell said: "Last year was the thirtieth Festival and some members of the Committee have been involved since the first! Our Committee was ageing and several members had already decided to step down after last July's event and so, unfortunately, the remaining members decided to call it a day."

The event was held alongside Tameside's waterways at the canalside location of Portland Basin and has attracted tens of thousands of local families and many boaters over the years. Celebrity Presidents have included Barbara Castle, MEP and local lass Cathy Staff, and to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Festival, Ashton's own recording stars from the seventies, The Fivepenny Piece performed at a night of nostalgia.

The Festival was originally created by a committee from the local IWA and later by members of the Huddersfield Canal Society, as a way in which to raise awareness of the Society's desire to restore this famous canal; and make it navigable once again. Once this goal was achieved, management of the event changed to another voluntary committee, this time supporting and raising funds for Willow Wood Hospice.

"Unfortunately, the weather was particularly poor for the Festival weekend last year. Willow Wood decided to withdraw from any involvement in future Festivals and without their charitable status, it made it difficult for us to continue", explained Hazel.

Often advertised as a weekend of family fun, the event featured a variety of craft tents, live entertainment and music, sideshows and other stalls. The Festival's famous beer tent will be sadly missed by lovers of real ales!

"The Committee would like to thank all those companies, businesses and individuals that have sponsored the Festival over the years and especially Tameside Council, who, through their Tame Valley Warden Service, have provided and assisted with preparation and maintenance of the site over the years. We'd also like to thank Ashton District Assembly who have supported the recent Festivals financially and with the loan of equipment.

"Most of all we would like to thank all the residents of Tameside and the surrounding boroughs, as well as all those people from further afield who have visited the sites over the Festival weekend and helped us to raise much needed funds to support many local good causes".

Should any other local community group wish to discuss taking over the organisation of future Festivals, they can contact Hazel on 01457 837826.

**Hazel Maskell**  
TCF Vice Chair

# Obituary - Margaret Sinfield

It is with great sadness that I learnt of the death of Margaret Sinfield.

Although for many people her name may not be familiar, it was she who played a key role in starting the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. She became Chair of the then West Riding Branch of Inland Waterways Association in 1973 and soon after took the initiative which led directly to the formation of HCS.

After a great deal of research I have now tracked down her comments published in January 1974. In her Chairman's remarks she said:

*" We need someone to organise a group of those interested in the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. Many members have mentioned this canal recently so don't let the Rochdale hog all the limelight. Let's have a good look at the Huddersfield Narrow and to begin with we need someone to organise towpath walks. If you are interested ..... please phone me.."*

With youthful vigour (or was it naivete?) I contacted her and the story began with a series of meetings which lead up to the April 1974 meeting in the Zetland Hotel in Huddersfield. (see Keith Gibson's version in "Pennine Dreams")

Having set the good ship HCS off on its course, Margaret tended to take a back seat but I knew she was there willing us onward.

I enjoyed several boating holidays with her and John Maynard on her narrowboat "Bridget" including the first Aston Canal Festival and memorably a descent of the Anderton Lift before it closed in 1983.

I was very pleased that Margaret was able to come to the post-reopening celebration in 2002 at Stalybridge and thus to savour the outcome of her initiative in 1974.

**Bob Dewey**  
Founder member



Bob Gough



*The Society's bird box, installed outside the Transhipment Warehouse and with integral camera, captures a glimpse of a prospective tenant. The monitor quality is not great, but even so, we are anticipating some intimate nest building views.*

# Random Jottings from the East

As there are no boat trips during the Winter months, I felt I should not let that stop me contributing to our quarterly magazine with a few lines about our 'out of season' activities.

It seems ages ago now, but we did have a good turn out from both sides of the Pennines for the Christmas get-together at Tunnel End. The crowd included a number of members who joined us at the latter end of the season: very keen to help crew the Shuttle and become involved in our social events. I'm sure they will enjoy the coming season and, of course, I'm delighted to have a few more volunteers to call upon - gives the 'usual suspects' a rest!

Peter Ruffley invited us aboard the Canal Boat Trust's 'Still waters' at the beginning of January, and I think about 22 took advantage of the invite. We had a short trip down the Ashton which soon turned into an underlay rolling session on t' towpath. All hands to the pumps, so to speak, and this huge, submerged length of

underlay was rolled and cut into sections and manoeuvred clear of the channel in no time - thanks to a small contingent of the Swiss Army. It was a major navigation hazard and we were pleased to find it had not been dumped back in the canal on our return trip (see 'action' picture opposite)!

We made good time back to Portland Basin and took the opportunity to extend the cruise to Donkey Stone Wharf and back. Peter had also organised a meal at the E-dit restaurant at Portland Basin.

A very good meal; excellent choice and value for money, and a venue to remember for future 'do's'. Many thanks to Peter for organising the day; it was an unusual and enjoyable day out, after all, even *terraphile* Administrator, Bob Gough, came along!

We've done a few walks over at Marsden, which Ronnie Rose has organised and led, with plenty of local history thrown in. The walks have included Wessenden Head via Butterley Reservoir, Scammonden Dam, Deanhead Reservoir and the towpath to



*Hardy souls ready for a Grand Day Out aboard Still Waters*

Slawit and back (with a break at the Moonraker Floating Tearoom).

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> February, Ronnie, Gwen Walker, Paul Leeman and I helped to steward the Imbolc festival in Marsden; a Celtic tradition featuring the Greenman of Spring chasing Jack Frost of Winter away. The festival starts with a procession from the National Trust car park led along the towpath to the display area by caped and hooded figures carrying torches and wearing animal masks. Others with homemade lanterns parade in and amongst the procession. The enactment takes place on the slope at the side of the Waters Edge buildings and is accompanied by drumming bands (excellent), fire displays, fireworks and much more. It's very atmospheric and well worth putting in your diary for next year (the first

Saturday in February) especially as the entire event is free of charge.

I think that just about exhausts my winter ramblings. I know you too will be looking forward to the coming season and some welcome sunshine.

**Andrea Fisher**

East Side Boat Coordinator



Martin Clark

*"Ah well, you see, Towpath isn't it, heavy wear ... you'll have to go for an 80/20 Wilton at least!"*



Bob Gough

# Not Just Mucking about on the Water

*Bob Maycock outlines the significance of recent changes in MCA Regulations affecting the operation of the Society's 'Marsden Shuttle' and the Tameside Canal Boat Trust's 'Still Waters'.*

## **Marsden Shuttle Water Taxi**

Following publication of the *'Merchant Shipping (Inland Waterways and Limited Coastal Operations) (Boatmasters' Qualifications and Hours of Work) Regulations 2006 – Structure and Requirements'*, it has become necessary to change the crew management policy for 'Marsden Shuttle'.

The Regulations have a phased application in the case of Small Passenger Vessels less than 24 metres long carrying not more than 12 passengers and not going to sea. The implementation date is 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

Skipper of Marsden Shuttle after this date will need to hold a licence approved by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

The basic qualification is Boatmasters' Licence Tier 2 or various Deck Officers' tickets, but, for Small Passenger Vessels such as 'Marsden Shuttle' other options are available. Of these, the Society has decided to use the 'Certificate in Community Boat Management'.

The Certificate is obtained after about 2 years experience and successfully completing a 2 to 2½ day teaching and testing programme at a National Community Boats Association (CBA) approved training centre.

In addition to the Skipper (defined as a person exercising the function of Boat

Manager on the voyage) being qualified, at least one crew member should have an appropriate qualification in First Aid.

Initial preparation of Candidates will be done by existing Huddersfield Canal Society Instructors.

Other formal evidence of training is also required for all levels of crew. This is dealt with as a matter of course by the Instructors; please do not be put off by it, we have to tick boxes to simply establish that the Shuttle is being used responsibly and not as a submarine or an aquatic bulldozer!

The list for the first two CBA teaching/testing programmes is already fully subscribed. If you are not on the crew list, but would like to be, please contact Andrea Fisher (01484 686136).

## **TGBT Still Waters**

The Tameside Canal Boat Trust's tug and butty 'Still Waters' is, because of its size and carrying capacity, designated a Class V vessel and requires specific training for its Skippers.

The qualification route for potential skippers of 'Still Waters' and their instructors has changed. These changes present a number of cost related and administrative problems. Solutions are emerging but are not yet in place, nevertheless, interested crew members who have not already done so are invited to contact Peter Ruffley (0161 494 0532) or to leave a message for Bob Maycock at the HCS office (01457 871800).

**Robert Maycock**  
Training Co-ordinator



# Notice of the 2008 AGM



## HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY LIMITED

Notice is hereby given that the Twenty Eighth Annual General Meeting of the above named Company will be held at the Masonic Hall, Uppermill on Thursday the 5th day of June, 2008 at 7.30p.m. to transact the following business:

1. To approve the Minutes of the 2007 Annual General Meeting.
2. To receive and adopt the Accounts for the Company for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007 together with the Report of the Council of Management and of the Auditors thereon.
3. To elect Nairne Son & Green as Auditors and to authorise the Council of Management to fix their remuneration.
4. To re-elect Mr. T. Ellis as a member of The Council of Management retiring by rotation.
5. To re-elect Mr. K. Sykes as a member of The Council of Management retiring by rotation.
6. To re-elect Mr. V. Willey as a member of The Council of Management retiring by rotation.
7. To consider any other nominations.
8. Any other business.

DATED the Nineteenth Day of March 2008  
By Order of the Council

J. M. Fryer, Company Secretary

*N.B. A member entitled to attend and vote at the Meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote on his/her behalf. A proxy must be a Member of the Company.*

Please note: A bar will be available at the Masonic Hall, but no food will be provided.  
Parking is available at the rear of the building - take care making the turn into the car park.

# A Towpath Guide - Review by Ken Wright

## HUDDERSFIELD NARROW CANAL A TOWPATH GUIDE

### ONE MAN'S VIEW

"A TOWPATH GUIDE". Such a modest title for a unique, information-packed volume. The Society's new guide, replacing the 1981 version, could be said to be long overdue. All I can say is that it has been well worth waiting for. Conceived, designed, largely photographed and written by our own Dr. Bob Gough, this is one epic work displaying enduring patience and an incredible sense of detail.

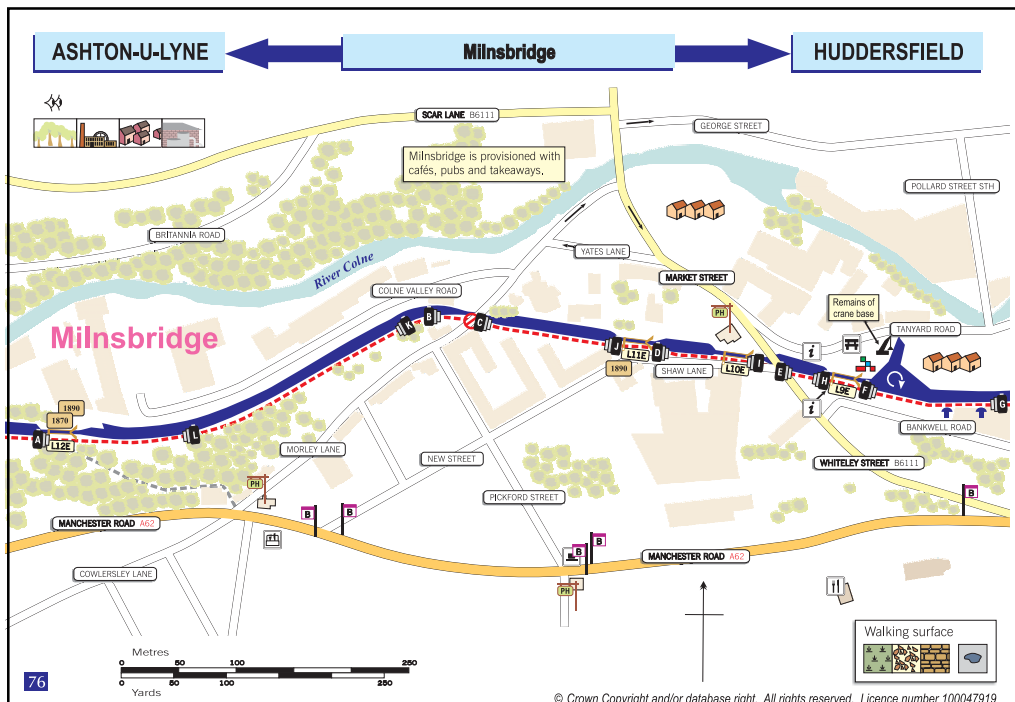
The book is A5, spiral bound in landscape style and every one of the 90 pages is high quality card, making it an ideal travelling companion, which is obviously what it is intended to be.

I would insist on keeping it in a good, watertight folder – it is far too valuable a possession to get wet! As a towpath guide the booklet is aimed at all canal users but favours walkers above others. Since most boaters on our canal spend a lot of time towpath walking, between locks, they count as 'walkers' too!

After an introductory few pages the canal journey starts, divided into half mile, intricately detailed, maps on the left hand page and, on the right hand page, photographs of the route and other photographs of local, archive, curiosity or natural history interest, with accompanying notes.

The maps are little works of art in themselves – the detail is amazing.

*Sample page spread from the Guide*



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# HUDDERSFIELD NARROW CANAL

## A Towpath Guide

Dr Bob Gough



Foreword by Robin Evans



The symbols used are unique and quite clear and are a major improvement on any seen in similar publications. One tiny quibble – in the review copy the colouring of the existing buildings was so faint as to be virtually invisible. Clearly marked on the maps are the positions from which the

Without looking at all cluttered, each map shows the canal (obviously), with local features, building types, local amenities, the type of landscape, the surface construction of the towpath and even how many puddles you will encounter when it's wet! Honestly!

accompanying photographs were taken and these are presented so that the reader can follow them in sequence, whether walking from east to west or vice versa. This is a very cleverly thought out system and I wouldn't start to try to explain how it has been done!

*cont'd over*



### Gardens in miniature - Mosses & Lichens

The stone boundary walls along the towpath are an ideal habitat for many different types of moss and lichen. Lichens are unusual being a partnership

between an alga and a fungus. They show a wonderful variety of forms including patches of colour, incrustations and 'leafy' clumps.

Buy the book and see for yourself.

The other photographs and diagrams illustrate many botanical and wildlife features (demonstrating Dr. Bob's academic background), historical items and those of curiosity value. I have spent many years walking and working on the canal and I still learned a great deal.

One section I found particularly "educational" was that depicting the walking routes 'over the top'. Although living a couple of miles from Boat Lane I have never ventured along it, not being certain of the route to Marsden. Here, clearly defined, are both routes – with additional points of interest. Now I have no excuse.

The book concludes with a list of useful contacts and an impressive distance-finding chart.

There are a few errors and omissions, inevitable in a work of such detail. The 'public arts', I feel, don't get enough attention or pictures – I would have expected the adventure playground and the Society's "snakes and ladders" on the Diggle flight to have featured. Saddleworth Museum does charge for entry and contains an award-winning

Tourist Information Centre, (not mentioned), that was recently threatened by 'economy' closure but has now been rescued by Saddleworth Parish Council.

The most serious omission – and one which Bob and the Society are trying to resolve – is that of BOATS! I counted 30, on well over 400 photographs, although some of the pictures were taken 'out of season'. Still, it would have been nice to have seen more. There were only about 100 humans and half a dozen dogs, so it was far from busy at the time.

In my view anyone who picks up "A Towpath Guide" will want to buy it and keep it. It leaves many a 'Nicholson' and 'Pearson' standing and, although not specifically designed as a boater's guide, can easily serve as one. One potential drawback, though. The book is such a mine of interesting information that you can become an expert on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal without ever leaving your armchair, having simply spent a most enjoyable couple of hours with your feet up!

For £4.99 this must be the season's bargain. Well done, Bob!

**Ken Wright**

*(Terrific review - Ed)*

*Dipping into 'Shorts For All Occasions' by Bernard Wrigley once again.*

My Auntie Kath would always maintain  
As long as she was alive  
You never really learn how to swear  
Until you learn how to drive.

"Joan how tall do penguins grow"  
She replied "Between two feet and one"  
"Oh heck – you know what that means?  
I think I've run over a nun"

"Your brain is a wonderful Organ"  
The boss said to me with a smirk  
"It starts first thing in the morning  
And doesn't stop 'til you get to work"

Christmas is like a day in the office  
I don't care what anyone says  
You do all the work, and then  
A fat bloke in a suit gets all the praise

# Greenfield 'Marina'



Alwyn Ogborn

An excellent shot from Alwyn shows work is well underway on reinstating the towpath adjacent to the Frenches development. A lift bridge has been installed and represents successful campaigning to maintain the towpath

route when a 'scenic diversion' around the mooring area was first proposed. Controversy still haunts the project as the specification of various building elements appears to be 'evolving' as the scheme proceeds. Watch for developments!

"Could you give me a tenner 'til pay-day"  
Said the tramp – I was slightly annoyed  
I asked him "When's pay-day?" He said "I dunno –  
You're the one who's employed

It's great fun, working for yourself,  
And not in the least bit trying  
Trouble is, when I ring in sick,  
I know I'm always lying

A roll of tape and a can of oil  
Keep a woman's life in good shape  
If it doesn't move and should – use the oil  
If it shouldn't move and does – use the tape



# Hollinwood Canal Society

Work on the construction of the new marina development in Droylsden has progressed rapidly in the first part of 2008. By Easter most of the concrete wash walls were in place. It is expected that the marina basin and connecting

canal from the Ashton Canal will be in water by the end of May.

This will re-open the first 175 metres of the Hollinwood Branch from Fairfield Junction. The design of the development allows for future continuation of the



canal route. The development includes 90 houses, 291 apartments, plus restaurants and offices.

The new wash walls have been constructed from reinforced concrete cast in situ. The bed of the basin and

canal channel will be lined with a waterproof membrane and covered with a layer of concrete.

It is possible that boats will be able to start mooring in the basin before the surrounding development is completed.







Volunteers from the Hollinwood Canal Society and Waterway Recovery Group North West had a further two-day working party in February. They carried out a variety of work including a continuation of the programme to remove trees that are growing from the towpath wash wall and pushing up the edging stones.

**Martin Clark**



All Photos: Martin Clark

# Photographic Competition

**\* CASH PRIZES \***

*Alwyn Ogborn, our competition organiser, writes:*

Welcome to the 2008 Huddersfield Canal Society Photographic Competition. Open to everyone, with free entry for HCS members, the top prize is £50 with other cash prizes for the various categories.

From the entries, we will select 12, suitably seasonal, prints of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal for publication as a 2010 calendar.

Please encourage all junior members of your family and friends to take an interest in our waterways and submit entries; and remember, the Narrow can look great whatever the time of year!

***Don't forget the closing date!***

## **THE JUDGE**

Mr Vincent Brown  
*Chief Photographer,  
Oldham Chronicle*

## **THE CASH PRIZES**

Overall Winner - £50  
Category Winners - £30  
Category Runners-up - £15

## **THE CLOSING DATE**

***Friday 24th October 2008***

## **THE RULES**

The competition is open to everyone - members and non-members alike. There is no entry fee for members, but a flat fee of £5 is payable for non-members, irrespective of the number of prints entered. (*Cheques made payable to 'Huddersfield Canal Society'*) Enter prints only, B&W or colour, sized between 6x4" to 8x6" maximum.

*Entrants agree their pictures may be used by the Society for promotional purposes.*

## **THE CATEGORIES**

A - Huddersfield Narrow - Senior  
B - Huddersfield Narrow - Junior  
C - Other UK Waterways - Senior  
D - Other UK Waterways - Junior  
(*Junior is 16 or under*)

## **SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO:**

(*max. 5 prints per category*)

Photographic Competition  
Huddersfield Canal Society  
Transshipment Warehouse  
Wool Road, Dobcross,  
Oldham, OL3 5QR

*Please put your name and address on the back of each photo AND the category for which it is being entered.  
Enclose a stamped SAE if you wish the return of your entry.*

# The Stamford Group



The Stamford Group are delighted to be associated with the Huddersfield Canal Society and wish them continued success.



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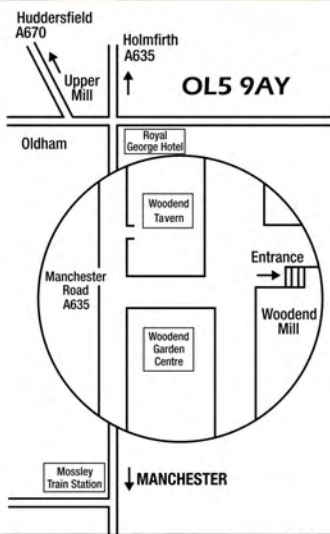
Manufacturers of Pronto-pex Barrier  
Pipe and Lignum extruded profile.



# 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

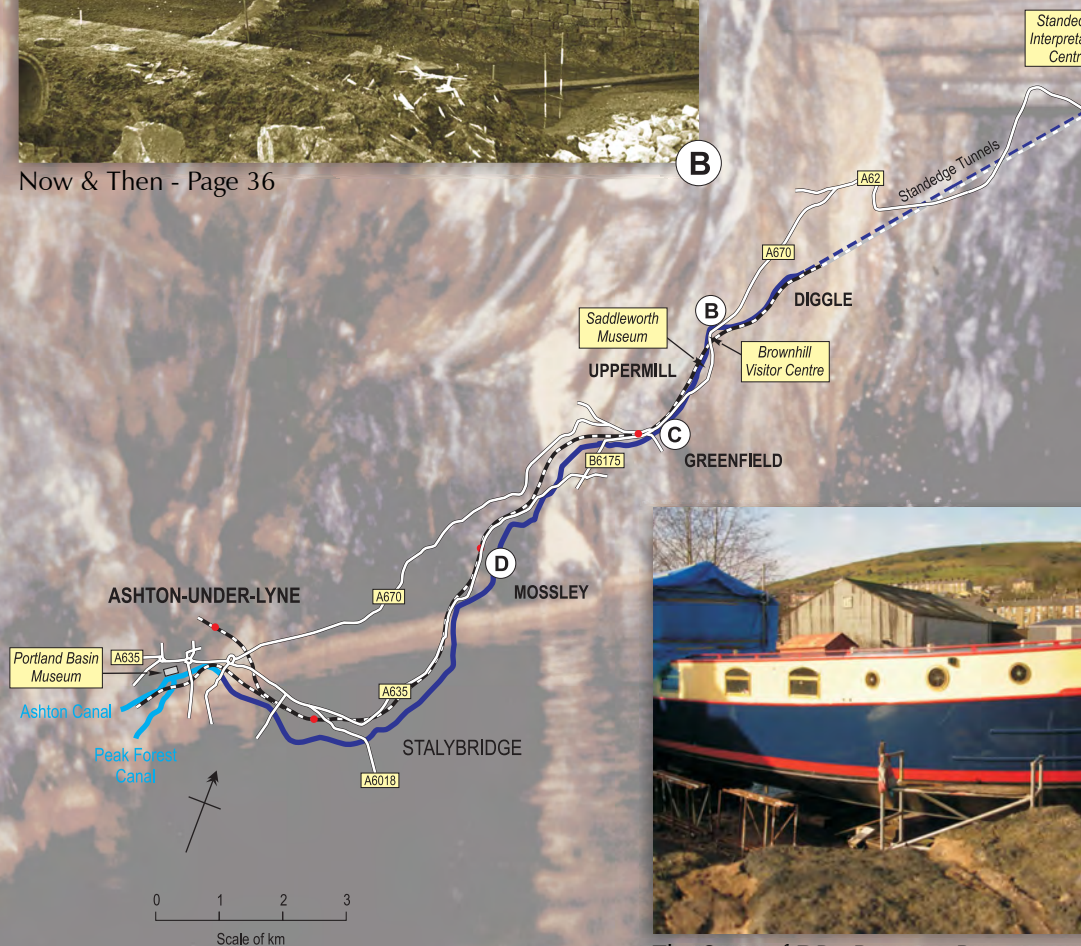
Situated in Mossley between Manchester Road (A635) and the Huddersfield Canal at Lock 14 West. There are moorings just past the mill near the Roaches Lock Pub. Woodend Mill is well worth a visit whether you like art or interested in the heritage and history of the industrial past. Most studio's open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



# The Huddersfield Narrow & Broad Canals



Now & Then - Page 36



The Story of DB1 Part 10 - Page 30





The Mystery of CBW continues - Page 40

A



D



Knoll Mill / Frenches Wharf Development - Page 19

C

- RYA Inland Waters Helmsman Certificate (1 or 2 days)
- RYA International Certificate of Competence & CEVNI
- RYA Diesel Engine Course
- MCA New Boatmaster Licence
- NCBA Community Boat Management Certificate

To discuss your requirements, contact Malcolm or Alison on:

0845 6446332 (local rate)

E-mail: [info@toplocktraining.co.uk](mailto:info@toplocktraining.co.uk)

Website: [www.toplocktraining.co.uk](http://www.toplocktraining.co.uk)

*Professional Inland Waters Training in the North West*



The Impossible Dream tells the story of the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, from work by enthusiasts in the early 1970's, through to the official re-opening by HRH the Prince of Wales, in September 2001, VHS and DVD price £10.99 plus £1.95 p+p.

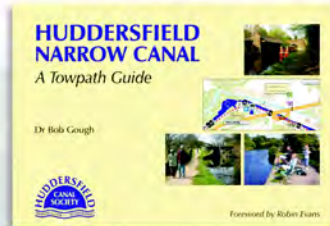


The original 1992 video commissioned by the Canal Society. A few copies are still available from the Society offices, price £10.99 plus £1.95

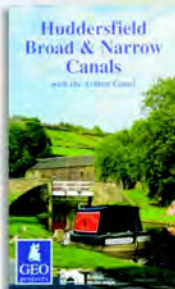


Chris Coburn's North West stage of his London to Inverness marathon.

Video - £14.99  
DVD - £16.99  
plus £1.95 p+p



Full colour, A5 sized, pictorial guide to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. 90 pages, over 500 colour photographs and 36 detailed maps. £4.99 plus £1.50 p+p



GEO Projects canal users map of the Huddersfield Narrow & Broad Canals.

£4.00  
plus £1.00 p+p



GEO Projects canal users map of the Huddersfield and Rochdale Canals.

£4.75  
plus £1.00 p+p

*All items available from HCS, Transshipment Warehouse, Wool Road, Dobcross, Oldham, OL3 5QR. Please make cheques payable to 'Loxvend Ltd'*



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# The Story of DB1 (or Itchy Feet) Part 10

With all the interior layout decided on, (*see plan overleaf*) great progress is being made on many fronts. The major leap forward is the construction of the wheelhouse.

As most people who navigate the inland waterways will know, low bridges and other air draft obstructions are not uncommon. Vessels with a wheelhouse, or even a pram type canopy, have to have a means of lowering it to pass beneath these.

Now, I have been advised that a hydraulic controlled lower and raise mechanism is not possible. Being somewhat pig-headed and innovative, I think it is and set about designing one.

The idea is to have four hydraulic rams at suitable spacing, powered from an electric pump via a pressure sensing 4-way divider unit, to drive the structure down and up again on the command of a push button. The bulk of the framework will have space to slide down the outside of the fixed steel section.

The problem comes with the windscreen, rear screen (there is a rope locker at the back) and the sections either side where the cabin is. The solution is to have the two screens hinged at the top and swung out as the structure descends. The two side pieces are to be constructed to hinge in the centre, top and bottom. These should fold out 'concertina' wise to lie flat at right angles when the wheelhouse is dropped. That is the theory. As someone once said, *"I can accept failure, but I*



1

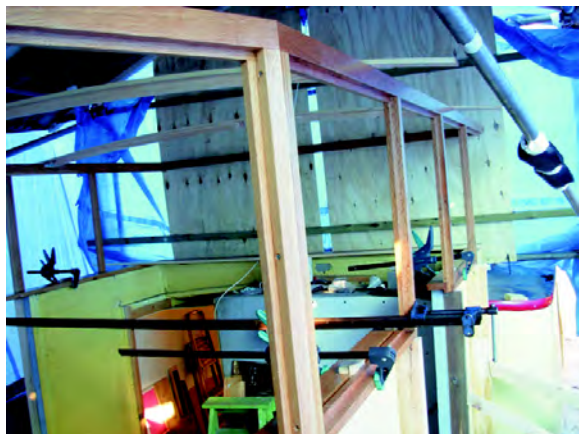


2



3





4



5



6

*can't accept not trying*" I will have enough egg on my face to feed the five thousand if it doesn't work. Watch this space.

The side frames have been made and had a couple of coats of varnish for protection.

*(photos 1 & 2)* What to make the roof from and what shape caused a lot of deliberation.

Finally it was decided to make it the same profile as the main cabin roof with white plastic sheeting on the outside and t&g v groove boarding on the inside. Using a redundant roof rib as a template, 7 pieces of 1" timber were cut to the same curve.

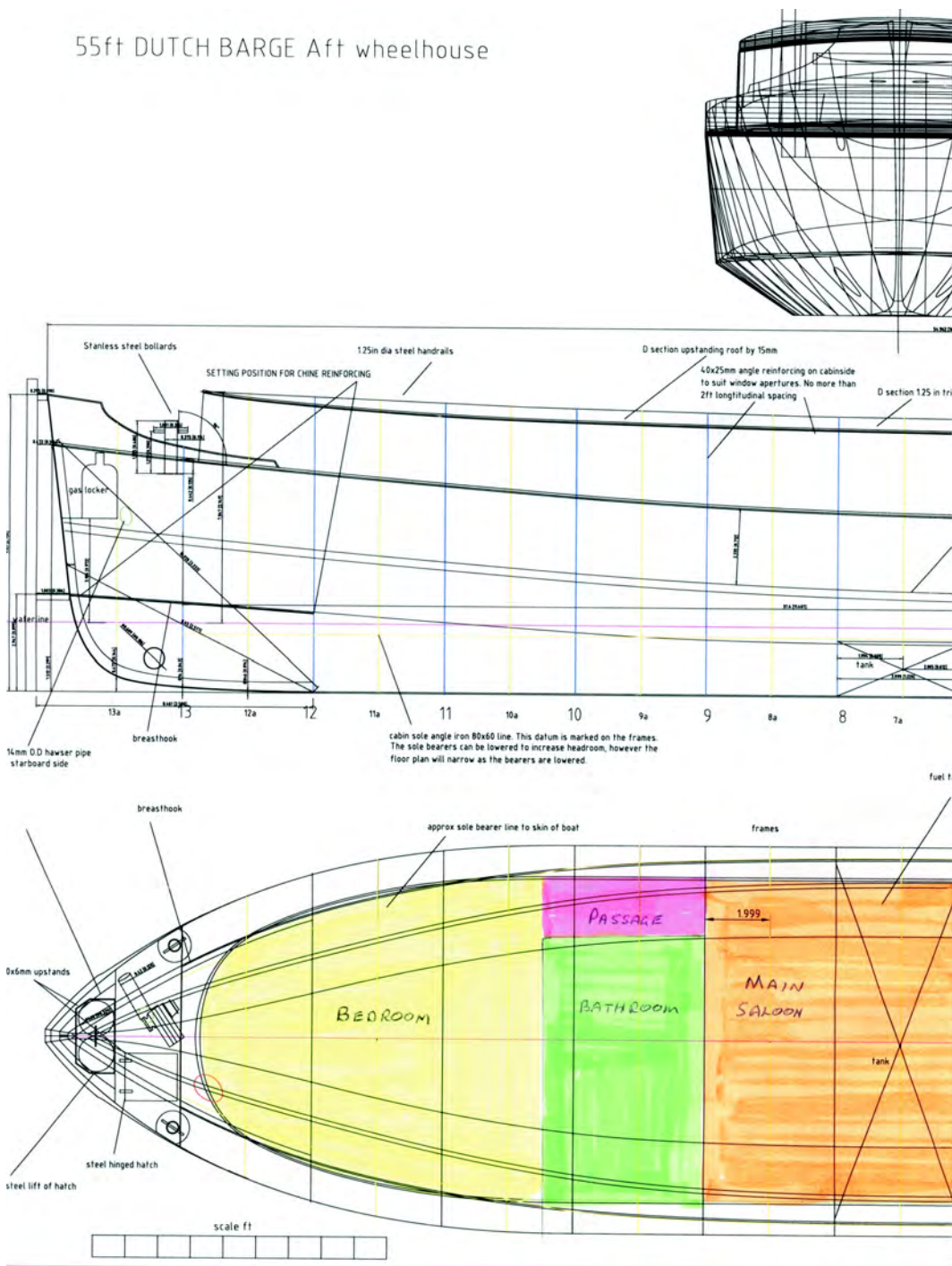
On the top of these, strips of thinner timber were glued and screwed across the top to form a 'T' section. *(photo 3)* These will be fitted inside the top rails and a further strip of timber fixed underneath to form an 'I' section. In effect a curved wooden girder.

The hydraulic rams have not been received at the time of writing, so the side frames have been propped in position and a couple of roof struts plus the front and rear top rails fitted. This is to enable the position of six sliders which are to be installed in the bottom rails to run down and up aluminium guide rails bolted to the steel sides. *(photos 4 & 5)*

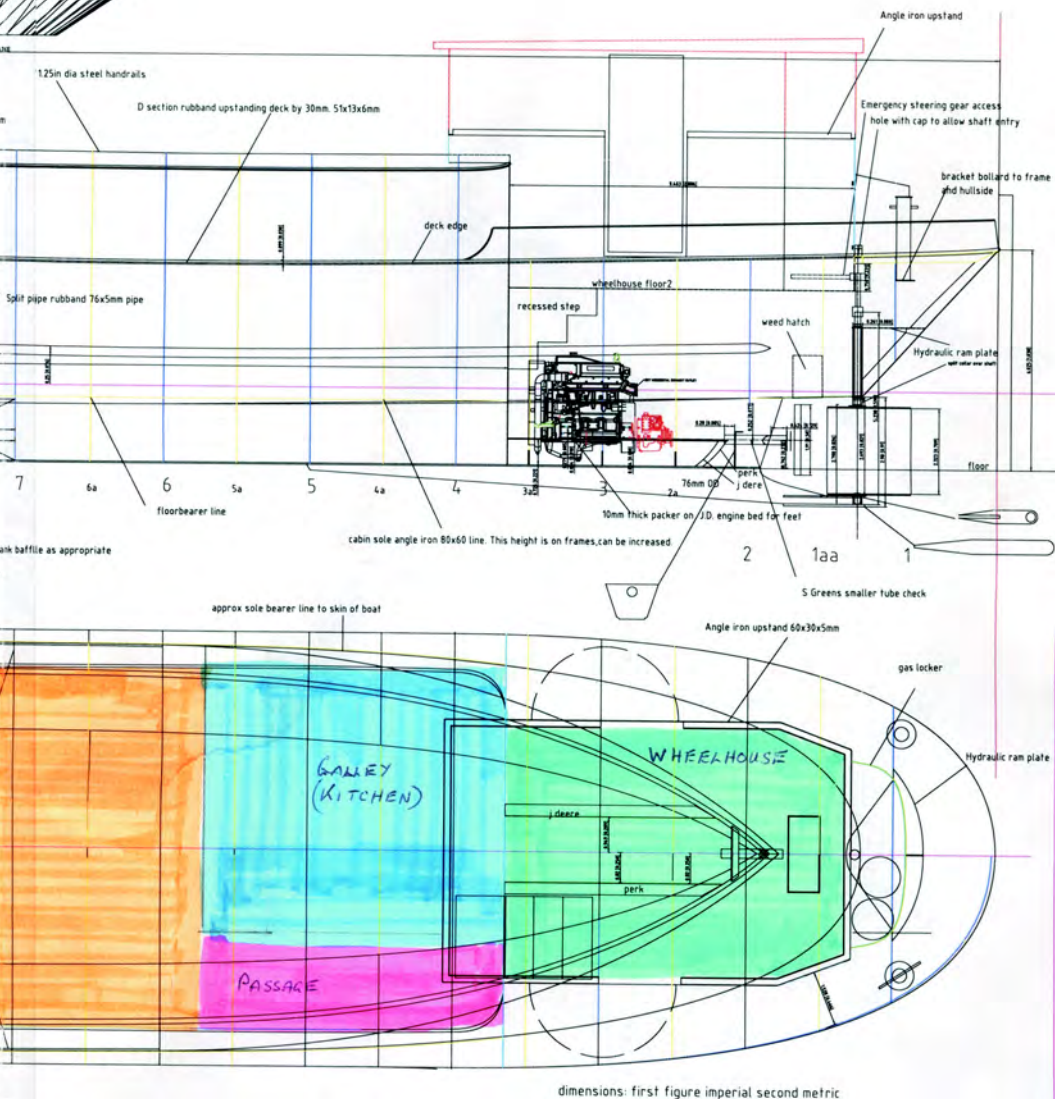
Of the inside fitting out, picture 6 shows the front bulkhead in the bedroom. This is to have a family heirloom bureau, that I remember from my childhood, stood in front with fitted shelves either side. Above this will be fitted cupboards.

*continued on page 34*

55ft DUTCH BARGE Aft wheelhouse







*continued from page 31*

Along the passage next to the bathroom and just into the bedroom, picture 7, will be hanging space wardrobes. These will occupy the space under the gunwale and stick out enough to provide useful shelf space and be in steps to follow the curve of the hull. Matching doors are already fitted on the bedroom and bathroom.

On the outside, Joan has been able to make faltering progress with the painting. Every reasonable day she was out there rubbing down and applying coats of paint as required. Most of the hull is now covered to finished gloss colour, but at least one more coat will be required in several places. Pictures 8 & 9 show both sides of the hull as seen from Waggon Road. Five mushroom vents have been fitted, as have the port & starboard navigation lights and the horn. I have not yet found a source for a suitable headlight.

This is highly likely to be the penultimate instalment of The Story of DB1. By the next issue of Pennine Link, we should either be very near the launch or actually floating. (Absence of leaks (*sic*) permitting - *dashed troublesome those vegetables*).

**Alwyn Ogborn**



7



8



9

# Society Events for 2008 - Spring/Summer

Dates for your diary:

## **Sunday 4th May**

Huddersfield Canal Society Open Day

*Transshipment Warehouse, Wool Road will be open to members and the general public. Come and have a look around our premises now that we have been here for just over a year and meet with Bob and Claire. The 'Marsden Shuttle' will also be moored up outside the building for anyone wishing to look on board.*

Free car parking.

**Time:** 11.00am - 4.00pm

*Also on the 4th May, from about 10.30am, the Horseboating Society will be working up the Diggle Flight as part of a Standedge Tunnel Festival on Diggle Field (above the top Lock 32W).*

*The Horseboating Society hope to leg through Standedge Tunnel, starting at about 2.30pm.*

*Why not visit both events for a grand day out by the Canal.*

## **Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th May**

Community Rail Weekend

*As part of a National series of events, the South Pennine Community Rail Partnership have teamed up with the Canal Society for two walks utilising the Canal towpath and train services. The walks, of about 8km, will be led by Bob Gough and start at Stalybridge Station, following the Canal to Greenfield Station for the return rail trip. Numbers are strictly limited to 12 each day, so please book your place in advance.*

**Time:** Saturday - Soon after arrival of 11.02 from Marsden (Manchester train arrives 10.42)

Sunday - Soon after arrival of 10.33 from Manchester (Marsden train arrives 9.37)

## **Sunday 22nd June**

Walk - Diggle portal to Marsden (8km)

*Andrea Fisher, East Side Boat Co-Ordinator, will be holding a walk from Diggle Portal to Marsden. Please ensure you wear suitable clothing and footwear and bring your own refreshments for this medium exertion walk. Limited to 15 people; please book your place by calling the Society. Return transport from Marsden to Diggle will be provided.*

**Venue:** Diggle portal car park (free)

**Time:** 10.30am

## **Sunday 20th July**

Boat Trip - Still Waters

*Boat trip on-board Tameside Canal Boat Trust's Still Waters along the Peak Forest Canal. There will be no refreshments on board, so don't forget your packed lunch! Please note: Due to the unpredictable conditions on the canal, the planned 3hr trip may have to be extended.*

**Cost:** £2.50 per person

**Venue:** Portland Basin Museum

**Time:** 10.00am - 1.00pm

*Numbers are strictly limited, so early booking is advisable.*

## **Sunday 24th August**

Treasure Hunt, Uppermill

*The Canal Society's Administrator, Bob Gough, will be devising another devious set of clues, this time for Uppermill village and the canal from High Street to Wool Road. Full details in the Summer Edition!*

For further information and booking of these events (where required), please call the Society on 01457 871800



Now  
&  
Then



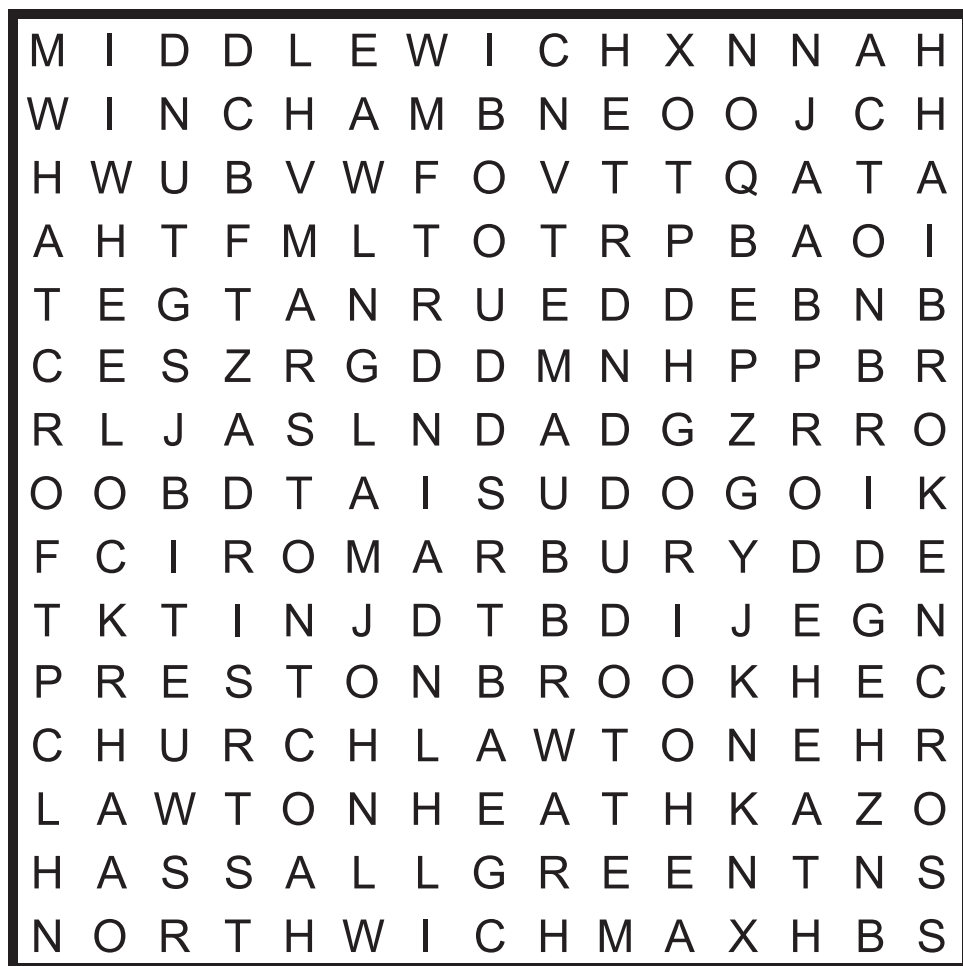
*The Transhipment Warehouse, Wool Road, now converted to the Canal Society's offices*





*The Warehouse in 1967 when Wool Road was being widened and the canal culverted*

## Wordsearchish 4



The theme of the words in the grid above, reading horizontally, vertically or diagonally, is 'towns/districts alongside the Northern Trent and Mersey Canal'. There are 20 answers to be found.

## Jidoku 8

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

The grid represents nine adjoining 'canals' and the letters are features on those canals: **L**ock, **J**unction, **T**ap, **R**ubbish point, **B**ridge, **M**arina, **W**aterways office, **S**anitary station and **C**rossover 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 50*



# The Mystery of CBW continues

Unfortunately, there has been no response to my appeal for information about the Narrow's curious marked stones, made in the Winter Issue.

I am not disheartened and determined to solve the mystery! My researches have revealed two tantalising references in the Canal Company Minutes:

## ***22nd September 1803***

*Resolved that Mr Rooth be and he is hereby directed to set down Stones or other durable Marks along the whole length of the Canal in order to clearly ascertain and shew what Land belongs to the Company ...*

## ***11th May 1837***

*Resolved that the Canal be measured and stones set up according to the directions of*

*the Act of Parliament.*

I have yet to consult the original 1794 Act, but are these the remnants of Rooth's marker stones or those prescribed in the Act? It is curious that 34 years elapse between the Resolutions, though the Company was, by 1837, well aware of the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway Company's interest in the Canal Company and so would be keen to establish the extent of their ownership.

Dave Finnis, who researched the stones in the early 1980s, concluding they were Canal Wall boundary stones with a later change of Boundary, directed me to further examples he had seen at Aspley Basin and Turnbridge, Huddersfield.



*Stone wall, Alwyn Ogborn's yard, Mossley Bottoms  
Unusual character style*



*Bywash wall, Lock 1E, Huddersfield*



*Towpath wall between Lock 15W & Manchester Road, Mossley*



*Towpath wall near Lock 15W, Mossley*

Subsequent developments mean they are now missing, but as the locations are on the Broad Canal, perhaps the stones are not unique to the Narrow after all.

Are any of them where they were meant to be or have they been re-used out of situ? Clearly cut by different masons, are they contemporaneous or represent

different phases of delineation? As ever, more questions than answers.

In the meantime, here are the ten examples I know about. I hope there are more to be found and would be delighted if members discover more and let me know their locations.

**Bob Gough**



Judy Jones

*Factory wall, near Lock 2E, Huddersfield  
A crisp impression of the cast letter 'B'*



*Towpath wall, Lock 9E, Milnsbridge  
Heavily weathered, see it while you still can!*



*Towpath wall, near Lock 1E, Huddersfield  
Poor quality stone weathering quickly*



*Towpath wall, Lock 7E, Paddock*



*Towpath wall between Lock 15W & Manchester  
Road, Mossley*



*Towpath wall near Grove Road, Millbrook  
An important stone lacking the 'B' insert*

Photos: Bob Gough & Judy Jones

# Standedge Transit ....

Standedge Canal Tunnel  
Site Visit Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2007

These notes are compiled by Peter Remnant of Specialist Plant Associates, as an informal 'spot' assessment of the conditions that will affect users of the canal tunnel if diesel powered boats are allowed through under their own power.

## ***1) Conditions encountered, and features observed***

Since accurate, portable instruments are now readily available, it seemed sensible to take a hot wire anemometer, and a 4-channel TROLEX gas monitor. Both were in calibration.

The TROLEX instrument measured Oxygen (O), Carbon Monoxide (CO), Nitrous Oxide (NO), and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). This covers the main exhaust constituents, and checks for a safe level of Oxygen. The passage through from Marsden to the Diggle Portal was with one of the battery powered tugs and a passenger module. Throughout the passage there was a noticeable draught of air from the Diggle end - which averaged 0.5m/sec – but was factored up or down depending on the cross section and the speed of the boat itself. Obviously the movement over the boat was higher due to the restriction of the boat itself. The piston effect of the passing trains in the adjacent rail tunnels was clearly apparent, but since it results in some “pushing then pulling” of the air it is difficult to quantify.

Stopping at two of the cross adits to look at conditions in the now disused adjacent single track railway tunnels allowed air flow measurements. In one

of these the air velocity averaged 0.5m/sec, Diggle to Marsden.

At Adit 25 the flow in the adit was checked, and found to be very low but measurable as 0.3 m/sec at the side of the adit and about 0.1m/sec if averaged across the whole section. Such slight cross movement is not surprising as the external influences on each tunnel are almost identical. The quite distinct old diesel exhaust smell in the canal tunnel shows that the railway tunnel fumes are forced into the canal tunnel as part of the piston effect.

Throughout the canal tunnel there are frequent 'bridges' where the cross adit links into the live railway tunnel. These are in many cases partially or wholly blanked off to prevent access.

The gas monitor was left switched on all through the tunnel but was boringly unresponsive, with no discernable readings of CO, NO, or NO<sub>2</sub>. These instruments do not read less than 1ppm.

## ***2) Current practice, and likely targets to meet***

The potential pollution problem in the canal is not unique, and scores of tunnels, road and rail, are routinely filled with diesel fumes and still remain in use without evident ill effects. However there is a new interest, on a Europe wide front, in reducing the NO and NO<sub>2</sub> levels, evidently due to the perceived effect on some people who might suffer respiratory problems if exposed to NO in particular. The issue is the subject of at least one Health & Safety Executive (HSE) sponsored working group and particularly affects the construction



industry where workers will spend an entire working shift in tunnels with diesel engined plant. This also applies to railway possession work in tunnels for the same reasons. The length of exposure is a factor.

Discussions centre around permissible levels, and at present industry feel that 5 p.p.m for NO is as low 'as reasonably practicable' whereas the HSE argue for 3 p.p.m. The rest of Europe seems content with 5 p.p.m. NO as a new target but have not begun to apply it legally.

NO<sub>2</sub> will probably be reduced to 3 p.p.m. as the ill effects are more serious.

### **3) Suggested Trials**

Since the instrumentation required to measure atmospheric conditions in the canal tunnel is readily available from a local company – TROLEX of Stockport – it seems sensible to suggest that this type be employed by B.W. staff. It can be rented or purchased, and the maintenance carried out by TROLEX themselves.

No trials seem to have been carried out with diesel boats in the tunnel. Would it be feasible to bring a group of boats through from the windward portal, so that the air flow relative to the boats is at a minimum? The lead boat would be down wind so exposed to the highest level of exhaust pollution. If there are concerns about exceeding safe levels of NO and NO<sub>2</sub>, then the trial could be carried out with only a few boats initially say 4. From experience working with powerful diesel engines underground it seems likely that the modest KW rating of boats will make little impression on NO and NO<sub>2</sub> levels. There is probably more of a problem with smokey engines

producing diesel soot (particulates) which people find objectionable. Specialist Plant will gladly assist by loaning gas monitors for short tests and even attending if necessary. Providing the monitors are not damaged (they don't like being submerged!) this can be a simple and cheap trial to get a feel for the extent of likely pollution.

A pragmatic approach will quickly produce a correlation between the combined power of boats passing through and the level of pollution relative to air flow.

### **4) Managing the Ventilation**

There are a number of ventilation shafts along the tunnel, inter-connected with all four tunnels.

These will all act as thermal siphons and are very effective in still weather where no pressure difference exists between the portals. However the sheer variety and complexity of inter connections makes it difficult to predict air flows. Only a detailed study of air flow under varied conditions will give an indication of how this will affect the canal tunnel. Does Network Rail have any data on tunnel ventilation- as it must be a concern for them when they are working in the rail tunnel? Jet fans and regular axial flow fans have been considered in the past. The axial flow fans could be used in ventilation shafts with undoubted effect, but the cost of providing power to these remote locations, and then ongoing maintenance, makes this a non-starter. Jet fans cannot be easily located in the canal tunnel, as both ends have restricted headroom for some distance. Finding room to locate a large fan in the roof would not be easy, and the ongoing maintenance could be difficult.

A Jet fan could be located in the roof of one of the disused railway tunnels, near a portal, and presumably not too far from an electricity supply, to stimulate flow through all tunnels. However the effect is difficult to predict, and trials would need to be carried out with a rented fan on a trailer fed by a generator at the portal.

## 5) Other Points

- Could boats be vetted for suitability for Standedge tunnel transits – for a fee?
- Fixed gas monitors could be located at the cross adits. There seem to be surplus intercom cables. These can alarm locally and in a control room.

- If there is power available at the cross adits, small jet fans could stimulate flow into the canal tunnel. However it seems doubtful whether the existing cabling would take, say, a 5KW load.

- Have pollution tests been carried out in other canal tunnels such as Blisworth?

Specialist Plant feel that the pollution risk in Standedge Tunnel appears to be low, and it would certainly be worth doing live trials to obtain valid data. After this a decision could be made on the use of diesel craft in the tunnel.

**Peter Remnant**  
Specialist Plant Associates

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*And lo and behold ....!*



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# PRESS RELEASE

**3 MARCH 2008**

## DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR TRIPS THROUGH STANDEGE TUNNEL

Boatowners wanting to travel through the Standedge Tunnel on their way up or down the Huddersfield Narrow Canal may soon be able to take advantage of a more efficient service which almost halves the current travelling time.

Testing this year has shown that it is feasible for diesel engines to be operated within the canal tunnel for routine operations and this has enabled British Waterways (BW) to look at rethinking how boats can be taken through the Tunnel.

Under possible new proposals for the 2009 season, British Waterways will pilot individual boats through the tunnel which will mean a faster and more flexible turnaround for customers. The operation will also include a raft of improvements to the current communications and safety issues within the 3 ¼ mile Tunnel which will release valuable resources for work elsewhere on the network.

Currently convoys of boats are pulled through the Tunnel by means of an electric tug twice a week on Wednesdays and Fridays, going outwards from Marsden to Diggle in the morning and returning at lunchtime. Boatowners have to book passage, travel on the tug and are not allowed to take pets on board. Additional staff are employed to fend the boats from the

narrow walls of the canal to avoid damage. The trip takes up to 3 hours depending on how big the convoy is.

If approved, the new proposals will involve extensive improvements to the Tunnel during next winter's stoppage season, including:-

- \* A faster passage through the tunnel with boat crews remaining on their own vessels
- \* Pets being allowed to remain on board
- \* Safety signing including tunnel chainages
- \* A turn-around customer waiting area at Diggle
- \* Further highlighted/fendered/removed hazardous rock projections within the Tunnel
- \* A refurbished short boat and pod
- \* More flexible communications systems within the tunnel
- \* A refurbished short boat and pod
- \* Improved welfare arrangements for British Waterways staff

Laurence Morgan, General Manager, British Waterways Yorkshire said:  
"We carried out a number of trials this year with a diesel tug operation to establish definitive information about potential problems with noxious fumes, test welfare and emergency responses as well as our control of the tunnel operations.

"The tests showed that gas emissions inside the tunnel were not a cause for concern and it may be possible to reduce the time taken to go through the tunnel down to one and a half hours.

"Moving on from this we are now considering a piloted operation of customers' own boats by British Waterways trained qualified staff.

This will be far better than the very complex operation we have at present which demands a shadow vehicle travelling in the neighbouring unused railway tunnel and also because of our concerns about the future reliability of the electric tugs.

"For 2008 we will be keeping the operation as is but a project team will be running some further low level trials to ensure that the business case is robust. We will also be talking with our partners Network Rail and the Emergency Services regarding the safety issues as the proposals have implications for their operations. We are however reasonably confident they will be positive about our proposals as it will offer substantial improvements to communication channels.

"We will be keeping the guided visitor trips on the glass roofed boat using electric tugs as is at the moment but will be keeping the operation under constant review.

"Although it is early days yet, we are very enthusiastic about the proposed changes as we feel this will offer our customers a vastly improved level of service and enable them to enjoy the trip through the highest, longest and deepest tunnel in the country far more than is possible at present."

The new season at Standedge will start from Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> March, with the first through trips scheduled for Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> and Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> March.

Anyone wanting to book passage should contact the Business Support Team on 0113 281 6860 or email [enquiries.yorkshire@britishwaterways.co.uk](mailto:enquiries.yorkshire@britishwaterways.co.uk)



# Mikron Theatre Company

## Touring in 2008

### ***‘Fair Trade’***

*Reaping the Dividends, the story  
of the co-operative movement*

Reap the dividends of Mikron Theatre Company's insight into the Co-operative Movement from its roots in the early part of the 19th century when the Industrial Revolution resulted in exploitation and misery for many working people.

Did it all begin at Toad lane in Rochdale in 1844?

We shall wander down the aisles of history to bring you the true story, told, of course, with a mixture of music, humour and sadness.

#### **Fact:**

There are more than 750 million co-operative members in over 100 countries.

#### **Fact:**

Sean Connery was a Co-op milkman before he became an actor.

#### **Fact:**

The Co-op carries out over 160,000 funerals a year.

#### **Fact:**

There is a Co-op for employees in the Emperor's Palace in Japan and many, many more...

*This production is in partnership with the  
Co-operative Membership.*

## ***Spring Tour 2008 - Venues***

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> April 7.30pm FIRST NIGHT!**

**Touchstones Education Studio**

The Esplanade, Rochdale, OL16 1AQ.

Booking essential as only limited tickets are available Tel: 01484 843 701

**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> April 8pm**

**Sir John Moore School**

Top Street, Appleby Magna, Swadlincote, DE12

7AH Tickets £9 (£7 concessions or £4

children). Tickets available on door or

Tel: 01530 270534

Show Sponsor: Gerald Box

**Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 7.30pm**

**Victoria Hotel**

Dovecote Lane, Beeston, Nottingham,

NG9 1AA Tickets £7 Tel: 0115 925 4049.

Food served until 7.30pm. Bookings taken for parties of 6 or more.

This performance is supported by  
Hands-On Pub Co and Tynemill Ltd

**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 8pm**

**Nosh**

95 Northgate, Almondbury, nr Huddersfield,

HD5 8UU Tickets £18 to include two-course meal served from 6pm.

Reservations in advance. £5 cash/cheque deposit required for all bookings.

For further details Tel: 01484 430004

**Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April 8pm**

**The New Inn**

Manchester Road, Marsden, Huddersfield,

HD7 6EZ Bar Snacks and a full pub menu are available 5pm – 11pm. Traditional beers and

Ales, wines and spirits.

[www.newinnmarsden.co.uk](http://www.newinnmarsden.co.uk)

Tel: 07980 533 741

**Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April 7.30pm**

**Georgian Theatre Royal**

Victoria Rd, Richmond, North Yorkshire,

DL10 4DW Tickets from £3.50 - £12

Box Office: 01748 825252

[www.georgiantheatreroyal.co.uk](http://www.georgiantheatreroyal.co.uk)

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2.00 pm**

**New Century House**

Corporation Street, Manchester, M60 4ES

Tickets £9 (£7 concessions) Booking essential as only limited tickets are available.

Tel: 01484 843 701

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April 8.00pm**

**Preston Brook Village Hall**

Sandy Lane, Preston Brook, Runcorn,

WA7 3AW Tickets £5 and £3 (concessions)

Tel: 01928 717 223

Booking in advance is advisable.

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> April 3pm**

**St Thomas & St Andrew's**

Doxey, Stafford, ST16 1EQ

A Collection will be taken after the show.

Tel: 01785 621 453 Show Sponsor: Doxey

Community Association

**Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April**

**The Railway Inn**

Shawhall Bank, Greenfield, Oldham, OL3 7JZ

Tickets £9 (£7 concessions)

Tel: 01457 872 307

[www.railway-greenfield.co.uk](http://www.railway-greenfield.co.uk)

**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April**

**Horbury Library**

Westfield Road, Horbury (next to the old

Town Hall) Tickets £9 (£7 concessions), £1

discount for Friends of Horbury Library.

For further details Tel: 01924 303060

**Thursday 1st May 7.30pm**

**Syngenta Cellar**

Lawrence Batley Theatre, Queen Street,

Huddersfield, HD1 2SP

Tickets £9 (£7 concessions)

Box Office: 01484 430528

[www.lawrencebatleytheatre.co.uk](http://www.lawrencebatleytheatre.co.uk)

**Friday 2nd<sup>nd</sup> May 7.30pm**

**The Coliseum**

Victoria Place, Whitby, YO21 1BW

Tickets £9 and (£7 concessions).

For further details Tel: 01947 825000

[whitby\\_coliseum21@hotmail.com](mailto:whitby_coliseum21@hotmail.com)

**Saturday 3rd May 8pm**

**CragRats Theatre**

Dunford Road, Holmfirth HD9 2AR

Tickets £10 (£8 concessions)

Advance booking essential. Food is served all day at the café bar until 9.30pm.

For further details Tel: 01484 691323

[www.cragratstheatre.com](http://www.cragratstheatre.com)

***Watch out for our  
37<sup>th</sup> Summer & Waterways Tour!  
24<sup>th</sup> May – 24<sup>th</sup> August 2008***

**Mikron Theatre Company**

Marsden Mechanics, Peel Street, Marsden,

Huddersfield HD7 6BW

Tel/fax: 01484 843701

email: [admin@mikron.org.uk](mailto:admin@mikron.org.uk)

[www.mikron.org.uk](http://www.mikron.org.uk)



Mikron

# Looking Back - Issue 41 - July & August 1981

*Pennine Link - Issue 41 page 9*

NINE

## S P O N S O R E D . . . . . T O W P A T H . . . . . W A L K

SEPTEMBER 6th



As reported in the last 'Pennine Link' the walk is planned for Sunday September 6th and will start between 10 am and 11 am on the canal towpath at Lock Side, Mottram Road, Stalybridge.

There will be marshalling checkpoints at the Tollemache Arms, Wade Lock, Uppermill and Diggle.

It should be possible to join and leave the walk at any of these checkpoints.

We hope that refreshments will be available at some of the checkpoints and they will almost certainly be available at Diggle.

Please join us on the walk and help boost the funds for the Uppermill Restoration Project. If you don't wish to walk you can always marshall and/or sponsor someone who is walking.

For sponsorship forms and any more information contact Hazel Maskell on Mossley 3992 or Dave Weston 061-303-7881.

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## T O W P A T H     G U I D E

August sees the arrival of the Towpath Guide for the Huddersfield Canals, Broad and Narrow.

Published by HCS Ltd., this 80 page guide will surely be a must not only for the members of HCS who I'm sure won't want to be without their copy, but anyone who:

enjoys walking towpaths (and dogs)  
observing scenery and wildlife

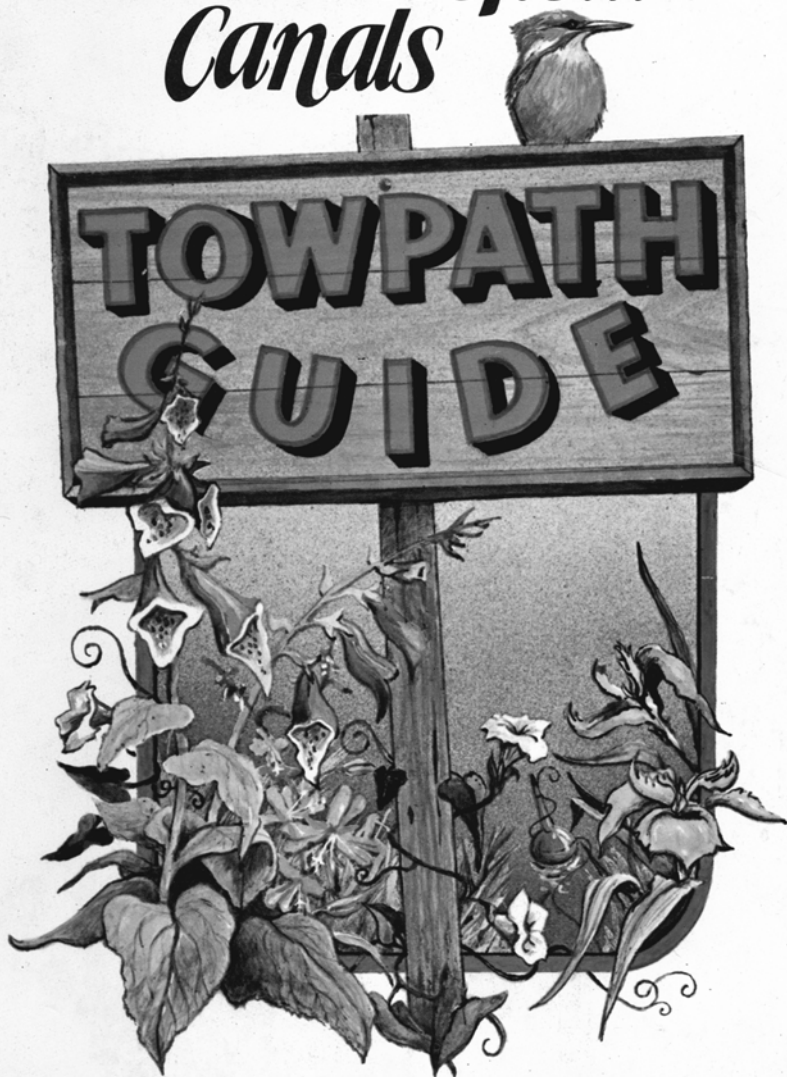
or simply has a passion for guides (sic)

Included in the guide is the history of both canals, the wildlife, fish and bird life plus lots of beautiful coloured and black and white illustrations. There are photos old and new, engineering features not to be missed, a good-pub-guide, boat lane maps as well as the 3" strip maps of the towpaths. Forward written by Anthony Burton, author and TV personality.

The pre-publication price is £2.50p plus 40p p&p available from the Sales Officer, Mrs. Jean Buckley, 37, Edward Street, Oldham. Tel:061-624-4881.

ORDER YOUR COPY NOW WITHOUT DELAY.

# *The Huddersfield Canals*



*Cover of the 1981 Towpath Guide. Definitely a collectors item these days, though copies do turn up*

*in seconhand bookshops now and again. 40p postage & packing, those were the days!*

# 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 experiences and here are some recent observations:

*"Thank you for all your hard work... We did not like having to wait for BW to open lock then rush up in convoy - then covered (very dirty rubber mats - please ask BW to wash!) ... We feel there is a big danger all your wonderful hard work will be wasted if it is not made much more user friendly.*

*The HNC is a truly beautiful canal - well worth the challenge and effort.*

*Great disparity between water shortage and continuous grounding on Eastern side compared with West which is overflowing. BW personnel very good on approach to and through Tunnel.*



*A prominent sign on, say, Wakefield Road bridge emphasising the need to measure your boat and make sure you're within the size restrictions would prevent the frustration of being stuck in a lock, or worse, being turned back at the Tunnel after making all the effort of getting up the East side. Otherwise a fantastic experience .... BW staff very helpful.*

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

Mr & Mrs Jarvis

SOMERSET

Mr & Mrs Peel

SOMERSET

R Gordon

QUARRIERS QUEST

N Brain

MOONRAKER

## Solution to Wordsearch 4

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

## Solution to Jidoku puzzle 8

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



# The Back Page

## HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY welcomes the following new member

2764 Miss Susie Melville, [REDACTED]

### MEMBERSHIP RATES

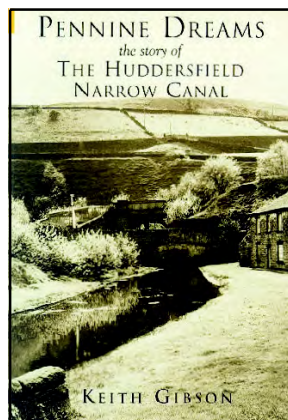
Individual	£9.00
Family	£11.00
Life	£90.00
Associate	£15.00
Corporate	£150.00

### COPY DATE

Articles, letters and comments for **Issue 162** of Pennine Link should reach the Editor at Transhipment Warehouse, Wool Road, Dobcross, OL3 5QR by **23rd May 2008**

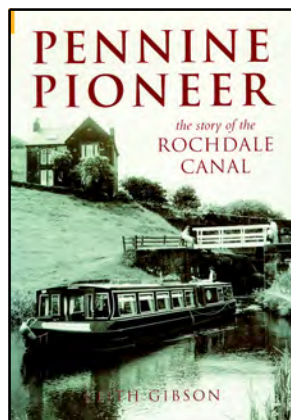
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### PENNINE DREAMS the story of THE HUDDERSFIELD NARROW CANAL

PENNINE PIONEER  
the story of the  
ROCHDALE CANAL  
by Keith Gibson



*"Pennine Dreams" (ISBN 0 7524 2751 Z) and "Pennine Pioneer" (ISBN 0 7524 3266 4) are published by Tempus Publishing Ltd. and are available from the Society office at £16.99 (p&p free to members, £1.50 to non-members) each or from booksellers.*

*Please make cheques payable to 'Loxvend Ltd'*

