

# Pennine Link

Magazine of the Huddersfield Canal Society



# 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*

### Sound, Camera, Action ...

The Society's new look website has been produced using 'JAM', a system developed by Manchester-based Stardotstar\* who, in turn, have received project funding from the Nominet Trust. The Trust, as part of their publicity, engaged Media Trust to produce a short film about the projects they fund, including 'JAM' and specifically the Canal Society's involvement.

The Marsden Shuttle, crew and passengers had pride of place, plus various interviews and a protracted 'grilling' of your Administrator, Bob Gough. Two days of filming will be condensed into two minutes, so any embarrassment will be short-lived!

See: [www.nominettrust.org.uk](http://www.nominettrust.org.uk) and search for "stardotstar" to be entertained!

**Bob Gough**



Lisa (Media Trust) camera and freelance sound engineer, Mike, at Tunnel End capturing the Shuttle and canal for Nominet's promotional short.

Bob Gough

|                               |    |                            |    |
|-------------------------------|----|----------------------------|----|
| Editorial                     | 4  | Slaithwaite Reservoir      | 20 |
| Chairman's Report             | 6  | Bywater on the Narrow      | 22 |
| Canal & River Trust Launch    | 8  | Blocked Navigation         | 27 |
| HNC Audio Trail               | 12 | Events at the Standedge VC | 28 |
| Hardy Fertiliser Company Ltd  | 16 | Dates for your Diary       | 29 |
| Jidoku 24                     | 18 | Planned Stoppages 2012/13  | 30 |
| 2012 Photographic Competition | 19 | A Service Appreciated      | 31 |

Cover: Debbie Allmont is prepared for some Pennine weather as she steers the butty boat Karnataka through the new channel above Lock 3E. Photo: Alan Stopher



## Editorial

Why are we here? This of course is a question which has exercised philosophers down the ages. In posing it here, however,

you will be relieved to know that I am not about to make a contribution to the debate on the meaning of life. Rather the impetus lies much closer to home. It arises from my reaction to two contrasting events which I attended during the same week of the Summer and which have prompted me to ponder the role of our Society.

In my editorial piece for our Summer edition I said that I had been invited to speak at the AGM of the Shrewsbury and Newport Canals Trust. I duly travelled down to the Trust's headquarters at the Wappenshall Basin on the edge of Telford on a very wet Saturday in June to address an audience of about a hundred. My presentation seemed to be well received and my wife and I enjoyed the day despite the weather.

Unlike ourselves, the S and N Trust does not have a working canal to enjoy. Rather it is in the position that we were in the early years of our Society. Their aim is to "protect, conserve and improve the route" of the canals with the "ultimate goal of restoring a continuous navigable waterway.....". To achieve this they are doing all the things that HCS did – lobbying central and local government, seeking co-operation from local businesses and land owners, securing the route and developing partnerships.

Having met and spoken to many of the members during my visit, I came away with a sense that the Trust possesses high levels of energy and enthusiasm amongst its membership. They realise the difficulty of the task, particularly in the current economic climate, but they are pressing on undaunted, united by a common goal. Moreover, they take inspiration from our achievement of the "Impossible Restoration" and comment was passed that if HCS can overcome the problems it faced, then so can they.

A few days later, this time a wet Thursday, I attended our own AGM in Slaithwaite. What a contrast, just thirteen people were present including seven members of Council. At the meeting, the question was asked whether if we were to have an external speaker, would more people come. We thought that maybe they would, but on the other hand, could we guarantee a decent sized audience if we were to invite a guest speaker?

That in itself is not a question to be answered here, but underlying it is the difference between our counterparts in Shropshire and ourselves – or perhaps even the difference between ourselves then and ourselves now.

So returning to my initial question why are we here? In addition to those members who are on Council there are of course two active groups of members.

There is our boat crew. Our group of about 15 committed and enthusiastic members who dedicate the season's weekends to crewing the Marsden Shuttle, carrying visitors from Marsden station to Tunnel End and back.



This is not only a service, it is also a showcase for the Society. A chance for us to demonstrate to visitors and to the CRT that we are making an active and positive contribution to the operation of the Canal as a visitor attraction.

In saying this, I am pleased to be able to publish a recent letter which we received praising our boat crew and thanking them for the help given to a visiting group. I also cannot let the occasion pass without expressing thanks to Andrea Fisher for her work as Crew Co-ordinator as she approaches the end of her last season in the role. Thanks, Andrea, and good wishes for the future.

There are also our maintenance volunteers, of which there are about ten in number. Organised by Trevor, they go out in all weathers to help maintain the canal. The work of this group is central to the fulfilment of one of our core aims which is to promote the proper use and maintenance in good order of the Huddersfield Narrow and Broad Canals.

These dedicated and active groups however comprise a small proportion of our membership. A larger, but still modest, group are the members who have signed up to receive Pennine Link Extra, currently about 12% of our total membership.

On reflection, perhaps what I am describing amounts, in fact, to a natural state of affairs. In the early stages of a project, when there are obstacles to be overcome, battles to fight and friends to be won over, then the energy I found in Shropshire is essential. When success has been secured and the desired end result is in place, maybe it is sufficient for a core group of enthusiasts to keep things ticking over.

But, we have just entered a new era in the life of our waterways. An era when the body responsible for our waterways needs to raise money to enable it to do the job with which it has been charged. An era when it will be vital to embed the heritage and economic importance of the waterways in the public psyche, in order to ensure their long term sustainability. I believe therefore that our task on behalf of the Huddersfield Canals is far from over. We are simply moving into a new phase.

For reasons explained in the previous Issue, I believe that the Society, as we enter the new era, is back to the position it was in thirty years ago; it is again the standard bearer for our magnificent waterway. It is for Council to take the lead on this, but our authority in making the case for investment to maintain and enhance our Canals comes through the membership, the more so if it is a demonstrably active and engaged membership.

This, I believe, is the answer to my question – it is why we are here. Perhaps we will not achieve the sort of AGM attendance that I witnessed in Shropshire but through our new look website, our Facebook page and Pennine Link Extra we are striving improve our engagement and we hope, through these means, you will come to feel more informed about, and engaged with, the Society.

Finally, I trust that, despite the disappointing Spring and Summer weather, those of you who took to the waterways enjoyed your boating and will look back on it with happy memories.

**Graham Birch**



## Chairman's Report

British Waterways is no more and the Canal & River Trust (CRT) is up and running as a fully fledged charity with a

massive responsibility for managing and maintaining most of the country's waterway heritage.

'What has changed?' you might ask. The first hundred days of a new government is always cited as a make or break time in convincing sceptics (and supporters) of its worth. Initiatives are rushed into place and quick wins targeted. In my view, short-termism is part of the problem of modern government as well as the nation's economy.

As I write in early September, CRT has been in existence for two months and I hope that we can be more patient with the new waterways organisation as the trustees and managers prioritise what is most important to ensure the longevity of our canal system, and build lasting relationships with those of us who cherish waterways such as the Huddersfield Broad and Narrow Canals. It will be a considerable challenge for the new trust to become a much-loved national treasure of the ilk of the National Trust. It has taken since 1895 for that august body to become a mass-membership organisation and fully integrate volunteers and staff.

That does not mean to say that HCS will not press for wider local engagement and improvements in the navigability of 'our'

canals. We may just have to be patient whilst changes in approach and priorities are introduced and our influence takes effect.

Elsewhere there is a brief report on the regional CRT launch on 12th July in Manchester.

I was pleased to have the opportunity to meet up with CRT Trustee, John Dodwell, as he navigated the HNC eastwards towards Huddersfield with his Birmingham Canals Navigation tug 'Helen' in early August. With its 3 foot draught, some pounds presented a challenge, particularly the troublesome one near Golcar which was partially dredged after the storm-induced closure the month before. John has been a very long standing friend of the waterways for 40 years or so and I'm sure his first-hand experiences on 'our' canals gave him a useful insight now that he has important legal responsibilities to ensure the Trust works towards its Charitable Objectives.

John and I first met as members of the Inland Waterways Advisory Council, which is no more, following the legislation to create CRT. The absence of a truly independent body advising Government Ministers on all matters relating to all inland waterways will mean the need for greater commitment within the Trust to do the right thing for the good of the waterways backed up by greater 'stakeholder' support and vigilance nationally and locally.

So what's been happening on the Huddersfield Canals? To date most of the CRT staff are the same familiar faces who are managing the transition and

having to cope initially with their share of reduced government funding nationally over the first three years. Nevertheless, there are plans for seven more sets of replacement gates in the winter works programme.

Work is progressing on Hill Top reservoir in Slaithwaite so the water level behind the dam has had to be reduced. The end of the deluge coincided with the reduction of feed from Slaithwaite and early August saw low pounds for a few days from Milnsbridge towards Huddersfield. A new standby pump is now in operation at Lock 12E to maintain navigation. I'm sorry to say that some boaters were inconvenienced during this period and for the two weeks in July following the intensive local storm referred to above. I hope that they also have some good memories of the Narrow Canal to take home.

Good work by members of our boat crew means that the Marsden Shuttle is looking the part again. The adverse weather has not helped with passenger numbers and takings are down, and the Visitor Centre has experienced a similar trend. Perhaps the Summer's sporting attractions have also had their impact on visitor numbers.

The weather has hampered Trevor and his maintenance team particularly with lock gate painting operations.

I am grateful to Graham Birch for his efforts in obtaining sufficient funding for the planned Audio Trail to go ahead. This is the one based on the Oldham Theatre Workshop play for last year's Bi-Centenary. Bob and Claire have been working with Stardotstar on our new look website which went live at the end of August. If you haven't been receiving

copies of your e-mailed Pennine Link Extra then please ensure that your email address is notified to our office staff so you can be included in the circulation.

Trevor Ellis has been continuing to chronicle the history of canal carriers on the Huddersfield and Rochdale Canals with help from Keith Gibson and Bob Gough. Keith was a leading light in the restoration schemes, a Council member for many years and is well-known for his books on the Huddersfield Narrow,

We had an Open Day at our office on Sunday 9th September in the historic Transhipment Warehouse at Dobcross to link in with the national Heritage Weekend. Although there weren't a great number of visitors, those who did were fascinated by the building and stimulated the discussion about its true origins and purpose. It would be safe to say "the jury is still out", but recent researches by Bob Gough may yet come up with something definitive - members, through Pennine Link and Extra, will be the first to know!

As you might expect, there is plenty going on. If you want to get involved in any aspect of the Society's work or have ideas for additional tasks which we should tackle, please get in touch with our office staff or Council members listed inside the front cover.

Here's to an Indian Summer!

**Alan Stopher**



# Canal & River Trust Launch

*All photos: Alan Stopher*





In my role as chair of Huddersfield Canal Society, I was invited to the event to celebrate the launch of the Canal & River Trust (CRT) in the Manchester & Pennine area on 12th July 2012. It was held on a mercifully sunny day at Castlefield in Manchester.

The official vesting of the waterways in CRT by Act of Parliament occurred 10 days before this and the Manchester event was one of a host of regional events to coincide with the national launch beside the Regent's Canal in London.

Invited guests gathered at a bar venue in a Castlefield railway arch near lock 92 to view short video presentations giving an illustrated 'message' about the new organisation and its work including one by its Patron, Prince Charles.

The Chair of M & P Partnership, Professor Walter Menzies, welcomed the assembled guests and Waterways Manager, David Baldacchino thanked all the representatives of supporting organisations for joining in the event and reinforcing the importance of their (and our) involvement in making the Trust a success. A celebration cake was then cut

by Deputy Mayor of Manchester, Cllr Naheem ul Hassan JP.

Following a swig of sparkling wine we all then trooped out to Lock 92 to witness the ceremonial unveiling of a new CRT sign at the start of the South Pennine Ring. The spectacle was made colourful by the presence of traditional-style working narrow boat Hadar in the livery of Grand Union Canal Carriers. Presumably it had not been possible to find a more local symbol of the canal in its heyday but nevertheless it looked splendid and gave the TV something interesting to film as a backcloth to interviews. The nature of regional TV means that Yorkshire viewers will have been shown the North East Partnership event in Leeds instead.

With the formalities over it was good to take the opportunity to meet up with friends and colleagues, old and new, in the Manchester & Pennine Area to reflect on the possibilities in the new era, and do a bit of gongoozling at the same time.

**Alan Stopher**



*more pictures over ...*







# HNC Audio Trail

Those members who were able to attend our bi-centenary festival day held at Diggle on September 18th 2011 had the pleasure of witnessing the centrepiece of the day; a performance by Oldham Theatre Workshop (OTW) of our specially commissioned outdoor interactive theatre production "Reflections of the Past".

Those who did not manage to attend the event will have seen pictures and accounts of it in the pages of Pennine Link and on our previous website.

The production was hailed as a success and comment was passed that it would be a shame if the work were to be lost, having been performed on just one day. Therefore, in collaboration with OTW, we set about thinking how it could be reproduced in a form which would be accessible to a wider audience. We decided to commission OTW to create an audio version of the play which could be accessed via the internet. As a consequence, all our members and the wider world will soon be able to enjoy the production.

Having secured funding for the project, work started in earnest in June and we expect that the completed work will be available on our new look website before the end of October (the launch date will be announced in Pennine Link Extra).

The first stage was to re-work the original script, to adapt it to an audio, rather than a visual, presentation format. This done, the core group of professional actors were reassembled, and working alongside Theatre Workshop students, a series of original sound recordings were created. The recordings combine the spoken word with music and sound effects inspired by locations along the Saddleworth section of the Canal.

At the time of writing, the recordings are complete. We have heard the result and are impressed with the outcome. Online visual effects, which will complement the audio material, are currently being prepared and the whole production should be completed by the end of September.

The material will then be available via our website and there will be two options for listening to and/or viewing the new production.

It will be able to be accessed at home anywhere in the world via the Internet simply by clicking on the link which will be on our website. A series of photographs, including many taken at the original performance, will be linked to the soundtrack so as to provide visual reference and direction.

The performance will also be available as a number of separate MP3 files which can be downloaded from our website. After download, listeners will be free to choose when and where to access the material. In particular there will be the option of taking the downloaded audio works to the actual locations alongside the canal in Diggle where the original drama was performed. To further facilitate access, it is intended to provide a trail of QR codes along the original route of the production. Using these, the recordings can be downloaded on site using a Smartphone with any Code Reader 'App'.

A booklet will also be available for download, which will give the background to the project as well as clear directions and map references of the various locations.

Our bi-centenary year gave us the opportunity to celebrate past achievements and recognise the contribution which members, past and present, have made to



the restoration. We are pleased that we have been able to undertake this project because it is about looking forward and using the fruits of the bi-centenary as a resource to disseminate the knowledge, and promote the conservation, of our historic waterway as an asset for the future.

It would not have been possible without the support of the three funding bodies who have underwritten the costs through grants totalling around £6,000. They are the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Pennine Prospects and Oldham MBC's Saddleworth and Lees District Partnership.

Of the total cost, 50% has come from the HLF which is, of course, the largest dedicated funder of the UK's heritage, investing around £255million a year in new projects. Since its inception in 1994, HLF has been responsible for distributing a share of money raised through the National Lottery for Good Causes and heritage across the UK. During that time it has supported more than 30,000 projects and allocated £4.5billion.

To receive our HLF award we have had to demonstrate that our project will meet the three key HLF objectives: Learning, Conservation and Participation. Having done so, the award has been made on the basis that we will "Promote, raise awareness of and increase knowledge of the Canal and its heritage". To learn more about the HLF go to [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk)

Pennine Prospects (PP) was established in April 2005 to support the regeneration of the South Pennines. The company is owned by the key local authorities, water companies, Natural England and voluntary/community sector bodies. Its focus is upon protecting the built, natural and cultural heritage for the benefit of the area's residents, while at the same time linking urban and rural regeneration processes across the adjacent city regions.

Working with its partners across the area, PP has successfully secured over £4.5 million for a range of heritage, landscape and community projects in the past six years.

The PP support we are receiving is from its South Pennines LEADER programme which is a community-led approach to rural development, focusing on basic services for communities, culture, heritage, village development and renewal.

It brings together those people who have an interest in encouraging and supporting rural development. Amongst its beneficiaries have been a range of 'cultural heritage' projects including a community radio station, oral history projects and canal-side access and interpretation.

To learn more about PP go to:

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

Oldham Council has provided funding through its Saddleworth and Lees District Partnership. This support is a continuation of the valued relationship that has developed between the Society, the Council and the communities of Saddleworth and their representatives over many years, dating back into the pre-restoration era. To learn more about the role and activities of the Partnership go to:

[http://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200630/saddleworth\\_and\\_lees](http://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200630/saddleworth_and_lees)

**Graham Birch**



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# Hardy Fertiliser Company Ltd

*Trevor Ellis considers the history of some of the Canals' early carriers.*

The Hardy Fertiliser Co. Ltd was a company based at Castle Street Mills (immediately below Lock 5E and at a sharp right-angle bend on Castle Street). The London Gazette records a meeting to liquidate the Hardy Fertiliser Company Ltd of Castle Street Mills, Stalybridge, on 28 April 1909, and in Kelly's Cheshire Directory for 1909, the company is shown as "Hardy (1909) Fertiliser Co. Ltd." However, we know nothing of the company pre-1909 and whether it used the canal. The mill was certainly used for cotton spinning until 1896, but may have been empty for some time after that date.

The well-known photo showing Umbria, loaded and at a wharfside, was taken with the boat alongside Castle Street Mill. It is interesting that Umbria carries the number 'No 1' suggesting that the company may have had at least one other boat and there is also reference on the cabin side to "Hollinwood". (However, Christopher M. Jones, who writes in the waterway press on boats, suggests that it was not unusual for firms to have "No.1" on the cabin side when owning only one boat.) The number 412 was the Stalybridge phone number of the firm. We know nothing about the firm's Hollinwood connection.

According to Christopher M. Jones, "Umbria" is recorded in the Runcorn Canal Boat Register as no. 844, being first registered by the Anderton Company on 28/07/1886, and this number can be seen on the cabin in the photograph. The Runcorn registration was cancelled

on 1 March 1917, though it would appear that the boat may have been transferred to Hardy's some time before that or the earlier number would have been removed when the cabin side was repainted. It is recorded in the Manchester Canal Boat Register on 2 March 1917 as 1016, Master Harold Cooke, to carry between Manchester and Stalybridge. Perhaps the fact that the boat was no longer visiting Runcorn was an issue in the re-registration.

In an article in Pennine Link 107 many years ago, Arthur Cooke, who worked with his parents, Harold and Matilda, for Buckley and Newton in the 20's, suggested that the boat was pictured at Buckley and Newton's wharf and on loan to them. But this seems unlikely as the buildings in the photo fit the footprint of Castle Street Mills rather than Buckley and Newton's premises and the cargo must surely be something lighter than flour. Arthur Cooke's parents lived in Stalybridge and we know from two sources that Harold was working for the Hardy Fertiliser Company in 1917 and he may have continued with them until they ceased trading, probably around 1920 or 1921. In his recollections, Arthur did not mention that they had worked for Hardy's and he may have assumed that they only ever worked for Buckley and Newton.

A brief record of passages on the canal during May 1917 shows that Umbria made 8 trips during the month, as follows:

**5/5/17:** From GC Canal to Stalybridge Warehouse, Mottram Road (wharf 97): *Compost*



**8/5/17:** From GC Canal to Staly: *Sand*

**10/5/17:** From Staly to GCR Canal:  
*Manure*

**18/5/17:** From Castle Street Mill (Wharf No 102) to GC Canal: *Manure*

**23/5/17:** From GC canal to Castle Street Mill (Wharf 102): *Compost*

**25/5/17:** From Castle Street Mill (Wharf 102) to GC canal: *Sand*

**25/5/17:** From Castle Street Mill (Wharf 102) to GC canal: *Compost*

**30/5/17:** From GCR Canal to Stalybridge Warehouse, Mottram Road (wharf 97):  
*Mill Dust.*

*(Note: GC - Grand Central GCR - Grand Central Railway. Wharf 97 was the Canal Company Warehouse at Mottram Road, Wharf 102 is Hardy's own wharf)*

On each occasion the captain was recorded as being Harold Cooke and the owner of the boat was shown as being

the **LNWR**. Christopher Jones suggests that this may have been a device to enable the LNWR to bill itself for tolls!

The Manchester Canal Boat Register does give some intriguing details about the fate of "Umbria". On 9<sup>th</sup> January 1935, when it would appear an effort was being made to tidy up the register and remove old entries, it records "*Letter from Hardy Fertiliser (1909) Ltd. Boat disposed of twelve years ago. All records of disposal lost. Not to be taken off Register by order Chief Inspector.*" This would have put its last service with Hardy's around 1923. The London Gazette, which lists company liquidations, has entries for the company on 11/11/1921 and 14/02/1922, which would suggest that the company had ceased trading around 1921. Who replied to the letter of 1935 is uncertain, though it may have been a solicitor or similar, handling the affairs.

**Trevor Ellis**



*Umbria alongside  
Castle Street Mill*


# JIDOKU 24

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| G | H |   |   |   |   | S | L |   |
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|   |   |   | K |   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   | K |   |   | B | T |
|   |   | A | H |   | S | L |   |   |
| C | G |   |   | L |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   | C |   |   |   |
| H | A |   |   |   | B |   |   |   |
|   | T | L |   |   |   |   | C | S |

The grid represents our waterways; and the nine letters are all canals within the Canal & River Trust. The initial letters featured being:

Trent & Mersey, Birmingham & Fazeley, Huddersfield Narrow, Leeds & Liverpool, Grand Union, Stratford, Coventry, Kennet & Avon, Ashton.

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



# 2012 Photographic Competition

The Huddersfield Canal Society is once again running its annual Photographic Competition.

Open to all ages, the competition has two categories for entries, with an overall winner, and a panel of judges will decide the winners. The winning entries will be published in the Winter edition of our prestigious magazine.

*Don't forget the closing date!*

## **THE CATEGORIES**

A - Huddersfield Narrow Canal

B - Other UK Waterways

plus an Overall Winning Photograph

## **THE RULES**

The competition is open to everyone - members and non-members alike.

There is no entry fee!

Enter prints only, Black & White or Colour, sized between 6"x4" to a maximum of 8"x6". You may enter up to 5 prints per category.

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

## **SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO:**

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 CLOSING DATE**

**Friday 9th November 2012**

# Slaithwaite Reservoir

*All photos: Alan Stopher*

Local members and visitors will have noticed the works being undertaken at Hill Top Reservoir by contractors May Gurney on behalf of the Canal & River Trust. The first phase of this work concentrates on repairs to the overflow structures and refurbishment of the footbridge over the spillway.

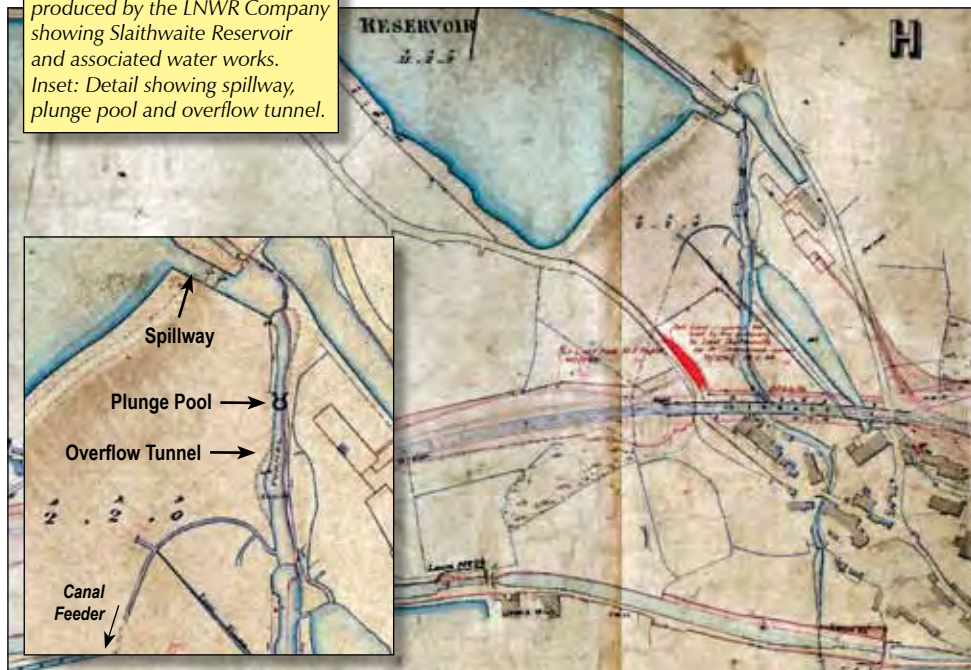
In keeping with any planned engineering works to historic structures, a heritage audit must be undertaken and November last year, British Waterway's Heritage Advisor, Judy Jones, invited me, Alan Stopher and Keith Sykes to tour the site and assess its heritage features. I produced a heritage report which is available in pdf format from the office should any member be interested; simply use the Contact Us form on our new website with a suitable request:

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

Once work had started, we were invited back to inspect a particular element of the repairs featuring the second 'plunge pool'. When the reservoir reaches capacity, any excess water flows over a wide spillway channel before making a number of vertical drops or plunges in its course to join the river Colne at a much lower elevation. Like natural waterfalls, cascading water can be very erosive and plunge pools were constructed to dissipate the water's energy before continuing its flow.

The second pool is located at the head of an overflow tunnel constructed by the LNWR Company in 1852 and our visit provided a unique opportunity for inspection at close hand. In fact our first scheduled visit had to be cancelled as, unexpectedly, the pool was found to be full of stone, shale and debris which required manual removal and a variation in the schedule of works.

*Extract of a c.1870 map produced by the LNWR Company showing Slaithwaite Reservoir and associated water works. Inset: Detail showing spillway, plunge pool and overflow tunnel.*



Geoff Brown Archive



The footbridge over the spillway is a very popular route, particularly with local school children, and the impact of its temporary closure has been ameliorated by engaging with the children, not only providing an opportunity to learn about water supply and reservoirs, but a series of their water-inspired artworks will be reproduced in metal panels and fixed to the refurbished footbridge.

**Bob Gough**

*The Society would like to express its thanks to Ian Gregory, Site Manager of May Gurney for taking care of us during the visit.*



Top: The spillway footbridge being re-decked.  
Middle left: Assorted debris cleared from the plunge pool being examined by (L to R) Ian Gregory (May Gurney), Graham Ramsden (CRT) and Bob Gough (HCS).  
Middle right: Entrance to the overflow tunnel with an 1852 dated keystone.  
Left: The plunge pool cleared of much of its debris. Excess water is being pumped out before a new concrete floor is installed.

# Bywater on the Narrow

*In the last Issue, your Chairman mentioned Bywater Hotel Boats' successful attempt to tackle the Huddersfield Narrow. Members may recall their first, and sadly unsuccessful, attempt two years ago, featured in the Autumn 2010 Issue of Pennine Link. Keith Sykes takes up the story of their latest journey down the East side.*

## **Bywater Holiday Cruises reach Huddersfield via the “Narrow”**

In mid June, Bob Gough, our Administrator, was contacted by Hanna Rees-Jones of Bywater Holiday Cruises to say they had two boats going through Standedge Tunnel that day and could they be given some advice on their onward journey down the east side of the Huddersfield Narrow.

The result was that I visited them that evening at their overnight mooring at Tunnel End, Marsden and had the pleasure of experiencing the working of a pair of hotel boats down the “Narrow” on the next day.

I met them that morning, with trusty windlass in hand, ready to help them down from Kettle Lane turning circle, above Lock 31E, towards Slaithwaite.

What I found was that whilst the average age of their guests was over 65, a few of them already had their “windlasses in hand” as they waited to assist where possible with the passage of the boats through the locks.

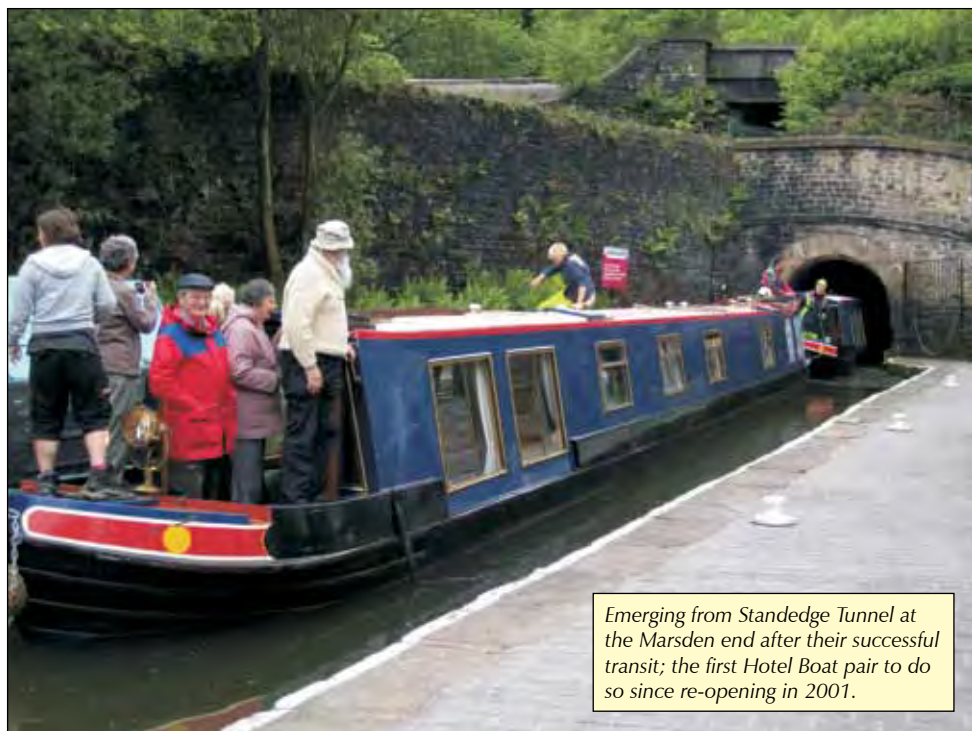
As it turned out, for most this was not their first Bywater canal boat holiday and, under the supervision of the boats' crew, they knew what they were doing.

As we went down the locks along some of the longer pounds the motor “Kerala” towed its butty “Karnataka”, but on the shorter pounds Hanna's husband, John, bow hauled it to the next lock.



*On a rather murky morning, the first of the pair enter Lock 24W on their way up the Diggle Flight for a transit of Standedge Tunnel.*

Bob Gough



*Emerging from Standedge Tunnel at the Marsden end after their successful transit; the first Hotel Boat pair to do so since re-opening in 2001.*

Bob Cough

On the moorings west of Lock 24E the boats stopped for lunch, breasting up so that lunch, prepared in the motor, could be passed through the side hatches to the guests' dining room in the butty.

For a crew that had been working two boats through 18 locks that morning, the lunch they then served was to the highest of standards for both the guests and crew. I should know, as I was invited to join them, the crew that is, for lunch. I did join the guests later to give a short talk about the water supply to the Huddersfield Narrow.

We then came to Lock 24E, the guillotine lock to the west of Slaithwaite Centre. With front and back fenders raised the first of the two 71 foot boats was gently lowered down, using the one paddle in the bottom gate.

Then followed the raising of the gate itself. It took more than one guest to raise it, not that it was stiff, far from it. To the original HCS design BW had added reduction gearing on the lifting gear and thus it takes 120 turns of the windlass to raise it and 120 to lower, then we had to do it all again for the butty. Hence every volunteer managed a "turn".

Onward we went into Slaithwaite Centre where they stopped for an hour for the guests to explore and for the crew to visit the local butcher and take on fresh supplies.

It was further onward then to a rural overnight mooring between Locks 17E and 18E, overlooking Westwood Mill's dam.

*cont'd over*





Moored up at Tunnel End after their successful transit.



Coming in to moor at Wool Road en route down the West side.





A rural overnight stop at Low Westwood between Locks 17-18E.

Keith Sykes

I next met up with “Kerala” and “Karnataka” a few days later on their return journey, with new guests, as they went through the new Lock 3E at the Waterfront Quarter. We were also joined there by our Society Chairman, Alan Stopher, who took advantage of the photographic opportunity.

Whilst not assisting them past Lock 5E, for they had all left Huddersfield about 9.30am, I found they made a speedy journey and reached Slaithwaite town centre by the late afternoon. They moored there overnight before progressing the next day to Tunnel End at Marsden for their return trip through the tunnel with all their guests aboard. A slow passage, I am told, with the butt under tow.

After a number of trips down the Narrow by hotel boats soon after the re-opening in 2001, this has been the only pair to reach Huddersfield in recent years.

It was made possible by the great improvement to locks and water supply that have taken place over the past 10 years and, as John Rees-Jones mentioned to me, the return trip for up to 8 guests each week could have been sold three times over.

I feel sure that with the positive experience of their 2012 journey they will be back.

**Keith W Sykes**

*Hannah Rees-Jones of Bywater writes:*

*We have enjoyed our time on the canal and have been pleasantly surprised by the improvements made since our last attempt 2 years ago. Certainly the East side, as I think I mentioned when I saw you, is in much better shape than we had been led to expect. I shall be sending a more detailed feedback to Alan (Stopher) in due course to let him know of our experiences in case this may be of use for future discussions with the CRT about works. As ever, we are aware that the experience of a pair of boats is very different to that of a single boat being handled by a multiple crew, but they may still be of interest. The first passage on a new canal is always the most challenging and problems always pose a bigger issue before you work out how to deal with them! Our next trip will therefore be a doddle!*

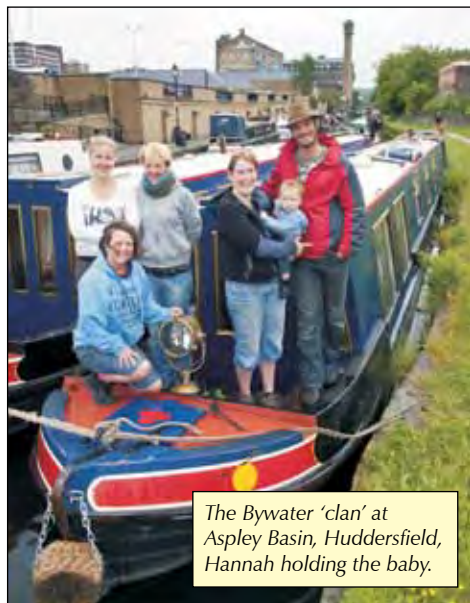
*Our return passage through Standedge was more pleasing I think, given that we knew what to expect. It still took 3.5 hours, but the boats only incurred a bit of chipped paint on the handrails and a*

few scratches to some window frames, all very minor. The guests and crew, in fact enjoyed the canal so much that we have scheduled to do both the Huddersfield and the Rochdale again next year. The quiet cruising and scenery along both canals combine to make them very enjoyable if hard work on the boating side.

We'd like to thank you and Alan for all the advice and information you gave John and the crew, and also your members, one lady of which was ever so nice and welcoming as we descended on the East side. It is a wonderful waterway and deserves much more attention than it currently gets from boaters!

We look forward to experiencing the canal again next year.

Regards,  
Hanna Rees-Jones



The Bywater 'clan' at Aspley Basin, Huddersfield, Hannah holding the baby.

Alan Stophier

Further details about Bywater Canal Boat Holidays can be found at: [www.bywaterholidays.co.uk](http://www.bywaterholidays.co.uk)

Cruise regular, Chris Goldsmith, traditionally writes a poem about his experiences. Here is his 'Huddersfield Narrow Canal' composition:

### GOING UNDERGROUND

Slaithwaite was our first night's stop  
The butty moored alongside us  
But sometime in the early hours  
Some clever \*\*\* untied us

Lock 24 had rising gates  
Which made the crew to frown  
One hundred thirty six turns up  
The same to wind back down

The gangers on the railway  
Oh how we hated them  
When they started engineering works  
At half past 2am

Chaperoned through Standedge Tunnel  
There was no chance of a meeting  
Weren't allowed a butty steerer  
So the butty took a beating

The Midges swarmed and everyone  
Was bitten to tamation  
I took a walk to Uppermill  
To get some embrocation

Somewhere near lock seven  
(though the thing defies belief)  
A pylon straddles the canal  
And we cruised underneath

Breakfast time in Ashton  
I was walking round outside  
When I ran into a vagrant  
Who was trying to blag a ride

Eighteen locks from Manchester  
It tipped it down with rain  
I said "if things don't buck up soon  
I won't come here again"

Chris Goldsmith

# Blocked Navigation



*The white duck is sat on the silt washed into the canal at Golcar Brook.*



*Specialist dredging equipment used to clear the blockage.*



It is obvious that canals need an adequate supply of water to operate and the Huddersfield Narrow is particularly susceptible to shortages with severe droughts causing prolonged closures in the past.

So, it seems ironic an abundance of water should cause a closure! But you can have too much of a good thing and July's heavy rains, which have typified our Summer, washed a vast amount of silt into the canal at Golcar Brook, between Locks 14 and 15E, blocking the navigation.

Accumulation of sediment at this location, owing to a blockage in the Brook culvert, has been a continuing problem for boaters, but site access always hampered remedial dredging.

However, a blocked navigation is another matter and contractors, May Gurney, brought in specialist equipment and removed some 60 tonne of material to clear the channel.

**Bob Gough**

*A notorious spot!  
1904 postcard illustrating the aftermath of the July flood at the same location. Barrow runs and plenty of manual labour to repair the canal and culvert.*

Trevor Ellis

Keith Sykes

Trevor Ellis Collection



# Events for 2012 at Standedge Visitor Centre

## **12th to 14th October** **Marsden Jazz Festival**

*As part of the 21st Marsden Jazz Festival, Standedge will host a number of Jazz and musical performances.*

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

## **20th to 28th October 11am-4pm** **Halloween at Spooky Standedge**

*Take a trip into Standedge Tunnel on a haunted boat, or come for a coffee or a pumpkin soup at the spooky café! Beware of the spooky characters who take control of Standedge Visitor Centre.*

**A FREE EVENT**

**24th October 10am-12pm 1-3pm**  
**Halloween crafts and pumpkin carving!**  
*Come and learn how to carve a spectacular pumpkin, or to make your friends jealous of your homemade Halloween costume with tips and tricks!*

**£5 per person**

## **27th to 28th October 10am-4pm** **Halloween Craft Fair**

*Local craft workers exhibit and sell at Standedge's monthly craft and gift fair.*

**A FREE EVENT**

## **17th to 18th November 10am-4pm** **Christmas Craft Fair**

*Festive offerings from local craft workers who exhibit and sell at Standedge's monthly craft and gift fair.*

**A FREE EVENT**

**See: [www.standedge.co.uk](http://www.standedge.co.uk)**  
**for more details and updates.**



# Dates for your Diary

**pennineprospects**  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2012

**Natural Capital:  
making the most of  
the South Pennines**

Join us at our **free** annual conference to explore ways in which the rich natural assets of the South Pennines can be used to provide economic, social as well as environmental benefits.

**Date:** Friday 19 October, 9.30am-4pm  
**Venue:** Marsden Mechanics Hall, HD7 6BW

To book: please contact  
[ann.atkins@pennineprospects.co.uk](mailto:ann.atkins@pennineprospects.co.uk)  
01274 433536 or return a completed booking form.

**SPEAKERS:**

- Tim Rollinson, Director General, Forestry Commission, keynote speaker
- Jim Burt, Natural England, maximising engagement in the natural environment
- Andy Tordoff, DEFRA, using natural environmental assets for economic benefit
- Dr Lois Mansfield, University of Cumbria, upland focus

**LAUNCH OF SOUTH PENNINES LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP**

**A CHOICE OF AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS AND SITE VISITS:**

- **Local & Distinctive:** making it work for you; using the South Pennines to promote your business; using your business to promote the South Pennines
- **South Pennines Local Nature Partnership:** shaping your partnership and creating a voice for the uplands
- **Exploring the Marsden Moor estate** using new audio resources created by the National Trust
- **A trip to Standedge Visitor Centre:** hear about the work of the Canal & River Trust and travel by boat through the Standedge Tunnel






Pennine Prospects was set up in 2005 as a champion for the South Pennines. It is a not for profit company aiming to promote, protect and enhance the built, natural and cultural heritage of the South Pennines. For more information: [www.pennineprospects.co.uk](http://www.pennineprospects.co.uk)



## The Railway & Canal Historical Society Annual Clinker Memorial Lecture 2012

Grahame Boyes will present:

**‘The Business of Running a Canal  
- evidence from the Peak Forest Canal’**  
2.15pm Saturday 10th November 2012  
**Entrance - Free**

### VENUE:

**Radisson Edwardian Hotel**  
**Free Trade Hall**  
**Peter Street**  
**Manchester**  
**M2 5GP**

The Society's new book:

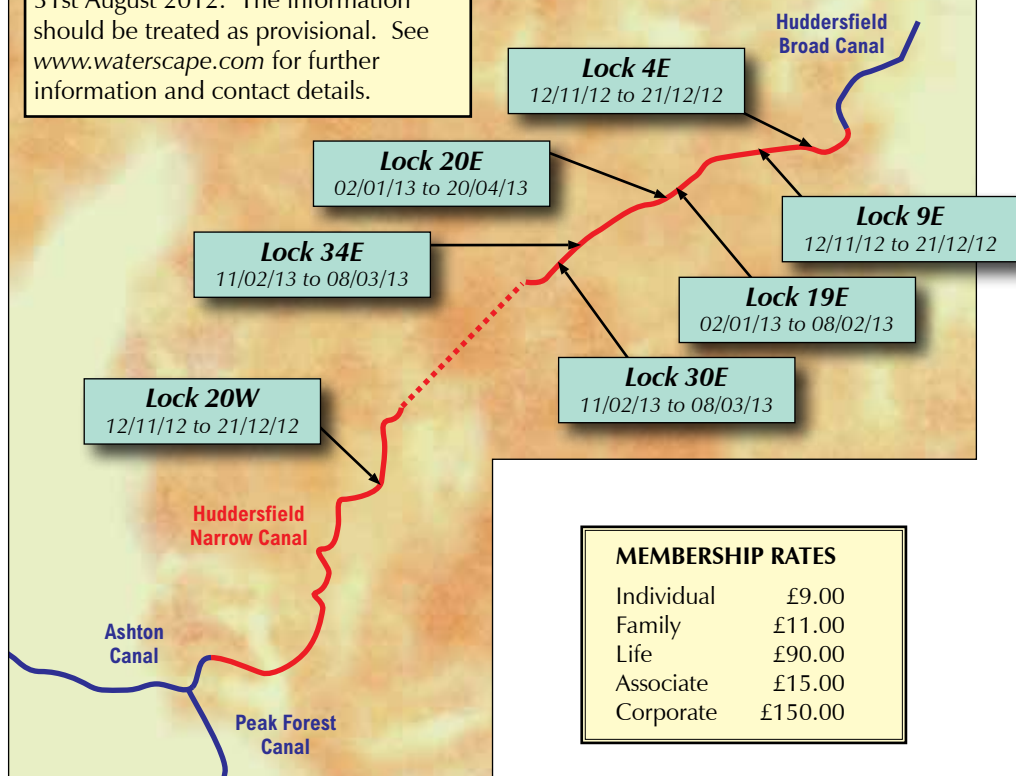
**‘The Peak Forest Canal:  
an engineering and business history’**  
by Grahame Boyes and Brian Lamb

will be launched at the lecture and on offer  
at a special lecture price of £20 (saving £10)

Enquiries: Graham Bird 0208 747 3694 [grabrail@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:grabrail@hotmail.co.uk)

# Planned Stoppages - 2012/13

This map reflects the work plan as at 31st August 2012. The information should be treated as provisional. See [www.waterscape.com](http://www.waterscape.com) for further information and contact details.



## MEMBERSHIP RATES

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

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## COPY DATE

Articles, letters and comments for *Issue 180* of Pennine Link should reach the Editor at Transhipment Warehouse, Wool Rd, Dobcross, OL3 5QR by 16th November **2012**

## ADVERTISING RATES

| Page        | Per Issue | Per Year |
|-------------|-----------|----------|
| <b>Qtr</b>  | £12.50    | £50.00   |
| <b>Half</b> | £25.00    | £100.00  |
| <b>Full</b> | £50.00    | £200.00  |



# A Service Appreciated

By E-Mail 24/07/12

Hello Bob and Andrea,

I am very belatedly sending this message to thank you for the wonderful water taxi service you gave our disabled members on Saturday 26th May on our Mystery Trip to Standedge, and do apologise for the long delay in writing to you.

By now I have totally forgotten the names of your two Members who helped us in and out of the Water Taxi on the day, but suffice to say that they could not have been more helpful, kind and attentive, and especially by re-routing the return pick-up point to where we emerged from our lunch in the Warehouse so

that the disabled people didn't have to walk all the way back down to the cafe area.

I do hope you will accept this email as a proper "letter", and again, many thanks for your wonderful service and helpfulness. Some of our members have been again "under their own steam" so to speak, and I will certainly visit again because it's such a wonderful place and you should all be so proud of what has been achieved.

So thank you once more, to everyone who helped us!

Kind regards and best wishes,

MARIE GILMAN

Secretary - Rotherham Breast Cancer Support Group



Our popular Water Taxi

