

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

Bench dedicated to the memory of Society member Brian Badminton

In the Spring 2013 edition, we reported the untimely passing of long serving Canal Society member Brian Badminton. His memory will be perpetuated by the dedication of a popular resting place

at West Slaithwaite. Brian's son Paul refurbished the bench beside Lock 29E (*pictured*) and HCS organised a suitable plaque (*inset*). Family and friends gathered on 8th February to express satisfaction with the work.

Alan Stopher



Alan Stopher

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Editorial

I feel that I should be starting this piece with a chorus of *"Happy Birthday to you"* because, of course, April 2014 sees the fortieth

anniversary of the founding of the Huddersfield Canal Society. The records show that the inaugural meeting took place at the Zetland Inn, Huddersfield on the 19th April 1974 and 40 years on, here we are still going strong and with a fully restored and operational canal to show for it.

Strictly speaking Pennine Link does not reach its 40th until August 2015 since it was in August 1975 that the Society's Journal first appeared under this title. It was, however, the sixth edition of the Journal, the first Bulletin being published in June 1974.

These early bulletins were in the form of a series of typed sheets, duplicated, I presume, on a Roneo duplicator. This takes me back as I have "fond" memories of producing seminar papers for the purpose of my university studies using Roneo stencils in the late 60's/early 70's.

This means of production/publication is light years removed from the desktop publishing technology we are able to use today. Moreover,

today's digital technology also gives us access to every edition of Pennine Link since the first one in June 1974 up to the Winter 2012 edition. Thanks to the efforts of Bob Gough they can be viewed on the Society's web site and as each new edition is published, its previous year's counterpart will be added to the archive.

This archive provides a fascinating insight into work of the Society as it moved towards restoration and beyond and in recognition of the anniversary, I am devoting this editorial to four brief snapshots of the Society as seen through the pages of Pennine Link in Spring 1974, 1984, 1994 and 2004.

1974 - The first Bulletin reported on the April 19th meeting and gives details of the new Society's officers. The first Chairman was John Maynard while A. Jarvis is listed as acting editor.

However, an appeal was made in the Bulletin for a permanent editor and by issue number two, Gerry Greenwood had taken on the role.

The centrepiece is the Chairman's welcome which he starts by saying that he has *"been astounded by the enthusiasm and support which has greeted the formation of the Society."* He goes on to say that *"some people are still asking what we intend*



to do” and in response he sets out the main objectives which he lists as:

1) Lobby the appropriate authorities and obtain support to preserve and improve the canal.

2) Physically help to clean up and improve the canal where we are able.

3) Keep a watch and object to any further official vandalism or development that will hinder the eventual reopening of the canal to through navigation.

4) Set up a study group to look seriously into the feasibility and costs of reopening.

He recognises that “there is a great deal of work to be done, both physical and mental” and that “we must not delude ourselves into thinking that we are going to have it all our own way - opposition is inevitable”

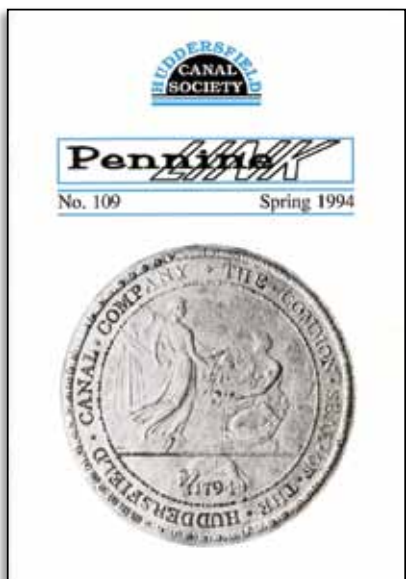
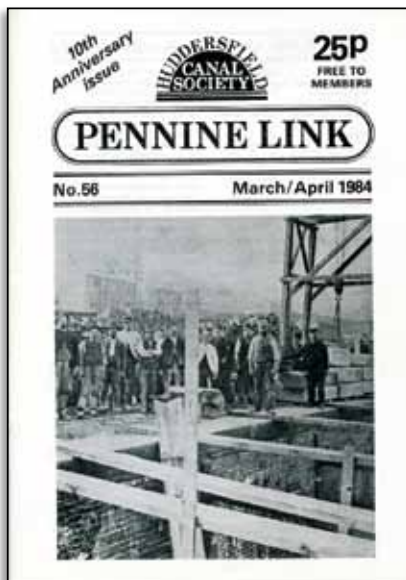
1984 - By now the chairmanship had been taken over by David Sumner and the editor of Pennine Link was Sue Gibson. It was still printed in black and white but it had expanded to fill 32 pages including advertisements. At that stage there were six editions each year

but it was the March one that styled itself ‘the 10th Anniversary edition’.

In a short editorial Sue highlights “The exciting news that Kirklees and West Yorkshire Councils have both now approved the Marsden-Slaithwaite canal restoration project.” This she takes as a sign that “even if we haven’t managed a fully restored canal after a 10 year campaign for restoration we feel progress towards this is now being made.”

On subsequent pages Keith Gibson goes into greater detail, explaining that “the project involves the restoration of nearly three miles of canal and 19 locks by means of a Manpower Services Commission sponsored Community Programme scheme employing about 50 people.” The estimated cost was about £154,000, and the work was expected to take about two years. On completion, the project would not only see the restoration of the beautiful rural section of canal between Marsden and Slaithwaite, but also the length of the

canal between Queen Street South and Wakefield Road in Huddersfield.

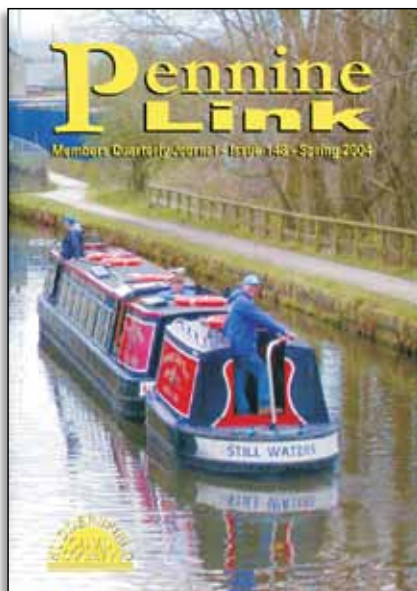


In his Chairman's piece David discusses the implications for the restoration of the proposed abolition of the Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire Metropolitan Councils, both of which had given strong support to the Society in its pursuit of restoration. He also looks forward to the imminent publication by G.M.C. of the Tame Valley Local Plan which was expected to offer support for restoration.

1994 – Twenty years on David Sumner remained as Chairman but Alwyn Ogborn had taken over the editorial seat. Reflecting the momentum towards restoration, HCS Restoration was in operation with Steve Whitby its Managing Director.

Alwyn's Editorial looked forward to the fact that the Summer issue would, for the first time, include colour photographs. *(After this, we reverted to black and white and the present full colour format came into being much more recently.)*

The abolition of the metropolitan counties had occurred in 1986 and we were now working with the three metropolitan boroughs of Kirklees, Oldham and Tameside. A Joint Committee had been formed, of which HCS and BW were also members. In March, a deputation from the Joint Committee attended the House of Commons, armed with facts and figures



past, present and predicted, to lobby MP's for funding to complete the restoration of the Canal.

The delegation was led by David Sumner and in his article he gives a detailed and very positive account of the visit. He was pleased to be able to report that already "out of the 74 locks, 53 have been restored, over 60% of the Canal dredged, and 7 road bridges re-opened to allow

navigation. A further £3 million worth of DLG funded restoration is to start this year".

2004 – With restoration now a fact, the Society was moving and establishing a new role for itself in the post-restoration world. Neville Kenyon was the new Chairman and Brian Minor was editing Pennine Link.

In introducing his editorial, Brian highlights that the issue has been printed as a special colour edition and that it was hoped to maintain this level of production in the future, not only to make the magazine more interesting for our members, but also more attractive to advertisers.

Neville meanwhile celebrates the election, at an EGM on 22nd January, of past Chairman David Sumner as President of the Society. This was a new post established to honour a member who has given exceptional service over many years. He also expresses delight

that David was awarded the MBE in the 2004 New Year's Honours List for his sterling work on behalf of the Society.

Further reflecting the post-restoration era, Neville refers to:

- the closure of HCS Restoration Limited.
- the fact that Bob Gough was now our sole remaining employee since the departure of Frank Smith.
- the intended sale of the Ashton office reflecting the need to smaller accommodation.

Finally, in the Council update written by Ken Wright, I am reminded what I was doing ten years ago when mention is made of meetings with the 'Oldham Group'; a group of Council officers concerned with the regeneration of the canal corridor. It is one of my regrets that, by force of circumstance, the engagement between the Society and the local Councils which was so central to restoration has fallen away to the extent that it has.

The now (in)famous letter to Bob Dewey from British Waterways Board Chief Estate Officer, A J Brawn in May 1974, being less than enthusiastic about the whole idea! Perhaps a Ruby, rather than red, rag ... However, we all benefit from hindsight, and none more so than our magnificent Canal.



Looking back through our online archive has been fascinating and I would urge everyone to go to our website, click on the link and just dip into the back copies that can be accessed there. However, I realise that this may have to wait until later in the year because, as the days

grow longer, the pull of the waterways will no doubt outweigh the urge to indulge in nostalgic reminiscences online! So, Happy Easter and enjoy the waterways in the coming Spring and Summer.

Graham Birch

(Errata: In my last Editorial I gave the dates of the Stalybridge Carnival weekend as the 23/24 June. This should have been 21/22 June; my apologies.)



I am afraid that there can be no question of restoring this Canal for through navigation and when Mr. Blenkharn referred to "a future target for restoration" he had in mind, of course, for the purposes of amenity. This would include fishing and in this connection our endeavour would be to improve the quality of fishing if at all possible, and some canoeing. The Canal will, of course, be kept in water.



Chairman's Report

By the time this edition reaches you, the Society will have celebrated its 40th Anniversary with an evening get together at

Marsden Mechanics on 4th April 2014. Initial enquiries were made as to whether the Zetland Arms could accommodate us. Although this pub, which has been through various guises since the inaugural meeting on 19th April 1974, has now reverted to its old name, it is currently awaiting a new leaseholder.

This year 19th April is Easter Saturday which clashes with family holidays and would have meant some key absences amongst current active members.

A number of meetings early in 1974 resulted in the inaugural one, so we decided that the date itself was not sacrosanct. Indeed 4th April figures more in the history of the Canal, this being the date of opening in 1811.

Letters have been sent out to all members residing in the UK and emails to all members on our distribution list so I'm looking forward to meeting many of you at the Mechanics that day.

The Winter stoppage programme on the Huddersfield Narrow has been completed earlier this year which means that through passages have been possible from early February. Tunnel transits are available on one day a week until the start of the season proper. Work continues on Hill Top reservoir, Slaithwaite, where the main drawdown pipe has been relined and a new valve is being installed in the downstream face of

the dam. CRT will be keen to finish this work to take advantage of Spring rains to refill the reservoir for the Summer.

The new Canal Observer initiative has got off to a good start. Most of the new team were trained for the task in January and started to report on their lengths of the Huddersfield Broad and Narrow Canals in mid-February. It will be interesting to see how this develops. In the meantime, thanks go to all involved.

The Marsden Shuttle has already been taken down to Dukinfield and back for its engine service and some interior work including a new floor. Thankfully, crew members did not have to experience the snow this year during their Winter cruise. The next task is to get the trip boat painted before Easter.

Standedge Visitor Centre will soon reopen for the Spring and the Society, in its capacity as 'Friends of the Centre', is planning to have a presence at the St George's Day event on Wednesday 23rd April. Although in mid-week, it is during Easter holidays so we hope there will be a good turn out to witness the legging of the horse-boat and St George slaying the dragon.

Besides the events already mentioned, the Society is planning a boat rally and operation of a trip boat in conjunction with the Stalybridge Carnival on 22nd June 2014. We have also been working with Kirklees College to run similar activities to occupy the crowds lining the roads around Chapel Hill, Huddersfield on 6th July when the Tour de France crosses the Huddersfield Narrow. There is a major logistical operation

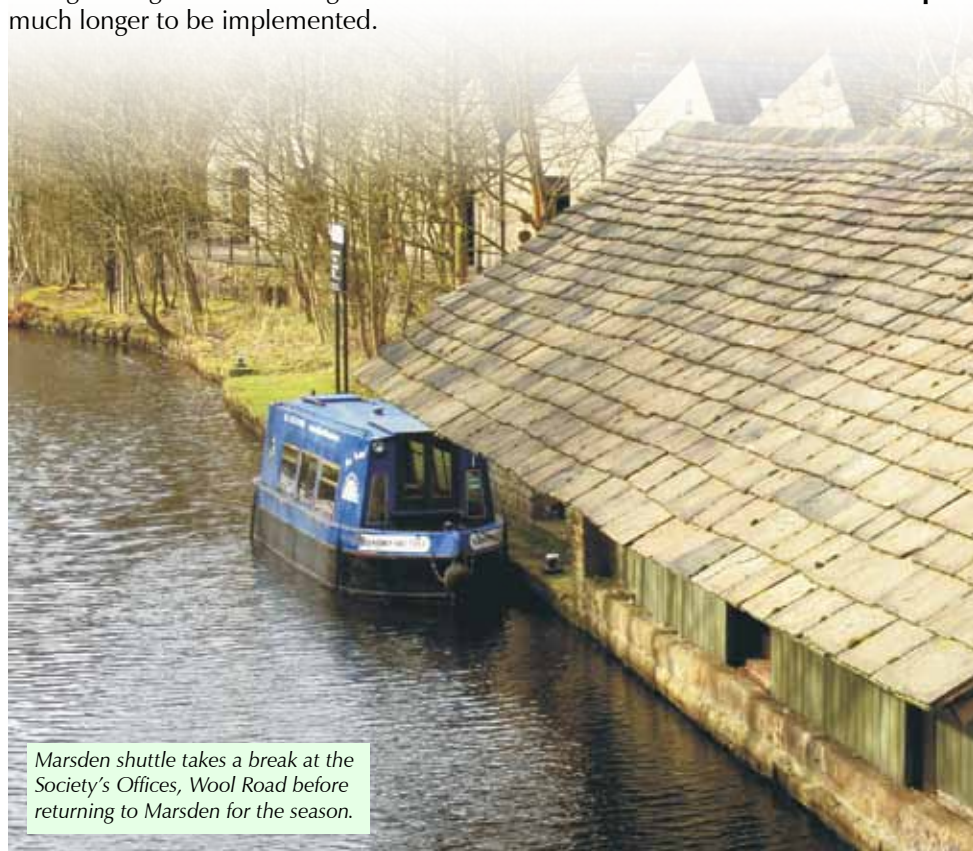
being organised throughout Yorkshire that weekend as roads along the route will be closed on the day the Tour passes through. Updates and requests for assistance from members will be publicised in Pennine Link Extra so make sure we have your email address.

Plans are being developed for some form of Colne Valley Greenway to link the Pennine uplands at Marsden and Huddersfield. Members of the Society's Council of Management have contributed to an initial workshop which was very constructive and considered issues such as managing towpath conflict and appropriate surfacing. The resulting project is likely to take some time to emerge and given the shortage of funds much longer to be implemented.

I'm pleased to say that common ground has been established between user groups keen to see improvements in the towpath which recognise the heritage and environment of the valley and allow safe access for all. The eventual Greenway may well be a braided path taking into account the needs of different users and the fact that many sections of towpath, particularly under bridges are very narrow.

As you can see, there has been much activity to report on and it is good to observe that your Society is still relevant today 40 years on from the start of the campaign for restoration. Here's to another 40 years!

Alan Stopher



Marsden shuttle takes a break at the Society's Offices, Wool Road before returning to Marsden for the season.

Claire Bebbington



Canal & River Trust Update

Since my previous report the Partnership has had two plenary meetings. The first took place on one of this

winter's rare bright, clear mornings, just before Christmas, at Hebden Bridge. The second took place at Macclesfield in mid-February on the morning after one of the fiercest of the succession of storms which we have experienced in the early weeks of 2014.

Many of the same topics featured at both meetings, so to avoid repetition, I will give an update on the various topics as they have progressed from December through to the present.

Manchester and Pennine Strategic Plan

As you will know from my previous updates, this is a detailed document setting out long term Strategic Objectives and Priorities for the Partnership. On completion it will be merged with corresponding documents being produced by each of the other regional partnerships to create a National Strategy.

By the end of our December meeting we were at the point where our M and P Strategy was just about agreed by the Partnership and was ready for consultation with CRT staff and external partners. This consultation process is still in progress and there are inevitable variations in the speed at which the various regions are working. Overall completion is now expected in Spring 2014.

Meanwhile at our February meeting we had a lengthy discussion about how Partnership members could and would engage with the implementation of the priority Actions. As a result we have now identified and agreed a partnership Lead Member to liaise and work with CRT staff on the delivery of each of the priority projects.

Tour de France 2014

In July, the opening stages of the Tour will take place in Yorkshire and the route will take it beside and across the Rochdale and Huddersfield Canals. Like HCS, CRT have identified this as a major opportunity to publicise the waterways and M and P are working with colleagues in the North East Region on plans for the event.

These will focus on promotional projects but the influx of many thousands of people will give rise to operational and safety issues which will also need to be taken into account.

Good News Stories

The "Tour" is very much a positive story and the Partnership were also delighted to receive news of several other "good news" stories.



Heritage Lottery Funding

Marple Aqueduct (*pictured below*), which carries the Peak Forest Canal 100 feet over the River Goyt, together with a series of canalside Lime Kilns and the nearby water powered Mellor Mill are to receive a £1.5 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Lottery funding will help to protect and improve access to the three structures and will include a series of environmental improvements to the sites as well as providing heritage training skills, development of walking routes and interpretation to help visitors understand how the sites would have looked at the height of the Industrial Revolution.

The bid was led by CRT in partnership with Mellor Archaeological Trust and Stockport Council. The funding will enable the employment of a project manager and an education and interpretation officer to manage a range of volunteering and educational opportunities.

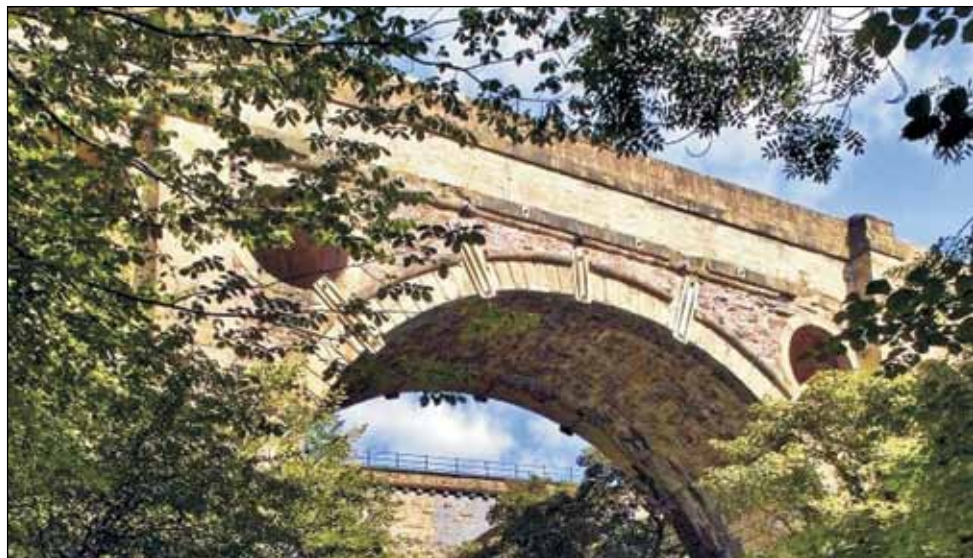
Ashton Canal Cycleway

We learnt at our September 2013 meeting that the national waterway system was to be a major beneficiary of the government's Cycle City Ambition Grant programme, which over two years is worth over £77 million. Of this, £10 million will be for schemes to enhance towpaths in Manchester, Birmingham and Leeds and of this, in turn, just under £2 million is for the Ashton Canal. The fund will pay for a comprehensive enhancement of the Canal Corridor comprising widening, surfacing and access improvements. Work is expected to start later this year.

Blue Peter

CRT has been in discussion with the BBC for a long time concerning opportunities to feature canal-based features on the flagship children's programme Blue Peter. A number of ideas have been developed and the outcome is that possibly two items are likely to be filmed for inclusion in the programme in the coming months.

cont'd ...



Canal & River Trust

Since BBC Children's programming is now based at the BBC's Northern H.Q. at Media City, Salford these items can be expected to feature canals in the M and P area.

Piccadilly Undercroft (not such good news)

You may recall that during 2013, I explained the problems of crime and anti-social behavior surrounding the underground section of the Rochdale Canal which runs under Dale Street in central Manchester. It lies to the South of Ducie Street Junction and must be used by any boat wishing to enter either leg (the Rochdale or the Ashton) of the Pennine Ring from central Manchester.

Regrettably, we learned that there had been a further two fatalities resulting from criminal activity over the recent Christmas period. This brings to five the number of deaths in the area in the past 12 months. In the same period there have been 80 reports of muggings and assaults.

In the face of this, it has become inevitable that gating of this section to prevent pedestrian access has become essential until a more radical solution is available. A planning application, to be submitted by Manchester City Council, for security gating is expected in the near future and the Partnership agreed that it should not be opposed by CRT. The issue of whether the closure will be night time only or 24 hour, remains to be decided.

South Pennine Ring Festival 2014

It will be recalled that in 2013 the idea emerged of extending the scope of the established Rochdale Canal Festival

and promoting it as a "South Pennine Waterways Festival". Despite the scarcity of financial resources, the Festival proved a success and it is proposed to repeat it in 2014.

The Festival Working Group, at a meeting in January, agreed to break from the tradition of having a dedicated week in midsummer as the focus of the Festival. Rather, it will be marketed as an ongoing event taking place throughout the year with individual events around the Ring being badged as part of the Festival. This will have the advantages of flexibility, making marketing more straightforward, spreading workload of the Development Manager and giving more flexibility to funding deadlines.

With regard to the role of Development Manager, we were pleased to learn that Lucy Burton is soon to be welcomed back from maternity leave and that thanks to funding contributions from Manchester City Council and Calderdale MBC she will be able to support the Festival on behalf of CRT.

"Outburst" 2014

Plans are now well in hand for the M and P's second annual "Outburst" or in other words, our annual conference. The Venue for 2014 will be the Manchester Mechanics Institute which is in central Manchester close to the Rochdale Canal. The date has yet to be confirmed but it is likely to be in mid-June and we anticipate that new CRT Chief Executive, Richard Parry, will be amongst the participants.

Graham Birch

Trustee, Manchester and Pennine
Waterways Partnership



Volunteer Activities

Our volunteer maintenance team continues to work on the canal, alternate Fridays. During the Winter months, we concentrate primarily on lopping of vegetation and the collection of litter.

We started the Winter at the Huddersfield end and we reached Ashton a little quicker than anticipated as there are now a couple of local groups working on the Canal in Greenfield and Mossley, and we have leap-frogged their areas.

We are now revisiting the Huddersfield end to combine these activities with oiling of the paddle gear. In a normal Winter we would have to lop trees that had been dragged down by the snow, but this year that will not have happened. However, with the winds that we have had and the increasing tendency towards

fly-tipping off bridges, I think we will have plenty of litter to move!

I understand that there may be some changes of personnel in CRT and that we may be dealing with someone different at local level. This, and the Canal Observer Scheme, described elsewhere, may lead to some changes in our work, but assuming that we get some dry weather, we will probably look at some painting work, particularly to the footbridges and paddle gearing, as this seems to be relatively low priority for CRT. Their problem is that you can only really do so much in the boating season, when there are other demands on their time.

We would still welcome anyone who wishes to get involved as we may lose some to other groups and it will give us more flexibility. The work isn't hard, but can involve a fair bit of walking. Simply give me a call on 01484 534666.

Trevor Ellis



Trevor (in van) and the maintenance volunteers at Slaithwaite ready for some serious lopping and litter picking.

Mike McHugh

2014 Stalybridge Carnival

Boat Rally & Free Boat Trips

- Huddersfield Canal Society (HCS) are holding a boat rally in Stalybridge on the weekend of 21st & 22nd June 2014 to coincide with the Carnival weekend.
- The boat gathering will provide a colourful additional attraction for the public to enjoy. This should help provide a really fantastic atmosphere for the Carnival weekend and show the canal and the Town Centre in the best possible light.
- Most boats will be moored in the canal close to Armentières Square and HCS will also be sponsoring a trip boat for the weekend which will provide free boat trips for members of the public.
- HCS members will be on hand to provide further information about the canal and to answer any questions you may have.

- In advance of the Carnival and Boat Rally we hope to have carried out a substantial clean-up of the canal and surrounding area in the Town Centre in conjunction with the Canal and River Trust (CRT), the Stalybridge Town Team and other volunteer groups. If you are interested in helping us out with this, please contact the HCS office on 01457 871800.
- There are also opportunities for volunteering to help maintain the canal and its environment for the future. HCS are working closely with CRT on this for the Huddersfield Narrow and Broad Canals. Please speak to any HCS or CRT staff present at this event if you are interested in volunteering to help in any way. Alternatively you can contact the HCS office on the above number.
- It is hoped there will be other attractions that can run alongside the Stalybridge Carnival and Boat Rally and that we can build on these further in the future.

Attention Boaters!
If you are keen to attend this gathering, please contact the HCS Office to register your interest



Watery activity in Stalybridge, April 2002

Top hole

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or do the whole South Pennine Ring.

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www.diggiehotel.com

<https://www.facebook.com/TheDiggieHotel>

AN HISTORIC public house at the heart of a community is set to gain a fresh lease of life as its new landlords have made refurbishments and introduced exciting events.

The Diggle Hotel, which dates back to 1525, has been taken over by Angie and Billy O'Reilly, landlords familiar to regulars at the Cross Keys, in Uppermill.

Angie had a vision in mind for the new premises.

"We wanted to give it a country feel, and make it nice and homely with coal fires," she said. "We have done it up gradually and had lots of ideas for getting the place to feel and look how it should do. We are excited and really looking forward to a successful future. Many of our Cross Keys regulars came to support us on our first weekend here and hope they'll be loyal in our new venture."

Their refurbishment plans included installing a wooden panelled bar and adding more tables and seating. And in pride of place behind the bar is Angie's beloved mirror engraved with 'Reilly's Bar', which she first hung in the Granby Arms in Uppermill almost two decades ago.

"We were out of the pubs for ten years, but the mirror has always come with us and I said it would go back up one day and now it is back where it belongs," said Angie.

The experienced landlady, who was trained at the Midland Hotel in Manchester, also has regular events and offers throughout the week to attract the community. The Hotel also hosts monthly brass band nights and is already signed up to be part of the annual Diggle Blues Festival in June.

Peckish visitors are able to tuck into homemade food, including traditional pies and puddings, served daily and with OAP Specials throughout the week. There is an appetising drinks menu to match, featuring regular ales Millstones Brewery Tiger Rut, Copper Dragon, and Black Sheep as well as guest beers. The Diggle Hotel is in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide.

And to round off a visit, the hotel offers four bedrooms – a double, a family room and two twins – to give weary customers a perfect night's rest.

Word Challenge - Solution

Last year's Seasonal entertainment tested out your word-power. Using each letter from 'Huddersfield Narrow Canal' only once, you were asked to fill in the squares with, in alphabetical order, just the first and last 'x' lettered words you could make. The usual provisions applied, i.e. no proper

names, foreign words, obscure dialects, plurals, hyphenation! The 3 letter word category was given as an example and the possible 'aah' to 'wus' alternative illustrated the point of exclusions.

an 'aardwolf' rather than an 'acaridan'.
I cannot say how the puzzle was received,
but perhaps 'no news is good news'?
Nonetheless, I hope it provided some
amusement and you managed to find
some, if not most, of the words.

Bob Gough

WORDS

H	U	D	D	E	R	S	F	I	E	L	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

N	A	R	R	O	W
---	---	---	---	---	---

C	A	N	A	L
---	---	---	---	---

3 letter
4 letter
5 letter
6 letter
7 letter
8 letter
9 letter
10 letter
11 letter
12 letter
13 letter

	A	C	E																
		A	C	E	D														
			A	C	H	E	D												
				A	C	A	R	I	D										
					A	C	A	R	O	I	D								
						A	A	R	D	W	O	L	F						
							A	D	E	N	O	I	D	A	L				
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										A	R	C	H	O	S	A	I	A	N
												A	R	C	H	O	S	A	N

[illegible]

EXAMPLE

R							
E	R						
I	E	R					
L	A	N	D				
D	L	I	E	R			
F	O	R	C	E	D		

JIDOKU 29

			I					S
	M				C	R		
							G	P
	I			P		G	M	L
S		P			R			
C	G							
G	S				P			
R		C		M			K	

Our puzzle setter, John, has felt like a bit of a change and gone for a more International waterway feel! The initial letters now featured being:

Panama, Kiel, Suez, Grand canal of China, St Lawrence Seaway, The Intracoastal Waterway of the USA, Manchester Ship Canal, Rhine waterway, Caledonian Canal.

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.

Canal Observing

Something that HCS Council have been interested in for some time is how the Society as a whole can be better 'Stewards' (for want of a better name) of the canal and its environs. For a long time our focus was on restoration to navigation, which of course was the great success story. Since then the focus has by necessity had to change and promotion is now an important part of the Society's role. The canal is essentially an outdoor leisure facility, so it's important that existing and potential users have a good experience when they visit the canal, whether it's for an afternoon walk with the family, as a commute along the towpath, or of course for boaters who are embarking on the Pennine challenge.

Maintenance of canals is a complex and costly business. The Canal and River Trust have a massive job on their hands keeping the British navigation system open, and whilst they regularly inspect all the waterways that they manage they value any additional information that's available. Also their priority is on engineering work and although inspections will pick up any work of this nature, a lot of other information that may be available but not really related to engineering work won't be recorded.

Back in May last year Management Council had a meeting with Jon Stopp, a volunteer for CRT who's official title is 'Adoption Inspirer'. He'd already set up a pilot project on the Rochdale Canal, where a number of volunteers carried out regular checks of a relatively short section of the canal. Information they provided was fed back to CRT and helped them plan their volunteer work on the canal as well as letting CRT know

about any other issues that they might not be aware of. On the Rochdale they call the volunteers 'OWLS' (observers of waterway lengths). We thought it sounded like a good idea so started looking at how we might do something similar for the Huddersfield Canals, although in deference to the Slaithwaite OWLS (the Over 50s Weekday Leisure club), we thought we needed to find a different title, so settled on Canal Observers, or COs for short.

After some discussions with CRT, and a few chats about how we'd go about it, in October last year we invited HCS members to express an interest in volunteering to be Canal Observers. The intention was to cover the full length of both the Narrow and Broad canals, but we had to see what the response was before we could decide exactly what we could do. Luckily we had a good response, so we could take the project to the next stage. The reporting format was refined, and some of HCS Council took on the jobs of co-ordinating the reports, which are to be carried out monthly.

To get things properly under way, we arranged a training session for the volunteers to make sure the role of the job and the reporting format was clear, and also to make sure that some basic Health and Safety information was provided. The first session was at Standedge Visitor Centre on the 25 January, when the first 'tranche' of 15 COs and co-ordinators met together to hear more about the project. Steve O'Sullivan from CRT gave everyone a chat about how valuable the Rochdale scheme had been, and talked about personal safety whilst visiting the



Jon Stopp (left) and Steve O'Sullivan from CRT

canal. He also talked about urgent or emergency situations, and how these should be dealt with. Jon Stopp then outlined what had happened on the Rochdale Canal, and gave some information about what to look for and what sort of things to record. A very useful Q&A session followed, where any issues that needed clarification were dealt with. Specifically the COs will be taking particular notice of the following-

- Channel
- Towpath
- Washwall
- Vegetation, particularly if it needs clearing
- Boundaries, where some attention may be required
- Locks
- Bridges
- Furniture, which includes peripheral items like signage
- Wildlife
- Litter
- Activity
(boats/walkers/fishing/cycling etc)

There's also space for the COs to report other issues that may not be otherwise covered, and to make suggestions for developments that would help improve the visitor experience.

The plan was to partake of a quick buffet lunch and then venture out on to the towpath for a 'practical' session with a walk down to Sparth Reservoir and back. The arrival of our Chair Alan Stopher, who was joining us for lunch and the afternoon session required a rapid re-think, as when he walked in it would have been quite reasonable to assume that he'd made his way to the Visitor Centre via the canal, and not in a boat. The Marsden heavens had of course opened and after giving it a good 40 minutes we decided that this part of the course would have to be abandoned. The good news was that we had extra time to attempt to finish off the buffet, exceptionally good value by the way from Angie's Café in Marsden!



A bedraggled Alan Stopher (standing) and Peter Rawson (in white) with prospective Observers

A second session was held at the HCS Office in Dobcross on Wednesday 12th February for those who'd not been able to make the Standedge session. Steve O'Sullivan and Hazel Mayow represented CRT at that session and yet again inclement weather, on the day of those 'hurricane strength winds', prevented the practical session taking place out on the canal. Three further individual sessions were subsequently arranged to complete the set.

We decided that the first set of reports should be completed for the end of February. These will be sent to the co-ordinators who will then put them together for their stretch of the canal before sending them to the HCS Office for final transmission to CRT. In the process, HCS will be picking up any jobs that any of the existing work parties can carry out, and there might be some ideas there for other improvements that could be promoted by HCS.

Early days but all quite exciting, and it provides even more opportunities for HCS members to get involved with

the work of the Society. At present we probably have enough willing volunteers on the east side but could do with a few more on the west. Whichever side you live on, if you think you'd like to get involved contact the HCS office.

Next issue we'll be letting you know how the project is getting on, and first experiences of putting together the reports. There may even be some things in there that we never expected!

Eric Woulds
Peter Rawson

HCS Council Members



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Street Scene Greenfield Group

SPRING NEWS

An update on volunteer activities

With well over 30 tons of stone already laid, the Group's project to repair the Greenfield section of the canal towpath will definitely continue for the foreseeable future.

With the appalling weather endured recently, many puddles have re-appeared though they are nothing compared to March last year.

Volunteers meet at 10am at a pre-arranged venue (confirmed beforehand by project leader Gill McCulley) and work for about 2 hours. As well as stone laying, the Group cuts back unsightly vegetation, removes litter etc. It's fun and good to be improving the appearance of the canal towpath.

A list of dates for the next 6 months can be obtained by emailing Gill.

Gill and a colleague were pleased to meet other volunteers/observers, HNC members and CRT staff at the Standedge

Visitors Centre in January to learn more about the Canal Observers Report form. This should prove to be a useful tool by providing regular and ongoing information on individual stretches of the Canal.

If you would like to be involved in the project, Gill can be contacted on: 01457 870364 or by email: gillmcculley@yahoo.com.



Hazel Mayow CRT



CGRA - SSGG



Inset: SSGG volunteers starting work on the towpath at Shaw Hall Bank, March 2013.

Main photo: a similar view a year on; SSGG's work bearing up well considering the appalling weather of late.

Bob Gough



Waterway Reflections

After two Summer seasons of canal cruising with my own boat, I thought it was time to reflect on some of the experiences.

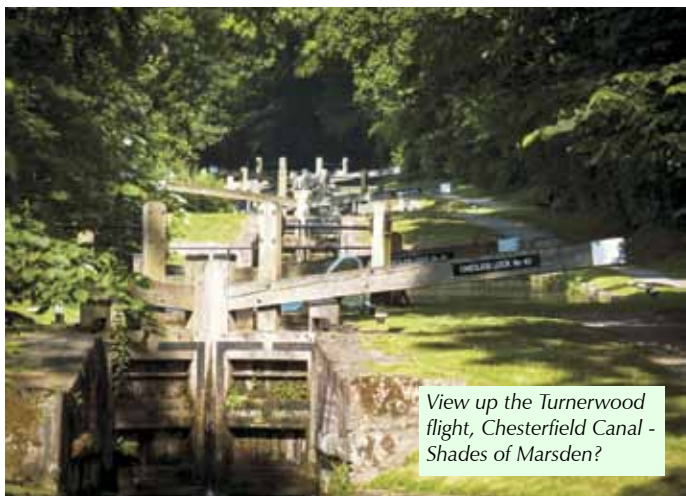
During the Summer of 2013 journeying from Sowerby Bridge in a generally east and south-east direction, my wife Ali and I have visited Doncaster, Sheffield, Worksop, Lincoln, Boston, Nottingham, Leicester, Northampton, Peterborough, Ely and Cambridge with a good deal of rural England in between.

There have been many highlights and few low points. The fine weather brought out millions of dragonflies and damselflies and we've lost count of how many times we've had sightings of Kingfishers. To my mind aquatic wildlife is one of the pleasures of boating and it was at its best this last year.

Two canals less visited by the boating fraternity provide interesting comparisons with our own. The Chesterfield Canal has quickly become a favourite of ours. It passes mainly through pleasant rural scenery, and has plenty of locks for the energetic boater, 6 being broad in dimension from the Trent to the outskirts of Retford and then 39 narrow ones to the summit at Kiveton. The final Turnerwood flight (*right*) to the top is quite a challenge and reminiscent of the Marsden Flight. It is well worth a visit on foot or by bike and a one way trip can be made by using Kiveton Park and Shireoaks stations. Our friends at the Chesterfield Canal Society have worked wonders but still have a major challenge on their hands to reopen the

sections westwards to join the isolated Staveley-Chesterfield section and have not been helped by the apparently arbitrary alignment of the proposed HS2 high speed rail link. Norwood tunnel at the summit has been closed for decades following mining subsidence so it is a bit like cruising up to Diggle or Marsden without the ability to pass through Standedge. Whilst there are few boats reaching the limit of navigation, the towpath is well-maintained (it includes a section of the National Cycle Network) and is busy with walkers and cyclists on Summer weekends. Not to be missed is the ice cream kiosk part way up.

The broad-beam Erewash Canal from Trent Junction up to Langley Mill is a post-industrial waterway through villages which would have been familiar territory to D H Lawrence. It was restored by the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association in 1973 and it was good to revisit it 37 years after our first cruise. Remarkably green in Summer time, it is difficult to envisage now how it would have looked when collieries and steelworks supplied its trade. A splendid feature which does survive is a number of beautifully constructed lace mills in Long Eaton and Sandiacre (*pictured above right*)



View up the Turnerwood flight, Chesterfield Canal - Shades of Marsden?

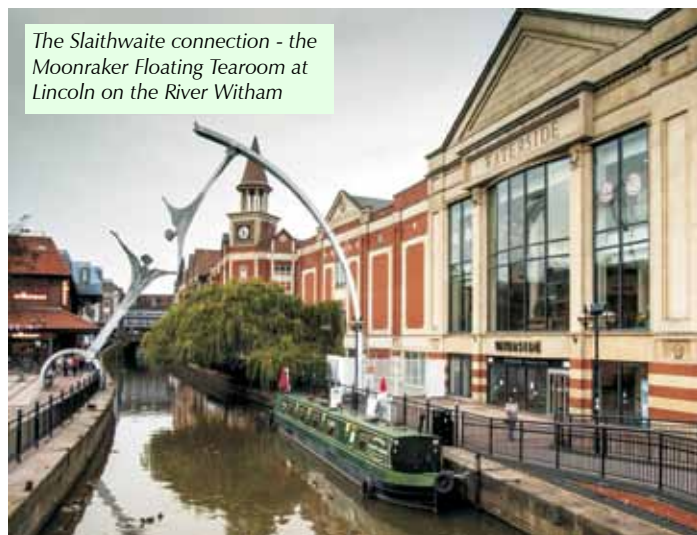


Moorings at Sandiacre on the Erewash Canal with Springfield Mill in the right background

is Springfield Mill built in 1888). They have largely been converted to residential use and give character to the waterway in the same way that mills still do in our own Colne Valley. The Erewash does not have the hills to go with the mills but it does provide an excellent walking and cycling route in a predominantly urban area.

During the 2013 season we came across two unexpected connections with the Huddersfield Narrow. Many of us wondered what had happened to the Moonraker Floating Tearoom which had been a welcome sight on the Slaithwaite towpath since the 1990s. The Moonraker broke new ground and its former owner

Val Todd showed admirable confidence in our canal well before restoration was complete. Nowadays we are spoiled for choice of tearooms and coffee shops in Slaithwaite but it hasn't always been the case. I was pleased to come across the Moonraker, still recognisable, but at a new location in the centre of Lincoln (left) although it is now

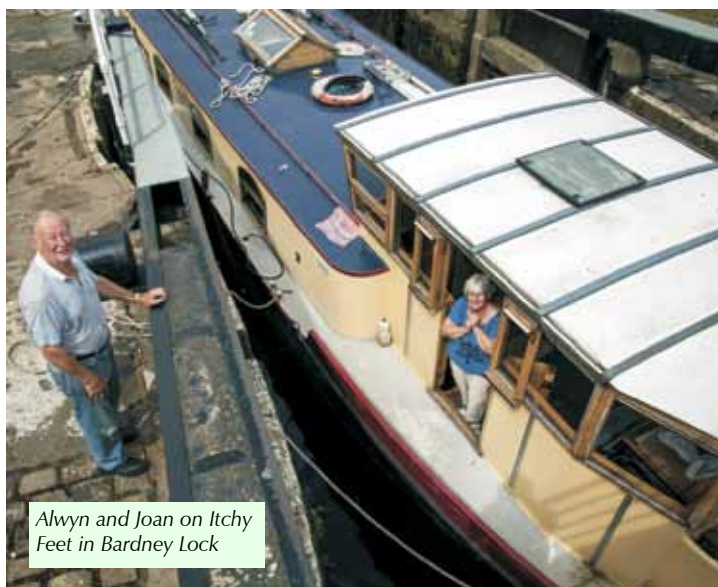


The Slaithwaite connection - the Moonraker Floating Tearoom at Lincoln on the River Witham

badged as the Ice Cream Floating Love Boat with such delights as 'Moonracker (sic) Mega Smoothies'! No doubt competition from other cafés here will be fierce but the owner is bound to experience a higher footfall in such a striking location.

Pennine Link readers of more than two years will recall our last editor Alwyn Ogborn sailing off with his partner Joan on their self-build Dutch barge. Rather out of scale for the 'Narrow' it was nevertheless constructed at

Mossley 'Docks'. We came across 'Itchy Feet' at Bardney Lock on the River Witham between Lincoln and Boston. It was good to catch up with Alwyn and Joan and have a tour of their spacious and well-appointed craft. Living full time on the boat they don't visit the Pennines much but keep in touch with what is going on through Pennine Link and the emailed Pennine Link Extra.



In September and October we ventured onto the River Nene, the Middle Level and the River Great Ouse and its Fenland tributaries. Each has its own character and there must be few rivers in the UK to rival the beauty of the Nene between Rushden and Peterborough. The fens have a character of their own and it seems counter-intuitive to be travelling along above farmland on watercourses which are designated as rivers.

Many of the rivers on the English lowlands are highly managed. After the challenges of trying to cruise on the capricious Calder last Autumn it has come as a pleasant surprise

to find that water levels vary little on the Great Ouse and its tributaries. This is down to the major engineering works based on the far-sightedness of Dutchman, Cornelius Vermuyden who designed the drainage system 350 years ago. Floodwaters are directed down relief channels. The pumps which drain the farmland up into the rivers limit the amount of run-off to manageable proportions. This area has some aspects in common with the troubled Somerset Levels but does not appear to have suffered in the same way. Lower rainfall in the East helps and in the Fens the Dutch influence is still strong.

I have drawn some comparisons between facilities provided by the Canal and River Trust and those provided by the Environment Agency (EA), Middle Level Commissioners and the River Cam Conservancy. Our experience is that CRT performs to a generally high standard throughout. Published information can be inaccurate or out of date, particularly when it comes to the downloadable 'Boater's Guides', but the facilities themselves are good and kept clean by their staff and contract cleaners. The EA's provision is more spartan and in some cases quite poorly maintained. The Middle Level is primarily a drainage body and has no legal ability to charge licence fees so it is not surprising that these tend to be supplied by local authorities with a consequently variable standard. The Cam Conservancy's facilities are provided by EA but the Conservancy charges 10% of one's annual cruising licence for a 90 day visitor licence so many will think twice before venturing up to Cambridge. It has to be said though that cruising along the Cambridge backs in the 'off' season is one of the top

cruising experiences in the UK. Punters and rowers are the Cam Conservancy's principle customers and we came across some peculiarities unique to this river.

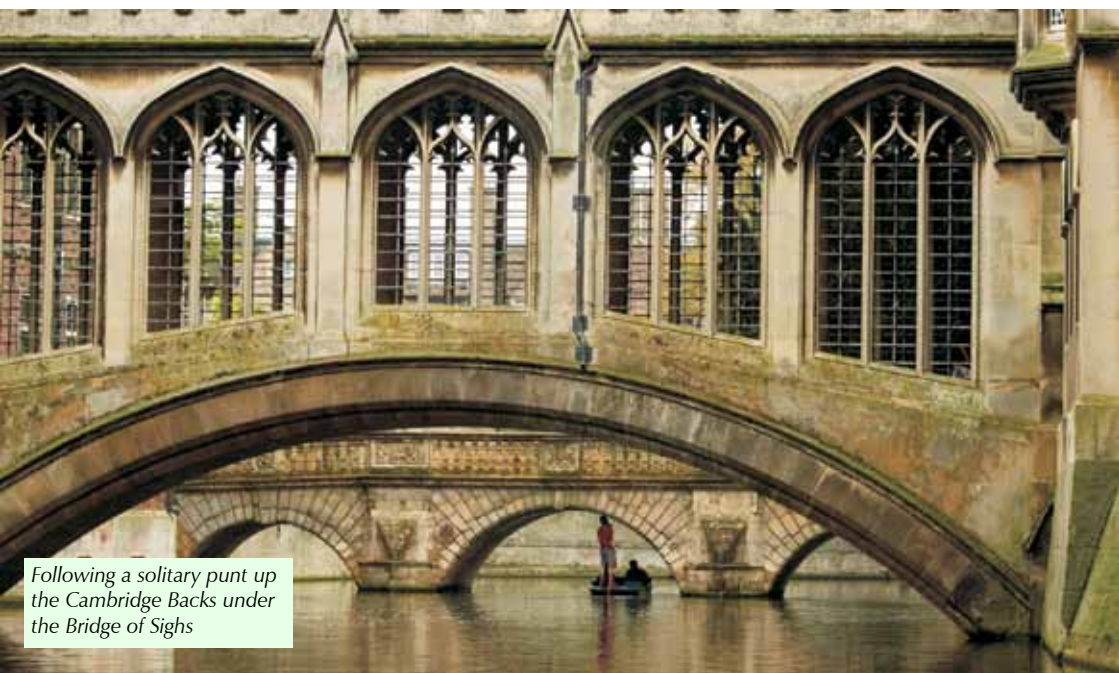


Moorings can be quite difficult to find on navigable drains and rivers so careful planning is required using the various publications available. Time will tell whether the Inland Waterways Association's long term aim of a single canal and river conservancy will ever come to fruition. In the meantime boaters will continue to pay fees to different bodies as they travel around the system and different standards of visiting boater provision will pertain.

Our narrowboat, Merdeka ('Freedom' in Malay) has been moored for a well-earned Winter rest at March in Cambridgeshire. With Spring in the air, we're starting to plan this year's cruise.

Alan Stopher

All photos by the author



Following a solitary punt up the Cambridge Backs under the Bridge of Sighs

Leaving a Legacy to the Society

The Society's Council undertakes an annual review of its Five Year Rolling Business Plan. The purpose of the Plan is to prioritise our activities in the context of the Vision for the future of the Society. This is ***"to ensure the viability and promotion of the Huddersfield Broad and Narrow Canals as navigable waterways within the overall network in perpetuity."***

Currently the Society relies on its reserves to fund its operations on a deficit basis. Clearly this cannot continue indefinitely. We therefore plan to move onto a sustainable footing within the next five years so that we can achieve our vision. To this end, amongst the goals set out in our Business Plan is the need to increase income from donations and legacies which have the potential to make a very important contribution to our fundraising

New legislation has increased the tax benefits of leaving money to charities. As a result, any gifts you make to a 'qualifying' charity such as the Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd - during your lifetime or in your Will - will be exempt from Inheritance Tax. A donation to charity in your Will may also reduce the rate that tax is paid at. *(To qualify for the reduced rate you must leave at least 10 per cent of the net value of your estate to a qualifying charity.)*

If you have already made a Will but would now like to add the Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd as a beneficiary, a simple Codicil can be used to include us. A sample Codicil form together with instructions can be downloaded from our web site or a paper copy can be obtained by contacting the Society office.

If you do not have a Will, the MoneySavingExpert website gives good advice on how to obtain one: www.moneysavingexpert.com and follow the *family/free-cheap-wills* links.

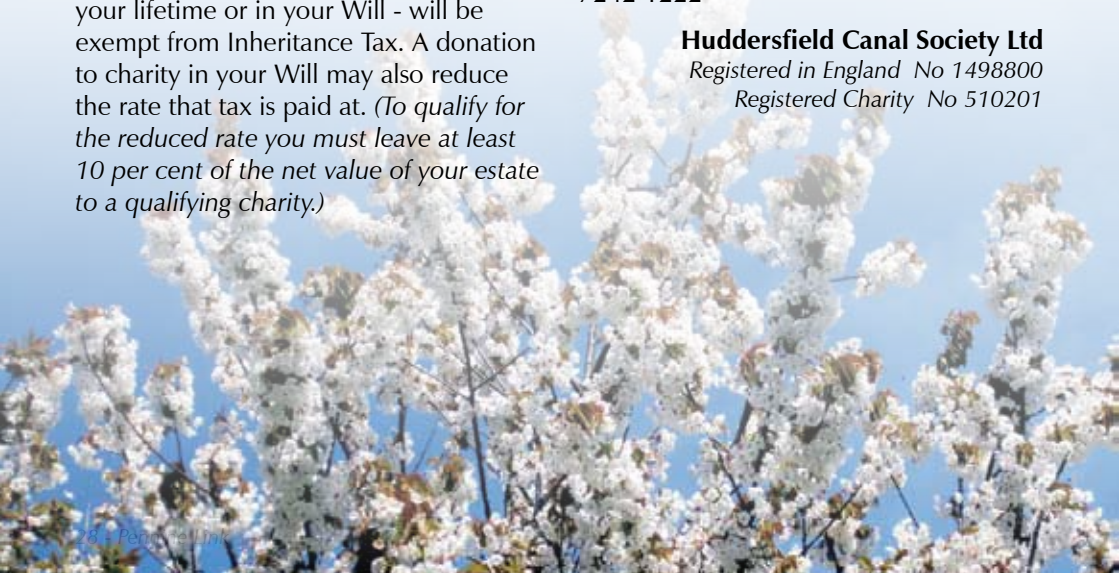
The Huddersfield Canal Society and its employees are not qualified to give legal advice. If you are worried about how best to draft a Will or Codicil, we do recommend you obtain professional advice from a solicitor with experience in Wills and Probate.

You can find a solicitor by contacting The Law Society at: www.lawsociety.org.uk and follow the *choosingandusing/findasolicitor.law* links or by phoning their Helpline on 020 7242 1222

Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd

Registered in England No 1498800

Registered Charity No 510201



Water Taxi Helps Out With Reunion Celebration

The Society was pleased to join in when four couples, who all met each other in the Autumn of 1963 when 'freshers' at Manchester University, recently revisited the north-west to celebrate their 'fiftieth'. During a visit to Standedge Tunnel and the Marsden Jazz Festival, Alan Kershaw and Paul Leeman turned

out to crew the boat between Marsden and the Tunnel Visitor Centre on a chilly and very wet morning.

After getting married to their respective partners in the late 60s and early 70s, each couple went their separate ways but have remained very close friends over the intervening years.

They travelled for the weekend from their homes in Hampshire, Oxfordshire, North Yorkshire and Berkshire and were not only extremely grateful for the ride, but also for the warm welcome extended by Alan and Paul, as they told the story of the Tunnel, the Canal and the Society.

Tony Zajac



Alumni Reunited!

Notice of the 2014 AGM

HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY LIMITED

Notice is hereby given that the Thirty Fourth Annual General Meeting of the above named Company will be held at The Watershed, 22 Bridge Street, Slaithwaite, HD7 5JN on Thursday 19th June, 2014 at 7.00pm to transact the following business:

1. To approve the Minutes of the 2013 Annual General Meeting.
2. To receive and adopt the Accounts for the Company for the year ending 31st December 2013 together with the Report of the Council of Management and of the Accountants thereon.
3. To elect Accountants and authorise the Council of Management to fix their remuneration.
4. To re-elect Mrs. Patricia Bayley as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
5. To re-elect Mr. Graham Birch as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
6. To re-elect Mr. Alan Stopher as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
7. To confirm Mr. Peter Rawson as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
8. To confirm Mr. Eric Woulds as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
9. To consider any other nominations*.
10. Any other business.

DATED the 20th Day of March 2014
By Order of the Council

M. H. McHugh, Company Secretary

* Any member must give notice, in writing, of their intention to propose any other member for election and that member give notice in writing, signed, indicating his/her willingness to be elected. Such notices must be submitted to the Secretary, Mike McHugh, Huddersfield Canal Society, Transhipment Warehouse, Wool Road, Dobcross, Oldham, OL3 5QR not less than four nor more than twenty-eight intervening days. Such proposals shall be voted upon at the Meeting, either by a show of hands or ballot according to the wish of the member being proposed.

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. The Form of Proxy enclosed must be completed and returned to the Administrator, Huddersfield Canal Society, Transhipment Warehouse, Wool Road, Dobcross, Oldham, OL3 5QR before the date of the Meeting. A proxy must be a Member of the Company.

Wildlife on your Car Bonnet



Visitors to the Wool Road Car Park may well encounter our ‘pet’ Heron. It has quickly learned that cars mean people and food!

P	R	K	I	L	G	M	C	S
I	M	G	P	S	C	R	L	K
L	C	S	R	K	M	I	G	P
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M	K	L	S	R	I	C	P	G
R	P	C	G	M	L	S	K	I

Solution to Jidoku 29

Bob Cough

MEMBERSHIP RATES

Individual	£9.00
Family	£11.00
Life	£90.00
Associate	£15.00
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COPY DATE

Articles, letters and comments for Issue 186 of Pennine Link should reach the Editor at Transhipment Warehouse, Wool Rd, Dobcross, OL3 5QR by **23rd May 2014**

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