

# Pennine Link

Magazine of the Huddersfield Canal Society



# Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd

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**Bob Gough** *Administrator*



The 2013 Accounts for Huddersfield Canal Society Limited are now ready to view online. Go to our website and see the Members' Area at the foot of the page.

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

# Pennine Link

Issue 186



Eric Wounds

*This year's Stalybridge Carnival weekend (21/22 June) enjoyed glorious sunshine and the Society supported the event with a boat gathering,*

*organised by Director Peter Rawson, and providing free boat trips on 'Still Waters'. A full account of the weekend will be given in your Autumn Edition.*

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Cover: St George combats the Dragon at the Standege Visitor Centre's St George's Day celebrations. Photo: Alan Stopher





## Editorial

At our successful and enjoyable forty year celebration event, which took place at the Marsden Mechanics Institute on April

4<sup>th</sup>, the toast repeated around the room was *“congratulations on forty successful years and here’s to the next forty”*.

For me, as someone who has been an active member of the Society for a relatively short period of time, it was great to meet and hear the reminiscences of numerous long standing Society members. People who had been involved in the early days of the Society and whose labours had brought about the first stages in the restoration project. I can only admire their commitment, enthusiasm, dedication and belief that the “Impossible Restoration” was not “Impossible” and that it was worth working to achieve.

Listening to these tales and recognising the magnitude of their achievement in turn led me to contemplate implications of the second part of the toast – the bit about the next forty years. We cannot know what the future holds, but those of us who are currently responsible for the stewardship of the Society, and those who succeed us, have a duty to those who worked so hard to bring about restoration to ensure the sustainability of their achievements.

In so saying, I have recently been reminded of two critical issues which have the potential to affect the future of our canals. The first is the fact that the twenty year Operation and Maintenance

Funding Agreement entered into by the three local authorities is coming to an end with the planned Sinking Fund never having been achieved. There are still five years to go, but time flies and when 2020 comes there will be a sizeable hole in the maintenance budget. Unless a further agreement can be reached with the three Councils, the slack will need to be picked up by CRT.

Following on from this, the second issue is that the funding of CRT itself is not guaranteed in perpetuity. The initial agreement is that the Charity will be underwritten for fifteen years from 2012 after which it should aim to be self-supporting. It is to be hoped that this will be achieved, but nothing is certain.

As a Society, there is nothing we can do to plug major financial gaps, but what we can do is lobby and influence those charged with making funding decisions to prioritise and safeguard our canals.

At a Local Authority level, I am not optimistic that further support will be forthcoming. Cuts in Council budgets are regularly in the news and it is difficult to envisage the trend being reversed. However, many of those reading this will be voters in one of the three authorities and in the period up to 2020 it will be for us a Society, and as individual members, to influence the decision makers by arguing the case for supporting our Canals as a huge asset to the area.

However, in anticipation that we are unsuccessful in our efforts at a local level we also need to do all in our power to ensure that CRT are willing and able to fill the funding gap from their own resources when the time comes.

In the two years it has been in existence we have developed a positive and constructive relationship with the Trust. We have our regular Operation and Maintenance meetings, we participate in the regional users forum meetings, we are aligning our volunteer activities through the Observer project and we are represented on the Manchester and Pennine and the Museums and Attractions Partnerships.

As a Society we need to consolidate and build upon these positive beginnings in our relationship with CRT in the period up to 2020 and beyond and come to be recognised at all levels within the Trust as a positive, informed and respected voice to be heard and listened to on matters concerning our Canals.

If we do this and pursue with vigour the aims of our recently approved and updated five year Business Plan, we will be protecting and honouring the legacy of those who had the vision to believe that the Impossible Restoration really was possible.

Changing the subject, I have, in recent months, been enjoying looking at the area of our website where Bob has provided access to all of the back numbers of Pennine Link. In doing so, it is noticeable they tend to include items by a number of different contributors, by no means all of whom are members of Council. By contrast, I am conscious that the focus has come to be on items penned by current Council members.

The fact is that this is the Society's magazine and it is not and should not just be the preserve of Council. As Editor, therefore, I would be happy to receive and consider for inclusion items from any member of the Society.

So if you have a tale to tell, boating experiences to relate or thoughts that you wish to share, please let us have them by sending them, preferably in electronic format, to Bob at the office.

Talking of Bob, and he won't thank me for this, I was pleased that we were able to mark his 25 years plus service to the Society by making a more than deserved presentation to him at our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary evening. I am the latest in the line of editors of Pennine Link, but it is Bob who today and for many years has made sure that our magazine reaches you in its attractive and high quality format. So my personal thanks and congratulations to Bob for his service to the Society and in particular to Pennine Link.

Finally another brief personal item. I have mentioned elsewhere that Nick Smith, who has, for a number of years, served as Enterprise Manager for our region under BW and subsequently CRT, is moving to a new post within CRT. I worked with Nick in my previous life at Oldham Council and have continued these links both through HCS and in my CRT role. He has, at all times, been happy to meet with and support our Society and for this I would like to thank him and wish him well in his new role.

**And finally**, as I write this piece in the middle of June with its almost endless hours of daylight it seems to me so far that the weather gods are being fairly kind. However, whatever the weather and in whatever way you chose to enjoy the waterways – afloat or on foot – make the most of Summer 2014.

**Graham Birch**



## Chairman's Report

The 40th Anniversary of your Society has come and gone and from my observations and the feedback I've had it was a successful evening.

My only regret was not having a chance to personally meet all who attended during what turned out to be a hectic evening. The contributions from our guest speaker Bob Watson about the Sobriety Project at the Yorkshire Waterways Museum and from Peter Toon of Mikron Theatre Group, showed many parallels with our Society's need to reinvent itself over 40 years.

An excellent turnout of members and supporters including some who were on the first committee ensured there were many memories to share. It was also good to hear from absent friends including our Patrons, Timothy West and Prunella Scales, who were in the thick of work commitments and unable to make the journey North.

The Summer cruising season is in full swing and Hill Top reservoir, Slaithwaite, is back in action. The only fly in the ointment is the deteriorating guillotine gate mechanism at Lock 24E which has reached the state where CRT staff have had to be present to work boats through since March. The Waterways Manager is determined that it will not fail during the Summer holidays and has scheduled a two week stoppage from 23rd June to 6th July during which time contractors will repair the mechanism.

Consultation on next Winter's stoppage programme on the Huddersfield Narrow has started and works to 9 locks are being proposed.

The canal observers are giving regular feedback on their sections. If anyone else would like to join this team I'm sure that they will be made welcome. Trevor's work

party is out and about alternate Fridays along the Narrow cutting back towpath vegetation, greasing gear and painting.

Our 12-seat trip boat, Marsden Shuttle, is looking pristine following its Spring repaint done professionally following sterling preparation by the boat volunteers.

A new member with a Human Resources background is helping to improve our volunteer recruitment and training processes. I'm pleased to say our numbers of volunteers are increasing once more. To all those who have recently joined us as volunteers, welcome to the team and I hope that your experience proves beneficial to you as well as to us. My thanks as always go to all our volunteers for dedication and hard work in improving our canal environment and promoting the Society and its waterways.

Last year the Huddersfield Canal Society made a commitment to step up its involvement in the Standedge Visitor Centre. Elsewhere in this edition you will see my report on the St George's Day event at the Centre which benefited from the contributions made by our staff and volunteers. In mid-May our administrator, Bob Gough, gave a talk to a visiting group from the Council of British Archaeology where he was able to give the group the benefit of his knowledge of the history of the buildings at Tunnel End.

By the time you read this Stalybridge Carnival will have taken place. The Society has worked closely with the Town Team to organise a boat gathering and a trip boat to add interest and colour to the regular event. Council member and local resident Peter Rawson has worked hard to drum up support from local boaters.

Just as I was starting to 'pen' this article, I was faced with a decision on the Society's proposal to host a boat gathering and run a

trip boat at Kirklees College's Huddersfield Waterfront campus during the Tour de France weekend of 5th/6th July. Our contacts at the College had spent several months trying to engage commercial partners to the Chapel Hill site in order to justify hosting a sizeable event including a big screen and seating for those watching the Tour pass by. Calder Navigation Society were prepared to bring their elegant trip boat Savile so that we could operate the Shuttle in tandem. In the end it wasn't to be. Without commercial input, the College could not justify opening their building over the weekend and with no toilets and washing facilities for volunteer boat crews and stallholders available I had no choice but to cancel the event. I still expect some boaters to moor nearby as there are rings and a grass strip which will take mooring pins in the length between Manchester Rd, Longroyd Bridge and the western end of the former Sellers Tunnel. Accommodation for Tour de France fans is in short supply so self-reliant boaters have an advantage.

In our office Bob Gough has been working on upgrading our computer systems following the withdrawal of support for Windows XP. The upgrade to Windows 7 has not been without its difficulties and I am grateful for his tenacity in seeing the job through. After almost 26 years in post Bob has seen many changes and always rises to the challenge. Claire, our part-time Marketing Officer, has continued to promote our activities including keeping the website current, issuing Pennine Link Extras to those on our email list and delivering leaflets to our contacts along the canal. Every event your Society organises or contributes to is different and each come with their own challenges when working with other partners. We're lucky as a Canal Society in having such dedicated staff to rely on.

Other projects have a much longer lead-in time. Plans are being laid in the South Pennines for a bid for EU Leader funds to

continue the good work on bringing visitors to our area and investing in infrastructure. On behalf of the Society I attended an initial workshop to help shape the bid where we developed a list of features that made our area special and established what we would like to see improved. If successful, Leader funds could be applied to much needed towpath improvements.

My wife, Ali and I have already taken in 5 weeks of river and canal cruising this season mainly in the lowlands of the Cambridgeshire Fens. When we reached Bedford on the Great Ouse at the end of April we were only 16 miles from the Grand Union Canal at Milton Keynes. It was good to come across volunteers from the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterways Trust who are campaigning for a new link between the two towns. By comparison with our own Shuttle, their community trip boat, the John Bunyan, is massive being 72ft by 10ft, and carries 60 people. Plans for the link first gained support from local businessmen over 200 years ago. Now, with the emphasis on leisure and the need to regenerate derelict brickworks sites along the route, there is every chance that the Trust's long term plans could come to fruition.

Our Society has been a beacon for canal restoration and I'm pleased that from time to time we can help shine the light for others. It was with this in mind I agreed to be interviewed at Stalybridge for a new short video made to coincide with the Canal & River Trust's new initiative to support restoration projects. In a welcome move, two staff have been recruited by CRT to work with Societies across the country to further extend the waterways network. As with our own project, the focus is on regeneration of canal corridors to create an environment beneficial to all.

Enjoy your Summer whether it is spent locally or whether you follow what is happening on our canals from afar.

**Alan Stopher**



## Manchester & Pennine Update

It is hard to believe that it is already two years since the Canal and River Trust (CRT) was officially launched to take over responsibility for our canals from

British Waterways. The charitable status which it enjoys has enabled it to broaden its remit and *“aim to inspire as many people as possible to connect with our canals and rivers.”*

The Manchester and Pennine (M and P) Partnership is fully signed up to this mission statement and we are therefore in the process of planning our second annual ‘Outburst’ Conference. The first such event was held in May 2013 at the Lowry in Salford and, attended by more than 150 people, it proved a great success.

This year’s event will again be held in partnership with, and sponsored by, The Healthy Waterways Trust. It will be at the Mechanics Institute, Princess Street, central Manchester on 19th June 2014. The venue is close to the Rochdale Canal and the day will conclude with an optional guided visit to the city centre section of the Canal.

Guest speakers at the event will include Canal Laureate Jo Bell, Chief Executive of the CRT Richard Parry and John Leyland of the Environment Agency. The emphasis again will be on consultation and engagement with our partners and canal users with the aim of keeping our manifesto as a living document.

Planning for the Conference was a major item on the agenda for our Partnership meeting which took place at Middlewich Town Hall on April 3rd. The agenda also covered several other major items, of which

I would like to highlight the following:

### **Application for Award of Green Flag(s)**

Established in 1996, the Green Flag Award scheme has become well known and recognised as the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces in the United Kingdom. The programme is managed by the Keep Britain Tidy organisation under licence from the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Any, free to enter, public park or green space is eligible to apply for an Award and we learned that colleagues Walter Menzies and Keith Sexton had recently met with Keep Britain Tidy to investigate whether canal corridors might be able to apply.

Keith told us that the response was encouraging and we discussed the issues that might be involved in preparing a credible application in respect of a canal corridor. For example, would it be feasible for the whole length of a canal to be the subject of a submission? If not, what sort of length would be appropriate? Also, given that the status, if awarded, is reviewed annually, could we commit the resources necessary to ensure year on year renewal?

The outcome was a unanimous decision, in principle, to work towards submitting an application for consideration for the 2015 award round. This would be the first bid in any CRT region and a formal announcement of the bid and of the chosen canal is expected to be made at the June 19th conference.

### **Middlewood Locks and the Ordsall Chord Railway link**

It was explained that Middlewood is a large and important vacant site close to central Manchester and fronting onto a restored



section of the Manchester, Bury and Bolton Canal (MB&B). If and when developed, it has the potential to allow the creation of a high quality mixed use development which will substantially enhance the canalside environment. However, the preferred route of the proposed Ordsall Chord railway line, which will provide a direct link between Manchester's two main line stations Piccadilly and Victoria, crosses the site.

The preferred route takes the line on a viaduct across the north end of the site, leaving a substantial developable area and relating in a satisfactory manner to the restored canal section. This option is supported by the landowners, Salford Council and the CRT.

However, objections have been raised over the proposed route on Heritage grounds and an alternative, which bisects the site, has been suggested by the objectors. This alternative route would diminish the potential of the vacant land, involve major reconstruction works

to the restored section of the MB&B and be detrimental to the long term objective of securing further restoration.

A public inquiry is being held into the merits of the objection and all parties, including CRT, are anxiously awaiting the outcome.

### **Piccadilly Undercroft**

The saga of how to deal with this issue continues and at the Partnership meeting we had a further, inconclusive, debate as to the best means of dealing with it. It is increasingly clear that there is a complex range of legal, public safety and engineering issues involved and plotting a course through them is extremely difficult. The only certainty is that things must change and it is probably impossible to find a solution with which all parties concerned will be entirely content.

### **Who are we?**

### **Canal and River Trust Video**

In the course of the meeting, we were also introduced to the Trust's new promotional



*The Diggle Flight - If eligible and selected ... a strong contender?*

Bob Cough

video – “Who Are We”. This is a high quality, professionally produced, short video promoting canals – whether for sailing, walking, fishing or just watching the world go by – as an antidote to the hustle and bustle of modern life.

The video is well worth watching and can be seen online by going to the Trust’s website where it is embedded in the home page. Alternatively, it can be accessed via YouTube. Simply go to the YouTube website and type in Canal and River Trust where you will find this and many other canal related film clips.

### Google Trekker

Whilst online, it is also worth looking at the results of the Trust’s Google Trekker project. The Trust took the Trekker equipment, on loan from Google, from August until November 2013. The result is that footage of over 130 miles of waterways will be available online so that people can make a virtual trip around a variety of waterway locations. Imagery already available includes the Bingley five-rise locks and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

### Skills for the Future

More positive news came in the report that the Trust has been awarded £607,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund – Skills for the

Future Programme to train forty-two new heritage workers. Fourteen trainees will be recruited each year for the next three years, with each post lasting 12 months, to learn skills such as lime mortaring, stonemasonry and carpentry. The trainees will work alongside CRT staff on programmes such as lock gate replacement and major works to lock chambers and masonry.

### Nick Smith

For the past two years, Nick Smith has served as CRT’s Enterprise Manager for the Manchester and Pennine Region; having moved from British Waterways where, operating out of the Wigan office, he had the same role.

At our partnership meeting, he announced that shortly he would be moving to a new post within CRT as Enterprise Manager for the North West Region. He assured us that steps were in place to appoint a replacement and since he would be remaining within CRT, he would be able to support the new post holder and ensure a smooth transition. The Partnership wished him well and thanked him for his considerable efforts on its behalf.

### Graham Birch

Trustee, Manchester and Pennine  
Waterways Partnership



## **CLOGGER’S COTTAGE**

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*\* A superb location beside the Huddersfield Narrow Canal*

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Since we started there have been some changes in CRT personnel but this hasn't affected the relationship that was established or the way the information is handled. In short, regular reports are prepared by the CO's and sent to a group co-ordinator and the HCS Office, where it's bundled together and sent to Nick Atkinson, the Customer Operations Supervisor, Manchester and Pennine Waterways. At this point any issues that aren't already known about are added to the CRT maintenance schedule, or if it looks more urgent are dealt with as soon as possible. Initially, the reports were going to be monthly but it soon became apparent that 'formal' reports weren't necessary every month – CO's are usually out and about on the canal at fairly frequent intervals so if they see anything that needs reporting in between they just

 <b>HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY</b> <b>CANAL OBSERVER - MONTHLY REPORT</b>			
Section <b>17</b>		Inspected by <b>Steven G Wilson</b>	
Reporting Period: From <b>1-Mar-14</b>		To <b>31-Mar-14</b> Total Hours <b>2.5</b>	
ITEM	LOCATION	NOTES	
<b>Unrecorded Infrastructure</b>  <b>Channel</b>		Br 96 to 99W 85% of length built up with silt and vegetation up to 1m wide along east side linc to 1.5m behind on both sides of 1st bend. 99W to 100W Mature trees in W bank - not obscuring navigation. 100W to 11W Surface of pond covered with algal scum at 12" depth along left bank. Navigation boating leaning. Large branches in centre of channel. 11W to Scout Tunnel 50% of W bank built up with silt and vegetation.	
		Br 96 to 99W 80% poor, 20% fair. Water discharges off retaining wall onto towpath near coal conveyor. 99W to 100W 60% poor, 40% fair. 100W to 11W 10% fair, 90% good, missing siltage to byreswash culvert near 11W. 11W to Scout Tunnel 70% fair, 30% good.	
<b>Towpath</b>		Br 96 to 99W Generally covered by grass and vegetation and observed by silt bulking. On W 50% of wall is missing at intervals and naturally replaced by collapsed embankment stabilised by vegetation. 99W to 100W 5' wall - satisfactory. W wall poor, mature trees abutting and growing in wall - good. W wall is paved embankment. 100W to 11W 50% of W wall built is poor - non-existent.	
		11W to Scout Tunnel	
<b>Washwall</b>		Br 96 to 99W 50% of small trees in W bank recently cut down. 99W to 100W Small trees behind W washwall at 10W. 100W to 11W Occasional small trees/taplings along W bank. At 10me trees leaning on W cut down but some in wall still need removing. 2 small trees leaning at 45 degrees over towpath at 100m from 11W on E. 11W to Scout Tunnel 50% of W bank built up with silt and vegetation and small trees.	
		11W to Scout Tunnel	
<b>Vegetation</b>		Br 96 to 99W Short lengths of stone wall collapsed, 30cm section missing. Overhanging vegetation along full length of retaining wall. 99W to 100W 15m of bwall missing, pond behind overtopping onto towpath. 100W to 11W 10m of bwall missing behind bench, 3m missing near 11W. 11W to Scout Tunnel Overhanging tree has displaced top course of retaining wall on E. (not W last report)	
		11W to Scout Tunnel	
<b>Boundaries</b>			
<b>Locks</b>			

*First page of Steve Wilson's March Report*

email the details when they see it, or if it's non urgent include it in the next bi-monthly report.

There may be opportunities for HCS work parties to do some of the work – Nick is in touch with Trevor Ellis so if they agree that something can be dealt with in this way Trevor can schedule the work in. As yet there hasn't been any work flagged up for HCS, but it's early days and the process is there for when it happens.

Nick has been really pleased with the CO scheme – at our regular liaison meeting he commented that apart from giving HCS members the chance to be more involved in the ‘stewardship’ of the Narrow and Broad Canals it means that CRT can rely on a regular stream of information about the condition of the waterways. The fact that the people who are supplying the reports are committed and informed individuals means that they are always relevant and of use.

The next step is to start seeing results from the CO information, and plans are in hand to use the data gathered to involve some of the communities along the canal corridor in joint improvement work, particularly towpath work. More information next time.

**Eric Woulds, Peter Rawson, Trevor Ellis**  
CO Co-ordinators.



## Shuttle Update & Volunteers

By the time you all read this, most of you will no doubt have seen our freshly painted and refurbished Shuttle. After a

long Winter of repairs and refurbishment we are once again up and running and better than ever.

It hasn't all been plain sailing though. As previously mentioned there now exists a small group of us who run the Shuttle, as well as dealing with the day to day maintenance and upkeep. Over the Winter period the Shuttle sailed down to Portland Basin Marina in Ashton to have an internal refit which included new (easy clean) flooring together with some new cabinets, worktops, carpet, leaks fixed and a general freshening-up of the paintwork and varnished surfaces.

We decided to do most of the external paintwork ourselves as the route back up to Standedge and traversing the Tunnel would have probably left our paintwork the worse for wear. We had a tight Easter deadline to work to which meant that we had to get on with things pretty sharpish whilst keeping an eye on the boating and waterways calendar. After our Winter appeal for volunteers to take the boat down and then back up again to Standedge, we were very heartened to hear from so many people who were in a position to help. When the Shuttle needs attention, if we cannot fix it ourselves, we nearly always sail it down to Portland Basin Marina, where Guy has a look over it, rubs his chin and says, "W-E-L-L, we could do that... however,

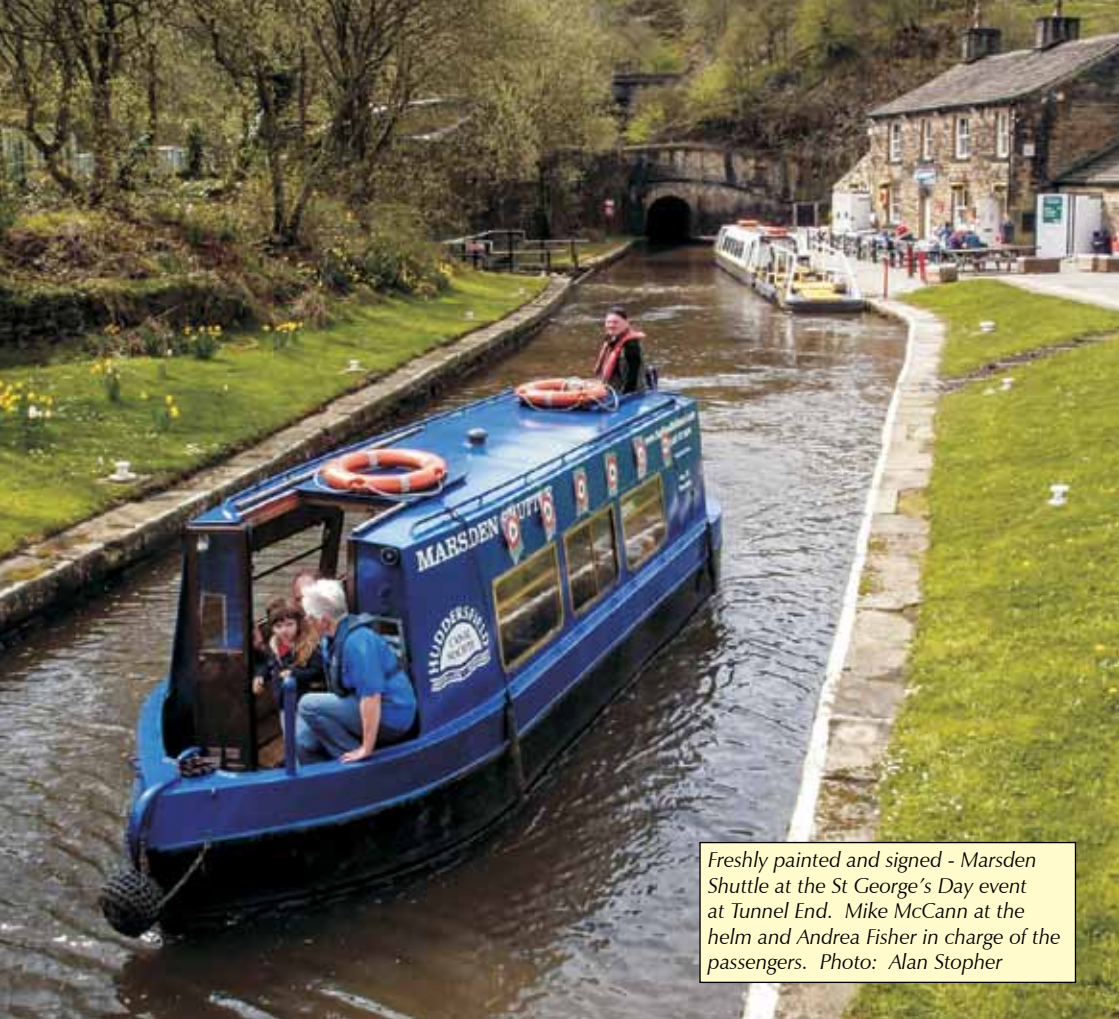
can I suggest ..." and away we go! We have had many mechanical repairs recently and have decided to renew many important items in the engine compartment.

At this point I must thank everyone who has worked so hard and given their time so freely but I must say that I have received a lot of help from my colleague, Mike McHugh, who has taken on a large part of my workload at various times when I have been unwell and made a good job of coordinating the boat tasks; thank you Mike!

These trips down to "Marineville" are not undertaken lightly as it is not like popping into your local garage to have a clutch or battery fitted. It takes a lot of planning, time and effort to move a boat; sometimes in poor weather to get the boat there and then all the way back again! Gladly, there always seems to be members who ask to be borne in mind whenever we carry out a manoeuvre such as this, which ensures good comradery, lots of puffing and panting and the odd gem of a story just waiting to be told, resulting in howls of laughter or the occasional snigger and appropriate cautionary comment to follow.

Anyway, whilst it was moored at Wool Rd., two of us took the opportunity to Karcher everything in sight on our boat above the waterline in preparation for our many undercoats of paint. After the final leg of the journey and moored up back into Marsden, dodging showers, we set about the un-glamorous task of rubbing down the old paintwork over a couple of weekends and undercoating





*Freshly painted and signed - Marsden Shuttle at the St George's Day event at Tunnel End. Mike McCann at the helm and Andrea Fisher in charge of the passengers. Photo: Alan Stopher*

over a number of days before handing it over to a specialist boat painter to complete the final coats and – voila!!

So we've got ourselves a shiny new(ish) boat. Now the hard work begins and this is where we appeal for volunteers who feel that they would like to get involved with the boat in a more "hands on" way. This means new crew members, skippers, helmsmen etc. We will give you the relevant training in whatever position you may be interested in which, in some cases, can lead to a qualification in boat operation and management.

The main point is that whatever your level of involvement with the Shuttle, you should find it enjoyable and fulfilling. If you wish to find out more, please contact our Administrator, Dr Bob Gough on 01457 871800 to register your interest in the first instance; alternatively you can email the society at:

[hcs@huddersfieldcanal.com](mailto:hcs@huddersfieldcanal.com)

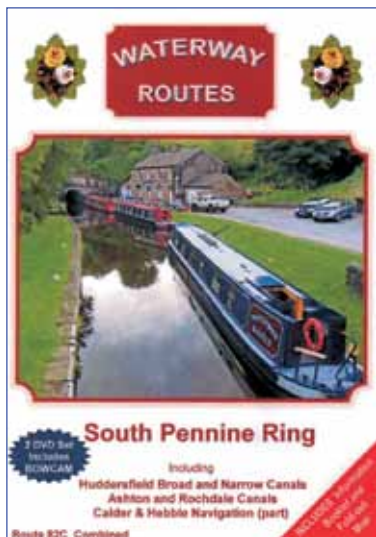
either way we look forward to extending a warm welcome to one and all.

Hope to see you soon!

**Tony Zajac**  
Boat Co-ordinator



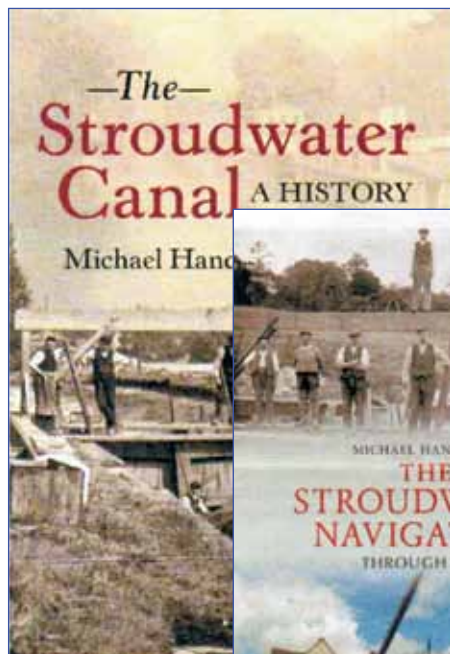
# Recent Publications



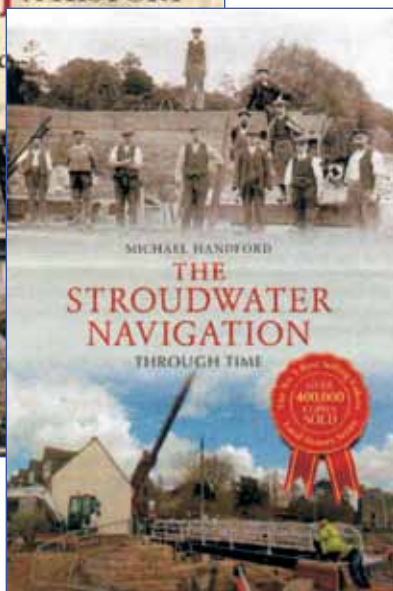
Many Members may already be familiar with the series of maps and DVDs produced by **Waterway Routes** which provide guides to the canal network. They have contacted us to let us know that they now have a pair of DVD's available for sale featuring the **Pennine Ring**. Filming took place in Summer 2013 and the production runs for about 60 minutes.

The journey starts in Manchester and proceeds clockwise around the Ring travelling West to East along the Rochdale. It then follows the Calder and Hebble to reach the Broad and then travels East to West on the Narrow to return to Manchester on the Ashton.

A second DVD is also available which has a speeded up version of the journey filmed from a forward facing Bowcam. The two can be bought separately at a cost of £12.95 and £7.95 (for the Bowcam) or together for £19.90. They can be obtained from Waterway Routes, 10 Bude Close, Nailsea, Bristol BS48 2FQ or via their website [www.waterwayroutes.co.uk](http://www.waterwayroutes.co.uk)



Also of interest are two newly published books which have been written by HCS member **Michael Handford**.



Michael has previously written and had published a Guide to the Cotswold Canals and he has now contacted us to let us know that he has written two further books which are for sale. These are: "The Stroudwater Canal – A History" and "The Stroudwater Navigation Through Time". The books are in paperback and cost £16.99 and £14.99, respectively. They are available from bookshops or direct from Amberley Publishing at: [www.amberley-books.com](http://www.amberley-books.com)

# Top hole

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A packed Mechanics hall



Guest Speaker, Bob Watson. AS



HCS President, David Sumner, makes a presentation to Bob with his wife, Lyubimka, in support. GB



Raffle Prizes



Peter Toon from Mikron. GB



What HCS has achieved in the 40 years since it was founded deserves to be celebrated and celebrate we did.

On the evening of April 4<sup>th</sup> members old and new came to Marsden Mechanics Institute for our 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party.

The evening started with us enjoying an excellent supper prepared and served by Angie's Kitchen, washed down by a drink or two. Over the meal memories were shared, incidents recalled and friends and colleagues, some no longer with us, were fondly remembered.

Moving to the more formal part of the evening we were first of all entertained by Peter Toon of the canal-based Mikron Theatre Company

Alan Stopher then reminded us of the successes of the past forty years and looked forward to future plans and activities. He spoke of the vision and dedication of the founder members, the level of achievement which restoration represented and our role in ensuring a sustainable future for our canals.

Next, our President, David Sumner, made a well-deserved award to our Administrator Bob Gough in recognition of his contribution to the Society during more than 25 years' service. Following Bob's response we were treated to a delightful impromptu rendering of a Bulgarian folk song by Bob's wife Lyubimka.

Finally our special guest, Bob Watson, gave a fascinating talk about the work of the Sobriety Project. Operating out the Yorkshire Waterways Museum it uses the Museum's resources to develop and train disadvantaged people from deprived communities.

A hugely enjoyable evening drew to a close at about 11 p.m. and we headed home looking forward to gathering again in another ten years to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**Graham Birch**

## Huddersfield Canal Society

### *Celebrating 40 Successful Years*



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



# Street Scene Greenfield Group

The Group's stone laying marathon to repair the Greenfield section of the canal towpath has now reached some 40 tons and improvements are much in evidence.

The number of puddles has dramatically reduced, partly due of course to the recent good weather as well. The project will continue indefinitely to include not just stone laying but also tidying up and cutting back vegetation, litter picking, etc.

The Group members (all volunteers) are delighted with their efforts so far when a comparison is made between the current condition of the towpath and that of only 15 months ago.

The Group meets twice a month at 10am at a pre-arranged venue (confirmed beforehand by project leader Gill McCulley) and members work for about 2 hours.

If you would like to be involved in the project, Gill can be contacted on 01457 870364 or by email: [gillmcculley@yahoo.com](mailto:gillmcculley@yahoo.com). A list of dates is available from Gill or you will find it on the CGRA/SSGG noticeboard at the Tesco Store in Greenfield.

**Steph Pelmore**



*Inset: SSGG volunteers starting work on the towpath at Shaw Hall Bank, March 2013.  
Main photo: a similar view 15 months on; SSGG's work and fine weather giving dramatic improvements for all users.*



CGRA - SSGG

Bob Cough

**SSGG IS GREENFIELD-BASED COMMUNITY ACTION TO BUILD CONFIDENCE AND PRIDE IN OUR COMMUNITY (A sub-group of Greenfield & Grasscroft Residents Association)**  
New Members welcome [info@ggra.co.uk](mailto:info@ggra.co.uk) or telephone: 01457 597666



# JIDOKU 30

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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.

## St George's Day at Standedge Visitor Centre

As part of the Huddersfield Canal Society's new informal role as a 'Friends of the Standedge Visitor Centre', we took part in the annual event to celebrate St George's Day.

Not having attended this event before I did not know what to expect but came away with the feeling that it was a much loved part of the calendar for local families and particularly children.

The event was held on the actual St George's Day which was the Wednesday in the middle of the second week of Easter holidays in Kirklees though unfortunately the week after Tameside and Oldham school holidays.

The day started slowly as we set up our new gazebo. Despite having a practice run it still took a while to erect on the lawn in front of the warehouse building and, given the occasional gust, we were grateful for the water-filled feet that held it down more effectively than guy ropes.

Visitors were slow to arrive as most knew that the highlight was later on in the afternoon. However no sooner had we set out the Canal Society stall with leaflets and sales items, Bob Gough had his first young customers for the Treasure Hunt (*below*).





Armed with plans of the site (*above*), participants were sent off to explore the whole site area looking for letters fixed to various objects. This meant that families explored further than they might have otherwise exercising the body and the brain. Once they had all the letters they were invited to complete a three word anagram on a St George's Day theme. Everyone taking part seemed to enjoy the search for clues even if some struggled with the anagram part. All those who made the effort were rewarded by a dip into the bundle of small Easter eggs and cream eggs.

Meanwhile in the first floor Thomas Bourne room at the visitor centre there was much cutting, pasting and colouring to make shields and swords organised by Canal and River Trust Duty Managers Claire Atkinson and Ellen Richards ably supported by volunteers including our own members Tricia Bayley and Steph Pelmore (*right*).





A highlight of the indoor activities was story-telling on a St George's theme by our own member Anne Barnes, who on an hourly programme had young children in rapt attention, much to the pleasure of their parents. Anne wore the uniform of the CRT Explorers who are accredited to work with children.

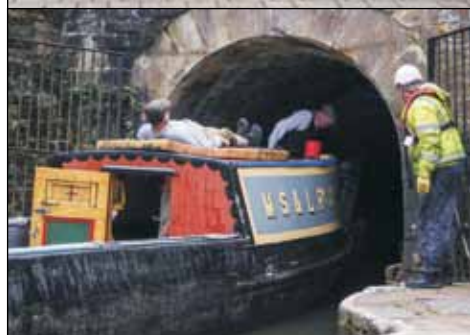
The Marsden Shuttle (*below*) resplendent in a new coat of paint was running from Lock 42E to the centre in the capable hands of experienced crew Andrea and Mike. The sun was shining and all was well with the world.





At Tunnel End itself, the cafe was doing good trade and as the afternoon progressed more and more families started to assemble expectantly to see if they could catch sight of the horse boat Maria with the crew of leggers coming through the Tunnel from Diggle.

The arrival of a horse box containing Bilbo Baggins caused much interest as did the efforts which went into 'St George' putting on his heavy attire (*left*).



As word spread of the imminent arrival of narrowboat Maria (*left*), the magnificent dragon marched down to the Tunnel mouth by its entourage led by another society member and canal observer, Ruth Gilbert. This wonderful piece of artwork (*below*) had been made in the second floor Loftspace by Janet Hagger, Sheila Hockin and Ruth.







With the welcome arrival of the boat the attendant dragon captured a young girl (*left*) who was strapped to the post in the centre of Maria. Whilst I was trying to suppress concerns over child protection, Sue Day of the Horseboating Society explained what was happening to the assembled visitors (*below*) who then followed the dragon to the lawn beside the warehouse where St George entered combat (*right*) to rescue the damsel.

It was quite a spectacle and it seemed such a shame that the beautifully made dragon came to such a sticky end. Well done to the Loftspace and the Horseboating Society whose joint efforts made it such a special event.

**Alan Stopher** (*All photos: The author*)





Cake for the victors!



# The Curious Tale of the Expanding Boat

On the 15th May, a CRT email alert saying that a boat was stuck at lock 41E, and the canal was effectively closed, aroused my curiosity. I'd never heard of a problem like this before, so I had to investigate...

The boat was the Vintage Blue, being crewed by friends of the owner en route to a berth at Wakefield. A small band of gongoozlers had already arrived at the scene by the time I got there. The crew had managed to descend the lock but the boat was stuck between the walls at the tail of the lock just past the bottom gates. A CRT team was making valiant efforts to un-wedge it and virtually all techniques were being employed including shifting loads on the boat, lowering and raising the pound between 41 and 40, and a bit of hefty rope work. The engine was also used to full capacity in an attempt to shift it but seemingly to no avail (*below*).



There were numerous comments made by the small group of onlookers, including wondering how on earth the boat had managed a passage so far without a similar incident on the West side. As Lock dimensions don't usually change overnight, I was convinced it was a boat problem as opposed to a lock problem but as time was pressing, I had to leave before any further information became available.

Apparently the CRT team was eventually successful in forcibly ejecting the boat from the Lock, but its passage East was not without further incident and it was difficult (and CRT assisted) progress as far as 28E, when it was decided that drastic action was called for. It was either a crane (ouch!) or a grinder. The latter was the preferable option and an inch or so was taken off the rubbing strips. However, CRT decided the boat should not attempt any further passage East and had to go back, presumably by being towed backwards to 31E to use the winding hole at Booth.

HNC might be a bit tight on occasions but all 6' 10" boats shouldn't have a problem with the Locks. Famously, the Mikron Theatre Company boat Tyseley is unable to navigate the HNC due to what might be termed middle aged spread – at one time I hear it was held together with chains to keep its midriff under control, since removed to make the boat more habitable. It is, however, a known issue, which is why we're unlikely to see Tyseley in Marsden. How Vintage Blue managed to get so far is still a bit of a mystery. The only explanation is that the Diggles must have done something as it came through Standedge Tunnel. Maybe they thought they could smuggle a load of their infamous mushrooms out with an unsuspecting crew. I hear they're quite heavy duty stuff.....

**Eric Woulds**

## What we Said Then ... Summer 1989

Many of you may well have already discovered and dipped into our online Pennine Link archive which, thanks to the efforts of Bob Gough, gives us access to every edition of Pennine Link since the first one in June 1974 up to the Winter 2012 Edition.

This archive provides a fascinating insight into work of the Society as it moved towards restoration and beyond and it is my intention to draw on it in this and future editions to provide a snapshot of what we were doing and planning at various points in our 40 year plus history.

On this occasion I am turning the clock back 25 years to the Summer of 1989. At that time our Chair was David Sumner and our vice chair, then as now, was Trevor Ellis. The Editor of Pennine Link was Alwyn Ogborn. The edition ran to 42 pages and contained an enviable total of 17 advertisements!

The principle event covered in this edition was the opening of Locks One, Two and Three West on the weekend of 4/5 June. This saw the passage of boats off the main canal system onto the Western end of the Huddersfield Narrow for the first time for some forty years. Moreover this was the first section of our canals (apart from the short piece under Wakefield Road bridge) to be connected to the main waterway network.

As Alwyn reflected in his editorial, "people sailing the Cheshire Ring or just visiting Ashton for our festival can now sail up to the Stalybridge boundary, although at the moment there is no winding place, and boats above 25/30ft. will have to reverse as far as Eli Whalley's

wharf at the end of the Ashton canal to turn round."

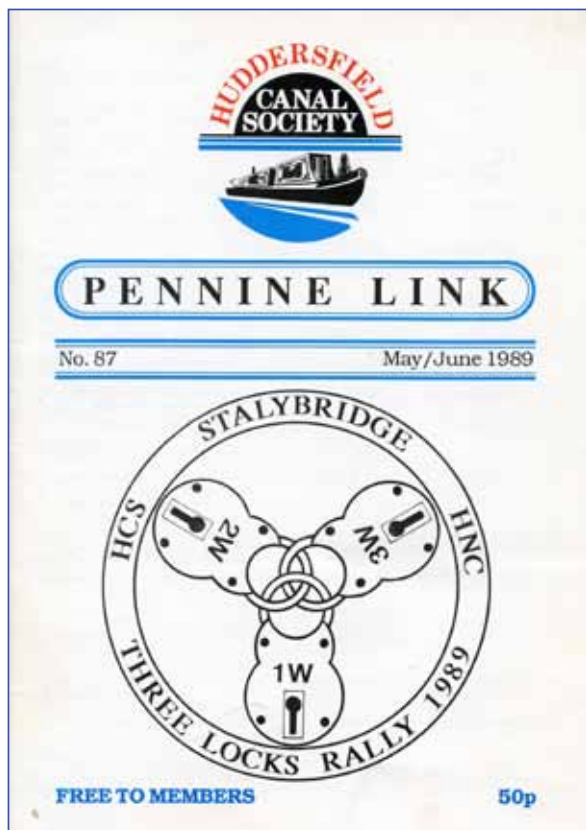
The opening ceremony involved a tape cutting at each of the three locks performed by "a glittering array of notabilities from the world of politics, waterways and commerce" comprising Euro M.P. Glyn Ford – Lock 1, John Tavare, Chairman of the Mersey Basin Campaign – Lock 2 and Ken Goodwin, Chairman of the Inland Waterways Association Lock 3.

Following the official opening it is recorded that approximately thirty-five boats made the ascent (and descent) over the course of the weekend.

Another major issue concerning the Society in the Summer of 1989 was the survey of the Standedge Tunnel which was in the process of being carried out by consultants Ove Arup and L & R Leisure. David reports that they are on target to produce their findings for a Joint Committee in the Autumn. However, he expresses concern that the full technical engineering study is not without problems; as an example he cites the fact that "roof falls and very deep siltation in the tunnel is causing worries to the survey team."

Complementing David's comments is a fascinating piece by Ove Arup Survey Engineer Glyn Walton, who describes himself as an Ove Arup Troglodyte.

He describes the work of the team over a nine week period during which they have "happily (?) poled back and forth through the tunnel and strolled through the numerous adits and cross-headings". Having done this he comments that the



check on the condition of the structure below water level.

It was promised that by early June all data from the survey would have been collected and work well advanced in evaluating and determining the extent of repairs required to the tunnel in turn enabling costs to be estimated.

Glyn's piece is concluded with the following words:

"Hail Standedge!" - those of us about to enter salute those who blasted you into existence!!!  
An Engineer Troglodyte, GLYN WALTON, OVE ARUP.

In part at least in response to cost implications arising from the tunnel survey David concludes his contribution by outlining the CHALLENGE the Society faced seeking to secure the funds needed to progress and accelerate the programme for the restoration. To this end

study has proved extremely interesting, not only from an engineering/geological/geotechnical point of view, but from an historical one also. "When in the tunnel one can sense the blood, sweat and tears that went into carving this tunnel under the Pennines", he says

At the time of writing, the above-water level survey had been completed to determine the geological formation and rock jointing within the tunnel and adits; gaining an understanding of the reasons for the various failures that have occurred. The next stage was to dewater the tunnel between the Marsden and Diggle lock systems to enable the ARUP Troglodytes to once again enter their tunnel environment to carry out a

he refers to a meeting which was shortly to take place with all interested partner organisations in an attempt to identify funding sources. The key to securing funding he suggests is to work towards a canal corridor regeneration approach and to demonstrate that restoration is about playing a real role in improving the economy and environment along the Narrow.

Meanwhile the Society's own volunteers were working at Diggle and progress is described in an article by Trevor. He reports that with the benefit of some excellent early Summer weather progress has been good.



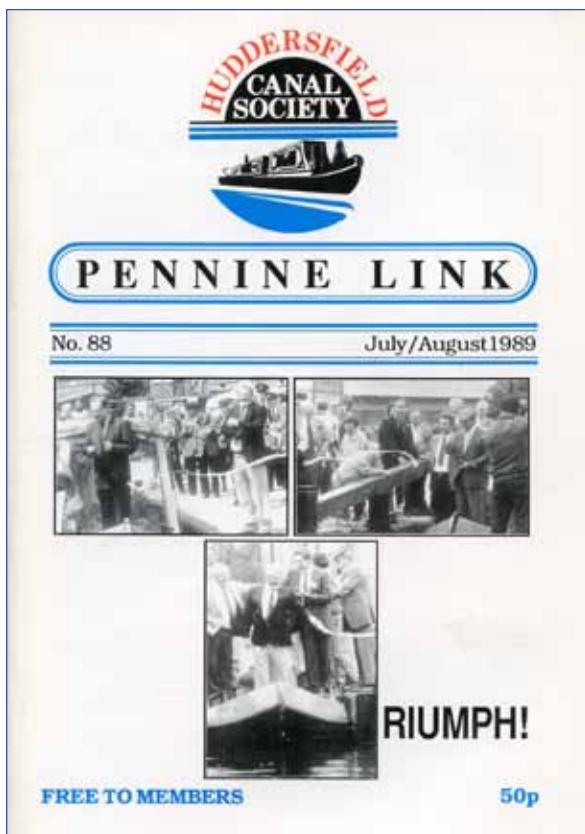
Work had been concentrating on locks 31W and 32W the latter, the summit lock, having been partly demolished infilled and weired. There had been problems due to delays in the delivery of new paddle gear. However, the gear had now been delivered and with the benefit of a newly acquired large concrete mixer work was progressing.

The report concludes with an appeal for more volunteers and for further items of building and engineering equipment including 2" pump hose and/or connectors and scaffolding. Repairs were also need to the 3" pump, which "requires some work before we can contemplate draining a lock chamber."

Finally mention must be made of contributions by Alwyn, in his editorial, and Trevor, in a separate article, on the subject of Paddle Gearing. These are fascinating to read but do not lend themselves to a short summary. What they do, however, is give an insight into the issues that

were being debated as the restoration progressed; so why not go to our website and have a look at what we said then – in Summer 1989.

**Graham Birch**



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# 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](http://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](http://www.lawsociety.org.uk) and follow the *choosingandusing/findasolicitor.law* links or by phoning their Helpline on: 020 7242 1222

**Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd**

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# 220 Club

Amongst the features at our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event was the launch of the Huddersfield Canal Society 220 Club. For those not there on the evening an introductory leaflet and membership application form was included with the Spring edition of Pennine Link. Membership is open to all members of the Society and the numbers joining up are growing all the time.

By joining, for only £2 a month, you will have the chance of winning a first prize of up to £350 or a second prize of £175 in each of the quarterly draws. Actual quarterly prize levels will, of course, depend on the numbers taking part.

## The 220 Club:

- Gives the Society useful additional income allowing it to continue its work and have an influence on your canals.
- Contributes to the varied work of the Society and helps it have a healthy future.
- Is run by Huddersfield Canal Society for its members and your support is needed.

To join you need to complete an application form. This can be downloaded from our website or we will be pleased to send you one through the post if you contact Bob or Claire at the office.



We need to emphasise, however, that for legal reasons, only Huddersfield Canal Society members are eligible to subscribe to HCS 220 Club, so if you are reading this and you are not a Society member, why not join us and then sign up to the 220 Club.

## AND here are the results of our first quarterly draw:

**Total Subscribers:** 21  
**Total Prize Fund:** £40.80

### 1st Prize:

Mr P Rawson winning £27.20

### 2nd Prize:

Mr A Broadbent winning £13.60

*Congratulations to the prize winners!*

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### MEMBERSHIP RATES

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### COPY DATE

Articles, letters and comments for *Issue 187* of Pennine Link should reach the Editor at Transhipment Warehouse, Wool Rd, Dobcross, OL3 5QR by **29th August 2014**

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