

Pennine Link

Magazine of the Huddersfield Canal Society



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

Pennine Link

Issue 188



Members may recall the sad news of Society stalwart, Alec Ramsden's passing last year. His son Graham (who works for CRT) has had a bench made, commemorating his father's involvement with the Society by an elegant inscription. Photo: Graham Ramsden

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Cover: Will the Huddersfield Narrow ever become the subject of a Jigsaw or feature on a box of Festive biscuits?



Editorial

As I am sitting writing this piece in mid-November it feels as though Christmas has already been with us for ever and by

the time you are reading this, the festive season will be well and truly upon us, with 2015 just around the corner.

The shops are, of course, full of prominently displayed gift ideas including the seasonal staples of confectionery (toffees, biscuits, chocolates etc.) and, in anticipation of the New Year, calendars.

To catch the eye and proclaim that this is not just any old tin of biscuits, but one which would be a worthy gift for valued friend or relative, the tins and boxes are adorned with attractive pictures. More often than not these are in the form of scenic views of town or country. Likewise, a favourite theme for calendars is to display scenes of “Beautiful Anyshire” with twelve selected views of the chosen region or county.

Browsing the displays of these items, it soon becomes apparent that amongst the favourite themes is the view of a canal. Amongst the views there will be one showing a brightly coloured canal boat moored outside a country inn on a Summer evening, another of a boat negotiating a lock with a crowd of fascinated spectators (gongoozlers) or perhaps a boat moving serenely through a rural landscape.

Taking these three examples and any others that come to mind, what do they all have in common? The answer is that they have **canal boats** as the focal point

of the scene. In each case, take away the boat and what are you left with? You are left with an attractive, but otherwise unremarkable, length of waterway and one that would not make the ‘cut’, so to speak, in selecting scenes for the calendar or confectionery box.

Which brings us to our own canal and the simple fact that there are not enough boats. Indeed, when out on the towpath, our Society volunteers are often asked the question “why do we see so few boats?”.

One reason for this is that it is a difficult canal to navigate because of the number of locks, but there is no evidence that this a deterrent for the committed boater. The boater who wants to scale the “Everest of the Canals”, who wants sail through the longest, highest and deepest canal tunnel and who wants to enjoy the unique perspective of the Pennine landscape offered by the Canal.

Moreover, recent work on lock gates and operating mechanisms and more consistent water levels are helping improve the boater experience which will hopefully encourage others to come and transit the canal. Further improvements at locks, such as footbridges on head gates, together with more mooring facilities along the canal would also serve to further enhance the experience for boaters, as would increasing dredging and off-side tree-maintenance.

This said, however, the shortage of boats can be attributed primarily to the limits on the number of boats imposed by CRT arising from the concerns about water availability and the capacity of the

Standedge Tunnel. Clearly the Tunnel is a constraint on boat numbers because of the need for one way working and the existence of valid health and safety issues.

However, in even the peak season the Tunnel operates only three days a week. Moreover, at the western end only boats travelling through the Tunnel are allowed up the Diggle Flight. Therefore, for four days a week this spectacular length of canal is empty. Indeed, since passing through the Tunnel is perhaps the key motivation for using the canal, boating along its whole length is governed by the Tunnel operating regime.

The obvious answer would seem to be to increase the number of Tunnel operating days so as to maximise the number of boats using it and hence the canal as a whole. It is recognised that there are cost implications for CRT in creating more tunnel slots, but recruitment and training of volunteers would help reduce costs and enable a more generous timetable to be put in place.

When this issue is broached, the other problem raised is that of water supply. The clear, although not necessarily easy answer to this, is to secure additional water supplies to feed the canal and ensure that it is navigable at all times. Consultation on the CRT's new Water Resource Strategy will perhaps offer an opportunity to devise and ultimately put in place a long term solution to this problem.

However, the issue of boat numbers exists now and we must press CRT to investigate and identify means of ensuring sufficient water to accommodate a significant increase in canal transits.

In putting these thoughts together I have been thinking back to the eve of the new Millennium, fifteen years ago, when the holy grail of restoration was in sight of finally being realised. My recollection is of a sense excitement and anticipation at the thought of the "Impossible Restoration" being almost achieved and the faith of the major funders, the local authorities and most of all the Society, being rewarded.

Now, some fifteen years later, I find myself asking: can we truly say that faith has been rewarded? Having had a role in the work myself, I am conscious that the vision shared by the partners was of a restored canal which would make a significant contribution to the regeneration of its south Pennine hinterland. That it would be a catalyst for economic investment, tourism growth and environmental enhancement.

There is sound evidence that this has been the case, but I cannot help feeling that so much more could be achieved. If, instead of having to offer a set of excuses for why it is so lightly used, we (and CRT) could promote and market a working, well used canal; a canal whose images we will be proud to find featured on those displays of festive confectionery.

Before signing off for this year, I am pleased to be able to offer three sets of thanks and congratulations. The first is a thank you to all of those who entered our annual photographic competition and my congratulations to the winning entrants.

The second, is my congratulations to our friends from Greenfield and Grasscroft who, in recognition of their work during the last 12 months on the Greenfield section of the Narrow, have won the CRT's Manchester & Pennine Volunteer



Chairman's Report

The main cruising season has now come to an end and it is time to look back on what has been generally a good summer

with a traditional mix of sunny warm weather interspersed with showers. I understand that the number of boat passages has been similar to previous years. The towpaths have been as busy as ever with walkers and cyclists getting out into the Pennine countryside.

The Winter stoppage periods have started and lock refurbishment operations are already underway on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal at lock 1W (new bottom gates), 20W (new top gate and remedial works to the floor), and grouting at locks 27E and 35E. Further works are planned at 9W, 18W, 19W, 32W, 34E and 37E before mid-March 2015. Your Society fully supports the Canal & River Trust (CRT) efforts to make improvements in lock operations and to reduce leakage where possible.

To improve operability, this winter CRT is repairing the hand-cuff locks which give added anti-vandal protection and at the same time considering which locks need them and which locks don't.

There has been sufficient water in the canal this season for the number of boats passing along the Narrow canal helped by the completion of work on Hill Top Reservoir, Slaithwaite in the Spring. We would all like to see more boats on the waterways but until more booked passages are permitted through Standedge Tunnel there will always be an upper limit. I understand from CRT that two volunteer chaperones have come forward which may assist in the number of passages being increased in 2015. A welcome increase in traffic would put more pressure on the canal's water resources. It is timely that CRT is consulting on a national Water Resources Strategy aimed at ensuring sufficient water is available throughout the network in all but the worst drought conditions. Your Society has been asked for its views and these have been included

Group of the Year award. We are of course kept up to date with the work they have done through the pages of Pennine Link and the presentation of the award is featured in their report for this issue.

The third is to thank Jon Reynolds whose entertaining item describing his journey along the Narrow in Summer 2014 I am pleased to be able to include in this issue. In doing so, may I repeat my invitation for more such contributions to Pennine Link from our members.

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.

And finally, all that now remains is for me to sign off by wishing you all a very happy Christmas and a good New Year in 2105 on and around the Narrow, the Broad and the rest of our wonderful waterway network.

Graham Birch

in feedback from the Manchester and Pennine Partnership.

Elsewhere in this issue Graham Birch tells us about the organisational changes which have been implemented in the Canal & River Trust. I have been impressed with the way that its Chief Executive, Richard Parry, has toured the country listening to customers and interested parties and also how quickly he has grasped the main issues affecting the waterways. The resulting re-organisation has set up a new centralised Asset Delivery team which will manage all the engineering and construction work across the network. The Waterway Managers in the regions lose the day-to-day management of such works and instead will have an enhanced responsibility for customer operations and services, development of partnerships and engagement with communities and volunteer coordination. I welcome the more customer focussed organisation resulting from the review as this is sure to bring about a closer relationship with organisations such as ours. I do recognise that there is a potential downside if the separation of local management from the centralised asset delivery team results in a slower response to matters requiring urgent attention to the fabric of the waterway. Vince Moran as Operations and Asset Management Director will have the responsibility to ensure this interaction works effectively.

One specific area of CRT operations which changes in the reorganisation is the management of Standedge Visitor Centre, which once again comes under the responsibility of the Waterways Manager after a short spell in the separate Museums and Attractions

Partnership. The increasing number of heritage sites which were being considered for 'attraction' status has appeared to prompt the integration of the centre with the operational waterway. It certainly seems to be a sensible way forward given the new emphasis on customer relations through CRT. As Graham explains in his article, the exceptions to this integration will be the large museums at Gloucester Docks and Ellesmere Port which will be separately managed.

As far as our own volunteers are concerned they have been busy on various fronts. The Marsden Shuttle has been operating on Sundays throughout the summer and has also undertaken additional duties such as club visits and weddings. A picture from one of the latter appears in a recent edition of the widely distributed Towpath Talk newspaper. The work party, ably lead by Vice Chairman, Trevor Ellis, has continued with the usual maintenance roles during its Friday sessions. We now have agreement in principle from CRT to borrow a workboat to tackle some of the overgrown vegetation on the off-side. Training will be needed before this can start. The canal observers have continued to give feedback on their sections on a 2 monthly basis. There have been changes in personnel in the area of volunteering and operations at CRT and we look forward to developing relationships to bring about an improvement in the overall canal environment.

In a new venture HCS volunteers have also pitched in to help with special events at Standedge Visitor Centre. New volunteers are always welcome so if you fancy steering our trip boat, getting



CRT Update

The final months of 2014 have yet again proved to be a busy and eventful period for the CRT both nationally and for the Manchester

and Pennine Partnership.

Since the appointment of Richard Parry as Chief Executive in Summer 2013 the Trust has been undergoing a major organisational review out of which are emerging new management and operational structures. These are aimed at creating a more effective and outward

facing organisation which will focus on the customer and be equipped to deliver the Trust's emerging Ten Year Strategic Plan.

The most recent change has been the launch on November 1st of the new Operations & Asset Management Directorate. It will be headed by Vince Moran and its key brief will be to focus on customer service, community engagement and the continued growth of volunteering. This brief is amplified in the Trust's press release publicising the launch which states that "The new directorate, has been established to

some physical exercise along our canal or helping with events please contact Bob or Claire in the office.

In addition, our own Council members volunteer their time to help run our charity in a business-like fashion on behalf of our membership. This often involves attendance and contributions at customer forums, conferences, special events and partner organisations meetings to ensure that the interests of our canals are forefront in the minds of decision-makers. Such opportunities are expanding because of the new emphasis in CRT on customers and volunteer groups and because HCS has a good track record in getting things done.

My heartfelt thanks go to all who volunteer in some way for our Society. By way of recognition of this commitment your Council has decided to run an evening get together for all our volunteers on 27th March 2015 at Marsden. Invitations and details will be sent out in due course.

Our staff continue to work hard for the Society. Bob Gough, our Administrator, has prepared a linear plan to assist boaters find facilities and mooring points along the Huddersfield Narrow and Broad Canals. By the time you read this it will be on our website. It is hoped that this information will encourage people to venture onto our splendid waterways. Our Marketing Officer, Claire Bebbington, has continued to contact members by telephone; primarily with the aim of increasing our email distribution list, so that more members can be reached by our newsy Pennine Link Extra. She is also organising a members' trip through the Standedge Tunnel for Spring 2015. Information on this will be circulated by email to those on the list.

It only remains for me to send best wishes to all our members for Christmas and the New Year wherever you are.

Alan Stopher

help the Trust: improve its customer service; deliver more benefits to the public and local communities; improve integration between staff, volunteers and contractors; manage resources more efficiently and increase productivity.”

Another important change is one which is of particular relevance to the Narrow and to our Society. This is the review of how the Trust’s Museums and Attractions are to be managed.

At present the Museums and Attractions portfolio comprises six sites, including of course our own Standedge Visitor Centre, all of which are managed by the Museums and Attractions Partnership. The proposal is that the Partnership in its present form will cease to operate and instead:

A nationally-managed major museum presence made up of the National Waterways Museum at Ellesmere Port and the Gloucester Waterways Museum will be established.

The operation and management of the sites at Anderton, Standedge, Stoke Bruerne and Trevor Basin will be devolved to their local waterway teams as part of the refocus on customer service and local communities.

As a result responsibility for the Standedge Visitor Centre will be transferred to the Manchester and Pennine Waterway Manager and the M and P Partnership will be involved in discussions/proposals for its future operation. Discussions on “handover” arrangements, in which I will be taking part, are in progress and I will report on the outcome in my updates during 2015.

The other significant, recent decision affecting M and P has been that of the

appointment of Professor Walter Menzies to serve for a further three years as Chair of the Partnership. Walter has been an energetic and inspirational Chair and he has over its first three years succeeded in moulding the partnership members into a cohesive group, committed to working for the benefit of the region’s waterways.

The re-appointment of the Chair was a reminder that the group had indeed been in existence for approaching three years. It was with this in mind that we decided to do a “stock take” of what had been achieved and what the priorities should be for the next three years.

We did this at a two day meeting in Ashton under Lyne in September. On the first day we debated three wide ranging topics. First we looked at planning for the future at national and local levels and discussed how we could best ensure that national priorities and objectives encompass the priorities of our own region.

Our second topic was our relationship with Local Authorities, in particular those on the Pennine Ring. Valuable financial support continues under the terms of the Operation and Maintenance Agreements but it is clear that the climate of partnership and co-operation, so vital in achieving restoration, no longer prevails. It was agreed that CRT should seek to re-establish these links by identifying shared objectives and how the benefits CRT can offer can fit with local agendas.

The third topic was Partnership Working - looking at how to improve existing partnerships and establish new ones, in particular with third sector organisations. The principle conclusion was that this should be tied into the Trust’s volunteering initiatives with the

emphasis being on encouraging local community groups to engage with the Trust and through this grow the number of Adoption Projects.

On the second day the bi-monthly plenary meeting took place. From a full agenda items of note included:

A progress report on the Green Flag bid for the Macclesfield Canal. A working group to prepare the bid has been established with the target being a submission date of January 2015 leading through to a decision in June 2015.

Partnership member Iain Taylor, who is employed by the Peel Group, gave a presentation on the operation of and plans for the Bridgewater Canal which is of course privately owned by Peel.

Finally Mark Heath of CRT gave a presentation on the water supply position across the M and P canals during 2014 and he was able to report that at the time of speaking there were no drought conditions in place on any of the region's canals.

The group met again on a wet and windy November 6th. The meeting took place in the events marquee at the Anderton Boat Lift.

Out of a full agenda there were three items of particular note

Business Planning – we received and discussed the proposed partnership Business Plan for 2015/16. The plan will feed into the national business plan and serves also as a bid for resources (both financial and staff) to implement the plan. Two projects were highlighted as “pathfinders” meaning that M and P's work provide a template for other partnerships to follow. One of these is the Green Flag project. The other,

following on from the discussion in September, is an initiative to reinvigorate the Trust's engagement with local authorities with the Huddersfield Narrow being identified as the test case.

Mike Coates of the Trust's Property team gave a presentation on development taking place in our region. He explained the various roles which CRT takes in the promotion of development with the aim of securing development appropriate to the waterway setting whilst also seeking a healthy financial return for the Trust.

Nigel Stevens introduced and summarized for us the Trust's Water Management team's consultation document “Putting the water into waterways”. The strategy covers the period to 2050 (i.e. 35 years). It discusses “levels of service” and their indicative costs and sets out a work stream for the next five years. It does not however at this stage contain an actual investment plan. The consultation was set out in the form of a request for a response to a series of 15 questions, each of which asked for the degree of agreement with a statement, and for details where there is disagreement. The consultation has now closed but for those who wish to view it the full document it is available on the CRT web site at: canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/library/7120-water-resources-strategy-full-consultation-document.pdf

We have a further meeting this year, on December 18th and dates for next year's programme have already been fixed, including a projected date for our third annual “outburst” which is planned to take place in June.

Graham Birch
Trustee

Cruising the Huddersfield Narrow

In Summer this year, Jon Reynolds and his son Nathan completed an East – West passage of the Canal on his 52 foot narrow boat “Borderline”. This is his account of what was clearly a very enjoyable journey.

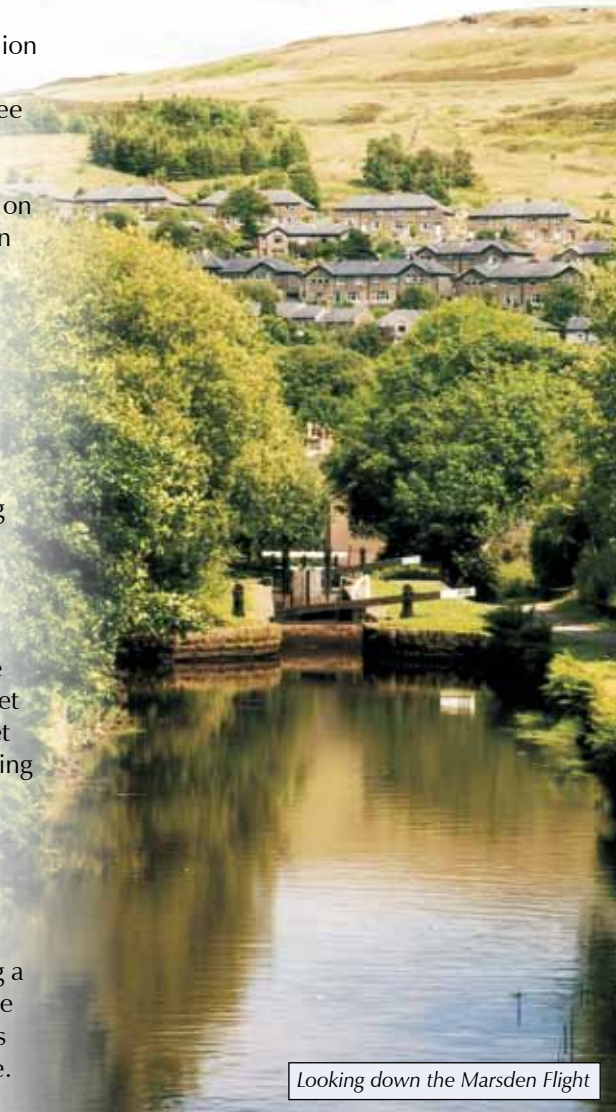
A BUZZ TO REMEMBER

I tend to find that boaters give an opinion of a canal based on their personal experience of it, a pleasant incident free passage usually means “a good canal” and vice-versa. Being single handed, every canal means quite a bit of effort on my part, so I generally judge a canal on the “buzz” I get from it.

Before I retired early and took to the canals I had worked for 28 years on the railways and I remember laying new track in Standedge Tunnel and looking down at the canal below, so this trip on the Huddersfield Narrow had a special meaning for me. Adding to the significance of the trip for me was the fact that in my three years as a continuous cruiser I had already completed the Rochdale and Leeds/ Liverpool Canals, so now I needed the Huddersfield Narrow Canal for a full set of Trans Pennine routes. I therefore set out in both hope and anticipation getting A Buzz to Remember.

For this trip I was in fact not single handed since my eldest son, Nathan, volunteered to come over from York and help me with the 74 Locks in the 20 miles of the canal. However, being a keen photographer I think getting some pictures of the inside of the tunnel was perhaps a bigger motive for joining me.

We left Aspley Basin in Huddersfield and the very first road bridge gave an indication of how tight things were going to be ahead. Moving round past the University to Lock No1 E a deep, very narrow lock which looked exactly what it was, something from the 18th century.



Looking down the Marsden Flight

We then encountered something very different, the original No 2 Lock was now overgrown and we had to squeeze "Borderline" between two ten foot walls of vegetation. Continuing from here we passed through the new locks and under the road bridges up onto the new, very narrow, very straight section of canal.

After a couple of hours travelling we were still within a stone's throw of Huddersfield as the locks came thick and fast, but as we broke out into the open countryside the scenery was breathtaking. During the rest of day one we completed 21 of the 42 Locks between Huddersfield and the tunnel to arrive in Slaithwaite for our overnight stop.

Setting off early next morning we continued our climb up towards Marsden. The weather was good and the scenery even better. With Nathan operating the locks and taking pictures of this, that and the other, and me in charge of the boat, we were able to thoroughly enjoy Yorkshire at its best.

By the end of our second day we had arrived at the entrance to Standedge Tunnel where we moored ready to transit the tunnel. We had enjoyed two brilliant days and tomorrow....**The Tunnel!**

I knew everything would have to come off the top of the boat, so we did that first thing in the morning before the guys from CRT came to measure "Borderline" up. It gave me some indication of how tight things were going to be when they said the tiller pin was too high!!

A quick application of gaffer tape replaced the pin and we were ready to go. Nathan on the front of the boat with his camera and me and my CRT Pilot on the stern. My first impression of the

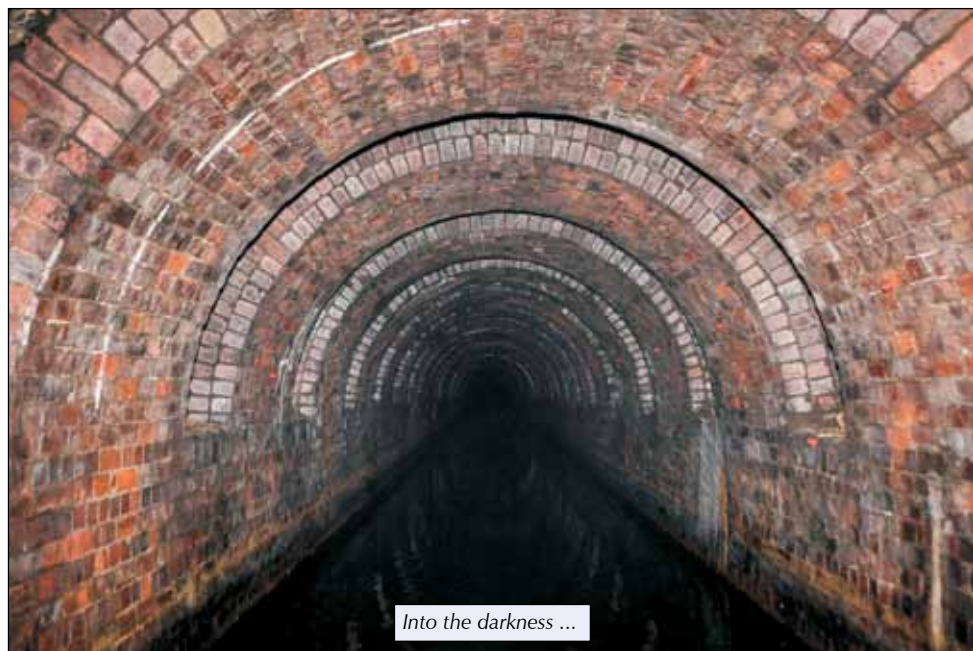
tunnel was ...**Wow!** It really was amazing as we slid into the darkness.

The Pilot was really helpful explaining the different sections. We saw the brick arches serving as strengtheners where the railway runs over the canal, the grey caverns where at sometime there had been a rock fall that had been repaired with steel mesh and sprayed concrete and then the amazing granite (*actually Millstone Grit, a sandstone; we hope this error was not mis-information from the CRT chaperone. Ed*). You could see why it took 16 years to dig and blast their way through.

At various points on route we stopped so the Pilot could report in and those above ground would be aware of where we were. This gave me an opportunity to have a stretch, as my 6'2" frame had been bent over for most of the journey. The Pilot explained that when constructing the Tunnel, gangs started from either side of the Pennines, but missed each other by 40 feet (oops!), so there is a bit of an S bend in the middle. (*The maximum mis-alignment is 26 feet and several vertical shafts were constructed to increase the number of working faces and help with the alignment. Ed.*) In all it took us 95 minutes to complete the trip; a truly awesome experience.

We stopped just after the Tunnel to put everything back on top of the boat then continued our journey, going down through the locks to Uppermill where we moored up and reflected on a brilliant day. The whole experience from the moment we left Huddersfield had been one I'll always remember.

Next day we continued our drop down towards the end of our trip, the weather



Into the darkness ...

was still superb and the beautiful countryside seemed to go on forever. We did experience a bit of water shortage around the Mossley area and down the flight towards Scout tunnel, but CRT had men on duty to help us out and it wasn't too much hardship, just a bit of slow progress.

By the end of our fourth day we had arrived in Stalybridge where Nathan had to take his leave and in doing so, like me, he was able to reflect on a truly memorable trip during which he had been able to take some spectacular photographs.

Next day, single handed again I dropped down the five locks into Ashton and the end of the remarkable Huddersfield Narrow Canal. It was an amazing journey, the scenery was absolutely stunning, the Tunnel was awesome and the overall opinion – it really was **A Buzz to Remember !**



A tranquil scene below Lock 10W, Heyrod

Finally, many thanks to all those people involved in the re-opening of a truly beautiful canal; without their efforts my trip would not have been possible.

*All pictures:
Nathan Reynolds*

Jon Reynolds
nb Borderline

JIDOKU 32

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

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.

Top hole

Standedge Tunnel certainly is.
And our boats are pretty good too.
Combine the two on a one-way trip,
or do the whole South Pennine Ring.

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Street Scene Greenfield Group

GREENFIELD VOLUNTEER GROUP SCOOP TOP AWARD

As already reported, the Volunteer Group has been working tirelessly for the last 20 months on repairs to the Greenfield section of the canal towpath. In recognition of the dedication of these volunteers, the Group has been awarded the Manchester and Pennine Volunteer Group of the Year award!

The Award was presented to Project Leader Gill McCulley and her colleagues by David Baldacchino, Manchester & Pennine Waterway Manager on 11th November.

Gill, who is a member of Street Scene Greenfield Group said: *"I would like to thank all individuals and businesses who have provided support for this ongoing community project by volunteering their time and/or donating money or materials. Without you, the progress and improvements we have made would not have been possible."*

In spite of the Group's sterling efforts, it is obvious that some of the wash walls are falling into disrepair and it is hoped that more investment may be forthcoming to carry out this important work.

Following the Award presentation, Gill and Street Scene Co-ordinator Peter Lowe were able to hand over Street Scene's cheque for £500 towards the cost of stone supplied by CRT.

If you would like to be involved and work with us, please contact Gill on 01457 870364 email: gillmcculley@yahoo.com. The Group meet twice a month and a list of forthcoming dates is available.





Above: SSGG volunteers receiving their 'Manchester & Pennine Volunteer Group of the Year' award pictured left. Right: CRT Waterway Manager, David Baldacchino, (left) is presented with a cheque for £500 by Street Scene Co-ordinator, Peter Lowe while Gill McCulley is proud to receive the award on behalf of the group
All photos: GGRA



SSGG IS GREENFIELD-BASED COMMUNITY ACTION WORKING FOR YOU TO BUILD
CONFIDENCE AND PRIDE IN OUR COMMUNITY
(A sub-group of Greenfield & Grasscroft Residents Association)
- YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE -
New Members welcome info@ggra.co.uk or telephone: 01457 597666

Volunteering Update

Steve O'Sullivan, Canal and River Trust (CRT) Volunteer Development Co-ordinator for the Manchester and Pennine (M&P) Region has provided the following overview of volunteer activity on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal (HNC): -

"The delays that occurred with CRT being able to review reports in the Spring/ Summer are overcome and we are back on track with a detailed review of the inspection forms that have been submitted by HNC Observers since March. Nick Atkinson, the Operations supervisor for the HNC and Peak Forest canals, is already well on with identifying volunteer and other tasks from the inspection reports. We are extremely grateful for the wide range of detailed information that has been recorded by the Observers over this period.

These reports will play an important part in the development of the volunteer and our own works programmes on the HNC and we hope you will bear with us on this whilst we complete this process.

Community volunteer groups continue to make a great contribution to the HNC and the number of groups is increasing. As well as the established groups at Greenfield and Mossley, new groups are starting in Slaithwaite and Stalybridge, and we are also developing contacts with volunteer groups in Marsden.

The next point of focus for CRT is Uppermill where we are looking to have a pop-up Welcome station and hopefully establish another local volunteer community group who will adopt this very popular section of canal. On the subject of community groups,

congratulations are due to Street Scene Greenfield who have been awarded the 'Manchester and Pennine Volunteer Group of the Year 2014' for their sterling efforts over the last eighteen months.

Under the recent major CRT reorganisation, the Standedge visitor centre has become the responsibility of the Manchester and Pennine Region under Waterway Manager David Baldacchino. We are looking at the potential to provide more attractions and encourage more visitors. There will be opportunities for volunteers to have a greater involvement at the centre so please get in touch if you are interested."

Manchester & Pennine General Overview

- Over 2500 volunteer days have been recorded since April 2014
- 16 Canal Adoptions have been signed up in the M&P Region (2 on HNC: SSSG at Greenfield and Emmaus in Mossley)
- Over 30 volunteer groups are working in the M&P Region
- CRT is continually looking to increase volunteer groups across the regional waterway.

If you have any suggestions or ideas for volunteer projects please get in touch.

Steve O'Sullivan, CRT Volunteer Development Co-ordinator, Manchester and Pennine Region

Tel: 03030 404040

Mob: 07887684707

e-mail: steve.osullivan@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Co-ordinator Peter Rawson writes:

HCS Overview

Our team of Observers has now been regularly reporting on the condition of the whole of the Huddersfield Narrow and Huddersfield Broad Canals since March. Originally, formal reports were submitted on a monthly basis but this has now reduced to once every two months as Observers have become more aware of their stretches and their problems.

They have provided a wealth of important information which is being processed by Canal and River Trust (CRT) colleagues so that packages of work can be allocated to the established volunteer groups, HCS's own volunteer team or their own workforce, dependent upon the nature and scale of the issues reported. The Observer role is an essential tool in recording the ongoing condition of the canal and helps highlight a different perspective to the regular, routine length inspections carried out by CRT staff. We would also like to thank all our Observers for their continued efforts on this and, although it may take some time, this will lead to significant improvements that we all want to see.

As reported elsewhere in this issue, CRT have recently had a major restructure which means that the Regions like Manchester and Pennine, which we mainly fall under (The Huddersfield Broad Canal is part of the North East Region), have been organised to provide a much more customer focused service.

As you can see from Steve O'Sullivan's overview, there is a lot more emphasis on volunteering and establishing Volunteer Groups to carry out much more of the ongoing care and maintenance tasks that

will make a considerable improvement to the canalside environment. This will, in turn, help CRT staff concentrate on repair and maintenance tasks on the canal that are currently outside the capabilities of the volunteer groups.

Our Observers, quite naturally, report on the poor condition of the towpath in many locations. The Greenfield Group (SSGG) are carrying out excellent work on the towpath through Greenfield and have made walking on this well used section, much more pleasant; whatever the weather tries to throw at us. They have been recognised by the M&P Region of CRT for this and awarded Volunteer Group of the Year for their efforts. Visitors to this section will probably also have noticed the poor condition of the washwalls and CRT staff are also proposing to work with this volunteer group to repair/reinstate these. This is an example of what can be achieved by Community/Canal Adoption Groups along the whole canal. There are proposals to engage with a Community Group in Marsden as well to carry out towpath improvement work there. Towpath improvement projects are ideal for Community engagement and bring enormous benefits for local users and also, collectively, for the whole canal.

In Stalybridge, we are working with CRT and the local community to establish a working group for the town centre. This initiative was initially set up by the Rev. Tom Parker of Holy Trinity Church, which is close to the canal at Armentières Square. The canal passes through the heart of the town centre here and CRT does not have the resources available to maintain the canal to a standard that befits its strategic setting. It is hoped that

more concentrated and frequent 'Clean-up' events will help bring this section up to the standard achieved when it was re-opened in 2001. Our next 'Clear-up' event in Stalybridge is on 24th January 2015 and we hope to hold these on a monthly basis thereafter. Similar proposals are being put in place in Slaithwaite, where again the canal forms a major feature in the heart of the town. In both cases, there is great potential to raise the profile of the town centres and the canal and, in turn, encourage more tourists and visitors, including much needed boaters!

We will be working with CRT to encourage more Community Groups to be formed along the whole canal to ensure that this magnificent asset is given more care and attention and secured for the long-term for the benefit of all users.

Work parties continue to be held on alternate Fridays by the Society's own workforce led by our Vice-Chairman, Trevor Ellis. Trevor's team covers the whole of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, with the exception of those stretches that have been adopted by Community Groups. This team is highly valued by our CRT colleagues and the Society has wide experience of working on the canal and with CRT's operating procedures. Works carried out include: vegetation control; paddle gear mechanism maintenance; painting and general maintenance; so you may well see them working anywhere along the canal. One major area of concern in many places is overgrown offside vegetation and this is starting to affect navigation and cause damage to offside

washwalls. The difficulty here is access which is generally only available by boat. We are in discussions with CRT about the use of one of their workboats. Subject to appropriate training and certification, this will allow qualified volunteers to operate the workboat along the canal to remove overhanging obstructions and maintain the offside more effectively.

Our volunteers also provide a great service in continuing to operate the Society's trip boat, the Marsden Shuttle, based at Standedge Visitor Centre. This is a good opportunity to get out on the water in a stunning location, working with like-minded colleagues. Training is provided and there is good camaraderie amongst this enthusiastic group of volunteers. Volunteers tell us that this is a worthwhile, enjoyable and stress free environment involving a range of tasks including engaging with many similarly enthusiastic customers.

Please contact us if you feel that you would like to get involved in any of these initiatives. Initially you can contact Bob Gough or Claire Bebbington at our office (contact details on the inside cover) and they will ask the appropriate group Co-ordinator to contact you with more specific details.

Finally, a big thank you to everyone who has given their time for the benefit of the canal. We are making good progress and by working together, we will ensure the future sustainability of the canal and improve the canal environment for all users and canalside communities.

Merry Christmas to you all and Best Wishes for 2015.

Peter Rawson

2014 Photographic Competition Results

Competition Judge, Alan Stopher, writes:

This year there were fewer entries possibly owing to the advertisement not appearing until the Autumn Issue.

At least two of our regular competitors, both excellent photographers, did not take part, so it opened the way for others to challenge. Despite the reduced numbers there was still a good range of entries to judge, Category B 'Other UK Waterways' providing the most variety. Print quality was variable and some of the larger format prints, particularly those which looked like they had been scanned from slides, lacked sharpness and had blocked up in the shadow areas.

The overall winner this year again came from the 'Huddersfield Narrow Canal' category. Nathan Reynolds' beautifully captured image of the Standedge Tunnel was the best I had seen of this difficult subject. The rendering of the bare rock was sharp showing no camera movement or difficulty with focus and the distant dot of light in the centre completed the scene.

A number of the Huddersfield Narrow entries had been taken on the Broad Canal. This narrowed(!) the choice of prints for commendation and gives us food for thought on next year's rules which could be altered to include both Huddersfield canals. The winner of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal category was M. Hinchliffe's 'Rough Holme Lock 12E, Milnsbridge' which was presented as a pleasing portrait view over the Lock towards Britannia Mills with Golcar in the background. The walker with dog in the foreground gave added interest to make a balanced composition.

Runner-up was another by M Hinchliffe print, 'Elland at Embankment Lock 28W'. The high viewpoint with the crew and horse from Elland posed in the lock makes an interesting foreground to this view down the Diggle flight in high Summer.

The Category B winner, 'At the end of the Rainbow' by A. Acott was a simple study of a reflected rainbow over a moored narrowboat. I liked the peacefulness of the scene and the fact that the colours had been so well captured.

The runner up, 'Proceeding up the River Thames, St Pancras Cruising Club at Gravesend' also by A. Acott, showed a contrastingly busy scene of narrowboats venturing onto the River Thames tideway. It was a good portrayal of something out of the ordinary. The commercial vessel, although distant, dwarfs the narrowboats and indicates the challenging nature of the cruise .

Commended in Category B was an interesting view of the Forth & Clyde Canal at Bowling Basin by M. Hinchcliffe. The canal leads the eye into the busy basin where boats of all shapes and sizes are moored. I think that the composition would have been slightly improved with a little more foreground and less sky but, who knows, there could have been a distracting white van just out of the picture at the bottom!

Well done to the winners and runners-up and those whose work has been commended and thanks to all for entering. I enjoyed looking at your work.

Alan Stopher



Overall Winner

The Standedge Tunnel, Nathan Reynolds, York



At the end of the Rainbow, Hopwas Wood
Angela Acott, Rochester

Category Winners



Rough Holme Lock 12E, Milnsbridge
Malcolm Hinchliffe, Golcar



*nb Elland at Embankment Lock 28W, Diggle Flight
Malcolm Hinchliffe, Golcar*

Runners-Up

*Proceeding up the River Thames, Gravesend
Angela Acott, Rochester*





*Bowling Basin, Forth & Clyde Canal
Malcolm Hinchliffe, Golcar*

Commended

*Your photos
could be winners in next
year's Competition!*

*Watch out for details on how to enter
in your Pennine Link*

Broad Towpath Taskforce

CRT



One of our regular volunteers, Alan, adds that not only do you meet new people, “you are working in a beautiful environment and it’s nice to put something back into the environment and the canal system”. And if that’s not enough to tempt you, you get a free cuppa and a biscuit too!!

The Taskforce has finished for Christmas now but we are back in business on Friday 9th Jan 2015. As the Trust refocuses on customer service and the local community over the coming months we are excited for what the New Year will bring. We would love to welcome more volunteers in 2015 and look forward to making some new friends! If you would like to join us please contact me. My contact details are as follows:

Claire McDonald

Volunteer Development Co-ordinator,
North East Waterways

M: 07920295943

E: Claire.mcdonald@canalrivertrust.org.uk

For more information about the group you can follow us on Twitter! @CRTvolunteers and @CRTClaireMc or search for Canal & River Trust Volunteers on Facebook.

The Huddersfield Broad Towpath Taskforce has been up and running now for two years. We had a slightly bumpy start, due to the snow and ice forcing us to cancel the first ever event! However, since then we have attracted a small band of regular volunteers and have regular attendance from students at Kirklees College.

Although we are not attracting busloads of volunteers we have achieved some great results and have made headway with the lock painting over the summer. These sessions are also very important in helping us make connections within the local community. If over the last two years we have brought a few new people on to the waterways then we have been successful!

Lucy Dockray, Volunteer Leader for the North East Waterway Partnership, runs these task days and has got to know our regulars well.

I have heard her comment on a number of occasions “it’s surprising what you find out about someone while you’re working with them. They’re a lovely group of people!” In fact we find that the social aspect, the opportunity to work in a pleasant environment with a group of like-minded people is a draw for a lot of volunteers.



CRT

Melrose Wedding



Dear Mike, Tony & all at
Huddersfield Canal Society,

We'd like to thank you very much
for providing the narrow boat
to ferry guests to our wedding at
Standedge on August 16th.
It really helped to put a unique
stamp on the day and everyone's
memories of our wedding involve
the narrow boat in some way,
shape or form. We only wish,
having had a fantastic time on
the boat, that more people had
been in a position to experience it
for themselves; it's safe to say we'll
never arrive in such style again!

Yours gratefully,

Keith & Kerrie Melrose

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir

Whilst Thomas Telford receives much credit for the completion of the Narrow readers will be aware that it was Benjamin Outram who was engineer to the Huddersfield Canal Company during the early years of construction. Sadly Outram died in 1805 and therefore did not live to see the completion of the project.

What readers may not know is that Benjamin Outram founded Benjamin Outram & Co., civil and structural engineering contractors in the late 18th century. After his death the name changed to The Butterley Company which successfully continued in business for over 200 years. However in 2008 it had a short term cash flow problem and,

Bob Gough adds: In the Proceedings of the Huddersfield Canal Company, the first reference to Benjamin Outram & Company is during a meeting on 10th February 1797, when it was: "Resolved that the Treasurers be directed to pay to Messrs Benjamin Outram & Co (when the funds of the Company will admit) the Sum of Two hundred pounds on Account of Cast Iron Work delivered by them"

in the financial panic of the time, the bank foreclosed and sadly the company went out of business. Sadly too, at the time, their demise went unnoticed by HCS.

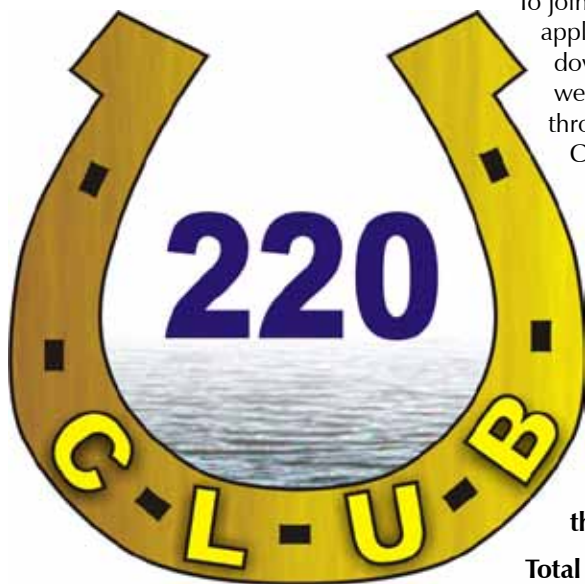
As a company they were very highly regarded in their field. Early in my career I worked for British Railways with them on a contract to rebuild a viaduct over the Trent. I learned a lot and was proud to have been associated with a company whose history reached back to the great age of canal building. An association which, moreover, carried through into the 21st century when it was contracted by British Waterways to build the Falkirk Wheel.

Keith Noble
Sowerby Bridge

Of course, Outram's most remarkable piece of cast iron work on the canal is the Stakes Aqueduct, crossing the River Tame near Slatybridge, which is still navigable to this day. Originally built as a stone affair, the aqueduct was swept away during the disastrous floods of August 1799 and the Company subsequently: "Resolved that the Aqueduct be made of one arch and of cast Iron as recommended by Mr Outram"



220 Club - 3rd Quarterly Draw



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 third quarterly draw:

Total Subscribers: 24
Total Prize Fund: £56.00

1st Prize:

Harold Nield winning £38.40

2nd Prize:

Vince Willey winning £17.60

Congratulations to the prize winners!

Launched at our 40th Anniversary Event, membership of the Huddersfield Canal Society 220 Club is open to all Members of the Society.

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.

Solution to Jidoku 32

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

74 Club Members

We welcome the following intrepid boaters who have successfully navigated the Narrow this year.

C Turner	JOPHINA II
Rob Pearson	HEKLA
Mike Lond	CORNWALL
C Locke	CORNWALL
Mr & Mrs Smith	TICKETY BOO
Alan Penter	AUGUSTUS
Ali Smith	CARETTA
Les Hynd	CLEMENCY
John Bird	WILLIAM HENRY
M Chinery	ROANOITE
Trevor Edgley	ONCE AGAIN
I Jameison	FREE SPIRIT
D Edwards	HOPE
John Haines	AETHELBURH
Tony Porter	HOLDERNESS

Make your voice heard!

Comments entered on the application form are forwarded to both the Canal & River Trust and Manchester & Pennine Waterways Partnership. This helps influence the decision-making process for work on the Narrow Canal and improvements to the navigation of our 'Everest' of the system.

Navigated the Narrow and don't have a plaque?

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

An application form can be downloaded from our website:

<http://www.huddersfieldcanal.com/#74-club>

or collected from the Tunnel End Café, or simply send a cheque payable to 'Huddersfield Canal Society' with a covering note to:

74 Club Plaque

Transshipment Warehouse, Wool Road
Dobcross, OLDHAM OL3 5QR



CRT's Planned Winter Stoppage Programme:

Lock 1W	Replacing the bottom gates	03/11/14 to 15/12/14
Lock 9W	Replacing the bottom gates	12/01/15 to 06/03/15
Lock 18W	Replacing the top and bottom gates	05/01/15 to 16/02/15
Lock 19W	Replacing the top and bottom gates	05/01/15 to 16/02/15
Lock 20W	Replacing the top gate and floor works	03/11/14 to 01/12/14
Lock 32W	Replacing the top gate	24/11/14 to 19/12/14
Lock 34E	Replacing the bottom gates	09/02/15 to 13/03/15
Lock 37E	Replacing the top and bottom gates	02/02/15 to 13/03/15

The Back Page

HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY welcomes the following new members in 2014

2853	[REDACTED]	Holmfirth, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.
2854	[REDACTED]	, Stalybridge, Cheshire.
2855	[REDACTED]	, Eden Bridge, Kent.
2856	[REDACTED]	Golcar, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.
2857	[REDACTED]	, Marsden, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.
2858	[REDACTED]	, Leeds, West Yorkshire.
2859	[REDACTED]	, Meltham, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.
2860	[REDACTED]	, Haxby, York, North Yorkshire.
2861	[REDACTED]	, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.
2862	[REDACTED]	, Stalybridge, Cheshire.
2863	[REDACTED]	, Norwich, Norfolk.
2864	[REDACTED]	, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, W. Yorkshire.
2865	[REDACTED]	, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire.
2866	[REDACTED]	, Corfe, Taunton, Somerset.
2867	[REDACTED]	Hedon, Hull, East Yorkshire.
2868	[REDACTED]	, Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire.

MEMBERSHIP RATES

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

COPY DATE

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** Owned by canal enthusiast & HCS member*

