

Pennine Link

Magazine of the Huddersfield Canal Society



HUDDERSFIELD
CANAL
SOCIETY
ASHTON-U-LYNE ~ HUDDERSFIELD

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Bob Gough Administrator



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

Pennine Link

Issue 189



Peter Rawson

New tail gates and mechanisms have been installed at Lock 1W at Ashton-under-Lyne. The troublesome hydraulic gearing has been replaced by conventional gearing with steel balance beams, one of which is cranked to accommodate the limited space between the Lock and the adjacent bridge parapet. This is particularly welcome as this was the hardest Lock on the Canal to work and gave a poor impression to boaters coming from the Cheshire Ring.

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Cover: All change at the Standedge Visitor Centre; sprucing up for the new régime. Photo: Bob Gough



Editorial

As we were going to press with the Winter 2014 edition of Pennine Link, the news was breaking that major changes were taking place concerning the

operation and management of Standedge Visitor Centre. What we were learning was that the CRT's Museums and Attractions Partnership was being wound up and that management of the Visitor Centre was being put into the hands of the Manchester and Pennine Partnership.

The creation of a visitor centre was a requirement of the principal funders as part of the restoration project. What they envisaged was the establishment of a centre which would tell the history of the canal and give visitors the opportunity to access and experience the unique Standedge Tunnel. However, the fact is that the Centre has had a somewhat chequered history.

Looking back, in the heady days when the long dreamed of restoration of the Narrow was about to become a reality, the creation of a visitor facility at Tunnel End seemed to be an entirely sensible and practical idea. Although, even at that stage, doubts were expressed over the practicality of including the now redundant boat lift.

However, almost from day one, the problems began. Some were external, but the Centre itself suffered from poorly conceived displays and interpretation, the unreliability of trip boats/the hydraulic lift and lack of marketing. Indeed, visitor numbers were such that by 2004, British Waterways (BW) were considering closure.

This was prevented only because the funding agreement required the Centre to remain open for a minimum of ten years. BW decided, therefore, to retain the Centre but to cut costs to a minimum for the remaining term of the funding contract. However, in 2008, a change of approach saw a new manager appointed, tasked with seeking to make the Centre viable, so that it could remain open.

Things gradually improved with modest increases in income and visitor numbers until, in 2010, the management of the whole of the Narrow, including Tunnel End, was transferred to BW's Manchester & Pennine division. This saw an increase in investment with the creation of an outdoor children's play area, a wildlife garden, the upgrading of the Watersedge Café and renovation of the Tunnel trip boats. Additionally, the top floor of the warehouse was leased to a local craft designer, so providing a modest source of income.

On the strength of this, visitor numbers began to grow and it was on this note that the Centre passed to the stewardship of CRT, who in turn set up a dedicated specialist division to manage its major public attractions in the form of the Museums and Attractions Partnership (M&A).

In the same way that there were few dissenting voices in 2001 when the Centre was created, there was a similarly positive response to the establishment of the M&A. It offered the opportunity to share best practice and to secure some economies of scale, together with better marketing and publicity opportunities.

However, as we now know, the M&A Partnership, for a variety of reasons, did

not succeed and Standedge Visitor Centre, along with most of the other attractions have been returned to the stewardship of their respective Regional Partnerships.

Since the news of this change became public, I have been involved in two meetings at which the future of the Visitor Centre has been discussed. At the second of these, just before Christmas, and as reported elsewhere in this Issue, we learned that the Centre Manager, James Dean, was leaving to take up a new post.

So, we find ourselves again on the threshold of another fresh start for Tunnel End. The discussions that have taken place have ranged across a variety of ideas but, if an underlying theme can be determined, it has been on the question of just what is the function of the facility.

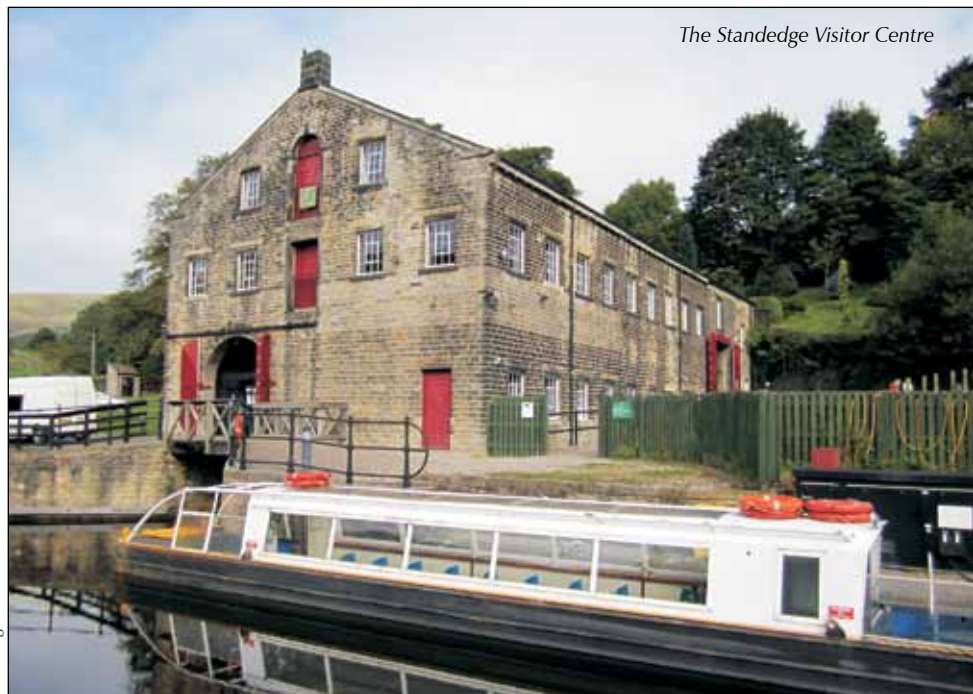
It was identified by CRT as a Museum/Attraction, but does it really qualify as either of these. It is certainly not the

former. A museum is a very specific type of facility which, by the display and explanation of objects and images, seeks to explain and illustrate the history of a place and/or activity.

To be successful and sustainable, a museum needs to be dynamic and, nowadays, increasingly interactive, with regular updating and turnover of exhibits such that it is able to generate return visits. Standedge, regrettably, has neither the space nor the resources to meet these demanding criteria.

There is a stronger case for classing it as an Attraction. However, under this heading, it does have its drawbacks. It is 'off the beaten track' and hence unlikely to attract 'passing trade'. There is very limited on-site parking, with the main car park being a 15 minute walk along the towpath, and the access road is unsuitable for coaches. There is also the Tunnel

The Standedge Visitor Centre



operation schedule which means that if you visit on the wrong day or at the wrong time, there may well be little or no boating activity, other than the Tunnel trips and, at weekends, our own Marsden Shuttle.

There are, however, the positives. There is its setting amidst the fabulous Pennine landscape, there is the opportunity to experience the Tunnel itself and there is the beautifully restored Warehouse with potential for a variety of uses. Indeed, despite the drawbacks, thanks to the hard work of James and his team, supported by our HCS volunteers, visitor numbers have increased year on year with an anticipated total for 2014/15 in excess of 40,000.

The site clearly has much potential and it seems to me that we should refrain from trying to categorise it and see it for what it is: a unique facility giving an introduction to, and showcase for, our wonderful Canal.

For what they are worth, my ideas for helping to develop and enhance it would include:

- Promoting the increased use of the Warehouse for income generating commercial uses (e.g. weddings, conferences, training events, etc.)
- Sparing no expense in upgrading and enhancing the towpath from Marsden Station/Car Park so that the walk becomes a positive part of the visitor's experience
- Establishing a "welcome facility" at the car park so that the visitor experience starts at that point. (This would of course include details of our Shuttle).
- Developing relationships with visitor destinations elsewhere along the Canal such as Uppermill and

Slaithwaite and in doing so promoting Tunnel End as part of a Canal Visitor Trail.

- Increasing boat movements through the Tunnel so that visitors are more likely to see what visitors to a canal expect to see, i.e. **Canal Boats!**

Finally, and above all else, the new management team should make sure that it learns from the mistakes of the past and builds upon the recent successes. As a Society, we will be more than willing to support them in this and we look forward to forging a stronger partnership between CRT and HCS; making available to the new management team the wealth of experience within HCS concerning the Canal and the Visitor Centre.

The Visitor Centre is the shop window for the Canal and I make no excuse for having devoted the whole of this Editorial to its past, present and future.

Before signing off, I want to thank those who have contributed to this edition of Pennine Link. In particular, I have enjoyed reading the contribution by Bob Cripps, one of our longer standing members, now resident in Sussex, who keeps in touch with events in the South Pennines through the pages of Pennine Link.

If, like Bob, you have a tale to tell, boating experiences to relate or thoughts that you wish to share, the pages of Pennine Link are always open for contributions from our members. Just forward them to Bob at the office, preferably in electronic format.

And finally may I wish you a happy Easter and hope that you will enjoy the waterways in the coming Spring and Summer.

Graham Birch



Chairman's Report

It's good to hear signs of Spring as garden birds start their early morning chorus and the days get noticeably longer. As I write

this piece in mid-March, this morning's snow on Castle Hill has melted, but the next few days look like being cold and wet, so we'll have to wait for warmer weather.

On the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, the Winter maintenance work is nearing completion. This year there have been more replacement gates on the West side than the East as most of the latter have received attention in recent years.

Particularly pleasing are the new tail gates at Lock 1W in Ashton-under-Lyne. The awkward hydraulic gate mechanism has been replaced by short, cranked balance beams and conventional gearing which should improve the welcome to our Canal from the Cheshire Ring.

Another important repair has been the tail gates at Lock 9W which have suffered severe leakage in recent years. At least two single-crewed narrow boats have come to grief here in recent years when getting stuck on the head gate cill whilst the Lock has emptied.

Graham's Editorial has updated you on the changes to the management of the Standedge Visitor Centre and given his thoughts on what could happen. I look forward to further developments. The new customer-focussed organisation which was implemented in November last year, has had the Winter to 'bed

in' and it will be interesting to see how the new emphasis on community and volunteer engagement manifests itself on our canals.

As far as our own volunteers are concerned, Trevor Ellis's work party has continued on Fridays during the Winter, weather permitting, focussing on trimming back vegetation and removal of litter. The Marsden Shuttle crews have had rest from duties and it is pleasing to record a number of new volunteers have signed up with Mike McHugh and his team. The Canal Observers have continued their inspections.

We're keen to see more canal length Adoption Groups and Peter Rawson is having some success in coordinating clean-ups of the canal environment in Stalybridge. By the time you read this, we will have held an evening of food and socialising at Marsden Mechanics to thank our volunteers and their partners for their commitment to your Society.

Your Council of Management continues to meet every other month to guide the Society's activities. In January, long standing Council member, Vince Willey, tendered his resignation. I would like to record my thanks to Vince for his work and commitment over a long period and wish him better health than he has experienced of late.

Plans are afoot for a number of Summer activities. We intend to have a stall at the South Pennine Boat Club Gala on the weekend of 2nd/3rd May. Claire Bebbington and Peter Rawson have been working with the Stalybridge Town Team to plan our involvement in the

Salybridge Carnival on 27th/28th June which, following the success last year, will involve a boat gathering and trip boat.

Claire is organising a members' trip through the Standedge Tunnel from Diggle to Marsden and a knowledgeable guide will lead an optional walk over the moors beforehand - weather permitting! See below for details of this limited availability event. Updates will be issued in emailed Pennine Link Extras. Claire produced 8 issues of Pennine Link Extra in 2014 and there have been two in 2015 already. If you are missing out on the news, please ensure Claire has your email address so that you can be added to the distribution list.

In response to requests for refreshments at our June AGM, we have decided to hold the meeting in the back room of Salybridge Station Buffet Bar on 25th

June 2015 where pre-ordered food will be available after the meeting so that those who attend this formal meeting can have a chat over food and drink once the business is over. Details are given in the formal Notice on page 29.

Bob Gough, our Administrator, continues to take on everything we ask him to do. The latest challenge has been to work out a more cost effective way of keeping him and Claire warm in our far from cosy office during the Winter months. I'm grateful for technical advice from retired heating consultant, Trevor Squibbs, who came up with the radiant heater approach being adopted.

That's all for now. Happy Easter and enjoy getting out and about this Spring.

Alan Stopher

Standedge Tunnel Through Trip and optional pre-trip walk across Standedge Moor

This event will take place on Saturday the 18th July 2015 and numbers for the through trip (Diggle to Marsden) are strictly limited to 20 (twenty) places. Members should arrive at the Diggle entrance by 12.45pm at the latest.

Canal & River Trust, who operate the trip, offer a free return taxi service (Marsden to Diggle) provided numbers are known in advance, hence, places should be booked by the 10th July at the latest.

As an optional alternative, members may like to meet Administrator, Bob Gough at Marsden Station at 9.30am for a complimentary, guided walk over Standedge Moor, arriving in good time for the return Tunnel trip. The walk (8km) is strenuous in parts and can be rough underfoot; the weather is unpredictable and you should have suitable footwear and clothing. If you wish to join the walk, please confirm this when you book your place on the through trip.

There is a fee of £15 per person and cheques should be made payable the 'Huddersfield Canal Society'. Please call 01457 871800 with any queries.

Car Parking: Diggle Car Park off Sam Road
 Visitor Car park, Old Goods Yard, Marsden



Manchester & Pennine Update

Since my last update there have been three meetings of the Manchester and Pennine Waterways Partnership (M and P) comprising two plenary meetings

and a special meeting, held on December 2nd at Tunnel End, Marsden, to discuss the "handover" of the Standedge Visitor Centre (SVC) from the Museums and Attractions Partnership (M and A) to the M and P.

The Standedge meeting was attended by all of the SVC staff as of that time, members of the M and P and the Chair of the, about to be dissolved, M and A.

The first part of the meeting involved James Dean presenting a detailed review of the life of the SVC since restoration, emphasising its chequered history, the

changes in management and the financial status of the Centre during the five year period of his involvement as manager.

In James' report, however, there had been no real reference to the role of HCS in assisting at SVC and in particular there was no mention of the operation of the Society's trip boat, Marsden Shuttle.

Therefore, I supplemented the presentation by advising the meeting of work of the Shuttle team, of our representation on the M and A Partnership and of our keen interest and support for events held at Tunnel End, particularly those during 2014.

The second part of the meeting involved a discussion based on James' report during which we sought to understand/explain the

Heady days at Tunnel End with the official opening of Standedge Tunnel by BW's George Greener on May 25th 2001



Alan Sopher

problems affecting operation of the Centre (location, weather, listed status of buildings, limits on numbers of boats using the Tunnel/days of operation, car parking etc.).

We also looked to the future and the opportunities which the Centre might be able to offer as part of the HNC/Pennine Ring/M and P visitor offer. No conclusions were reached, but a lot of food for thought was taken away for further consideration.

The first opportunity to reflect upon these ideas was at the final M and P meeting of 2014 which took place in Manchester on December 18th. There was a full Agenda for this meeting and so there was only limited time for discussion of SVC. Moreover, it soon became clear that the picture had changed significantly in the intervening weeks with the announcement, by David Baldacchino, that James Dean had resigned from his post and that he would be leaving in mid-January.

David confirmed that the post would be filled, but that the opportunity would be taken to review the job description, with a view to seeking an appropriate skill set, which would be informed by the emerging ideas for the future of SVC.

In conclusion, it was agreed that the guidance of the future role and operation of the SVC was a significant and specialised role for M and P going forward and that it could not be done justice by an agenda item at a busy bi-monthly meeting.

It was confirmed, therefore, to establish an SVC sub-group which would meet to deal specifically with the Centre. The group would report to the main M and P group but would meet to an agreed timetable to deal with SVC matters. It was further agreed that the group would include members of the main M and P group supplemented by co-optees with a specific interest/knowledge of the Centre. In agreeing this, the potential value of

including HCS representatives amongst the co-optees was recognised.

At the December 18th meeting there was also an extended discussion on the paper I had produced on the future links between CRT and Local Authority Partners. National Trustee, Francis Done, attended specifically for this item.

The issue is that we are well advanced into the 20 year Operation and Management Agreement period and when it terminates, CRT stands to take a significant cut in its income.

We recognised that, during restoration, the partnership between BW, the Society and the Local Authorities was integral to its success. However, the world has moved on in the years since restoration and the conclusion reached by M and P, which will in turn be promoted at a National level by Francis Done, is that we need to seek to establish a new form of partnership which demonstrates advantages for both sides.

This will need to be tailored to the local agenda for each Authority and as a first step, the intention is to seek a series of meetings with the three Local Authorities aimed at introducing CRT, what it does and what it can offer. The view is that unless and until we can restore canals onto their agendas, we will have little or no chance of establishing the dialogue with the relevant Departments and Officers with whom we need to develop a positive working relationship.

The other major item, and one in which I had also been closely involved, was a discussion on the approach to be taken by CRT in response to a planning application submitted to Manchester City Council. This was for a twenty eight storey residential tower block on the bank of the Rochdale Canal just to the north of the Castlefield area.

The key issue is that the structure will be cantilevered over the Canal and access will be via a pedestrian bridge across the Canal. As a result, CRT will be in a position to seek payment from the developers in return for its consent to overbuild the Canal. The meeting therefore discussed and offered suggestions to the CRT Property team as to how the forthcoming negotiation might produce the best outcome for the Canal and for M and P.

As a final item, the Chair advised that three members of the partnership, David Champness (of United Utilities), Linda Jubb (a consultant architect) and Mark Turner (of Pennine Prospects) have announced that they will be retiring from the Partnership at the end of their three year term. Replacements would be sought with advertisements being placed early in the New Year.

The first meeting of 2015 took place at High Lane near Marple on February 5th. Unfortunately, due to ill health, I was unable to attend the meeting so I cannot offer a first-hand account.

However, I can report that the principle item on the agenda was a presentation by, and discussion with, Sara Hilton of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) on future priorities in this key area for the waterways. Sara's visit was particularly appropriate because it coincided with the restoration work being undertaken on the Grade 1 Listed Marple Aqueduct (*opposite*). The total cost of this work will be £2.3 million which includes a grant of £1.5m from HLF. Physical works on the restoration started in early November 2014 and were due to be completed by the end February this year.

Also due to attend the meeting was Andrew Walker, the Waterway Ombudsman who had expressed a wish to be there in order to gain a better understanding of the role of the CRT's Partnership groups.

Other reports received included the following updates:

- Progress with the appointments of the M and P Development & Engagement Manager, the joint Rochdale/Huddersfield Project Officer and the replacement for James Dean at Standedge.
- Piccadilly Undercroft Gate: where work towards the night time closure of the towpath by installation of gates is progressing, but a conclusion is still some way off.
- Ashton Canal Velocity Project: work started on site on January 22nd with a media launch and photocall planned for the 10th February accompanied by a press release. The Project will upgrade 8km of towpath from Picadilly Basin in Manchester to Portland Basin in Ashton-u-Lyne for multi-use.

Graham Birch
Trustee M and P



Alan Crosby

I've Been Here Before

Photos: Martin Clark

Way back in 1986 HCS, received a cheque to the value of £1,200,000 from Greater Manchester Council (GMC). Its purpose was to help the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow by funding the cost of replacing four "dropped" bridges on the Greater Manchester section of the Canal. A few days later the Metropolitan Counties were abolished. Now, in 2015, Greater Manchester County seems to be rising again, but that is another story.

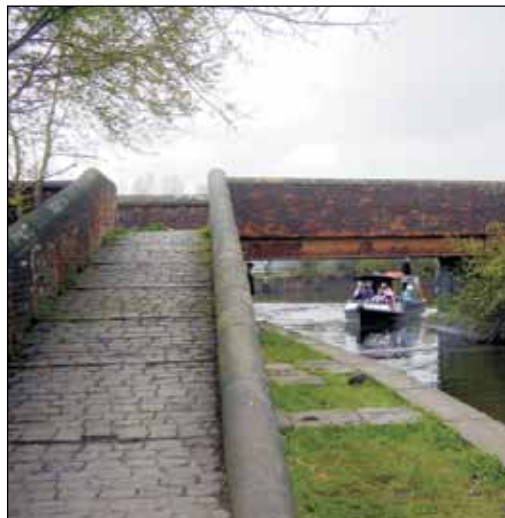
The member who was responsible for this tombstone funding was GMC Councillor Peter Scott who, until two years ago, served as a Councillor for Reddish, which is on the line of the now infilled Stockport Branch of the Ashton Canal.

In 2006, Peter telephoned me to say that plans were being made to restore the Stockport Branch and he asked if I would be involved? I declined to lead the nascent society but agreed to be vice Chairman. Last year our Chairman Bill Bates, who is a member of the

Macclesfield Canal Soc., resigned so that he and his wife and family could enjoy his retirement and cruise the waterways. So I became Chairman, but of what?

The Manchester and Stockport Canal Society, whose Secretary is Peter Scott, aims to restore the four and a half mile Branch which connected with the Ashton just below Lock 11 and terminated behind Nelstrop's Flour Mill on Wharf Street off Lancashire Hill in Stockport.

It has only twenty metres of water and that, at the entrance in Clayton. It has no Locks and a line which passes through some hitherto unfashionable parts of Manchester and Stockport. However, we have the support of both Councils, particularly Manchester, and we are making progress, not unlike our early days with the Huddersfield, when we were lobbying and not Lock restoring.



Left: A vision of the future as a trip boat turns from the Ashton and Manchester Canal at Clayton into the Stockport Branch. Sadly, the boat can only venture twenty metres before reaching today's 'limit of navigation' (above).

We have other friends including, significantly, the owners of two large mills in Reddish, Broadstone and Houldsworth Mills. The former, built in 1907, was one of the last cotton spinning mills to be built in the region. It is now home to incubator units and a smart factory outlet retail centre with cafés. The owners want to see boats outside the Mill despite the temporary disruption that canal restoration would cause. We have a canal plaque inside the Mill as we have also on the Nelstrop Mill and in North Reddish Park.

Another six plaques are planned along the canal line. When we unveiled the Nelstrop plaque, their Managing Director told me that today they receive wheat which is shipped to Ellesmere Port and brought by road to Lancashire Hill. Historically, however, they had coal and wheat deliveries by narrowboat, this ceasing only in the early twentieth century.

In 2006, the then British Waterways produced for us a pre-feasibility study for the restoration of the Canal in two sections. The study, which identifies all barriers to restoration, forms a basis for further work, but it does not identify the benefits.

In splendid isolation ... constructed in 1864, this towpath bridge crossed the entrance to a short arm that served the Ashton Canal Company's Gorton Maintenance Yard.



Last year I asked Patrick Moss, the son of Ian Moss, a Marple resident and canal and railway enthusiast, to help us with evaluating the benefits. His company, Moss Naylor Young Ltd, is scoping the options and benefits for reopening the Canal to navigation. We expect the final draft this Spring, but early indications suggest a surprisingly high economic benefit to be gained from full restoration. Once this is completed, we shall have the tools to propose a restoration strategy to the two local authorities, IWA and Canal and River Trust.

One of the major engineering challenges which will need to be faced, was created by the construction of a large spillway for the Gorton Lower Reservoir, on the line of the canal, by United Utilities, some years ago. One of my civil engineering chums, who volunteers his time with me at Rose Hill Station, Marple, has engaged final year MSc Civil Engineering students at Manchester University to design a solution. We look forward to the Report, which will form a significant part of their Degree, and propose alternative, costed, engineering solutions by June 2015.

To my colleagues on HCS Council and to many HCS members, the above will seem a familiar restoration procedure and strategy. The only difference is that we are forty years older! As the title to my article states "I've been here before".

David Sumner

Chairman

Manchester and Stockport Canal Society

For more information on the history and line of the canal go to:

www.mscs.org.uk and

www.penninewaterways.co.uk/ashton/stockport.htm

New Head of Customer Services at CRT



Canal &
River Trust

Keeping people, nature & history connected

The Canal & River Trust has appointed Ian Rogers as its first permanent head of customer services. The new role supports the Trust's 10-year strategy to create stronger connections between the charity and the millions of people who use and enjoy its waterways each year, and is part of a renewed focus on improving the service the charity offers to customers.

Ian, who will be starting his role on 2 February, comes from Aon, the large insurance broker, where he has been managing director of the Aon Affinity division working with SME (small and medium-sized enterprises) customers. Prior to that, he worked in senior customer service roles at Dataforce, Thomas Cook and Eurostar.

Ian's priority will be to lead the Trust's programme of customer service improvements, ensuring that all parts of

the organisation put customers at the heart of what they do. He will assume direct responsibility for leisure boating, licensing and enforcement.

Richard Parry, chief executive of the Canal & River Trust, said: *"I'm delighted to welcome Ian to the Trust. Our future success requires us to continue to change how we do things; to engage with all those who use or visit our waterways, or live alongside them, in a different way, and to make customer service and community involvement central to how we operate. Ian's role will be vital in making these essential changes that will put our customers at the centre of our operation."*

As part of Trust's ten-year strategy, the charity's 11 waterway units will have greater focus on delivering excellent day-to-day customer service to boaters and other visitors, and working with their local Waterways Partnerships to create stronger relationships with local communities and stakeholders.

CRT Press Release

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Stalybridge Festival & Boat Gathering 2015

Stalybridge Festival and Boat Gathering 27th & 28th June 2015

Following on from last year's successful event we are again working with the Stalybridge Festival Committee and Stalybridge Town Team (STT) to provide a full weekend of activities for the public to coincide with the annual Stalybridge Carnival. The spectacular Carnival parade takes place on the Sunday afternoon and last year was led by a Samba band and comprised 50 entries in the parade including 7 very large floats. The unique colour provided by the narrow boats moored on the canal and the activity on the water provided a lot of interest and help set a great scene for visitors.

We reported on last year's event in the Autumn 2014 edition of Pennine Link and will again be providing free boat trips which were very popular with everyone. They really did help people appreciate what a great asset they have in the centre of town and to see things from a boater's eye perspective closer to water level.

A major attraction on the Saturday this year will be the Tameside Sea Cadets (TS Quantock) display team. They are scheduled to perform their fantastic window ladder display in Armentieres Square throughout the day on Saturday. This is not to

be missed and their displays are in great demand all over the country. A market is planned for Armentieres Square on the Sunday and other attractions are under consideration. There will also be many additional activities/attractions in the nearby Cheetham Park from 12.00 Noon on Sunday.

We feel that last year's event helped people appreciate the canal and encouraged more people to join in



and volunteer to help with its care and maintenance. We would like to see more boats there this year so please come along if you can. If you are passing through on a longer trip please consider a stopover to join in on the event. HCS representatives will be present for the full weekend and you can be sure of a warm welcome and an enjoyable experience should you choose to come. To add interest for boaters there will be a 'Best Presented Boat Competition' judged by the Carnival Queen and Princesses. We will provide more information

through the Pennine Link Extra forum nearer the time but, in the meantime, please do not hesitate contact Bob Gough or Claire Bebbington at the HCS Office if you would like more details.

The Society had also been working with the Canal and River Trust (CRT) and STT to attract a volunteer group to care for and maintain the canal corridor and its town centre surroundings more effectively. This is very important here as the canal corridor benefits from well-maintained surroundings and vice-versa the town centre benefits from a well-

maintained canal. Several major clear ups have already been carried out. As you read this we will have also completed a further event scheduled for 21st March 2015 to coincide with a national initiative called 'Community Clear Up day'. It is proposed to hold subsequent major clear up events at approximately six weekly intervals and the next event is to be held on Saturday 9th May to avoid the May Day Bank holiday weekend.

We are also proposing smaller work groups in between times to tackle specific issues such as painting, boundary fence repairs and landscape work etc. If you would like join in on the clear up days or with any of these smaller groups please contact HCS Council Member Peter Rawson at peter.rawson@hotmail.co.uk or on either of the telephone numbers on the inside cover of this magazine.

Scenes from the 2014 Carnival



Bob Gough, Alan Stophes, Eric Woods

Peter Rawson



2015

Photographic Competition

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

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

Don't forget the closing date!

THE CATEGORIES

A - Huddersfield Canals (*Narrow & Broad*)

B - Other UK Waterways

plus an Overall Winning Photograph

THE RULES

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

There is no entry fee!

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

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

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO:

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

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

THE CLOSING DATE

Friday 13th November 2015

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K		P		M				I
					G	I		
			P					S
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	P		M					K

The initial letters 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.

Solution on Page 31

Looking Back from a Far Country

Membership no. 0165 must make me one of HCS's longer standing members and, living in East Sussex, one of its more distant ones. And by reason of this distance, I'm also an almost totally inactive one, other than to renew my annual subscription and read *Pennine Link*. In fact, my only claim to active participation is to have written a few protest letters to Kirklees and Tameside about planning applications that threatened the restoration in the 1970s. Perhaps such protests from afar helped to show that the restoration was of more than just local interest.

It was in the early '70s that I regularly joined my sister and her young family on their annual hire boat holiday. Together, these covered most of the Midland canal system and got me hooked on inland waterways. The nearest we ever got to HNC was the top of Marple locks en route to Whaley Bridge. Other trips were with friends and work colleagues and, in 1974, one of these took us from Sowerby Bridge - then a terminus - via the Aire & Calder and Leeds & Liverpool to near Chorley. This trip included a diversion up the Huddersfield Broad to Aspley Basin and gave me my first glimpse of derelict locks on the Narrow. It was about that time that I joined IWA and several canal-specific restoration societies, HCS included, as it seemed to me that the Narrow was a 'must-do' restoration – 'impossible' or not!

As a result, two other trips on my canal cruising CV were with HCS members in 1979 and 1980 and the reminiscences of Jean Beck (Buckley) in *Plink* 167 mention several of the crew for the first of these trips. Organiser Peter Freeman's meticulous accounts show who was there, for how long and how much each should pay – a princely £27.79 in my case for 5½ days! As those involved may remember, it was

a 2-week hire from Shardlow (Trent & Mersey) and the plan was to go up the T&M to Stoke and then the Caldon Canal to Froghall. Returning south, we would then go via the Rivers Trent and Soar to Leicester. I can only vouch for the second week, which I joined at Bridge 66, Rugeley on the Sunday, but the detailed records of progress that I tended to keep on all my canal trips show that we did indeed reach Leicester – at 1935 on the evening of Wednesday October 3rd. The following morning is recorded as 'sightseeing' – in Leicester!?

The crew for the second week, apart from myself, were Ron and Jean Buckley, Pete Freeman, Alex Cripps, Laurence Sullivan, Alex Huxham and Billy Rowlands. The joining instructions also note that for that week, Jean would be in charge of 'feeding and cleaning' with Ron overseeing the engine. In the *Plink* article Jean also mentions Jean Wrigley who was on the first week and, for the record, others on the first week that she doesn't mention were Audrie Kinnear, Phil and Joyce Calverley and also a Phil S. In retrospect, I feel unworthy to have shared the trip with so many early stalwarts of HCS.

Apart from my progress log for the time I was there, my records of the 1980 trip are sparse. However, I seem to remember David Finnis being there for at least some of the time. I joined the boat on Saturday October 11th at Napton Bridge Inn on the South Oxford Canal. We then went south, reaching Oxford on the Monday evening. Returning north, we had reached the Rose Narrowboats boatyard at Brinklow (north Oxford) by Friday evening. I've found slides taken on this trip in my photographic archives but none for the earlier one – perhaps I forgot my camera!

Earlier in 1980, celebrations had been held at Rainhill for the 150th anniversary of the Liverpool - Manchester railway which, as a railway engineer, I felt obliged to attend! (These included a replica of Stephenson's *Rocket* and other steam and modern locomotives parading past admiring spectators who were on grandstands erected alongside the track). It seemed a good idea to combine this with a visit to the HNC, for which Laurence kindly offered me a bed at his little house in Stalybridge. I can't remember exactly where we went, but the photograph (*right*) shows us both standing on the sill of an un-identified lock. I've no idea who took it. But I do recall an encounter with mushy peas at a local chippy – then neither a familiar nor an appetising sight for a Southerner!

The 1980s brought a wife, a daughter and rather less freedom to disappear on a canal trip at any opportunity. However, we did take her on the Oxford Canal before she was mobile enough to fall overboard! (Now, age 31, two of the several addresses she has had in London have been near to the Regents Canal).

Since then, trips afloat have been rather infrequent and so, for the most part, I get my canal 'fix' from the towpath. Having taken up running, I put in a good few training miles canalside as the occasional overnight stay in Manchester – once an important place for railway engineering – allowed an evening run up the Rochdale Nine followed by the

then cascaded Rochdale or the Ashton. Castlefield to Failsworth and back is about a half marathon! Later, I found myself working on the other side of the Pennines at York or Leeds and from here I was able to take the train to Huddersfield and to Slaithwaite to see how the restoration was getting on.

Work has also taken me to a few canalside locations in France. In Paris, the Canal de l'Ourcq is just a short walk from Gare de l'Est; Lille has the Canal de la Deule; and as a reminder of home, Belfort has derelict locks on the Canal de Montbéliard à la Haute Saône. When at the office near Kings Cross, it was but a short lunchtime



Bob Cripps Archive

walk to St. Pancras and Battlebridge Basins on the Regents Canal but, now retired, I am tens of miles from the nearest navigable, non-tidal waterway - the River Medway at Tonbridge. My nearest restoration schemes are the Sussex Ouse (15 miles away) – still very much in its infancy - and the Wey and Arun (50 miles) which has made remarkable progress with very little external finance and now has a popular trip boat operation on the restored section.

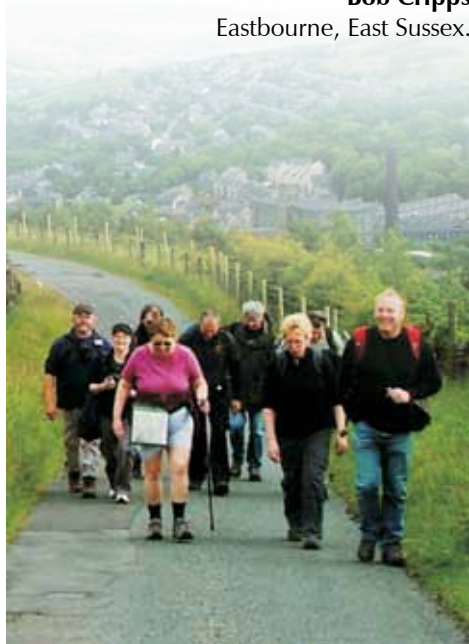
Apart from the trips mentioned above, I've only ever attended two official HCS events. The first was the Link Day on 21st July 2001 for which, despite the distance, it really did seem worth making the journey. Here, I met up with Laurence again and recognised several other notables from their photos which appeared regularly in *Plink!* The second was the tunnel trip in June 2011 which started (*right*) with a walk across the moor from Marsden to Diggle, led by Dr. Bob (also see my photo in *Plink* 176), and then, after welcome refreshments at the Diggle Hotel, the tunnel transit. To do a bit more towpath, I then took the train back to Greenfield and walked the towpath to Stalybridge (with Dr. Bob's excellent guide book in hand) before returning to Manchester where I was staying. And talking of towpath guides, I was interested to read under 'What we Said Then' in *Plink* 187 that in *Plink* 30

(September 1979) it was announced that a new one was to be published. I recognised its cover immediately as I still have a copy. It was eventually published in 1981.

I still harbour an ambition to one day cruise the Narrow by boat and so, with more time on my hands and still passably fit, I might just be available for anyone desperate for crew; or maybe a reunion cruise with some of those mentioned above – but I'm not volunteering to organise it!

Bob Cripps

Eastbourne, East Sussex.



Bob Cripps



CLOGGER'S COTTAGE

Canalside holiday cottage for two in Saddleworth

Spring Gardens
Moorgate Street
Uppermill
OL3 6DF

Contact: Peter or Judith
01457 878361
www.uppermillcottage.co.uk

* *A superb location beside the Huddersfield Narrow Canal*

* *Convenient for all village amenities*

* *Owned by canal enthusiast & HCS member*

Winter Maintenance Works

Photos: Alan Stopher



Above: Work is well underway on installing new tail gates at Lock 34E near Sparth.

Left: Newly installed tail gates at Lock 18W, near Greenfield. The dark staining on the oak timbers is produced by the high tannin content of the unseasoned wood.

Below: Installing a new tail gates at Lock 37E, on the Marsden Flight, where sponsorship from the children's TV programme Blue Peter has been acknowledged with a brass plaque and familiar logo carved into the balance beam.



Street Scene Greenfield Group

SPRING NEWS FROM STREET SCENE GREENFIELD GROUP

An update on tow path volunteer activities

Luckily only one project day had to be cancelled during the Winter months because of bad weather and since then the project has continued apace.

CRT have been given access to United Utilities' land adjacent to the long stretch of tow path between Chew Valley Road and Well-i-hole which has enabled stone to be dropped midway between the two. On February 23rd, with just a short distance to barrow, 4 tons were laid in record time - 50 minutes. The Group were then able to enjoy a leisurely brew – see photo below!

A further 6 tons of stone were laid here on March 12th making the total to date in the region of 80 tons. On the same day, a number of large clumps of vegetation were also removed from the wash wall – see photo opposite - which will hopefully ensure it remains stable.

On March 1st, two members from the Group joined CRT on their workboat on the Macclesfield Canal and together with other volunteers, helped cut back vegetation from the workboat rather than tow path. The Group will discuss with CRT, the possibility of carrying out a similar exercise on the HCS.

Emmaus, Mossley are now adopting the stretch from Division Bridge to Roaches Lock: the Greenfield Volunteer Group



CCGRA



will concentrate on their own section, plus the stretch from Hall's Lock to Wade Lock in Uppermill.

As well as the usual tasks, the Group have planted snowdrops, bluebells and aconites which were purchased online from YouGarden who kindly donated extra bulbs for our worthy cause!

The next 6 months project working days are currently being firmed-up with CRT and a list will be posted shortly on the GGRA/SSGG notice board in Tesco's, Greenfield.

The Group meet twice a month for about 2 hours. If you would like to be involved, please contact the Project Leader Gill on 01457 870364 or email: gillmcculley@yahoo.com.



Our bulbs have potential!

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

The Limekilns at Brownhill

Society members will be familiar with the fact that there are 32 Locks on the West side of the Huddersfield Narrow and 42 on the East side. Historically, they were referred to by their ordinal number and location.

Individual names were acquired later and uniquely, three Locks in Uppermill: Wades (21W), Dungebooth (22W) and Limekiln (23W), are clearly named in a list as part of the London Midland and Scottish Railway Company's plan (c1927) of the Huddersfield Canals which accompanied a general description of their asset acquired from the London & North Western Railway (LNWR). The LNWR had acquired the Huddersfield and Manchester Railway Company who themselves had bought out the original Huddersfield Canal Company (HCC) who built the Narrow Canal.

Limekiln Lock is of particular interest as there has been uncertainty as to the location of any associated kilns that would have occasioned the name.

As a source material, the HCC Minutes (1794-1843) provide a useful history. The earliest reference is from a meeting at the Globe Tavern, Ashton-u-Lyne on the 24th of June 1801 when it was *"Resolved that Mr Rooth be authorised to purchase on behalf of the Company a small piece of Land belonging to Abraham Rhodes adjoining the Aqueduct above the twenty third Lock in Saddleworth And also two small pieces of Land left on each side of the Canal adjoining the above mentioned plot and belonging to John Platt of Dobcross And that Mr Rooth do cause a Limekiln to be erected in the best situation upon the said pieces of Land."*

The 'Farrar' Estate Plan (1770), later copied by Joel Hawkyard in 1825, published by the Saddleworth Historical Society (SHS) in 'Mapping Saddleworth', Book 2, lists A. Rhodes' land ownership in 1789 and coincidentally two plots, named Little and Great Kiln Wood, appear near to the land in question (Figure 1). Using the locations of various settlements and field boundaries, an attempt has been made to relate the present Canal to this plan. Accepting the inherent errors, the Estate boundary appears to be some distance from the aqueduct. Part of John Platt's land is a significant distance away at Heathfields, though he, and Abraham Rhodes, most likely had other property outside the Farrar Estate which is not mapped or listed in the index.

Nonetheless, limekilns were built and in October 1811, it was *"Resolved that Mr John Rooth be and he is hereby directed and impowered(sic) to let the Limekilns that are built at Brownhill in Saddleworth to such person as will undertake the same on the following terms ..."* with a reduction in rent proportionate to the quantity of lime burnt.

Certainly the kilns were a significant landmark in the 1820s when the Trustees of the Standedge to Oldham Turnpike referred to establishing a toll house and gate *"near the Lime Kiln at Brownhill"* (Quarter Sessions Order Book, June 30th 1824 as quoted by Bernard Barnes in 'Passage through Time' SHS 1981). The "Six Inch" Ordnance Survey (OS) map, surveyed 1849-51 and published in 1854, fails to show any lime kilns in the area and incidentally mis-names Lock 23W as "Lane Kiln Lock"! It is possible

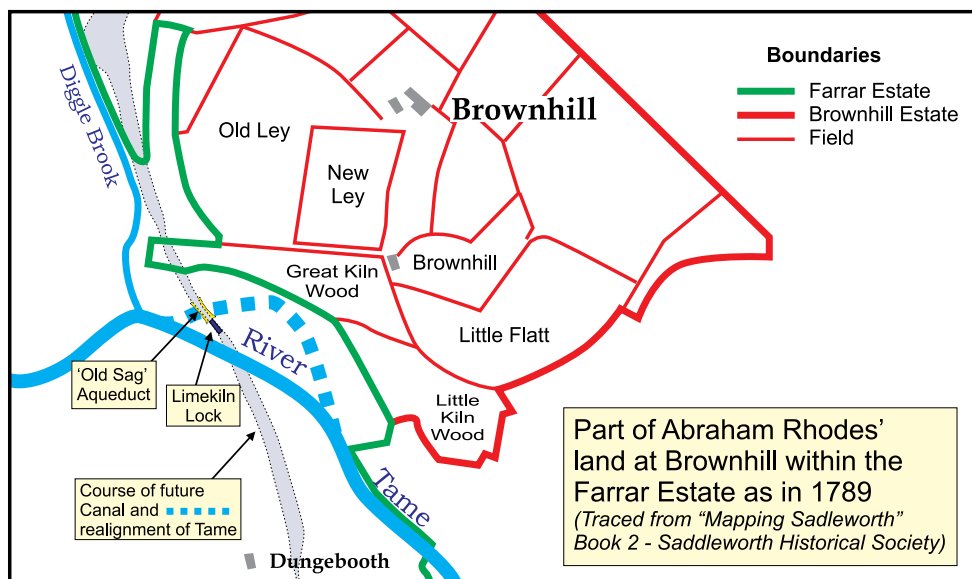


Figure 1

the kilns were relatively short-lived and their remains of little significance to the map surveyors.

Visitors to the site today will be impressed by the Uppermill Viaduct carrying the Manchester to Huddersfield railway over the valley. Ironically, it is this viaduct, built in 1849 by the LNWR, which offers further clues, albeit somewhat misleading!

The Society's Trevor Ellis, researching historic editions of the Huddersfield Chronicle, came across an article in the February 1863 issue, reporting a railway accident on the viaduct: "...When the train was about half-way over the viaduct, and going slowly, the front axle-tree of a waggon laden with salt broke, and suddenly stopped the waggons behind. Several of them were thrown off the rails against the battlement wall of the viaduct, nearest to Dobcross, and ... the weight of the waggons harled(sic) down the massive wall for a distance of about twelve yards

into the valley below, a height of 66 feet. The stones fortunately fell near to the old lime-kilns, and did no damage in their descent."

Figure 2 (overleaf) is a sketch plan of the area under investigation.

From the newspaper report, it appears the stones fell to the Western side of the viaduct and from its central region (marked 'X' in Figure 2). This suggests the lime kilns were located North East of Den Lane and in the grounds of No1 Mytholme. However, reference to an 1862 Deposited Plan and Register of the Standedge to Oldham Turnpike Trust, held at Wakefield Archives, clarifies the issue. The Trust proposed a branch road from Brownhill Bridge to Tamewater Bridge (what would become today's Dobcross New Road) and their plan detailed the adjacent property owners who might be affected. Of significance are the plots outlined in green in Figure 2 and numbered 2, 7 and 10. An extract

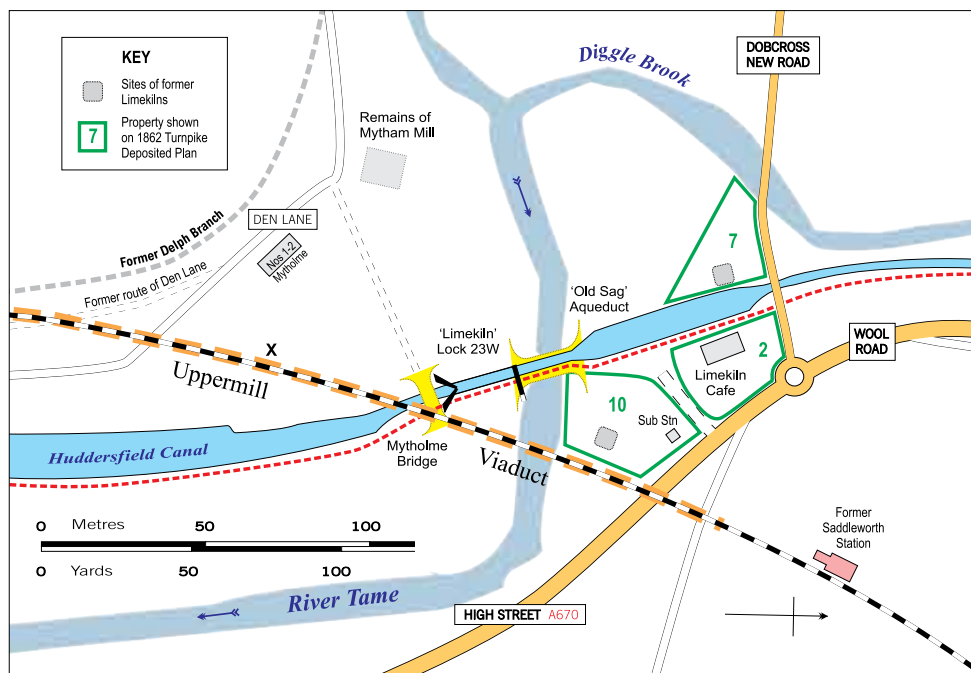


Figure 2

from the accompanying Register gives details as follows:

Plot	Description	Owners	Occupiers
2	Wharf Land	John Bradbury	John Bradbury
7	Site of old Lime Kilns and appertaining land	LNWR Company	LNWR Company
10	Site of old Lime Kilns and appertaining land	John Bradbury	John Bradbury

Therefore, there were two separate sites for the 'old limekilns' and furthermore, the train was well along the viaduct, rather than half way, for the stones to fall "near to the old lime-kilns". According to a LNWR estate map (1905), the site (plots 2 & 10 in Figure 2) had been sold by the Railway Company to John Bradbury; hence his listing as owner/occupier, and plot 7, leased to the Company.

In conclusion, the Huddersfield Canal Company, acquiring land from Abraham Rhodes and John Platt, built lime kilns

on two sites at Brownhill by 1811. The kilns appear to be operating into the 1820s but for how many years after is unclear; certainly they seem

to be disregarded during the 1849/51 OS 6" Survey. Today, plot 7 is the Brownhill Nature Garden where visitors may be intrigued by some overgrown stonework behind the compost bins, next to the canal bank! Plot 10 is some decidedly hummocky, overgrown land below the viaduct near the electricity sub-station. Yet the naming of Lock 23W and the Café remain as a testament to the limekilns at Brownhill in Saddleworth!

Bob Gough

Notice of the 2015 AGM

HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY LIMITED

Notice is hereby given that the Thirty Fifth Annual General Meeting of the above named Company will be held at the Stalybridge Station Buffet Bar on Thursday 25th June, 2015 at 7.00pm to transact the following business:

1. To approve the Minutes of the 2014 Annual General Meeting.
2. To receive and adopt the Accounts for the Company for the year ending 31st December 2014 together with the Report of the Council of Management and of the Accountants thereon.
3. To elect Accountants and authorise the Council of Management to fix their remuneration.
4. To re-elect Mr. Michael McHugh as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
5. To re-elect Mr. Keith Noble as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
6. To re-elect Mr. David Sumner as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
7. To confirm Mr. Anthony Zajac as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
8. To consider any other nominations*.
9. Any other business.

DATED the 20th Day of March 2015
By Order of the Council

M. H. McHugh, Company Secretary

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

N.B. A member entitled to attend and vote at the Meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote on his/her behalf. The Form of Proxy enclosed must be completed and returned to the Administrator, Huddersfield Canal Society, Transhipment Warehouse, Wool Road, Dobcross, Oldham, OL3 5QR before the date of the Meeting. A proxy must be a Member of the Company.

Please Note: This year's AGM at the Stalybridge Station Buffet Bar has the option of food after the the formal meeting (about 8.00pm). If you would like some food, available at a modest cost if pre-booked, please let Peter Rawson know (0161 303 8003 peter.rawson@hotmail.co.uk) by the 12th of June at the latest.

Leaving a Legacy to the Society

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd

Registered in England No 1498800

Registered Charity No 510201



220 Club

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

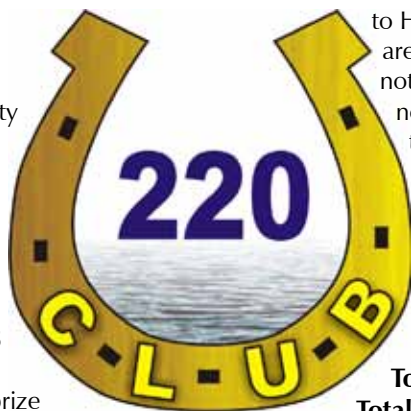
By joining, for only £2 a month, you will have the chance of winning a first prize of up to £350 or a second prize of £175 in each of the quarterly draws. Actual quarterly prize levels will, of course, depend on the numbers taking part.

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.

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 fourth quarterly draw:

Total Subscribers: 24
Total Prize Fund: £57.60

1st Prize:

Mr A. Long winning £38.40

2nd Prize:

Mr D. Walker winning £19.20

Congratulations to the prize winners!

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

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MEMBERSHIP RATES

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

Articles, letters and comments for *Issue 190* of Pennine Link should reach the Editor at Transhipment Warehouse, Wool Rd, Dobcross, OL3 5QR by **11th May 2015**

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