

Pennine Link

Magazine of the Huddersfield Canal Society



Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd

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NON-COUNCIL POSTS

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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 190



Bob Cough

The Society's new noticeboard has been installed on the towpath opposite our offices at Wool Road.

A sturdy, metal construction, the board is lockable and by using duplicate pieces of mountboard as backing, the information is easily updated and then swapped over.

A brief history of our building is featured (*to satisfy the many walkers who are obviously curious about its significance*) together with a promotion of the then, up-coming Stalybridge Boat Gathering at the Carnival Weekend.

We are very grateful to CRT's Ian Moody and his team who did the hard work of excavation and 'postcreting' to install the structure.

Just the job for a 'selfie'!

Editorial	4	St George's Day Celebrations	20
Chairman's Report	6	More on Limekilns	22
Manchester & Pennine Update	8	Street Scene Greenfield Group	24
Volunteers Activities	11	Locomotive Bridge	26
Canal Observing Update	12	Visit to Hargreaves Workshop	29
Volunteer Social	16	An Observer's Tale	30
2015 Photographic Competition	18	220 Club - Fifth Draw	31
Jidoku 34	19		



Editorial

No one who was involved in any way with the restoration of the Narrow could deny that the three Local Authorities (Kirklees, Oldham and Tameside) played a

major role in bringing about the reopening of the Canal. Now you might be thinking 'he would say that wouldn't he' having worked for Oldham MBC and been part of the authority's restoration team, but it is an inescapable fact.

This is in no way to downplay the role of the Society in the achievement, because without the Society, the idea would never have been born and the first steps taken. Moreover, it was the Society, through lobbying, promoting and publicising the project, which sold the idea to the three Authorities and persuaded them to throw their weight and resources behind it.

Having done so, the Authorities played a key role in the process of bidding for and securing Derelict Land Grant for specific sections of the Canal, funding which was used to resource a range of restoration projects by the Society's own HCS Restoration team. This, in turn, provided the impetus for their involvement in drafting the bid and securing the Millennium Lottery funding. The restoration was then carried out and completed under the direction of the Huddersfield Canal Company in which the three Authorities participated as partners alongside British Waterways and of course, HCS.

The partnership embodied in the Canal Company was at its zenith during and in the months immediately following the completion of the restoration project. It had been sustained by a group of Local Authority officers and elected members who had a genuine enthusiasm for and belief in the merits of restoring our Canal. Moreover, in Oldham, it was the same group of members

and officers, myself included, who worked alongside colleagues from Rochdale, Manchester and Calderdale to bring about the restoration of the Rochdale Canal and hence the re-birth of the Pennine Ring.

In the years that followed, the members and officers who had been involved in the projects moved on, in some cases to posts elsewhere, others, like myself, into retirement. The memories of what was achieved and the wider benefits which accrued have gradually dissipated and engagement with the Society and more widely with CRT, is sadly almost non-existent. The only continuing link is through the commitment which the three Councils are tied into to contribute for a further five years to the Operation and Maintenance Agreement.

This situation is regrettable but at the same time in part understandable given the enormous cuts in local government funding which have been imposed in the prevailing climate of austerity. Moreover, given the result of the recent General Election, there seems little likelihood of the trend being reversed any time soon.

In these circumstances, when any request for support either through engagement with staff or financial contributions is made, the inevitable question in the prevailing climate is going to be "What's in it for us. How have we benefitted from the restored canal and how might we benefit in the future?" Such an anticipated response has led me to think about the case that might be made and here are some of my conclusions.

A Working, Living Canal - The work to achieve restoration, complemented by the subsequent maintenance programme, has created a working canal which is as spectacular as any to be found on the inland waterway system. It might be argued that this is what has been paid for, but think for a second what the alternative scenario might have been. Without the investment of time and money that has occurred an already

decommissioned, unloved and neglected canal would have increasingly become a potentially hazardous no-go area. As such it would have been a costly liability both to local communities and local authorities.

Economic Benefits - As evidenced by a series of authoritative economic assessments, the restored canal has proved to be an important asset to the local economy. For example a figure in the order of £2.5 million per year of tourism and leisure expenditure has been attributed to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal since its restoration. A significant part of this has come from visitors to the Standedge Visitor Centre which welcomed a record of around 40,000 plus visitors in 2014/15. There is also reliable evidence that canal restoration gives a lift to land values, adding, it is said, a premium of between 15% and 25% to the value of canal frontage sites.

A Link with our Heritage - Amongst the attractions for visitors is the heritage embodied in the Canal and its structures. The highlight is the magnificent Standedge Tunnel, complemented by the Tunnel End complex. However, there is far more to the Narrow than the Tunnel. Throughout its length there are heritage features in the form of its Locks and bridges, the detailing of which tells the tale of its history and provides a link between the modern era and those whose livelihood depended on the waterway in decades long since passed.

A focus for Community Engagement

Over 40 years ago the dream that it might one day be possible to restore and re-open the Narrow brought together a group of like-minded people who became the founder members of HCS. Ever since then and right through to the present day the canals remain a focus for community action and engagement. The Work Group, the Shuttle Team, the Observers and Adoption Groups such as GGRA. This sort of involvement can help to grow a mentality that recognises that not only the canal but the world around us as a whole is not just the responsibility of an anonymous "someone". Rather it belongs to us all and its stewardship falls to us all.

Sustainability – This is something of a ‘buzz word’ nowadays, but it is an important consideration in a world responding to climate change and the need for conservation of natural resources. Against this background, our Canals, in common with the network as a whole, push a number of sustainability buttons. For example, there is the opportunity to use the towpath as a safe, traffic free route for walking or cycling to school or work as an alternative to going by car. Similarly walking and cycling are also high up on the increasingly recognised health and well-being agenda. Benefits to the sustainability and diversity of the natural environment can also be seen. For example, the canal-side environment, particularly in the more urban sections, provides habitats for species of fauna and flora in areas where, without the canal, they would be unlikely to flourish.

So has the restoration of our Canal brought lasting benefit to the communities through which it passes? I would say an emphatic “yes” but I would, wouldn’t I? However, I believe that these and other examples comprise the makings of a case to put before anyone who needs to be convinced that our Canals offer wide ranging benefits and asks the question “What’s in it for us?”

In conclusion, I repeat, as always, that if you have any thoughts on the above or any other canal-related matter which you wish to share or if you have a tale to tell or experiences to relate, the pages of Pennine Link are open for contributions from our members. Just forward them to us, preferably in electronic format, to Bob at the office.

And finally, as I write this in the final days of May, with its almost endless hours of daylight, it seems to me so far that the weather gods are being reasonably kind, although we do seem to be experiencing a bit of everything that our climate has to offer. However, whatever the weather and in whatever way you chose to enjoy the waterways – afloat or on foot – make the most of Summer 2015.

Graham Birch



Chairman's Report

Summer has arrived in the Pennines and although there has been a chilly wind during May, at least we're getting some bright sunny

weather to compensate.

The cruising season has been underway for two months as I write in late May. There have been a few short interruptions to navigation on the Narrow with fallen trees needing clearing in three locations and occasional reports of low pounds in Huddersfield. CRT have just reported a leak at Britannia Bridge which has necessitated dewatering and fish rescue between Locks 12E and 13E. The initial engineering investigation has found that a hole will need to be plugged. Work is starting immediately and depending on the extent of the work it could be two weeks before the canal reopens. On the Huddersfield Broad Canal there has been a damaged tailgate on Lock 5 which was soon repaired.

The HNC was in the news for a different reason this Spring. The new gates at Lock 37E on the Marsden flight had a starring role in BBC's Blue Peter programme on 23rd April 2015. The short sequence packed a lot in. Presenter Barney Harwood was filmed on site helping to measure up for the gates, being shown the Standedge Tunnel, at Stanley Ferry workshop watching the programme's logo being carved into the new tail gate balance beam, steering a CRT work boat along the summit pound and then on site 'helping' during the gate installation. It was good coverage for

canals in general and I hope it will inspire young people to explore the heritage and environment on their doorstep. I gather it has already brought young visitors to Marsden to search out the Blue Peter logo and plaque for 'selfies'!

Our volunteers have been busy ferrying passengers between Lock 42E and the Standedge Visitor Centre, painting balance beams, greasing lock gear and trimming vegetation. I enjoyed our volunteer social evening at Marsden Mechanics Hall on Friday 27th March. It was a good opportunity to meet and thank many of you for your contribution to our Society. The picture quiz got everyone out of their seats talking and mingling as well as filling gaps in member's knowledge of the Narrow Canal. The feedback has been good and your Council has agreed that some form of gathering for all volunteers should be scheduled each year. Once we have plans for the 2016 they will be circulated via the Team leaders.

Your Society was present at Standedge Visitor Centre during the St George's Day celebration on 19th April. Besides the boat crew running the Shuttle, Tricia and Peter staffed our stall, Bob Gough ran one of his themed quizzes and Council member Eric Woulds, wearing a different 'hat', played his accordion for the maypole dancing. I personally staffed our stall at the well organised South Pennine Boat Club open day on 2nd May. It was good to meet up with people from a number of organisations together with boaters who enjoyed cruising our canals. It was a shame about the weather, but at least the sun

shone the following day on the Tour de Yorkshire Cycle Race as it crossed the Huddersfield Narrow Canal at Slaithwaite.

Elsewhere in this edition Graham Birch gives an update on the work of the Manchester and Pennine Partnership of the Canal & River Trust. A new Community Development Manager has been engaged for each regional team and I look forward to showing these new colleagues around the Broad and Narrow Canals shortly. It is early days to judge how the community-focussed reorganisation of CRT is performing and I hope to gain an insight into plans when we meet.

From a national perspective, the transfer of waterways responsibilities from British Waterways to a charitable Trust in 2012 looks more beneficial than ever. As the new Government gets to grips with a further round of austerity, public bodies are under more and more pressure as they reduce front-line services to a minimum. Many commentators state that we have not seen anything yet in terms of cuts in services particularly in the metropolitan areas.

Whilst CRT is not immune from financial pressures as it is competing for donations at a time when many are suffering financially, its fixed grant has a further twelve years to run. It can therefore keep on top of essential maintenance on a 200 year-old network whilst attracting new supporters to the inland waterways.

Voluntary sector organisations are now running many public services and as more and more is demanded of volunteers, recruiting new ones becomes increasingly challenging. In this environment, I would like to think

that our offer of providing interest for waterway-based activities meets some people's needs, as well as the Society's, and it is pleasing to note that new boat crew members have joined the team recently.

By the time you read this, the Stalybridge Carnival on 27th/28th June will be upon us, or even passed. Claire Bebbington and Peter Rawson have been working hard on plans. This year there will be two trip boats running. Still Waters will repeat last year's shuttle through Lock 7W and Community Spirit will join in by providing trips up and down from Armentières Square. We would have liked to have our own Marsden Shuttle offering boat trips at Stalybridge but pre-arranged holidays meant that key members of the boat crew were unavailable.

As we reach mid-Summer, I hope to meet some of you at our AGM which this year will be held in the back room of Stalybridge Station Buffet Bar on 25th June 2015. By popular request, we'll have some hot food available after the formal meeting.

On the publicity front, Bob and Claire have organised a fine new notice board which was 'planted', with CRT assistance, opposite our Transshipment Warehouse office. Our website continues to tell the world about our canals and up to date news items are circulated by Claire to those on our email distribution list. If you are missing out, please contact Claire at the office.

That's all for now. Enjoy the summer.

Alan Stopher





Manchester & Pennine Update

By the time you are reading this, the Canal and River Trust will be celebrating its third anniversary, having come into being,

in succession to British Waterways, in Summer 2012.

Central to the management of the Trust is the CRT Council. This is an elected body which helps to shape policies and provides guidance and perspective on key decisions. The body, as it now stands, first met in March 2012. Its members reflect the wide appeal of the waterways and include a mix of elected and independently nominated individuals, together with the Waterway Partnership Chairs.

The Council is elected to sit for three years and in consequence the present Council is about to reach the end of its term. The election for a new Council will take place towards the end of 2015 and nominations are being invited from those who wish put themselves forward to serve as members for the next three years. Nominations will close on September 11th.

Full details of the process and the interest groups represented, can be found on the CRT web site. However, of particular note is that this time round, two new groups will be represented on the Council: i.e. the Trust's Friends (*people who give a regular donation to the Trust*) and its Volunteers.

If any HCS members are interested in standing, full details of who is eligible to vote and stand in the Council election

are also set out on the Trust's web site.

As well as the National Council, members of the Regional Partnerships were also appointed for three years and changes in the membership of the Manchester and Pennine Partnership have also taken place. For a variety of reasons, three of the founder members of the Partnership: David Champness (*of United Utilities*) Linda Jubb (*a consultant architect*) and Mark Turner (*of Pennine Prospects*) decided to retire from the Partnership at the end of their three year term. Advertisements were therefore placed inviting applications to join the Partnership and interviews took place early this year. There was a good response, with some excellent candidates coming forward.

In conclusion, four new members were appointed and they are:

Dr Julian Holder - currently lecturing in architecture at Salford University following work with English Heritage North West

Ray Butler – an experienced boater and an active member of the Macclesfield Canal Society.

Kate Hughes - a senior communications manager with the Environment Agency.

Keith Barnes - Chair of Groundwork Manchester and previously Regional Director of Government Office Northwest.

Julian and Ray were able to attend the Partnership's second meeting of the year which took place at the offices of Sustainable Transport (branded **sustrans**) in central Manchester on March 26th.

Also present at the meeting was Gillian Renshaw who is the Partnership's newly appointed Community Engagement Officer. Gillian has been recruited from Trafford MBC. She officially took up her post with M and P during April but took the opportunity to attend this meeting to meet the Partnership and gain a flavour of its work.

The main item on the agenda at the meeting was the presentation, by David Baldacchino, of the Manchester and Pennine Business Plan 2015/16 – 2017/18.

The Plan comprises:

- A ten year strategy summarised in a list of twenty bullet points which taken together will be the focus for the Trust's activities up to 2025.
- A three year delivery plan setting out targets and milestones in areas such as volunteer recruitment and community adoptions.
- A one year plan setting out priorities and budget requirements for projects to be completed in the current financial year

Amongst the year one items in the Plan is an initiative to seek to re-negotiate the Operation and Maintenance Agreements for the Huddersfield Narrow and the Rochdale Canals. Of these two, the more critical is that for our own Canal, for which the current Agreement terminates in 2020.

Funding has been allocated to support this work and the first thing to do will be to set out and agree the actions that will be required to construct a case to be put to the three local authorities. This will, in turn, inform decisions on how the

funding which has been earmarked can be most effectively used.

In brief, other matters covered at the meeting included:

Progress report on the Green Flag Award bid on the Macclesfield Canal – if successful this will be the first Green Flag to be awarded to a waterway and the project is viewed as a pilot for other projects in the region and across the country. The judging day was to be on May 21st and the formal announcement of the 2015 Awards is scheduled for July 21st.

In the light of further, well publicised, incidents, David Baldacchino provided a progress report on the proposal for gating the Rochdale Canal Undercroft.

Works on the Ashton Canal Towpath Velocity Project started in January and were progressing well. This is part of the wider Cycle City programme, which is funded by a £20 million grant awarded in 2013 as part of a national funding scheme, to provide increased and improved cycling infrastructure for Greater Manchester. After the meeting, a site visit was organised to view the works.

Finally, we received an update on the progress on the Rochdale and Huddersfield Canal Community Roots project.

Funded from the Esmée Fairburn Trust and the Post Code Lottery, this project will fund, for three years, an Engagement Officer whose work will focus on those sections of the HNC and the Rochdale which are included in the SSSI designations.

The post holder will seek to enhance and conserve these sites by organising and

leading a programme of conservation management activities involving local communities and volunteers.

The post of Project Leader, which is full time for three years, has been advertised but, as yet, no appointment has been made. More details of the project and the funders can be found on the CRT web site.

In conclusion and looking ahead, by the time you are reading this, the Partnership's Annual Outburst will have taken place on Thursday June 11th. Once more, it is being held at The Mechanics Institute, Princess Street, Manchester. The keynote speakers will be the Trust's Chief Executive Richard Parry and Jessica Bowles of Manchester City Council. Jo Bell, the Canal Laureate, will be joining us again and Partnership members will be providing updates on the eight themes set out in the Partnership's Manifesto which was launched at the first Outburst, held at the Lowry, Salford in 2013.

Graham Birch
Trustee, M&P Partnership



Canal Laureate, Jo Bell

Standedge Tunnel Through Trip - 18th July 2015 and optional pre-trip walk across Standedge Moor

Numbers for the through trip (Diggle to Marsden) are now limited to 18 (eighteen) places. Members should arrive at the Diggle entrance by 12.45pm at the latest.

Canal & River Trust 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.

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 to: '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

Volunteer Activities



Over the Winter period we have managed to work our way along the Canal from East to West, clearing litter and lopping overhanging vegetation from those parts of the Canal that do not have their own Adoption Group working. We have now oiled the paddle gearing and greased the gate pivots on the East side, including checking the hydraulic units for oil. It is likely that parts of this job will need doing again, more than once, during the boating season as CRT have transferred from using grease on the gearing to a bio-degradable oil. While this is much more environmentally-friendly than grease and does not tend to build up around the gearing in the way that grease did, unfortunately it does what it says on the tin and does not last as well, especially in wet conditions.

Over the Summer, we will probably repeat some painting of the balance beams and paddle gearing and I will need to do a survey of the Locks to assess which need it most; in recent years, a lot of gates have been replaced, including several sets over the Winter, and it is hard to keep an up to date record. There is also the possibility of us doing some cutting back on the offside, subject to being trained on CRT boats, though I note that some areas have recently been attended to.

Anyone who is interested in joining us on alternate Fridays, please give me a ring. At the moment, a lot of our work is tending to be on the eastern side, largely due to the number of local groups coming forward to adopt stretches on the West side.

Trevor Ellis

Canal Observing Update

We're well into our second year of Canal Observing. For those unfamiliar with this, it's a process that HCS has agreed with Canal & River Trust (CRT) whereby volunteer Canal Observers (CO's) regularly inspect a section of the canal and then complete a short report setting out any issues noted. The reports are screened at the HCS office to identify anything that can be fitted into the HCS work programme before being sent to CRT who check them against reports from their own Lengthsman. For example our reports may have more up to date information or may include items the Lengthsman has missed or doesn't consider important. There's always an element of judgement involved, but we prefer to report things that are 'minor' now rather than let them become 'major' in future.

There are dedicated CO's for the full length of the canal (except for the Tunnel section...) so we receive lots of regular information. CRT staff do their best to keep up with this but resource allocation can be (as they say) challenging at times. So we need to be mindful of this in our expectations. However, CRT are very supportive and meetings with Nick Atkinson, who manages HNC maintenance work, have been very positive. Since starting, we have discovered that our original report form (based on one used for the Rochdale Canal) needed modification to make the transfer of information from our form to the 'official' CRT system easier. A new format has been drafted and it's out for consultation with the CO's. It makes identification of location easier and concentrates on the major maintenance

items i.e. channel, washwall and towpath, without ignoring other items the CO's have been noting e.g. litter 'hot spots'.

Last year information was focussed on the towpath. Generally its condition is satisfactory, but there are some pretty diabolical sections. Some, like the section east of Lowestwood Lane, are particularly popular with casual walkers so, to an extent, they are victims of their own success, but reminding CRT about these sections does no harm. There's been some success with volunteer work parties on the West side doing towpath improvements under CRT guidance and we should see what could be done on the East side.

This year we're seeing more issues with the washwall. These are a fundamental constructional element of any canal which, as well as defining and protecting the channel, also stop the towpath falling into the canal. The towpath/washwall combination is especially important on the HNC as on both East and West sides, the canal runs along a river valley at a higher level, effectively creating a 16 mile long dam. Any breach in the washwall could have extremely serious long-term consequences.

In times past, the biggest threats to the washwall were its being bashed by boats, trodden on by horses or copings levered out by mooring pins. Nowadays it's more likely to be walkers stepping on the copings to avoid muddy stretches, inappropriate vegetation, anglers rod rests, or simply old age. Dredging is also an issue. Canals weren't built with copious moorings in mind (boats not

moving weren't making money) so the channel section can be naturally shallow next to the washwall as it's usually built straight off the puddled clay. CRT are well aware of this, but over-zealous dredging can weaken the washwall if its foundation is undermined. Additionally, where vehicles drive very close to the edge, deterioration caused by weathering or dodgy reconstruction can be made worse.

Damage also results from vandals opening all paddles to drain down the canal for fun, causing a sudden drop in water pressure. Apart from wasting water and annoying boaters, this also accelerates deterioration of any vulnerable sections – what might not have been a problem for a few years suddenly becomes urgent.

Sections of washwall were rebuilt during the restoration years but not to the highest standards. Much of it has survived primarily through sheer weight – some of the copings must weigh 250 – 300kg (or 1/4 ton in old money). However, gravity is now taking over and if copings are loosened then they start to slide in the general direction of the channel, taking the washwall with them. The problem isn't confined to the towpath side – there are sections with a washwall on both sides, usually where there's development (often industrial) with a canal frontage. There's at least one site in danger

of imminent collapse due to vehicles running too close to the edge. Since prevention is better than the cure, we're now asking CO's to take special notice of washwall issues.

If you want assist the CO's, let the HCS office know about any washwall issues or any other maintenance problems you encounter. We're always happy to welcome new CO's too – there are vacancies on both east and west sides as Council members (happily!) cover any vacancies, but we're equally happy to let someone else have a go!

Eric Woulds

The access road in Slaithwaite suffering deterioration





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Volunteers' Social 2015

As a Society we attach great value to the work done by the many volunteers who undertake a variety of tasks in connection with our Canals. We have Trevor's Maintenance Group, the Boat Team and our Observers, as well as those who sit on Council and take responsibility for the administration and financial management of the Society.

It was decided that it would be appropriate to hold a social event to which our volunteers could be invited as a 'thank you' for their time and efforts and allow the members of the Groups to meet, compare notes and share tales of the waterway. A date was set and on the evening of Friday 27th March, fifty four volunteers, partners and friends gathered at Marsden Mechanics Hall for an enjoyable social gathering.

There were representatives from all the Canal Society volunteer teams together with people from the Canal Adoption groups: Emmaus and the Greenfield Canal Group. A complimentary hot buffet was provided and the bar was open for those wishing to purchase drinks.

As Chairman, I welcomed all present and thanked them for all their work on behalf of the Society. Bob Gough and Jenny Lee organised a photo quiz which kept everyone guessing. There was a raffle and David Sumner urged participation in the 220 Club. Eric Woulds provided the sound equipment and a suitable mix of popular music and everyone enjoyed themselves, catching up with old friends or meeting new ones.

Bob Gough





My thanks go to all who attended and those who helped organise the event. We aim to make this an annual event, so watch out for further information on the timing and location of the 2016 Volunteers' Social.


Alan Stopher

Alan Stopher



Alan Stopher

2015 Photographic Competition

A photograph of a canal scene. In the foreground, a narrowboat with a green and yellow diamond-patterned cabin is visible. In the background, a brick building with a large 'TESCO' sign is situated behind a canal bridge. The water is calm, reflecting the boat and the building.

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,
Transshipment Warehouse, Wool Road,
Dobcross, Oldham, OL3 5QR

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

THE CLOSING DATE

Friday 13th November 2015

JIDOKU 34

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

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

St George's Day Celebrations *Photos: Alan Stopher*





Left: Re-enacting the battle between St. George and the Dragon for the life of a fair maiden. The Dragon makes a fateful lunge at St George (top) and a swift riposte dispatches the beast.

Above and Right: Transformed into the Visitor Centre's own Village Green, tradition Maypole dancers try not to get into too much of a tangle while the musicians keep a lively tempo; Society Director Eric Woulds on accordion.

Below: Administrator, Bob Gough braving the elements for the start of the Treasure Hunt and making some impromptu Origami dragons.



More on Limekilns

Trevor Ellis writes:

In the course of researching the history of the canal, I have found more limekilns to add to those at Brownhills described by Bob Gough in the last Pennine Link.

The early policy seems to have been to establish limekilns along the canal in order to take advantage of the limestone coming from Bugsworth by way of the Peak Forest Canal. Lime would have been used not just for building, but was seen as a way of improving land for agriculture and there was even a far-fetched proposal at one stage to hoist it up the shafts of Standedge Tunnel to improve and cultivate the moors!

In addition to those at Brownhills, there were certainly some by Paddock Foot Aqueduct, on the site of what was later Birkhouse Boiler Works (Map 1) and two sets in Huddersfield – one on the University site (Map 2) and the other opposite the later gas works site, not far from the Leeds Road bridge (Map 3).

I would not be surprised if there were once some in Marsden, but anything that had become disused adjacent to the canal in Marsden will inevitably be buried under tunnel spoil from the later railway tunnels. Certainly it had been proposed to the Canal Company, late in 1801, to purchase land at the Diggle end of the Tunnel for a wharf and limekilns.

All of the limekilns seem to have become disused quite early on – for example, those at Birkhouse are already described as “old” on a map of 1851 in Huddersfield Library. The last reference I have found to those on the University site is 1864 and the Leeds Road ones

1854. It is not hard to come up with reasons why. The economics of the traffic were poor; at Brownhills, boats carrying limestone came from the Peak Forest Canal and, in addition, coal would be needed – also from the Peak Forest. Most of these boats would return empty, as the lime was mainly for local use. The situation in Huddersfield would be little better, though there were some coal pits fairly close.

Probably a bigger problem would be the unpleasant smoke from the kilns, located close to the centre of town. This was the era when the Huddersfield Improvement Act of 1848 was passed, giving powers to tackle a range of nuisances.

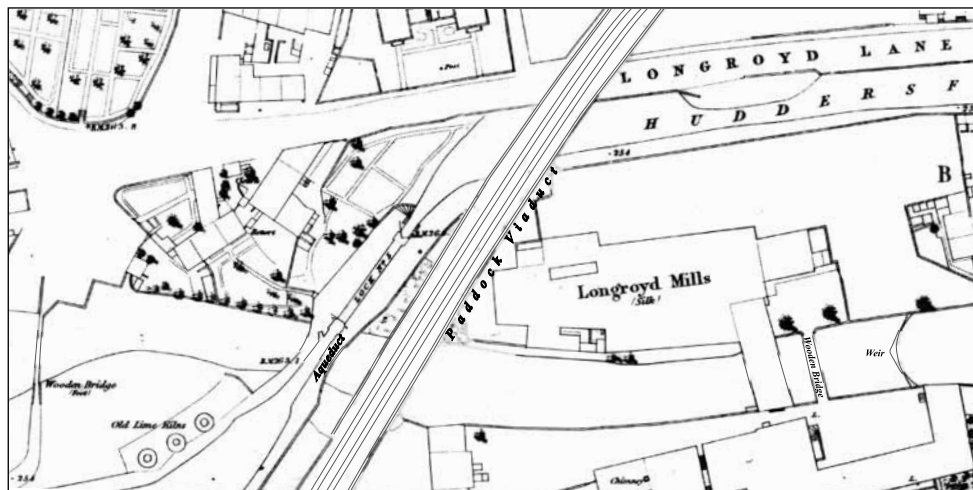
Limekilns were increasingly established at Bugsworth, with boats able to take lime out and bring coal in. The only problem with this is the carriage of the lime, which can be a dangerous cargo should it come into contact with water.

As early as 1850, there was a report in the Huddersfield Chronicle referring to a boat belonging to Mr. Joshua Farrar, of Marsden, who seems to have been the local coal and lime merchant. The vessel was loaded with lime, and a shower of rain fell, some finding its way through the covers. It generated so much heat as to set the covers on fire. Fortunately there was a pile of sand on the wharf, which could be used to extinguish the fire; water would only have made the situation worse!

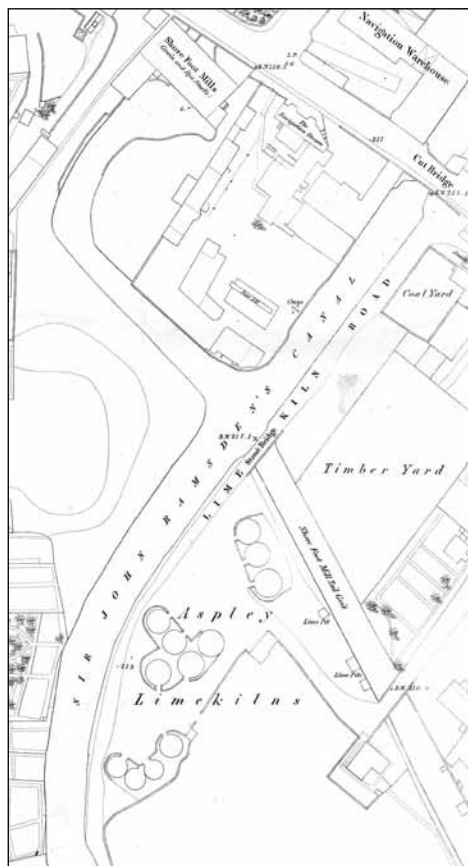
Trevor Ellis

BURNING

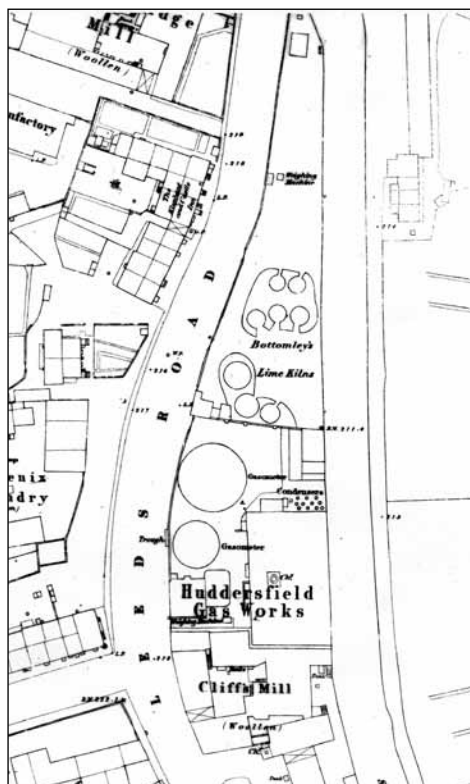
Limestone to Lime + Carbon dioxide
 CaCO_3 to $\text{CaO} + \text{CO}_2$



Map 1



Map 2



Map 3

Street Scene Greenfield Group

Volunteers continue to improve their adopted section of the canal towpath

Work continues on a twice monthly basis and future dates have been agreed with Canal & River Trust (CRT) as follows:

Saturday 27 June

Thursday 9 July

Saturday 25 July

Tuesday 4 August

Saturday 22 August

Thursday 3 September

Saturday 19 September

On the last project day in May, Ian Moody from CRT was able to arrange for several piles of stone to be dropped at various points along the stretch from Hall Lock's to Uppermill which made life easier with less distance for volunteers to carry the stone in barrows. Ian also brought the Whacker Plate which helped compact the stone and gave a smooth surface; particularly helpful for our canine friends!

On the same day, which happened to be the day after the annual Whit Friday Band Contest, the towpath was busy with local residents and visitors and a great number of positive comments were received.

The Group also carried out a litter pick and were pleased to see there was very little compared with what had been found in previous years. It appeared that if an area is well looked after, people are more reluctant to abuse it.

A total of 106 tons of stone have now been laid since the project started two years ago. As well as continuing with this, other projects to further improve our section of the Canal have been discussed and agreed with Nick Atkinson, Customer and Relations Supervisor at CRT.

These include:

- Badly-needed repairs to fencing (to be carried out by CRT and helped by volunteers)



Volunteers from CGRA get their backs into it!

CGRA

- Training for volunteers to help repair wash walls
- Training for volunteers in Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) for Lock gates
- Training for using the whacker plate and motorised wheelbarrow

The Group is also arranging for two of the broken finger posts on the towpath to be replaced. Councillor Hudson and Marston's Brewery have very generously donated monies for these. The one adjacent to the Kingfisher pub will be decorated with a kingfisher mosaic and the other at Well-i-Hole with a different local species. They are being made by local partners Jacqui Symons & Richard Dawson of Arbarus, Woodend Mill, Mossley who designed and made the new finger posts for the RSPB at Dove Stone Reservoir. The Group hopes that these will be installed during the Summer.

All in all, there are exciting times ahead for the Group. Much has been achieved



CRT's Ian Moody (far left) with volunteers from GGRA

GGRA

and now there are opportunities for volunteers to increase their knowledge of the important workings of the Canal.

If you would like to be involved, please contact the Project Leader Gill by email at: gillmcculley@yahoo.com or call her on: 01457 870364.

It's fun, inspiring and you won't be disappointed!

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 -

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Locomotive Bridge

Trevor Ellis writes:

At a recent meeting there was some discussion about the coming anniversary of the “Locomotive Bridge” at Turnbridge in Huddersfield, which carries the date 1865. As many of you will know, the bridge stands on the Huddersfield Broad Canal, a short distance from Aspley Basin. What we needed for a commemoration was a precise opening date. I volunteered to look into this, thinking that it would be relatively easy to find something online in the pages of the Huddersfield Chronicle, which conveniently started publication in 1850. What I found was a story which keeps coming back to one man.

The first reference I found was in the Huddersfield Chronicle on 10th March 1860, which reported the Huddersfield Improvement Commissioners considering a letter from a Mr. R. Armitage about the narrowness and condition of the bridge. At their next meeting (reported 7th April), they first decided that they had no power to intervene as the bridge was owned by the

London and North Western Railway (along with the whole of the Broad and Narrow Canals,) but then returned to the matter and specified what they would like in any new bridge – including 4ft. footways on both sides!

Nearly two years go by and on 8th. March 1862 the Chronicle reports the Commissioners considering another letter from Mr. Armitage, who had recently spoken to the LNWR Engineer. At this point I started to wonder who Mr. Armitage might be, given his persistence and apparently ready access to the engineer. The paper reported that the LNWR had repaired the bridge, but had stated that it would be the last time. They had a design for a full-width overbridge, but would not build it unless others contributed. Otherwise they would build a narrow iron bridge. At their next meeting the Commissioners agreed to approach the LNWR for details, but nothing further emerges in the Chronicle, so presumably the Commissioners either could not or would not contribute.

The next mention I found of the bridge is in the Chronicle on 2nd. December 1865, when it is obviously built as a lad appears in court for winding it up unnecessarily and obstructing the traffic.

Where the story becomes interesting is that, in and amongst, there are several references to general problems caused by traction engines, including one owned by a Mr. Armitage of Turnbridge. I could not find anything

Copy of a painting showing the original swing bridge at Quay Street, Turnbridge. The actual painting is believed to have hung in the boardroom of one of the Mills featured.



much about him in the Chronicle, but this Armitage must have been the author of the letters as the Leeds Mercury 25th. March 1865 has an advert naming Richard Armitage as the owner/manager of Turnbridge Ironworks, also the contact for the letting of "Room and Power" in "the fireproof mill, Quay Street". These businesses are either side of the bridge and to reach the centre of

W B Stocks Collection



Although the barge on the Broad Canal at Turnbridge was the main subject, the timber framed bridge was included with a detailed reflection in the 'flat' water. c. 1955

Huddersfield and particularly the railway from the ironworks, it would be necessary for his engine to cross the bridge. Given the eventual name "Locomotive Bridge", this might be the reason for the rebuild.

One final detail which might explain the alacrity with which the Improvement Commissioners decided that the matter was outside their jurisdiction is that, again in the Mercury, Armitage is referred to at one point as "Commissioner Armitage". Sure enough, he is listed elsewhere as one of the Improvement Commissioners. The matter would therefore have given the Commissioners some potential embarrassment had they started to spend public money on what was clearly the hobby horse of one of their members, even though he seems to have absented himself from the meetings where it was considered. The rebuilding seems to be very much a one-man campaign, with no obvious support such as letters to the Chronicle from other parties.

Finally, what of the opening ceremony? There does not appear to have been one! From an old article in Pennine Link by the late Neil Fraser, I finally managed to trace a small news item in the Huddersfield

Examiner (not online) dated 7th. October 1865, which is headed "Removal of the Old Turnbridge in Quay Street," which makes the unlikely statement that all construction had taken place in the previous week (the Examiner then being weekly). The reporter appears to have been to see the bridge operated and the article concludes "Some bridge of this sort was much wanted, Messrs. Armitage and Company being in the habit of taking bales and heavy castings, varying from five to fifteen tons, exclusive of six ton wagons, over the bridge." No wonder the original wooden swing bridge couldn't cope!

The bridge is listed as a Historical Monument, despite the fact that most of the original wooden structure was replaced by steel angle girders around the early 1970's. Given that the chains will certainly have been replaced, the deck renewed and the recent conversion to electrical operation, we are very much dealing with a "George Washington's axe" here.

Trevor Ellis



Visit to Hargreaves Workshop

In March of this year seven members of HCS Council took up an opportunity which was on offer to make a visit

to Hargreaves Lock Gates workshop in Sowerby Bridge. This was a particularly welcome and interesting opportunity for several of our contingent who had been involved in lock gate funding, sourcing and fitting during the long years of restoration on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

Sowerby Bridge is perched on the hillside along the steeply sided Calder Valley. It was therefore intriguing to see a lock gate workshop hidden behind the main thoroughfare on a rare piece of level ground. The more so because the site has an incredible narrow access despite the fact that lorries need to manoeuvre in and out carrying wide lock gates.

Nigel Lord, the manager, met us and explained the history of the workshop

which is relatively recent given the nature of the business. It developed from the Callis Mill Company which started wooden gate and bridge construction on the Rochdale Canal as recently as 1982.

Twenty six years later, in 2008, the Callis Mill Company was acquired by Hargreaves as it fitted well with their own foundry operations in Halifax producing Lock ironwork and a host of other castings. It is clear that continuity has been the key to maintaining expertise in a specialised business and the company can justifiably claim that they have had over thirty years of experience in the canal restoration industry.

Our visit coincided with a lull in activity as they were finishing off a set of gates for Ham Mill Lock on the Cotswold Canal Project. The lull was because they were awaiting supplies of timber for the next order.

They make gates out of Oak, Ekki or Greenheart. The latter two are West African hardwoods which result in long-lasting gates. The ones we saw were

made of Ekki which is denser than water and difficult to drill. The global nature of the business was brought home



Nigel Lord (centre) welcomes the Canal Society visitors to the workshop and explains how the firm became established.

by the fact that Ebola in Africa has had an impact on the deliveries of timber.

Beside the two storey shop with its crane running along unusual wooden runway beams, there is a single story shop with a range of traditional drilling and cutting equipment.

Hargreaves own foundry manufactures a range of iron works including gate paddle and ground paddle gearings, marine and mooring bollards, finger / mileposts, quoins, anchor plates, pots and pins etc. It also has its own pattern shop and we were able to examine the pattern for a lock quoin.

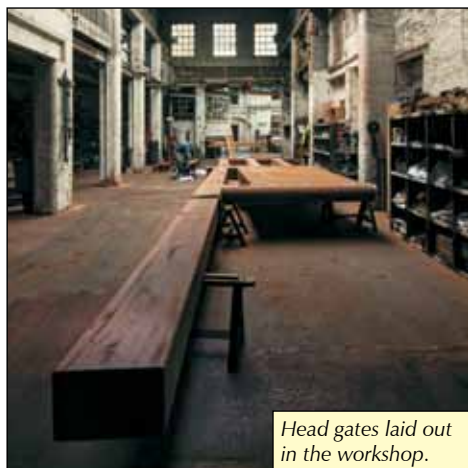
We came away with the lasting impression that Hargreaves workmanship was second to none as well as their demonstrable talent for innovation in what is a traditional industry. Since reopening to through navigation, all the HNC gates have come from BW and CRT's Stanley Ferry and Bradley workshops but I would be more than happy to see Hargreaves given an opportunity to supply their excellent products. I've recently spotted some Dutch made gates on the Kennet & Avon, so who knows what may be possible?

Trevor Ellis and Keith Sykes listen attentively to Nigel explaining the merits of the timber which they use whilst standing on head gates destined for the Cotswold Canal Project near Stroud.

Our thanks go to Richard Hall of Hargreaves for organising the visit and to Nigel Lord for showing us around and answering all our questions.

Whilst in Sowerby Bridge, Keith Noble gave us a tour around the Calder & Hebble Basin and up the first two locks and pointed out features of interest before we repaired to the Jubilee Refreshment Rooms at the railway station for a bite of lunch. Thanks Keith for sharing your knowledge.

Alan Stopher



Head gates laid out in the workshop.



All Photos - Alan Stopher

An Observer's Tale

More than forty years ago, with my teenage pal,
walking down the towpaths of the Ashton Canal;
the smoke stack and pipes of the Clayton Aniline,
while pit ponies graze by the Ashton Moss Mine.
Skeletal wrecks lay in the channel clogged reeds,
never thinking the outcome of those future deeds,
now locks and an aqueduct become our priority;
as Observers often for our waterway society.
Narrow boats raised from their untimely graves
in the cut once again with wild fowl make waves
a magnet of activity, lose modern day stress,
thanking the rebirth to the Huddersfield C S. DK 03/15

I REALLY NEED THE SHELF SPACE! I'm looking for a new home for my complete, bound collection of Waterways World dating back to the very first edition. Please contact Peter Killan – 01457 878361 for further details.

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220 Club

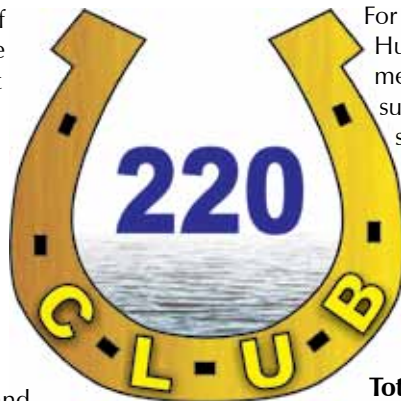
We've had the first year of our Club and although the year closed with a modest 24 subscribers, the first prize of £38.40 on that occasion represented a return of the £24 stake with 60% interest! And that was just one of the quarterly draws.

We're pleased to say that there has been something of an anniversary 'flurry' and we now have 35 paying subscribers giving, as you can see, a quarterly first prize of £56 and second prize of £28! The more who subscribe, the higher the prize fund offered for your £2 a month stake.

Of course, the **220 Club** also:

- 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 the enclosed application form or it can be downloaded from our website. Do consider completing a Standing Order and then you'll never miss a draw.



For legal reasons, only Huddersfield Canal Society members are eligible to subscribe to HCS 220 Club, so if you are reading this and not a Society member, join us and then sign up to the 220 Club.

AND here are the results of our fifth quarterly draw:

Total Subscribers: 35
Total Prize Fund: £84.00

1st Prize:

Mr A. Brook winning £56.00

2nd Prize:

Mrs A. Scott winning £28.00

Congratulations to the prize winners!

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