

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 193

'All hands to the rails' as the Greenfield and Grasscroft volunteers install new fencing along the towpath.



CCRA

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Cover: CRT's workboat gives the UCAN volunteers access for some offside tree clearance. Photo: UCAN



Editorial

Four years ago, having just celebrated the bi-centenary of the official opening of the Narrow, Council decided that it was time to

look forward and set out the priorities for the future of the Society. It was decided to produce a Business Plan for the Society which would be regularly reviewed so as to measure progress against the targets set out in the Plan.

There were two principal reasons why the Business Plan was needed. These were:

- The Society needed to clarify its role in the post restoration era. In the early days and up until the completion of restoration, the role was clearly defined i.e. to secure the restoration of the Canal to full through navigation. This achieved, we needed to define what our priorities should be, now and in the future.
- Although our finances were in a healthy state, it was an inescapable fact that year on year our expenditure exceeded our income. There was, therefore, a need to investigate the potential for new sources of income if our operating model was to be able to continue unchanged.

Four years on, as we moved into 2016, it was agreed that the time had come to have a thorough review of the priorities and targets we set ourselves in 2012 and to decide what changes might need to be made. The context for this was that:

- Despite initiatives such as our 220 Club, our year on year expenditure continues to exceed our income and our investment capital, therefore, continues to fall.

- British Waterways is no more and the management of the Canals rests with the more outward-looking Canal and River Trust (CRT).

As I write, the new Business Plan is still a 'work in progress', but we are clear on the three guiding principles which will direct our work as a Society in the coming years. I would like to explain briefly why I fully subscribe to these principles. They are to:

Promote and encourage in all possible ways, the proper use, improvement and maintenance in good order of the Huddersfield Canals and their connecting waterways.

The responsibility for maintenance and operation of our canals as part of the waterway network rests with CRT. This is a huge job, bearing in mind the age of much of the network and the number of structures which must be kept in good order. There are also the pressures on the Trust's time and resources resulting from such things as the damage to the Rochdale Canal caused by the Boxing Day floods.

In this context, while there is always room for improvement, as a Society we cannot complain about the attention paid to the HNC by CRT since it came into being. However, we have to be mindful that resources will always have to be prioritised and there will always be more to do than there are resources to pay for it. Therefore, as a Society, we owe it to those many members who worked so hard to bring about the "Impossible Restoration" to ensure the continued "improvement and maintenance in good order" of our canals. We can do this not only through the work of our own volunteers but also by being the voice of our canals. A voice which is there to make the case for the investment needed to maintain and enhance our

canals and at the same time increase their usage now and in years to come.

Protect the interests of the canal through support for and engagement with partners to grow the visitor economy and realise the potential of the canal and its corridor for sustainable business, social and environmental uses and activities.

I have argued in recent Issues of Pennine Link that the exposure given to the canal network in recent television series can only be beneficial by raising the profile of the network in the public psyche. The same applies in our own area. If you are reading this, you do not need me to tell you about all the positives that our canals bring to their Pennine hinterland, but there are many more out there to whom the message can be transmitted.

A key role for our Society is to be a central point for the dissemination of this message. We have, in the past, organised events ourselves e.g. the Family Fun Day at Uppermill in 2010 and the bi-centenary celebration at Diggle in 2011. However these take a large amount of time and resources. Our more recent approach has been to team up with partners and in doing so support local festivals and events along the Canal corridor e.g. at Stalybridge and at Standedge Visitor Centre.

By this means and also through our use of printed and digital media, we can seek to raise the profile of our canals, keeping them in the public eye and securing growing recognition of their value as an amenity, heritage and economic asset.

Ensure the continuing prudent stewardship of the Society's assets and resources in accordance with its charitable status.

Although perhaps seemingly the most mundane of the key principles, this is in many ways the most important because the

first two can only be achieved if our Society remains active. In the absence of a major windfall, we know that a change in the way we operate is inevitable over the course of time and it is the recognition of this that is driving our Business Planning process.

As I write, the latest review is still in progress but I, for one, am clear that whatever we decide must be in the interests of ensuring the HCS is there to safeguard and promote the interests of the Huddersfield Broad and Narrow Canals as navigable waterways within the overall network for many years to come.

Before I finish, I need to turn to another couple of matters. First, if you refer back to our Winter 2015 edition, on page three you will see a splendid photograph of a heron holding in its beak a perch which it had caught from the Narrow at Linthwaite. Our 'in-house' acknowledgement of the source of the photograph was not very obvious to the photographer, so I would like to repeat our thanks to Di Carey who took and sent us the picture.

Second, I have, in this column, issued a regular invitation to contribute to Pennine Link if you have a tale to tell, boating experiences to relate or thoughts that you wish to share. I was, therefore, delighted when, early in January, we received an email from Sandra Parnell describing encounters experienced by her and her husband when traveling in France on their canal boat 'Gadabout'. I wish to thank Sandra and look forward to some more of our readers following her example. Just send your contributions, preferably in electronic format, to Bob at the office.

In thanking Sandra, I would like to extend my thanks to all of our contributors and wish them and all of you many pleasant days enjoying the waterways in the coming months.

Graham Birch



Chairman's Report

Well it's been quite a Winter. As far as the inland waterways are concerned the floods in the Calder valley have dominated the headlines.

The Rochdale

Canal and the Calder and Hebble have suffered unprecedented levels of damage. Who would have thought that the river could have risen high enough at Elland to not only inundate the canal which is at a much higher level, but also partially demolish the canal bridge? The authorities, Calderdale Council and the Canal & River Trust, have been swift to start on the more straightforward repairs to reopen towpaths. Volunteers from our friends at the Calder Navigation Trust have helped with the clear up and, using a boat provided by Shire Cruisers, surveyed the stretches between the main blockages. In addition local residents have volunteered for CRT to support the clean-up. The major sections of damage will take much longer to resolve. The communities along the Calder Valley, suffering a second flooding to their property in four years, have started the long road back to normality but the new normal is not a happy prospect for those who live and have their businesses in the valley bottom.

The intensity and duration of storms in the Calder catchment has frequently brought inundation to homes but in places the Boxing Day 2015 floods were almost a metre higher than anything seen before. As well as the effects of climate change there is also a contributing factor from the peat erosion on the Pennine moorlands. Two centuries of atmospheric pollution, wild fires and historic draining and over-grazing has meant that the moors have

a much reduced capacity to hold water. This means that when intense storms occur large volumes of water cascade down watercourses and hit the valley floor in a very short time causing terrible floods. A welcome move is that the current work by land owners, environmental agencies and charities and water companies in the South Pennines is focusing on reversing the trend of 200 years aims to rewet the moors using a range of measures to restore their ability to act like a sponge. A major European Union grant to project managers Moors for the Future will give this a much-needed boost. Large quantities of water in Pennine reservoirs are essential to maintain navigation but as we've seen recently there is such a thing as far too much in the wrong place.

Thankfully our own canals got off lightly. Erosion to the towpath beside Lock 30E was soon repaired by CRT staff. In Standedge Tunnel, 8 to 9 cubic metres of sand, gravel and other debris were swept into the tunnel by a stream that flows in about 250 metres from the Diggle portal. Work has been underway in mid-February to clear this using a water-borne back-hoe excavator.

Planned Winter maintenance work on the Huddersfield Narrow is well advanced. The stoppages involving lock gate replacement and pressure grouting were mainly on the west side this time. All were complete by Christmas 2015. The dredging which started at 21W in Uppermill is now half-way down to Lock 13W at Mossley.

We had a fruitful meeting with the Manchester & Pennine Waterway Manager David Baldacchino in late November to discuss the Operation and Maintenance of the Huddersfield Narrow. David tabled draft plans for next Winter's work and

asked the Society for their views.

The programme showed no fewer than 18 Winter 2016/7 stoppages which will be targeted at improving the navigability of the Huddersfield Narrow with an emphasis on sealing leaks and dealing with some time-expired gates. The aim ultimately will be to bring the HNC and other waterways in Manchester & Pennine up to the standards found elsewhere on the network. Time will tell whether emergency flood repairs will bring about the diversion of funds from planned work. The current CRT appeal for donations could help soften the blow. We had a good airing of views on the number of unplanned short term stoppages during the last cruising season and I am satisfied that a combination of timely notification of issues and swift response is keeping disruption of the navigation to a minimum. Other issues of mutual interest such as boaters' feedback, towpath improvements, new mooring sites, tunnel operations, responses to observer feedback, and promotion of the canal were discussed.

Over the Winter period the crews of our trip boat Marsden Shuttle have had a well-earned rest. Trevor Ellis and the maintenance team have dodged the rain to keep the Narrow Canal looking tidy concentrating on areas where there are no established adoption groups.

Now that that the integrated management of the Standedge Visitor Centre and the HNC waterway operations has settled down, a prominent consultancy firm has been engaged by CRT to advise on how best to increase visitor numbers and income at Tunnel End Marsden. The Visitor Attraction Company (TVAC) has an impressive list of clients and projects from the London Eye to the Deep and have also tackled some smaller regional attractions more akin to the Visitor Centre. I'm pleased to say your Society was invited to a consultation meeting at which my

colleagues and I put forward some ideas about possible improvements to increase footfall. I am aware that a number of other local people and organisations were also being consulted so TVAC will have plenty to think about as they develop a new Business Plan.

Over the years since the reopening of the Narrow Canal, there have been a number of management structures under two navigation authorities. Some members will recall that at one time the HNC was split at Standedge between two regional organisations based in Leeds and Manchester. This did not do a lot for a coordinated approach to waterway management and was thankfully short-lived. The current division between regions is at Huddersfield so the Broad is managed from Leeds whilst the Narrow is managed from Red Bull north of Stoke-on-Trent. The respective waterways partnerships for the North East and Manchester & Pennine recently held a joint meeting at Standedge Visitor Centre to discuss matters of mutual interest which demonstrates a considerable step forward from the 'bad old days'. I was grateful for the opportunity to take part on behalf of our Society. Present were the two Chairs of the Partnerships, a number of the volunteer partnership members from different walks of life and key CRT paid staff. Topics for discussion were volunteer responses to the flooding in the Calder Valley, the successful Green Flag award for the Macclesfield Canal and how this might be applied to other lengths of the network, efforts to reinvigorate commercial traffic on the Aire and Calder and Manchester Ship Canal and a proposed CRT application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for restoring sections of damaged infrastructure. It was an interesting and thought-provoking morning and a good indication of the Trust's commitment to improving engagement with local

communities and collaboration across the artificial divisions of a large organisation.

Elsewhere in this Pennine Link our Editor has done a good job setting the scene for our work on a new Business Plan. Your Council has also been discussing plans for events in the next two years. Last year we had an enjoyable social evening with our volunteers. Arrangements have been made for this to take place again, this time at the Marsden Band Club, on the evening of Thursday 12th May. In promoting our waterways our priority is to link with and support events led by partner organisations. Our role in the Stalybridge Festival is becoming established and this year we plan to have the Marsden Shuttle flying the flag there. We've been invited to take part in the Heritage Open Days arrangements in Tameside in early September 2016. Initial thoughts have been given to promoting and supporting a South Pennine Explorer Cruise in 2017 by a group of boats along the lines successfully organised by the Birmingham Canal Navigation Society (BCNS). Over a number of years a cruise around the lesser

known stretches of the BCN network has encouraged exploration by boaters new to these areas. We have also responded positively to an Inland Waterways Association enquiry about a possible rally so watch this space.

Last year we held our AGM in the convivial setting of Stalybridge Station buffet bar back room and laid on a basic hot meal for those who needed sustenance. Following our policy of alternating between East and West on successive years, this year we will have our 16th June AGM at the Head of Steam in Huddersfield. We'll start the formal business at 7pm as usual and a portion of steak pie and mushy peas at £5 will be available from 8.15pm on a first come, first served basis.

By the time you received this edition, an early Easter will be upon us and thoughts will turn to getting out and about along the waterways. Enjoy your experiences wherever they are.

Alan Stopher

Standedge Visitor Centre on a Winter's morning



Alan Stopher



Manchester & Pennine Update

In recent issues of Pennine Link I have highlighted and welcomed the level of positive coverage the canal network has had in

the broadcast media in the past couple of years. The early weeks of 2016 have seen more coverage but this time, sadly, it is coverage that we would rather have done without because it has concerned the impact and aftermath of the Boxing Day floods in the Calder Valley.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the floods and the repair work being undertaken was the major item on the agenda for the first M and P Partnership meeting which took place in Salford on January 21st.

In a presentation describing and illustrating the damage, M and P waterway manager David Baldacchino told us that the floods were the worst

we've ever seen on our waterways. Thankfully, from an HCS point of view, both the Narrow and the Broad escaped fairly lightly but there was major damage on both the Rochdale Canal and the Calder & Hebble Navigation. Here, the volume and force of the water destroyed homes and businesses in Hebden Bridge, Mytholmroyd, Sowerby Bridge and other valley settlements. It damaged canal structures and washed away substantial lengths of canal bank and towpath.

For example, on the Rochdale between Hebden Bridge and Todmorden, the flooded River Calder washed away an entire stretch of canal bank and hundreds of tonnes of soil, trees and debris slid down the side of the hill and blocked the canal. While on the Calder and Hebble, the listed Elland Bridge was so badly damaged by the floodwaters that it will need to be completely rebuilt.

Steve Wilson



The River Tame floods over the canal banking below Lock 9W, Herod; we got off lightly in comparison

David and Partnership member Jon Stopp then went on to describe the tremendous efforts that had been, and were still being, made by CRT staff and volunteers who have been out in all weathers helping the local communities carry out repairs. This included moving over 200 tonnes of stone and other materials – the weight of 15 double decker buses – to the fill holes and long scours that were left by flood waters along the towpath through Sowerby Bridge, Hebden Bridge and Todmorden.

As a result, it was hoped that before the end of January, local residents will once again be able to use the towpath all the way from Sowerby Bridge to Todmorden. Re-opening of the waterways (and in consequence the Pennine Ring) for navigation will, however, need to await the completion of repairs to structures and breaches and the removal of landslips.

In conclusion, the Partnership members acknowledged the effort of all of those staff and volunteers who had worked to deal with the flooding challenges over Christmas and the following weeks and we asked that thanks be passed on to all concerned.

It is inevitable that the extent of work needed to undertake all the necessary repairs will have an impact on budget planning and allocation for the next financial year. However, progress is being made on a number of important projects on which updates were given.

Measuring Social Value - I have reported in previous Updates the discussions which have taken place concerning the potential impact of the termination of the Local Authority

Operational and Maintenance (O and M) Agreements in four years' time with a resultant drop in income for CRT. In response, the Trust allocated funding in 2015/6 for work to be commissioned to support a case for an approach to seek continued support post-2020.

This work has now started and is being undertaken by consultants Social Value Business Ltd, who's Director Richard Dickens gave a presentation at the January 21st meeting. He explained that past impact evaluations studies have concentrated primarily on the economic impact of the canals.

The Social Value approach however takes a much wider view. What it will do is help CRT to monitor, report on and evidence local social value. By doing this it will be possible to calculate the direct, indirect and added value that the region's canals generate across the fields of health, education, housing, justice and environment as well as employment and the economy.

This is undoubtedly an important piece of work, particularly for the Narrow, as the end of the O and M Agreement approaches. I will be taking a particular interest in it and I am looking forward to seeing the outcomes as they emerge.

Spatial Planning for Greater

Manchester (GM) - another area in which I have a particular interest. It has been widely publicised that with the strong encouragement of Central Government, the ten GM local authorities have agreed to the pooling of certain of their responsibilities to create a single strategic authority under the leadership of an elected Mayor. The first mayoral election will take place in 2017.

In preparation for this, work is already underway to prepare a Spatial Plan covering the entire GM area. The M and P Partnership is keen to ensure that the GM waterways are integrated into this work and an initial meeting has already taken place between CRT and the GM team. It has been agreed that CRT will be welcome to make an active contribution to the work to which I will also be making a contribution on behalf of the Partnership.

Increasing boating on the Trans-Pennine canals - Partnership member Ray Butler has put forward a suggestion that as a means of promoting the Pennine Ring and encouraging increased use, an “explorer cruise” be organised. This would be on the lines of successful events which have taken place to promote underused sections of the West Midland canal network. HCS Council has expressed interest and discussions are planned with a view to perhaps holding such an event in 2017.

Following the November 2016 visit of the National Trustees, the proposal for the creation of a central Manchester base for M and P is gaining momentum.

The suggestion is, in the short term, to establish a temporary base whilst negotiations to secure a permanent one take place.

Consultants tasked with preparing a **Destination Strategy for Standedge Visitor Centre** have been appointed and work has started. Consultation is taking place and our Chairman Alan Stopher together with other HCS Council colleagues have met with them explaining the views of the Society.

Having been awarded in 2015, the **Green Flag** for the Macclesfield Canal needs to be reviewed and reassessed each year if it is to continue in place. This will be done in an unannounced visit by a representative of Keep Britain Tidy in the coming months. Also, following last year’s success, plans are being made this year to submit an application for Peak Forest Canal.

Partnership meetings will again take place at two monthly intervals during 2016 and our annual “Outburst” will take place at a venue yet to be decided upon on June 9th.

Graham Birch

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A Hidden Gem

Having lived in East Yorkshire all our lives we thought we knew the area well so on a visit to Melbourne, a small village just off the Hull to York

road, we were surprised to discover Pocklington Canal.

We were visiting the village for the 2005 open gardens weekend and spotted a sign advertising canal trips. Intrigued, we followed the signs and were delighted to discover a small marina with several boats moored and a 40 foot narrow boat offering 30 minute trips for whatever you wished to put in the donation bucket!. Needing no encouragement we hopped aboard.

The chap "in charge", a member for 40 or so years, was very informative and told us all about the Pocklington Canal Amenity Society (PCAS). By the time we had had two trips on the boat called **NEW HORIZONS**, we were fully paid up Society members!

Over the next few years we became volunteer crew for the boat and we undertook training with Waterstart at Thorne. We gained our CCC Certificate in 2006 and our CCBM Certificate August 2007, the latter being a qualification required to be in charge of a Community boat.

One of the most memorable, and different trips we undertook on New Horizons was to take it to Goole one Winter to enable work to be carried out on it. It was a two day trip involving going from the Melbourne Arm along the canal to Cottingwith Lock at East Cottingwith. This took us out onto the tidal River Derwent and then onto Barmby Barrage where we moored for the night. Next day we followed the River Ouse to Goole.

On this trip one of the most important items was our VHF Radio Handset. This enabled us to have contact with the Lock Keeper at Barmby Barrage and the Bridge Master at Boothferry Bridge who guided



us whilst sailing along the Ouse towards the Ouse Bridge. It was a very surreal experience sailing under the mighty Ouse Bridge in a tiny 40 foot narrow boat. You really cannot appreciate the size of the bridge or the river until you are sailing under it!

Having arrived at Goole dockyard, we had to enter the huge Ocean Lock and were informed by the Harbour Master that there was another vessel waiting to enter along with us. We were to go first and moor on the starboard side. Once tied up we turned to watch a very large ship enter behind us and felt completely dwarfed by this ocean going vessel. Fortunately, the helpful skipper allowed us to exit ahead of him, for which we were grateful as I am sure we would have been swamped by his wash had he gone first!

Whilst New Horizons was berthed at Goole that Winter she had her bow and stern anodes replaced, work carried out on the propeller and a new coat of paint. When the time came to return to Melbourne, the Society was advised that the Lock gates at Cottingham had failed and B.W. were "closing" the Lock for safety reasons. Fortunately BW agreed to meet us at Cottingham on our return journey and helped us to safely negotiate the Lock.

In the event the Lock was closed from 2007 and not re-opened until 2009 whilst BW carried out repairs and fitted new gates. During this period the boat was unable to leave the Pocklington Canal, a 'Remainder' waterway.

The Ings which surrounds the canal is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and has featured on the television programme

called "Hands on Nature" first shown in 2006 and presented by Chris Packham for the BBC. New Horizon was used for the filming and the programme featured the wildlife on the canal including owls and dragonflies, of which there is an abundance in the area.

PCAS boat trips have increased in recent years and a wide variety of trips are offered. These include Private (book the boat for yourself and up to 11 people, plus a crew of 3) and Open Trips to Gardham Lock, 3 hours, Hagg Bridge 4 hours and Cottingham Lock, 6 hours.

It was the Society's Bicentennial in 2015, marking the Act of Parliament granting permission to build the canal. More bicentenary celebrations will follow in 2018 marking the completion of the building of the canal.

The Society has launched a Bicentennial Restoration Appeal with a target of £250,000 of which £100,000 so far has been raised. The goal is to restore more of the canal enabling navigation a further two miles from Melbourne Arm to Bielby. This will involve clearing the overgrowth of vegetation allowing the Society to keep a channel clear with their weed cutting boat, Sheila Nix. This will benefit not only canal craft but also the overall biodiversity of the waterway. In other words, it will be good for waterway users and for everything else that lives in or alongside the waterway.

For more information on this "hidden gem" of a waterway please visit their website for further details, you will not be disappointed!

www.pocklingtoncanalsociety.org

Jan Tiffin

Notice of the 2016 AGM

HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY LIMITED

Notice is hereby given that the Thirty Sixth Annual General Meeting of the above named Company will be held at the Head of Steam PH, Huddersfield on Thursday 16th June, 2016 at 7.00pm to transact the following business:

1. To approve the Minutes of the 2015 Annual General Meeting.
2. To receive and adopt the Accounts for the Company for the year ending 31st December 2015 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. Trevor Ellis as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
5. To re-elect Mr. Alan Stopher as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
6. To re-elect Mr. Keith Sykes as a member of the Council of Management retiring by rotation.
7. To consider any other nominations*.
8. Any other business.

DATED the 21st Day of March 2016
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, Transshipment 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, Transshipment 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 Head of Steam has the option of food after the the formal meeting (about 8.00pm). A tray of Steak pie with mushy peas will be available at £4.95 per portion on a 'first pay, first served' basis.

Top hole

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

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Our Narrowboats *Mary* and *Alice* are available throughout the year and will accommodate up to 10 people. Hire cost from £90 per day.

Crossing the Divide

Not only is the Huddersfield Narrow the Everest of UK canals, it possesses a unique feature: a 5,000+yd hole in the ground which helped cause Trevor Ellis to name our Canal The Impossible Restoration project. Whilst the Tunnel was only reopened in 2001, the Turnpikes and Boat Lane were used continuously for hundreds of years by pack horse to carry goods to and fro over the Pennines.

Many of us have done the Tunnel trip either in one of Fred (the new Standedge Admiral) Carter's trips or in hire boats or privately owned craft, but how many of us have walked over the top?

I had the pleasure this Summer to join Bob Gough and HCS member Roy Meakin and friend in the walk from Marsden Station to the Diggle Tunnel portal. I said Summer, but one never crosses the Pennines on foot whether it be in south Derbyshire or over the moors East of Alston in Cumbria without suitable walking gear for inclement weather. So it was on Saturday 18 July.

We left Top Lock (42E) at around 10.00am after Bob gave us a preliminary briefing and set the scene for our four mile walk.

We crossed the A62 just south of Marsden village and proceeded up Old Mount Road with the golf course way down to our left. Not many takers here today. This road follows the line of Blind Jack Metcalf of Knaresborough's original turnpike. This road building pioneer, that is if you discount the Romans, used bundles of heather as a sub base for stone and pebbles through marsh and boggy land. We soon crossed the moor with Pule Hill on our right towards Redbrook reservoir passing a Huddersfield to Manchester milestone which seemed slightly off track and noting a rescue boat cruising around on this canal reservoir, presumably before a dinghy race in the afternoon - plenty of wind for them! Above us, but out of sight, are two more canal reservoirs Swelland and Black Moss.

As we approached the A62 near to the old Floating Light pub, Bob reminded us that

Society stalwart, Dave Finnis, has reminded us that the 31st March 2016 is the thirtieth anniversary of the launch of the inaugural Standedge Trail, a network of footpaths crossing Standedge Moor. It is also the anniversary of the demise of West Yorkshire Metropolitan County Council and Greater Manchester Council; the latter granting the Society £1.2m which kickstarted the restoration drive - the rest is history!

the Canal is some 500 feet below us. The next canal reservoir Brun Clough almost touches the main road - no anglers present- and we turned left or South to descend into an almost industrial landscape of spoil heaps made up of arisings from the shafts down to the Tunnels below.

We passed a derelict cottage which had an attempt at restoration, but now shelters only birds and sheep. The track took us downwards passing these air shafts to the start of Diggle edge and the habitation in view in the hamlet of Diglea. The trail now becomes Boat Lane and, since I last came here in the late 70's, has a few restored old houses to the left and right. We were happy to reach the shelter of the lower slopes of the Pennines before we arrived at the Diggle Hotel PH; venue of many Canal Society meetings in the '70s, '80s and early '90s. We briefly commandeered the bar so Bob could extend a long print showing a geological section of the Tunnel – what a document and what engineer Benjamin Outram would have given to see it!


The trip back to Marsden was by boat, so we caught the 1.00pm through the Tunnel,

joining other members, and arrived in time for me to wander along the towpath to Marsden Station for my return home to Marple. The Canal Tunnel trip has been well documented and parts of it appear regularly on TV with presenters such as Timothy West and Prunella Scales and Anita Rani (Countryfile) so no need to describe our experience here. Suffice to say the Tunnel still amazes me.

The cost of construction, which was way over budget due to difficult geology and rampant inflation (Napoleonic Wars), was nearly one third of the cost of constructing the remainder of the Canal. In contrast, its restoration cost, supervised by British Waterways (now Canal and River Trust), was £5m and bang on budget.

We undertook this short guided walk in mid Summer to coincide with the Tunnel trip. I urge all members to “go over the top”. Contact Bob for this year's walk and trip so you can truly say you have done one of the most interesting crossings of the Pennines.

David Sumner
HCS President



Route of the first Turnpike with Warcock Hill to the right. Crossing the Moor is not to be taken lightly!

Community Roots

Project Leader Rhys Wynne writes:

Community Roots is a 3 year Canal and River Trust project seeking to improve the environmental condition of the SSSI sections of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal (West) and the Rochdale Canal, it is supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and players of the People's Postcode Lottery.

I started in June when the canal was very green and buzzing with life, the canal obviously looked very different during the Winter months. The foliage died back and much of the wildlife hibernated or migrated. But there was one lifeform that flourished and which I found fascinating. Fungus seemed to be more plentiful this Winter than ever before with Jelly Ear, King Alfred Cakes and Inkcaps everywhere.

With the trees dormant, we took the opportunity to give those on the stretch from Lock 1W up to Stalybridge a good trimming back as they were shading out the aquatic plants and had started to become an obstacle for boats. Most of these were the usual birch, alders and ash but right in the middle was an enormous fig tree that has seemingly sprung up out of nowhere. We cut these back and carried out similar work on a stretch on the Rochdale Canal near Failsworth. This will hopefully give a boost to the Luronium sp. and make it safer to navigate these stretches.

In December, I found myself cycling up and down miles and miles of towpaths, trying to find a suitable hedge for a Hedge-laying Course. I thought I had found the perfect one in Marple – right next to toilets and parking and opposite a good chippy - only to realise it was shielding canal users from being pelted with balls from the adjacent golf course. I didn't think I would be very popular if I hacked this back.

In the end, the course ran in Disley and people travelled from as far as Mossley and Littleborough to learn this traditional method of maintaining healthy hedges. During the Spring we are running more courses in countryside skills, such as dry stone walling and traditional grassland management, which people would be very welcome to attend. The Grassland Management course will involve the use of scythes and I was very excited when these fascinating looking tools arrived!



Rhys was particularly delighted with his late Christmas present; Reaper's Habit to follow!

Rhys Wynne

We are also continuing to run towpath tidy days in Stalybridge which are always good muddy fun and I would be very keen to extend these to other areas of the SSSI if people are interested.

To get in touch, please contact me on:
rhys.wynne@canalrivertrust.org.uk or
<https://www.facebook.com/rhys.wynne.5>

JIDOKU 36

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

Street Scene Greenfield Group

Photos: GGRA

Firstly, to recap on Winter events, Canal & River Trust hosted a Christmas gathering on 10 December as a 'thank you' to Volunteers. It took place at the Anderton Boat Lift, Northwich and three members of the Greenfield Group were pleased to attend. It's a fascinating place and it was good to have an opportunity to look at the inner workings of the Lift itself and enjoy a river cruise. It was an excellent afternoon. Thank you CRT.

The Group's towpath project has continued throughout the Winter. CRT's workboat has been on the Greenfield stretch and put to good use by our volunteers (*pictured right, repelling all boarders!*) to cut back a lot of over-hanging vegetation which was obstructing the route for canal boats.

Work to repair/replace fencing has also continued (*below*) and on 16 February, some 23 metres was fully completed to a very professional standard. Construction of the two new finger posts is well under way and they will be installed shortly.





Top: Bedding in the commemorative Rowan tree, but did we remember to include the bucket in the Risk Assessment?

Above: Volunteers pose with a traditional warning sign; new, bespoke signs (overlay) will prevent confusion about their shady pasts!

Three volunteers have undergone motorized wheelbarrow and whacker plate training and wash-wall repairs, under CRT's supervision, are due to start soon.

The Group was also asked a while ago if a Rowan tree could be planted on the towpath in memory of local resident Roger Broadbent. Permissions were eventually given and undeterred, in spite of pouring rain, volunteers helped to plant the tree on February 6th. Widow Kath Broadbent and her family were very appreciative and the Group was delighted to be able to assist.

The Group would also like to thank CRT for providing 2 signs for use when Volunteers are working on the towpath and definitely not doing Community Service! These have been personalised with the GGRA/SSGG logo.

Although there has been little evidence of litter, the Group has seen fit to erect anti dog fouling notices to try and encourage dog owners to clear up after their pets and not leave a mess for others to walk or cycle in.

The next 12 months project working days have been confirmed with CRT and a list posted on the GGRA/SSGG notice board in Tesco's at 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

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 ring: 01457 597666

'Gadabout' or Noah's Ark

My husband and I saw our narrowboat, Gadabout, across a crowded marina at Goole and it was love at first sight. We bought her but what we didn't expect was that we would become so involved with her that we would both take early retirement and set out on a waterborne odyssey.

A year after having purchased her she was craned onto a lorry at Thorne, shipped from Immingham and popped into the water in Middleburg. This was the start of our European adventure and our meeting with five animals, or even six counting the mink at the Doncaster lock which really would have liked to have eaten us.

By chance, and superb luck, we found a berth in The Arsenal Basin in the centre of Paris. Bliss! There were lots of other

foreigners there on boats, including an American couple who had a black Labrador named Jack.

We were in Gadabout one day, reading and sudokuing when we heard a bump as something jumped into the prow. The next thing was a paw banging on the door. We opened the door and a black Labrador barged past us and made itself comfortable on the rug. Where had it come from? Who did it belong to? What could we do? Well, we just petted it and it seemed very happy so we didn't do anything.

After about an hour there was another knock on the door. This time it was an American looking for his "dorg". We had to give Jack back, but after that, every time Jack went missing from home his master and mistress knew exactly where



'Gadabout' somewhere in France?



Extraire le Gopher
du bois, nous aurons
besoin de plus
d'espace !

he was and didn't worry any more. Not only had we acquired a dog friend, but two American people friends.

On the first of April we set sail as the mooring charges went up and I'm from Yorkshire. On boats you have to learn quickly and one of the first things I learned was not to put food waste bags on the seat in the prow as water rats are extremely agile and always hungry! Arggggggh!

Off we set and eventually we arrived at Sens. A man was walking a dog which I thought resembled a Husky. (My husband bred them in the Antarctic and we always said we would have one when we retired, but a NARROWBOAT is a bit narrow, so we cried off.) When I asked if the dog was a Husky the man replied, *"No, it's a Japanese Malamute AND it's only friendly to family members."* Suddenly, the dog jumped into my arms and began licking my face. Now, I haven't explored my family tree and don't think I have French connections, but my second name IS Yvonne.

At St Mammes another dog jumped on board. Its mistress came running along the towpath shouting apologies. She was invited for a cuppa and then we took her and the pet pooch for a little sail. When we moored up again we were invited for aperitifs to the lady's town farm, a very

old building built round a large square grass area. Part of the building was a house, part a shop and the rest cow sheds. Magic.

As you may now have realised, we are really dog people, but our most expensive invader was a Persian cat. We were moored at Besancon next to a really posh yacht whose crew did not speak to us and only looked at us down their noses. My husband had gone for a walk and I was absorbed in Sudoku when I was suddenly aware of a flash of movement under the table.

I knelt down and grasped the cat which snuggled up to me and purred. After a little petting I stood up cuddling it and went out onto the pontoon to see if anyone was around who might have lost a baby. The snooty lady from the posh yacht was there and my husband was just arriving back from his walk. The lady cried out, *"Oh you have my darling!"*. My husband growled, where did you get that cat?" In the end I managed to return the cat, but only after a tussle as it wanted to be a Narrowboater.

The boat is now sold. Boo hoo! We still wonder did our Boat have an appealing "Odour"? Or was it us?

Sandra Parnell

Uppermill Community Action Network

Our volunteers have been active during our recent Project Days and we have managed to escape the worst of the wet weather. Since starting last October we have clocked up over 180 volunteer hours.

We are now officially a sub-group of the newly formed Uppermill Community Association and are awaiting final confirmation from Canal & River Trust of our adoption of the Canal from Wade Lock to Wool Road. The latter is actually in Dobcross, of course, but it completes a conveniently managed length of canal which is appreciated by Uppermill residents and we will always be pleased for Dobcross residents to join in our activities.

We have completed our clearance of leaves from the towing path and it is the first time for many years that the pathway has been relatively leaf-free for the Winter months. More recently we have spent time clearing vegetation and saplings from the off-side of the canal before the bird nesting season using a CRT workboat (*below*). Using the boat has also enabled us to clear some litter from the off-side bank. Notably we have recovered several traffic cones and a shopping trolley (*pictured right*) which had been thrown down the banking from Den Lane – a considerable distance from the nearest supermarket and we can only speculate how the trolley found it's way there.





Photos: UCAN

We are taking part in the nationwide 'Clean for the Queen' event on Friday March 4th when we will ensure that the towing path and surroundings are in pristine condition ahead of Her Majesty's 90th birthday. On the same day, approximately 300 Saddleworth School pupils will be carrying out a massive clean-up in Uppermill.

We have some exciting plans for later in the year and April Project days are programmed for 9th, 19th and 30th.

Any HCS members who wish to join UCAN or require more information are welcome to contact me at

peterkillan@hotmail.com or
01457 878361

Peter Killan

*... we happy few,
we band of brothers (and sisters);
For (s)he to-day that cutteth the
Ashe and briar shall be remembe-r-ed
with advantages and gratitudes on
this, St Padre Pio's day!*



Shuttle Volunteers Needed

Can you please help get the Marsden Shuttle to Stalybridge for this year's Festival Weekend: 25th & 26th June.

For the first time, we are planning to take the Shuttle to the Stalybridge Festival and run boat trips throughout the weekend.

Members are invited to help get the Shuttle there and back from Marsden on the following days. No previous boating experience is required!

You are, of course, invited to visit the Stalybridge Festival and particularly the

iconic Carnival which will be celebrating its 40th birthday! Trips will be run on the Shuttle and other boats on both the Saturday & Sunday.

Please let Mike McHugh know if you would like to help on any or all of these days by email: mcq.mike@gmail.com or phone: 07771 760157.

Further details and notifications of any changes are on our Marsden Shuttle calendar on the Web at goo.gl/AP2pur

Thank you!

THERE and BACK

Monday 20th June

From Tunnel End, Marsden through the Standedge Tunnel (*there's an experience!*) then down the Diggle Flight to moor at the Canal Society's office at Wool Road, Dobcross.

Friday 24th June

From The Society's office at Wool Road, Dobcross to Armentières Square, Stalybridge.

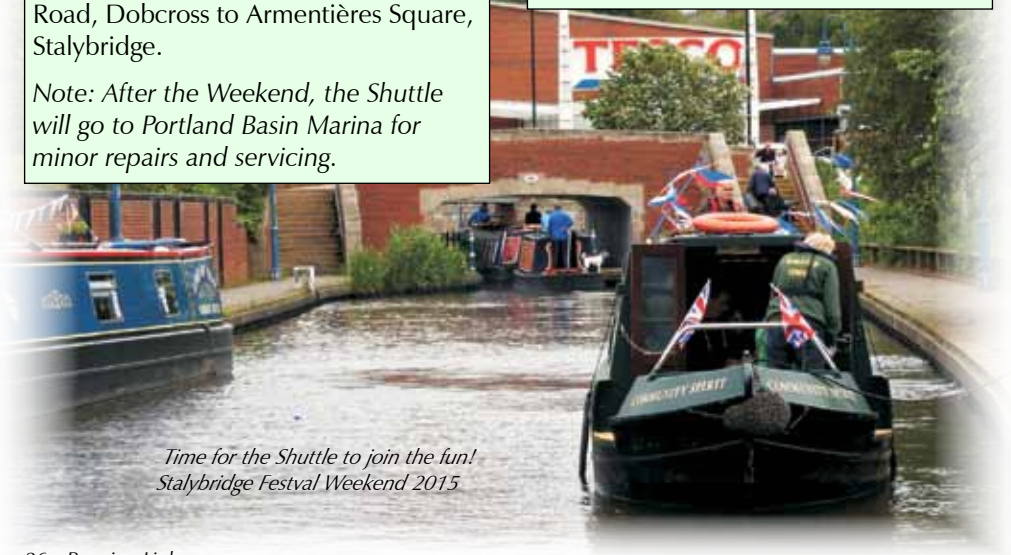
Note: After the Weekend, the Shuttle will go to Portland Basin Marina for minor repairs and servicing.

Wednesday 29th June

From Portland Basin Marina to the Society's office at Wool Road, Dobcross.

Friday 1st July

From the Society's office at Wool Road, Dobcross, back through Standedge Tunnel, to Tunnel End, Marsden.



*Time for the Shuttle to join the fun!
Stalybridge Festival Weekend 2015*

Lend me Your Ears!

CRT's Rhys Wynne, recently organised a Wildlife Walk along the canal from Stalybridge towards Millbrook. The walk was led by wildlife expert, Russ Hedley, of Nature Talks & Walks, Bolton: www.naturetalksandwalks.co.uk

Despite a rather damp and cold day in early March (and even wetter and muddier towpath!) there was a lot to see and hear; with many varieties of birds emphatically declaring their territories.

A particular highlight was spotted by Rhys amongst the trees on a felled branch of Elder: a wonderful 'crop' of *Auricularia auricula*, variously known as Judas', Jew's or now Jelly, Ear Fungus.

The association of Judas with the naming of the fungus came from the belief that Jesus' betrayer hanged himself from an Elder tree; the generic Jew's Ear became commonplace before Jelly Ear dispelled any anti-semitic overtones.

Further walks are planned throughout the season providing an ideal opportunity to experience the wonders of our wildlife along the 'green corridor' that is our Canal!

Contact Rhys Wynne for future events:
rhys.wynne@canalrivertrust.co.uk

Bob Gough

Above: A Robin announces his presence and encourages prospective mates.
Below: Something of a delicacy in the Far East, a fine crop of *Auricularia*.

Photos: Bob Gough



A Fishy Connection

A report in the Huddersfield Examiner last year came to our attention. It concerned a young angler who had recently had the good fortune to catch a large pike while fishing the Huddersfield Broad Canal near Cooper Bridge.

The young man expressed his delight at making the catch but he went on to express his concern at the illegal actions of others who “are stripping local waterways of fish”. This was happening because people were draining locks on the canals and taking away large numbers of fish to eat. As a result he had “quite often turned up to fish only to find the lock pound drained”. He concluded by saying that “A lot of people are concerned at the reduction of fish stocks in the waterways and I don’t like to see what some people do.”

The report went to point out that it is illegal for anglers to keep all the fish they catch. Also that there are strict limits on the type and size of fish which can be kept and that

the Environment Agency takes court action if people are caught breaching the rules.

The Examiner’s report concluded with a quote from the Angling Trust which said that in recent years, illegal fishing has increased dramatically in a number of areas of the country and many thousands of fish are being killed in fisheries by anglers with no permission to fish there.

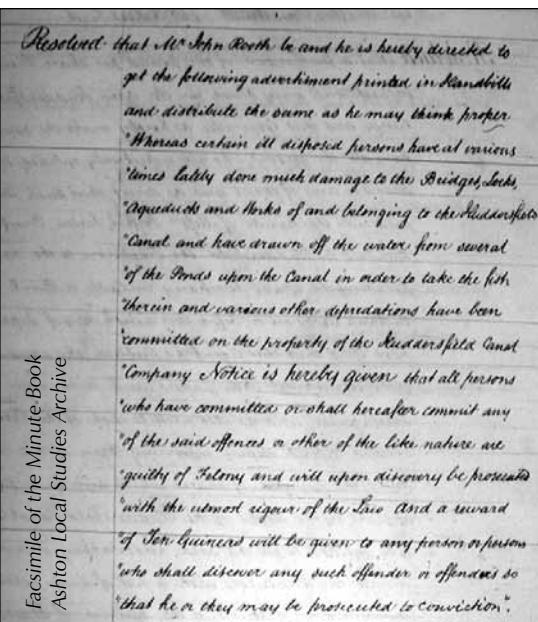
On seeing this report Bob Gough delved into the archives and came up with the following extract from the Minutes of the Huddersfield Canal Company:

At a meeting of the Committee of the Huddersfield Canal Company held at the George Inn in Huddersfield on Wednesday the twenty fifth day of June one thousand eight hundred and six at ten o’Clock in the forenoon
.....

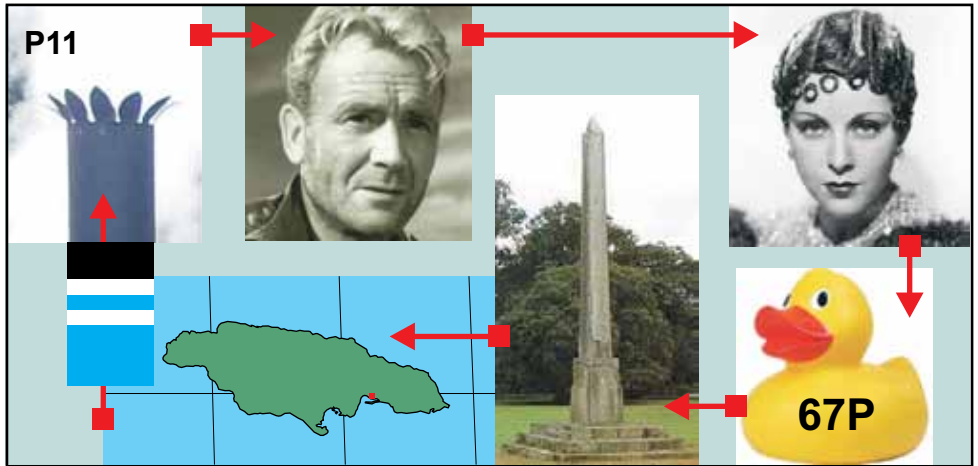
“Resolved that Mr John Rooth be and he is hereby directed to get the following advertisement printed in Handbills and distribute the same as he may think proper “Whereas certain ill-disposed persons have at various times lately done much damage to the Bridges, Locks, Aqueducts and Works of and belonging to the Huddersfield Canal and have drawn off the water from several of the Ponds(sic) upon the Canal in order to take the fish therein and various other depredations have been committed on the property of the Huddersfield Canal Company Notice is hereby given that all persons who have committed or shall hereafter commit any of the said offences or other of the like nature are guilty of Felony and will upon discovery be prosecuted with the utmost vigour of the Law And a reward of Ten Guineas (£10.50, about £360 in today’s money) will be given to any person or persons who shall discover any such offenders so that he or they may be prosecuted to conviction”
.....

As they say, “La plus ça change”!

Graham Birch



A Solution for You



I hope the last edition's seasonal puzzle (above) provided some entertainment. As the connections are circular, you could start anywhere in the sequence, but I'll be literal and start top left.

It is always a challenge to come up with a puzzle for the Winter edition but the picture of the Steamboat set me thinking.

P11 is page 11 of the edition and the picture is a detail of the *funnel*, the Steamboat is called 'Whistle Down the Wind' the title of a novel written by Mary Hayley Bell wife of *John Mills* and their daughter, *Hayley Mills* starred in the film adaptation. The 50's rock singer *Bill Hayley* was famous for his *Kiss Curl* (I know, I wasn't very happy with this one!) and his band, *The Comets* leads to the nickname of *Comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko*: the *Rubber Duck*, which featured in the most audacious rendezvous mission *Rosetta* whereby a robot probe, *Philae*, carried by the *Rosetta* spacecraft, landed on the comet, the naming of the mission comes from the famous *Rosetta Stone* which played

a significant part in deciphering Egyptian Heiroglyphs; it has gained International 'fame' ever since it's discovery in 1799; less well known, but also significant, is the *Philae Obelisk* (pictured) with it's Greek and Heiroglyph inscriptions; the obelisk stands in the grounds of *Kingston Lacey* in Dorset; the map is of *Jamaica* and the red dot is its capital, *Kingston*; getting back to the Steamboat was tricky! But the *funnel* was the link; one of Jamaica's main exports is bananas and the so-called 'Banana Boats' were identified by the blue, white, blue, white, black insignia on their funnels.

Bob Gough

Comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko



ESA/Rosetta/MPS for OSIRIS Team MPS/UPD/LAM/IAA/SSO/INTA/UPM/DASP/IDA

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.

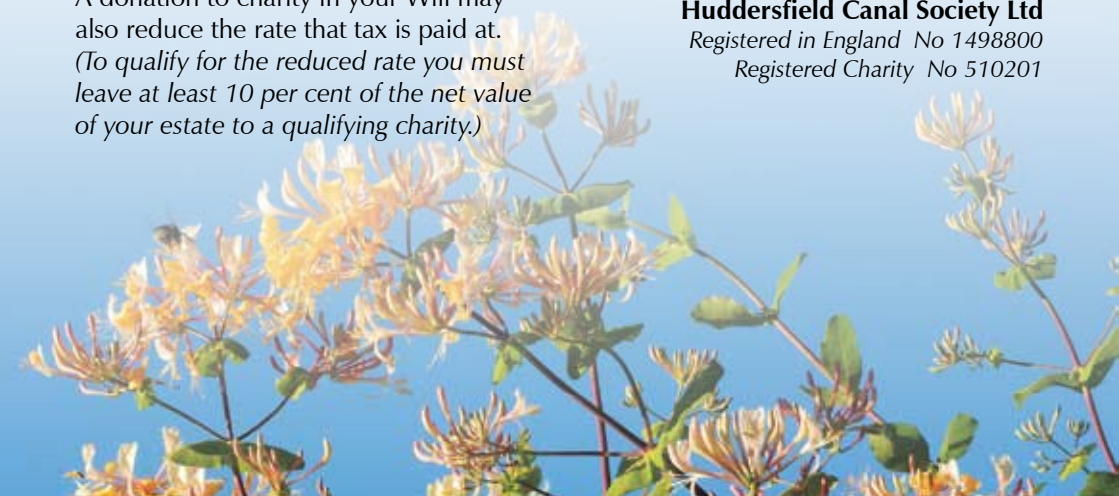
You can find a solicitor by contacting The Law Society at: www.lawsociety.org.uk and follow the *choosingandusing/findasolicitor.law* links or by phoning their Helpline on: 020 7242 1222

Thank you.

Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd

Registered in England No 1498800

Registered Charity No 510201



220 Club - 8th Draw

We are delighted to have reached 50 paying subscribers giving, as you can see, a quarterly Prize Fund of £120 with a first prize of £80 and second prize of £40! 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 Eighth quarterly draw:

Total Subscribers: 50
Total Prize Fund: £120

1st Prize:
Mr B Edwards winning £80
2nd Prize:
Mr J Haines winning £40

Congratulations to the prize winners!



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

Solution to Jidoku 36

MEMBERSHIP RATES

Individual	£9.00
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Corporate	£150.00

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